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OPPOSITION TO AUTHORITARIANISM:

IDEATIONAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

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OPPOSITION TO AUTHORITARIANISM:
IDEATIONAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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For my mentor,
Dr. Charles D. Kenney

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Abstract

Why do some opposition movements succeed in deposing authoritarian leaders in the former Soviet Republics, while some others fail? How do regime opponents challenge authoritarian discourses and practices? How do authoritarian regime institutions and their narratives galvanize popular support to retain power? Although post-Soviet scholarship has to date offered a variety of explanations for diverse regime trajectories, little work has simultaneously examined how autocrats and opposition forces build popular support in their efforts to maintain power or resist it, respectively. My work sought to remedy this gap by exploring competing political forces' engagement in the symbolic politics of national identity and their access to economic resources in Russia and Ukraine. I find that that opposition forces' effective appeal to a competing vision of national identity and autocrats' limited control over wealth provides a sufficient explanation for the collapse of authoritarianism. Yet incumbent leaders' preeminence over the symbolic struggle of national identity and broad control of economic resources enable authoritarian regimes to mobilize support both from masses and the political and economic elite, while depriving potential opposition forces of meaningful sources of popular support. Overall, this study seeks to shed light on how ideational and material resources available to both incumbent leaders and opposition movements are important in shaping authoritarian outcomes.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

On November 21, 2013, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich decided not to sign the European Union Association Agreement which anticipated closer political and economic ties between his country and the Union. In protest, a few hundred young Ukrainian men and women began to gather in Kyiv's central square, Maidan, and agreed to camp out in the city center until the government heard their call. On the night of November 30, 2013, Yanukovich's security forces responded by conducting a brutal sweep through the Maidan. Images of police beating protestors prompted widespread public outrage, and led thousands of people from all over Ukraine to join the demonstrations in solidarity and march in the streets of Kyiv by early December. The demonstrations that began as a peaceful gathering of a few hundred-people hoping to force Yanukovich's government to reconsider its suspension of the Agreement evolved into a more dramatic political movement, seeking the removal of a leader who had been edging the country toward an autocratic future. After a three-month standoff with protestors, popular calls for regime change caused Yanukovich's grip on power to crumble - just as it had during the Orange Revolution in 2004.

While massive protests thwarted Yanukovich's increasingly authoritarian rule in Ukraine, similar protests failed to ever pose a significant threat to the consolidation of Vladimir Putin's authoritarianism in Russia. Indeed, a few years earlier in 2011, large numbers of Russian people poured into the streets to protest the fraudulent parliamentary elections in which Putin's party United Russia was credited with 49.32 percent of the vote. These protests, the largest to occur in Russia within the last two decades, stirred many more in the ensuing months of 2012. Putin and his party, in stark contrast to

Yanukovich's rule, were nevertheless able to disperse the calls for political reforms and avoid giving any major concessions to the Russian opposition movement. By the end of June 2012, the Russian opposition movement simply ran out of steam.

The obvious question then arises: Why do some opposition movements succeed in deposing authoritarian leaders in the former Soviet Republics, while some others fail? How do regime opponents challenge authoritarian discourses and practices? How do authoritarian regime institutions and their narratives galvanize popular support to retain power? In other words, why in some post-Soviets states do autocratic incumbents achieve the consolidation of their rule, but not in others? Therein lies the puzzle of this research.

Earlier studies, discussed below, often focused on regime characteristics, opposition resources and tactics, and incumbent strategies when explaining the rise and fall of post-Communist authoritarian regimes. Further analyses accounted for regional diffusion, a set of structural variables including the strength of a regime's ties to the West as well as an autocrat's organizational capacities, and more recently, divisions over national identities. However, only a few of these studies looked simultaneously at both ideational and material bases of support harnessed by the authoritarian regime and the opposition.

Thus, my study first emphasizes the ways in which symbolic appeals of national identity shape the survival and fall of authoritarian rule. I argue that a successful competing vision of national identity evoked by effective opposition movements is a major source both of mobilization of grass roots support and a split among elites. Conversely, a higher degree of public support for a national identity espoused by regime authorities has the opposite effect. The more an authoritarian regime successfully coopts the entirety of national identity, the less the chance the opposition has to mobilize a

sufficient number of people and encourage sufficient elite defection to overthrow an incumbent leader.

Second, my argument focuses on the access of competing regime and opposition symbolic entrepreneurs to economic resources and on the ways that access enables each to invoke their own vision of national identity. The retention of state control over the economy admittedly make it less feasible for regime opponents to galvanize popular support and to encourage the defections of political elites. Therefore, my study argues that the greater the opposition's access to broad economic resources, the greater the chance for successful anti-regime mobilization.

Finally, I demonstrate that when the regime controls national identity and/or the economy, the survival of authoritarian rule is likely. In other words, the greater the popular acceptance of the national identity evoked by a regime and/or the greater a regime's control over economic resources, the greater the chance for the survival of authoritarian rule.

In this vein, my study explains the divergent regime trajectories of Russia and Ukraine from 1991 onwards. My analysis begins by exploring and comparing Russia under Boris Yeltsin (1991-99) and Ukraine under Leonid Kuchma (1994-2004). More or less contemporaneously, both leaders sought to ingrain an authoritarian system of rule by using similar methods. With increasingly uneven political playing fields, sympathetic media coverage, weakened parliaments, and fraudulent elections, Russia under Yeltsin and Ukraine under Kuchma both became more authoritarian. Next, Yeltsin transferred power quietly to his preferred successor Putin in Russia by resigning ahead of time in December 1999. Putin proceeded to hold on to power by winning 52.9 percent of national

votes in the March 2000 presidential election. In Ukraine, however, Kuchma met enormous popular resistance in the aftermath of seemingly rigged presidential elections in 2004. The subsequent revote authorized by the Ukraine's Supreme Court brought the opposition leader, Viktor Yushchenko to power with approximately 52 percent of the vote to Yanukovich's 44 percent.

At this point the paths of two similarly authoritarian regimes of Ukraine and Russia sharply diverged. While Putin succeeded consolidating authoritarian rule throughout the 2000s, Yushchenko ended the rise of authoritarianism in the mid-2000s. Down but not out, Yanukovich nevertheless regained the pinnacle of power by winning the presidency in the 2010 elections and re-embarked upon an authoritarian path immediately thereafter. Indeed, Yanukovich had already captured the prime ministership after the parliamentary elections of 2006 - although it was for a short period. As in Russia under Putin and his successor Dmitry Medvedev, Ukraine's political playing field quickly became uneven in favor of the incumbent, elections were marred with fraud, and independent media reporting was suppressed in Ukraine under Yanukovich's presidency. Notwithstanding Putin's consolidation of power in Russia and Ukraine's swift reversal under Yanukovich in 2010-15, opposition forces were able to mount challenges to both systems. As acknowledged above, Russian incumbents succeeded in thwarting the opposition movements in 2011-12. In Ukraine, however, Yanukovich was forced from power in 2014 by a wave of protests. Thus, although the Russian and Ukrainian regimes were similar in many respects at the time of protests, the two regimes could not have fared more differently in terms of transitional outcomes. As analysis will show, a comparison

of the Ukrainian and Russian authoritarian regimes provides leverage for assessing the key variables of this study.

Popular Protest and Authoritarian Breakdown in the Post-Soviet States

When explaining the fall of post-Communist authoritarian regimes, early academic focus centered on hybrid regime characteristics, the resources and tactics of regime dissenters, and the diffusion of tactical repertoires between opposition movements.

Some scholars hypothesized that because hybrid regimes, in stark contrast to full authoritarian regimes, allowed for regular elections and more pluralism, these factors could coalesce to make incumbents vulnerable enough sometimes to succumb to popular protests seeking their ouster. According to Michael McFaul and Taras Kuzio, the combination of these factors gave opposition movements more breathing space and essentially an opportunity to continue existing in between and through electoral cycles in post-Soviet states such as Georgia and Ukraine. Therefore, when elections were marred by fraud in these hybrid regimes, opposition movements were swiftly able to mobilize support on the ground.[1] Yet, in several post-Soviet states with similar regime characteristics, regime dissenters failed to topple authoritarian rulers on the eve of rigged elections.

Alternative studies developed a model with a focus on opposition strategies that revolved around elections. According to Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik, where regime dissenters ousted autocratic leaders, they relied on a set of strategies, including

[1] Michael McFaul, "Transition from PostCommunism," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 16(3), July 2005, pp. 5-19; Taras Kuzio, "Democratic Breakthroughs and Revolutions in Five Post-communist Countries: Comparative Perspective on the Fourth Wave," *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 16(1), Winter 2008, pp. 97-109.

forming a united electoral bloc, effective political campaigning, active engagement with civil society organizations, election monitoring, parallel vote counting, and – if necessary – getting people out into the streets to protest fraudulent elections results. At the same time, Bunce and Wolchik noted that regime opponents learned these strategies in part from other opposition movements which successfully unseated autocratic incumbents in post-Communist Europe and from American and European democracy promotion organizations.[2]

Lucan Way's analysis, in stark contrast, observed that the Belarussian opposition movement, although it studied and applied tactical repertoires of other successful anti-regime movements, could not mobilize a strong support base to pose a threat to the regime after the 2006 presidential elections.[3] Similarly, the Armenian opposition movement failed to oust autocrats both in 2004 and 2008 even though it closely modeled its organization and tactics after the opposition forces of Georgia.[4]

In the view of Mark Beissinger, the divergent authoritarian outcomes, although opposition movements may have employed similar tactics and strategies over time, stemmed from the timing of protests. According to Beissinger, earliest opposition movements that succeed in overthrowing authoritarian regimes fostered the chances of next opposition movements to topple non-democratic leaders. As political revolutions reverberated across time and space, would-be opposition forces in other times and places however were not the only parties who watched and learned. Incumbent regimes also

[2] Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes," *World Politics*, Vol. 62 (1), Jan. 2010, pp. 43-86.
[3] Lucan Way, "National Identity and Authoritarianism: Belarus and Ukraine Compared," in *Orange Revolution and Aftermath: Mobilization, Apathy, and the State in Ukraine,* edited by Paul D. Anieri, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010, pp. 137-41.
[4] Lucan Way, "The Real Causes of the Color Revolutions," *Journal of Democracy,* Vol. 19 (3), 2008, pp. 59.

learned how to respond to popular protest movements by studying and discerning valuable lessons which can be derived from previous confrontations within different states. In their efforts to stay a few steps ahead of potential opposition forces, authoritarian leaders raised institutional barriers. This arguably prevented late opposition movements from dismantling authoritarian regimes.[5]

Other approaches emphasized the institutional design of authoritarianism itself in the post-Soviet states. Henry Hale argued that constitutionally mandated term limits encouraged elite defection from an incumbent regime by setting a certain date for the exit of president who would no longer have the power to allocate economic resources and dispense favors.[6] However, some factors that may affect political elites' calculation to support anointed successor or opposition candidate – including, the benefit of supporting the incumbent's preferred successor, the strength of a possible opposition movement, and the ability of regime and its opponents to galvanize mass support – were not discussed in Hale's approach, as indicated by Scott Radnitz.[7] At the same time, Way's examination of post-Soviet authoritarian breakdowns highlighted that a large number of ousted incumbents would not have been formally required to term out. In other words, there were no term limits in place in many instances in which autocrats were deposed by popular protests.[8]

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[5] Mark R. Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol.5 (2), 2007, pp. 259-276. Also, see, Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

[6] Henry E. Hale, "Regime Cycles: Democracy, Autocracy, and Revolution in Post-Soviet Eurasia," *World Politics*, Vol. 58 (1), October 2005, pp. 133-65.

[7] Scott Radnitz, "The Color of Money: Privatization, Economic Dispersion, and the Post-Soviet 'Revolutions'," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 42 (2), Jan. 2010, p. 130.

[8] For a table of "Term Limits and Leadership Turnovers 1992-2014," see Lucan Way, *Pluralism by Default: Weak Autocrats and the Rise of Competitive Politics*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2015, p. 171.

Some discussions of authoritarian institutions also concentrated on autocrat's control of state wealth. Radnitz argued that when a state's economic resources were transferred into private hands and created a new capitalist class, this occasionally backfired for autocracies. In other words, the interest of the capitalist class varied from the interest of the incumbent rule in some instances. At the same time, the dispersion of state's economic resources meant that the general population no longer depended solely upon the state for its survival. In the end, Radnitz highlighted, some states that went through mass economic privatization (i.e. Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan) faced opposition movements backed by newly created capitalist classes and people who were less dependent on the state for their economic well-being. Additionally, the growing dispersion of state wealth limited autocrats' potential to deter elite defections to opposition forces. This combined with popular protests fostered the fall of authoritarian regimes.[9] While I agree that the broad dispersion of state economic resources plays an important role in the chances for success of an opposition movement in ousting an incumbent autocrat, this critical factor in and of itself does not solely indicate when an infusion of financial resources into an opposition movement should be expected to yield results or generate sustained mass protests.

Ultimately, all approaches laid out above offer very insightful but partial frameworks to understand the reasons for the divergent regime paths of many post-Communist states. At the same time, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way proposed a more systematic approach to assessing the causes of divergent authoritarian outcomes for most post-Soviet states.[10]

[9] Radnitz, "The Color of Money," pp. 127-46.
[10] Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.They focus on *competitive authoritarian regimes.*

According to these scholars, high *linkage*[11] to the West was a sufficient condition for regime transition to *democracy*. Where density of ties to the West was low or medium, high authoritarian *organizational capacity*[12] was predicted to bring *authoritarian stability*. In the case of low or medium organizational power, *Western leverage*[13] designated the potential outcome. Therefore, high leverage generated *unstable authoritarianism*[14] while low or medium leverage led to stable authoritarianism.

Moreover, Levitsky and Way noted that all post-Soviet authoritarian regimes had low linkages to the West because of their Soviet past. Thus, what distinguished one from another in terms of transitional outcomes was first and foremost the incumbent's organizational power, followed by Western leverage. In this context, the success of anti-regime protests in Georgia and Ukraine to unseat autocrats was due in part to incumbent regimes' inability to crack down on organized and sustained opposition protests and to prevent former regime allies from deserting for the opposition movement, respectively.[15] Therefore, both aforementioned countries – where organizational power was low and Western leverage was high – predicted to become unstable authoritarian regimes. Yet, to the contrary, Ukraine democratized following the Orange Revolution. Therefore, critics emphasized that this model remained limited in accurately predicting transitional

[11] Western linkage is defined as "the density of ties (economic, politic, diplomatic, social and organizational) and cross-border flows (of capital, goods and services, people, and information)" between a country and the US, European Union as well as international institutions led by Western powers. Ibid., pp. 43-50.
[12] The sources of organizational power as follows: "A single, highly institutionalized ruling party," and "extensive and well-funded coercive apparatus," or "state's strong control over the economy." Ibid., pp. 54-67.
[13] Western leverage is invoked to highlight "government's vulnerability to external democratizing powers." Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, pp. 40-3.
[14] Unstable authoritarianism refers to incumbent turnover without democratization.
[15] Ibid., p. 69.

outcome when a regime's organizational power is low or medium.[16] In the end, however, Ukraine slid back to authoritarianism by 2010 – as predicted by the model favored by Levitsky and Way.

From a theoretical perspective, the question as to whether the degree of an autocrat's organizational power in a country where linkage is low is alone sufficient to account for varying authoritarian regime outcomes, regardless of its ideational background, arises. Indeed, Way's recent work focuses on activists' commitment to anti-regime protests by analyzing divisions over national identity.[17] Where "relatively equal divisions in *titular* national identity along ethnic, regional, cultural, or other lines"[18] existed, authoritarian regime's ability to monopolize power faced major constraints in the post-Soviet era, according to Way. Hence, the greater the share of general population that support an alternative vision of national identity to the one espoused by an incumbent regime, the stronger the chance for potential opposition movement to bring down an autocrat. In Ukraine and Moldova, Way suggested, divisions in national identities enabled opposition movements to mobilize major support in the form of popular protests and thus help to depose autocratic leaders. Conversely, the unified national identity of Belarus made it very difficult for the opposition movement to make appeals to the people and to galvanize major support for its attempted anti-regime protests.[19] While Way's comparative work on the role of divided national identities in the fall of post-socialist authoritarian regimes is unquestionably remarkable, his analysis – to a certain degree – moves away from the

[16] Dan Slater, "Review: Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War," *Perspectives on Politics*, Volume 9 (2) , 2011, p. 387.
[17] Way, *Pluralism by Default*.
[18] Ibid., p. 188.
[19] While *divisions in national identity* was analyzed to explain the failure and success of the opposition movements in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, the authoritarian regime's organizational capacity figured prominently within each case of Way's book.

constructivist approach to identity. For instance, Way notes that "Russia was dominated by a single identity that pitted small numbers of ethnic separatists against a large majority of Russians." This understanding however underestimates "competing worldviews" amongst Russians and their potential to affect the course of change. Therefore, in Way's account, national identity becomes more about manifestation of "visible," "historical," "structural" *lines* and less about processes through which national identity content is shaped, negotiated, and contested by political entrepreneurs and people. Along the same lines, Way's framework underlines the use of divided national identity by opposition to galvanize support. Yet, it gives less attention to how incumbent regime and its opponents promulgate, control, and mobilize these identities. Lastly, in both Ukraine and Moldova – two instances in which opposition movements had success in unseating incumbent rulers, – divided national identities emerged as territorially concentrated. On the other hand, Belarus – where the opposition movement failed in ousting the incumbent ruler – had neither a divided national identity, nor territorially concentrated divisions along any relevant lines. Therefore, it might be worth asking that are territorially dispersed identities associated with authoritarian collapse as strong as territorially concentrated identities?

Yitzhak M. Brundy and Evgeny Finkel's analysis of divergent regime outcomes in Ukraine and Russia also concentrated on the role national identity in the transition from authoritarian rule. According to these scholars, the failure of Russian liberals in the immediate post-communist period to actually cultivate an alternative concept of national identity combined with the ill-fated market economy gave rise to " [an] unchallenged spread of illiberal, imperial, anti-market, and xenophobic notions of Russian identity"

that persists to day.[20] At the same time, Brundy and Finkel remarked that the legacy of Soviet nationalities policy "blur[ed] Soviet and Russian identities" which "reinforced the imperial notion of Russian national identity" even within liberal-minded elites.[21] As such, these scholars suggested that this hegemonic notion of national identity was to a great extent accountable for Russia's non-democratic path. In turn, Ukraine's historical and Soviet-institutional path entailed two competing visions of national identity – the Western Ukrainian identity, which centered on Ukrainian language and culture, and leaned towards being a part of Europe on one side, and the Eastern Ukrainian identity, which favored closeness with Russia, primarily due to cultural and economic considerations, on the other side. In this context, Brundy and Finkel argued that the "pro-democratic forces" of Ukraine were always able to mobilize support on issues of national identity without devoting much attention to economics. Nevertheless, post-Soviet Ukrainian elites who drew upon the frames of Ukrainian nationalism, with the arguable exception of Yushchenko, and opposition groups and activists, which engaged in Ukraine's successful anti-regime protests, associated with democratic values loosely at best.[22]

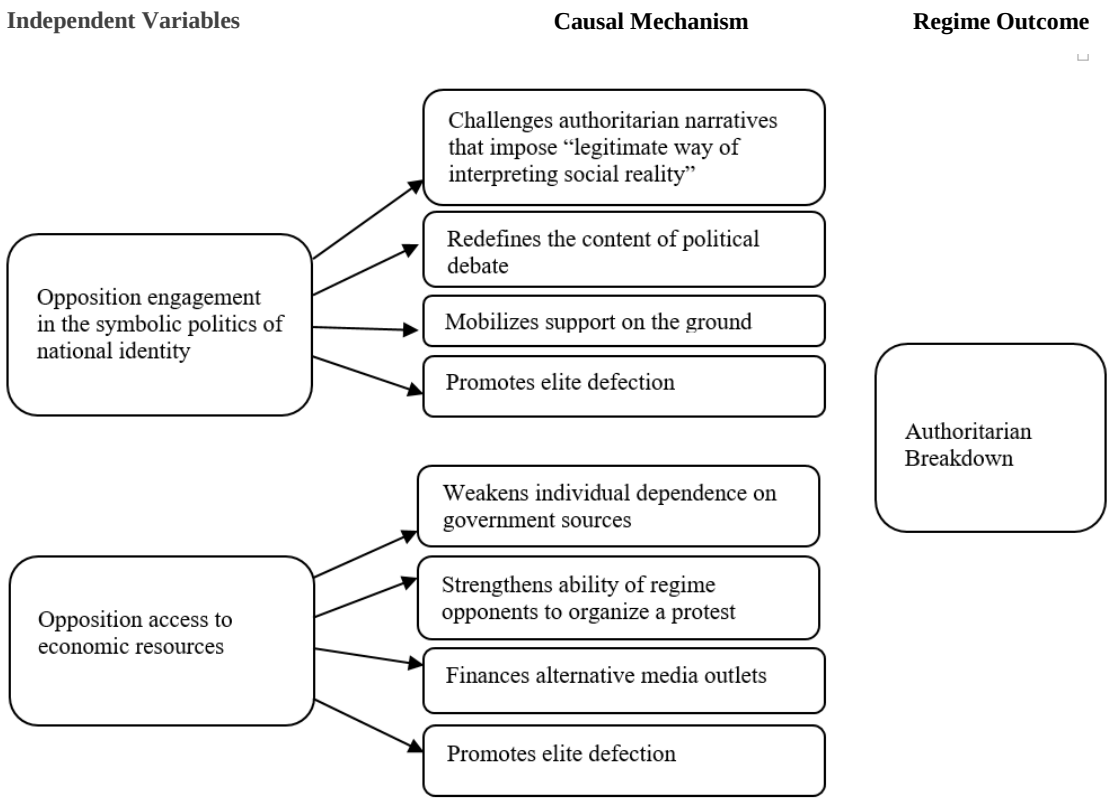
My study situates itself in the burgeoning literature that attempts to explain the fall or survival of authoritarian regimes in post-Soviet states. It builds upon the previous works, but with a further focus on national identity – which it proposes to be a major variable in explaining divergent transitional paths. More critically, my work links the symbolic

[20] Yitzhak M. Brundy and Evgeny Finkel, "Why Ukraine is not Russia: Hegemonic National Identity and Democracy in Russia and Ukraine," *East European Politics and Societies,* Vol. 25 (4), 2011, p. 825.
[21] Ibid., 819.
[22] Beissinger also notes that what unified Ukrainian revolutionaries of 2004 was their common disdain for the incumbent ruler, rather than their loyalty to common values of democracy. Elites in opposition on the other hand were quick to frame activities with democratic vocabulary to cover a variety of grievances. Mark R. Beissinger, "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution: Coalitions in Ukraine Orange Revolution," *American Political Science Review,* Vol. 107(3), August 2013, pp. 1-19.

politics of national identity with the material bases of popular support that authoritarian incumbents and opposition groups can mobilize in Russia and Ukraine.

Explaining Authoritarian Regime Trajectories in the Post-Soviet Territory

This work analyzes the divergent regime paths of Ukraine and Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It seeks to explain why Ukrainian opposition movements achieved the overthrow of authoritarian incumbents while their Russian counterparts failed to do so? In other words, how did autocratic incumbents popularize and maintain their rule in Russia, but failed to do so in Ukraine? I argue that where regime opponents depose authoritarian leaders, this hinges primarily upon two variables: (I) opposition engagement in symbolic politics of national identity, (II) opposition access to economic resources.



(I) Opposition engagement in the symbolic politics of national identity

Until recently, few regime studies systematically analyzed how national identity may indeed contribute to the survival and fall of authoritarian regimes in the post-Soviet states. My study considers national identity as a type of collective identity, which Rawi Abdelal et al. dwell on two dimensions – content and contestation. Content refers to the *meaning* of a group's distinctiveness and boundaries, as well as its purposes and preferences. It also entails a group's relation to other groups, which admittedly enforces group members' perception of *what they are (or are not).* Arguably most critically for this study, content invokes the economic, political, and social perspectives that are associated with a group identity, which simultaneously structure the way people view and interpret *how the world works.*[23] At the same time, contestation consists of the *degree* of agreement (or disagreement) about the each of the properties of content within a given group. In this way, it refers to the process through which people and political elite negotiate an identity content.[24] As Abdelal et remark, "there is always some level of in-group contestation over this [identity] content, implying that social identities vary in agreement and disagreement about their norms, worldviews, analytics, and meanings."[25]

Next, this study views a nation as "a collective of people … united by shared cultural features (myths, values, etc.) and the belief in the right to territorial self-determination."[26]

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[23] Rawi Abdelal et al., *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 18-27.
[24] Ibid., pp. 27-9.
[25] Ibid., 31.
[26] Lowell W. Barrington, "'Nation' and 'Nationalism': The Misuse of Key Concepts in Political Science," *PS: Political Science & Politics,* Vol. 30 (4), pp. 712-17.
Italic belongs to the author of this study.
See also, Walker Connor, "A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a …," *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* Vol. 1, Oct. 1978, pp. 377-400; Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism,* Colorado: Westview Press, 1977, pp. 1-13.

National identity – as a form of collective identity – thus refers to "a set of attitudes, beliefs, and commitments regarding qualifications for membership, the location of territorial boundaries, and the content of political, social, economic, cultural arrangements that are best suited for the given nation."[27] Neither nation nor national identity is a substantial entity; each are socially constructed. Indeed, scholars have long noted that the state is a "powerful *identifier*" because of the "material and symbolic resources [that it has]" to impose " a legitimate principle of [social] vision and division" over competing alternatives.[28] As an incumbent regime effectively harnesses the content of a national identity, the legitimacy of a state in the eyes of its people increases.[29] On the other hand, "[e]ven the most powerful state does not monopolize production and diffusion of identifications … and those that it does produce may be contested."[30]

My work argues that the lower the degree of the popular agreement over a national identity content evoked by regime authorities, the higher the chance for opposition movements to mobilize a sufficient number of people on the ground and ultimately succeed in bringing about authoritarian breakdown. As Rogers Smith remarks, "political leaders necessarily engage in 'people-forming' or 'people building' endeavors to a greater or lesser degree all the time" in order to persuade people "to embrace the valorized

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[27] Bernhard Peters, "A New look at 'National Identity,'" *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 3(1), 2002, pp. 3-32, **quoted in** Brundy and Finkel, "Why Ukraine is not Russia," , p.815.

[28] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004, pp.28-65; Pierre Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power," *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 7 (1), 1989, pp. 14-25; Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. by Graham Burchell, Peter Miller, and Colin Gordon, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 87-104. Also, see, Loic Wacquant, "Symbolic Power and Group-making: On Pierre Bourdieu's Reframing of Class," *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 2013, pp. 1-18.

[29] Herbert C. Kelman, "Patterns of Personal Involvement in the National System: A Social-Psychological Analysis of Political Legitimacy," in *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory*, ed. by James N. Rosenau, Revised Edition, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1969, pp. 276-88.

[30] Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups,* p.43.

identities, play the stirring roles, and have the fulfilling experiences [that they ascribe for them]" through "arguments, rhetoric, symbols, or 'stories' of a more obvious and familiar sort."[31] Additionally, incumbent autocrats may dismiss or relegate a set of beliefs, values, and identities found in society to a secondary role in order to promote regime purposes. Rival political leaders or opposition figures, in turn, may appeal to these subordinated values and sentiments when challenging the national way of life promulgated by those in power, and thus redefine the lexicons of political debate.[32] Admittedly however, political endeavors of "people building" – both by an incumbent regime and its opponents – say nothing about "the *depth*, *resonance*, or *power*" of identities invoked in the daily experiences of the people that they are ascribed to, which indeed "can only be addressed empirically."[33]

In this context, an effective appeal to national identity is a significant source of support for both authoritarian regimes seeking to consolidate rule and opposition movements attempting to overthrow autocrats. As Way's in-depth study of several post-Soviet states demonstrates, where democratizing push from the West is weak, divisions in national identity may help anti-regime movements to mobilize sufficient support in bringing about authoritarian regime.[34] As such, the larger the share of a population which backs a competing vision of national identity evoked by an opposition movement, the higher the chance for the fall of an incumbent authoritarian regime.

[31] Rogers M. Smith, *Stories of Peoplehood: The Politics and Morals of Political Membership*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 4, 45.
[32] Ibid., p. 53.
[33] Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, p. 54.
[34] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 18-22; Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*.

Admittedly, intense disagreement over a conception of national identity harnessed by autocratic incumbents may also prompt political elites to defect to opposition movements. Expected economic benefits as well as identity choices may drive elite participation or non-participation in opposition movements.

(II) Opposition access to economic resources

The role of the state's control over economic resources received a considerable amount of attention in democratization literature. Recent studies highlighted the importance of the state's economic power to its authoritarian stability. Scholars such as Levitsky and Way argued that a state's strong discretionary control over wealth might substitute for weakness in party strength and coercive capacities as it provides incentives for cohesion within regime elites and necessary resources for thwarting regime opponents.[35]

My study contends that the state's control over wealth plays an important part in regime outcomes as Levitsky and Way propose. Authoritarian incumbents prove stronger when major economic resources are overwhelmingly controlled by the state, and unsurprisingly they prove weaker when far less economic resources are controlled by the state. Additionally, I argue that opposition movements may bring down autocrats even in the face of a relatively strong ruling party and coercive forces.

First of all, dispersion of economic resources to more private actors reduces the share of a population that depends on the state for its economic livelihood. This further enables a greater share of the population in a country to partake in opposition movements without a fear of intimidation and reprisal from state authorities.[36] Conversely, with a higher

[35] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, pp. 66-7; Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 16-7.
[36] Radnitz, "The Color of Money," pp. 127-46.

percentage of a population relying on state controlled economic resources, more support can be seen for incumbent regime stability. In this vein, an incumbent regime may maintain popular support through control and bestowal of economic resources selectively to regime loyalists.[37]

Second, where autocrats successfully monopolize control over wealth, regime dissenters lack economic resources to organize and sustain popular protests. As the existing body of post-Soviet scholarship largely demonstrates, independent economic actors – namely, oligarchs – indeed played a major part in financing anti-regime activities which led to the fall of incumbent autocrats. Along the same lines, independent economic actors provide opposition movements with an opportunity to disseminate alternative political narratives to pro-government media through media outlets of their own. Admittedly, where alternative sources of news and information exist, regime dissenters have greater success communicating their messages and spreading their narratives. Conversely, opposition movements being starved of economic resources are unlikely to reach out to masses, and to galvanize adequate popular support for their causes.[38]

Lastly, where state and economy are largely interwoven, less incentive exists for that regime elite to partake in opposition activities. In this situation, opposition movements fail to attract the necessary economic resources to build enough momentum to dismantle incumbent regimes and thence the overall likelihood of incumbent regime collapse remains low. At the same time, defection of political elites to an opposition movement

[37] For a similar argument, see, Beatriz Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
[38] For the role of non-state economic actors in financing anti-regime protests and alternative media outlets, see, Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*; Way, *Pluralism by Default*; Radnitz, "The Color of Money."

largely fails to occur. In contrast, the rise of an opposition movement endowed with significant economic resources and capable of attracting support effectively for its message signal the vulnerability of an incumbent regime. In this situation, the chances of elite defection to an opposition movement increase. As political elite desert an incumbent regime for a potential opposition movement, the legitimacy of regime dissenters in the eyes of the public increases.

In summary, my work argues that opposition movement's effective appeal to a competing notion of national identity – to the one harnessed by an autocratic regime – and its access to broad economic sources provide a sufficient condition for the fall of authoritarian regime. In this vein, I suggest that the lower the degree of popular agreement over a national identity espoused by an autocratic incumbent, the higher the chance for an opposition movement to mobilize support on the ground and prompt a split among regime elites. Conversely, the more an autocratic regime monopolizes national identity discourse, the less chance for regime dissidents to bring about authoritarian breakdown. Next, I argue that the lower the degree of regime control over the economy, the higher the chance for an opposition movement to invoke its own vision of national identity, galvanize support, and promote elite defection. A broader concentration of economic resources in the hands of an autocrat makes it more likely for regime to survive. Simultaneously, my work highlights that an incumbent power's control over national identity discourse and/or its retention of economic resources – the factors which precipitate the fall of authoritarian rule – contribute to the survival of authoritarianism.

Why Russia and Ukraine?

This study applies the framework laid out above to explain why the Russian and Ukrainian states that were similar in many respects in the 1990s have since diverged so starkly in authoritarian outcomes. Put succinctly, I seek to understand why Ukrainian opposition movements succeeded in deposing autocrats while Russian regime opponents failed. In the same vein, my study explores why authoritarian incumbents failed to consolidate power in Ukraine but nevertheless succeeded in Russia.

As Victor Zaslavsky pointed out in the early 1990s, "there were [at the time] high hopes that Russia and Ukraine, like the countries of Central Europe, would be able to establish Western-style democracies and market economies."[39] Ukraine and Russia both began the immediate post-Soviet era with similar impediments to transitioning to a more democratic form of government. Both countries inherited undeveloped civil societies, weak traditions of the rule of law, and economic systems predicated upon state ownership of major resources and industries from their recent Soviet pasts.[40] Both also lacked any prior first-hand experience with democracy. Neither Ukraine nor Russia had strong ties to or interactions with democratic Western powers compared to many Central European countries.[41]

Soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Leonid Kuchma (1994-2004) in Ukraine and Boris Yeltsin (1991-99) in Russia sought to ingrain authoritarian rule by using similar methods. Both leaders created systems of support based upon close relations with newly

[39] Victor Zaslavsky, "Nationalism and Democratic Transition in Post-communist Societies," in *Daedalus*, Vol. 121 (2), 1992, pp. 97-121, **quoted in** Brundy and Finkel, "Why Ukraine is not Russia," p. 814.
[40] On this issue, see, Marc Morje Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
[41] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, pp. 197-200.

emerging class of oligarchs in their respective countries. A few oligarchs in each country owned major media outlets, and slanted reporting to favor autocratic incumbents when necessary. Both incumbents lacked an effective party organization on the one hand, but both were nevertheless able to cripple their nation's parliament on the other hand. Kuchma and Yeltsin both did not shy away committing electoral fraud to retain power.[42] With increasingly uneven political playing fields, domestic media biased towards the each regime in each country, weakened parliaments, and fraudulent elections, Ukraine and Russia became more authoritarian under Kuchma and Yelsin.[43] Notwithstanding these similarities, Kuchma met with resistance from a cohesive and organized protest movement which mobilized thousands of protestors on the eve of Ukraine's rigged 2004 presidential elections in which Kuchma's hand-picked successor, Viktor Yanukovich was declared to be the winner. Ultimately, the opposition leader, Viktor Yushchenko, prevailed in the revote of the 2005 presidential elections. In contrast to Kuchma's Ukraine, Yeltsin cleared the way for his chosen successor Putin by resigning the ahead of schedule in December 1999 in Russia. This made Putin acting president of Russia and facilitated Putin's victory in the 2000 presidential elections.

The moments of transition of power in both countries provide interesting focal points and illuminate how Ukrainian and Russian regime paths began to diverge. The incoming president of Ukraine, Yushchenko, put an end to the authoritarian rule, while his counterpart in Russia, Putin, launched to consolidate authoritarian rule. Down but not out, Yanukovich captured the prime ministership after the parliamentary elections of 2006 –

[42] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, pp. 186-97, 213-220; Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 57-63, pp. 146-9.
[43] On the definition of competitive authoritarianism, see, Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, pp. 5-12.

even it was for a short period. By using illicit practices, Yanukovich was also able to garner enough votes to amend the Ukrainian constitution unilaterally under Yushchenko's presidency.[44] More critically, Yanukovich regained the pinnacle of power in Ukraine by defeating former revolutionary Yuliia Timoshenko in the 2010 presidential elections, and re-embarked upon an authoritarian path immediately thereafter. During the same time frame, Putin's hold on power in Russia tightened. United Russia, pro-Putin party, gained controlled over Russia's legislature, by wining 222 seats in the 2003 parliamentary elections, effectively spelling an end to legislative challenges by opposition political parties. Putin further exercised de facto control over Russia's judiciary, foreclosing the possibility that political opponents could ever mount any major challenges to his regime. Contemporaneously, regime intimidation of various oligarchs produced another desired outcome: economic support for opposition protests evaporated. New amendments to electoral laws also placed large obstacles in the paths of regime outsiders. In 2008, Putin hence succeeded to transfer power to his close associate Dmitrii Medvedev, while he himself remained to lead politics as Russia's prime minister.

As in Russia under Putin and Medvedev, Yanukovich in Ukraine undermined the independence of the parliament and the judiciary. The Party of Regions' control of the parliament unquestionably abetted the rise of Yanukovich's authoritarian rule. Similarly, Yanukovich's increasing control over judiciary enabled him to prosecute his main rivals and regime dissenters. Lastly, Yanukovich's close relations with various oligarchs helped to cement his authoritarian rule. Thus, both Ukraine under Yanukovich and Russia under Putin and his chosen successor Dmitry Medvedev lacked an even playing field,

[44] Ibid., pp. 72-8.

independent media, and clean elections. Regime dissenters in both countries were nevertheless able to mouth severe challenges in the early 2010s. Russian incumbents successfully thwarted the opposition movements of 2011-12 while Yanukovich once again fell from power in 2014 following a wave of protests.

Thus, Russia and Ukraine differed greatly on transitional outcomes between each other, simultaneously highlighting the key variables of my study over the relevant time frame analyzed. This provides leverage for assessing the impact of national identity and state (de)concentration of economic resources on regime outcomes in the post-communist era. In other words, the cases of Russia and Ukraine allow me to test my hypothesis that a people's acceptance of national identity evoked by regime and a state's extensive control over wealth contributes to the survival of authoritarian rules. In turn, when potential opposition has sufficient access to economic resources, and espouses a competing notion of national identity among its putative members, a greater chance for the fall of authoritarian regime exists.

Theoretical Implications

This study aims to provide a theoretical framework, reinforced by empirically convincing evidence, as to why similar authoritarian regimes experienced divergent outcomes in the post-Soviet era. My analysis links ideational frames of authoritarian rule and those of its opponents with the material basis of support that each is able to garner in order to shed light on the differing transitional paths of Ukraine and Russia. In other words, it looks simultaneously at the symbolic politics of national identity and the economic

underpinning of popular support garnered by authoritarian regime and opposition movement.

My analysis first shows that appeals to a popular national identity can prove decisive in shaping regime paths for autocrats and opposition movements alike. Admittedly, most scholars in comparative politics to date placed less emphasis on the role national identity plays in molding various regime outcomes in post-Soviet states. There have been only a few book-length studies that systematically examine the symbolic politics of national identity and its effect upon transitional paths of post-Soviet states. Importantly however, these works often focused on the ways in which structural splits in national identity led to popular protests. My work stands on the shoulders of previous work done in this area, and it further seeks to demonstrate that even in the absence of structurally shaped identity choices, internal disagreements about national identity content evoked by an incumbent regime may catalyze support in favor of potential opposition forces. By discretely focusing on contestation over national identity content – in a way that is not only confined to structural splits in a titular group, – this framework thus has the potential to compare a relatively larger number of cases in accounting for authoritarian outcomes.

Second, my work highlights the role that a state's degree of control of wealth plays in overall authoritarian regime stability. Along with previous studies, my findings show that a broader concentration of economic resources in the hands of an autocrat makes it more difficult for opposition movements to garner popular support and stimulate protests. Furthermore, the cases discussed in this study demonstrate, an incumbent autocrat's control of economic resources explain diverging regime outcomes more fully than in either the degree of institutionalization of an incumbent party or the coercive capacity of

an incumbent autocrat's regime. Indeed, this work shows that a less-tightly state-controlled economy can provide potential opposition with an opportunity to defeat autocratic regimes – when they also successfully appeal to nationalist sentiments – even when incumbents possess a well-disciplined party organization and/or coercive capacity. In contrast, where regimes lack great organizational capacity, autocrats may stay in power depending on the degree of state's control of economic resources.

By accounting for ideational and material basis of mobilizational support both for autocrats and their opponents simultaneously, my work overall brings a new perspective to assess the survival and fall of authoritarian regimes in the post-communist period. At the same time, the comparison of Russia and Ukraine within this framework prompts broader theoretical implications for the literature on identity and social mobilization. First, my work agrees that earlier institutions and policies matter by making a set of identity repertoires available to both regime elites and opposition forces to draw on in their efforts to legitimize their demands – even though those policies and institutions no longer exist.[45] Second, expected economic benefits are not the only factor shaping masses and elites' decision to partake in popular protests. Indeed, their mobilizational preferences

[45] See, Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 51 (2), pp. 273-86.
Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics*, ed. by Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen and Frank Longstreth, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 1-33; Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 2, 1999, pp. 369-404; Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, "Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science," in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, ed. by Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Miller, New York and London: W.W. Norton &Company, 2002, pp. 693-721. B. Guy Peters, *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism,'* 2nd ed., New York: Continuum, 2005.

are also an effect of their identity choices.[46] Third, national identities are not substantial entities, but rather constructed through the processes of social negotiation.[47]

Observational Implications

This work is comprised of an in-depth analysis of Russia and Ukraine to describe the causal mechanisms of transition outcomes in the post-Communist era. My analysis traces the processes through which economic dispersion and national identity may affect authoritarian regime trajectories in these two countries. While describing the causal processes in Russia and Ukraine, I relied on numerous of journal articles, book chapters, and books; reviewed a number of local press sources, published surveys, and statistical data for the periods of interest; analyzed dozens of videos from protest scenes on Youtube; and transcribed the speeches of leaders during both opposition and pro-government rallies, interviews, and official documents. In addition, I incorporated the findings of my own fieldwork – carried out between July and December of 2015 in Moscow and Kyiv and between mid-June and mid-July of 2017 in Kyiv. During this time, I conducted sixty-two in-depth interviews and several follow-up interviews with political activists, journalists, politicians, and ordinary protest participants in Russia and Ukraine. These interviews introduced a variety of issues that I may not capture otherwise, and consequently enriched the theoretical framework and empirical findings of this work.

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[46] Peter A. Hall, "Historical Institutionalism in Rationalist and Sociological Perspective," in *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*, ed. by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 204-225; Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, eds. *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991; Thomas A. Koelbe, "The New Institutionalism in Political Science and Sociology," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 27(2), Jan. 1995, pp. 231-243; Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism," *Political Studies*, XLIV, 1996, pp. 936-957.

[47] See Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups,* and *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

I drew on a set of strategies to assess the accuracy of hypotheses. My framework - laid out above - suggests that authoritarian breakdown may result from the regime's failure to popularize its choice of national identity and control economic resources. Thus, I shall exhibit evidence to illustrate that the opposition successful engagement in the symbolic politics of national identity and its access to economic resources prompted the fall of authoritarian incumbents in Ukraine. Similarly, I shall demonstrate that the regime's dominance over national identity and/or its retention of control over economy and its led to the survival of authoritarian rule in Russia. Thus, empirical evidence shall illustrate that when the factors precipitating the fall of authoritarian rule are harnessed by the regime, the rise of authoritarian regimes is the likely outcome. The lack of such evidence, on the other hand, would show that alternative variables affected transition from and back to authoritarian rule.

Thus, broad disagreements over national identity evoked by an incumbent regime should factor in when explaining the cause of authoritarian breakdowns. Where opposition movements achieved the overthrow of an authoritarian regime, I shall find evidence of its engagement in symbolic politics to mobilize a competing conception of national identity. Indeed, public surveys may reveal the strength of potential opposition in relation to its cultivation of splits in national identity. By charting the rise of anti-regime movements simultaneously with growing divisions over national identity content, I may demonstrate the critical role identity plays in the fall of authoritarian regimes. However, my hypothesis would again prove incorrect if available evidence made it apparent that ousted incumbents did not fall in large part due to competition between differing national identity choices. In turn, where incumbent forces maintained their rule,

a high level of national acceptance of a regime's sponsored national identity (or a lack of a serious competing vision of national identity) would reinforce my hypothesis.

As I make an explicit claim that the fragmented economy allowed both the political elite and the masses to make rather ideational decisions, autocrats' weakness in controlling economic resources should therefore be empirically demonstrable in each case of regime collapse. If autocrats defeated opposition movement – which successfully galvanized support based on an alternative national identity content – despite a high level of economic dispersion, it would suggest that my argument does not hold water. In contrast, where autocratic incumbents maintained their rule or transferred power to their anointed successor, the appearance of the state's considerable control of wealth will likewise buttress the validity of this model. On the other hand, my hypothesis would prove incorrect if incumbent autocrats defeated opposition movements – namely those which successfully galvanized support based on a notion of national identity - in spite of a high level of economic dispersion as well.

All in all, neither opposition mobilization of a competing conception of national identity nor its access to economic sources may alone explain the fall of authoritarian regimes. Only when an incumbent force loses its monopoly over national identity choices, along with the broad control over economic resources, then there is a real chance for opposition movements to bring down an authoritarian regime. Moreover, when an authoritarian regime monopolizes national identity discourse and retains its control over economic resources, the authoritarian survival is the likely outcome.

Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter I presented above develops the theoretical framework, questions, and case selection that are at the center of the project. Chapter II provides an account of Soviet system of nationality policies to shed light on political elites' endeavors to (re)invent a national identity in contemporary Ukraine and Russia, while not a priori postulating the acceptance of imposed national identities among masses. Chapter III and IV present a detailed analysis of regime trajectories in Russia (1992-2000) and Ukraine (1992-2004), respectively. Process-tracing provides leverage for assessing the impact of national identity and state (de)concentration of economic resources on regime outcomes in each case. Chapter V and VI take off from the point when the two similarly authoritarian regimes experienced divergent paths, and afterwards assess the role played by the key variables of this study in the fall and survival of authoritarian incumbents with respect to challenges mounted by opposition forces in Russia (2000-2012) and Ukraine (2004-2014). Chapter VI summarizes the research findings and discusses the broader implications in analyzing transitions from authoritarian regimes.

CHAPTER II: THE LEGACY OF SOVIET NATIONALITY POLICIES

In many cases of post-Soviet regime transition, the process by which autocrats acquire, retain and lose power has been connected to their ability to control the discourse of national identity. However, scholars of social sciences more often treated "nation" and "identity" in substantialist and essentialist terms. In the words of Brubaker, "[these terms] are used *analytically* … as they are used in *practice*, in an implicitly or explicitly reifying manner, in a manner that implies or asserts that 'nations,' 'races,' and 'identities' 'exist' as substantial entities and that people 'have' a 'nationality,' a 'race,' an 'identity.'"[48] Instead, Brubaker proposes to study national identity both from above and from below:

> From above, we can focus on the ways in which [identity] categories are proposed, propagated, imposed, institutionalized, discursively articulated, organizationally entrenched, and generally embedded in multifarious forms of 'governmentality.' From below, we can study the 'micropolitics' of categories, the ways in which the categorized appropriate, internalize, subvert, evade, or transform the categories that are imposed on them.[49]

Through posing the question of "how people – and organizations – *do things* with categories," this approach overcomes the risk of "conflating a system of [institutionalized] *identification* or *categorization* with its presumed result, *identity*."[50] Indeed, official identity forms may not lie in everyday experiences of the people that they are designated to.

Along these lines, an account of the Soviet system of nationality policies shall not *a priori* postulate its outcomes as the acceptance of imposed national identities among

[48] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups,* p. 32-3. Italics belong to the author of this study.
[49] Ibid., p. 13.
[50] Ibid., p. 13-4, and p. 53.

masses. Nor shall researchers dismiss the part that Soviet institutional design and its practices played in the elites' endeavors to invent a national identity in contemporary Ukraine and Russia. The Soviet regime's nationality policies "[made] certain categories readily and legitimately available for the representation of social reality, the framing of political claims, and the organization of political action"[51] to political entrepreneurs in the post-Communist period. Therefore, elite circles appealed to the Soviet past in rediscovering and construing symbols, memories, and traditions in developing narratives of a nation. However, this does not entail that such policies and narratives have a major impact on "framing perception, orienting action, and shaping self understanding in everyday life."[52] As Smith notes, "[f]or its [nationalism] appeal necessarily depends on the resonance of the popular traditions, values, memories, myths and symbols that nationalists 'rediscover' and adapt for novel political ends."[53]

The story of the blossoming of national identities in the Soviet Union begins with the adoption of *federalism* and *indigenization* (korenizatsiia) at the center of its nationalities policy. Speaking about the Soviet regime, Terry Martin remarks that

> Russia's new revolutionary government was the first of the old European multiethnic states to confront the rising tide of nationalism and respond by systematically promoting the national consciousness of its ethnic minorities and by establishing them many of the characteristic institutional forms of the nation-state … Nothing comparable to it had been attempted before, and, with possible exception of India, no multi-ethnic state has subsequently matched the scope of Soviet affirmative action.[54]

[51] Ibid., p. 54.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach*, Routledge: London and New York, 2009, p. 59.
[54] Terry Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire: The Soviet Union as the Highest Form of Imperialism," in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, ed. by Ronald G. Sunny and Terry Martin, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 67.

However "if most socialists agree that federalism was a 'philistine ideal,' and that 'national culture' was a bourgeois fiction, and that assimilation was a progressive process," why did the Bolsheviks adopt such practices?[55] The answer to this question lies in their encounter with nationalism in the years of the Revolution and the Civil War, according to many scholars.[56] The early Bolsheviks subscribed to the Wilsonian principle of self-determination in order to mobilize ethnic support for their revolutionary cause. As Martin indicates, the mobilizing force of nationalism – particularly among counter-revolutionaries – took Lenin by surprise. Lenin reasoned that the arousal of nationalism was necessarily a consequence of the distrust that the oppressed nations had towards the oppressor nation – in other words, Tsarist Russia. Therefore, the only way to ease it was to acknowledge the right to self-determination.[57]

Moreover, for class identity to emerge as salient in society, Lenin argued, national identity had to be reconciled with. Appeals to nationalist sentiments were an effective source of mobilization in the revolutionary process. This, the Bolsheviks concluded, may trigger an "above -class alliance" and result in losing the support of the people.[58] Ironically enough, Yuri Slezkine remarks that "[t]hey [the socialists] needed native languages, native subjects and native teachers … in order to 'polemicize with their own bourgeoisie, to spread anticlerical and anti-bourgeois ideas among their own peasantry …' and to banish the virus of nationalism from their proletarian disciples."[59] Thus, the

[55] Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review*, Vol.53 (2), Summer 1994, p. 417.
[56] Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire," Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment;" Ronald G. Sunny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993, particularly Chapter III, pp. 84-127.
[57] Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire," p. 68, 71.
[58] Ibid., pp. 69-70.
[59] Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment," p. 418.

early Soviet leaders agreed that the forms of nationhood may be granted to the people to weaken the appeal of nationalism. In this vein, the development of national identity was considered as an inevitable path to galvanize support for socialism. At the same time, the "national phase" became associated with the modernization of the backward nationalities under socialism.[60]

Next, the Soviet nationality policies espoused "an idea of nation fixed to territory."[61] In this way, the Soviet system designated territories to the "core" nationalities; fifteen Union republics and various numbers of autonomous republics, oblasts, and okrugs were established. Simultaneously, indigenization was encouraged in each national territory. The language of the core nation was elevated to the status of the official state language. National intelligentsia were created and exclusively appointed to privileged positions in state institutions. The public displays of national markers (folklore, poetry, museums, customs etc.) were supported.[62] After all, Union republics – aside from the Russian Republic – particularly resembled nation-states: "[C]onstitutions, flags, anthems, state languages, communist parties, council of ministers …, parliaments, radio and television channels broadcasting in national languages, unions of writers, moviemakers, painters, and composers, national libraries, museums of national history, and Academies of Sciences."[63]

All of this however did not entail either the right to self-determination or efficient political and economic autonomy to non-Russian nationalities in practice. As Slezkine

[60] Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire," p. 70-1. Also, see, Steven Sabol, "The Creation of Soviet Central Asia: the 1924 national delimitation," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 14 (2), 1995, pp. 225-241.
[61] Sunny, *The Revenge of the Past*, p. 110.
[62] Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire," p. 73-5.
[63] Brundy and Finkel, "Why Ukraine is not Russia," p.817.

notes, "[n]ational rights were matters of cultural 'form' as distinct from political and economic 'content;' but ultimately all form derived from content and it was up to party leaders in Moscow to decide where the line should be drawn in each case."[64] Therefore, the indigenous cadre – which owed its position to the Soviet system – were to exercise Moscow's political control over their fellows and impede the emergence of ethnic mobilization by alternative leaders.[65] All in all, the Soviet nationality policies meant,

> [F]irst to, harness, contain, channel, and control the potentially disruptive political expression of nationality by creating national-territorial administrative structures and by cultivating, co-opting, and (when they threatened to get out of line) repressing national elites; and second, to drain nationality of its content even while legitimating it as a form, and thereby to promote the long-term withering away of nationality as a vital component of social life.[66]

While the Soviet regime intended to dissolve the essence of nationhood, its institutions and practices rather promoted "new ethnic assertiveness."[67] This was partly an outcome of Moscow's efforts to reconcile with national elites in the post-Stalinist period. First, Khrushchev pruned the regime's repressive apparatus. Second, Brezhnev's policy of "respect for cadres" delegated numerous administrative tasks to national cadres, lengthened the term of appointment of national elites, and seconded the recruitment of the Party's leadership positions from titular elites. Finally, national elites were able to grab more political autonomy, while fearing less about potential retaliation from the center. National cadres began to formulate and pursue the interests of their communities.

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[64] Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment," p. 434.
[65] Philip G. Roeder, "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization," *World Politics*, Vol. 43 (2), Jan. 19991, pp. 203-7.
[66] Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 25. Also, see, Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union: communism and nationalism, 1917-1923*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997.
[67] Roeder, "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization."

The native leaders gained broader institutional and popular support for their agendas, which enabled them to negotiate with Moscow for channeling further resources to national territories.[68]

In this vein, as Roeder underlines, "[t]he very success of previous affirmative action policies created a large group [of indigenous professional elite and intelligentsia] with the skills to constitute themselves as independent political entrepreneurs."[69] Given the Soviet regime's policy to train and promote titular elites to invent national cultures, it can hardly be a surprise that the center's declining ability to compensate natives resulted in the loss of their loyalty for Moscow. In the end, as Slezkine aptly puts, "national form seemed to have become the content and … nationalism did not seem to have any content other than the cult of form."[70] Admittedly, there was nothing left but the narratives of nationhood that were invented by the regime-sponsored indigenous elites.

Similarly, the Soviet practice which assigned each person a distinct ethnic identity "at birth on the basis of descent, registered in personal identity documents, recorded in bureaucratic encounters, and used to control the higher education and employment"[71] contributed to the development of national consciousness. As the Soviets were unable to create the socialist content, ethnicity became a predominant marker of "social vision and division."[72]

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[68] Ibid., pp. 212-3; Jerry F Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union is Governed*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979, pp. 480-518; Joel C. Moses, *Regional Party Leadership and Policy-Making in the USSR*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974, pp. 3-21, and "Regionalism in Soviet Politics: Continuity as a Source of Change, 1953-1982," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 37 (2), 1985, pp. 184-211.
[69] Roeder, "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization," p. 213.
[70] Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment," p. 451.
[71] Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, p. 53; also, see, Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*," pp. 30-2.
[72] Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*," p. 21.

As a result, the very Soviet nationality policies instigated the rise of nation and nationalism in autonomous homelands. Federal structures secured the mobilizational resources for the national communities, and indigenization created a group of skillful political entrepreneurs with their own ethnic agendas.[73] The institutionalization of individual ethnic identity cemented further nationhood as "a central organizing principle," upon which native elites later based their political claims.[74]

Russians and Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR)

From the early days of the Bolshevik revolution onwards, the status of Russian nation within the Soviet Union had remained unsolved. Russia's imperial past marked it as an oppressor nation to be reconciled within the Soviet Union.

In imperial Russia, emperors and intellectuals promoted the idea of Russian empire as a Russian nation-state within ever-expanding territories – particularly throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[75] While the Russian entity was envisioned as an empire earliest under the rule of Peter the Great, its name acknowledged the multi-ethnic character of its people, *Rossiiskaia imperiia* – instead of *Russkaia* which refers to ethnic Russians. However, this did not mean to change the ultimate purpose of the empire, which was to assimilate non-Russian people within its bureaucratic practices. At the same time, political elites encouraged the Russian subjects to take pride in the territorial vastness of empire and its ethnic and cultural diversity.[76] This effort – namely, state patriotism – was

[73] Roeder, "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization;" Valeri Bunce, *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State,* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999; Dmitry P. Gorenburg, *Minority Ethnic Mobilization in the Russian Federation*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
[74] Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*," p. 26, fn. 8.
[75] Vera Tolz, *Inventing the Nation: Russia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
[76] Ibid., pp. 155-91.

reinforced during the reign of Catherine the Great; particularly because the empire upheld the view that the territorial expansion of the state was indeed a process of "the gathering of indigenous Russian lands."[77] However, Vera Tolz remarks that the "territorial nationalism" that envisioned the entire empire as a Russian nation-state had meant little for the ordinary people by the time of the Bolshevik revolution.[78]

Nicholas I retained the policy of his predecessors to build a unitary state within newly annexed lands. Most importantly, Nicholas' "official nationality policy" espoused a new vision of nationhood through the identification with Orthodoxy and Monarchy. As Ronald Sunny points out, Russian political elite and intellectuals failed to mold a notion of Russianness, distinct from both the ethnicity and the imperial state.[79] Instead, the "official nationality policy" conflated Russian nation and state into one. Thus, "[n]otions of nation dissolved into religion and the state, and did not take on a powerful presence as a community separate from the state or the orthodox community."[80] In the following decades this policy was combined with the cultural Russification of non-Russian subjects for the purpose of preserving the unity of the empire, which eventually precipitated nationalist awakening among them.[81]

In most respects, it is this rising nationalism of non-Russian people within the empire throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century compelled Bolsheviks to formulate a nationality policy that would mitigate Russians' past as the oppressor nation. Under the Soviet rule, "Russians, as 'the former great power nationality,' thus were to be

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[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., p. 181.
[79] Ronald G. Sunny, "The Empire Strikes Out: Imperial Russia, 'National' Identity, and Theories of Empire," in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, ed. by Ronald G. Sunny and Terry Martin, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 23-67.
[80] Ibid., p. 44.
[81] Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union: communism and nationalism, 1917-1923*, pp. 6-7.

treated differently than the 'formerly oppressed' nationalities."[82] Consequently, Russian were denied nationhood privileges, which were guaranteed to other nationalities.[83] RSFSR encompassed only remaining territories after non-Russian republics were created. In many ways, its institutions were conflated with those of the Union. According to Martin, Stalin's concern that a separate Russian republic may challenge the authority of All-Union institutions, was a major source of this policy.[84] Thus, the RSFSR lacked its own Communist Party, Academy of Sciences, and KGB. However, Union institutions, in practice, were Russian institutions. As Alexander Motyl notes, "[t]he distribution of authority … has traditionally been … in the Russians' favor, especially in central institutions such as the Politburo, the Secretariat, the Central Committee and its apparatus, ministries of all-Union importance, second secretaryship of republican parties."[85]

Similarly, although Russian culture was not celebrated in the wake of affirmative action policies as it represented the culture of an oppressor nation, its language remained the lingua franca of all-Union. Yet Soviet leadership began to reconcile with Russians as early as the 1930s, "both due to the unacceptably high levels of Russian resentment it [the affirmative action] had provoked and because it had failed to disarm ethnic conflict and non-Russian nationalism."[86] In the language of Slezkine, "the Party began to endow Russians with a national past, national language and an increasingly familiar iconography, headed principally by Alexander Pushkin – progressive and 'freedom-

[82] Terry Martin, "The Russification of the RSFSR," *Cahiers du Monde russe*, Vol. 39(1/2), Jan.-Jun. 1998, p. 100.
[83] Ibid., p. 99.
[84] Ibid., p. 101.
The Soviet Union eventually witnessed a marking contestation for power between Gorbachev, the leader of the Union, and Yeltsin, the leader of RSFSR, as envisaged by Stalin.
[85] Alexander J. Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel: State, Ethnicity, and Stability in the USSR*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987, p. 41.
[86] Martin, "The Russification of the RSFSR," p.113.

loving' to be sure, but clearly celebrated as a great Russian, not a great revolutionary."[87] As Soviet historiography and textbooks rehabilitated Russian past, Soviet culture began to seem more Russian.[88] Ultimately, the retrieve of Russian culture on one hand, and institutional overlap between RSFSR and all-Union on the other hand, promoted Russians' identification with the entire Soviet Union.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Soviet leaders also launched a campaign to espouse a notion of *Soviet people* united by Russian culture. While the Communist Party was seeking to "draw [nationalities] closer" to endorse the "merger of nationalities" of the Soviet Union, Russian and non-Russian cultural elites were not enchanted with the idea of Soviet people.[89] As for Russians, Yitzhak Brundy remarks, the notion of Soviet people "was too abstract and too unrelated to their own life experiences. It glorified modernization while ignoring the problems that accompanied the transition from a rural way of life to that of an urban, industrial society."[90] Additionally, with the de-Stalinization process, various notions of Russian nationalism rejuvenated among intellectuals. The growing group of Russian nationalists opposed the concept of Soviet people and above all the regime in many ways. In particular, Russian nationalists argued that the Soviet economic modernization was attained at the expense of the Russians and Sovietization was downgrading Russian culture.[91] By contrast, Motyl's research indicates that Russians had the larger share of ethnic resources within the Soviet Union – including "demographic size, economic modernization (size of working class), social development

[87] Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment," p. 443.
[88] Tolz, *Inventing the Nation: Russia*, p. 184-5.
[89] Yitzhak M. Brundy, *Reinventing Russia: Russian Nationalism and the Soviet State, 1953-1991*, Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998, p. 43.
[90] Ibid.
[91] See, Brundy, *Reinventing Russia*; Tolz, *Inventing the Nation: Russia*, pp. 203-8.

(number of urban dwellers), cultural vitality (number of scientific works as a substitute for size of intelligentsia), communication capacity (number of books published), and organization capacity (number of sociopolitical activists or organizations)."[92] As Motyl puts it, "the Russians [were] hegemonic societally."[93]

Earlier Russian nationalism nonetheless remained confined to elite circles and resonated little with mass' experiences. Indeed, surveys – conducted in the late 1970s and the early 1980s – indicated that the majority of Russians viewed the entire Soviet Union as their own homeland.[94] However, the political and economic circumstances significantly changed by the late 1980s. Russians began to harbor doubts about the wisdom of preserving a multinational state. The self-image of Russians bearing the economic burden of the Union, along with the rising unrest of non-Russians, set Russian history in a distinct path. Thus, in the words of Zaslavsky, "for the first time, the Russian popular response to the growing assertiveness of non-Russians did not favor imperialism and chauvinism but rather the emergence of a genuine Russian nationalism that aspired the creation of a national Russian state."[95]

In this respect, Boris Yeltsin and his allies placed the demand for Russian sovereignty in the center of their political agenda, while negotiating with Gorbachev and the Soviet administration in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the same time, the creation of Russia's Congress of People's Deputies, along with Yeltsin's election as chairperson,

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[92] Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel*, p.43.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Leokadia Drobizheva, "Perestroika and the Ethnic Consciousness of Russians," in *From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics*, ed. by Gail W. Lapidus, Victor Zaslavsky, and Philip Goldman, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 101.
[95] Victor Zaslavsky, "The Evolution of Separatism in Soviet Society under Gorbachev," in *From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics*, ed. by Gail W. Lapidus, Victor Zaslavsky, and Philip Goldman, pp. 83-5.

provided the Russian opposition with a platform to pursue their demand for national sovereignty. It is also worthy to note that democrats made up only one fifth of the Congress, which had overall 1500 members. The equal number of the deputies were communists and nationalists, while the rest gravitated towards the left of the political spectrum over time.[96]

Subsequently, Russian deputies voted in favor of making Russian Federation a sovereign state on July 1990. In response to the growing calls for independence in Russia and other Soviet states, Gorbachev called for a referendum to save the Union from dissolution. In March 1991, 71 percent of RSFSR population indeed agreed to preserve the Soviet Union, while 26 percent opposed it. The Russian referendum also included a question about the formation of the presidential office, which majority of the voters supported. In the words of Michael McFaul, "the mixed result of the March 1991 referenda allowed both sides to claim victory but also underscored the fact that neither side had an overwhelming popular mandate."[97] Thus, Gorbachev and Yeltsin, along with other leaders, returned to negotiate a deal which envisaged ultimately broader sovereignty for republics. At the same time, Yeltsin became the first president of Russia in June 1991 by receiving around 58 percent of the popular vote. In the end, the August 1991 putsch staged by the Soviet hard-liners changed the course of the Soviet history irrevocably, ceasing the plans for preserving the Union in any other form. Meanwhile, Yeltsin's resistance efforts against the putschist gained him further popularity in Russia. In December 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved and Russia became an independent state.

[96] Leon Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*," New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, p. 495.
[97] Michael McFaul, *Russia's Finished Revolution: Political Change from Gorbachev to Putin*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001, p. 115.

Ukrainians and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR)

As has been noted by Andrew Wilson, "the … borders of the independent Ukrainian state, inherited from the Ukrainian SSR as defined by Stalin's wartime conquests, corresponded more closely to Ukrainian ethno – linguistic territory than at any time in the modern era."[98] In fact, until after the Second World War, when the western territories of Ukraine were entirely incorporated into the Soviet Union, Ukrainian lands were mostly divided and under the rule of different empires and later states. An independent Ukraine briefly existed only after the mid-1600s and during and after the First World War.[99]

The territories of Ukraine first partitioned on the eve of the Mongol invasion (1240) and then under the weakened Cossacks rule (1667), later in the late eighteenth century, and finally in 1920-21 after the Civil War.[100] Thus, Ukraine's western territories, Galicia, Transcarpathia and Bukovyna, remained under the Habsburg rule over a century. After the demise of Habsburg Empire in the First World War, Galicia, Transcarpathia and Bukovyna were subsumed into Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, respectively.

At the same time, the Russian Empire gained the control of Ukrainian territories of the Right Bank of the Dnieper River and Volhynia following the partitions of Poland in the second half of the eighteenth century. While the Right Bank remained successively under the rule of Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, Volhynia was seized by Poland in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution. Along with the territories of Galicia,

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[98] Andrew Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s: A Minority Faith*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 1.
[99] Ibid., pp. 1-26.
[100] Ibid. Also, for a detailed study on this issue, see, Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, 2nd ed., New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2002.

Transcarpathia and Bukovyna, Volhynia was incorporated into the Soviet Union throughout the Second World War.

However, the Left Bank of the Dnieper River was absorbed into the Russian Empire from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, and next became a part of the Soviet Union in 1922. Similarly, the southern territories of Ukraine came steadily under the rule of Russian Empire since the late eighteenth century, while the Ottoman Empire was losing its control across the Black Sea. The region also saw rapid industrialization and migration in the nineteenth century under the Russian rule.[101]

Most critically, the divergent historical paths of the Ukrainian territories had a major impact on the development of the national consciousness. In many ways, the Ukrainian territories under the Habsburg rule were better situated to preserve a distinct sense of identity. First, as Keith Darden and Anna M. Grzymala-Busse highlight, promotion of the mass schooling by the Austrian rule significantly contributed to raising national awareness in Galicia. Since the Habsburg Empire endorsed a separate sense of Ukrainian identity in Galicia to counterweight Poles and Russians, its curriculum "had national content and stressed the cultivation of distinct identities."[102] Second, the Austrian rule granted equal status to the Uniate Church (in other words, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church) with the Roman Catholic Church. This, in the words of Wilson, provided "the

[101] For the history of Ukraine's divided territories, see, Sarah Birch, "Interpreting the Regional Effect in Ukrainian Politics," *East-Asia Studies*, Vol. 52(6), 2000, pp. 1017-41; George O. Liber, "Imagining Ukraine: Regional Differences and the Emergence of an Integrated State Identity, 1926-1994," *Nations and Nationalism,* Vol. 4 (2), 1998, pp. 187-206; Valeri Khmelko and Andrew Wilson, "Regionalism and Ethnic and Linguistic Cleavages in Ukraine," in *Contemporary Ukraine: Dynamics of Post-Soviet Transformation,* ed. by Taras Kuzio, New York: Routledge, 2015, pp. 60-81; Grigory Nemiria, "Regionalism: An Underestimated Dimension of State-Building," in *Ukraine: The Search for a National Identity*, ed. by Sharon L. Wolchik and Volodymyr Zviglyanich, New York: Rowman&Littlefield Publisher, 2000, pp. 183-97.

[102] Keith Darden and Anna Mari Grzymala-Busse, "The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and The Communist Collapse," *World Politics*, Vol. 59 (1), October 2006, p. 95.

best means of preserving ... [Ukrainian/Ruthenian identity] from out-right Polonisation."[103] Arguably most importantly, the territories under the Habsburg rule, particularly in Galicia and Transcarpathia, were able to experience with elections, which in turn arouse Ukrainians' ethnic consciousness.[104] Ukrainians living in the western territories under the different states also continued to participate in elections during the interwar period. After all, these experiences of Ukrainian people were instrumental in the preservation of their identity and in the emergence of national-minded clergy and intellectuals under the Habsburg empire.[105]

On the contrary, even when the Russian Empire endorsed literacy in the Ukrainian territories, the language of the curriculum was Russian, and the content was drawn upon the unity of Orthodox and Rus.[106] Moreover, the use of Ukrainian language in public was restricted in the late nineteenth century over the territories under the Russian rule.[107] At the same time, as has been noted earlier, the beginning of industrialization had a profound impact on the composition of the population in the eastern and southern territories of Ukraine. Industrialization brought large numbers of Russians in, but did not affect so much Ukrainians. Therefore, the cities increasingly became populated by Russians – and thus, Russified, – while the land remained Ukrainian.[108] Indeed, Ukrainian peasants did not migrate into the urban industrial areas until the 1920s and 1930s.[109]

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[103] Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 103.
[104] Birch, "Interpreting the Regional Effect in Ukrainian Politics," pp. 1021-22.
[105] Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 103.
[106] Darden and Grzymala-Busse, "The Great Divide," p. 97.
[107] Ibid.
[108] George O. Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR 1923-34*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 11-5.
[109] George O. Liber, *Total Wars and the Making of Modern Ukraine, 1914-1954*, Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2016, pp. 125-8.

As a result of these experiences, Ukrainian population under the Russian Empire developed relatively late and weaker sense of ethnic identity in comparison to western Ukrainians. However, Sarah Birch indicates that by the time the Duma elections were held in 1917, "the process of political mobilization had advanced and ethnic Ukrainians had begun to articulate demands for regional autonomy."[110]

In this vein, the creation of the Ukrainian SSR in the early 1920s provided a vent for reconciliation of national sentiments. Although Soviet federalism did not in practice mean administrative decentralization – as laid out above, – Wilson remarks that "the territorialisation of Ukraine in the Ukrainian SSR, the existence of a Ukrainian 'parliament,' a Ukrainian cabinet of ministers, a Ukrainian version of the Soviet flag, even a separate Ukrainian membership of the United Nations, all provided important consolidation points for Ukrainian national identity."[111]

At the same time, the policy of korenizatsiia promoted the development of native cadres, and endorsed the Ukrainian language as well as its culture to achieve a dominant role in the republic. Thus, the party required the use of the Ukrainian language in the primary education and cultural institutions. It also expanded the linguistic Ukrainization to publishing, higher education, government bureaucracy, and economic institutions into the 1920s. Yet Martin notes that this policy, although it was generally backed by Ukrainians, was resisted by groups including Russian-speaking urban workers, Russians, Russified Ukrainians, government bureaucrats, and industrial managers.[112] Above all, the growing concern of Stalin that korenizatsiia was provoking Ukrainian nationalism was

[110] Birch, "Interpreting the Regional Effect in Ukrainian Politics," pp. 1023.
[111] Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 147.
[112] Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001, pp. 75-122.

the major source of its abrupt end by the early 1930s. The mass revolts of Ukrainian peasants about collectivization also contributed to this outcome. Ultimately, the end of korenizatsiia entailed purges of large numbers of Ukrainian nationalists and intellectuals throughout the 1930s.

On the other hand, the Ukrainian territories that were dispersed among Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania had a comparatively lenient situation for the organic development of Ukranian civil society and national identity. Indeed, Galicia under Polish rule was hotbed of Ukrainian nationalism in the interwar period. By the early 1930s, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), the largest ultra-nationalist group, was founded. In the words of Per Anders Rudling, "explicitly totalitarian, the movement embraced the *Fuhrerprinzip*, a cult of political violence, racism, and aggressive-anti Semitism."[113] In 1940, the organization split into two factions. While the relatively moderate nationalists led by Andrii Mel'nik formed the OUN-m, the radical nationalists under the leadership of Stepan Bandera created the OUN-b. During the Second World War, these movements supported the merging of dispersed armed groups into the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). Most importantly, the collaboration of the OUN and the UPA with Nazi Germany – and also, fighting the Soviet army – for the purpose of the establishment of an independent Ukrainian state is one of the most controversial and divisive elements in the history of Ukraine.[114] Ultimately, the incorporation of the western territories of Ukraine into the Soviet Union and the subsequent repression on the one

[113] Per Anders Rudling, "The Cult of Roman Shukhevych in Ukraine: Myth Making with Complications," *Fascism*: *Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies*, Vol. 5, 2016, p. 31.
[114] See also, Per Anders Rudling, *The OUN, the UPA, and the Holoccaust: A Study in the Manufacturing of Historical Myths*, Pittsburgh: The Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburg, 2011; David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine*, Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2007.

hand, and the internal disputes on the other hand, considerably weakened the OUN and the UPA by the mid-1950s.[115]

While all the historic Ukrainian territories were united for the first time in centuries under the Stalinist rule, modern boundaries of Ukraine were finalized with the transfer of Crimea in 1954. However, the distinct cultural development of Ukrainian territories continued to reflect their historical paths. By the late 1980s, 47.5 percent of pupils studied in Ukrainian language schools and 47 percent in the Russian language schools. In Galicia 90 percent of the schools offered education in Ukrainian language while in Donbas this number was less than 10 percent and in Crimea near zero.[116] Similarly, the 1960s dissident movement rooted in L'viv, although its center was in Kyiv in the late Soviet period; there were only a small number of dissidents in the urban cities of the southern and eastern Ukraine. While the dissident movement in the 1960s focused on economic well-being and cultural rights of the Ukrainians, the waves of repression over three decades plagued its activism.[117]

More importantly, when the Popular Movement of Ukraine (Rukh) came about after Gorbachev's reforms, it galvanized support largely in the western territories. Even when Rukh organized a human chain – up to a million people – as a symbol of national unity in the early days of 1990, it stretched from Kyiv to L'viv – but not further. In a similar vein, Rukh gained most of its 108 seats with votes mainly from the west of Ukraine – it swept almost all the seats in Galicia, performed well in Volhynia, Kyiv, and several urban

[115] Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s*, pp. 48-52.
[116] Dominique Arel, *Language and the Politics of Ethnicity: The Case of Ukraine*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign PhD, 1993, p. 160 and 178, **quoted in** Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 148.
[117] Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 153-6. Also, see, Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*, 190-8.

cities of central Ukraine, but had few seats in southern and eastern Ukraine – in the elections of March 1990 to Supreme Soviet. On the other hand, many Ukrainians continued to widely support the Communists. Of 450 seats in the parliament, 385 were won by the Communist Party. This number later came down to 238 because of defections.[118]

With the secessionist demands of the Baltic States and Russia's declaration of sovereignty, Rukh was noneteless able to openly call for Ukrainian independence in 1990. Yet 70.5 percent of Ukrainians agreed to the preservation of the Soviet Union as "a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics" in the Soviet referendum of March 1991. The support for the Union was particularly strong in the east and south of Ukraine.[119] By the end of 1991, a marked shift in the attitude of the population residing in these territories came about. Consequently, Ukrainian voters in the east and south showed high support for independence in the national referendum on December 1, 1991. After all, above 90 percent of the population voted for "yes," and thus Ukraine declared independence.[120] But, the split in national identity continued to manifest itself in post-Soviet Ukrainian politics.

[118] Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 161.
[119] Ibid., 165.
[120] Ibid., 169.

CHAPTER III: POST-SOVIET TRANSITION IN RUSSIA (1992-1999): THE RISE AND SURVIVAL OF AUTHORITARIANISM

After the defeat of the putschists in August 1991, Yeltsin became the leader of new Russia. Broad support of the people and the Congress provided Yeltsin as "a liberal and democrat"[1] with a historical opportunity to lead Russia's transformation from the Soviet Union.[2] Notwithstanding this, "the revolution was remarkable for its self-restrained."[3] First, the Congress members who were elected at the time of the Soviet Union remained to rule the country by the end of 1993. Second, Yeltsin and the legislative branch relegated the making of the constitution to second place. The lack of the rules designing the distribution of powers between the president and the legislative branch precipitated acute political crisis in the early years of the Russian Federation.

After Yeltsin forcibly dissolved the Congress and gained broad executive power at the expense of the Russian parliament in a referendum marred with irregularities, Russia derailed from the path of democratic development. In solidifying his authoritarian rule, Yeltsin relied on his associates from Sverdlovsk, where he was the first secretary of the Communist Party in 1976-1985,[4] and competing power groups instead of surrendering himself with a political party. While the president rewarded loyalty of his associates, he also did not shy away from playing his subordinates off against each other. In the second half of the 1990s, Russia's new group of businessmen rose to prominence in Yeltsin's camp. The group provided extensive financial assistance and media resources to Yeltsin

[1] Lilia Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia: Myths and Reality*, Washington, D.C: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999, p. 269.
[2] Michael McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution: Political Change from Gorbachev to Putin*, pp. 124-6.
[3] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 467.
[4] For Yeltsin's years in Sverdlovsk, see, Timothy J. Colton, *Yeltsin: A Life*, New York: Basic Books, 2008, pp. 79-105.

in the 1996 presidential elections, in return for larger gains in privatization deals. After defeating the Communist leader Gennadii Ziuganov in the presidential race, Yeltsin continued to meet serious challenges in the Duma. At the same time, Yeltsin's former associates formed a broad political alliance to oppose the Kremlin. Despite the growing resistance to his rule, Yeltsin eventually succeeded in installing his chosen successor Vladimir Putin.

Nevertheless, Yeltsin confronted substantial challenges in his efforts to ingrain an authoritarian rule throughout the 1990s. Although the president possessed some advantages, Russian opposition forces mounted serious threats to his rule. Unlike their counterparts in Ukraine, Russian opposition forces eventually failed to remove the authoritarian rule. Then, what explains Yeltsin's ability to maintain his authoritarian rule in the face of serious crisis? This part of the study suggests that Yeltsin was able to stay in office and eventually transfer his powers to Putin because Russian opposition forces either lacked the broad resources to compete with the Kremlin or failed to frame its struggle against the regime in national terms. Ultimately, the Russian opposition forces were not able to simultaneously raise sufficient public support and broad financial resources to defeat the regime, despite Yeltsin's declining popularity and his inability to cultivate a national idea distinct from the Soviet past.

The rest of this chapter provides a detailed explanation of Russia's post-communist transition under the Yeltsin rule in 1992-2000. At first, it traces the sources of political confrontation, which eventually led to the unlawful dissolution of the Congress, between Yeltsin and Russian deputies. Next, it analyzes the ways in which Yeltsin ingrained his

authoritarianism in Russia and the reasons for opposition forces' inability to oust the incumbent regime in the 1990s.

Russia's Transition to Uncertainty under Yeltsin in 1992-1994

After the political victory against the August putschists, Soviet institutions were peacefully liquidated in Russia. Yeltsin and the reformist camp received broad support from the people and the Congress to carry out the necessary political and economic reforms in transition from the Soviet system. In the aftermath of the August putsch, the legislature – which the law designated as the supreme authority of the Russian Federation – granted Yeltsin the power to lead the reform process by decree for one year.[5]

While Yeltsin decided not to undertake a large-scale revamp of institutions immediately, he directed his early efforts to rescue the Russian economy. In October 1991, Yeltsin and his advisers drafted an economic program which envisioned price liberalization, privatization, and stabilization.[6] Given the dramatic decline in Russia's national income and production,[7] the Congress overwhelmingly supported the proposed program of economic reform, with 876 to 16 votes in favor.[8] Yeltsin formed a new government and appointed Yegor Gaidar as deputy prime minister to lead the Russia's transition to market economy. In November 1991, the Russian government took full control of all the economic institutions and natural resources on its territory.[9] This was followed by price liberalization and privatization in 1992.

[5] Ibid., p. 495.
[6] *Rossiskaia Gazeta*, October 29, 1991 **cited in** Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 4th ed., New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 289.
[7] Ibid.
[8] *Radio Moscow World Service*, November 1, 1991, **cited in** Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 491.
[9] Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, p. 290.

With the beginning of the economic policies of shock therapy, the government swiftly lost the support of the legislative branch. In the ensuing months, many deputies, who were able to preserve their seats after Yeltsin decided not to hold a new parliamentary election, strongly opposed the measures presented by Gaidar and his team. These deputies instead called for "socially oriented market reforms." The disagreement about the economic policies further intensified by the lack of rules defining the authorities of the executive and legislative branches. In fact, a draft constitution written by democratic leader Oleg Rumiantsev was published in November 1990, with the endorsement of Yeltsin.[10] However, deputies put little effort to adopt it in the immediate post-Soviet era, arguably because it envisaged a strong presidency and called for the dissolution of the Congress. As a result, Yeltsin and his government faced increasing opposition from the legislature within months of the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

In the beginning of 1992, Yeltsin's presidency also began to meet challenges from public. While communists and nationalists held rallies initially to commemorate the Soviet Union on various occasions, these forces later came out to streets to protest Yeltsin's reforms.[11] In January and February, the number of opposition demonstrators ranged from 10,000 to 40,000.[12] Several protests also witnessed clashes with the security forces throughout the year. Moreover, there had been varied attempts made to unify communists and national-patriots within a political platform. In February 1992, the Congress of Civil and Patriotic Forces was held in Moscow. While the Congress came to

[10] See, Oleg Rumyantsev, "Russia's New Constitution," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2 (2), Spring 1991, pp. 35-46.
[11] McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, p. 176.
[12] By contrast, democrats were able to mobilize larger crowds comprising between 50,000 and 100,000 people in support of Yeltsin's policies. See, Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, p. 34.

little in the end, the participation of Vice President Alexandr Rutskoi revealed the growing disagreement within the Yeltsin administration.[13] In October 1992, the National Salvation Front was formed by communists, nationalists, and parliamentarians – some of whom were earlier Yeltsin's allies. The members of the Front were unified in their refusal of Yeltsin's presidency and his economic policies. In response to growing opposition from communists and national-patriots, Yeltsin issued a decree to "crack down all extremist groups that aim to destabilize the country."[14] However, the Front maintained its political activities after Yeltsin's decree, which "expos[ed] the weakness of the Russian president"[15] to repress the opposition groups.

After all, the most serious challenges Yeltsin and his administration met in 1992-93 sprang from the parliament. As noted earlier, the disagreement about the direction of economic policies, combined with elusive institutional boundaries between the presidency and the parliament, proved to be the main sources of contention in Russia's political scene. By the time of the Sixth Congress of People's Deputies in April 1992, the division between the Yeltsin administration and the legislature grew stronger. The speaker of the Supreme Soviet, Ruslan Khasbulatov, "encouraged deputies to exercise control over the actions of the government."[16] At the same time, the Vice President Rutskoi publicly opposed the economic policies of shock therapy. These two politicians were joined by communists and nationalists in the legislature. As a result of growing opposition to the government and Gaidar's reform, Yeltsin made concessions to the parliament by changing the composition of the government. While the Yeltsin

[13] Tatyana Yakhlava, "'White' Russia with a Streak of Black," *Moscow News*, February 12, 1992.
[14] "Get Tough Decree Targets Extremist Groups," *Moscow Times*, October 29, 1992.
[15] McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, p. 179.
[16] Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, p. 42.

government succeeded in staying in power in the Sixth Congress, the parliament continued to resist Gaidar's program. When Yeltsin appointed Viktor Chernomyrdin, the former head of Gazprom, as prime minister at the Seventh Congress in December 1992, Gaidar exited from the government, which delivered a major blow to Russia's shock therapy.[17] In his search for new allies, Yeltsin also came closer to the centrist Civic Union, composed of industrialists and state enterprise managers.[18]

In this respect, the immediate post-Soviet era reveals that the Russian legislature was able to form a meaningful opposition to the regime and force Yeltsin to make concessions, despite the fact that the distribution of powers greatly favored the president. Ultimately, many deputies came to agree that Yeltsin's executive powers should be curbed to elevate the legislative branch. With the initiation of 290 deputies closely linked to the National Salvation Front and the endorsement of Khasbulatov, the Congress passed several amendments to the constitution in December 1992.[19] These amendments revoked the presidential rule in favor of the parliamentary system. As a response, Yeltsin threatened to call for a national referendum to decide whether the president or the Congress should have the power to lead the country. With the mediation of the head of the Constitutional Court, Valerii Zorkin, Yeltsin and Khasbulatov eventually agreed to hold a national referendum in April 1993 on the division of powers between the president and the legislature and to halt the changes to the constitution made at the Seventh Congress.[20]

[17] "If Nothing Else, Pace of Reform Should Lessen," *Moscow Times*, December 16, 1992.
[18] Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, p. 56.
[19] Michael Urban, Vyacheslav Igrunov, and Sergei Mitrokhin, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 279.
[20] Ibid., p. 280.

Nonetheless, the compromise reached between Yeltsin and Khasbulatov did not last long, as the two leaders and their supporters failed to agree on the referendum questions. Subsequently, the Congress at its Eight Assembly in March 1993 voted in favor for revoking Yeltsin's right to rule by decree, making the government accountable to the legislature, and giving the government the right to introduce legislation.[21] Yeltsin reacted to these resolutions by announcing his decision to bypass the parliament and impose a state of emergency in the country. However, Yeltsin's decision to impose special rule was even opposed by his own allies, including the head of the Security Council, Yurii Skokov,[22] and Zorkin, along with the Vice President Rutskoi.[23] At the same time, the Congress called for a vote on the impeachment of Yeltsin. Yet xparliamentary opposition fell 72 votes short to remove the president. In the end, Yeltsin and the Congress agreed to hold a nation-wide referendum in April.

The upcoming referendum consisted of questions about people's confidence in Yeltsin's presidency and his economic policies, along with their opinions about holding earlier elections for the presidency and the parliament. On April 25, 1993, 64 percent of Russia's 107.3 million adult population went to the polls. The referendum results[24] revealed that 58.7 percent of voters had confidence in Yeltsin's presidency, while 39.2 percent did not. Additionally, 53 percent expressed their support for Yeltsin's socio-economic polices and 44.6 percent disagreed. At the same time, 49.5 percent of voters were in favor of early presidential elections and 67.2 percent supported early parliamentary elections. Thus, Yeltsin gained a narrow victory in the referendum, as

[21] "Humbling Defeat for President," *Moscow Times*, March 13, 1993.
[22] Skovkov was also from Sverdlovsk.
[23] "A Big Step into the Unknown," *Moscow Times*, March 22, 1993.
[24] Catherine Dank, *Politics Russia*, New York: Routledge, 2013, p. 150.

majority of people remained in favor of his presidency and economic policies. Given that Russian people experienced sharp drop in incomes, dramatic rise in prices, and steep inflation in the last years, people's support for Yeltsin's market reforms were instead unexpected.[25] However, it is worthy to note that a large share of voters also disapproved Yeltsin's socio-economic policies and backed the early presidential elections. The referendum results were even more alarming for the Congress, as many people seemed disappointed with the then Congress.

While considering the April referendum "a clear sign of [people's] support"[26] for himself, Yeltsin made swift efforts for drafting a new constitution. A Constitutional Commission was organized to lead the efforts for making the constitution in June 1993, comprising both the president's supporters and opponents. Soon however, Khasbulatov and Rutskoi, along with opposition representatives, left the Commission in protest. The legislature continued to carry out its own constitutional draft. Meanwhile, Yeltsin's ally Civic Union failed to wield an influence in the unfolding political crisis. Thus, the Supreme Soviet approved a draft law, which "would make it virtually impossible for the president to ratify his constitution without the legislature's approval" in July.[27] As it did before the April referendum, the lack of agreement about the rules of amending (and making) the constitution between Russia's leaders dragged the country deeper into political crisis.

[25] Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, translated by Catherina A. Fitzpatrick, New York: Times Book, 1994, pp. 213-4.
[26] Ibid., p. 247.
[27] "Parliament to Rework Yeltsin's Charter," *Moscow Times*, July 17, 1993.

By the beginning of September, Yeltsin came to view that "Russia simply could not go on with a parliament like this one."[28] To set in motion his plan to dissolve the parliament, Yeltsin summoned his Defense Minister, Pavel Grachev, Interior Minister, Victor Yerin, Acting Security Minister, Nikolai Golushko, and Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozurev in a dacha nearby Moscow on September 12. After receiving their support, Yeltsin decided to disband the parliament on September 19.[29] At the time of the declaration, a military unit was also planned to occupy the White House where the parliament was located. In the next days, Yeltsin made efforts to coordinate the action with different political figures. However, the information of Yeltsin's draft decree on the dissolution of the parliament was leaked to the opposition. As Khasbulatov and Rustkoi stayed in the White House to resist any potential occupation, Yeltsin had to postpone his plans.[30]

In turn, the Congressional leaders appeared to believe that they may be able to draw significant support from the Russian people in a potential confrontation with the president. A public opinion poll conducted at the time showed that Yeltsin's approval ratings dramatically declined from 35 percent in June to 24 percent in August. Conversely, Rutskoi scored 27 percent approval rating and came ahead of Yeltsin in the poll.[31] In addition, the opposition leaders sought to galvanize support from the regional and local representatives against Yeltsin's potential act to dissolve the legislature. The Federation Council – which was formed a while ago as a result of the president's efforts and comprised the representatives of Russia's regions – had already revealed itself to be

[28] Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, p. 242.
[29] Ibid., pp. 244-7.
[30] Ibid., p. 250.
[31] The Public Opinion Foundation's survey **quoted in** *Moscow Times*, August 3, 1993.

reluctant to promote Yeltsin's constitution.[32] This arguably made the opposition forces to believe that they were backed by a sizable number of regional leaders. Lastly, Rutskoi's military past and his continuing communication with the army raised the hopes for military support in a potential confrontation with the Yeltin's rule.[33]

On September 21, 1993, Yeltsin finally issued the Decree 1400 which dissolved the Congress, suspended the Constitution, and called for parliamentary elections in December.[34] The parliamentary opposition denounced Yeltsin's decree as "a coup d'etat in its purest form."[35] The Constitutional Court agreed with the opposition forces in the parliament by declaring the decree as unconstitutional.[36] The speaker of the Supreme Soviet, Khasbulatov, called for an emergency session.[37] Legislators passed a vote to release Yeltsin from his duties and to install Rutskoi as acting president.[38] Over the next days, communists and nationalists began to gather in front of the White House, while deputies remained inside to defend the building. The opposition leaders also delivered arms to crowds surrounding the White House. In turn, Yeltsin cut off all lines of communication to the building to hamper the opposition leaders' attempts to galvanize further support. Moreover, the president used his control over media to diminish the coverage of parliamentary opposition and legitimize his decision for disbanding the Congress. The state TV stations – Channel 1 and 2 – provided only minor (and biased) coverage from the parliament and their directors stated their support for Yeltsin.[39]

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[32] McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, p. 194.
[33] Ibid., 196.
[34] Vladimir Orlov, "Political Crisis in Russia Reached Its Peak," *Moscow Times,* September 24, 1993.
[35] McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, p. 195.
[36] Ibid.
[37] *Moscow Times*, September 22, 1993.
[38] Ibid.
[39] *Moscow Times*, September 23, 1993.

Simultaneously, the parliament's media outlets – including Rossiskaia Gazeta – were forced to close down.[40] Yeltsin also commanded security forces to guard the Ostankino television tower from the potential attacks of the opposition.[41]

While the police forces under the Interior Minister imposed a stronger blockade of the parliament as of September 24, the Yeltsin government did not immediately stormed into the White House. Meanwhile, a few generals joined the opposition leaders. Tension between the Yeltsin government and the parliament turned into violent conflict on October 3, when the opposition supporters attacked the mayor's office next to the White House. The fact that the police blockade rapidly fell apart emboldened the opposition forces. In response, Yeltsin declared a state of emergency and ordered the security forces to take necessary steps to reestablished the order in Moscow.[42] Yet the armed opposition supporters were also able to take over the Ostankino tower and shut down the Channel 1 on the same day.

Yeltsin's account of this period also reveals that the army was not enthusiastic to act against the parliament.[43] At first, the elite units, Alpha and Vympel, resisted to involve in the operation to the White House. With great efforts of the director of the security service of the Kremlin, Mikhail Barsukov, and the head of the presidential security, Alexander Korzhakov – both men were former KGB (Soviet secret police) officers, – some members of the units initially agreed to move nearer to the White House. Next, Defense Minister Grachev was also reluctant to send the troops to the parliament.[44] Although Grachev

[40] *Moscow Times*, September 24, 1993.
[41] *Moscow Times*, September 25, 1993.
[42] Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, p. 272.
[43] Ibid., pp. 272-6.
[44] Ibid., pp. 11-4.

ensured Yeltsin several times that the army was moving toward the city, troops stood beyond the Moscow Ring Road – edge of the city border. In the words of Yeltsin, "the army, numbering two and a half million people, could not produce even a thousand soldiers; not even one regiment could be found to come to Moscow and defend the city."[45] Only after he gave a written order, Grachev agreed to seize the parliaments with the tanks.

On October 4, the army began to shell the White House. Soon afterwards, it became clear that the opposition leaders lacked sufficient power to defend the parliament. In other words, parliamentary opposition's inability to frame its struggle in national terms resulted in the failure of galvanizing broad support for its cause, although it was backed by committed activists from communist and national-patriotic groups. At the same time, Yeltsin's control over media deprived his opponents of resources to communicate its potential message with the masses. After all, majority of Muscovites remained in favor of Yeltsin, as they did in the April referendum. According to the Public Opinion Foundation[46] survey which was conducted with one thousand-six hundred Muscovites on the same day of the military operation, 72 percent of respondents expressed that they supported Yeltsin, while only 9 percent were on the side of the parliament. When asked about who was guilty of the bloodshed in the city a few days later, 40 percent of Muscovites listed Rutskoi and Khasbulatov while only 8 percent indicated Yeltsin. At the same time, 40 percent of respondents stated that all of them were equally responsible for the violence. Similarly, 38 percent of the Russian population who participated in the survey viewed the opposition leaders responsible for the events of October 3-4, while

[45] Ibid., p. 276.
[46] "Sobytiia v Moskve oseniu 1993 goda" [Events of Autumn 1993 in Moscow], *Public Opinion Foundation* [FOM], October 9, 1993.

only 12 percent pointed to Yeltsin and his allies. Additionally, 10 percent stated that paramilitary groups were the main reason behind the violence in Moscow and 33 percent found all parties equally responsible for the conflict.

While the opposition movement failed to appeal to the majority of Russians, regional bosses and local representatives also did not give substantial support to the Congress. Despite the repeated calls of Khasbulatov and Rutskoi, only a few regional leaders turned against Yeltsin. In addition to their inability to raise further support, Yeltsin's opponents began to lose allies as events unfolded. In the beginning of October, leaders of the Communist Party[47] decided not to join street protests, "because these popular acts had become increasingly inflammatory and confrontational."[48] With the Communist Party's supporters retreating from streets and the protests' failure to gain further support, the opposition leaders' potential to defend the White House undeniably weakened.

In the end, Yeltsin was able to crack down on the parliament. On October 4, 1993, Khasbulatov and Rutskoi were arrested and put behind the bars. Simultaneously, the National Salvation Front and other movements which supported the parliament were banned.[49] The newspapers of communists and nationalist-patriots were also forced to shut down.[50] Immediately after, Yeltsin scheduled elections both for a new constitution and a legislative branch.

In the absence of any meaningful opposition, Yeltsin and his allies were able to exclusively define the new rules of the political game in Russia. Therefore, the draft of

[47] The Communist Party of the Russian Federation was re-established in early 1993.
[48] McFaul's interview with Victor Peshkov, a high-ranking member of the Communist Party, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, p. 197.
[49] Aron, Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 555.
[50] Ibid.

the new constitution reflected Yeltsin's victory over the parliament. The executive-legislative arrangements made in the constitution culminated a super-presidential system.[51] The new constitution gave the president the power to appoint the prime minister, while the Duma – the lower house of the new legislative branch which consisted of 450 delegates – approved the president's nomination. In the case that the Duma disapproved three nominations that the president made, the latter could dissolve the parliament and call for early elections. Furthermore, the prime minister was given the power to appoint his cabinet without the approval of the Duma. Since the prime minister had been appointed and dismissed by the president, the executive branch came under strict control of the president. Next, the draft made the impeachment of the president almost impossible, while the president's power to dissolve the parliament was maintained. In addition to regulating relations between the government and the Duma, the constitutional draft also envisaged the creation of the Federation Council – the upper house of the legislative branch. The Council consisted of 178 representatives, two members elected from each Russia's regions.

The constitutional referendum and the legislative elections were held together on December 12, 1993. According to the official results, more than 53 percent of Russia's adult population participated in the elections. Around 60 percent of the participants voted in favor of the new constitution. However, there had been evidence of fraud in the referendum. Although the authorities claimed that 56 percent of the electorate participated in the referendum, the voter turnout was less than 50 percent required for the

[51] See, Rita Moore, "The Path to the New Russian Constitution: A Comparison of Executive-Legislative Relations in the Major Drafts," *Democratizatsiya*, Vol.3(1), 1995, pp. 44-60.

validation of the proposed draft.[52] Also, the Yeltsin regime reportedly skewed media coverage in the run-up to referendum and put pressure on state employees to approve the constitution.[53]

In the parliamentary elections, pro-presidential political parties underperformed. Despite enjoying broad access to financial resources and state TV channels, Russia's Choice headed by Gaidar won only 16 percent of the parliamentary seats.[54] Similarly, the Russian Unity and Concord, which was composed of several ministers and politicians in the Kremlin and was backed by Chernomyrdin, gained just over 4 percent of the parliamentary seats. Conversely, two opposition parties – nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democrat Party of Russia (LDPR) and Ziuganov's Communist Party – received 25 percent of the seats in the parliamentary elections. By adhering to "the restoration of the Russian state 'within the borders of the former USSR'"[55] and resisting the broad privatization, Zhirinovskii's party gained 14 percent of the Duma seats. Ziuganov run an election platform on opposition to Yeltsin's political and economic stance, combined with Russian nationalism and anti-Westernism.[56] This gained the Communist Party around 11 percent of the seats in the parliament.

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[52] *Izvestiia*, May 4, 1994, p. 4 **cited in** Moore, "The Path to the New Russian Constitution," p. 57.
[53] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, fn. 88, p. 193.
[54] Urban et al, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*, p. 308.
[55] Richard Sakwa, "The Russian Elections of December 1993," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47(2), 1995, p. 205.
[56] Ibid., pp. 204-5; Evelyn Davidheiser, "Right and Left in the Hard Opposition," in *Growing Pains: Russian Democracy and the Election of 1993*, ed. by Timothy J. Colton and Jerry F. Hough, Washington, D.C: Brooking Institution Press, 1998, pp. 182-4.

Table 3.1 Russian Parliamentary Elections, December 12, 1993

	Votes, %			*Seats*		*Share of Seats, %*
	List	SMD		List	SMD	
Valid Votes	50.6	50.6				
Invalid Votes	3.7	4				
Total Votes (% of electorate)	54.3	54.6				
Russia's Choice	14.5	6.3		40	30	15.6
Liberal Democratic Party	21.4	2.7		59	5	14.3
Communist Party	11.6	3.2		32	16	10.7
Women of Russia	7.6	0.5		21	2	5.1
Agrarian Party of Russia	7.4	5		21	12	7.3
Yabloko	7.3	3.2		20	3	5.1
Russian Unity and Concord	6.3	2.5		18	1	4.2
Democratic Party of Russia	5.1	1.9		14	1	3.3
Others	8.2	6.6		0	8	1.7
Independents	–	45.2		–	146	32.5
Against all	3.9	14.8		–	–	–
Invalid Ballots	6.8	7.4				
Total	100	100		225	224	100

In the 1993 elections, 225 deputies were elected from party lists according to the principle of proportional representation. Election threshold for political parties was set at 5 percent. The other 225 deputies were elected in single-mandate districts through first-past-the-post formula. The deputies were at this time elected to serve for two years.

Source: "Results of Previous Elections to the Russian State Duma," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_elections_93-03.php.

After December 1993, Yeltsin's executive powers made the legislative branch seem insignificant in comparison. In most aspects, Russia's strong presidentialism rooted in the balance of power *already* skewed in favor of the incumbent ruler with the successful crackdown on the parliament in October.[57] To put succinctly, the Russian constitution and its super-presidential model was "a *reflection* of incumbent authority rather than a *cause* of it."[58] With the establishment of the strong presidency, the parliament became relatively less competitive – but still posed strong challenges – in its relation to the executive branch in 1993-95.

[57] See, Way, "Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave," pp. 243-4.

[58] Ibid., p. 245; Gerard M. Easter, "Preference for Presidentialism: Postcommunist Regime Change in Russia and the NIS," *World Politics*, Vol.49(2), 1997, pp.184-211.

Authoritarianism in Yeltsin's Russia in 1994-1999

From 1994 onwards, the Yeltsin administration itself witnessed increasing political struggle of various power networks seeking to strengthen their influence in Russia. Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and his allies, state enterprise managers, were one of the earliest groups involved in the power struggle. The managers controlling the largest industries in Russia aimed to increase their share in privatization deals by controlling the government.[59] This group was challenged by the deputy prime minister, Oleg Soskovets, along with Yeltin's security chief, Korzhakov, and the future director of the FSB,[60] Barsukov. Korzhakov and Barsukov possessed close ties with the army and security forces.[61] Korzhakov also created a secretive and powerful presidential security service, which he led until 1996.[62] With the assistance of Suskov, Korzhakov and Barsukov additionally acquired the ownership of various companies, and used the money they made to finance political activities.[63]

According to some accounts, the latter group played a key role in Yeltsin's decision to wage a war in Chechnya.[64] The Chechen republic pushed for its independence from Russia since 1991. Unlike many other Russian republics, Chechnia did not sit at the table to negotiate a deal with the central government. In December 1994, Yeltsin decided to send the army into Chechenia to restore the order.[65] The war lasted eighteen months, and led to many military and civilian causalities. From the beginning, Yeltsin's decision to

[59] Anders Aslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution: Why Market Reform Succeeded and Democracy Failed*, Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007, pp. 137-40.
[60] FSB is the successor of the KGB.
[61] Aslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, p. 136.
[62] Ibid.; Urban et al, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*, p. 297.
[63] Ibid.; Urban et al, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*, p. 297.
[64] Ibid., p. 152. See, also, Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, p. 112.
[65] "Yeltsin Authorizes Use of Force in Chechnia," *The Moscow Times*, December 10, 1994.

invade Chechnia proved to be unpopular. In a December 1995 poll, 65 percent of Russians disapproved the use of force in the Chechen republic, while only 20 percent approved.[66] A February 1995 poll revealed that people's confidence on President Yeltsin significantly decreased. In comparison to the previous year, the share of respondents who expressed distrust on Yeltsin was found to have doubled.[67]

At this time, the Communist Party sought to capitalize on public dissatisfaction with Yeltsin and his government. On June 21, 1995, communists attempted to start Yeltsin's impeachment process, which failed to gather necessary support in the parliament. In spite of this, communists succeeded in passing a vote of no-confidence in the Chernomyrdin government a day later, with 241 to 70. The prime minister immediately called for a second vote. Yeltsin threatened to dissolve the Duma, if the deputies passed the second vote of confidence. In the end, Yeltsin agreed to dismiss a number of senior officials as a concession to the parliament.

Yet Yeltsin could not rescue his allies from poor showing in the 1995 parliamentary elections, as he himself was highly unpopular in the eyes of the public. The president promoted the idea of creating two centrist political parties prior to the elections. In this way, Yeltsin aimed to "cut off both the left and right wings of extremists' movement" entering the Duma.[68] As a result, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin orchestrated a center-right party, while the speaker of the parliament, Ivan Rubkin, created a center-left party. Although Chernomyrdin's Our Home is Russia possessed extensive media and financial

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[66] Svetlana Migdisova and Elena Petrenko, "Rossiiane Vozrazhaiut Protiv Uderzhivaniia Chechni c Pomoshiu Sily" [Russians Opposed the Retain Chechnya with the Use of Force], *FOM*, December 23, 1994.
[67] *FOM*, March 3, 1995.
[68] Interview with Yeltsin, *Time*, May 8, 1995, p. 38 **quoted in** McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, p. 242.

resources,[69] the party gained only 12 percent of the votes. The Rubkin Bloc failed to pass the 5 percent threshold in the proportional part of the election. Conversely, the Communist Party came first in both proportional representation and single mandate districts. Communists gained 35 percent of seats in the Duma. The other opposition party, LDPR, won 11 percent of the parliamentary seats.

Table 3.2 Russian Parliamentary Elections, December 17, 1995

	Votes, %			*Seats*		*Share of Seats, %*
	List	SMD		List	SMD	
Valid Votes	64.4	62.9				
Invalid Votes	1.3	1.4				
Total Votes (% of electorate)	65.7	64.3				
Communist Party	22.3	12.6		99	58	34.9
Liberal Democratic Party	11.2	5.4		50	1	11.3
Our Home Is Russia	10.1	5.5		45	10	12.2
Yabloko	6.9	3.2		31	14	10
Others	44.9	30.1		–	65	13
Independents	–	31.2		–	77	17.1
Against all	2.8	9.6		–	–	–
Invalid Ballots	1.9	2.3				
Total	100	100		225	225	100

Source: "Results of Previous Elections to the Russian State Duma," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_elections_93-03.php.

The triumph of the Communist Party, and the poor showing of the pro-presidential parties, in the parliamentary elections raised a serious threat to the Yeltsin rule. The country's economic troubles and the ongoing war in Chechenia also plagued the president's popularity rating. An opinion poll found that only 8 percent of 1500

[69] Urban et al, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*, p. 309.

respondents backed Yeltsin's potential presidential candidacy.[70] All this nearly convinced Yeltsin to suspend the 1996 presidential elections in March.[71]

The evolution of Yeltsin's re-election campaign reflected the shifting balance of power among competing groups behind the scenes. With Chernomyrdin's Our Home is Russia underperforming in the elections, the alliance of Soskovets, Korzhakov, and Barsukov rose to prominence in the Yeltsin administration. As a result, the group commanded the early efforts for Yeltsin's election campaign. In their opinion, the path to victory was to strengthen Yeltsin's image as a strong leader and to halt the unpopular economic reform policies.[72] However, Soskovets and his allies soon became convinced that Yeltsin was not likely to win the elections. To avoid this outcome, the group recommended Yeltsin to cancel the presidential race.

At this point, a different alliance began to wield influence within the Yeltsin camp. In the first half of the 1990s, privatization gave way to a new group of businessmen, which became known in Russia as oligarchs. The group, which was mainly comprised of bankers, feared that a potential communist victory would deliver a major blow to its interests. To ensure Yeltsin's victory, oligarchs made an alliance with the reformers. In late 1995, a "loans-for-shares" privatization set into motion arguably to finance the Yeltsin campaign.[73] This arrangement ultimately enabled oligarchs to gain the control of the shares in Russia's key companies. In turn, the Yeltsin administration received large sums of money from the Russian businessmen. Soon thereafter, Anatolii Chubais – who

[70] *All- Union Center for Study of Public Opinion*, April 17, 1996 **quoted in** Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, p. 156.
[71] Boris Yeltsin, *Midnight Diaries*, translated by Catherine A. Fitzpatrick, New York: Public Affairs, 2000, pp. 23-6.
[72] Michael McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections: The End of Polarized Politics*, Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1997, pp. 15-8.
[73] Aslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, pp. 161-4.

was in charge of privatization until the beginning of 1996 – took command of Yeltsin's re-election campaign.

With this group displacing Soskovets and his allies, Yeltsin's campaign message was considerably altered. In its efforts to counter communist leader Ziuganov's national-patriotic outlook, the campaign portrayed Yeltsin as "the guarantor of stability, continuity, and progress."[74] Yeltsin speeches emphasized the necessity of defending the country against a communist revanche.[75] The campaign maintained that a potential return of communists would lead to "more hardship, greater uncertainty, and possibly even violent conflict."[76] Although Russia had suffered in many ways since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Yeltsin insisted that "the aim of reforms were right and needed no changes."[77] His presidency would ensure the stability and continuity of reforms, and thus improve the lives of Russians. Overall, Yeltsin's campaign sought to strengthen the president's image as "a guarantor of stability" and "a father figure … for the nation."[78]

However, Yeltsin's message of stability remained unconvincing as long as the Chechen war did not end. A few months prior to the elections, Yeltsin launched a process of negotiation with the Chechen leaders by withdrawing the Russian army from the republic. Shortly after, the Russian government signed a treaty with the Chechen representatives to end the war.[79] In the span of three months, media outlets, which earlier criticized the Kremlin policy over Chechnya, also shifted their coverage in favor of the

[74] Yeltsin's speech **quoted in** McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 28.
[75] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, pp. 621-2.
[76] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 29.
[77] Yeltsin's speech **cited in** Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 620.
[78] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 24, 30.
[79] Michael Specter, "Chechens's Leader Signs Peace Pact with the Kremlin," *New York Times*, May 28, 1996.

president.[80] As a result, Yeltsin was able to broaden his appeal as candidate for stability by resolving the very unpopular war in Chechnya just days before the elections.

Yeltsin had also access to mass resources necessary to promote his candidacy. As noted earlier, oligarchs provided substantial funding to Yeltsin's reelection campaign after the loans-for-share privatization.[81] Along with the oligarchs' financial assistance, the president used his control over government spending to galvanize broad support in the elections.[82] Yeltsin populism thus revealed itself "allocating benefits to particular geographic, social, or economic constituencies" in the months leading up to the elections.[83] Next, the Yeltsin team's domination of major media outlets played a key role in communicating the campaign message. Igor Malashenko, who was the director of NTV owned by oligarch Vladimir Gusinskii, coordinated Yeltsin's media campaign. The two TV channels controlled by the state – Channel 1/ORT and RTR, – along with NTV allocated majority of election coverage to Yeltsin.[84] These national TV stations also limited the access of other presidential candidates to airtime. Similarly, main national and regional newspapers backed the Yeltsin candidacy and provided anti-communist coverage.[85]

In turn, Yeltsin's main opponent, Ziuganov, possessed an ideological platform and well-established nation-wide party institution, which captured the largest share of parliamentary seats in the 1995 elections. Soon after becoming the presidential candidate

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[80] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 624.
[81] Also, see, Joel M. Ostrow, Georgiy A. Saratov, and Irina M. Khamada, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia: An Inside View of the Demise of Democracy*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2007, pp. 65-6.
[82] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 33.
[83] Daniel Treisman, "Why Yeltsin Won," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75(5), 1996, p. 67.
[84] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 34; Joel M. Ostrow et al, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, pp.67-9.
[85] Ibid., p. 22, 34.

of the Communist Party, Ziuganov received the support of the Russian national-patriotic forces. Ziuganov's campaign platform built upon the ideas of imperialism, nationalism, and patriotism.[86] In Ziuganov's view, Russia's centuries long history and its geopolitical position gave birth to "a unique civilization" which manifested continually itself in the form of empire since the beginning.[87] Therefore, Ziuganov stated, the empire "was the necessary form for the development of the Russian state."[88] According to Ziuganov, the last empire, Soviet Union, was destroyed by the Western powers – most importantly, by the United States – and the financial actors within the West organized internationally because they feared from potential.[89] Eventually, their collaborators in the nation – Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and democrats – completed the mission of breaking the empire apart.[90] Ziuganov called for the restoration of the state across the former Soviet territories in which ethnic Russians and their culture would possess the dominant position.[91] His campaign slogan was *Russia, Motherland, People*. In the end, Ziuganov's candidacy appealed to patriotic sentiments and made only rare references to the ideas of socialism and communism.[92]

At the same time, Ziuganov had a mass party organization to endorse his candidacy across Russia. With "530,000 members in 20,000 party cells"[93] in his hand, Ziuganov was able to "mobilize thousands of door-to-door 'agitators.'"[94] Given that the Ziuganov

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[86] Ibid., p. 39.
[87] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 596; Marlene Laruelle, *In the name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in Contemporary Russia*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 86-99.
[88] Gennadii Ziuganov, *Derzhava* [The Great Power], Moscow: Informpechat, p. 30 **quoted in** Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 596.
[89] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, pp. 596-7.
[90] Ibid., pp. 597-8.
[91] Laruelle, *In the name of the Nation*, p. 95.
[92] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 41.
[93] Zyuganov **cited in** Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 602.
[94] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 602.

team primarily relied on the print media to spread his message, the party organizations and its members played a key role in distributing millions of campaign materials in their localities.[95] The organizational capacity was further boosted by the support of the national patriotic camp. This group effectively coordinated campaign activities with the communists. Its print media also actively promoted Ziuganov's candidacy. In particular, Alexander Prokhanov and his newspaper *Zavtra* involved broadly in building the campaign messages and promoting them.[96] Next, the Communist Party's lead in the Duma enabled Ziuganov to utilize to some extent state resources for campaign purposes. The communist leader was thus able to hold campaign rallies extensively across Russia's different regions. Lastly, Ziuganov's campaign benefitted from the financial assistance of red directors across Russia's territories, but this "was only a fraction of that pledged to the Yeltsin team."[97] In the end, the official campaign spending limit was approximately $3 million, while Yeltsin significantly exceeded the limit with some estimates of his spending ranging between $100 to $500 million.[98]

On June 16, 1996, Russians went to polls to elect their president. Yeltsin came first in the elections by winning 35.8 percent of the national vote. Ziuganov placed closed second behind Yeltsin by receiving the support 32.5 percent of people participated in the elections. The former General Alexandr Lebed scored 14.7 percent of the votes, while democratic opposition figure Grigorii Yavlinskii gained the 7.4 percent of the electorate. The run-off between Yeltsin and Ziuganov was scheduled for July 3.

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[95] Aron reports that "the three largest communist dailies alone distributed throughout the country, had a combined print-run of nine million," *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, p. 602.
[96] Ibid., pp. 593-96.
[97] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 47.
[98] Lee Hockstader and David Hoffman, "Yeltsin's Campaign Rose from Tears to Triumph," *Washington Post*, July 7, 1996.

Despite the small margin between the two leaders, Yeltsin maintained an advantage as a result of a deal negotiated with Lebed prior to the elections. Lebed promised to endorse the Yeltsin candidacy in the second round of elections in exchange for a high-ranking position in the government. Immediately after the first round of elections, Lebed was appointed as the head of the Security Council.[99] While Lebed's inclusion in his administration increased the possibility of gaining a victory, Yeltsin also put pressure on regional leaders who did not galvanize sufficient public support in between the two rounds of the elections.[100]

However, Yeltsin's efforts to win the upcoming election stumbled as a result of a power struggle within his own camp.[101] A few days after the first round of the elections, Korzhakov and his allies orchestrated the arrest of the two associates of Yeltsin's campaign manager, Chubais. At the time of their arrest, Chubais' associates were leaving a government office in the White House with half a million dollars. By revealing the corruption of the Chubais team, Korzhakov and his allies sought to regain their influence within the president's camp. However, Yeltsin took the side of Chubais and ultimately fired Korzhakov, Barsukov, and Soskovets from his administration.

Although this political incident produced a negative image of his administration, Yeltsin was able to gain a victory in the second round of the elections. While Yeltsin won 54.4 percent of the votes, his opponent Ziuganov received the support of 40.7 percent of the people who participated in the elections. The residents of largest Russian cities, Moscow and St. Petersburg, overwhelmingly backed the Yeltsin presidency.[102] Similarly,

[99] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 60.
[100] Ibid., p. 63.
[101] See, Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, pp. 187-88.
[102] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 69.

the younger generation of voters – between the ages of 18 and 29 – gave strong support to Yeltsin.[103] In turn, Ziuganov performed well across the regions of South-west and South-east which had become known as the red belt.[104] In several Russian regions, Ziuganov eventually appeared to gather less votes in the second round of the elections than the previous round.[105] In spite of the evidence of voter fraud in different regions, the Communist Party did not challenge the election outcomes.

In sum, the 1996 presidential elections witnessed the only run-off in the history of post-Soviet Russia. The Communist leader Ziuganov's appropriation of national-patriotic vision and his well-institutionalized political party enabled him to raise a serious threat to Yeltsin's re-election. On the other hand, Yeltsin's inability to cultivate a national identity in the post-Soviet era deprived him of significant source of popular support and his low popularity ratings nearly convinced him to cancel the elections. What appeared to enable Yeltsin to win the re-election was the broad financial and media resources provided by various oligarchs. These resources helped Yeltsin to re-cast his image as "a father figure to nation" and to recapitalize on the threat of communism with voters – although Ziuganov made only rare appearances to socialism and communism. As a result, Yeltsin was able to retain power by defeating his rival in the presidential race.

[103] Aron, *Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, pp. 629-30.
[104] Ibid., p. 630.
[105] See, McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, pp. 72-4.

Table 3.3 Russian Presidential Election, 1996

		First Round, June 16		*Second Round, July 3*	
Candidates	*Political Parties*	*Vote %*	*Number*	*Vote %*	*Number*
Boris Yeltsin	Independent	35.8	26,665,495	54.4	40,203,948
Gennadii Ziuganov	Communist Party	32.5	24,211,686	40.7	30,102,288
Alexander Lebed	Congress of Russian Communities	14.7	10,974,736	–	–
Grigorii Yavlinsky	Yabloko	7.4	5,550,752	–	–
Vladimir Zhirinovsky	Liberal Democrat Party	5.8	4,311,479	–	–
Six other candidates		2.2	1,636,950	–	–
Against all candidates		1.6	1,163,921	4.9	3,604,462
Electorate			108,495,023		108,600,730
Invalid Votes		1.4	1,072,120	1.1	780,592
Total valid vote		68.7	74,515,019	68.1	73,910,698
Total		100		100	

Source: "Results of Presidential Elections 1996 - 2004*Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/president/presidency_96-04.php.

The 1996 presidential elections marked the arrival of oligarchs in the state bureaucracy. Owing his electoral victory to a great extent to the financial and media resources provided by the oligarchs, Yeltsin distributed several influential government positions to his new allies. These oligarchs continued to actively run their businesses while serving in the government.[106] Access to the government enabled the oligarchs to gain further privileges in the privatization of state assets. However, the oligarchs' efforts to accumulate more wealth led to increasing competition for power within the Yeltsin administration.[107]

While his allies got into a struggle for advancing their political and economic power, Yeltsin also continued to meet challenges from the Duma. Indeed, the president's weak support base in the parliament forced him to make concessions to the opposition forces throughout his second term. When the Russian economy went into a free-fall in 1998 with the Asian financial crisis and the sharp drop in world oil prices, Yeltsin had to agree with the appointment of Foreign Minister, Yevgenii Primakov, who was broadly supported by

[106] Joel M. Ostrow et al, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, p. 73.
[107] Aslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, pp. 169-72.

the Duma, as prime minister in September 1998.[108] Thus, the parliament was able to block Yeltsin's efforts to reappoint his ally Chernomyrdin as prime minister[109] and elevate its own candidate to lead the government.

Given Yeltsin's poor health and approaching term limit in 2000, Primakov's appointment as prime minister raised the possibility of him becoming the new president. Primakov gained the support of both the communists and nationalists in the Duma "for his independent politics, his desire to be independent of the oligarchs, and was not himself corrupt."[110] Primakov's independent power base from Yeltsin resulted in him threatening the oligarchic interest. When Primakov made efforts to prosecute the oligarchs for their corruption, Yeltsin's daughter Tatiana Diachenko, who herself was highly corrupt, encouraged the president to dismiss him.[111] Indeed, The Family[112] – comprising Yeltsin's family, several oligarchs and government officials – sought to install a prime minister who could protect them and their interests, when Yeltsin retired.[113] After Yeltsin dismissed Primakov as prime minister, the Family continued its search for a potential protector. Ultimately, the Family choose the former KGB officer Vladimir Putin as Yeltsin's potential successor because of his "unwavering loyalty toward a political patron in his protection of St. Petersburg Mayor Anatolii Sobchak."[114]

While Putin was appointed to the post of premier in August 1999 as Yeltsin's likely successor, the Mayor of Moscow, Yurii Luzhkov, emerged as a presidential candidate in

[108] Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, pp. 262-2.
[109] Ibid., pp. 256-61.
[110] Joel M. Ostrow et al, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, p. 84.
[111] Ibid., p. 85.
[112] Aslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, p. 198.
[113] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, p. 195.
[114] Joel M. Ostrow et al, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, p. 87.

opposition to the Kremlin.[115] Both political forces saw the 1999 parliamentary elections as a rehearsal for the 2000 presidential elections and made efforts to build their own electoral basis.

Yeltsin's former ally, Luzhkov, established his own party, Fatherland, in 1998. The Fatherland formed an electoral coalition with All Russia which comprised some regional leaders. Soon afterwards, Primakov, who Yeltsin sacked a few months before, but who was still popular, joined the Fatherland-All Russia (OVR) bloc.[116] While establishing a broad coalition among various political forces, the party placed itself as a centrist force in the Russian political stage. OVR's campaign message "spouted statist rhetoric," pledging to strengthen the national government and to restore the great power status of Russia in the international system.[117]

Moreover, OVR had access to financial resources necessary to run an efficient electoral campaign. First, Luzhkov controlled the Sistema group, which possessed many companies in Moscow.[118] Second, regional leaders' close association with the Russian state companies, including Lukoil and Gazprom, and the local businesses provided the bloc with further financial assistance.[119] In terms of media resources, the TV Center, which was owned by the Moscow city center and aired in many large cities, and regional TV channels gave substantial airtime to OVR.[120] Additionally, oligarch Gusinkii's NTV

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[115] Yeltsin, *Midnight Diaries*, pp. 290-4.
[116] Timothy J. Colton and Michael McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy: The Russian Elections of 1999 and 2000*, Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2003, pp. 81-6.
[117] Ibid., p. 90. For OVR election program, see, "Manifest izbiraltelnogo bloka 'Otechestvo – Vsia Rossiia'" [Manifesto of the Electoral Bloc 'Fatherland – All Russia'], *Manifesto Project*, November 20, 1999.
[118] Henry E. Hale, *Why not Parties in Russia? Democracy, Federalism, and The State*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 216.
[119] Ibid., 219-20; Colton and McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy*, pp. 88-9.
[120] Hale, *Why not Parties in Russia?* p. 217, Colton and McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy*, pp. 88-9.

and various newspapers provided positive coverage to the bloc in the beginning of the campaign.[121]

To counter the rise of OVR, pro-Kremlin forces orchestrated a new party, Unity, just three months before the parliamentary elections. Sergei Shoigu, the head of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, took the lead in running the party. While Unity refused to define its place on the political spectrum, its campaign was devoted to "Russia's territorial integrity and national greatness."[122] Given that at the time of campaigning the Chechen war had reignited, Unity sought to appeal to nationalist sentiments to mobilize voters.[123] With the endorsement of Putin whose tough stance against the Chechen rebels gained strong support from Russians, Unity's popularity rapidly increased.

Unity's ability to provoke national feelings – even though it lacked a systematic program – distinguished its future from the earlier pro-Kremlin parties. While the previous political parties possessed significant advantages in terms of accessing financial and media resources, their inability to cultivate popular messages resulted in them faring poorly in the parliamentary elections.[124] By contrast, Unity effectively invoked to nationalist sentiments by using the broad resources available to it. The financial and media resources were provided particularly by the oligarchs who feared that the strong showing of OVR would potentially lead to a Primakov presidency.[125] As a result, Unity was able to gain larger share of seats in the Duma than OVR in the 1999 elections, only three months after its formation (16.2% to 15.1%).

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[121] Colton and McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy*, pp. 88-9.
[122] Ibid., p. 54, 58.
[123] Ibid., p. 59.
[124] Ibid., p. 49.
[125] Hale, *Why not Parties in Russia?* p. 288.

Table 3.4 Russian Parliamentary Elections, December 19, 1999

	Votes, %			*Seats*		*Share of Seats, %*
	List	SMD		List	SMD	
Valid Votes	60.5	60.3				
Invalid Votes	1.2	1.3				
Total Votes (% of electorate)	61.7	61.6				
Communist Party	24.3	13.4		67	46	25.1
Unity	23.3	2.1		64	9	16.2
Fatherland–All Russia	13.3	8.6		37	31	15.1
Union of Right Forces	8.5	3		24	5	6.4
Liberal Democratic Party	6	1.5		17	0	3.8
Yabloko	5.9	5		16	4	4.4
Independents		41.7		—	114	25.3
Against all	3.3	11.6		—	—	—
Others	13.3	10.9			16	3.4
Invalid ballots	1.9	2.2				
Total	100	100		225	225	100

Source: "Results of Previous Elections to the Russian State Duma," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_elections_93-03.php.

As expected, defections immediately began from OVR, after it fared poorly in the elections. Primakov withdrew his presidential candidacy as he "lack[ed] time to raise funds or to build a sufficient organization" to run an election campaign.[126] Similarly, Luzhkov decided not to compete in the 2000 presidential elections. Thus, the communist leader, Ziuganov, remained the only significant opposition presidential candidate. Meanwhile, Putin's success in the Chechen fight, combined with economic growth produced by increasing oil prices, boosted public support for his presidential candidacy. Yeltsin was now convinced that it was time for him to transfer the presidency to his chosen successor. On the last day of 1999, three months before the end of his term limit, Yeltsin announced his resignation and Putin became the acting president.

[126] Joel M. Ostrow et al, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, p. 91.

In sum, Russia under Yeltsin became a competitive authoritarian regime. Throughout the 1990s, Yeltsin's weak support base in the Duma forced him to make concessions to the opposition forces. Although pro-Kremlin parties had access to broad economic and media resources, their inability to cultivate a national idea left them with poor electoral results. By contrast, the main opposition parties' national-patriotic appeal gained them substantial support. However, opposition candidates' inability to access broad economic and media resources resulted in them losing the presidential elections, despite their campaigns' successful appeals to nationalist sentiments. In the end, with the founding of Unity and its well-performance in the elections through developing a national-patriotic appeal, Yeltsin was able to repel the potential presidential candidates in opposition and install his own successor.

Table 3.5 Russian Parliamentary Elections, 1995-1999

Political Party		**Share of Seats**	**Share of Seats**	**Change %**	**Seats**	**Seats**	**Change**
		1995	**1999**		**1995**	1999	
Communist Party		34.9	25.1	-9.8	157	113	-43
Liberal Democratic Party		11.3	3.8	7.5	51	17	-34
Our Home Is Russia		12.2			55		
Yabloko		10	4.4	5.6	45	20	-25
Unity			16.2			73	73
Fatherland–All Russia			15.1			68	
Union of Right Forces			6.4			29	
Others		13	3.4	-9.6	65	16	-49
Independents		17.1	25.3	8.2	77	114	37
Total		100	100		450	450	

Source: Based on information from *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org.

CHAPTER IV: POST-SOVIET TRANSITION IN UKRAINE (1992-2004): THE RISE AND FALL OF AUTHORITARIANISM

After Ukraine gained independence in 1991, Leonid Kravchuk – the head of the ideological division of the Communist Party and later the chairman of the Supreme Soviet – became the country's first president elected with a popular vote in a race against Viacheslav Chornovil – the leader of the democratic Rukh movement. While Ukraine political regime was relatively open under Kravchuk, the continuity of political institutions from the Soviet system created significant obstacles to its democratic development. First, in contrast to its Eastern European neighbors, post-Soviet Ukraine did not experience the removal of old elite. Instead, Ukrainian parliamentarians, who had been elected under the Soviet rule, remained in their positions until the next parliamentary elections in 1994. Although Ukraine banned the Communist Party immediately after independence, 238 communists continued to make up the majority in the parliament. Second, Ukraine preserved its Soviet constitution, while amendments to it were made between 1991 and 1995. Although new institutions were also established, the lack of clear divisions of state powers in the constitution led to political conflicts and plagued the course of change.[1] After all, "there was not a political revolution in Ukraine" in the immediate post-Soviet era.[2]

Despite many hurdles in its post-communist transition, Ukraine was able to carry out relatively free and fair presidential elections in 1994. While these elections resulted in peaceful transition of power, Ukraine afterwards experienced the remarkable rise and fall

[1] See, Kataryna Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine: The Constitutional Politics of State Formation*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001, pp. 110-22.
[2] Paul D'Anieri, *Understanding Ukrainian Politics*, Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe, 2007, p. 74.

of authoritarianism under the incoming leader Leonid Kuchma. As Boris Yeltsin in Russia, Kuchma inherited a country with a weak tradition of rule of law, an undeveloped civil society, and an economy built upon state-ownership of vast resources. By using methods similar to his counterpart in Russia, Kuchma also sought to ingrain his authoritarian rule in Ukraine. The new constitution, which was adopted in 1996 after Kuchma's threat to hold a nation-wide referendum on confidence in the president and the parliament, asserted the president's domination over government and diluted the parliamentary authority. Next, by using his control over state economic resources, Kuchma made efforts to build a power base in legislature. Subsequently, several oligarchic factions formed in the parliament, which raised support for Kuchma in return for gaining privileges in privatization of state assets.[3] Finally, with his control over state institutions and close relations to oligarchs, Kuchma engaged in manipulation of media, intimidation of regime opponents, and election fraud. Thus, in the 1999 presidential elections, Kuchma succeeded in sidelining his main rival, Olexandr Moroz, the leader of Socialist Party. By evoking to the threat of Communism, Kuchma was eventually able to win the reelection.

Despite Kuchma's efforts to build an authoritarian regime, Ukraine eventually became democratized in contrast to Russia. In the 2004 presidential elections, when President Kuchma sought to transfer power to his anointed successor Victor Yanukovich by vote-rigging, opposition forces organized a cohesive protest movement which put an end to Ukraine's authoritarian path. Therefore, the obvious question arises: What explains

[3] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 57-65. Also, Lucan Way, "Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 16(2), April 2005, pp. 131-45.

the success of Ukrainian opposition forces in overthrowing the authoritarian regime? Why did authoritarianism not survive in Ukraine as in Russia?

Two factors explain the downfall of authoritarian rule in Ukraine. First, the protest movement was able to gain broad support from the Ukrainian population, because many individuals, who resisted the content of the national identity harnessed by the regime, came out to streets to defend the opposition leader, whose appeal responded to their perception of the Ukrainian identity. While the opposition movement clearly benefitted from the deeds of democratic–minded leaders and protesters in the Maidan, its appeal to Ukrainophile identity was the main source of the success in ousting the authoritarian regime in 2004, which will be discussed below.[4] Second, the opposition was able to access to necessary economic resources, as some oligarchs – who accumulated their wealth on good relations with Kuchma – began to turn against the regime in the early 2000s. These oligarchs eventually provided key organizational and financial resources for the Ukrainian protest movement. In the aftermath of the Orange Revolution, the role of Western assistance to regime opponents also prominently figured in scholarly debates.[5] Although significant funding particularly from the United States had been coming to Ukraine since the early 2000s, it was reportedly used for democracy promotion activities

[4] See, Dominique Arel, "Orange Ukraine Chooses the West, but Without the East," in *Aspects of Orange Revolution III: The Context and Dynamics of the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections*, ed. by Ingmar Bredies, Andreas Umland and Valentin Yakushik, Ibidem-Verlag: Stuttgart, 2007, pp. 35-54; Beissinger, "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution: Coalitions in Ukraine's Orange Revolution" ; Way, *Pluralism by Default*.

[5] See, Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005, pp. 183-9; Iris Kempe and Iryna Solonenko, "International Orientation and Foreign Support," in *Presidential Election and Orange Revolution Implications for Ukraine's Transition*, ed. by Helmut Kurt and Iris Kempe, Kyiv: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2005, pp. 113-22; Michael McFaul, "Ukraine Imports Democracy: External Influences on the Orange Revolution," *International Security*, Vol. 32 (2), 2007, pp. 45-83.

– not for opposition candidates.[6] In the final analysis, Kuchma's rule was built upon a system of patronage, in which he distributed state economic resources to competing oligarchs for political gains, and maintained by appeals to polarized visions of Ukrainian identity. However, the very same factors which enabled Kuchma to ingrain authoritarianism in Ukraine sowed the seeds of its own end.

The rest of this chapter focuses on the Ukrainian post-communist transition in 1992-2004. First, it gives an account of Ukraine's early struggle for political and economic transformation from the Soviet system under Kravchuk's leadership. Second, the chapter analyzes the authoritarian regime that Kuchma built and the reasons for its collapse in the face of popular protests.

Non-Revolutionary Politics of Ukraine under Kravchuk in 1992-1994

After winning elections against Chornovil by a big margin, Kravchuk became the president of newly independent Ukraine on December 1, 1991. In the words of Anders Aslund, "Kravchuk had transformed himself within less than two years from communist ideological policeman to national communist leader and now to Ukraine's first president and national leader."[7] In his rise to prominence as Ukraine moved towards independence, Kravchuk made efforts to appeal to dissimilar political groups and citizens to galvanize support. To achieve this, the future president of Ukraine created "a public persona that was most things to most people."[8] This led Kravchuk to remain vague about his potential political orientation on the one hand – aside from his unequivocal support for the

[6] Ibid.
[7] Anders Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics," 2009, p. 32.
[8] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 182.

country's independence.[9] Partly as a result, Kravchuk, a national (pro-independence) communist, was able to gain substantial votes in the east, south, and center, while his nationalist rival Chornovil was widely supported in three Galician regions of western Ukraine during the 1991 presidential elections. On the other hand, Kravchuk's reluctance to associate with any particular political faction hampered the opportunity for political and economic transformation of Ukraine after independence. Because the president opted for working with a parliament elected in March 1990 instead of calling early elections – which "would have required identifying himself with a particular party and narrowing his political base unnecessarily,"[10] – communists further remained in prominence in Ukraine's political circle. Although the Communist Party was banned on August 30, 1991, its former members continued to occupy key positions in bureaucracy and also in economy.[11] In many ways "the legacy of the Soviet *nomenklatura* carrie[d] considerable inertia in the politics of post-Soviet Ukraine"[12] and thus impeded prospects for democracy and market-oriented development.

[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., pp. 182-3.
[11] Kerstin Zimmer and Olexey Haran, "Unfriendly Takeover: Successor parties in Ukraine," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vo. 41, 2008, p. 545.
[12] Bohdan Harasymiw, "Ukraine's Political Elite and the Transition to Post-Communism," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 21 (1-2), 1996, p. 146. Furthermore, Harasymiw in this study provides numbers about the former communists in the key government institutions – i.e. the Presidential Administration, the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Parliament – between 1990 and 1996.

Table 4.1 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, December 1, 1991

Candidate	*Political Party*	*Total Vote, %*	*Number*
Total Votes (% of electorate)		84.2	31,891,742
Leonid Kravchuk	Self-Nominated	61.6	19,643,481
Viacheslav Chornovil	Rukh	23.3	7,420,727
Levko Lukianenko	Ukrainian Republican Party	4.5	1,432,556
Ihor Yukhnovskii	Self-Nominated	1.7	554,719
Volodimir Grinov	Self-Nominated	4.2	1,329,758
Leopold Taburianskii	People's Party of Ukraine	0.6	182,713
Against all/ Invalid votes		4.2	1,327,788
Total Votes		100	

Source: Sarah Birch, "Ukraine," in *Elections in Europe: A Data Handbook*, edited by Dieter Nohlen and Philip Stover, Baden: Nomos, 2010, p. 1976.

While Kravchuk's commitment to Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union enabled him to ascend to power, his attitude towards nationalism was indeed moderate early in his presidency. As Ukraine left with a population in which over eleven million (22 percent of whole population) was made up of Russians, Kravchuk's efforts focused on ensuring unity among people. In his early speeches, Kravchuk seemingly promoted the view of Ukraine "as a state of Ukrainians, Russians and all the nationalities who inhabit it."[13] As this line of understanding was necessary to solidify the Ukrainian statehood at the time, the president also reminded the Ukrainian elites – particularly in the west – of the perils of endorsing the revival of "a national state."[14]

After his first year in presidency, Kravchuk however began to develop a more positive attitude towards nationalism. The president embraced the *trizub* (trident) and the blue-yellow flag – both of which implied the continuity within Ukrainian history since

[13] *Holos Ukrainy*, January 24, 1992 and December 7, 1991 **quoted in** Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s*, p. 111.
[14] Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s*, p. 111.

antiquity – as well as the national anthem – which was used in independent Ukraine between 1917 and 1920. Conversely, these newly adopted symbols resonated little with the population of the eastern and the southern regions.[15] Next, Kravchuk invested in promoting Ukrainian language and culture, and also opposed the elevation of Russian to a second state language. Finally, the president "endorsed the nationalist view of the past as an endless series of misfortunes at Russia's hand" in respect to the Ukrainian history.[16] This line of thinking also took on concrete forms as to distance Ukraine from Russia. Overall, these policies enabled Kravchuk to gain support of national democrats in the parliament.

When the Ukrainian economy declined, and living standards dropped sharply in 1992-93, Kravchuk's policies began to provoke serious resistance in the east. In particular, the discord between the president, prime minister, and the parliament, which was partially an outcome of the lack of new constitutional arrangements, hindered the development of a consistent economic reform program. Ironically, when Ukraine's economic difficulties were growing, Leonid Kuchma, the head of the military-industrial complex in Dnipropetrovsk and future political rival of Kravchuk, was leading the government. However, Kuchma was able to "sidestep responsibility for economic crisis simply by taking a strong pro-Russian stance" ahead of the 1994 presidential elections since many considered the economic troubles an outcome of "Ukraine's break with Russia and the Soviet Union – an event that was indelibly tied to Kravchuk."[17]

[15] Ibid., p. 111 and 161-2.
[16] Ibid., p. 111.
[17] Yuryi Lukanov, *Tretyi Prezident: Polytichnii Portret Leonida Kuchmi*, Kyiv: Tak Spravi, 1996, p. 86 and 110 **paraphrased in** Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 55.

Most importantly, Ukrainian authorities' political and economic policies led to a massive wave of miners' strike in the eastern Donbas regions in June 1993. Backed by the local elite, the Donbas miners demanded regional autonomy and a national referendum on confidence in the president and the parliament.[18] Indeed, organizations and parties in the region already articulated programs by 1993 which called for regional autonomy as well as state language status for Russian and greater economic integration with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)/Russia.[19] The Ukrainian authorities nonetheless were able to defer the miners' call for regional autonomy at this point, while accepting to schedule the national referendum on confidence in the president and the parliament.[20] However, both Kravchuk and the parliament later agreed instead to call for early presidential and parliamentary elections. At the same time, the political crisis in Russia, which resulted in Yeltsin dissolving the parliament in September 1993, played a part in deputies' decision for early elections.[21]

With the ban on the Communist Party lifted in July 1993, the parliamentary elections in March-April 1994 witnessed a comeback for the communists. The Communist Party gained 25 percent of the seats in the parliament, while the overall Ukrainian left's share of seats amounted to 35 percent in the first round of elections in March-April. In the words of Wilson, "the left has gained extra strength from being *de facto* vehicle for Russophone protest at 'nationalizing' policies in Ukraine."[22] While the Communist Party

[18] Vlad Mykhenenko, "State, Society and Protest under Post Communism: Ukrainian Miners and Their Defeat," paper presented at the *Political Studies Association-UK 50th Annual Conference, London,* April 10-13, 2000.
[19] Andrew Wilson, "Growing Challenge to Kyiv from the Donbas," *Ukrainian Weekly*, Jersey City, N.J, September 9, 1993.
[20] Vlad Mykhenenko, "State, Society and Protest under Post Communism."
[21] Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 118.
[22] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p.189.

was backed strongly in the east, the Socialist Party created at a time the former was banned gathered support from Russophile population throughout Ukraine.[23] On the other hand, Rukh and other national democrat parties, which called for political and economic reforms to solidify Ukrainian statehood,[24] performed with less success. Rukh gained only 5.9 percent of the votes in the first round, appealing to the voters in the west. Overall, national democrats won 9.2 percent of the votes. Additionally, more than one hundred sixty parliamentarians were without party affiliations, and many of these were former communists.

Most importantly, the new parliament marked the emergence of centrist factions which gained sufficient seats to shift the balance of power between the left and the right. While the centrist political parties had scored only 3.6 percent of the votes after the first two rounds of elections, Ukrainian parliamentarians subsequently regrouped and formed several other factions in the center. Although these centrist groups were not ideologically cohesive, they filled around 125 parliamentary seats by May 1995.[25] Similarly, businessmen emerged as a political force by winning around 20 percent of the seat in the 1994 elections.[26]

[23] Sarah Birch, *Elections and Democratization in Ukraine*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, pp. 85-8.
[24] Ibid., p. 85.
[25] See, Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 134.
[26] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 65.

Table 4.2 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, March – April 1994

Party	*Votes, First Round, %*	*Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Total Left	18.6	119	35.2
Communist	12.7	86	25.4
Socialist	3.1	14	4.1
Rural	2.7	19	5.3
Total Centre	3.4	12	3.6
Total National Democrats	9.2	31	9.2
Rukh	5.2	20	5.9
Republican	2.5	8	2.4
Total Extreme Right	2.4	8	2.4
All Parties	33.5	170	50.3
Independents	66.3	168	49.7
Total Seats Filled		338	100

In 450-single member constituencies, candidates were required to gather a majority of votes to win after at least fifty percent of voters participated. For that reason, Ukrainian citizens in some districts voted six times.
Source: Sarah Birch, *Elections and Democratization in Ukraine,* p. 84.

As his allies in the national democratic camp lost considerable influence in the parliament from 108 seats in 1991 to 28 seats in 1994, Kravchuk grew wary of a potential defeat in the upcoming presidential elections. Additionally, the approval of the leader of Socialist Party, Olexander Moroz, as chairman of the parliament, with the support of communists in October 1994, raised his concern. Therefore, Kuchma sought to delay the race also by making threats. However, the parliament did not give into the pressure.[27] The election was scheduled to be held on June 26, 1994.

During the election campaign, Kravchuk portrayed himself as "the father of the Ukrainian nation"[28] and defended the Ukrainian independence, language and culture. He opposed the development of closer ties with CIS/Russia and elevating the status of Russian to the state language.[29] With Rukh not putting a candidate forth, Kravchuk

[27] Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 118.
[28] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 66.
[29] Marta Kolomayets, "Kravchuk, Kuchma to Face Off in Presidential Race on July 10," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, July 3, 1994, p. 1, 3.

moreover was able to dominate pro-Ukrainian discourse. In turn, Kravchuk's main rival, Kuchma, called for improving relations with Russia, upgrading the status of Russian language, and decentralizing the system of governance.[30] While Kravchuk vilified Kuchma by stressing "his 'Russophile' tendencies and willingness to convert Ukraine into a neocolonial state within the Russian domain,"[31] Kuchma pledged to cease the domination of "Galician nationalism" over Ukrainian authorities.[32] Additionally, socialist Moroz was set on running in the election, with the support of the Communist Party. In the first round of elections, Kravchuk came first by gathering 37.7 percent of the votes with a strong support in the western regions, while Kuchma's share of vote amounted to 31.2 with a concentration in the eastern and southern regions. Socialist Moroz was able to gain only 13 percent of votes.

In the second round, both Kravchuk's and Kuchma's appeal to voters were bolstered by the support of the Rukh and the Communist Party, respectively. Kravchuk used his control of the media to slant news coverage in his favor. He also sought to mobilize state employees at the local level to steal elections.[33] In turn, Kuchma, the head of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, had broad support of business[34] and local officials in Eastern and Southern Ukraine.[35] In the end, Kravchuk lost the race against Kuchma, 45 percent to 52.1 percent. Most importantly, the second round of elections further marked the split in the voting patterns of Ukraine's regions. As Kataryna Wolzchuk aptly puts it, "while these cleavages were not so evident during the referendum

[30] Ibid.
[31] Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 136.
[32] Ibid., p. 139.
[33] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 54-6.
[34] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 196.
[35] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 56.

in 1991, when the idea of independence, albeit for different reasons, was supported more evenly across Ukraine, the two disillusioning years of Ukrainian independence made them more apparent. These divisions were readily exploited by the presidential candidates."[36] As a result of this, Kravchuk scored over 90 percent of the votes in the three Galician oblasts – Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil, – while Kuchma received over 80 percent of votes in the more populous Donbas. Furthermore, Kuchma won majority of votes in all oblasts east of the Dnieper.[37] In summary, Kravchuk's electoral basis had substantially changed from 1991 to 1994. While he had captured strong support in the south and east in 1991,[38] these same regions backed Kuchma in 1994. Although Kravchuk's share of vote increased sharply in the western regions in comparison to 1991, this was not sufficient to bring a victory to Kravchuk in the run-off.

[36] Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 138.
[37] See, for the oblast-level results of the 1994 presidential run-off elections, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, July 7, 1994, p.3.
[38] See, for the oblast-level results of the 1991 presidential elections, *Ukrainian Weekly*, December 8, 1991, p.5.

Table 4.3 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, 1994

Candidate	*Political Party*	*First round, June 26, 1994 %*	*Number*	*Run-off, July 10, 1994 %*	*Number*
Total Votes (% of electorate)		68.0	26,480,671	71.0	26,883,642
Leonid Kravchuk	Self-Nominated	37.7	9,954,474	45.0	12,111,603
Leonid Kuchma	Self-Nominated	31.2	8,244,844	52.1	14,016,830
Olexandr Moroz	Socialist Party	13.0	3,437,816		
Volodimir Lanovii	Self-Nominated	9.3	2,455,830		
Valerii Babich	Self-Nominated	2.3	630,392		
Ivan Pliushch	Self-Nominated	1.2	341,172		
Petro Talanchuk	Self-Nominated	0.5	142,996		
Invalid votes/against all		4.43		2.8	
Total		100		100	

Sources: *The Ukrainian Weekly*, July 3, 1994, p. 3 and July 7, 1994, p.3.

The Rise and Fall of Kuchma's Authoritarianism in 1994-2004

As in Russia under Yeltsin, Kuchma's election to presidency in 1994 instigated the rise of authoritarianism in Ukraine. Kuchma, a "red director" from Dnipropetrovsk, relied extensively on business and regional groups – with which he had collaborated earlier – in building authoritarian rule, while also utilizing his control over state institutions to keep political and economic actors in line with the regime. At the same time, the new constitution adopted in 1996 enabled Kuchma to dominate the government, while considerably debilitating the authority of the Ukrainian legislature. As a result, the Kuchma presidency transformed Ukraine into an authoritarian regime, in which the ruling elite strictly controlled the media, harassed critics and opposition forces, and carried out electoral fraud in various elections. However, none of this ensured the survival of the authoritarian regime Kuchma built.

When Ukraine experienced its first peaceful transition of power in the post-Soviet era in 1994, many hoped Kuchma would move the country in a democratic direction. Despite running on a pro-Russian platform during the elections, Kuchma in the ensuing months seemed to put his campaign program on a back burner. Instead, he centered his administrative efforts on Ukraine's economic development. At this point, Kuchma and his fellow industrialists from Dnipropetrovsk "were just beginning to realize that the new Ukrainian state could make them very rich."[39] Partly as a result, Kuchma sought closer cooperation with the West to lead the country's transition to a market economy. His campaign promise of improved economic ties with Russia was set aside.

After three months in the office, Kuchma proposed "deep structural reforms" to stabilize Ukraine's financial system.[40] While Kuchma's plan for market reforms was saluted by national democrats, communists were unsurprisingly opposed the prospect of privatization. Although the parliament confirmed the economic reform plan with 231 votes in October 1994,[41] the privatization of state assets later proved to be the source of contention between the president and the leftist parties in the parliament. As a result, the privatization of state assets had been mostly realized through presidential decrees. By the end of Kuchma's first term, the share of private sector in Ukraine's GDP rose to above 50 percent – with the assistance of Western institutions.[42] More than 25 percent of large-

[39] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 195.
[40] Marta Kolomayets, "Kuchma Outlines Radical Program of Reforms," *Ukrainian Weekly*, October 16, 1994, p. 1.
[41] Marta Kolomayets, "Parliament Approves Kuchma Reform Program," *Ukrainian Weekly*, October 23, 1994, p.1.
[42] European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), "Share of GDP from Private Enterprise, 1991-2007," **cited in** Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 82.

scale enterprise assets had been transferred to private ownership by 2001 and mass privatization of small companies had been completed by 2003.[43]

While Kuchma's economic model drew strong criticism from the Left, his efforts to create a stronger presidency, with a new constitution, intensified the political conflict between these two forces in 1995. Kuchma proposed at first a draft law, which could have considerably strengthened the presidency, until a new constitution was completed. However, the leftist parties – which held altogether over 160 seats at the time[44] – insisted that because the bill anticipated the reversal of the several articles of the constitution in place, this required 2/3 majority in the parliament.[45] In response, Kuchma threatened to hold a national referendum on confidence in the president and the parliament. Despite the protest votes of communists, the draft eventually passed in the parliament on July 1995 with mostly the support of centrists and right parties.[46] The law, which was to stay in force for the next twelve months, granted a wide-range of powers to the president. However, Kuchma was not able to gain the right to dissolve the parliament, as this passage was removed from the law before the vote in the parliament took place.

In the ensuing months, Kuchma and the parliamentarians negotiated multiple draft versions of the constitution. Since the proposed drafts reinforced the presidential authority at the expense of the parliament, communists remained in opposition.[47] National democrats chose to compromise as long as the drafts reflected their vision of nationhood.[48] The fragmented center, with little ideological concern, found itself

[43] EBRD, "*Transition Indicators by Country*," http://www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/economic-research-and-data/data/forecasts-macro-data-transition-indicators.html.
[44] Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 134.
[45] Ibid., p. 194.
[46] Ibid., p. 195.
[47] Ibid., pp. 209-3.
[48] Ibid., pp. 213-7.

vulnerable to pressure from other political camps.[49] Only after Kuchma moved to call again for a nation-wide constitutional referendum, the parliament, with the strong leadership of its chairman Olexander Moroz, was able to adopt a new constitution on June 28, 1996.

The 1996 constitution crafted a strong presidency, an outcome of Kuchma's influence in the constitution-making process. First, the constitution gave the president powers to appoint and dismiss the prime minister, the cabinet members, and the heads of the central executive bodies. Second, the president was now able to propose bills, issue decrees, and veto laws originated in the parliament. Lastly, the constitution also granted the president the right to appoint one third of the Constitutional Court's justices.[50] Thus, the *Verkhovna Rada* (parliament) was no longer to dominate the Ukrainian political stage as it did in the Kravchuk era. Notably however, Kuchma's presidential authority was relatively weaker than Yeltsin's in Russia. In April 2000, Kuchma sought to gain more powers through a national referendum. The proposed amendments to the constitution envisaged to grant the right to dissolve the parliament to the president, lift parliamentarians' immunities from criminal prosecution, and establish a bicameral parliament.[51] All of this seemingly aimed at reducing power of the parliament. Despite galvanizing popular support for the constitutional changes in the national referendum, Kuchma was eventually not able to enforce their implementation.

The new constitution gave way to the presidential domination of the government and debilitated the legislature, partially explaining the rise of Kuchma's authoritarianism.

[49] Ibid., pp. 217-9.
[50] Petro Matiaszek, "A closer look at Ukraine's Constitution," *Ukrainian Weekly*, August 4, 1996.
[51] Jan Maksymiuk, "Subduing the Parliament with a Referendum," *RFERL*, January 26, 2000.

Equally important was the president's growing control of security and law enforcement bodies, which he effectively used to harass potential rival forces. Kuchma immediately appointed his close allies to the highest-ranking positions in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), and Tax Administration. Meanwhile, the security forces of Ukraine recovered from the disarray generated by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The number of police officers that the Ministry of Internal Affairs commanded reached almost 400,000 in 1999, four times larger than what it had been at the independence.[52] The SBU had 28,000 officers, while the State Tax Administration employed 72,000 inspectors.[53] Furthermore, the three institutions were transformed into repressive organs in the Kuchma era and served to collect information illegally on politicians and businessmen.[54] Most importantly, the regime used surveillance to ensure the elites' compliance with the regime,[55] as the Melnichenko tapes revealed. When politicians refused to obey, the regime put out damaging information to undermine them. Similarly, business owners who turned against the regime found their companies under close examination of the Tax Administration.[56] Additionally, Kuchma used police and tax inspectors to mobilize voters in their districts. Indeed, the employees of these bodies were threatened to be fired if they failed to do so.[57]

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[52] *Holos Ukrainy*, December 18, 1999, **cited in** Bohdan Harasymiw, "Policing, Democratization and Political Leadership in Postcommunist Ukraine," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 36(2), June 2003, p. 323.
[53] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 114-5.
[54] Keith A. Darden, "Blackmail as a Tool of State Domination: Ukraine under Kuchma," *East European Constitutional Review*, Spring/Summer 2001, p. 67-71.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid. Also, see, Way, "Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism."
[57] See, "New Tape Translation of Kuchma Allegedly Ordering Falsification of Presidential Election Returns," *Kyiv Post*, February 16, 2001.

As Bohdan Harasymiw aptly remarks, "since parliamentarians are themselves compromised, they are hampered … in collectively restraining the president from employing all means at his disposal … for his own political ends."[58] Instead, Kuchma's leadership in Ukraine created a system of corruption, which went a long way among parliamentarians.[59] This was largely an outcome of Ukraine's large-scale privatization, in which Kuchma used state resources to create a network of loyalists. In the late 1990s, the number of wealthy people in the country substantially increased. Having accumulated their wealth through unfair access to state resources, these actors – namely, oligarchs – sought to avoid potential prosecutions by holding seats in the parliament. Moreover, oligarchs – who were now in the parliament and owning political parties and media outlets – mobilized their resources for the incumbent regime, in return for gaining presidential favors in the allocation of state assets.[60] Yet, the system that Kuchma built to galvanize support from oligarchs in the ruling of country also "increased the chances that [economic] resources would fall into the 'wrong' hands."[61]

The incident of Pavlo Lazarenko was first to signify the drawbacks of Kuchma's system of rule. Having filled the administration with his allies from Dnipropetrovsk, Kuchma put Lazarenko, the governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, in charge of energy as the deputy prime minister within Yevhen Marchuk's cabinet in September 1995. After Kuchma fired Marchuk in May 1996, Lazarenko became the prime minister.[62] In the next twelve months of his premiership, Ukraine "became the epitome of corruption."[63] By

[58] Harasymiw, "Policing, Democratization and Political Leadership in Postcommunist Ukraine," p. 333.
[59] See, for a detailed study of system of corruption in the Kuchma era, JV Koshiw, *Abuse of Power: Corruption in the Office of the President*, Artemi Press Ltd, 2003.
[60] Also, see, Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, pp. 263-74.
[61] Way, "Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism," p.138.
[62] Koshiw, *Abuse of Power*, p. 78.
[63] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 95.

extorting money from companies and building the United Energy System of Ukraine – which became the largest gas distributor of the country – with Yuliia Timoshenko, Lazerenko accumulated massive wealth.[64] Furthermore, he exploited his political position in privatization deals, seeking to take control of various state assets and monopolize other sectors (apart from the gas market).[65] In the words of President Kuchma, "[Lazarenko] would have ' privatized' the whole country in a year or two."[66] In July 1997 after "he long overlooked Lazarenko's illegal financial machinations," [67] Kuchma dismissed him as prime minister.

In turn, Lazarenko moved swiftly to oppose the Kuchma regime, by developing *Hromada* (Community) party with Timoshenko and investing millions in media companies.[68] Seeking to prevent *Hromada* from entering parliament in the March 1998 elections, state authorities soon closed down Lazarenko's newspapers and TV channels with arbitrary charges.[69] In spite of this, *Hromada* was able to win 23 seats in the 1998 parliamentary elections. On the other hand, this intensified the regime's assault on Lazarenko and his party. In August 1998, Ukraine's widely politicized prosecutors accused him of money laundering.[70] After *Hromada* announced Lazarenko as its candidate in the 1999 presidential elections and Lazarenko stated his intentions to collaborate with Moroz's Socialist Party,[71] Kuchma also got his allies in the parliament to lift his immunity from prosecution. Meanwhile, Timoshenko, along with her ally

[64] Koshiw, *Abuse of Power*, pp. 77-98.
[65] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, pp.94-6.
[66] "Memoirs of a kind-hearted President Kuchma," *Kyiv Post*, November 18, 1999.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Koshiw, *Abuse of Power*, pp. 86-7.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] "Lazarenko for President of Ukraine," *Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), Vol. 5(12), January 25, 1999.

Olexander Turchinov, deserted the party, arguably because of fear of prosecution.[72] In February 1999, the Rada voted (310 to 39) to lift the immunity of Lazarenko.[73] He fled the country to avoid prosecution, and *Hromada* eventually disappeared.

The Lazerenko case set an example for other regime insiders, revealing the potential consequences of challenging the incumbent rule. Using administrative resources, President Kuchma also sought to weaken rival political parties on the right and the left. The leading party of western Ukraine, Rukh, had already experienced several splits by the late 1990s, some of which were master-minded by pro-regime oligarchs.[74] Furthermore, the suspicious death of the long-time head of the party, Chornovil, in a car accident[75] left the party more vulnerable to factionalism. Similarly, other smaller right-wing parties also found themselves in the midst of internal power struggles.[76] At the same time, a number of leftist political parties began to sprout in the early 2000s. To siphon votes from the Communist Party, the largest opposition group at the time in the parliament, these regime-orchestrated formations also placed "communist" in their names.[77] Nataliia Vitrenko and her Progressive Socialists, which she established after defecting from Moroz's Socialist Party, formed allegedly "loyal left wing 'opposition' [forces]."[78]

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[72] "Mutiny in Hromada," *Monitor*, Vol. 5(14), January 21, 1999.
[73] "Ukrainian Parliament Lifts Lazarenko's Immunity," *Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), Vol. 5(34), February 18, 1999.
[74] Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, Santa Barbara, California: Praeger Security International, 2015, p. 169.
[75] See, Taras Kuzio, "New Evidence Points to High-Level Involvement in Political Murders in Ukraine," *RFERL*, September 19, 2003.
[76] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 199.
[77] Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, p. 170.
[78] Taras Kuzio, "Oligarchs, Tapes and Oranges:' Kuchmagate to the Orange Revolution," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vo. 23 (1), March 2007, p. 36.

While the Kuchma regime utilized all means to diminish any political opposition, it also began to invest in creating a political party to solidify its ground. At first, the National Democratic Party (NDP) – formed in 1996 – aspired to "become a political core of the consolidation of pro-Kuchma centrist forces."[79] Despite its poor performance in the 1998 parliamentary elections, NDP's share of seats grew significantly by the end of the year.[80] Many parliamentarians, who were elected in single-mandate districts, landed in NDP mostly because of its close ties to the regime. Next, the rise of oligarch-engineered factions after the 1998 elections provided ground for Kuchma's authoritarian enactments. Because oligarchs sought to safeguard their economic gains, wield influence in the corridors of power, and benefit from parliamentary immunity, they poured money into building political parties. These forces subsequently aligned themselves with the Kuchma regime and supported the latter's policies in the Rada.

[79] Zimmer and Haran, "Unfriendly Takeover," p. 553.
[80] See, Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 265.

Table 4.4 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, March 29, 1998

Political Party	*PR Votes, %*	*PR Seats*	*SMD Seats*	*Total Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Communist Party	24.6	84	38	122	27.1
Rukh	9.4	32	14	46	10.2
Socialist/Rural Bloc	8.5	29	5	34	7.5
Progressive Socialist Party	4	14	2	16	3.5
Greens	5.4	19	–	19	4.2
National Democratic Party	5	17	12	29	6.4
Hromada	4.6	16	7	23	5.1
Social Democratic Party (United)	4	14	3	17	3.7
Other Parties	25.7	–	28	28	6.2
Independents	–	–	116	116	25.7
Against All/Invalid	8.4				
Total	100	225	225	450	100

In the 1998 elections, 225 deputies were elected from party lists according to the principle of proportional representation. Election threshold for political parties was set at 4 percent. The other 225 deputies were elected in single-mandate districts through first-past-the-post formula.
Source: Sarah Birch, *Elections and Democratization in Ukraine*, pp. 106-7; Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

The Social Democratic Party (United) (SDP(u) was one of the oligarchic factions in the new parliament. While the party was officially headed by the former prime minister Marchuk and former president Kravchuk, it was in reality controlled by Victor Medvedchuk and Hrihorii Surkis – the Kyiv clan. These oligarchs accumulated their wealth in gas and real estate sectors in the 1990s.[81] Medvedchuk also gained the control of two Ukrainian TV channels, Inter and 1+1, which maintained around 50 percent of the viewer market.[82] The Kyiv clan and SDP(u) "were often Kuchma's most reliable supporters in the parliament," after factionalism thrived within NDP.[83] Another oligarchic group was the Revival of the Regions (RoR), which was formed in 1999 by the former

[81] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 107.
[82] Olena Prytula, "The Ukrainian Media Rebellion," in *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. by Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul, Washington, D.C: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006, p. 111.
[83] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 271.

members of NDP.[84] Later, two factions, Democratic Council and Regions of Ukraine, sprang from RoR. Olexander Volkov and Ihor Bakai, who both made their money in the energy sector, headed Democratic Council. [85] Volkov also played a critical role in Kuchma's re-election campaign in 1999. Regions of Ukraine was controlled by Donetsk businessman and politicians.[86] In 2001, Mikola Azarov, the head of the State Tax Administration, became the leader of the faction. The last oligarchic formation was Labour Ukraine, led by Victor Pinchuk and Serhii Tihipko – the Dnipropetrovsk clan. [87] While Pinchuk, who is also Kuchma's son-in-law, built up his wealth in steel industry, Tihipko made his money in the banking sector. Like Medvedchuk, Pinchuk also owned Ukrainian TV channels. His ICTV, New Channel, and STB maintained 35 percent of total TV audience.[88]

With the support of his allies in different factions, Kuchma was able to remove socialist Moroz from the chairmanship of the parliament immediately after the 1998 elections. At the same time, the decision of the Communist Party, which remained the largest group in the Rada, to back Olexander Tkachenko, the head of the Peasant Party, enabled the latter to become the new chairman, despite the protest of pro-presidential groups.[89] Tkachenko subsequently "developed leadership ambitions" and his resistance to leave the post of chairman in 2000 precipitated a political crisis within the Rada. [90]

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[84] Ibid., p. 266.
[85] Ibid., p. 271.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Prytula, "The Ukrainian Media Rebellion," p. 112.
[89] "Leftists Wins Ukrainian Parliament's Chairmanship," *Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), Vol. 4(130), July 8, 1998.
[90] Wolczuk, *The Moulding of Ukraine*, p. 265, and 268-9.

Notwithstanding this, Tkachenko's replacement of Moroz's parliamentary position was a victory for Kuchma ahead of the 1999 presidential elections.

Admittedly, Moroz was the most serious threat on the left for Kuchma's potential re-election. To weaken the socialist leader's appeal in the presidential race, Kuchma on the one hand subtly promoted other leftist alternatives.[91] In particular, Ukrainian TV stations, controlled by the regime and its supporters, provided more coverage to Progressive Socialist Party's leader, Vitrenko, while Moroz, along with the communist leader Petro Simonenko, received only negative coverage.[92] On 2 October, Vitrenko and her supporters were injured in a campaign meeting as a result of a grenade attack by unknown persons. The Ministry of Internal Affairs rapidly accused a local head of the Moroz's campaign of organizing the attack.[93] With the media providing wide coverage of the incident, the socialist leader's campaign appeal was subsequently tarnished. On the other hand, Kuchma effectively deprived Moroz's campaign of necessary economic resources. Wilson remarks that "Lazarenko and, possibly, Timoshenko had planned to finance" Moroz.[94] As noted earlier, Lazarenko left the country to avoid corruption charges after his parliamentary immunity was lifted in February 1999. Conversely, Timoshenko "was convinced to return to Kuchma's fold" after her frozen bank accounts were released.[95] In the end, Kuchma's only "viable rival" on the left remained the communist leader Simonenko.

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[91] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, pp. 200-1.
[92] Sarah Birch, "The Presidential Election in Ukraine, October 1999," *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 21, 2012, p. 342; OSCE, *Ukraine Presidential Elections 31 October and 14 November 1999: Final Report*, Warsaw, March 7, 2000, pp. 36-41.
[93] Katya Gorchinskaya, "Grenade Attack Rattles Vitrenko," *Kyiv Post*, October 7, 1999.
[94] Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 43.
[95] Dmitrii Popov and Ilia Milshtein, *Oranzheivaia Printsessa: Zagadka Iulii Tymoshenko*, Kyiv: Izdatelstvo Olgy Morozovoi, 2006, pp. 186-7, 190 **cited in** Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 61.

By using similar tactics, Kuchma was also able to get rid of potential candidates on the non-left spectrum. For a while, Victor Yushchenko, the chairman of National Bank of Ukraine, "had been toying with the idea of running for president."[96] However, the murder of Vadim Hetman, the head of the Ukrainian Interbank Currency Exchange, in April 1998, left Yushchenko without any source of financing for his election campaign.[97] Moreover, Kuchma's campaign manager, Volkov, allegedly offered Yushchenko the post of premiership in exchange for his decision not to run in the race.[98] Another presidential candidate was the former prime minister, Yevhen Marchuk. While he made earlier efforts to unite various forces on the left and the center around a common candidate, this proved to be futile. After the first round of election, Marchuk declared his support for Kuchma. In turn, he was appointed as chairman of National Security Council.[99]

While Kuchma systematically eliminated his opponents across the political spectrum on the one hand, he boosted his appeal by mobilizing oligarchs and their resources around his election campaign on the other hand. An election bloc, made up of NDP and oligarchic factions in the parliament and headed by prime minister Valerii Pustovoitenko, was formed to support Kuchma's re-election.[100] At the same time, Ukrainian oligarchs reportedly raised over $1.5 billion for Kuchma's campaign expenditure.[101] Next, Kuchma made extensive use of the state TV station *UT1* and other private channels to promote his candidacy. The OSCE report reveals that Ukraine's four main TV stations – *UT1*, *Inter*, *1+1*, and later *STB* – "devoted the majority of their prime-time news coverage to the

[96] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 119.
[97] Ibid. p. 341.
[98] Kost Bandarenko, "Naperedodni Premieriadi," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, January 10, 2005 **quoted in** Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, pp.43-4.
[99] Birch, "The Presidential Election in Ukraine, October 1999," p.
[100] Kuzio, "Oligarchs, Tapes and Oranges:" pp. 34-5.
[101] Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, pp. 201-2.

incumbent … whilst his opponents received substantially less airtime."[102] Additionally, TV channels provided sympathetic coverage of Kuchma's campaign, while his main rivals were given mostly negative coverage.[103] At the same time, private media stations, which refused to endorse Kuchma, came under close scrutiny of State Tax authorities.[104] Lastly, the incumbent regime coerced local authorities, militia, and public institutions into campaigning in its favor. According to the OSCE report, the staff of medical and educational institutions as well as the heads of collective farms "were threatened with the loss of their jobs" if they resisted getting involved in Kuchma's campaign.[105] Also, three governors were allegedly dismissed after their regions failed to raise sufficient votes for Kuchma.[106]

In the first round of the presidential elections, Kuchma was able to gather the largest share of votes (36.5%). The communist leader, Simonenko, came in second (22.2 %), with Moroz a distant third (11.2%). As many scholars remarked, this was the best possible scenario for Kuchma. Similar to Yeltsin's 1996 presidential campaign in Russia, he was able to capitalize on the threat of communism with the Ukrainian electorate. Thus, Kuchma portrayed himself "as the only leader capable of preventing a possible red 'revanche.'"[107] In turn, Simonenko sought to mitigate his appeal by declaring support for the improvement of the private sector and Ukrainian independence.[108] Yet, Simonenko's last-minute attempt to broaden his appeal fell short. In the end, Kuchma was re-elected

[102] OSCE, Ukraine Presidential Elections 31 October and 14 November 1999: Final Report, p. 21.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid, pp. 22-3.
[105] Ibid., pp. 16-8.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Roman Woronowycz, "On the Campaign Trail," *Ukrainian Weekly*, October 10, 1999, p.6.
[108] *Komunist*, No. 45, November 11, 1999, p. 1 **quoted in** Wilson, *Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, p. 203.

by winning the 56 percent of vote against Simonenko's 38 percent of vote on November 14, 1999.

Most importantly, regional polarization, which earlier corresponded to competing visions of national identity, mattered less in the 1999 elections. In fact, Simonenko's pro-Russian appeal was not able to impede Kuchma garnering support in the eastern regions. For instance, Donetsk and Kharkiv, where Simonenko received the largest share of votes in October, backed Kuchma in November. In addition to capturing Russophile voters, Kuchma was also able to gain the support of Galician oblasts in the west of Ukraine. In the end, Kuchma's anti-communist stance, along with his system of patronage, enabled him to garner the votes necessary for his reelection from across Ukrainian regions.

Table 4.5 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, 1999

Candidate	*Political Party*	*First round, October 11, 1999 %*	*Number*	*Run-off, November 14, 1999 %*	*Number*
Total Votes (% of electorate)		70.1	26,305,198	74.8	28,212,484
Leonid Kuchma	Self-Nominated	36.5	9,598,672	56.2	15,870,722
Petro Simonenko	Communist Party	22.2	5,849,077	37.8	10,665,420
Oleksandr Moroz	Socialist Party	11.2	2,969,896		
Natalia Vitrenko	Progressive Socialist Party	10.9	**2,886,972**		
Yevhen Marchuk	Self-Nominated	8.1	2,138,356		
Yurii Kostenko	Rukh	2.2	570,623		
Gennadii Udovenko	Rukh	1.2	319,778		
Others		1.8			
Against All/Invalid Votes		5.7		5.9	
Total		100		100	

Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

After his victory in the elections, Kuchma immediately turned to building a parliamentary majority to raise support for necessary economic reforms. Given that Ukraine was "on the verge of default" for foreign loans, oligarchs also joined forces together with Kuchma

for accelerating the process of reforms.[109] First, Yushchenko, a pro-reform economist, was approved as prime minister of Ukraine on December 22, 1999 with 296 votes in the parliament.[110] He immediately appointed Timoshenko, a former oligarch, as deputy prime minister in charge of energy. Second, eleven factions on the center and right formed a pro-presidential majority in the Rada on January 13, 2000.[111] Lastly, with the support of these factions, Kuchma launched an attack on Tkachenko, the leftist speaker of the parliament. Tkachenko's resistance to the parliamentary vote in favor of his dismissal was responded by the prosecutor office through re-opening a corruption investigation in February 2000 which had been sidelined in 1998.[112] In the end, Ivan Pliushch, a Kuchma associate, replaced Tkachenko as chairman of the parliament.

With the strong power-base in the parliament and control over the government, Kuchma also reinvigorated his plans to expand presidential authority in early 2000. As noted earlier, the president pushed for a national referendum in April, which subsequently culminated overwhelming public support for proposed changes, partly as a result of the regime's pressure at the local level. While Kuchma was one step closer to acquiring more powers at the expense of the parliament, the Gongadze scandal eventually impeded his creeping authoritarianism.

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[109] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, 129-31.
[110] Stefan Korshak, "Verkhovna Rada overwhelmingly approves reformer Viktor Yuschenko as Prime Minister," *Ukrainian Weekly*, December 16, 1999, p. 1.
[111] "Coalition Needs Unity, Perseverance," *Ukrainian Weekly*, January 23, 2000, p. 6.
[112] Stefan Korshak, "Leaders of Leftist Opposition in Rada Targets of Criminal Investigations," *Kyiv Post*, February 20, 2000, p. 1.

The Gongadze Scandal and Its Aftermath

On November 28, 2000, a month after opposition journalist Georgii Gongandze's beheaded body was found south of Kyiv, Moroz publicized audiotapes of Kuchma that had been secretly recorded in 1998-2000 by one of the presidential security guards, Mikola Melnichenko. The tapes not only revealed Kuchma's involvement in the murder of Gongadze, but also the depth of his overall abuse of power.[113] Subsequently, Ukrainians began to pour into the streets in demonstrations calling for "Ukraine without Kuchma." In mid-December, protesters – who were mostly made up of socialists and led by the leaders of the Socialist Party, Moroz and Yurii Lutsenko, – erected a tent city in the center of Kyiv. Rukh members and radical nationalists also joined the tent city. The protesters called for the resignation of President Kuchma, Minister of Internal Affairs, Yurii Kravcehnko, and head of SBU, Leonid Derkach.[114] After a week of demonstrations, with the arrival of Christmas, activists ended their tent city momentarily.

In early February, the "Ukraine without Kuchma" protest were resumed in Kyiv. The demonstrators again consisted of diverse political groups, ranging from communists to nationalists. Moreover, Timoshenko of the Fatherland Party (*Batkivshcina*) stepped into the leadership position in this wave of protests. Her efforts to reform Ukraine's energy sector as deputy prime minister over the last year agitated particularly pro-Kuchma oligarchs, as they lost their privileges in the business.[115] Timoshenko was at first charged with money laundering, relating her position in the United Energy System. Next, Kuchma

[113] See, Koshiw, *Abuse of Power*.
[114] Yarema A. Bachynsky, "Protesters Erect Tent Towns in Kyiv as Gongadze Scandal Continues," *Ukrainian Weekly*, December 24, 2000, p. 1 and 13.
[115] Aslund, *How Ukraine Become a Market Economy and Democracy*, pp. 138-9.

dismissed her as deputy prime minister in January 2000.[116] In response, she, along with Moroz, created the Forum for National Salvation to coordinate efforts for Kuchma's removal.[117] Shortly after this, Timoshenko was jailed and accused of corruption.

In addition to arresting Timoshenko, the Kuchma regime sought to discredit protesters in various ways. The state channel and other stations owned by pro-Kuchma oligarchs questioned the motivations of protesters. Kuchma claimed that demonstrations were financed by Lazarenko and Timoshenko, and the Gongadze case was used to destabilize the country. Next, the regime used provocateurs to disrupt the opposition activities. It also organized protests in the center of Kyiv to show support for Kuchma. Lastly, state authorities resorted to force in early March and dismantled the tent city.

In the end, the protest movement succeeded in removing Kravchenko and Derkach – both of whom were recorded while speaking about Gongadze with Kuchma – from their posts as Minister of Internal Affairs and head of SBU, respectively. However, Kuchma continued to stay in power, partly because of opposition leaders' failure to mobilize the bulk of Ukrainian population. The largest demonstrations were able to gather around 20,000 to 30,000 people.[118] A poll, conducted in late 2000 and early 2001, found that only 1 percent of whole population was ready to participate in protests, while 25 percent were inclined to "wait for better times."[119] At the same time, the failure of the opposition movement to appeal to the broader public "may be related to the fact that national identity played a far less prominent role in this protest than it did in successful protests," as Way

[116] Roman Woronowycz, "Kuchma Dismisses Tymoshenko," *Ukrainian Weekly*, January 28, 2001, p. 1 and 4.
[117] Jan Maksymiuk, "Forum for National Salvation Is Established," *Ukrainian Weekly*, February 18, 2001, p. 3 and 8.
[118] Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 58.
[119] SOCIS survey **cited in** *Ukrainian Weekly*, February 18, 2001, p. 21.

remarks.[120] Another reason Kuchma was able to remain in power was because the support of oligarchic factions in parliament rescued him from potential impeachment.

With the Gongadze scandal, Kuchma's popularity sank at home, dropping as low as 26 percent.[121] He also lost his credibility in the eyes of Western leaders. In 2002, Kuchma was excluded from an upcoming NATO meeting. Rejected by the West, Kuchma turned to Putin's Russia to develop closer ties. At the same time, Prime Minister Yushchenko emerged as the most popular leader in the government.[122] His pro-market reforms gained him the support of the West, including the United States. However, Yushchenko's economic policies disturbed pro-Kuchma oligarchs, who suffered losses in their sources of income, and aroused the opposition of the communists. Together these two forces ousted Yushchenko's government together with 263 votes in the parliament in April 2001.[123] This also marked the end of the coalition between centrist factions and national democrats as the latter favored Yushchenko's leadership.

Simultaneously, national democrats began to regroup within two political formations. First, Timoshenko initiated steps to create an anti-Kuchma alliance. Following her release from prison in March 2001,[124] Timoshenko formed an electoral alliance based on her Fatherland Party to run in the 2002 parliamentary race. Second, Yushchenko moved to lead the electoral bloc "Our Ukraine," although he continued to refrain from criticizing Kuchma's presidency. Most critically, Yushchenko's growing popularity attracted the support of several wealthy businessmen to his bloc. Petro Poroshenko was one of them,

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[120] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 63.
[121] "The Opinions and Views of Ukrainian Population in January 2001," *Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS)*, January 17, 2001.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Roman Woronowycz, "Verkhovna Rada Votes to Oust Yushchenko," *Ukrainian Weekly*, April 29, 2001.
[124] State authorities filed a criminal case against the judge who released Timoshenko in May 2001. See, "Agents Raid Offices of Ukrainian Judge Known for Opposition Decisions," *Kyiv Post*, May 28, 2001.

who owned confectionary factories. Another businessman was Yevhenii Chervonenko, who run a drink and a truck company. David Zhaniia and Mikola Martinenko, both made their money in the energy sector, were also among the supporters of Yushchenko's bloc. All these millionaires accumulated their wealth, owing to good relations with Kuchma and his administration. However, unlike other oligarchs who remained on the side of the Kuchma regime, they "nearly all run active businesses, which would benefit from a less active state."[125] As the rule of law remained weak in Ukraine, these oligarchs thus saw the involvement in politics as a way to protect their properties from the state. Finally, the liberalization of economy under Yushchenko's premiership made the oligarchs less dependent on the state, which encouraged them to invest in opposition forces.[126]

By contrast, major oligarchs – billionaires – continued to back the Kuchma regime, while competing with each other to grab more state assets. Various oligarchic factions in the parliament, including centrist NDP, Pinchuk's Labor Party, and Party of Regions, among others, formed an election bloc – "For a United Ukraine," – ahead of the 2002 parliamentary elections. The chief of Kuchma's presidential administration, Volodimir Litvin, undertook the leadership position of the bloc. Additionally, Medvedchuk's SDP(u) ran on the side of the regime in the upcoming elections.

The election result was a victory for Yuschenko's Our Ukraine, gaining 24.8 percent of the seats in parliament. The opposition bloc performed well particularly in multi-mandate districts, dominating western regions of Ukraine. Although For a United Ukraine won only half the number of PR votes and seats as Our Ukraine, it gained around 50

[125] Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 63.
[126] Anders Aslund, "The Ancien Regime: Kuchma and the Oligarchs," in *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. by Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul, Washington, D.C: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006, pp. 9-28.

percent more SMD seats than Our Ukraine, giving the bloc just 11 fewer total seats in the parliament. The pro-Kuchma bloc had a strong showing in the eastern regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv. The Communist Party's share of seats amounted to 14.4 percent, gaining much support in southern Ukraine. Timoshenko's bloc won 4.8 percent of seats, with the backing of western regions. Also, Moroz's Socialist Party and Medvedchuk's SDP(u) scored around 5 percent of parliamentary seats. While independents won 20 percent of the seats, no less than 5 percent rapidly aligned with For a United Ukraine.

Table 4.6 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, March 31, 2002

Political Party	*PR Votes, %*	*PR Seats*	*SMD Seats*	*Total Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Our Ukraine	23.5	70	42	112	24.8
For a United Ukraine	11.7	35	66	101	22.4
Communist Party	19.8	59	6	65	14.4
Timoshenko Bloc	7.2	22	0	22	4.8
Socialist Democratic Party (United)	6.2	19	5	24	5.3
Socialist Party	6.8	20	3	23	5.1
Other Parties	17.9	–	9	9	2
Independents			94	94	20
Against All/Invalid	6.1				
Total	100	225	225	450	100

Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

However, the victory of opposition forces in the election did not necessarily translate into growing influence in state institutions. On the contrary, Kuchma and his allies succeeded in installing Litvin as speaker of the parliament in May 2002 by a vote of 226. After the appointment of Medvedchuk as head of the presidential administration, the regime also intensified its efforts to form a parliamentary majority. This was completed in October with the support of oligarchic factions which earlier put together For a United Ukraine. In November, Viktor Yanukovich, the chairman of Donetsk region, was appointed as

prime minister, gaining 234 votes in the parliament. The triumph of pro-Kuchma forces was partially an outcome of the intimidation, bribery, and blackmailing of some parliamentarians.

While Kuchma's allies were capturing the government, regime opponents were suffering losses. In particular, business owners who backed the opposition forces came under close scrutiny of state authorities. The companies of Poroshenko and Zhvaniia, among others, were raided on various occasions.[127] Journalist and reporters in opposition were increasingly subjected to the government's pressure. Kuchma's chief of staff, Medvedchuk, also tightened the regime's control of media by imposing a new form of censorship. In what is called *temniki*, Medvedchuk and his staff dictated "specific events and topics the television stations should accent in their news coverage."[128] Furthermore, journalists who did not comply with *temniki* had been subjected to threats.

In response to Kuchma's growing repression, opposition leaders sought to instigate street demonstrations. In September 2002, the "Arise, Ukraine!" movement, led by Timoshenko, Moroz, and Simonenko, called for the removal of Kuchma. However, Yushchenko's unclear attitude towards the protest hampered opposition leaders' appeal to Ukrainian people.[129] The movement was able to gather 25,000 people in Kyiv, at most.

While the "Arise, Ukraine" demonstrations failed to gain sufficient support to force Kuchma's exit in 2002, Yushchenko emerged as a favorable candidate in opposition before the 2004 presidential elections. In turn, the pro-Kuchma factions in the parliament

[127] Ibid., p. 68.
[128] Roman Woronowycz, "Journalist Take a Stand: No More Censorship," *Ukrainian Weekly*, October 20, 2002, p. 1 and 16.
[129] See, Roman Woronowycz, "Anti-Kuchma Protests Continue," *Ukrainian Weekly*, October 27, 2002, p. 1 and 3.

declared their support for Yanukovich, who also became the head of Party of Regions in 2003, as presidential candidate. However, Kuchma's fear that Yushchenko might win led him to seek changes in the constitution which would reduce presidential powers and strengthen parliamentary authority. While communists and socialists, along with oligarchic factions, backed Kuchma's proposal, the Timoshenko bloc and Yushchenko's Our Ukraine strongly opposed it. On April 8, 2004, 294 parliamentarians voted in favor of constitutional changes, just 6 votes short of the necessary two-thirds majority.[130]

The 2004 Presidential Elections and the Orange Revolution

The downfall of Kuchma's authoritarianism came with the popular protests that arose in response to the rigged presidential elections of 2004. The mass rallies, which had become known as the Orange Revolution, led to the nullification of the November 21 runoff by the Supreme Court and the scheduling of a new run-off on December 26, 2004. In what follows, the opposition leader Yushchenko defeated Kuchma's hand-picked successor Yanukovich. Moreover, I argue that two factors led to the success of the opposition movement in ousting Ukraine's authoritarian regime. First, Yanukovich's election campaign, which was purposefully built upon provoking divided perceptions of Ukrainian identity, played an inverse role by prompting many people who ascribed to Ukrainophile identity to take part in demonstrations against the regime. Second, Kuchma's system of patronage, which distributed state economic resources to private actors in exchange for political support, turned against the regime. While privatization of the early 2000s increased the wealth of oligarchs, simultaneous market reforms

[130] See, Roman Woronowycz, "Verkhovna Rada fails, by 6 Votes, to Pass Constitutional Amendments," *Ukrainian Weekly*, April 11, 2011, p. 1 and 8.

diminished their dependence on the state. All this encouraged some of the oligarchs, who grew weary of Kuchma's strong hand in the economy, to provide financial and organizational resources necessary for stimulating the anti-regime protest. In the end, the opposition movement's ability to gain broad support from the Ukrainophile population, along with its access to economic resources, led to the downfall of Kuchma's authoritarianism in 2004. We will turn to these arguments below in details.

As noted earlier, Yushchenko became a popular political figure after serving as prime minister in 2000-01. Under his leadership, Ukraine's economy grew considerably and Ukrainian pensioners began to receive their pay checks.[131] While Yushchenko's efforts put the country's economy on its feet and also gained him the support of the West, the Gongadze scandal brought Kuchma administration's corruption and criminality to light. At this point, Kuchma's popularity sank at home, and his only ally remained Putin's Russia abroad. Moreover, Kuchma's fear of prosecution led him to anoint a successor, who was also not very popular in Ukraine. In fact, early opinion polls revealed the popularity of Yushchenko in comparison to Yanukovich (around 38% to 32%).

To broaden his appeal, Yanukovich at first made a populist appeal by promising increases in pensions and welfare benefits. Although this had a positive impact in Yanukovich's ratings, it was still not sufficient for him to win an election.[132] With the arrival of the arrival of Russian political technologists – including Gleb Pavlovskii and Marat Gelman – upon the invitation of Kuchma's chief of staff, Medvedchuk, the Yanukovich campaign gained a new direction. The strategy was now to cast the elections

[131] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 147-8.
[132] See, Volodymyr Paniotto, "Ukraine: Presidential Elections and the Orange Revolution," *KIIS*, 2005, p. 10-1.

as a struggle between the competing visions for Ukraine. Thus, Yanukovich's campaign focused on portraying him as a pro-Russian leader, while discrediting Yushchenko as a Ukrainian nationalist. In this vein, Yanukovich pledged to elevate the status of Russian to an official language and to introduce dual citizenship of Ukrainians with Russia.[133] He also revealed himself in opposition to Ukraine's NATO membership. A 2004 opinion poll found that around 60 percent of Ukrainians agreed with Yanukovich's proposals for Russian language and dual citizenship, while more than 20 percent opposed these potential policies. [134] Similarly, 43 percent of Ukrainians were against the country's access to NATO, while 19 percent was in favor of such direction. [135] Lastly, Putin's visit to Ukraine a week before the election also strengthened Yanukovich's campaign appeal among the Russophile population.

In turn, Yushchenko sought to appeal to the Ukrainian people by promising "change" in the country. He made a commitment to end corruption, enforce the rule of law, and promote freedom. Yushchenko unequivocally supported Ukraine's greater integration with Europe. While his campaign did not embrace ethno-nationalistic vision of Ukrainian people, he nonetheless favored Ukrainian to remain the sole state language. Additionally, Yushchenko encouraged constituencies to be cautious against the government which "tr[ies] to divide the Ukrainian people into 'west' and 'east,' divide us by ethnic origin and language, by history and faith" in order to deflect the opposition against itself. He maintained that "there is only one conflict in Ukraine today – between those in power and

[133] "Yanukovich Povtoril Piar-khod Kuchmy i Zakryl Sebe Dorogy na Zapad," [Yanukovich Repeated the PR Move of Kuchma and Closed Himself to the West," *Ukrainskaia Pravda,* September 27, 2004.
[134] Paniotto, "Ukraine: Presidential Elections and the Orange Revolution," p. 10.
[135] Ibid.

the people."[136] Thus, Yushchenko refused to run on an election platform that Yanukovich's team very much attempted to impose.

Despite Yushchenko's resistance to get involved in a divisive campaign, Yanukovich and the regime continued to discredit the opposition leader as a Western agent, extremist, and radical nationalist. In October, tons of flyers and posters were found in various warehouses in and around Kyiv. These materials propagated anti-American and anti-Yushchenko sentiments together by even hinting a threat of a civil war if an American agent comes into power.[137] Next, state authorities labelled youth organizations which favored Yushchenko's candidacy as extremist groups. More than 350 activists of *Pora* (It's Time), modelled on the opposition movements of Serbia (*Otpor*) and Georgia (*Kmara*) which had succeeded in overthrowing authoritarian leaders, were detained across the country.[138] Security services also claimed to find explosives in *Pora*'s Kyiv office. While police found no criminal evidence in their initial search which was videotaped by activists, they returned to the office when there was no one around. Next, the Prosecutor General's office filed a case against *Pora* on the grounds of "terrorism" and "destabilizing the situation in the country."[139] State authorities also suggested that members of *Pora* might have planted the bomb in a Kyiv market, which killed one person and injured eleven people in August 2004.[140] Lastly, various radical nationalist groups

[136] "Campaign Report: Viktor Yushchenko's Announcement of His Bid for the Presidency," *Ukrainian Weekly*, July 11, 2004, p. 3 and 11.
[137] See, *Kyiv Post*, October 7, 2004, p. 1 and 3
[138] Pavol Demes and Joerg Forbrig, "Pora – "It's Time" for Democracy in Ukraine," in *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. by Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul, Washington, D.C: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006, p. 94.
[139] "Genprokuratura Prishla 'Pore' Statiu Terrorizm" [General Prosecutor Came at Pora with the Article on Terrorism," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, October 16, 2004.
[140] "Genprokuratura Sviazyvaet Poru c Troeshinskimi Teroristami," [General Prosecutor Links Pora with the Terrorists of Troeshina Market," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, October 18, 2004.

with close ties to Medvedchuk and SDP(u) were used to delegitimize Yushchenko and his supporters. Pro-regime TV stations widely aired the election advertisements of these groups which were ostensibly in favor of Yushchenko, but indeed served to "build up anti-Yushchenko stereotypes in the east."[141] In the same vein, the nationalist groups controlled by the regime held demonstrations to spread an image of Yushchenko as a fascist leader.

As the regime controlled major Ukrainian TV channels, Yushchenko's candidacy was also continually given negative coverage. Yanukovich's election campaign dominated the news and received sympathetic coverage in all the main TV stations which were controlled by the state and pro-regime oligarchs. Moreover, the regime forced censorship on editorial boards, journalists, and reporters. Media agencies which refused to comply with *temniki* were systematically harassed. Channel 5 was one of the news outlets which was subjected to the regime's pressure. The TV station, which was co-owned by Our Ukraine's Petro Poroshenko, found its broadcasting license revoked and bank accounts frozen in October, because of its alternative coverage of the elections.[142]

In a similar way, the government exploited its control over administrative resources to promote Yanukovich's candidacy. State employees were encouraged to campaign in favor of Kuchma's hand-picked successor at local levels. Students and public sector workers were intimidated if they refused to support Yanukovich. Simultaneously, police officers were used to impede people's attendance in opposition rallies. Some campaign events of opposition presidential candidates were also thwarted by state authorities.[143]

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[141] Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 91.
[142] Oksana Tsisyk, "Channel 5 Staff Starts, Ends Hunger Strike," *Kyiv Post*, October 28, 2004, p. 3 and 6.
[143] OSCE, *Ukraine Presidential Elections 31 October, 21 November and 26 December 2004: Final Report*, Warsaw, May 11, 2005, pp. 17-8.

In the end, all these government tactics led to a spike in Yanukovich's popularity. Late polls showed that more than 40 percent of the Ukrainians backed Yanukovich, compared to earlier 32 percent.[144] Notwithstanding this, the regime reportedly attempted to carry out election fraud to ensure a victory for Yanukovich. However, these efforts fell short. In the first round of elections, Yushchenko defeated Yanukovich by a small margin, 39.90 percent to 39.26 percent. Thus, the regime was only able to falsify election results to diminish the gap between Yushchenko's and Yanukovich's shares of vote, since the exit polls showed that Yushchenko was leading by around 5 points.[145] As also expected, Yushchenko gained the support of the western and central regions, while Yanukovich was backed in the eastern and southern regions.

After the first round of elections, Timoshenko's bloc, Moroz's Socialist Party, and ex-Prime Minister Anatolii Kinakh came together to endorse Yushchenko's candidacy. Yushchenko's popularity ratings rose above 40 percent in November, while Yanukovich's ratings declined to 35 percent.[146] In turn, the regime intensified its efforts to carry out electoral fraud in the run-off elections held in November. According to preliminary results, Yanukovich was declared as the winner of the elections late in the night of 21 November. Conversely, exit polls put Yushchenko ahead of Yanukovich by 53 percent to 44 percent.[147] As it became clear that state authorities had carried out large-scale fraud,[148] Yushchenko called on his supporters to defend democracy. In response, more than 200,000 people poured into Kyiv's central square *Maidan Nezalezhnosti*

[144] Paniotto, "Ukraine: Presidential Elections and the Orange Revolution," p. 11.
[145] Ibid., p. 15.
[146] Ibid., p. 11.
[147] Ibid., p. 16.
[148] For the methods that state authorities used to falsify elections, see, also, Paniotto, "Ukraine: Presidential Elections and the Orange Revolution," p. 13-4.

(Independence Square) on November 22. With *Pora* providing the early organizational muscle, hundreds of tents were erected in downtown Kyiv on November 22-23. In the ensuing days, many more Yushchenko supporters travelled to participate in the demonstrations, particularly from the western regions. Some western regions and cities (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil) also refused the preliminary election results and declared Yushchenko as Ukraine's president.[149] In a symbolic act, Yushchenko was furthermore sworn in presidency before the parliament on November 23. However, the Central Election Commission announced Yanukovich's victory against Yushchenko on November 24, with 49.46 to 46.61 percent of the vote.

After Yanukovich was declared as the winner of the elections, the anti-regime protest became more intensified. The demonstrators seized the Trade Union building, the Ukrainian House, and the City Hall in Kyiv center, which were used to coordinate protest activities.[150] Upon the call of Yushchenko, the activists, mostly made up of *Pora* members, [151] also blocked the state buildings, including the ministries and the Presidential Administration offices. While "a couple of thousands of [*Pora*] activists … create[d] an initial 'nucleus' for the demonstrations,"[152] hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian people travelled to Kyiv in support of Yushchenko. Sizable opposition rallies were also held in other cities, including Lviv, Sumy, Kharkiv and Odesa. Many protesters displayed Yushchenko's campaign color, orange, in their clothing, ribbons and flags, while chanting

[149] Oksana Tsisyk, "Regions Choose Own President," *Kyiv Post*, November 25, 2004, p. 7.
[150]Roman Woronowycz, "On the Streets of Kyiv: A Look at the Protesters' Days and Nights," *Ukrainian Weekly*, December 5, 2005, p. 5.
[151] Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 129.
[152] Andrew Wilson conveys this information from Rostyslav Pavlenko, a Kyiv based political scientist and the current Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration. See, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 129.

the slogans of "*Yushchenko is our president*," "*Together we are many, we cannot be defeated*," and "*East-West together.*"

Thus, massive electoral fraud sparked popular protests throughout Ukraine on the side of Yushchenko. According to Mark Beissinger's study of different surveys, between 13 and 18 percent of Ukraine's 36 million adult population participated in these demonstrations which lasted nineteen days.[153] A larger share of Ukrainian people also gave support to the pro-Yushchenko movement rather than opposing it, although the margin varied between 1 percent to 11 percent in the surveys.[154] Despite many people seemed to unite against an authoritarian regime, Beissinger finds that protesters had indeed a weak commitment to democratic values. For instance, only 34 percent of Ukrainians who joined the demonstrations stated that they supported a multi-party system, while 38 percent did not share this view.[155] Similarly, 61 percent of pro-Yushchenko demonstrators agreed that strong leaders could overcome the challenges that the country met better than democratic mechanisms.[156] Lastly, only 40 percent expressed that they protested "to defend the values of a just, democratic society," when asked to list two reasons for participation.[157] Therefore, Beissinger remarks that "a majority of those who participated were not primarily motivated by the desire to defend democratic values," although the protest certainly benefitted from democratically minded individuals and leaders.[158]

[153] Beissinger, "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution," p.7.
[154] Ibid., p. 6-7.
[155] Ibid., p. 9.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.

Then, the obvious question remains: What explains this popular protest? Indeed, competing visions of Ukrainian nation seem to be the major source of mobilization of support on the ground. As noted earlier, Yanukovich's campaign sought to provoke and exploit the divided perceptions of Ukrainian identity in anticipation of gaining broader support than Yushchenko. Thus, Yanukovich used his election platform to make pro-Russian appeals and to discredit Yushchenko as a radical Ukrainian nationalist. However, this culminated an inverse effect by impelling many citizens who ascribed to Ukrainophile identity to come out to streets in protest, after the electoral fraud of November 21.

Indeed, Beissinger's analysis of a survey reveals that Ukrainophile identity – which supports the development of Ukrainian language and culture, and opposes closer ties with Russia – played a key role in protest participation. First, 74 percent of Orange Revolutionaries stated that they spoke mostly Ukrainian in their daily lives, compared to 70 percent of Yanukovich's supporters who stated to speak Russian.[159] Next, more than 65 percent of pro-Yushchenko protesters were against making Russian an official language.[160] Third, around 80 percent of Ukrainian protesters agreed either that "Ukraine should develop relations primarily with the West" or that "Ukraine should remain independent and rely on its resources."[161]

Additionally, many protesters were from western regions which had been the breeding ground for Ukrainian nationalism. Western Ukrainians protested in support of Yushchenko at rates up to eight times greater than the rest of Ukrainians.[162] Despite their

[159] Ibid., p. 13.
[160] Ibid., p. 9.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid., p. 8.

smaller share in the Ukrainian population (around 18 percent), western Ukrainians made up of 50 percent of all Orange revolutionaries.[163] Another 40 percent of pro-Yushchenko protesters were from central regions.[164] Thus, overwhelming majority of protesters in the Orange revolution came from western and center regions, although these two regions only contained half of the Ukraine's overall population. By contrast, many Ukrainians in the eastern and southern regions remained in opposition to the Orange revolution.[165] In the end, competing visions of the Ukrainian identity had overwhelming effect on the attitudes of country's population toward the protest.

As many Ukrainophile activists arrived in Kyiv, the Maidan became the epicenter of the protest in support of Yushchenko. Several political figures undertook the role of leading the crowds on the ground. Yushchenko's ally Timoshenko and campaign manager Olexandr Zinchenko[166] often appeared on the stage to maintain the commitment to the protest. Our Ukraine's Mikola Tomenko and the Socialist Party's Yurii Lutsenko addressed the Maidan daily to organize protest activities. On the ground, Our Ukraine's Roman Bessmertnii[167] worked with *Pora* to coordinate logistic, security, further opposition actions. Meanwhile, Kyiv's Mayor Oleksandr Omelchenko stated his support for the protest. The city administration began to provide utility services and sanitary facilities, which helped to sustain ever-growing number of protesters.[168]

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[163] Ibid., p. 14.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Zinchenko was a former member of Medvedchuk's SDP(u).
[167] Bessmertnie was President Kuchma's parliamentary representative and defected to Our Ukraine prior to the 2002 parliamentary elections.
For Bessmertnii's role in the Maidan, see, Tatiana Silina, Serhei Rakhmanin, and Olga Dmitricheva, "Anatomiia Dushi Maidana" [Anatomy of the Maidan's Spirit], *Zerkalo Nedeli*, December 11-17, 2004.
[168] Yilianna Vilkos, "Logistics of Revolution," *Kyiv Post*, December 2, 2004.

Moreover, pro-Yushchenko oligarchs mobilized financial and organizational resources necessary for maintaining the protest movement. From the beginning, David Zhvaniia, a big donor of Yushchenko's presidential campaign, contributed substantially to the Maidan, by bringing tents, kitchen equipment, food, and biotoilets.[169] Petro Poroshenko and Olexandr Zinchenko – both were Kuchma's former allies – also provided funding for the tent city and the protest.[170] According to Zhvaniia, the cost of the Yushchenko campaign and the Orange Revolution was together more than $150 million, and it was paid by Ukrainian businessmen.[171] Additionally, Kyiv's small and medium size business owners who had "begun to resent the influence of the *arriviste* Donetsk elite" under the Yanukovich premiership contributed to maintain the protest in the Maidan.[172] Likewise, ordinary Kyivans supported demonstrators by bringing warm clothes, foods, medicine as well as donating money. Small donations of the Ukrainian people reportedly amounted to 20 million hryvna (around $3.85 million) in the first twenty days of the protest.[173]

At the same time, Poroshenko's Channel 5 proved to be critical in conveying the messages of the Maidan to the Ukrainian people. As pro-Kuchma allies extensively controlled Ukrainian TV stations, Channel 5 became the main provider of the protest coverage. The TV station aired continually protest events and interviews with opposition leaders. Although Channel 5 was available to viewers in less than half of the Ukrainian territory, its rating increased substantially by the end of the November.[174] Next, news

[169] Ibid.
[170] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 69.
[171] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, p. 179.
[172] Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 125.
[173] Leonid Amchuk, "Alexandr Tretiakov: U Nas Ne Bylo Amerikanskikh Deneg" [Alexander Tretiakov: We Did Not Have American Money], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, December 22, 2004.
[174] Anna Kozmina, "Channel 5 Sees Orange Ratings Spike," *Kyiv Post*, December 2, 2004, p.5.

reporters in major Ukrainian TV channels, including 1+1, Inter, and the state TV Channel 1, began to oppose the government's increasing censorship by collectively going on strike or resigning from their positions.[175] Finally, the resistance of journalists against the government pressure enabled the opposition movement to receive coverage from national TV stations – 1+1 and Channel 1.

While all this access to different resources led the opposition movement to grow stronger on the ground, Yanukovich also sought to demonstrate his strength by mobilizing his supporters. Indeed, Beissinger's study finds that between 1.9 and 3.9 percent of the Ukrainian adult population took part in pro-Yanukovich demonstrations.[176] A large share of the protesters consisted of individuals from the Donestk region (around 40 percent).[177] At the same time, pro-Yanukovich protestors were linked to greater dependency on the government for their livelihood and possessed less wealth compared to the Orange revolutionaries, which arguably made them more susceptible to potential reprisal from the regime.[178] Partly as a result of this, Yanukovich's supporters' commitment to the protest was seemingly weak in Kyiv. Indeed, the rallies remained small in number and lasted only for a couple of days.

While his efforts to organize rallies in Kyiv did not result in strong showing of support, Yanukovich, along with his allies in the regime, made growing demands to use of force against the pro-Yushchenko protesters. According to several reports, Ukraine's Interior Ministry commanded 10,000 troops, with bullets and tear gas, to move towards

[175] See, "Telezhurnalisty Prizyvaiut Unichtozhit Rabotu Medvedchuka" [TV Reporters Call for Ending the Work of Medvedchuk], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, November 23, 2004.
[176] Beissinger, "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution," p.7.
[177] Ibid., p.13.
[178] Ibid.

Kyiv on November 28, 2004.[179] Yet Kuchma resisted the use of force to disperse the protest[180] and called the country's leaders since early on to return the negotiating table for resolving the political crisis. At the same time, Ukraine's security forces were fragmented to launch a crackdown on the pro-Yushchenko protesters. In particular, the SBU was reported to cooperate with the opposition forces by providing the transcripts of phone conversations revealing the electoral fraud and also passing on information about the government's preparation for a violent response.[181] Moreover, the military allegedly conveyed its intention to defend the protesters, if the Interior Ministry deploys troops in Kyiv.[182]

As Yanukovich and his allies were not able to get rid of the protesters forcibly – and, similarly, the opposition forces "lacked the power to impose unilateral victory,"[183] – Ukraine's political elite had to negotiate a solution to end the conflict. On November 26, Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, the EU Commissioner Javier Solana, and OSCE representative Jan Kubis, in addition to the speaker of the Russian parliament Boris Grizlov, arrived in Kyiv to mediate the talks between the political forces. At the same time, Volodomir Litvin, the speaker of the Rada, played a significant role in this process. On November 27, the Ukrainian parliament under Litvin's leadership declared the second round of the presidential elections invalid by a vote of 255 out of 450. 307 parliamentarians also voted that the election result did not

[179] C. J. Chivers, "How Top Spies in Ukraine Changed the Nation's Path," *New York Times*, January 17, 2005.
[180] Stefan Wagstyl, Chrystia Freeland, and Tom Warner, "Ukraine President Spurned Pressure over Protesters," *Financial Times*, December 13, 2004.
[181] Chivers, "How Top Spies in Ukraine Changed the Nation's Path."
[182] Ibid.
[183] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 73.

reflect the will of voters.[184] Although these resolutions were non-binding, the decision of the Rada rendered the opposition demands legitimate. It also revealed that the pro-Kuchma oligarchic factions were no longer united behind the Yanukovich presidency. Moreover, the Supreme Court eventually deemed the election results invalid on December 3, 2004. A re-run of the second round of the presidential elections were scheduled to be held on December 26.

While the specifics of the election were yet to be determined, Yushchenko sought to ensure that the new law would provide sufficient mechanisms to reduce the voter fraud. In turn, the elite of the old regime were eager to weaken the powers of a potential Yushchenko presidency, with the purpose of protecting their own interests through the parliament. These concerns resulted in the parliament to negotiate a comprehensive agreement between the political forces on December 8. While the agreement introduced new regulations to promote free and fair elections, it also articulated constitutional reforms to diminish the presidential powers. According to the proposed amendments to the constitution, Ukraine will have a parliamentary-presidential system, the parliament will select the prime minister and appoint many members of the government. The president will remain limited in its power to dismiss the parliament. With 402 parliamentarians, including 78 members of Our Ukraine and 1 member of Timoshenko bloc, voting in favor of these overall changes in the law, the agreement between the Ukrainian political forces sealed.[185] Following the vote in the parliament, Ukrainian people went to the polls for a re-run of the second round of the presidential elections. On

[184] "Vykhod iz Politicheskovo Krizisa. Yanukovich – Ne Prezident" [A Way out of Political Crisis. Yanukovich Not Recognized as President], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, November 27, 2004.
[185] "Politreforma iz 'Paketa': Kto Chto Poluchit i Kogda," [Political Reforms According to the Package of the Constitutional Amendments: Who Gets What and When], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, December 8, 2004.

December 26, 2004, Yushchenko became the country's third president by defeating Yanukovich, with 52 percent to 44 percent.

To sum up, the Orange Revolution stemmed from spontaneous actions of individuals who were ascribed to Ukrainophile identity in the face of large-scale election fraud. While democratic values certainly motivated some proportion of the protesters, Yanukovich's pro-Russian appeal indeed provoked massive numbers of Ukrainian people to join the demonstrations in opposition to the regime. At the same time, the opposition forces were able to access to economic resources critical for stimulating the protest, as several oligarchs who had previously benefitted from close relations to the Kuchma administration aligned themselves with the Yushchenko camp. While Yanukovich sought to use force against the protesters, Kuchma's reluctance to do so weakened his chosen successor's ability to command the internal security forces. Additionally, the disagreement between Yanukovich and Kuchma arguably emboldened different security agencies to resist the government's potential act of repression. Moreover, the pro-regime alliance also dissolved in the face of the mass protest, which led the opposition forces to gain a legitimate ground for their demands in the parliament. In the end, regime opponents' ability to captivate support based on a competing vision of national identity and access to financial resources and media together led to the defeat of the authoritarian regime.

Table 4.7 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, 2004

Candidate	*Political Party*	*First round, October 31, 2004 %*	*Number*	*Run-off, November 21, 2004 %*	*Number*	*Re-run, December 26, 2014 %*	*Number*
Total Votes		74.54	28,035, 184	81.12	30,511, 289	77.28	29,068 971
Viktor Yushchenko	Self-Nomination	39.90	11,188, 675	46.61	14,222, 289	51.99	15,115, 712
Viktor Yanukovich	Party of Regions	39.26	11,008,731	49.46	15,093, 691	44.20	12,848, 528
Oleksandr Moroz	Socialist Party	5.82	1,632, 098				
Petro Simonenko	Communist Party	4.97	1,396 135				
Natalia Vitrenko	Progressive Socialist Party	1.53	429,794				
Others		3.53					
Against all		1.99		2.34		2.34	
Invalid Votes		3		1.59		1.47	
Total		100		100		100	

Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

Table 4.8 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, 1994-2002

Political Party	Share of Seats, %	Share of Seats, %	Change, %	Share of Seats, %	Change, %	Seats	Seats	Change	Seats	Change
	March-April 1994	March 1998		March 2002		March-April 1994	March 1998		March 2002	
Communist Party	25.4	27.1	1.7	14.4	-12.7	86	122	36	65	-57
Socialist Party	4.1			5.1	-2,4*	14			23	-11*
Rural Party	5.3	7.5	-1.9	–	–	19	34	1	–	–
Progressive Socialist Party	–	3.5	3.5	–	–	–	16	16	–	–
Rukh	5.9	10.2	4.3	–	–	20	46	26	–	–
National Democratic Party	–	6.4	6.4	–		–	29	29	–	29
For a United Ukraine	–	–	–	22.4	22.4	–	–	–	101	101
Social Democratic Party (United)	–	3.7	3.7	5.3	1.6	–	17	17	24	7
Hromada	–	5.1	5.1	–		–	23	23	–	–
Greens	–	4.2	4.2	–		–	19	19	–	–
Our Ukraine	–	–	–	24.8	24.8	–	–	–	112	112
Timoshenko Bloc	–	–	–	4.8	4.8	–	–	–	22	22
Other Parties	9.6	6.2	-3.4	2.0	-1.4	31	28	-3	9	-19
Independents	49.7	25.7	-24	20	-5.7	168	116	-52	94	-22
Total						338	450		450	

* Extracted from the total percentage of seats and actual number of seats that Socialist/Rural Bloc received in 1998.
Sources: Sarah Birch, *Elections and Democratization in Ukraine*, p. 84, 106-7; Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua

Table 4.9 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, 1991-2004

Candidate	Political Party	Vote Share, %	Vote Share, %		Vote Share, %		Vote Share, %	
		1991	1994		1999		2004	
			First Round	*Second Round*	*First Round*	*Second Round*	*First Round*	*Second Round*
Leonid Kravchuk	Self-Nominated	61.6	37.7	45.0	–	–	–	–
Viacheslav Chornovil	Rukh	23.3	–	–	–	–	–	–
Leonid Kuchma	Self-Nominated	–	31.2	52.1	36.5	56.2	–	–
Olexandr Moroz	Socialist Party	–	13.0	–	11.2	–	5.82	–
Petro Simonenko	Communist Party	–	–	–	22.9	37.8	4.97	–
Viktor Yushchenko	Independent	–			–	–	39.90	51.99
Viktor Yanukovich	Party of Regions	–			–		39.26	44.20

Sources: Sarah Birch, "Ukraine," in *Elections in Europe*, p. 1976; *The Ukrainian Weekly*, July 3, 1994 and July 7, 1994; Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

CHAPTER V: AUTHORITARIAN CONSOLIDATION AND POPULAR PROTESTS IN RUSSIA (2000-2012)

Elected by winning 52.9 percent of national votes in March 2000, Putin, in his first presidential term, moved swiftly to consolidate authoritarian rule. To achieve this end, Putin's regime on the one hand sought to dominate the right to articulate claims about Russian nation.[1] While the regime turned to patriotic lexis to evoke a sense of a Russian national identity, the cultivation of this identity allowed the incumbent rule to neutralize its opponents and galvanize support from both political elite and people in the strengthening of central authority. By placing references to patriotism, Russia's great-powerness (*derzhavnost*), its state-centeredness (*gosudarstvennost*), and collectivism, the Kremlin aimed at espousing a sense of ultimate meaning and coherence to nation which would legitimize Putin's authoritarian vision.[2] At the same time, the regime-sponsored national idea was increasingly imbued with ethno-political connotations.[3] Following Putin's first term, traditional values began to seem more *russkii* (ethnic Russian) than ever before in the post-Soviet period. In the end, this line of nationalism strengthened the incumbent autocrat's ability to maintain the loyalty of disparate groups in Russia.

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[1] See, Marlene Laruelle, *In the name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in Contemporary Russia*, pp. 134-48, "Rethinking Russian Nationalism: Historical continuity, political diversity, and doctrinal fragmentation," in *Russian Nationalism and the National Reassertion of Russia*, London and New York: Routledge, 2009, pp. 13-49, "Russia as an anti-liberal European civilization" in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000-15*, ed. by Pal Kolsto and Helge Blakkisrud, Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2016, pp. 275-98.

[2] See, Petr Panov, "Nation-building in post-Soviet Russia: What kind of nationalism is produced by the Kremlin," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*," Vol. 1, 2010, pp. 85-94; Alfred B. Evans, "Putin's Legacy and Russia's Identity," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vo. 60(6), August 2008, pp. 899-912; Aleksandr Verkhovskii and Emil Pain, "Civilizational Nationalism: The Russian Version of the 'Special Path,'" *Russian Social Science Review*, Vol. 56(4), August 2015, pp. 2-36.

[3] Pal Kolsto, "The ethnification of Russian nationalism," in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000-15*, edited by Pal Kolsto and Helge Blakkisrud, Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2016, pp. 18-45.

In consolidation of authoritarian rule, Putin's presidency on the other hand invested in reasserting state control over economy. Russian political system under Yeltsin was seemingly vulnerable to oligarchic interests. While oligarchy owed its wealth to unruly privatization of state enterprises, their survival relied on close relations with political elites. To advance their economic interests, oligarchs did not shy away from meddling into electoral campaigns, financing political parties, and buying off seats in the Duma. The competition among oligarchs, along with the regime's failure to resist lobbying pressures, degraded state institutions. After a decade of Yeltsin's leadership in which state authority weakened, crime and corruption became widespread, and living standards dropped dramatically, Putin launched a campaign to reinstitute a larger role for state in economy. To do this, the incumbent regime distanced a group of oligarchs, which it perceived as potential threat to its authority, through selective application of law. Soon thereafter, the regime effectively regained the control of assets privatized in the 1990s.

As Putin's rule stripped prominent oligarchs of their assets, and reasserted state control over economy, regime dissenters also saw their economic resources drying up. While opposition parties and grassroots movements lost their ability to mount serious challenges to the authoritarian state, increasing oil prices, and economic growth accompanied to it, enlisted people further behind Putin's rule. Thus, Russian citizens, who enjoyed better standard of living, became more invested in the stability of the regime. Above all, the Putin period clearly illustrates that when national identity discourse and economic resources – the factors that precipitate the fall of authoritarian rule – are simultaneously harnessed by an incumbent power, this strengthens incumbent authoritarian's ability to retain power.

The Consolidation of Putin's Authoritarianism in 2000-2008

Following Yeltsin's surprise announcement of resignation, Putin became acting president of Russia in the last day of 1999. A few days before Yeltsin stepped down, Putin discussed ideological and economic underpinning for his potential (authoritarian) rule in the words of the attainment of Russia's revival in a document entitled *Russia at the turn of Millennium*.[4] In what is commonly now referred as *Millennium Manifesto*, Russia's future president began with offering his own interpretation and reconciliation of Russia's past and present. At first, Putin insisted that "[i]t would be a mistake not to recognize … the unquestionable achievements of those [communist] times. But it would be an even bigger mistake not to realize the outrageous price our country and its people had to pay for that social experiment."[5] Therefore, Putin suggested, this epoch moved Russia away from "the mainstream of civilization." Next, the prime minister asserted that the country "reached its limits for political and socio-economic upheavals, cataclysms and radical reform."[6] Seeking to repudiate calls for revolution, Putin stressed that "[b]e it under communist, national-patriotic, or radical-liberal slogans, our country and our people will not stand a new radical break-up."[7] Lastly, Putin insisted that "[the] country's genuine renewal cannot be achieved by merely experimenting with abstract models and schemes taken from foreign textbooks."[8] In the view of Putin, Russia's experience in the 1990s already demonstrated that the country had to find "its own path of renewal."

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[4] Vladimir Putin, "Russia at the turn of the millennium," December 29, 1999 in *Putin: Russia's Choice*, Richard Sakwa, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2008, pp. 317-28. Also, see, "Rossia na rubezhe tysiacheletii," *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, December 30, 1999, http://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4_millenium.html.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

In this context, Putin's *Millennium Manifesto* continued by outlining the various ways in which unity of Russian people and restoration of a strong state can lay the basis for Russia's future. Admittedly, hence, Putin aimed at consolidating Russian nation around state. While Putin stressed the importance of efforts to endorse the unity of nation, this ostensibly did not entail his support for the cultivation of a state ideology. In the words of Putin, "[t]here should be no forced civil accord in a democratic Russia. Social accord can only be voluntary."[9] However, Putin insisted that national consolidation can be attained on the grounds of "primordial, traditional values of Russians (*Rossianin*)."[10] At the center of Russian idea, Putin thus placed patriotism, greatness of Russia, state-centeredness, and social solidarity.

According to Putin, patriotism was "a feeling of pride in one's country, its history and accomplishments."[11] At the same time, patriotism was "the striving to make one country better, richer, stronger and happier."[12] Insofar as patriotic feelings were not filled with "nationalist conceit" and "imperial ambitions," Putin argued, "there is nothing reprehensible or bigoted about them." Next, Putin asserted that "Russia was and will remain a great power."[13] In his view, "characteristics of its [Russia's] geopolitical, economic, and cultural existence"[14] dictates nation's destiny to thrive as a great power. Additionally, *Millennium Manifesto* highlighted, "[f]or Russians, a strong state is not an anomaly to be discarded."[15] In the words of Putin, "[o]ur state and its institutions and structures have always played an exceptionally important role in the life of the country

[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

and its people."[16] Putin's emphasis on social solidarity further amounted to this line of thinking, as *Millennium Manifesto* reiterated that "collective forms of social activity" rather than "individualism" was what Russians accustomed to. Thus, Putin insisted that "paternalistic sentiments have struck deep roots in Russian society."

However, the "primordial, traditional values" that Putin identified with *rossiiskii* people throughout the *Manifesto* emerged to be drawn from a past which rather belongs to ethnic Russians. Although Putin's choice to use *rossiiskii* over *russkii* in appearance evoked an understanding of nationhood based on citizenship, as Pal Kolsto notes that the values ascribed to the nation "were generally the same ones as those that numerous authors before him singled out as typical of ethnic Russians and not necessarily of other peoples of Russia."[17] Thus, the culture that Russian regime promoted as constitutive of nation in the ensuing years was imbued with a particular ethnic marker. This also became discernible as Putin's nationalist ideology increasingly displayed references to *russkaia* culture.

Accordingly, adherence to patriotic identity and values swiftly emerged to be the point of reference for inclusion, and so exclusion, in the moral and political community of nation – instead of citizenship – under Putin's presidency.[18] At the same time, this line of thinking ironically allowed rulers to mobilize support – both of ethnic and non-ethnic Russians – in the name of state, regardless of the constitutive content of peoplehood (civic vs. ethnic understanding of nationhood). By emphasizing the historical continuity embodied in the state – above and beyond any transformation in political authority, –

[16] Ibid.
[17] Kolsto, "The ethnification of Russian nationalism," p. 19.
[18] This idea is built upon Brubaker's discussion on nationalism, see, *Ethnicity without Groups*, pp. 132-47.

Putin's regime was also able to appeal to disparate political groups regardless of their vision of nation. With the adoption of Russia's state symbols in December 2000, the incumbent power further reconciled the three epochs of the Russian history.[19] The new national anthem was the same Soviet one with new lyrics, while the coat of arms was a red flag, symbolizing Soviet past, with a double-headed Tsarist eagle on it. The new flag consisted of white, blue, and red colors, representing Russia's democratic experiment under provisional government in 1917.[20]

To reinstate a strong state, Putin's *Millennium Manifesto* moreover called for the formation of "a democratic, law-based, workable federal state." Putin particularly seemed to concern with "the constitutionality of adopted laws" in sub-national units in his *Manifesto*. As Russia's judiciary remains slow to ensure this, Putin argued, "the constitutional security of the state, the federal center's capabilities, the country's manageability and Russia's integrity would then be in jeopardy." Additionally, *Millennium Manifesto* ascribed a larger state role in the economy to ensure Russia's resurgence. Because Russia's free market experience without "a clear understanding of national objectives and advances" during the 1990s plagued the country, Putin insisted, "today's situation necessitates deeper state involvement in social and economic processes." Hence, "the state should act where and when it is needed."

After all, Putin in *Millennium Manifesto* articulated a state-centered notion of nationhood which aimed at galvanizing popular support for his authoritarianism and

[19] "Russia's state symbols," http://eng.flag.kremlin.ru/.
[20] The new state symbols enjoyed substantial public support. A Public Opinion Foundation (FOM) survey in 2002 revealed that 66 percent of respondents liked the new national anthem, while 53 percent felt the same for national coat of arms. Similarly, 64 percent had a positive attitude regarding the state flag, see, "Russian anthem, coat of arms, and flag [Rossiiskie gimn, gerb i flag]," Public Survey, *FOM*, January 24, 2002, http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/socium/val_/patriotizm/dd020338.

legitimizing increasing political control of the Kremlin in the ensuing years. Although similar notions of Russian idea were claimed by various groups across the political spectrum throughout the 1990s,[21] the predicaments of Chechenia allowed Putin to appropriate this idea and mobilize public support behind the regime. Putin created an image of himself as "the defender of nation"[22] by sending the federal forces to crush separatists in Chechenia following the Chechen incursion led by Shamil Basayev into the neighboring region of Dagestan in August 1999 and a wave of apartment bombings in Moscow and nearby towns in September 1999 blamed on Chechens. As Putin adamantly argued that "if we didn't stop the extremists right away, we'd be facing a second Yugoslavia on the entire territory of the Russian Federation – the Yugoslavization of Russia,"[23] Chechenia emerged as "his biggest selling point" in the 2000 presidential elections.[24] Given that Putin also had economic access to broad financial and media resources as a result of his close relations with the Family,[25] his support rose from 2 percent at the onset of his premiership in August, 21 percent in October, a surprising 40 percent in November, and 45 percent by the end of 1999.[26] In the end, Putin was able to defeat the Communist leader Ziuganov by winning 52.9 percent of the votes in the first round.

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[21] See, Laruelle, *In the name of the Nation*.
[22] Colton and McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy*, p. 180.
[23] Natali Gevorkyan, NatalyaTimokava, and Andrei Kolesnikov, *First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait by Russia's President Vladimir Putin*, translated by Catherina A. Fitzpatrick, New York: PublicAffairs, 2000, p.141.
[24] Colton and McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy*, p. 171-97.
[25] Ibid., pp. 177-80; Joel M. Ostrow et al, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, pp. 96-98.
[26] "V. Putin's Rating [Reiting V. Putina]," Public Survey, *FOM*, April 19, 2000, http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/pres/putin_/rating_Putin/td0501.

Table 5.1 Russian Presidential Elections, March 26, 2000

Candidate	*Political Party*	*Total Vote, %*	*Number*
Vladimir Putin	–	52.9	39,740,434
Gennadii Ziuganov	Communist Party	29.2	21,928,471
Grigorii Yavlinskii	Yabloko	5.8	4,351,452
Aman-Geldy Tuleev	–	3.0	2,217,361
Vladimir Zhirinovsky	Liberal Democrat Party	2.7	2,026,513
Konstantin Titov	Union of Right Forces (unofficial candidate)	1.5	1,107,269
Ella Pamfilova	For Citizen's Worth	1.0	758,966
Stanislav Govorukhin	–	0.4	328,723
Yuri Skuratov	–	0.4	319,263
Aleksei Podberezkin	Spiritual Heritage	0.1	98,175
Umar Dzhabrailov	–	0.1	78,498
Against all		1.9	1,414,648
Electorate			109,372,046
Invalid Votes		0.6	701,003
Total Valid Votes		68.0	74,369,773

Source: "Results of Presidential Elections," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/president/presidency_96-04.php.

As Putin's regime reclaimed the Russian idea, opposition parties in parliament, which invoked to similar notions of nation, lost their ideological platforms and underperformed in elections. This led to inner party conflicts, while making opposition forces more susceptible to Kremlin's influence in the ensuing years. With the formation of the Kremlin-sponsored political party Unity, Putin hence was able to gain the control of Russia's legislative branch.

In the 1999 Duma elections, the Fatherland – All Russia bloc (OVR), which was expected to be a front runner, lost considerable support after the formation of Unity. Unity, created only a few months ahead of elections, did not seem to have a systematic political program. However, Putin's endorsement of Unity, and his tough handling of Chechenia, allowed the party to siphon votes off from OVR, which sought to represent

itself also as "the union of patriotic and democratic forces" of Russia.[27] After coming third in the parliamentary elections behind Unity, the OVR coalition began to dissolve. First, the All Russia faction broke away from the coalition in January 2000 and pledged support to Putin ahead of the presidential elections. Following the defection from the bloc, the leader of OVR, Primakov, seen as a presidential contender[28] while ago with his message for stability and strong state, decided not to run in the 2000 elections, and later resigned from his leadership position in the party.[29] Next, in April 2001 the Fatherland leader Yurii Luzhkov announced the upcoming merger of his party with Unity.[30] With the completion of this process, United Russia emerged in December 2001. Thus, by the end of 2001 the Kremlin accomplished to put one of its main rivals in the centrist camp under its control.

Similarly, after Putin's patriotic appeals in the 1999 presidential elections led to the defeat of the communist leader Gennadii Ziuganov – who ironically mounted a serious challenge to Yeltsin in the 1996 presidential elections as he claimed to represent patriotic forces of Russia, – the Communist Party of Russian Federation (CPRF) also found itself in the midst of internal conflicts. In October 2000, Gennadi Seleznev, the communist chairman of the State Duma, moved to form a left-democratic movement *Rossiia*, while maintaining his membership in the CPRF.[31] In May 2002, Seleznev however was expelled from the party after his refusal to leave the speaker's post in the Duma. The same year, Seleznev created the Party of Russia's Rebirth, based on the *Rossiia* movement.[32]

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[27] See, "Manifest izbiraltelnogo bloka 'Otechestvo – Vsia Rossiia'" [Manifesto of the Electoral Bloc 'Fatherland – All Russia'].
[28] Hale, *Why not Parties in Russia?* p. 214.
[29] "Primakov Clears the Way for Putin," *Moscow Times*, February 5, 2000.
[30] Andrei Stepanov, "Fatherland Merges with Ruling Party," *Moscow News*, April 18, 2001.
[31] Aleksei Zverev, "Gena's Engineering," *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, October 2, 2000.
[32] "Left Democratic Forces Want to Have Own Faction in Next Duma," *RIA Novosti*, November 16, 2002.

Yet Seleznev's electoral bloc with Russian Party of Life had a marginal victory during the 2003 elections by gaining 3 seats in the parliament. Notwithstanding this, the CPRF also saw a marked decline in its support by receiving only 11.6 percent of votes, compared to 25.1 in the 1999 elections. According to Andrei Kunov et al., United Russia was "the biggest beneficiary of the communist electoral collapse" as it attracted approximately 20 percent of the CPRF's 1999 vote.[33]

Moreover, the formation of the Kremlin-orchestrated leftist, national-patriotic party, *Rodina* (Motherland), whose one of founders Sergei Glazev was a former ally of communists, contributed to the decline of CPRF's electoral support in 2003. In Luke March's words, "[the CPRF's] unwillingness to concede leadership of the national-patriotic alliance to the rising Sergei Glazev drove him towards the competitor bloc *Rodina*."[34] The bloc, led by Dimitri Rogozin and Sergei Baburin along with Glazev, run on a platform which alloyed social-justice discourse, criticism of oligarchy with Russian ethno-nationalism.[35] As *Rodina* enjoyed favorable media coverage and the regime's financial support, it was able to win 8.2 percent of national votes in the 2003 parliamentary elections. Hence, Laruelle highlights the positive correlation between the regions where Rodina obtained a strong electoral hold and the CPFR lost electoral support.[36]

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[33] Andrei Kunov, Mikhail Myagkov, Alexei Sitnikov and Dimitry Shakin, *Putin's 'Party of Power' and the Declining Power of Parties in Russia*, London: Foreign Policy Center, April 2005.
[34] Luke March, "The Contemporary Russian Left after Communism: Into the Dustbin of History?" *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol. 22 (4), December 2006, 435.
[35] Laruelle, *In the name of the Nation*, p. 102-112.
[36] Ibid., p. 105.

Table 5.2 Russian Parliamentary Elections, December 7, 2003

	Votes, %			*Seats*		*Share of Seats, %*
	List	SMD		List	SMD	
Valid Votes	54.8	54.3				
Invalid Votes	0.9	1.1				
Total Votes (% of electorate)	55.7	55.4				
United Russia	37.6	23.2		120	102	49.3
Communist Party	12.6	10.8		40	12	11.6
Liberal Democrat Party	11.5	3.1		36	0	8.0
Rodina	9.0	2.9		29	8	8.2
Yabloko	4.3	2.6		0	4	0.9
Union of Right Forces	4.0	2.9		0	3	0.7
Agrarian Party of Russia	3.6	1.7		0	2	0.4
People's Party	1.2	4.4		0	17	3.8
Others	9.9	6.6		–	6	0.7
Independents	–	26.8		–	68	15.1
Against all	4.7	12.9		–	3	0.7
Invalid Ballots	1.6	2.1				
Total	100	100		225	225	100

Electoral threshold was set at 5 percent.
Source: "Results of Previous Elections to the Russian State Duma," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_elections_93-03.php.

After the CPRF's poor showing in the 2003 parliamentary elections, Ziuganov faced another wave of opposition raised by Gennadii Semigin. Semigin, a businessman and communist deputy, sought to become the CPRF's presidential candidate in the 2004 elections. However, the communist leader Ziuganov backed his ally Nikolai Kharitonov to run in the race. The conflict within the CPRF plagued Kharitonov's campaign and contributed to the electoral failure. In May 2004, the CPRF excluded Semigin from its membership, accusing him of cooperating with the Kremlin. Semigin formed a left leaning nationalist party Patriots of Russia by the end of the same year.[37] Ultimately, communists were not able to pose as solid opposition to Putin's regime as it did to Yeltsin,

[37] "Patriots of Russia" Intend to Compete with the Kremlin Using Public Organizations," *RIA Novosti*, November 24, 2004.

since Ziuganov's party lost its grip on patriotism and failed to avoid internal rivalry. In fact, CPFR was no longer a serious regime contender in Russia under Putin.

While Putin's regime vanquished its main rivals in parliament, its patriotic appeals also attracted support of some other opposition parties. The populist-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhrinovskii swiftly moved his Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) to second Putin's war in Chechenia. Similarly, Russia's liberal party Union of Right Forces allied itself with Putin over Chechenia. As the regime also assaulted critics of Chechen war by claiming their lack of loyalty to state, the language of political debate in Russia echoed merely with patriotic voices.[38] After all, as Marlene Laruelle remarks, "patriotism has become the ideological *posture* shared by all parties," while "any meaningful public debate on what political, social, and economic direction Russian society should take" eroded from Russian political life."[39]

With Putin gaining more popular support and asserting his control over Moscow's politics, the regime turned to weaken potential sources of rivalry in periphery in the words of restoring a strong state. Referring to "its genetic code, its traditions, and the mentality of its people," Putin argued, "from the very beginning, Russia was created as a super centralized state."[40] Among other things, the Kremlin first divided 89 regions of Russia into seven super districts, headed by presidential envoys, in May 2000.[41] Second, the State Duma replaced the law that directly made governors and the chairs of regional legislatures

[38] Simone Ispa-Landa notes that "[u]npatriotic' was applied to so often and in so many cases – to publicizing 'ugly' facts about the war, calling for an end to the fighting rather than victory, and approving of international mediation rather than relying on Russian governmental bodies," see, "Russian Preferred Self-Image ant the Two Chechen Wars," *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 11(2), 2003, p. 313.
[39] Marlene Laruelle, "Rethinking Russian Nationalism: Historical continuity, political diversity, and doctrinal fragmentation," p.25.
[40] Natali Gevorkyan, NatalyaTimokava, and Andrei Kolesnikov, *First Person*, p.186.
[41] "Putin seeks power over regions," *BBC*, June 15, 2000.

members of the Federation Council, the upper house of the parliament.[42] Next, the Constitutional Court granted the president the right to remove regional heads who repeatedly failed to comply with federal laws and disband regional parliaments if their adopted laws violated federal legislation in April 2002.[43] Lastly, the Kremlin designed new laws that in effect stripped regional parties of their right to contest national elections and reduced independent candidates' ability to gain a seat in Duma.[44] Thus, regional basis of politics came under close scrutiny of Putin's regime. Simultaneously, opposition groups which enjoyed administrative resources brought by regional governors lost their financing.[45] Yet, Putin's consolidation of power over regions seemingly enjoyed considerable public support. As Richard Sakwa highlights, "in [the] 2004 [presidential elections] he [Putin] came top in every region, and this endowed his federal reforms with popular legitimacy."[46]

In the rise of Putin's authoritarianism – so his outmaneuvering of opposition forces and ensuring the Kremlin's political authority, – incumbent's investment in reasserting its control over economy also played a key role. Admittedly, Putin's presidency framed the battle against oligarchy – which were allegedly guilty of creating disorder and instability in Russia in the 1990s – as a way of ensuring Russia's resurgence. Indeed, state's increasing control over economy provided Putin with necessary material resources to sustain popular support for the regime while depriving regime opponents of any meaningful financing to mount challenges to itself.

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[42] "Putin Signs Last Bill in Plan," *AP*, August 5, 2000.
[43] "Constitutional Court outs more limits in president's right to dismiss elected local officials," Newsline, *RFERL*, April 5, 2002.
[44] "Putin Wins Vote to Limit Parties," *Moscow Times*
[45] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 149.
[46] Richard Sakwa, p. 193.

As soon as Putin came to power, he took immediate steps to curb oligarchic influence on Russian politics and economy. On May 11, a few days after Putin's inauguration, federal security agents raided the offices of Vladimir Gusinskii's Media-MOST empire – the largest independent media group of Russia.[47] As Media-Most outlets, most significantly NTV television station and *Segodnia* newspaper, were known to provide coverage highly critical of Putin and the war in Chechenia, the raids were widely interpreted as politically motivated. On June 13, Gusinskii was arrested on charges of embezzlement and released after four days in custody.[48] In the ensuing weeks, Gusinskii had to sell NTV to the state-controlled energy company Gazproom and flee Russia.[49] Similarly, after Boris Berezovskii had a falling out with Putin and moved into opposition by forming Liberal Party, the Kremlin ordered the tax police to audit his television station TV-6 and oil company Sibneft in the summer of 2000.[50] Ultimately, Berezovskii had to transfer his shares in the television station ORT and the gas company Sibneft to his business partner Roman Abramovich, who enjoyed preferential treatment from the Kremlin, and left the country in November 2000.[51] The same year, some of Russia's biggest business – Norilsk Nickel, Lukoil, and Avtovaz – came under scrutiny of authorities through also the investigation of tax evasion and improper sale deals.

Amid the government crackdown on oligarchy, Putin summoned twenty-one leading business elite to lay down the rules of new era. On July 28, 2000, Putin first agreed that the authorities shall not review post-Soviet privatization deals. In turn, competing

[47] Brian Humphreys, "Commandos Raid Media-MOST," *Moscow Times*, May 12, 2000.
[48] Simon Saradzhyan, "Prosecutors Arrest NTV Boss Gusinsky," *Moscow Times,* June 14, 2000; Oleg Shchedrov, "Russian Media Mogul Freed amid Outcry," *Moscow Times*, June 16, 2000.
[49] Arkady Ostrovsky, *The Invention of Russia: From Gorbachev's Freedom to Putin's War*, New York: Viking, 2015, 263-303.
[50] "Authorities suddenly interested in Berezovsky and Abramovich entities," *Monitor*, July 28, 2000.
[51] Ibid,; Sarah Karush, "Berezovky Says He's Quitting Duma," *Moscow Times*, July 18, 2000.

business elites shall not seek to wield influence on government institutions to advance their interests.[52] Second, Putin pledged to level the playing field by remaining "equidistant" from business leaders. In the end, oligarchs were no longer to benefit close ties with the authorities. On the contrary, they were now required to act according to law and stay out of politics. As *Kommersant* newspaper put it, Putin in this meeting revealed that "[he] does not intend to be an equal partner with big business, but an elder one."[53] This not only meant that the Kremlin was ready to put the oligarchs equally in their place, but also compelled them to act in the interest of state. Therefore, business leaders soon began to mobilize their own resources behind the regime as Putin called for it.[54]

Moreover, the Kremlin manifested its decisiveness to remove oligarchs who did not comply with the new rules of the game by ordering the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovskii – the head of the Russia's biggest oil company of Yukos – on charges of tax evasion and fraud in October 2003 and the subsequent accusation of the company.[55] Despite Putin's warning to stay away from politics, Khodorkovskii attempted to form a loyal cohort in the 2003 Duma elections by financing liberal parties, including *Yabloko* and Union of Right Forces, while Yukos also poured funding into the CPRF.[56] Indeed, CPRF's national party list included several Yukos-affiliated candidates. At the same time, the news of Yukos chief's potential candidacy in the 2004 presidential elections – if not, then in 2008 – were circulated. [57] By arresting Khodorkovskii ahead of the December elections, the

[52] "Kremlin statement on meeting with businessmen," *Reuters*, July, 2000.
[53] Gregory Fifer, "Oligarchs Are 'Sick of Being Oligarchs,'" *Moscow Times*, July 29, 2000.
[54] Peter Rutland, "The Oligarchs and Economic Development," in *After Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, ed. by Stephen K. Wegren and Dale R. Herspring, 4th ed., Lanham and Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010, p. 169.
[55] Catherine Belton, "Khodorkovsky Arrested on 7 Charges," *Moscow Times*, October 27, 2003.
[56] Sergei Kolmkov, "The Role of Financial-Industrial Groups in Russian Political Parties," *Russia Watch*, No:9, January 2003, pp. 15-7.
[57] Catherine Belton, "Khodorkovsky for President in 2004?," *Moscow Times*, October 30, 2003.

incumbent regime not only pushed the liberal parties that the oligarch funded out of the Duma, but also removed a potential competitor from political scene.

Also, the Yukos affair was a key turning point to bring assets privatized in the 1990s back under the state control. As Andrei Yakovlev remarks, "natural resource rent was a political asset" for Putin's regime to galvanize popular support for its enactments."[58] In this respect, the regime regained the possession of 11 percent of Russia's petroleum production with the acquisition of Yukos.[59] Simultaneously, Putin launched a campaign – national championship program – which called for controlling at least 51 percent of stocks of companies parties in the energy sector.[60] In 2005, the incumbent power reclaimed 51 percent of Russia's energy giant Gazprom's shares.[61] The same year, Abramovich also agreed to transfer his shares in Sibneft to Gazprom, which led the state to control one third of Russia's overall oil output.[62] In the end, a new political-economy system – namely, state capitalism – was born in Russia under Putin's presidency. As Sakwa aptly puts, "the economic sphere was to be controlled by the authorities" in this new system, and "oligarchs were to understand that their historic role as the creator of capitalism was over."[63]

As for Russian people who witnessed their country's wealth being cheaply sold to oligarchs, Putin's steps to reassert state control over economy provided strong incentives to support the regime. In a ROMIR poll in 2003, 45 percent of respondents viewed the

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[58] Andrei Yakovlev, "The Evolution of Business – State Interaction in Russia: From State Capture to Business Capture?" *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58 (7), Nov. 2006, pp. 1046.
[59] Miriam Elder, "Flaring the Gas That Could Fix Supplies Gap," *Moscow Times*, February 27, 2007.
[60] Marshall I. Goldman, *Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 15.
[61] Ibid., p. 101.
[62] Catherine Belton, "Gazprom Scoops Up Sibneft for $13Bln," *Moscow Times*, September 29, 2005.
[63] Sakwa, *Putin's Russia's Choice*, pp. 147.

influence of big corporations on the economy as negative, while only 25 percent found it to be positive.[64] Similarly, according to a 2004 survey, 82 percent of respondents, when asked to choose between a stronger state and flourishing private enterprise, opted for the state. Of the remainders, only 12 percent advocated for private business.[65] With oil prices sky-rocketing, and GDP rising average 7 percent a year in 1999-2007, Russian people mobilized further behind the regime in its battle against oligarchy. [66] In 2000-2004, the president's approval ratings hovered between 61 percent and 86 percent.[67]

As Putin's rule stripped prominent oligarchs of their assets and reasserted state control over economy, Russian opposition hence founded itself deprived of economic resources and media access. Regime opponents lost their ability to challenge the authoritarian state. Consequently. many dissident movements vanished from Russia's public life during Putin's first term. In the absence of any meaningful opposition movement, Putin was reelected in 2004 to presidency by winning 71.3 percent of votes.

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[64] N.I. Gorin et al, "Obshvestvo, biznes, vlats," in *Obshcvestvo i ekonomika*, December 2003, pp. 36-63, **quoted in** Rutland, "The Oligarchs and Economic Development," p. 167.
[65] Aleksandr Kolesnichenko, "No Aversion to Private Enterprise," in *Novye Izvestiia*, March 4, 2005, **quoted in** Rutland, "The Oligarchs and Economic Development," p. 167.
[66] *World Bank*, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2008&locations=RU&start=1999.
[67] "Approval of Putin," *Levada-Center*, http://www.levada.ru/eng/indexes-0.

Table 5.3 Russian Presidential Elections, March 14, 2004

Candidate	*Political Party*	*Total Vote, %*	*Number*
Vladimir Putin	–	71.3	49,565,238
Nikolai Kharitonov	Communist Party	13.7	9,513,313
Sergei Glazev	–	4.1	2,850,063
Irina Khakamada	–	3.8	2,671,313
Oleg Malyshkin	Liberal Democrat Party	2.0	1,405,315
Sergei Mironov	Russian Party of Life	0.7	524,324
Against all		3.4	2,396,219
Electorate			108,064,281
Invalid vote		0.5	578,824
Valid vote		63.8	68,925,785

Source: "Results of Presidential Elections," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/president/presidency_96-04.php.

Nonetheless, Putin, in his second term, met with social unrest at home and a wave of color revolutions abroad. The Beslan school attack by Chechen militants in the fall of 2004, the widespread mobilization against the "monetization of social benefits" in 2005, and the growing ethnic Russian nationalism posed challenges to regime elites in domestic politics. The color revolutions, seen in Georgia with the overthrow of Eduard Shevardnadze in 2003, next in the Orange revolution of 2004 in Ukraine, and lastly in the Tulip revolution in Kyrgyzstan with the ouster of Askar Akaev in 2005, also amounted to the Russian authorities' concerns.

To encounter these challenges, the regime reformulated the very ideational sources of its legitimacy. In this respect, the regime's discursive practices first touted a color revolution in Russia and the return of oligarchy as potential threats to the country's stability. Second, ruling elite promoted an idea of national-self conditioned by Russia's special path. Third, the Kremlin made growing nationalist appeals to ethnic Russians. Lastly, the regime launched its own "grassroots" movement *Nashi* (Ours) to propagate its line of nationalism and to counter ideological opposition to Putin's authoritarianism.

In the beginning of Putin's second term, ruling elites put substantial effort to delegitimize color revolutions. In the wake of Orange revolution, through which the leader that the Kremlin endorsed was defeated, the Russian regime widely depicted these events as being promoted and financed by the West against "itself." Moreover, the regime-sponsored publications propagated that a color revolution in Russia would not be able to bring an end to criminality, corruption and oligarchy's power. On the contrary, it will lead to a less democratic regime by creating chaos and diluting the state power.[68] Instead, Putin's leadership remarked, Russia "will decide for itself timeframe and conditions" of its democratic development. In the meantime, the regime declared, "[a]ll methods of fighting for national, religious, and other interests that are outside the law contradict the very principles of democracy. The state will react to such methods firmly."[69]

Moreover, Vladislav Surkov, the deputy chief of the presidential administration, developed a concept – "sovereign democracy" – in 2006, aiming at legitimizing the role of ruling elite in Russia's stability.[70] In the view of Surkov, it was the Russia's "united elite" which could shield Russia against potential color revolutions managed by outsiders and the return of oligarchy, while the country builds its democracy on its own traditions. As Andrey Okara points out, Surkov's project attempted to "furnish the power-wielding

[68] Evgeny Finkel and Yitzhak Brundy, "Russia and the Colour Revolutions," *Democratization*, Vol. 19 (1), February 2012, pp. 26-30.
[69] Vladimir Putin, *Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation*, April 25, 2005, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22931.
[70] V. Iu. Surkov, "Nationalization of the Future: Paragraphs *pro* Sovereign Democracy," translated by Stephen D. Shenfield, *Russian Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 47 (4), Spring 2009, pp. 8-21.

camp with grounds for claiming the exclusive right to the upkeep of its preponderant status and to legitimize itself in the eyes of the nation and the world community."[71]

While the regime engaged in stirring up anti-revolutionary sentiments, public opinion polls found ironically widespread apathy among Russian youth toward a color revolution in their country. According to Sarah Mendelson and Theodore Gerber's survey in 2005, 72 percent of respondents did definitely not want to see an Orange revolution occurring in Russia. 17 percent also did probably not want to see such a development. Only 3 percent supported the idea of Orange-like revolution in Russia. Moreover, Russian youth largely considered the Ukrainian revolution orchestrated by outsiders.[72] In the lack of political enthusiasm among Russians, the Kremlin's narrative of color revolutions thus served the purpose of strengthening the ideological foundations of Putin's authoritarianism and further legitimizing suppression on regime dissidents. This in fact laid the groundwork for a new law on NGOs in 2006. To monitor "the registration, financing and activities" of NGOs in Russia, the new regulation created a chamber. Most strikingly, the chamber was authorized to decide whether to disband an NGO on the grounds of receiving foreign funding for political activities or engaging in activities beyond its declared goals.[73] In other words, this law left the state authorities with the excessive discretion in restricting "unwanted" NGOs. Putin's leadership soon froze bank accounts of Khodorkovsky's civil society foundation, Open Russia, as a part of the new law disallowing convicts from creating and running NGOs.[74]

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[71] Andrey Okara, "Sovereign Democracy: A New Russian Idea or a PR Project?" *Russia in Global Affairs*, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_9123.
[72] Sarah E. Mendelson and Theodore P. Gerber, "Soviet Nostalgia: An Impediment to Russian Democratization," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29(1), Winter 2005-06, pp. 85.
[73] Francesca Mereu, "Putin Quietly Signed NGO Bill Last Week," *Moscow Times*, January 18, 2006.
[74] Nabi Abdullaev, "Open Russia's Accounts Are Frozen," *Moscow Times*, March 3, 2006.

To counter a potential revolution in the country, the regime also made efforts to espouse a national idea, which emphasized Russia's special path, its civilizational uniqueness, and centuries-long state tradition. Ruling elite often referred to these ideas to justify the "distinct course of democratic development." Moreover, Putin and his allies attempted to configure a national-self by comparing Russia with Europe, which ironically asserted its "Europeanness." According to this view, although Russia shared the democratic ideals of Europe, its democratic development will be independent. In Putin's words, "the democratic road we have chosen is independent in nature, a road along which we move ahead, all the while taking into account our own specific internal circumstances."[75] Thus, Russia, Putin stated, will cultivate its democracy in accordance with "[its own] historic, geopolitical and other particularities."[76] Surkov, in *Nationalization of the Future*, further unfolded Russia's particularities. According to Surkov, European democracy was built upon the tradition of individualism. By contrast, Russia's civilization was based on the traditions of state-centeredness and collectivism. The attainment of Russian people's sovereignty thus meant the preservation of a strong state.[77] In this way, Surkov justified the rise of Putin's authoritarianism in the words of the renewal of Russia's strong state – as a part of country's tradition.

While Putin's presidency capitalized on a potential color revolution to credit its own authoritarian enactments, it was the rise of (ethnic) Russian grassroots nationalism which posed in practice a challenge to the regime. Several political formations, including The Movement against Illegal Immigration (DPNI) and Rodina, played a major role in

[75] Vladimir Putin, "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," April 25, 2005.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Finkel and Brundy, "Russia and the Colour Revolutions," pp. 26-30.

provoking xenophobic nationalism in 2004-08. Putin's regime sought to discredit these movements as a threat to state, per se. Therefore, official speeches filled with remarks, urging that nationalism and xenophobia may lead the collapse of Russia's multi-ethnic state.[78] However, ethno-nationalist grassroots movements did not always represent themselves in opposition to the regime.

DPNI led by Alexander Potkin (Belov) was one of those nationalist groups, which at first glance offered to work with the state. Established in 2002, DPNI ascended in a short time of period to a leading position among radical nationalists. This largely relied on its ability to "translate ethnic xenophobia into more socially acceptable rejection of immigrants."[79] In this way, DPNI's propaganda targeted illegal migrants from Central Asian republics as well as the country's non-ethnic Russian citizens who moved into "traditionally ethnic Russian" regions. The movement garnered substantial support from ultranationalists and skinheads, although it lacked any further ideological outlook. Its sole focus on immigration also allowed the movement to collaborate with political elite in parliament sharing the same position, regardless of their overall ideological differences.

DPNI had for the first time its opportunity to draw considerable public attention, when state authorities established a new holiday – People's Unity Day – on November 4, 2005. At the day of the holiday, Eurasia Youth Movement (ESM), which was founded a few months earlier by the nationalist ideologist Alexander Dugin's International Eurasia Movement, officially organized a "Right-Wing March" to protest the Western influence

[78] See, Surkov, "Nationalization of the Future."
[79] Galina Kozhevniko, "Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Oppose It in Russia in 2005," *SOVA*, February 25, 2006, https://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2006/02/d7366/#_ftn7.

in Russia.[80] When the march started as planned, approximately 3000 radical nationalists under DPNI, including violent skinhead groups, swiftly turned it to an anti-immigration demonstration. DPNI's ability to take control over a rally with its xenophobic slogans in the center of Moscow further convinced its member to see themselves as "a legitimate patriotic movement." In Belov's words, DPNI was "no longer a marginal group but a popular force that everyone will have to take into account."[81]

A year later in September, DPNI gained arguably its largest political victory during the ethnic clashes in Kondopoga, a Karelian city. When a fight broke between locals and Caucasus natives in the town and left two people dead, Belov and his movement promptly involved in leading the ethnic riots. Because of the xenophobic attacks, many Caucasus natives had to flee the town. This "success" of DPNI brought extensive media coverage to the movement.[82] Within the following months, DPNI's activities to organize the *Russkii* March on the Unity Day further drew the attention of the media. More importantly, the event indicated the growing collaboration between DPNI and nationalist opposition in parliament.

The left wing-nationalist *Rodina* began to reveal itself as more of an oppositional voice in 2005-06, after seen as a Kremlin-loyalist group in parliament for a few years. Rodina's first act of dissent emerged during mass protests against the "monetization of social benefits" in the early 2005. From the very start, *Rodina* indeed attempted to lead the movement.[83] Several *Rodina* members, including Rogozin, staged a hunger strike to

[80] ESM opposed the Western influence and particularly the Orange "threat" in Russia. Similar to DPNI, the movement also did not position itself as a challenger of the Kremlin.
[81] Nabi Abdullaev, "Nationalists Staking Their Political Claims," *Moscow Times*, November 17, 2005.
[82] Galina Kozhenikova, "Autumn 2006: Under the Kondopoga Banner," *SOVA*, January 4, 2007, http://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2007/01/d9912/.
[83] "Benefit Protests Acquire Political Coloring," *RIA Novosti*, January 13, 2005.

suspend the law, which clearly set the party in political opposition to United Russia and Putin. *Rodina*'s defiance of the Kremlin on the other hand gave way to closer relations with CPRF. *Rodina* members joined the May Day rally organized by CPRF in 2005. Remarkably, these two parliamentary opposition parties also extended their collaboration to one of the biggest grassroots movements National Bolshevik Party when its strongly anti-Putin leader Eduard Limonov was given the floor to address the crowd in the rally.[84]

While *Rodina*'s growing engagement with opposition groups on the left already concerned the Kremlin, it was however the party's xenophobic nationalism led it to lose its "election privileges." Ahead of the Moscow city Duma elections in December 2005, *Rodina* run a campaign, which urged voters to "clean the city of garbage." LDPR, which also competed for nationalist votes, ironically accused *Rodina* of instigating ethnic hatred in its campaign. Consequently, the Moscow city court barred the party from the elections in response to LDPR's petition.[85] The Kremlin additionally denied *Rodina*'s registration to seven out of the eight regional elections in March 2006 by using its already well-established institutional control.[86] Rogozin soon had to resign from his position as the party leader under the pressure from state authorities. Putin's regime thus condoned ethnic nationalism insofar as *Rodina* remained loyal to its authority. However, the regime found itself challenged by *Rodina*'s leaders as the party's support base swiftly grew and its message radicalized. Most critically, Rodina's experience revealed that a competing notion of national identity may be the source of ideological opposition to the regime's legitimacy. This realization prompted the Kremlin to put an end to *Rodina*.

[84] "Communists and Their Allies Show Rising Radicalis m," *RIA Novosti*, May 1, 2005.
[85] Simon Saradzhyan, "Rodina Barred from City Duma Elections," *Moscow Times*, November 28, 2005.
[86] Francesca Mereu, "Sunday's Elections a Sign of Things to Come," *Moscow Times*, March 10, 2006.

When Rodina dissolved in 2006, many of its nationalist leaders and supporters however moved closer to DPNI. Rogozin and several members of *Rodina* first joined to DPNI's efforts to organize the *Russkii* March in November. The nationalist march met by growing pressure by the state authorities in Moscow. Consequently, it gathered fewer people than the Right-Wing March a year before. However, the *Russkii* March in 2006 turned out to be a nation-wide event, as demonstrators in other 11 cities held rallies.[87]

Next, nationalist leaders began to orient their efforts to create a formal political platform. In 2007, Rogozin and Andrei Saveliev, former Rodina leaders, founded a new political party, Great Russia, with Belov. Many commentators agreed that Great Russia would cross the seven percent threshold, which was necessary to gain seats in parliament, if it was to contest elections.[88] At the time, opinion polls also found substantial level of xenophobic attitude in society that Great Russia's leaders were seeking to capitalize on.[89] When asked about the idea "Russian for the Russians (*russkikh*)," approximately 55 percent of respondents agreed at a minimum that it was a good idea in 2007, which rose up from 43 percent in 1998. 32 percent of participants also stated that non-ethnic Russians were the reason behind Russia's many problems. Moreover, around 40 percent indicated to feel "irritation," "dislike" and "fear" from natives of Russia's southern republics who migrated into their cities. Similarly, 57 percent of respondents argued for restricting immigration from Caucasus and Central Asia. Thus, Great Russia's narrative had potential to resonate with a relatively large segment in society. This led the Kremlin to

[87] Ibid.
[88] Natalya Krainova, "Rogozin Creates Great Russia," *Moscow Times*, May 7, 2007.
[89] See, "Russian Public Opinion: 2012-2013," *Levada-Center*, Moscow, 2013, p. 154-59. The survey data involved 1600 respondents.

deny registration of Great Russia as a political party ahead of the 2007 parliamentary elections.

While Putin and United Russia dismantled nationalist forces from the electoral scene by using their control over institutions, they also engaged more in narratives and projects, which promoted the primacy of ethnic Russians over others in the federation. Particularly, ruling elites made efforts to evoke a sense of ethnic Russians as the core of the (multi-ethnic) state. For instance, ethnic Russians were proclaimed as "[the] tireless rulers" of "the multi-faceted civic-Russian world" in Surkov's essay – *Nationalization of the Future*. Similarly, Surkov, in his lecture on *Russian Political Culture,* professed that "God created us to be ethnic Russians [*russkie*] as well as citizens of Russia [*rossiane*]."[90] In this context, the regime offered a story of "civic-Russian nation," which was contradictorily imbued with ethnic Russian connotations.

This line of thinking also manifested itself in regime's investments in creating an official idea of Russian nation. According to Galina Zvereva's analysis of the federal bill "On the Foundations of the State Nationalities Policy of the RF" in 2003 and its multiple versions in 2006, the official discourse of Russian nation centered around the ideas of "continuity between the Russian Federation and the 'thousand-year history' of the Russian state and the Soviet Union," "'civilizational uniqueness' of the Russian state and society" and "the special status and historical role of ethnic Russians."[91] By appealing to Russia's long history and civilizational uniqueness, ruling elites first reinforced the idea of a strong state as "the bearer of nation's destiny." Next, the very same ideas enabled

[90] Vladislav Surkov, "Russian Political Culture: The View from Utopia," translated by Stephen D. Shenfield, *Russian Social Science Review*, Vol. 49 (6), December 2008, p. 89.
[91] Galina Zvereva, "What Will We Be Called Now: Formulas of Collective Self-Identification in Contemporary Russia," *Russian Science Review*, Vol. 52 (1), January – February 2011, p. 4-28.

Putin's leadership to insinuate that ethnic Russians, their language and culture historically played "the unifying role" in nation's destiny. Lastly, ruling elite also distinctively attempted to acknowledge ethnic Russians as "the state-forming people." Although Putin and United Russia were not able to conclude a "binding" idea of the nation, which would recognize the primacy of ethnic Russians over other nationalities in the federation, their nationalistic appeals reflected the growing nationalist sentiments among ethnic Russians in society.

Moreover, ahead of the 2007 parliamentary elections, United Russia engaged in projects to mobilize nationalist votes behind Putin's regime. Particularly, the *Russkii* Project, led by Ivan Demidov, the head of United Russia's youth organization Young Guard, Andrei Isaev and Pavel Voronin, United Russia's deputies, attempted to reclaim the discourse of Russian nationalism from DPNI and galvanize support among former *Rodina*.[92] To achieve this, the project coordinators planned to conduct public seminars to discuss ten *russkii* questions, including what *russkii* nationalism is, what *russkaia* nation is, and what the relationship between *russkii* nationalism and racism is.[93] With the victory of United Russia in the parliamentary elections, the Kremlin however put an end to this project.

[92] Marlene Laruelle, *Inside and Around the Kremlin's Black Box: The New Nationalist Think Tanks in Russia*, Institute for Security and Development Policy, Stockholm Paper, October 2009, pp. 32-6.
[93] "'Edinia Rossiia' nachala borby za natsionalistov" ['United Russia' started a fight for nationalists], *Kommersant Daily*, February 6, 2007.

Table 5.4 Russian Parliamentary Elections, December 2, 2007

	Votes, %	*Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Valid Votes	63.1		
Invalid Votes	0.70		
Total Votes (% of electorate)	63.71		
United Russia	64.30	315	70
Communist Party	11.57	57	12.7
Liberal Democrat Party	8.14	40	8.9
Fair Russia	7.74	38	8.4
Others	7.14	0	0
Total		450	100

Election threshold was set at 7 percent.
Source: "Results of Previous Elections to the Russian State Duma," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_elections_93-03.php.

In 2004-08, Putin's leadership thus sought to cultivate an idea of collective-self which was grounded in the rejection of Western-style democracy and the defense of Russia's special path. The representation of state "as the bearer of nation's destiny" justified Putin's tightening grip on power in the restoration of state political authority. The idea of nation confined in state also allowed Putin's regime to lament its opponents as enemies of nation.[94] In this course, the Russian state was increasingly attributed to *russkii* culture. The ruling elites hinted the core role ethnic Russians, their culture, and language played historically in the state. Explicit efforts were also made in official discourse to appeal to ethnic Russian nationalism. This was particularly a response to the rise of xenophobic movements, challenging the Kremlin's sole authority to articulate claims about the Russian nation.

Moreover, the regime launched a "grassroots" movement *Nashi* (Ours), which would propagate its line of nationalism, in countering ideological oppositions to its authoritarian rule. In February 2005, Russian media first reported that the Presidential Administration

[94] Philipp Casula, "Sovereign Democracy, Populism, and Depoliticization in Russia: Power and Discourse During Putin's First Presidency," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 60 (3), May-June 2013, pp. 8-9.

was planning to develop a new youth movement, which would replace the pro-Putin movement "Marching Together" (*Idushchie Vmeste*).[95] In April 2005, Nashi was officially established, and a board of five "federal commissioners," including the former leader of Marching Together Vasilii Yakemenko, was assigned to lead the movement. Its main goal was manifested as to "preserve the sovereignty and integrity of Russia" from external and internal threats.[96] External opponents, according to Nashi, strove to dominate Russia under the guise of democracy and freedom. Internal opponents on the other hand sought either to bring back the oligarchic capitalist regime of the 1990s or to spread fascism in the country. Moreover, Nashi claimed, "an unnatural union between liberals and fascists, westernizers and ultra-nationalists, international funds and international terrorists are being formed only by one thing: a hatred of Putin." Against this alliance, Nashi pledged itself to support Putin and his political vision for Russia. Admittedly, thus, Nashi's mission was to counter any potential opposition, which may disturb the transition of power in Putin's Russia on the eve of the 2007-2008 election cycle.

To achieve this, Nashi mobilized thousands of youth in support of Putin's regime on various occasions. The movement held its first meeting in May 2005 during the commemoration of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. Over 60,000 people gathered in Moscow for Nashi's "Our Victory" rally. In March 2007, around 15,000 Nashi activists became "President's Messenger" in a two-day activity in the capital. After the 2007 parliamentary elections, 30,000 Nashi members marched in to Moscow's streets to

[95] "Obyknovennyi Nashizm" [Ordinary Nashism], *Kommersant*, February 21, 2005.
[96] The movement's official website www.nashi.su is no longer accessible. For movement's manifest, see, Nashi, "Russian Youth Movement: History and Manifesto," translated by Danya Spencer and Michael Smeltzer, *The School of Russian and Asian Studies*, June 12, 2011, http://www.sras.org/nashi_russian_youth_movement.

congratulate Putin for the victory of United Russia.[97] Nashi also organized an educational camp every year on Lake Seliger. Its activities involved in rallies, lectures, and meetings with political figures. 3,000 activists first participated in the camp in 2005, and this number reached to astounding 10,000 in 2008. At the same time, Nashi trained its activists to monitor elections and conduct exit polls in countering potential challengers. All movement activities were financed by the state and Russia's big businesses.[98]

Given the victory of United Russia in the 2007 parliamentary elections and Medvedev in the 2008 presidential elections, Nashi clearly succeeded in completing its mission. After this desired outcome, the regime found it costly to sustain the movement. Therefore, Nashi soon was reoriented to work on social, economic, and innovative projects.

Table 5.5 Russian Presidential Elections, March 2, 2008

Candidate	*Political Party*	*Number*	Total Vote, %
Dmitry Medvedev	United Russia	70.3	52,530,712
Gennady Ziuganov	Communist Party	17.7	13,243,550
Vladimir Zhirinovsky	Liberal Democrat Party	9.3	6,988,510
Andrei Bogdanov	–	1.3	968,344
Electorate			107,222,016
Invalid votes		0.9	1,015,533
Valid votes		69.7	73,731,116

Source: "Election 2008," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/president/presidency_2008.php

In contrast to other autocratic regimes in the post-Soviet territory, which engaged in various tactics to undermine potential opposition forces and yet failed, the survival of Putin's authoritarianism in Russia could be partly attributed to the regime's monopolization of national identity discourse. At the same time, opposition groups'

[97] "Pro-Kremlin youth group rallies in support of Putin," *RIA "Novosti,"* December 6, 2007.
[98] See, M. Stulov, "Kak Kreml finansiruet svoe molodezhnoe divizhenie" [How Kremlin is financing its own youth movement]," *Vedomisti*, November 29, 2010.

ability to challenge Putin's authoritarianism was significantly undermined by the regime's increasing control over wealth over the 2000s.

By the end of his second term in 2008, Putin achieved in renationalizing and controlling key companies of Russian industry – in the sectors of energy, banking, transportation, and communication.[99] The process of reversed privatization sent a clear signal that the Putin regime would not tolerate any act of defiance by oligarchs. With the further erosion of rule of law, private businesses had no option but to comply with the government's agenda. At the same time, Putin placed his close associates, who in many cases also held administrative positions, to the boards of renationalized companies to ensure government interests in these assets. Ultimately, the increasing control of the regime over economy left opposition groups no means to finance their activities. Moreover, under Putin's presidency, the regime's ownership of oil production dramatically rose – from around 15 percent in 2000 to 50 percent in 2012, – while the country's overall oil production increased over 40 percent.[100] With high energy prices, the Putin regime gathered significant popular support in its autocratic turn.

By the time the 2008 presidential elections were held, Russia in fact transformed into an authoritarian regime. Russian parliament was no longer a base for opposition. Judiciary lacked any meaningful independence from Russia's ruling elite. Moreover, Putin's regime established its strict control over media. While TV and radio channels, and newspapers mostly lacked the ability of independent reporting, journalists in

[99] For a table of companies renationalized and controlled by the Putin regime, see, Goldman, *Petrostate*, p. 135.

[100] James Henderson and Alastair Ferguson, *International Partnership in Russia: Conclusion from the Oil and Gas Industry*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 22-34.
Hence, Russia's oil and gas accounted for almost 45 percent of its budget revenue by 2008. See, Anna Andrianova and Dina Khrennikova, "How Cheap Oil is Squeezing Russia's Economy," *Bloomberg*, January 25, 2016.

opposition were frequently harassed. Sweeping restrictions on NGOs were placed, sources of civic activism dwindled. Elections no longer offered a genuine choice of candidates. By amending laws on elections and political-parties, the Kremlin systematically barred opposition parties from contesting. Races were also marred by some irregularities. After systematically removing regime challengers from political scene, Putin smoothly transferred power to his close ally Medvedev in 2008. However, Putin himself continued to lead Russia's politics as prime minister.

Popular Protests and Authoritarian Survival under Putin-Medvedev Tandem in 2008-2012

After winning 70.3 percent of national votes in March, Medvedev stepped into the Kremlin as Russia's third president in May 2008. In his 2009 article entitled "Go Russia!" – in which the president outlined his administration's priorities, – Medvedev rather appeared as a liberal voice in support of economic modernization and political reforms.[101] With the 2008 global financial crisis – and 8 percent decline in Russia's GDP accompanied to it in 2009, – the necessity of innovative technologies to diversify the raw-material based economy and fighting corruption were laid out as the main goals of the president's program in modernizing Russia's economy. At the same time, Medvedev, in his article, discussed the ways in which improving democracy and reforming judiciary may contribute the country's future. In particular, the president criticized the paternalistic attitude found in society as a source of weak civil society – and so a serious impediment in democratic development.

[101] Dimitrii Medvedev, "Go Russia!," originally published in *gazeta.ru*, September 10, 2009, available at www.kremlin.ru.

Speaking of the institutions of modern democracy, Medvedev insisted that political reforms made under his presidency moved Russia towards a more competitive system. In response to regime critics – displeased with the pace of change, – Medvedev underscored that "[h]asty and ill-considered political reforms have led to tragic consequences more than once in our history." Thus, Medvedev, in line with Putin's political narrative, cautioned against radical means to reform the system and reasserted that such a development will bring the chaos of the 1990s back in Russia. Similarly, the president ensured that foreign models cannot simply guide Russia's democratic development.

While Medvedev's lexis of economic modernization and political reforms appealed to some Russian citizens more than others, his inability to implement change raised anger and frustration. Indeed, Medvedev, in his last televised interview as Russia's president, stated that he, himself, was "not entirely satisfied" with economic progress.[102] Moreover, Medvedev's support for Putin's return to power clearly displayed that nothing had changed in politics under his presidency. Yet, as Timothy J. Colton aptly puts it, "Medvedev the politician could not act freelance. Having no opportunity to build his own power and patronage base, even had he wished it, he was as dutiful a cog in the Putin machine as ever."[103] Thus, Medvedev, in practice lacking a distinct political and economic agenda from his predecessor, failed to response to Russian citizens' demands for democracy. However, the rise of living standards over the decade gave birth to a group of people in larger cities, which were ready to voice their disappointment with Russia's regime in streets.

[102] "Interview to Russian TV Networks," April 26, 2012, available at kremlin.ru.
[103] Timothy J. Colton, *Russia: What Everyone Needs to Know*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 175.

Russian Spring: "The star of joy will rise again!"[104]

On December 5, 2011, a day after the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) announced that United Russia won 49.32 percent of votes, several thousand-people poured into the streets of Moscow in response to the reports of massive electoral fraud.[105] In the ensuing days, more people joined the protest. Large numbers of protestors were unexpected, and these rallies were the first of their kind in the last twenty years. Opposition forces continued to protest during the winter of 2011 and 2012 in Moscow and other larger cities. However, I argue that the Putin regime's monopolization of national identity and its retention of considerable control over economy instigated the defeat of regime dissenters in Russia.

Table 5.6 Russian Parliamentary Election, December 4, 2011

	Votes, %	*Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Valid Votes	59.2		
Invalid Votes	0.9		
Total Votes ((% of electorate)	60.1		
United Russia	49.32	238	52.9
Communist Party	19.19	92	20.4
Fair Russia	13.24	64	14.2
Liberal Democrat Party	11.67	56	12.4
Yabloko	3.43	0	–
Others	1.57	0	–
Total		450	

Source: "Results of Previous Elections to the Russian State Duma," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_today.php.

At first, a protest, organized by liberal Solidarity and Left Front, brought thousands of protesters onto Moscow's Bolotnaia Square on December 10, with the demand "*For Honest Elections*."[106] On December 24, around a hundred thousand people again

[104] Pushkin, *To Chadaev*, recited by an interviewee, Moscow, November 12, 2015.
[105] In fact, United Russia failed to maintain its absolute majority in Duma after the 2011 parliamentary elections, as its share of votes dropped from 64.7 percent in 2007. See, "Duma Voting Behavior," *Center for Study of Public Policy*.
[106] Kevin O'Flynn, "Silliness, Civic Activism Merge at Record Rally," *Moscow Times*, December 12, 2011.

responded to the call of opposition forces by gathering in downtown Moscow, Sakharov Prospect.[107] Many displayed white ribbons and chanted slogans for honest elections. My discussions in the field revealed that protesters' call for new elections rather stemmed from their desire to overall change Russia's political system. In the words of an interviewee, "*we were tired of corruption, lies, unruly behavior of government officers, and old style management*."[108] Another respondent adds that, "*we wanted democracy – free and fair elections, opposition parties and candidate to be allowed to contest elections without the barriers of registration, freedom of expression.*"[109] At the same time, many interviewees highlighted the need for restoring independency of Russia's judicial system.

Moreover, protesters' desire for political change became evident after Putin's announcement of a potential return to presidency on September 24, 2011. In the words of an interviewee, "*I remember that panic and despair were all over Facebook. All my friends wrote that they were either leaving the country or thinking about their age when Putin leaves the office next time … They were not particularly pleased with Medvedev, but the return of Putin meant the end of any hopes.*" The interviewee adds that "*this mood created the protest. Parliamentary elections were just a trigger.*"[110] In my discussions, many other respondents agreed with this sentiment.

[107] Alexander Bratersky, Natalya Krainova, "Saturday Rally Suggests Protest Mood Is Growing," *Moscow Times*, December 24, 2011.
[108] Author's interview, Moscow, July 2, 2015.
[109] Author's interview, Kyiv, July 30, 2015.
[110] Author's interview, Moscow, November 10, 2015.

Table 5.7 Levada-Center's survey with protesters, December 24, 2011 and February 4, 2012

Dec. 24, 2011, N: 791 Feb.4, 2012, N: 1,346	Do you support the annulment of previous parliamentary elections' results and the organization of new elections?		Do you support the dismissal of CEC head Vladimir Churov and prosecutions of those guilty of election falsification?		Do you support new laws in political parties and elections?		Do you support the release of all political prisoners?		Do you support the slogan "Not Give a Single Vote to Putin?"	
%	Dec. 24	Feb 4	Dec. 24	Feb 4	Dec. 24	Feb 4	Dec. 24	Feb 4	Dec. 24	Feb 4
Strongly agree	81	81	86	83	77	78	65	66	68	71
Agree	15	14	11	14	17	16	18	18	18	18
Disagree	2	2	1	1	1	2	6	8	8	4
Strongly disagree	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	3	2	2
Difficult to say	1	2	1	1	4	3	7	6	4	5

Source: "Opros na prospekte Sakharova 24 dekabria" [Public opinion poll on Sakharov Avenue on December 24], *Levada-Center*, Moscow, December 26, 2011, http://www.levada.ru/old/26-12-2011/opros-na-prospekte-sakharova-24-dekabrya; "Opros na mitinge 4 Fevralia" [Public opinion poll on February 4 meeting], *Levada-Center*, Moscow, February 13, 2012, http://www.levada.ru/2012/02/13/opros-na-mitinge-4-fevralya/.

As the crowds gathered, protesters were soon infused with the feeling of majority in Moscow. To voice their dissent against Russia's regime, protesters chanted the slogans of "*You don't even represent (and also imagine) us*." Hence, as an interviewee puts it, "*we did not imagine ourselves, either. We were so surprised to see each other in December – Ocean of people in front of my eyes … Then, until March, we thought we were majority*."[111] As the protest garnered support from disparate political groups in Moscow, this sentiment strengthened. While liberals rose in prominence in the protest, other groups, including communists, social democrats, and nationalists, joined them.[112]

[111] Author's interview, Kyiv, July 30, 2015.
[112] "Opros Na Mitinge 4 Fevralia" [The survey at the Rally on February 4], *Levada-Center*, Moscow, February 13, 2012.

In the words of Denis Volkov, "[having] looked inside of the movement, it seemed that 'everyone' and 'very different people' came to protest (partly because the crowd was quite colorful, there were diverse flags, slogans, demands, costumes, and clothes)." However, he continues, "for an average Russian watching what was happening in TV, it must have seemed like a gathering of the rich."[113] Admittedly, the portrayal of the protest as a movement of the "creative class" in independent media amounted to the latter image, and so plagued opposition forces' ability to appeal to Russian people.

Table 5.8 Levada-Center's survey with protesters, December 24, 2011 and February 4, 2012

Political Identification (%)	Dec. 24 N: 791	Feb.4 N: 1,346		Dec. 24	Feb.4
Democrats	38	30	Conservatives	3	2
Liberals	31	27	New Left	2	4
Communists	13	18	Anti-Fascists	2	2
Socialists / Social Democrats	10	10	Different	4	4
Greens	8	6	None above	6	6
National-Patriots	6	14	Difficult to answer	3	3
Anarchists	3	4			

Respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer in these surveys.
Source: "Opros na prospekte Sakharova 24 dekabria" [Public opinion poll on Sakharov Avenue on December 24], *Levada-Center*; "Opros na mitinge 4 Fevralia" [Public opinion poll on February 4 meeting], *Levada-Center*.

The "creative class" in Russia was used to describe young urbanites from "rising" professions – e.g. media, design, art, and IT. This new group owed its economic well-being to the restoration of the Russian economy over the last decade. Indeed, Russian sociologists and political scientists largely debated the economic composition of the creative class. [114] The discussion revolved around if the members of creative class could

[113] Denis Volkov, "Protestnoe Dvizhenie v Rossii v Kontse 2011-2012 gg: Istoki, Dinamika, Rezultaty" [The Protest Movement in Russia in late 2011 and 2012: Origins, Dynamics, Results], *Levada-Center*, September 2012.
[114] See, Artemy Magun, "The Russian Protest Movement of 2011-2012: A New Middle-Class Populism," *Statis*, Vol. 2(1), pp. 160-91; Alexander Bikbov, "The Methodology of Studying 'Spontaneous' Street

be categorized as middle-class. However, during my interviews in the field, many protesters did not associate themselves with middle-class. Some respondents highlighted the wage gap between Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other cities of Russia in assessing their own economic well-being.

The members of the creative class nonetheless differed from fellow Russians with their "cultural habits." Many spoke English, travelled abroad, and spent their time on the internet. The creative class set its sight on the European way of life. [115] However, as an interviewee puts it, "*the creative class was just the most noticeable part of protesters, who were in bright clothes and brought the funniest slogans … It was not the group which was ready for long political work … There were also many different people in the protest - working class, old school democrats, university professors, and political activists of any kind*."[116]

Table 5.9 Levada-Center's survey with protesters, December 24, 2011 and February 4, 2012

	Dec. 24 N: 791	Feb.4 N: 1,346		Dec. 24	Feb.4
Age (%)			**Occupation** (%)		
18-24	25	21	Specialist	46	36
25-39	31	37	Manager	17	14
40-54	23	23	Student	12	11
55 and older	22	20	Business owner	8	9
Education (%)			Pensioner	–	11
Incomplete secondary school	1	1	Office employee	8	–
Secondary or vocational school	17	18	Salesperson/ service sector	4	–
Incomplete higher education	13	11	Unemployed	2	5
Higher education	70	70	Other	–	8

Source: "Opros na prospekte Sakharova 24 dekabria" [Public opinion poll on Sakharov Avenue on December 24], *Levada-Center*; "Opros na mitinge 4 Fevralia" [Public opinion poll on February 4 meeting], *Levada-Center*.

Activism (Russian Protests and Street Camps, December 2011-July 2012). Summary," *Laboratorium*, Vol.4(2), 2012, pp. 275-84.

[115] See, Aleksandr Morozov, "Po tu storonu vyborov" [On the other side of the elections], *Russkii Zhurnal*, November 28, 2011.

[116] Author's interview, Moscow, November 10, 2015.

However, as the opposition movement continued to project an image of itself based on the creative class, the protest failed to galvanize support from ordinary Russian people. First, the idea of the creative class contributed to protesters' understanding of themselves in *opposition* to Russian people. In the words of a respondent, among others, "*trendy media portrayed us as the creative class – good looking people with ironic posters. We were happy to be the creative class – Russian Europeans. That was the way that separated us from the rest of Russia which belongs to the working class*."[117] Second, the protesters' identity as cultivated by the media and themselves devalued efforts to appeal to Russian people. The opposition leaders attempted to respond to the identity of the protesters whom they aspired to lead. However, this hindered the opposition movement from arousing a wider sense of collective-self among Russians, which may have stimulated the protest. Therefore, the cleavage between the westernized, urban, and wealthier protesters and the rest of Russia continued to widen. As an interviewee further explains, "*people were trying to understand if the movement was about them and their interest. Unfortunately, they found out that it was about the creative class. They thought that they were not creative. They decided to wait for Putin, because he was their voice*."[118] Lastly, the image of the protest helped the Kremlin to discredit the opposition as a movement of angry urbanites "from the narrow world of building one's own individual well-being."[119] In pro-government rallies, the regime also attempted to counter the opposition forces, and so their western liberal values, by evoking Russia's (state) traditions.

[117] Author's interview, Kyiv, July 30, 2015.
[118] Author's interview, Moscow, October 6, 2015.
[119] Vladimir Putin, "Demokratiia i kachestvo gosudarstva" [Democracy and the quality of state]," *Kommersant,* February 6, 2012.

From December 24, 2011, onward, the opposition moreover created the Organization Committee to lead the protest actions. The committee was composed of politicians, activists, journalists, and public figures. Its members raised funds for rallies, conducted permit negotiations with the city authorities, provided logistical assistance, coordinated speakers at the rallies, and informed the public about the subsequent actions.[120] My discussions with the few committee members revealed that regime dissenters across the political spectrum provided financing to the protest. A member explains that among the main donors of the protest, there were conservative figures, which later supported the "Crimea is Ours" campaign as well as the so-called Donetsk People Republic in Ukraine. Additionally, business owners with liberal views and government employees offered financing to the opposition movement. The committee member notes that "*there were some rules to the game. People who worked for the government financed the movement anonymously*."[121] However, as another committee member explains, "*there were no major businessmen who were ready to support the movement. Some of them were among the protesters, but they tried to remain incognito*."[122] Admittedly, the regime's control of economy disseminated a fear of reprisal, which curbed the opposition movement's ability to access broader resources to stimulate the protest. At the same time, business owners and companies, which supplied equipment to the protest, were occasionally harassed by the regime.[123] With the increasing government repression in early May 2012, the

[120] Denis Volkov, "Protest Movement in Russia through the Eyes of its Leaders and Activists," *The Russian Public Opinion Herald*, December 2012.
[121] Author's interview, Moscow, November 11, 2015.
[122] Author's interview, Moscow, November 10, 2015.
[123] Author's interview, Moscow, November 11, 2015.

Organization Committee had to conceal publicly available financial information to avert a crackdown on its supporters.

From the beginning, several media outlets provided coverage to the protest. The independent radio channel Echo Moskvy, whose main shareholder is GazProm, and the cable channel TV Dozhd gave voiced to the opposition movement, while state-controlled media mostly dismissed the protest. Given that over 70 percent of Russians received their news from the state-owned TV channels, protesters' ability to disseminate alternative political narratives to the regime was largely curtailed.[124] Moreover, a poll in 2013 found that around 60 percent of the population considered the news on state-sponsored TV channels reported mostly objectively.[125] Unsurprisingly, the Kremlin used its media dominance to endorse the pro-government rallies and Putin's candidacy ahead of the March 2012 presidential elections.

Nevertheless, the protest movement was also unexpected to the Kremlin. In the beginning, the government seemed open to the negotiations with the opposition movement. While regime elites rejected the protesters' demands for a rerun of the parliamentary elections and the dismissal of the head of CEC Vladimir Churov, they offered to restore the gubernatorial elections and ease the registration rules for political parties and candidates after the upcoming presidential elections.[126] However, the government harshened its attitude towards the protest, with Putin's re-election to presidency. At the same time, the regime achieved in maintaining elite unity. The resignation of Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin in September 2011 - shortly after Putin

[124] "Russian Public Opinion 2013-2015," *Levada-Center*, Moscow 2016, p. 203.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Bratersky and Krainova, "Saturday Rally Suggests Protest Mood Is Growing."

announced his candidacy for presidency - remained the only defection from the ruling elite.

In February 2012, the opposition movement continued its actions. Around a hundred thousand people again poured into the streets of Moscow on February 4 in protest of Putin's potential presidency.[127] The movement leaders urged all Russians "*Not to Give a Single Vote to Putin*." Meanwhile, President Medvedev met with the three opposition leaders – the coordinator of the Left Front movement, Sergei Udaltsov, and the co-founders of the People's Freedom Party, Boris Nemtsov and Vladimir Ryzhkov, – to discuss political reforms on February 20. The opposition figures further agreed to join the working group for settling the changes to the political system.[128] On February 26, in the last protest before the presidential elections, more than thirty thousand Russians gathered in downtown Moscow and created a "Big White Circle" by holding hands and wearing white ribbons.[129]

Simultaneously, the regime mobilized its own supporters in pro-government rallies to encounter and delegitimize the opposition movement. On February 4, thousands of people gathered for an "anti-orange" rally in Poklonnaia hill – a place which is dedicated to Russia's military victories.[130] The next rally drew over one hundred thousand regime supporters into the Luzhniki stadium on February 23 – the day of the Defenders of the Fatherland.[131] During the rallies, people carried banners with the slogans "*No to Orange Revolution*," "*We are for Putin*," and "*If not Putin, then Who?*" At the same time, state-

[127] Alexander Bratersky, "Protest Fever Stays High Despite Cold," *Moscow Times*, February 6, 2012.
[128] Lyudmila Alexandrova, "Russian authorities enter into dialogue with radical opposition," *TASS*, February 21, 2012.
[129] Kevin O'Flynn, "Opposition Join Hands in Anti-Putin Protest," *Moscow Times*, February 27, 2012.
[130] Lyudmila Alexandrova, "Russian authorities respond to middle class demonstrations," *TASS*, February 6, 2012
[131] Alexander Bratersky, "Putin Rally Raises Bar for Opponents," *Moscow Times*, February 24, 2012.

controlled media provided extensive coverage of the two rallies. Independent media sources however reported that some of the people were forced by their employers or paid to attend in the rallies.

At first, speakers at the rallies discredited the anti-government protesters as "traitors" financed by the West, aiming at provoking unrest in Russia. Sergei Kurginian, a coordinator of the anti-Orange protest, called on protesters to say "no to the destruction of Russia," He added that "we say no to the American embassy, where these disgraced people turned to when Michael McFaul arrived." Second, Putin's presidency was justified as the only way to sustain a strong and stable Russia. Several speakers at the rallies reminded Russian people of the disorder and instability in the 1990s. Putin was praised as the leader who could defend the nation against an Orange Revolution and a return to the oligarchic rule as it was a decade ago. Otherwise, speakers suggested, an Orange revolution will put an end to Russian statehood and national unity. Lastly, Putin himself made nationalist appeal to the crowds in the last rally. In his address, Putin insisted that "the battle for Russia continues" – against unspecified enemies. Invoking Russia's victorious history and nation, Putin therefore reasserted that "we are ready to defend our great motherland … always and forever" and "we will not allow anyone to meddle into our affairs." At the same time, Putin cautioned Russian people "not to look overseas" and "not to betray the country." Thus, Putin, as the other rally speakers, insinuated that anti-regime protesters were not loyal to Russia and its culture.[132] Most importantly, the presidential candidate was once again able to portray himself as "the defender of the nation."

[132] Videos of speakers at pro-regime rallies are available on Youtube.

On March 4, 2012, Putin was reelected by winning 63.60 percent of national votes. Independent election observers reported procedural irregularities during the count, while assessing voting positively.[133] The next day, 14,000 people gathered in the Pushkin square to protest the presidential elections.[134] While the opposition leaders chanted the slogans of "*Putin is a thief*," they had nothing new to offer to the crowds. The relatively low numbers of protesters also suggested the disappointment with the movement. At the same time, Putin's victory marked the increasing crackdown on protesters. On March 5, around 200 protesters, including Alexey Navalny, the anti-corruption blogger who emerged as the most popular leader of the protest movement, Ilia Yashin, the leader of Solidarity, and Sergei Udaltsov, were arrested.[135] In the end, there were only 25,000 people – although permission was obtained for 50,000 – attending the rally on March 10.[136]

5.1.1 Russian Presidential Elections, March 4, 2012

Candidate	*Political Party*	*Total Vote, %*	*Number*
Vladimir Putin	United Russia	63.60	45,602,075
Gennadi Ziuganov	Communist Party	17.18	12,318,353
Mikhail Prokhorov	–	7.98	5,722,508
Vladimir Zhirinovskii	Liberal Democrat Party	6.22	4,458,103
Sergei Mironov	Fair Russia	3.85	2,763,935
Electorate			109,860,331
Invalid votes		0.8	836,691
Valid votes		64.5	70,864,974

Source: "Results of Presidential Elections," *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org/president/presidency_result.php.

[133] See, OSCE, *Russian Federation, Presidential Election, 4 March 2012: Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions*, Warsaw, March 5, 2012.
[134] Andrew Roth, "A Test of Will: Alexy Navalny Starts to Test His Limits," *Russia Profile*, March 6, 2012.
[135] Andrey Sinitsyn, "Some Get a Maydan, Others Get a Fountain. Opposition Rally on Moscow's Pushkin Square Was a Flop for Its Organizers," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, March 7, 2012.
[136] "Miting 'Za chestnye vybory' na Novom Arbate zavershilsia" [Meeting 'For Honest Elections' on Novii Arbat Ended], *Lenta.Ru*, March 10, 2012.

Yet by March protesters across the political spectrum were able to bypass their differences and unite "*For Honest Elections*." However, as an interviewee puts it, "*it is easier to make numerous protests based on election theme, when there is competition among political parties and candidates*."[137] The opposition's lack of an alternative candidate in the presidential elections, its failure to formulate new demands, and most importantly its appeal as a movement of creative class impeded it from gaining broader support basis. At the same time, disagreements within the opposition movement increased. In the words of a respondent, "*so-called liberals did all they could do to alienate ethnic Russian nationalists*."[138] Socialists also felt unease with the liberals' projected image of the protest, which, they argued, legitimized Putin's idea of "silent majority." Among liberals, the peaceful tactics of the protest emerged as a matter of disagreement.

Moreover, the regime did shake off the effects of earlier opposition movement. In response to the protest movement, Medvedev signed three bills into law. The first law lowered the number of required membership for registering a political party from 40,000 to 500.[139] However, the law did not include any provision, which may allow political parties to form an electoral bloc to increase their chances to win a seat in Duma. The second bill reinstated the direct election of regional heads, which were removed by Putin in 2004. The law required a candidate to gain support of at least five percent of municipal deputies in a region to contest elections. As for independent candidates, the law also indicated the need for collecting additional signatures from at least 0.5 percent of the

[137] Author's interview, Moscow, October 20, 2015.
[138] Author's interview, Moscow, October 3, 2015.
[139] Natalya Krainova, "Medvedev Signs Party Reform Bill into Law," *Moscow Times*, April 4, 2012.

population. Given United Russia's control over regional parliaments, the regime continued to have considerable leverage over the election process. The last bill waved the requirement for collecting signatures to run in parliamentary elections and reduced the number of signatures that a candidate needed to collect for contesting presidential elections.[140] Thus, the Kremlin was able to fend off the opposition forces without making any major concessions.

On May 6, 2012, a day before Putin's inauguration, thousands of anti-regime protesters poured into the streets of Moscow. The "March of the Millions" led to the serious clashes between protesters and security forces. Around 400 people, including Navalny and Udaltsov, were detained.[141] In the following days, protesters, and thus police, moved from streets to streets in Moscow. Authorities detained more protesters during the three days of "walking." On May 13, the opposition figures headed the Test Walk Rally which drew 10,000 people into the streets.[142] At the same time, some protesters began to camp out near by the monument of Kazakh poet Abai Kunanbaev on Chistye Prudy. Around 3,000 people visited the camp until it was forcefully demolished on May 16.[143] In the beginning of June, the Russian parliament passed a bill that stipulated larger fines for participants of unsanctioned rallies, that ordinary protesters will not be able to afford. On June 12, a few days after Putin signed the bill into law, the last mass rally was held. Afterwards, the protest movement evidently petered out. Thus, Putin was

[140] Alexander Bratersky, "Racing the Clock, Medvedev Signs Final Reforms," *Moscow Times*, May 3, 2012.
[141] Mark Bennets, "Russia's Anti-Putin Activists Look to Maintain Protest," *RIA Novosti*, May 10, 2012.
[142] "Peaceful Opposition Protests Action Held in Moscow," *Itar-Tass*, May 14, 2012.
[143] Marc Bennetts, "*Police Break up Anti-Putin Camp, Activists Relocate*," RIA Novosti, May 16, 2012.

able to hold on to his authoritarian rule in Russia, without making major concessions to the protest movement.

In summary, the Russian opposition movement mobilized a segment of the nation, with its narratives against political system and Putin. However, the protest failed to gain larger support base partly because of its ineffective engagement in the symbolic politics of nation. As an interviewee aptly puts it, "*the EuroMaidan protest was against Yanukovich and for Ukraine. However, we had only one of these factors: we were against Putin*."[144] In fact, Russia's regime not only dominated the right to speak for the nation, but also depicted the anti-Putin protest as a movement against the nation. Putin again emerged as the "defender of the nation." At the same time, the opposition's lack of access to economic resources, and thus media outlets, impeded its ability to disseminate the protest message and stimulate the movement. Moreover, Russia's regime control over broad economic resources discouraged people to attend the protest because of the fear of reprisal. Simultaneously, the Kremlin used its control over media to mobilize support for the regime. In the end, the regime's control over national identity discourse and economic resources – the factors which precipitated the fall of authoritarian rule in Ukraine – facilitated the survival of the authoritarianism in Russia.

[144] Author's interview, Moscow, November 11, 2015.

Table 5.1.2 Russian Parliamentary Elections, 2003-2011

Political Party	Share of Seats	Share of Seats	Change %	Vote Share	Change %	Seats	Seats	Change	Seats	Change
	2003	2007		2011		2003	2007		2011	
United Russia	49.3	70	20.7	52.9	-17.1	222	315	93	238	-77
Communist Party	11.6	12.7	1.1	20.4	7.7	52	57	5	92	35
Liberal Democrat Party	8.0	8.9	0.9	12.4	3.5	36	40	4	56	16
Fair Russia	–	8.4	8.4	14.2	5.8	–	38	–	64	26
Motherland	8.2	–	–	–	–	37	–	–	–	–
People's Party	3.8	–	–	–	–	17	–	–	–	–
Yabloko	0.9	0.0	0.69	0.0	0	4	0	-4	–	–
Union of Right Forces*	0.7	0.0	-0.7	0.0	0	3	0	-3	–	–
Agrarian Party	0.40	0.0	-0.40	–	–	2	0	-2	–	–
Others	0.7	–	–	–	–	6	0	-6	–	–
Independents	15.1	–	–	–	–	68	0	-68	–	–
Total						447	450		450	

Source: Based on information from *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org.
*In the 2011 parliamentary elections, Boris Nemtsov and his Union of Right Forces run under the name "Right Cause."

Table 5.2.1 Russian Presidential Elections, 2000-2012

Candidate	Political Party	Vote Share 2000	Vote Share 2004	Change %	Vote Share 2008	Change %	Vote Share 2012	Change %
Vladimir Putin*	–	52.9	71.3	18.4	–	-1.0	63.6	-6.7
Dimitrii Medvedev	United Russia	–	–	–	70.3		–	
Gennadii Ziuganov	Communist Party	29.2	–	-15.5	17.7	4.0	17.18	-0.52
Nikolai Kharitonov		–	13.7		–		–	
Vladimir Zhirinovskii	Liberal Democrat Party	2.7	–	-0.7	9.3	7.3	6.22	-3.08
Oleg Malyshkin		–	2.0		–			
Grigorii Yavlinskii	Yabloko	5.8	–	–	–	–	–	–
Irina Khakamada	Independent	–	3.8	–	–	–	–	–
Mikhail Prokhorov	Independent	–	–	–	–	–	7.98	–
Against all	–	1.9	3.4	–	–	–	–	–
Others	–	6.5	4.9	–	1.3	–	3.85	–

Source: Based on information from *Center for Study of Public Policy*, http://www.russiavotes.org.

CHAPTER VI: DEMOCRATIZATION, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND POPULAR PROTESTS IN UKRAINE (2005-2014)

The victory of Orange camp seemingly put an end to Ukraine's authoritarian path. However, the post-revolutionary period was marked by political instability, rendering the development of the country's democracy crippled. Ukraine under Victor Yushchenko's presidency witnessed four governments in the next five years. Soon after his inauguration in January 2005, Yushchenko appointed Yuliia Timoshenko as his prime minister. However, the coalition between the leaders of Orange Revolutions was short-lived. In September 2005, Yurii Yekhanurov, the leader of Our Ukraine, was appointed as the new prime minister, with the support of the deputies of Viktor Yanukovich's Party of Regions in the Verkhovna Rada.

While Ukraine held its parliamentary elections in March 2006, a new government led by Yanukovich could only be formed in August. Soon Yanukovich's illicit efforts to gain 300 seats in the parliament to amend the constitution led Yushchenko to call for early elections – held in September 2007. At the same time, in both parliamentary elections the leaders of the Orange Revolution continued to garner support in the Ukrainophile western and central regions, while Yanukovich, the defeated leader, was again able to appeal to the mostly Russophile voters in the eastern and southern regions. In November 2007, the Timoshenko Bloc (BYuT) and Yushchenko's Our Ukraine renewed their coalition. Despite recurring political conflicts between the two leaders of the Orange Revolution, Timoshenko succeed in holding onto her premiership until the end of Yushchenko's presidency. Admittedly however, the failure of the Orange coalitions benefited Yanukovich's campaign in the 2010 presidential elections.

In most respects, Ukraine's democratic trajectory in the post-Orange revolution era was an outcome of ensuing conflicts among the main political forces rather than of deliberate efforts towards its consolidation, as noted by some scholars.[1] Indeed, the political elite of the old regime continued to wield enormous influence within the country, simultaneously fending off state reforms necessary for the development of democracy. Similarly, close relations between oligarchs and bureaucracy remained intact. All political camps enjoyed the support of big businesses during election campaigns, and in return big business preserved its access to the corridors of political power. After all, Ukraine's Orange revolution was not able to either ensure the rule of law or reverse the wide-spread corruption.[2]

Yet the country democratized in the ensuing years, experiencing free and fair elections, plurality of media voices,[3] and unrestricted street protests. At the same time, the leaders of the Orange revolution moved swiftly to improve Ukraine's relations with the EU. In February 2005, Ukraine and the EU signed an Action Plan, which unequivocally showed Europe's strong support for the country's political and economic transformation.[4] The same year in December, the EU recognized Ukraine's market economy status.[5] In 2008, the country also became a member of World Trade Organization.

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[1] See, Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 43-92; Adam Eberhardt, *The Revolution That Never Was: Five Years of 'Orange' Ukraine*, Warsaw: Punkt Widzenia, 2009, pp. 43-79.
[2] Freedom House, *Ukraine: Nations in Transit*, 2010, https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2010/ukraine.
[3] For an in-depth study of Ukraine's media development under Yushchenko's presidency and beyond, see, Katerina Tsetsura, *Media Map Project. Ukraine: Case study of donor support to independent media 1990-2010*, Washington, DC: Internews; World Bank Institute, 2012.
[4] EU-Ukraine Action Plan, 2005, p.5, http://library.euneighbours.eu/content/eu-ukraine-action-plan-0.
[5] "EU Grants Ukraine 'Market Economy' Status," *RFERL*, December 1, 2005.

Nonetheless, Ukraine's democratization came to an end with the election of Yanukovich to presidency in February 2010. The president installed a new government in March and appointed his close ally Mikola Azarov as prime minister. From then on, Yanukovich swiftly embarked upon a path to instill his authoritarian rule, gaining the control of the government, the legislature, and also the judiciary. Indeed, Yanukovich used his dominance over the government and the parliament to push for legislation to bring the courts under his control. Afterwards, Ukraine's highly politicized Constitutional Court reversed the 2004 amendments to the constitution, effectively reinstating the strong presidential system. Yanukovich also exploited the courts to prosecute political rivals and regime dissenters. Meanwhile, the president's allies both in politics and business were rewarded for their loyalty with government positions and privatization deals. Ultimately, corruption again thrived in Ukraine.

However, when Yanukovich attempted to shift Ukraine's foreign policy orientation away from the EU, this quickly sparked popular protests against his authoritarian regime. Small protests that began in response to the president's decision not to sign the EU Association Agreement transformed into massive demonstrations in Kyiv within days. As in the Orange Revolution, the Euromaidan protesters challenged the way in which the Yanukovich regime envisioned Ukraine's political, economic, and cultural prospect by invoking an alternative notion of national identity and thus galvanized further popular support. Moreover, Ukraine's private economy brought necessary economic resources to the Maidan. This enabled regime opponents not only to stimulate the protest on the ground, but also to communicate their message with the public. In the span of three months, Ukraine's authoritarian rule was ultimately overthrown. This part of the study

reveals that protesters' effective appeal to a competing vision of national identity and regime's limited control over wealth provides a sufficient explanation for the collapse of Yanukovich's authoritarianism.

Democratization under Yushchenko in 2005-2009

After Yushchenko mobilized hundreds of thousands of people in response to vote rigging in the 2004 presidential election and won the re-run against Yanukovich in December, revolutionaries expected his presidency to usher in political and economic transformation of Ukraine. The political compromise reached to amend the Constitution in early December curbed the strong presidential system in favor of the parliament, although the constitutional reform did not come in to effect until the beginning of 2006. While the amended constitution played a key role in Ukraine's democratization by creating a mixed, presidential-parliamentary system, the political reforms hastily adopted in 2004 however laid the ground for enormous conflict in the country's system of government.

With the wide popular support for his presidency and the waning institutional basis of Yanukovich's Regions Party on the eve of the Orange Revolution, Yushchenko could have reversed the constitutional amendments – as Yanukovich did when he came to power in 2010.[6] Instead, Yushchenko's presidency led to the most democratic era in the country's history. Not only did Ukraine experience clean elections both in 2006 and 2007, but also its media and civil society were able to express a variety of opinions without fear

[6] A public poll revealed that Yuschenko's popularity rating reached approximately 60 percent early on his presidency. See, Valentinas Mite, "Ukraine's Yushchenko Marks 100 Days in Office," *RFERL,* May 3, 2005.

of repression by the regime. Yet, none of this meant that the victors of Orange Revolution shied away from assaulting their rivals in the Party of Regions.

When the early Orange Coalition led by Timoshenko launched a campaign to revise earlier state privatization deals, this seemingly targeted the assets of Yanukovich's financiers. In 2005, the Ukrainian government re-nationalized the *Kryvorizhstal* mill plant, which was sold to Victor Pinchuk, Leonid Kuchma's son-in-law, and Rinat Akhmetov, Donetsk-based billionaire and Yanukovich's close ally, for $800 million in a questionable deal a year before.[7] Soon, the company was re-privatized and acquired by Mittal Steel for $ 4.8 billion. Moreover, with the growing government pressure on his business, Akhmetov reportedly left the country in April 2005.[8] In another instance, Boris Kolesnikov, the head of the Donetsk branch of the Party of Regions, was arrested on criminal charges.[9]

However, the government's intimidation of Yanukovich's associates, and so the oligarchs, retreated when the first Orange Coalition proved no longer to be functional in the midst of allegation of corruption.[10] After dismissing Timoshenko, Yushchenko sought to appoint Yekhanurov as his new prime minister. To gain sufficient support for the approval of his candidate, the president choice to make a deal with Yanukovich. In September 2005, the memorandum signed by the two leaders "put an end to prosecutions for election fraud" and "closed the questions of re-privatizations" in exchange for the Regions' support of the Yekhanurov government.[11] This admittedly opened the door for

[7] Valentinas Mite, "Ukraine: Officials Prepare Biggest Steel Mill for Re-Privatization," *RFERL*, June 29, 2005.
[8] "Smutnye Vremena Akhmetova i Pinchuka" [Troubling Times for Akhmetov and Pinchuk], *Ukrainkaia Pravda*, April 21, 2005.
[9] "Ukraine Says Lawmaker Arrested on Extortion Charges," *RFERL*, April 7, 2005.
[10] "Yushchenko Dismisses His Government Amid Corruption Allegations," *Kyiv Post*, September 8, 2005.
[11] Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, p. 81.

Yanukovich's Regions Party to reorganize and later raise a serious challenge to the leaders of the Orange camp.

Within months of Ukraine's new constitution coming into force, Ukraine held its first proportional parliamentary elections. Major businessman provided substantial financing to election campaigns of both the Orange parties and its main rival, Party of Regions. At the same time, media outlets widely owned by oligarchs covered different political parties favorably. As Yushchenko was not able to control the flow of information due to private ownership in media, this enabled political parties widely to communicate with their potential supporters.[12]

In the course of campaigning, the main political forces essentially appealed to competing notions of Ukraine's national identity. Yushchenko's Our Ukraine Bloc strongly supported the country's potential membership for EU and NATO as well as its development of free market economy. Unsurprisingly, the Bloc opposed the elevation of Russian to the status of official language. Overall, Yushchenko's party portrayed itself as the voice of the Maidan.[13] The Timoshenko Bloc also took a similar stance with Our Ukraine in respect to Ukraine's EU prospect and the status of Russian language. However, the populist Timoshenko remained vague about the question of the country's access to NATO.[14] In turn, Yanukovich's Party of Regions called for developing closer relations with Russia, upgrading the status of the Russian language, and devolving power

[12] See, OSCE, *Ukraine, Parliamentary Elections, 26 March 2006: Final Report*, Warsaw, June 23, 2006.
[13] Zenon Zawada, "Political Bloc Profile: The Our Ukraine Coalition," *Ukrainian Weekly*, Vol. LXXIV (7), February 12, 2006, pp. 5, 17.
[14] Zenon Zawada, "Political Bloc Profile: The Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc," *Ukrainian Weekly*, Vol. LXXIV (9), February 26, 2006, pp. 3, 14.

to regions. The Party opposed Ukraine's potential membership in NATO. However, Yanukovich appeared to agree with furthering the country's integration into Europe.[15]

Yanukovich's Regions Party came back strongly to Ukraine's political scene, winning 32 percent of votes in the March 2006 elections. Tymoshenko's electoral bloc also performed well and gained 22 percent of votes. However, Yushchenko's Our Ukraine found itself losing substantial support by receiving only 14 percent of votes. At the same time, Ukraine's Socialist Party and Communist Party picked up 6 and 4 percent of votes, respectively.

Table 6.1 Russian Parliamentary Elections, March 26, 2006

Political Party	*Votes, %*	*Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Total Votes (% of electorate)	67.55		
Party of Regions	32.14	186	41.3
Yuliia Timoshenko Bloc	22.29	129	28.7
Our Ukraine	13.95	81	18.0
Socialist Party	5.69	33	7.3
Communist Party	3.66	21	4.7
Against all	1.77		
Others	18.31		
Invalid Votes	2.19		
Total	100	450	100

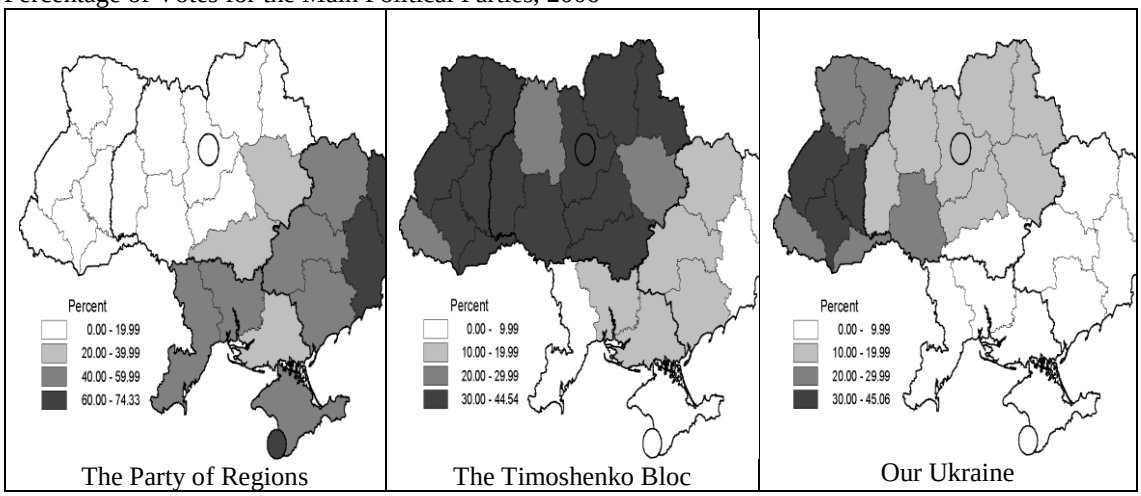
Election threshold was set at 3 percent.
Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

Divisions over Ukraine's national identity appeared to play a key role in the preferences of voters in the 2006 parliamentary elections, as highlighted in the study of Ralph Clem and Peter Craumer. [16] The Party of Regions garnered strong support in the east and south.

[15] Svitlana Kobzar, "Ukraine's Party of Regions: Domestic and Foreign Policy Objectives," *ISPI Policy Brief*, N. 133, May 2009, pp. 1-9.
[16] Ralph S. Clem and Peter R. Craumer, "Orange, Blue and White, and Blonde: The Electoral Geography of Ukraine's 2006 and 2007 Rada Elections," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 49 (2), 127-51. Also, see, Inna Melnykovska, Rainer Scheweickert & Tetiana Kostiuchenko, "Balancing National Uncertainty and Foreign Orientation: Identity Building and the Role of Political Parties in Post-Orange Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 63 (6), August 2011, pp. 1055-72.

The highly industrialized and urbanized eastern regions of Ukraine are mainly populated by ethnic Russians and Russophile Ukrainians. Similarly, a large number of ethnic Russian population is concentrated in the southern regions. In turn, the Timoshenko Bloc and Our Ukraine were largely backed by the electorate in the western and center regions. While the west is the hotbed of the Ukrainian nationalism and has mainly ethnic Ukrainian population, the center regions' population is composed of both ethnic Ukrainians and Russians. Thus, the country's Russophile population – which speaks Russian and favors closer economic and cultural relations with Russia – gave their votes for Yanukovich's Regions Party, while its Ukrainophile population – which supports the development of Ukrainian culture and language as well as the greater integration with Europe – showed support for the Orange parties.

Percentage of Votes for the Main Political Parties, 2006



The Party of Regions | The Timoshenko Bloc | Our Ukraine

Source: Ralph S. Clem and Peter R. Craumer, "Orange, Blue and White, and Blonde: The Electoral Geography of Ukraine's 2006 and 2007 Rada Elections."

Moreover, election outcomes marked the growing influence of oligarchs in the Ukrainian politics. Donetsk based billionaire Akhmetov, along with 60 of his associates, entered in to the parliament on the list of the Party of Regions.[17] As other oligarchs also provided financing for different political parties during the 2006 election campaign, Adam Eberhardt notes that approximately two thirds of the lawmakers emerged to represent business interest in the Rada.[18]

Next, Yanukovich's Regions Party's return to the parliament, with the strong support from the east and south as well as from the Donetsk-based business, gave way to long coalition negotiations in Ukraine. After the Orange parties failed to agree on the terms of the coalition, Yushchenko struck a deal with Yanukovich. In exchange for Yushchenko's endorsement for his premiership, Yanukovich agreed to sign the "Universal of National Unity." First, the declaration reiterated the status of Ukrainian as the official language. On the other hand, it guaranteed the use of Russian or any other native language "in all vital needs." Second, the Universal called for endorsing Ukraine's integration with Europe, with the prospect of gaining membership in EU. Third, it endorsed Ukraine's participation to Russian-led Single Economic Space for creating free-trade zones. Finally, the Universal supported Ukraine's cooperation with NATO, however its membership to the organization was to be decided in a national referendum.[19]

In turn, Timoshenko strongly criticized Yushchenko's agreement with Yanukovich as "the betrayal of the Maidan." However, the Timoshenko Bloc did not shy away from collaborating with the Party of Regions in the ensuing months. In fact, Yanukovich, with

[17] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*," p. 214.
[18] Eberhardt, *The Revolution That Never Was: Five Years of 'Orange' Ukraine*, p. 59.
[19] "Universal natsionalnovo edintstvo," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, August 3, 2016.

the support of Timoshenko, passed legislation to move more powers to the parliament. Admittedly thus, divisions in the Orange camp enabled Yanukovich to reinforce his position. Yet, when Yanukovich's Regions Party garnered almost 300 votes to amend the constitution by purchasing lawmakers, this prompted Yushchenko to dissolve the parliament in April 2007. [20] New parliamentary elections were scheduled for September 30, 2007.

As expected, Ukrainian political parties held onto their regions in the 2007 elections. The Party of Regions gained 34.4 percent of votes, with the concentration in the east and south. Timoshenko's populist bloc also increased its share of votes to 30.7 percent by attracting further support in western Ukraine. Yushchenko's electoral bloc Our Ukraine-People's Self Defense received 14.2 of popular votes. At the same time, Ukraine's Socialist Party lost its seats, and Litvin Bloc entered into the parliament.

Table 6.2 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, September 30, 2007

Political Party	*Votes, %*	*Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Total Votes (% of electorate)	62.03		
Party of Regions	34.37	175	38.8
Yuliia Timoshenko Bloc	30.71	156	34.6
Our Ukraine – People's Self-Defense	14.15	72	16.0
Communist Party	5.39	27	6.0
Litvin Bloc	3.96	20	4.4
Socialist Party	2.86	0	0.0
Against all	2.73		
Others	4.10		
Invalid Votes	1.73		
Total	100	450	100

Election threshold was set at 3 percent.
Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

[20] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 76.

Also, as in the 2006 elections, major businessmen significantly contributed to election campaigns. Yanukovich's Regions party was again supported by the owner of System Capital Management Akhmetov and the gas trading mogul Dmitro Firtash. Timoshenko's bloc received support from the Industrial Union of Donbas. The owner of Roshen chocolate company Petro Poroshenko financed Yushchenko's Our Ukraine's election campaign. Ihor Kolomoiskii's Privat Group supported both Yushchenko's and Timoshenko's bloc.[21] As a result, oligarchs remained to wield substantial influence within the parliament.

In November, BYuT and Our Ukraine formed a new coalition. However, the political conflict between Timoshenko and Yushchenko again rendered the Orange Coalition dysfunctional. Soon, the Timoshenko Bloc, along with the Party of Regions and the Communists, voted for increasing the powers of parliament at the expense of presidential authority in September 2008.[22] Subsequently, Yushchenko withdrew his support from the coalition. More importantly, the president issued a decree to dissolve the parliament in October and called for early elections.[23] However, a Kyiv court suspended the decree, which resulted in Yushchenko dismissing the court itself.[24] Although Timoshenko succeeded in staying as prime minister in the end with the support of some lawmakers in Yushchenko's Our Ukraine and Litvin Bloc, the coalition was no longer able to effectively govern the country.

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[21] Anders Aslund, *What Went Wrong and How to Fix It*, Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2009, p. 71; Serhiy Kudelia and Taras Kuzio, "Nothing personal: explaining the rise and decline of political machines in Ukraine," *Post-Soviet Affairs,* Vol. 31(3), May 2015, pp. 250-78.
[22] Stephen Bandera, "Pro-Western coalition crumbles as president warns of political coup," *Kyiv Post,* September 4, 2008.
[23] "Yushchenko calls for early elections," *Kyiv Post,* October 8, 2008.
[24] Alina Pastukhova, "President sinks as early vote challenged," *Kyiv Post,* October 16, 2008.

At the same time, Lucan Way highlights that Timoshenko and Yanukovich at this time came very close to forming a coalition. However, "political cynicism and mutual distrust" of the members of both the Timoshenko Bloc and Regions Party handicapped negotiation talks. Next, the electoral bases of the political parties raised the concern for furthering political rapprochement. As the two parties were backed by different voters – essentially divided by the meaning of Ukraine's national identity, – the coalition might have damaged the images of Timoshenko and Yanukovich in the eyes of their electorate.[25]

In the last four years, the Ukrainian politics found itself in a democratizing yet unstable state. First, the constitutional reforms, which reduced the presidential powers in favor of the parliament, laid the ground for democratic progress. With none of the political parties garnering sufficient support to amend the constitution,[26] this reduced the possibility for sliding back to authoritarianism. Second, divisions in the Orange camp, and so their dysfunctional governments, enabled Yanukovich and his Regions Party to recover from the defeat of the Orange Revolution. As the leaders of the Orange parties sought to collaborate with Yanukovich when they fell into conflict, this resulted in the Party of Regions becoming a coalition partner in 2006 and passing legislation to increase the powers of the parliament. Next, splits in national identity remained to shape party preferences of voters, which in turn raised the cost of political collaboration between the Orange parties and Yanukovich's Regions Party. Finally, the post-Orange revolution era did not put an end to close relations between bureaucracy and oligarchy – despite the hopes of many. Instead, big business owners provided significant amount of financing to different parties, which in turn enabled them to preserve their influence in the parliament.

[25] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 77.
[26] Ibid., pp. 73-8.

With Yanukovich's ascent to the presidency in early 2010, the impetus for democratization process was lost. The repeated failure of Orange Coalitions, along with Ukraine's worsening economy due to global financial crisis of 2008, benefitted Yanukovich's election campaign.[27] At the same time, Yushchenko's efforts to rehabilitate nationalist leaders and organizations who fought for Ukraine's independence during the Second World War and the Orange Parties' support for the law recognizing the *holodomor* (Great Famine of 1932-33) as "an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people" by the Soviet Union did not help these political forces appeal to voters who longed for the Soviet nostalgia in the east and south.[28] Conversely, Taras Kuzio highlights, the Party of Regions often made use of the Soviet narrative of Ukrainian nationalists as fascists while discrediting its political rivals and thus galvanizing public support in 2005-2010.[29] Although none of the candidates were able to garner 50 percent of the vote in the first round, Yanukovich succeeded in winning against Timoshenko in the run-off 2010 presidential elections, 48.95 percent to 45.47 percent. Hence, 78.5 percent of voters in eastern Ukraine supported Yanukovich, when 80 percent of voters in western Ukraine backed Timoshenko.[30]

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[27] Ukraine's GDP grew an average of 7.5 percent yearly in 2000-08. However, the country's GDP dropped sharply by 15 percent in 2009. See, World Bank, *World Development Indicators: GDP Growth*, http://data.worldbank.org/country/ukraine.

[28] See, Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, pp. 250-7; and Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, *On the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine*, No 376-V, November 28, 2006, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/anot/en/376-16.

[29] Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, p. 260.

[30] Kudelia, "The Maidan and Beyond: The House that Yanukovich Built," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 25 (3), July 2014, p. 21. Also, see, Nathaniel Copsey and Natalia Shapovalova, "The Ukrainian Presidential Election of 2010," *Representation*, Vol. 46 (2), 2010, pp. 211-25.

Table 6.3 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, 2010

Candidate	*Political Party*	*First round, January 17, 2010 %*	*Number*	*Run-off, February 7, 2010 %*	*Number*
Total Votes (% of electorate)		66.5	24,588,268	68.8	25,493,529
Viktor Yanukovich	Party of Regions	35.32	8,686,642	48.95	12,481,266
Yuliia Timoshenko	Fatherland	25.05	6,159,810	45.47	11,593,357
Serhii Tihipko	Self-nominated	13.05	3,211,198		
Arsenii Yatseniuk	Self-nominated	6.96	1,711,737		
Viktor Yushchenko	Self-nominated	5.45	1,341,534		
Petro Simonenko	Communist Party	3.54	872,877		
Volodimir Litvin	People's Party	2.35	578,883		
Oleh Tiahnibok	Svoboda	1.43	352,282		
Anatolii Gritsenko	Self-nominated	1.2	296,412		
Others		1.71			
Against all		1.65		4.39	
Invalid votes		2.29		1.19	
Total		100		100	

Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

The Rise and Fall of Yanukovich's Authoritarianism in 2010-2014

In his February 25 inauguration speech before Ukrainian lawmakers, Victor Yanukovich at first called for the support of the parliament – that he described "a place for a strong opposition, which should control the actions of the government and the president – in future efforts to "create a transparent, effective and accountable system of governance." While the president next promised to ensure political stability, reform economy, and fight corruption, his speech also asserted the need to develop "equal and mutually beneficial relations with the Russian Federation, the European Unions and the United States."[31] Contrary to this, the period between 2010 and 2013 saw growing consolidation of power in the hands of Yanukovich, undermining the parliament and the courts. Simultaneously, Yanukovich's allies in business found their power restored in Ukraine. Later, the

[31] "President Victor Yanukovich's Feb. 25 inaugural speech in parliament," *Kyiv Post*, February 26, 2010.

"Family" – led by the president's son Olexey – came to strongly control the economy, while corruption thrived. Yet, when Yanukovich openly averted the country's integration with Europe in favor of improved relations with Russia, his authoritarian regime met with strong resistance. In the span of three months, the Ukrainian opposition movement, which effectively appealed to a competing notion of national identity and garnered necessary economic resources to spark the protest, led to the collapse of Yanukovich's authoritarianism.

Within days of rising to power, Yanukovich made quick efforts to consolidate his rule. As Timoshenko's government received a vote of no confidence in the parliament, a door opened for the president to form his own government. Yanukovich then signed a law which enabled the Party of Regions to recruit lawmakers from other parties to reach a majority in parliament, although the 2004 constitutional reforms clearly stated that parliamentarians will lose their mandate if they were to leave the political party they were elected from (imperative mandate).[32] On March 11, the Party of Regions formed a new coalition with the Communists, the Litvin Bloc, and parliamentarians that deserted from the Timoshenko Bloc and Our Ukraine. While Yanukovich appointed Azarov as the new prime minister, his loyal businessmen received critical positions in the government.[33]

With his control over the government and the parliament, Yanukovich rapidly moved to undermine opposition forces. In the local elections held in October 2010, the Justice Ministry blocked the heads of Timoshenko's Fatherland Party in Kyiv and Lviv from

[32] John Marone and Peter Byrne, "Power Grab," *Kyiv Post*, March 12, 2010.
[33] Indeed, Anders Aslund notes that "the apparent purpose of this government was to restore the oligarchy and facilitate the enrichment of the oligarchic factions close to Yanukovich." Aslund, *What Went Wrong and How to Fix It*, p. 82.

standing as candidates.[34] Next, the Party of Regions and its allies passed legislation in November which reversed Ukraine's parliamentary elections from a proportional to a mixed system and raised the election threshold to 5 percent.[35] As a result of the election reforms, Yanukovich's Regions Party expected to increase its share of seats in the 2012 parliamentary elections, while making it more difficult for minor parties to have representation.

Even with the election reforms, Yanukovich's alliance did not yet have sufficient votes to amend the constitution unilaterally in parliament. To overcome this, the ruling power further turned to the judiciary. First, a law on the judiciary enabled the High Council of Justice, dominated by pro-Yanukovich members, to appoint and discharge the country's judges from their post in July 2010.[36] This mounted a serious threat to Ukraine's judicial independence. Then, several Constitutional Court justices were fired from their positions.[37] Consequently, the Constitutional Court reversed the 2004 amendments to the constitution and eviscerated the presidential-parliamentary system in Ukraine in October 2010.[38] As Yanukovich gained the power to name a prime minister, appoint and dismiss executive officials, and also assign security service positions, his grasp on power strengthened.[39]

While Ukraine was experiencing significant changes in its judiciary, Yanukovich's regime also began to instigate a serious of political prosecutions against its main rivals.

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[34] "Batkivshchyna to Boycott Local Elections in Lviv," *Kyiv Post*, October 14, 2010.
[35] "Ukraine Changes Election Rules Ahead of 2012 Vote," *Reuters*, November 18, 2011.
[36] Peter Bryne, "Legal experts say new court law would deepen judicial problems," *Kyiv Post*, July 15, 2010.
[37] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, p. 81.
[38] "Ukraine court boosts powers of President Yanukovich," *BBC News*, October 1, 2010.
[39] Olexiy Haran, "From Viktor to Viktor: Democracy and Authoritarianism in Ukraine," *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 19(2), 2011, p. 98; Serhiy Kudelia, "The Maidan and Beyond: The House that Yanukovych Built," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 25 (3), July 2014, p. 21.

Yurii Lutsenko, a former interior minister and opposition lawmaker, was arrested for abuse of office in December 2010 and given a jail sentence for four years.[40] Timoshenko, the leader of the largest opposition party in the parliament, was sentenced to seven years in jail in October 2011 for "exceeding her power" in a gas deal that she signed with Russia as a prime minister. Timoshenko was further banned from serving in public office for 3 years.[41] With this sentence, Yanukovich's regime certainly aimed to eliminate its main competitor from standing as the head of her party and a presidential candidate in the next elections.

Moreover, Ukraine's media pluralism under Yanukovich's regime began to decline in the early 2010s. The largest media groups, owned by Yanukovich loyalists, encouraged self-censorship among journalists. Akhmetov's *TV Ukraina* and State Channel 1 further provided positive coverage of Yanukovich and his Regions Party ahead of the 2012 parliamentary elections.[42] At the same time, Yanukovich directed Valerii Khoroshkovskii, the head of Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and also a share-holder of Inter Media group, to enforce censorship on opposition media.[43] The media crackdown continued in 2012 as Ukraine's tax authorities also launched an investigation against TV channel TVi, a strong critic of the regime.[44] In the same year, a number of journalists, including the leading newspaper *Ukrainskaia Pravda*'s Mustafa Naiem, were physically assaulted.[45]

[40] "Ukraine's Lutsenko Jailed For 4 Years," *Reuters,* February 27, 2012.
[41] "Tymoshenko Sentence in Gas Supply Case Takes Legal Force," *Interfax-Ukraine,* December 2011.
[42] Oleksandr Sushko and Olena Prystayko, "Ukraine: Nations in Transit," *Freedom House,* 2013.
[43] Peter Bryne and Olesia Oleshko, "Channel 5, TVi see threat to free speech in court ruling on frequencies," *Kyiv Post,* July 11, 2010.
[44] Oleksandr Sushko and Olena Prystayko, "Ukraine: Nations in Transit."
[45] Ibid.

In turn, international election observers unsurprisingly characterized Ukraine's 2012 parliamentary elections "by the lack of a level playing field, caused primarily by the abuse of administrative sources, lack of transparency of campaign and party financing, and the lack of balanced media coverage."[46] Even with the uneven playing field in its favor and strong support from oligarchs, Yanukovich's Regions Party increased its share of seats only by 2.3 percent. In fact, the three opposition parties combined – Tymoshenko's and Yatseniuk's Fatherland, Vitalii Klitschko's UDAR (Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform), and Oleh Tiahnibok's nationalist Svoboda (Freedom) – outperformed the Regions in the proportional half of the election, 49 to 30 percent. The Party of Regions and its coalition partner Communist Party – both primarily supported in the eastern and southern regions – garnered around 9 million votes in the proportional part of the elections, while the three opposition parties received 10 million votes – mostly in the western and central regions. However, Yanukovich's party gained 113 seats in the single-mandate constituencies, while the opposition parties together got 57 seats. In the words of Kuzio, the 2012 parliamentary elections "stabilized Ukraine's political system into four or five-party system with the country split between more entrenched mutually exclusive and multiple identities."[47]

[46] OSCE, *Ukraine, Parliamentary Elections, 28 October 2012: Final Report*, Warsaw, January 3, 2013.
[47] Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, p. 98.

Table 6.4 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, October 28, 2012

Political Party	*PR Votes, %*	*PR Seats*	*SMD Seats*	*Total Seats*	*Share of Seats, %*
Party of Regions	30.0	72	113	185	41.1
All Ukrainian Union "Fatherland"	25.54	62	39	101	22.4
UDAR	13.96	34	6	40	8.8
Communist Party	13.18	32		32	7.1
Svoboda	10.44	25	12	37	8.2
Others	6.81	–	7	7	1.5
Self-nominated	–	–	43	43	9.5
Total		225	220	445	100

Source: Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

When the new coalition government was formed, Ukrainian politics found itself further dominated by Yanukovich's Family. The latter, along with Akhmetov's associates, controlled the government and so the economy. Moreover, the Family monopolized the state's law enforcement and tax authorities.[48] In this way, Yanukovich's family had sufficient resources to build itself as the "wealthiest clan in Ukraine" by the time its chief steps out of the office.[49] Thus, state procurement auctions and privatization deals were delivered to Yanukovich's business associates. In fact, Serhiy Kurchenko, who ran a gas company on behalf of Yanukovich's son Olexander, emerged as one of Ukraine's wealthiest people in less than two years.[50] In contrast, the regime penalized business owners which sided with the Orange leaders. [51] In the end, corruption and corporate raiding thrived under the Yanukovich regime. Soon, even the "non-Family" clients felt threatened as their share of spoils also shrank. Hence, Kuzio notes, "Ukraine's oligarchs

[48] Ibid., p. 427.
[49] Ibid., p. 426.
[50] Ibid., p. 427.
[51] Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What It Means for the West*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2014, p. 57.

outside "The Family" and Donetsk … withdrew their support during Yanukovich's presidency."[52] Additionally, the Family's corrupt system burdened ordinary Ukrainian citizens and owners of small and medium-sized enterprises.

To galvanize support both from business and people, Yanukovich admittedly had to rebrand his image in the 2015 presidential elections. To do this, the president ostensibly favored signing the EU Association Agreement. Ukraine had already concluded the "Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA)" with the EU in 2011 and negotiated the Association Agreement in 2012. However, the EU pulled back from signing the DCFTA because of its concern on Ukraine's judicial system.[53] Nonetheless, European leaders kept the door open for signing the Association Agreement during the November 2013 Eastern partnership program in Vilnius and demanded that Ukraine satisfy a set of conditions. As a result, the Ukrainian parliament passed a number of bills to fulfill the EU's requirements by November. Yet, the regime resisted passing the most critical bills for the completion of the Association Agreement, pertaining reforms on the judiciary and the release of Timoshenko to receive medical treatment.[54]

Most critically, Ukraine's prospect to sign the EU's Association Agreement raised Russia's concerns. Ukraine under Yanukovich already refused to become a member in Russia's Customs Union, although the president agreed to prolong the stay of Russia's Black Sea fleet until 2042.[55] In the months leading to the Vilnius summit, the Kremlin launched its campaign to intimidate Ukraine by blocking trade. Deteriorating relations

[52] Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, p. 430.
[53] Aslund, *What Went Wrong and How to Fix It*, pp. 94-5.
[54] "Lawyers: EU to Not Sign Association Agreement with Ukraine if Tymoshenko Not Released," *Interfax-Ukraine*, August 13, 2013.
[55] "Factbox: Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine," *Reuters*, April 26, 2010.

between the two countries may have weakened Yanukovich's main constituency in eastern and southern Ukraine. Earlier in 2012, Yanukovich successfully appealed to his supporters by signing a law which cleared the way for declaring the Russian language an official language in the regions.[56] However, Ukraine's "accession to the Customs Union" remained popular in the south and east (50.8 % and 44.9 %, respectively), while Ukraine's "accession to the EU" gathered substantial support in the west and center (68.4 % and 46.5 %).[57] In April 2013, overall 45.8 percent of Ukrainians favored joining the EU, while 35.8 percent disagreed.[58] In the end, Yanukovich decided that his regime would be better off not signing the Association Agreement. On November 21, 2013, the president suspended the EU negotiations.

Euromaidan: "Slaves do not go to Heaven"[59]

After Yanukovich decided not to sign the EU Association Agreement, a few hundred young Ukrainian men and women began to gather in Kyiv's central square, Maidan. Protesters agreed to camp out in the city center until the government heard their call. The demonstrations that began as a peaceful gathering of a few hundred-people hoping to force Yanukovich's government to reconsider its suspension of the Agreement swiftly evolved into a more dramatic political movement, seeking the removal of a leader who had been edging the country toward an autocratic future. Moreover, this part of the study argues that the Ukrainian opposition movement's successful engagement in the symbolic

[56] "Yanukovich Signs Contentious Russian Language into Force," *Kyiv Post,* August 8, 2012.
[57] "Which Integration path should Ukraine choose," *Razumkov Centre,* April 2013.
[58] "Should Ukraine join the European Union (EU)?" *Razumkov Centre,* April 2013.
[59] A sign in the Maidan, cited by an interviewee, Kyiv, September 2015.

politics of national identity together with access to economic resources together prompted the fall of authoritarianism in the span of three months – as in the Orange Revolution.

From the very beginning of EuroMaidan, protesters drew upon symbolic capital, rhetoric, and legitimacy of past struggles in their call. The opposition movement gathered in the Maidan of Independence, which was "more than the main square in Kyiv," but also "a landmark of historical continuity."[60] Student protests and hunger strikes that brought the government down in 1990, opposition rallies of "Ukraine without Kuchma" in 2000 and 2001, and the Orange Revolution of 2004 all took place in Maidan.[61]

Within days, Kyiv witnessed the largest rallies since the Orange Revolution of 2004. On November 24, over 100,000 Ukrainians responded to calls to rally in support of European integration. Protesters carried the EU and Ukrainian flags and chanted the slogans of *"Ukraine belongs to Europe"* and *"We are for Europe."* My interviews in the field revealed that the early phase of protests was rather an outcome of Ukrainian *citizens*' desire for a better life. As an interviewee puts it, "*I knew the Association Agreement was not the panacea. But, I hoped such a document could show a road map to fight corruption in the judicial system and other things*."[62] Another respondent remarks that "*when Yanukovich was campaigning for the elections, it was written on the boards that 'everything was for people.' Then, we asked 'who were the people.?' The people were Yanukovich's 'Family' and friends.*" [63] In the words of another interviewee, "*our purpose was then not to overthrow Yanukovich, but to force the government officials – [Prime*

[60] Natalia Otrishchenko, "Beyond the Square: The Real and Symbolic Landscapes of the Euromaidan," in *Ukraine's Euromaidan: Analyses of a Civil Revolution*, ed. By David R. Marples, Frederick V. Mills, Ibidem-Verlag: Stuttgart, 2015, p. 149.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Author's interview, Kyiv, September 7, 2015.
[63] Author's interview, Kyiv, August 4, 2015.

Minister] Mikola Azarov and his cabinet ministers - to go sit back at the table and sign the agreement."[64]

However, the tenor of demonstrations swiftly changed on the night of November 30, 2013, when Yanukovich's security forces responded by conducting a brutal sweep through the Maidan. Videos of police beating protesters prompted widespread public outrage, and led thousands of people from all over Ukraine to join the demonstrations in solidarity and march in the streets of Kyiv by early December. As protests grew, Euromaidan also became less about Ukraine's path to Europe and more about penalizing those guilty of violence in the Maidan. In the ensuing months, protesters increasingly demanded the resignation of Yanukovich. [65]

[64] Author's interview, Kyiv, August 2, 2015.
[65] "From Maidan-camp to Maidan-Sich: What has changed?" *Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation in cooperation with KIIS*, February 2, 2014.

Table 6.5 Survey of the Fund "Democratic Initiatives of Ilko Kucheriv" with Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, December 2013 and February 2014

What has promoted you to come to Maidan? (chose not more than 3 causes)	Dec. 7-8, 2013 N: 1037 %	Dec. 20, 2013 N:515 %	Feb. 3, 2014 N:502 %
Refusal of Viktor Yanukovich to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union	53.5	40	47.0
Violent repression against protesters	69.6	69	61.3
Calls of opposition leaders	5.4	6.7	2.8
The desire to change the government in the country	39.1	38.9	45.6
The desire to change the life in Ukraine	49.9	36.2	51.1
Solidarity with friends, colleagues and relatives also are on Maidan	6.2	4.1	3.7
Collapsing of democracy, the threat of dictatorship	18.9	13.7	17.5
It is interesting and funny on Maidan	2.2	1.2	0.4
The desire to take revenge on the government for everything that has been committed in the country	5.2	9.6	9.8
The danger that Ukraine joins the Customs Union and generally returns to Russia	16.9	14.4	20.0
The money I have been paid (or was promised to get paid)	0.3	0.2	0.0
Other (what?)	3.3	8.2	4.6
IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY	0.5	0	0
What requirements do you support (those made on Maidan)? (mark all the requirements that are important for you)			
The release of the arrested members of the Maidan, end of the repression	81.8	63.9	82.2
Signing an Association Agreement with the European Union	71.0	58.6	49.0
The dismissal of the government	80.1	74.5	68.2
Initiation of an investigation on those guilty for beating protesters on Maidan	57.6	50.7	63.7
The dissmissal of the Parliament and calling for early parliamentary re-elections	55.6	51.4	59.1
Release of Yuliia Tymoshenko	37.8	36	30.4
Viktor Yanukovych's resignation and early presidential re-elections	75.1	65.7	85.2
Change the Constitution, to return to constitutional reform of 2004, which limited the government of the president	37.9	42.8	62.5
Violation of criminal cases at all who was involved in corruption	49.6	42.8	62.1
The general increase of living standards	46.9	42.5	41.1
Other (what?)	3.4	6.7	1.6
IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY	0	0	0

Source: "From Maidan Camp to Maidan-Sich: What Has Changed," *KIIS*, Kyiv, February 6, 2014, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=226&page=17&t=3.

Simultaneously, the protest was imbued with more nationalist feelings. As an interviewee explains, "*when all the protest started, middle aged people had an excuse: they already had their fight during the Orange Revolution. … However, when they saw on the TV that security of their kids was in danger, the future of the nation was in danger, they did not have this excuse any longer*."[66] Hence, as Voldymyr Kulyk aptly remarks, "the moral resolve not to 'let them beat our children' had a nationalist connotation as it treated the nation as one big family."[67] At this point, the Maidan also began to display more the national colors of Ukraine. Thousands of protesters additionally sang the national anthem, "assert[ing] their determination as 'Ukrainians' to prevail in a fight with 'unspecified 'enemies.'"[68] An interviewee tells, "*I never thought that I would sing the himn [anthem] with such deep feelings, especially when Berkut attacked. I was sure that I would stand to the end whatever happens. With my fellow Ukrainians, I fought for freedom and independence of Ukraine*." [69]

[66] Author's interview, Kyiv, August 16, 2015.
[67] Volodymyr Kulyk, "Ukrainian Nationalism Since the Outbreak of Euromaidan," *Ab Imperio*, Vol.3, 2014, p. 98.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Author's interview, Kyiv, September 1, 2015.

Table 6.6 Survey of the Fund "Democratic Initiatives of Ilko Kucheriv" with Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS)

	Dec. 7-8, 2013 N: 1037	Dec. 20, 2013 N:515	Feb. 3, 2014 N:502		Dec. 7-8, 2013 N: 1037	Dec. 20, 2013 N:515	Feb. 3, 2014 N:502
Age (%)				**Occupation (%)**			
15-29	38.0	34.1	33.2	Director (deputy) of company, institution, unit	8.0	4.2	4.5
30-54	49.0	52.0	56.0	Specialist (with a higher education)	39.5	21.7	26.7
55 and older	13	13.9	10.8	Law enforcement officers, military	1.4	2.7	3.0
Education (%)				An entrepreneur (businessman)	9.3	12.3	17.4
Incomplete secondary	0.8	2.2	4.3	Worker	6.7	14.4	15.2
Secondary general and vocational education	22.1	38.9	43.1	Farm worker, farmer	0.6	1.9	2.9
Incomplete higher	14.4	10.3	9.5	Pupil	0.4	1.1	–
Higher	62.7	48.7	43.1	Student	13,2	10,1	6.2
				Pensioner	9.4	11.2	7.4
				Do not have a permanent job, but work for the occasion in different places	3.1	8.5	4.5
				Temporarily unemployed and have no source of income	2.4	7.7	8.5
				Other	6.2	4.2	4.7

Source: "From Maidan Camp to Maidan-Sich: What Has Changed," *KIIS*, Kyiv, February 6, 2014, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=226&page=17&t=3.

However, protesters' imagination of the nation as one-big family did not correspond to the way some other Ukrainians tend to interpret their experience with the nation. Although protesters saw themselves defending the nation's freedom and independence against enemies, other Ukrainians remained opposed to the protest. A poll in February

2014[70] found that less than half of the Ukrainians supported the protest (40 %), while 23 percent of Ukrainians continued to back Yanukovich's regime. At the same time, 32 percent of Ukrainians did not support either side. The support for Yanukovich's regime concentrated in Eastern Ukraine (51.9 %), while 32.2 percent of southern Ukrainians also backed the incumbent regime. On the other hand, the protest gathered substantial support in the western (80.4 %) and central (51 %) regions. Also, 19.6 percent of the southern region revealed its support for the protest.

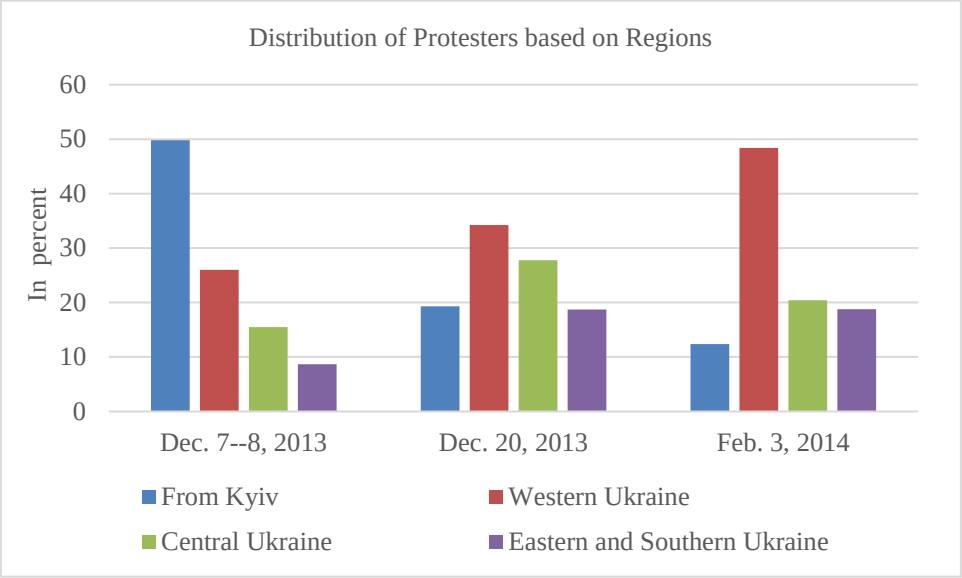
Table 6.7 KISS' survey: "Ukraine – by regions"

Feb. 8-18, 2014 N:2032	Macro-regions			
Whom do you support right now in the conflict in Ukraine?	Western %	Central %	Southern %	Eastern %
On the side of authorities led by Yanukovych	2.6	10.7	32.2	51.9
On the side of protesters	80.4	51.0	19.6	7.5
None of the sides	12.6	32.5	41.7	39.4
DIFFICULT TO ANSWER	4.3	5.8	6.6	1.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Source: "Attitudes of Ukrainians and Russians Towards Protests in Ukraine," *KIIS in corporation with Levada-Center*, February 28, 2014, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=231&page=17&t=3.

Additionally, as of February 2014, 87.6 percent of protesters came from the regions. Among them, the majority visited from western Ukraine (54.8 %).[71] Thus, competing visions of national identity, concentrated in different regions, played a major role in Ukrainians' perception of the protest.

[70] "Attitudes of Ukrainians and Russians Towards Protests in Ukraine," *KIIS in corporation with Levada-Center*, February 28, 2014.
[71] See, "From Maidan-camp to Maidan-Sich: What has changed?"



Source: "From Maidan Camp to Maidan-Sich: What Has Changed," *KIIS*, Kyiv, February 6, 2014, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=226&page=17&t=3.

Equally important was the popularity of the national identity, which supports Ukrainian culture and language, and favors an orientation toward Europe, in younger age groups, compared to the preference for the other notion of national identity, which gravitated towards improved relations with Russia as part of material and cultural concerns. Younger Ukrainians (aged 18-29 and 30-39) had a significantly larger preference for the protest (43.6% and 42.1 %, respectively) than that of Yanukovich's regime (14.2% and 20.2 %, respectively). The support for the protest continued across most Ukrainian age groups, while the preference for Yanukovich's regime was higher in older age groups. The largest support for the regime came from those aged over 70 with 37.6 percent.[72] Similarly, Ukrainians with higher education tend to back the protest (45.1 %) rather than supporting Yanukovich's regime (17.3%).[73]

[72] "Attitudes of Ukrainians and Russians Towards Protests in Ukraine."
[73] Ibid.

Table 6.8 KISS' survey: "Ukraine – by age," "Ukraine – by education level"

Feb. 8-18, 2014 N:2032					
Whom do you support right now in the conflict in Ukraine?	On the side of authorities led by Yanukovych %	On the side of protesters %	None of the sides %	Difficult to answer %	TOTAL
Age					
18-29	14.2	43.6	36.1	6.2	100
30-39	20.2	42.1	31.7	5.9	100
40-49	21.5	43.3	31.0	4.1	100
50-59	26.3	38.3	32.0	2.8	100
60-69	27.6	37.1	31.3	4.1	100
70+	37.6	31.4	27.1	3.9	100
Education					
Basic (less than 7 years)	28.9	33.3	37.8	0	100
Incomplete secondary (less than 10 years)	30.9	41.8	25.5	1.8	100
Complete secondary	25.8	36.1	32.6	5.4	100
Higher	17.3	45.1	32.0	5.6	100

Source: "Attitudes of Ukrainians and Russians Towards Protests in Ukraine," *KIIS in corporation with Levada-Center*, February 28, 2014, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=231&page=17&t=3.

From the beginning, the three political parties in parliament involved in the organization of the protest. The Orange leader Yuliia Timoshenko's and Arsenii Yatseniuk's Fatherland, Vitalii Klitschko's UDAR, and Oleh Tiahnibok's nationalist Svoboda undertook leadership role and financed the protest in the Maidan.[74] Similarly, Poroshenko was an early supporter of the protest.[75] Moreover, regime outsider oligarchs helped to organize the protest, providing favorable media coverage. TV channels, including 1+1, Channel 5, and those owned by Kuchma's son-in law Viktor Pinchuk reported from the Maidan.[76] Also, Inter, the most-watched Ukrainian TV channel owned by the head of Presidential Administration Serhii Lovochkin, provided coverage of the Maidan by the

[74] "Ukraine: Stalemate," *Economist*, January 6, 2014.
[75] "Ukraine's protests: A new revolution on Maidan Square," *Economist*, December 7, 2013.
[76] Sergii Leshchenko, "The Maidan and Beyond: The Media's Role," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 25 (3), July 2014, pp. 52-7.

end of December.[77] At the same time, the regime loyalist oligarchs, who were threatened by Yanukovich's family, reportedly provided financing to protesters.[78] After all, Yanukovich's failure to control the wealth, and thus the media, stimulated the protest participation.

Next, dispersed economic resources strengthened the self-organization of protesters in the Maidan. When students were beaten by Berkut in the end of November, more protesters vigilantly occupied the Maidan in defending "Ukraine" against Yanukovich. They erected tents in the square, seized the City Hall and House of Trade Unions, in which nationalist Svoboda played a key role, and coordinated logistics and further actions. My discussions with protesters highlighted their voluntary efforts to sustain the protest, by helping in outdoor kitchens, bringing medicine and warm clothes, providing medical and legal assistance, and donating cash. *Ukrainskaia Pravda* reported that between $21,400 and $41,700 were collected daily in the Maidan.[79] At the same time, small and medium-sized business owners, who were hit by Yanukovich's tax policies, encouraged their employees to participate in rallies, and provided large amounts of financing to stimulate the protest.[80] Meanwhile, the Civic Sector of EuroMaidan emerged to organize the activities in Kyiv. A coordinator in the movement also highlighted the Ukrainian diaspora's financial support to the protest.[81] Additionally, self-defense units were formed in the Maidan. Small and midsize businesses reportedly sent their workers

[77] Ibid.
[78] Serhiy Kudelia's interview with Taras Stetskiv: "The Maidan and Beyond: The House that Yanukovich Built," p. 29; Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis*, p. 72.
[79] "Na Maidan ezhednevno zhertvuiut ot 180 do 350 tysiach griven" [Donations in Maidan totals between 180 to 350 thousand hryvnias daily], *Ukrainskaya Pravda*, February 17, 2014.
[80] James M. Gomez, Kateryna Choursina and Volodymyr Verbyany, "Ukraine Entrepreneurs Supply Lines, Keep Blockades Fueled," *Bloomberg*, February 14, 2014.
[81] Author's interview, Kyiv, September 7, 2015.

to join the self- defense units. [82] The units also benefitted from the financial support of business owners. [83] In the end, the cost of sustaining the protest in Kyiv was about $70,000 per day, according to some estimates.[84]

At the same time, interviewees in our discussions often associated the self-organization in the Maidan with Ukrainian history and culture, while also alluding to Russians as lacking a similar tradition. A respondent remarked that "*the memories of self-organization are alive in families in Chernivtsi [which was a part of Austro-Hungarian empires]*," and added that "*in Ukraine, you first need to think about yourself, but [in a way of] what you can do for your country. Self-organization is all about this. Russians are on the other hand collectivist*." [85] Similarly, another interviewee suggested that "*Russians need their tsar. Here, in Ukraine, we can self-organize. We still need leaders, but we don't need a leader.*" [86]Also, many respondents highlighted that the organization of self-defense units in the Maidan was drawn upon the military tradition of Ukrainian Cossacks in the seventeenth century.

As the protest intensified, the regime began to crumble. First, Yanukovich's close ally Lovochkin attempted to give his resignation. However, the president did not accept it. Next, Inna Bohoslovska, David Zhvaniia,[87] Volodimir Melnichenko, and Nikolai

[82] Lucan Way's personal communication with Andrew Wilson: "The Maidan and Beyond: Civil Society and Democratization," *Journal of Democracy,* Vol. 25(3), July 2014, p. 40; Iain Marlow, "Ukraine's protesters find unusual ally in business," *The Globe and Mail*, December 4, 2013.
[83] Author's interviews, Kyiv, September – October 2015; Iain Marlow, "Ukraine's protesters find unusual ally in business," *The Globe and Mail*, December 4, 2013, and Lucan Way, "The Maidan and Beyond: Civil Society and Democratization," p. 40.
[84] Ibid., p. 29.
[85] Author's interview, Kyiv, September 9, 2015.
[86] Author's interview, Kyiv, August 4, 2015.
[87] Zhvaniia, who was a major financier of Yushchenko's election campaign in 2004 and the Orange Revolution, fell apart with Our Ukraine in 2008. He became a member of the parliamentary coalition which supported Yanukovich in 2010.

Rudkovskii quit the Party of Regions in December 2013.[88] Finally, Yanukovich agreed to negotiate with the three opposition leaders, Yatseniuk, Klitschko, and Tiahnibok, on December 13th. However, the president refused to dismiss prime minister Azarov, who was accused of ordering the violent crackdown in the Maidan.[89] Instead, Yanukovich's regime brought larger numbers of *tituski* (hired thugs) from other regions to provoke violence in the Maidan, while also organizing its own pro-government rallies in Kyiv.[90] Moreover, Yanukovich signed a new deal with Putin on December 17, which included Russia's $15 billion worth of assistance to Ukraine.[91]

By January 2014, the protest seemingly slowed down. In early January, the ultra-right Svoboda party, which gathered 10.4 percent of the votes in the 2012 parliamentary elections, organized a torch-lit march in Kyiv in the memory of Stepan Bandera, the leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in the Second Word War era. As has been discussed earlier in this study, Bandera's organization unified various armed groups under the Ukrainian Insurgent Army during the war. However, these organizations' collaboration with Nazi Germany, along with their fight against the Soviet army, to form an independent Ukrainian state, is one of the most disputed topics in the country's history.[92] Therefore, the Svoboda's commitment to the protest, and his leader Tiahnibok's ethno-nationalist appeal, provoked a split in the Maidan. In other words, some praised Svoboda's activities during the protest, while others condemned. In the view of an

[88] Olexander Andreyev, "In Ukraine, the oligarchs hedge their bets," *Open Democracy*, December 17, 2013.
[89] Natalia Zinets, "Ukraine's Yanukovich Hold Crisis Talks as Thousand Mass for Rally," *Reuters*, December 13, 2013.
[90] Mark Rachkevych, "Opposition warns of Yanukovych attempts to instigate violence at Dec. 15 rally," *Kyiv Post*, December 13, 2013; Halya Coynash, "High-Price Pro-Government Provocation," *Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group*, December 14, 2013.
[91] Katya Gorchinskaya, Darina Marchak, "Russia gives Ukraine cheap gas, $15 billion in loans," *Kyiv Post*, December 17, 2013.
[92] Per Anders Rudling, *The OUN, the UPA, and the Holoccaust*; David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains*.

interviewee, "*all the opposition leaders were disappointing. They did not organize any actions. … Svoboda [however] organized actions in the Maidan. They were all the time active. They secured the Maidan for us. They were all the time in the front.*"[93] However, another interviewee suggested that "*Svoboda's image and militarization of the Maidan pushed potential protesters away. … Many Kyiv residents even started to avoid the Maidan area because they felt threatened.*" [94] Most importantly, pro-Yanukovich media in Ukraine and Russia capitalized on the images of Svoboda's activities, Banderite symbols and OUN flag to discredit the Maidan. Given that Yanukovich's allies owned the major TV channels, and over 80 percent of Ukrainians received their news from TV, the media coverage of nationalists in the Maidan further deepened the alienation of Ukrainians in the eastern and southern regions.[95] Yet, without the leadership and organizational muscle provided by the Svoboda, regime opponents might clearly have had a harder time in stimulating the protest.

Next, Yanukovich pushed a new legislation through the parliament, aimed at curbing the protest in the Maidan, on January 16, 2014. However, these new "anti-protest laws" once again intensified the protest. Right Sector, an ultra-nationalist group which was created in late November, swiftly defied the Yanukovich regime by throwing Molotov cocktails and beating riot police. During the violent clashes in Hrushevskii street, Right Sector activists, although small in numbers (around 300), emerged in the front lines and drew substantial media attention.[96] In the view of Right Sector's leader Dmitrii Yarosh -

[93] Author's interview, Kyiv, September 7, 2015.
[94] Author's interview, Kyiv, August 16, 2015.
[95] "The Media and Trust to Ukrainian and Russian Media," *KIIS*, October 29, 2014.
[96] This number was given by Oleksandra Matviychuk, Head of the Board at Center for Civil Liberties: Author's interview, Kyiv, August 2015.

an adherent of "the ideology of Ukrainian nationalism as interpreted by Stepan Bandera," – many others resorted to violence because of the frustration both with Yanukovich's regime and the opposition leader's inability to move the protest forward.[97] Finally, Yanukovich's regime, in the face of increasing resistance, agreed to revoke the anti-protest legislation on January 25. In the same day, Yanukovich's prime minister Azarov also gave his resignation.

By the end of January, protesters seized several government buildings in the western and central regions.[98] More visitors from western Ukraine poured into the streets of Kyiv. Meanwhile, Lovochkin resigned from his position.[99] However, Yanukovich remained reluctant to compromise with the opposition. Hence, the regime deployed more militias from eastern and southern Ukraine in Kyiv in February.[100]

On February 18, the protest once again turned violent after the Yanukovich-controlled parliament refused to discuss the president's powers. In the following hours, the regime attempted to clear the Maidan but failed. The ongoing negotiations between the regime and the opposition leaders did not bring an end to the brawl in the Maidan. On February 20, Yanukovich's regime made a fatal mistake by ordering security forces to open fire on the protesters. The snipers shot around seventy people to death in downtown Kyiv.[101] The

[97] Mustafa Naiem, Oksana Kovalenko, "Lider Pravogo sektora Dmitrii Yarosh: Kogda 80% strany poddezhivaet vlast, grazhdanskoi voini byt ne mozhet" [The Leader of Right Sector Dmitrii Yarosh: When 80 percent of the country does not support the regime], there cannot be a civil war," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 4, 2014.
[98] "Beyond Kyiv: Ukrainian Protesters Seize Control of Regional Administrations," *RFERL*, January 27, 2014.
[99] Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis*, p.84.
[100] See, Daryna Shevchenko, "Protesters take police hostages in conflict," *Kyiv Post*, February 21, 2014.
[101] "V Minzdrave podtverdili informatsiiu o 77 pogibshikh" [The Ministry of Health conformed the death of 77 people," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 21, 2014.

same day, several deputies resigned from the Party of Regions.[102] The mayor of Kyiv, Volodimir Makeienko, also left the ruling party in reaction to the government's assault on the protesters.[103] Most importantly, thirty-four members of the Party of Regions voted in favor of ending the police violence in the Maidan, along with the deputies of the opposition parties in parliament (236 out of 450).[104] Hence, Yanukovich was no longer able to control the legislature.

On February 21, delegates of Poland, Germany, France, and Russia, who arrived in Kyiv a day earlier, concluded a deal between Yanukovich and the opposition leaders. The agreement, signed in the afternoon, called for early presidential elections by the end of the year, the restoration of the 2004 constitution within 48 hours, and the formation of a national unity government within 10 days.[105] The same day, the parliament voted to reinstall the 2004 constitution, which was backed by one hundred-forty members of the Party of Regions, to remove the Interior Minister Vitalii Zakharchenko, and to amend a criminal law leading to the release of Yuliia Timoshenko.[106]

However, the agreement between Yanukovich and the opposition leaders was met with resistance by protesters in the Maidan. Soon after Klitschko stepped on stage to explain the agreement, Volodymyr Parasiuk, a commander in one of the many self-defense units, interrupted him. Parasiuk called protesters not to leave the Maidan until

[102] "Eshe niat deputatov pokinuli fraktsiiu PR" [Five more deputies left the faction of PR], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 2014.
[103] Christopher J. Miller, "Death, fire, smoke and soot darken Ukraine's prospects," *Kyiv Post*, February 21, 2014.
[104] Lucan Way reports from the analysis of Lesi Orobets: *Pluralism by Default*, p. 85.
[105] "Ukrainian president and opposition sign an early deal," *BBC News*, February 21, 2014.
[106] "Rada vosstanovila deistvie konstitutsii 2004 goda" [Rada restored the 2004 Constitution," *Zerkalo Nedeli*, February 21, 2014. Also, see, *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 21, 2014

Yanukovich resigned.[107] At the same time, Rights Sector, along with several other groups, pledged to continue with the protest.[108] In the late evening, the news of Yanukovich fleeing Kyiv suddenly circulated.[109] In my discussion with interviewees, two things became evident regarding this phase of the protest. First, many protesters expressed their disapproval of the opposition leaders, as the signed agreement allowed Yanukovich to stay in power. In the view of interviewees, "*people could not live another year with Yanukovich, after the mass shooting*." Second, Yanukovich's exit was quite unexpected for protesters, as it was for the rest of the world. In the end, Ukrainian parliament voted to remove Yanukovich on February 22.

In summary, the Ukrainian opposition's effective appeal to a competing notion of national identity, along with its broad access to economic resources, stimulated the protest leading to the fall of Yanukovich's regime. Yanukovich's refusal to sign the EU Association Agreement and leaning towards Russia to ensure his authoritarian rule, and later the violent crackdown on protesters, increased the disagreement over the national identity espoused by the regime. In response, many protesters, ascribed to Ukrainophile identity, poured into the streets of Kyiv to "defend the nation, Ukraine's freedom and independence" against a leader edging the country towards his vision of authoritarianism. Particularly, ultra-right groups' commitment to the protest played a significant role in the ousting of the Yanukovich's regime. Moreover, support of Ukrainian business, which suffered from the "Family's" economic dealings, brought necessary financing to sustain

[107] "Liudi postavili ultimatum: otstavka Yanukovicha do utra" [People delivered an ultimatum: resignation of Yanukovich by morning," *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 21, 2014.
[108] "'Pravui sektor' ne slozhit oruzhie do ostavki Yanukovicha" [Right sector will not lay down arms until Yanukovich's resigns], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 21, 2014.
[109] "Yanukovich vuletel b Kharkov" [Yanukovich flew to Kharkiv], *Ukrainskaia Pravda*, February 21, 2014.

the Maidan and also helped to disseminate the opposition forces' message to Ukrainians. Simultaneously, the regime began to crumble. At first, few members of the Party of Regions deserted Yanukovich. However, after the mass shooting, many former allies defied the regime by supporting the majority in parliament to end police violence. Within the next few days, the Yanukovich's regime finally collapsed.

Table 6.9 Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections, 2006-2012

Political Party	Share of Seats, %	Share of Seats, %	Change, %	Share of Seats, %	Change, %	Seats	Seats	Change	Seats	Change
	2006	2007		2012		2006	2007		2011	
Party of Regions	41.3	38.8	-2.5	41.1	2.3	186	175	-11	185	10
Yulia Timoshenko Bloc*	28.7	34.6	5.9	22.4	12.2	129	156	27	101	-55
Our Ukraine**	18.0	16.0	-2	–	-16.0	81	72	-9	0	-72
Socialist Party	7.3	0.0	-7.3	–	–	33	0	-33	–	–
Communist Party	4.7	6.0	1.3	7.1	1.1	21	27	6	32	5
Litvin Bloc	–	4.4	4.4	–	-4.4	–	20	20	0	-20
Udar	–	–	–	8.8	8.8	–	–	–	40	40
Svoboda	–	–	–	8.2	8.2	–	–	–	37	37
Others	–	–	–	1.5	1.5	–	–	–	7	7
Independent	–	–	–	9.5	9.5	–	–	–	43	43
Total						450	450		445	

Source: Based on information from Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.
* In the 2012 parliamentary elections, the political party that Yuliia Timoshenko led took the name All Ukrainian Union "Fatherland."
**In the 2007 parliamentary elections, the electoral bloc led by Yushchenko changed its name to Our Ukraine – People's Self Defense.

Table 6.1.1 Ukrainian Presidential Elections, 2004-2010

Candidate	Political Party	Vote Share, %		Vote Share, %	
		2004		2010	
		First Round	*Second Round*	*First Round*	*Second Round*
Viktor Yushchenko	Self-Nominated	39.90	51.99	5.45	–
Viktor Yanukovich	Party of Regions	39.26	44.20	35.32	48.95
Petro Simonenko	Communist Party	4.97	–	3.54	–
Yuliia Timoshenko	Fatherland	–	–	25.05	45.47

Source: Based on information from Central Election Commission of Ukraine, www.cvk.gov.ua.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

The post-Soviet era witnessed in many countries the rise of authoritarian regimes, characterized by flawed elections, unlevel playing fields, and widespread violation of civil liberties.[1] While some incumbent leaders effectively consolidated authoritarian rule in their respective states, others failed to hold onto power in the face of growing opposition. This dissertation has focused on two such cases: Russia and Ukraine. The two countries inherited weak respect for the rule of law and undeveloped civil societies from the Soviet past. Both Russia and Ukraine lacked any prior experience with democracy and strong ties to the Western countries. Both states also possessed mass economic resources and industries from the Soviet system. In spite of these similarities, Russia and Ukraine experienced divergent transitional paths in the post-Soviet era. While Russia became a consolidated authoritarian regime, Ukraine oscillated between authoritarianism and democracy. This dissertation sought to explain the reasons of different authoritarian outcomes in these two countries.

Post-Soviet scholarship has to date offered a variety of explanations for diverse regime trajectories. Some studies focused on the design of political institutions in explaining the failure of democratization in this region. For instance, Steven Fish related fading democracy in Russia with the super-presidential system.[2] Similarly, Timothy Colton and Cindy Skach considered undeveloped party systems, along with presidents who are not "integrated into an institutionalized party system," as conducive to a reversal

[1] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, pp. 5-12.
[2] M. Steven Fish, *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 193-246.

in the democratization of post-Soviet states.[3] Although constitutional design wields nontrivial influence on regime trajectories, Gerald Easter and Lucan Way aptly point out that authoritarianism was rather a cause – than an outcome – of strong presidential systems in the region.[4] At the same time, my work also noted that Putin in Russia consolidated more powers than Yeltsin without making any changes to the constitution, while Yanukovich succeeded in bypassing constitutional constraints to restore the presidential system after coming to office.

Alternatively, Henry Hale focused on formal term limits in analyzing post-Soviet regime outcomes. According to Hale, in the post-Soviet "patronal" systems where incumbent leaders failed to hold onto power, constitutionally mandated term limits promoted elite defection by carrying uncertainty and thus enabled the opposition to challenge authoritarian rule.[5] However, Kravchuk in Ukraine fell from power in 1994, even though he did not approach his term limits. While Hale's framework also accounts for presidential popularity in shaping the political elite's expectations about a leader's future and their decision to either support or oppose a president approaching his term limits, it yet leaves out some key variables – most importantly, a potential opposition movement's ability to mobilize support – affecting political actors' perception of the likelihood of regime survival. This was how Yanukovich's authoritarian rule fell in the

[3] Timothy Colton and Cindy Skach, "The Russian Predicament," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 16 (3), July 2005, pp. 113-26.
[4] Gerard M. Easter, "Preference for Presidentialism: Postcommunist Regime Change in Russia and the NIS," pp.184-211; Way, "Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave," p. 243-44.
[5] Henry E. Hale, "Regime Cycles: Democracy, Autocracy, and Revolution in Post-Soviet Eurasia" pp. 133-65, "Formal Constitutions in Informal Politics: Institutions and Democratization in Post-Soviet Eurasia," *World Politics*, Vol. 63 (4), Oct. 2011, pp. 581-617.

face of a broad opposition movement in 2014, although his first term was to end a year later.

Another set of studies paid attention to the dissident movements, the tactics and repertoires available to them, and the diffusion of opposition techniques among post-Soviet countries.[6] Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik particularly asserted a set of strategies for opposition movements seeking to overthrow authoritarian leaders in the wake of fraudulent elections.[7] Yet some opposition movements adopting the techniques and strategies similar to those that had enabled other opposition movements to thwart autocrats nonetheless failed to mobilize sufficient support on the ground after a regime stole elections. Moreover, the fall of Yanukovich's authoritarian rule – as laid out in chapter VI – was brought about more by spontaneous acts of Ukrainian people than by prior efforts of civil society organizations when there were no elections.

Recently, Lucan Way – building upon his earlier work with Levitsky – offered an approach which looked at both an authoritarian incumbent's capacity to repress challengers and opposition leaders' ability to mobilize support in regard to national identity divisions.[8] His study found that authoritarian leaders who possessed vast organizational resources or strong control over the economy will be able to repress opposition forces in countries where divisions in national identity are negligible. While categorizing Russia as having a unified national identity, Way disregards challenges

[6] Bunce and Wolchik, "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes," pp. 43-86; Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena," pp. 259-76; Joshua A. Tucker, "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions," *American Political Science Association*, Vol. 5 (3), Sep. 2007, pp. 535-51. Also, see, Marc M. Howard and Philip G. Roessler, "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vo. 50 (2), April 2006, pp. 365-81.
[7] Bunce and Wolchik, "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes," pp. 43-86.
[8] Way, *Pluralism by Default*, pp. 7-26.

posed by communists and national-patriots throughout the 1990s. The resistance of these groups in the Duma against Yeltsin's rule generated an armed conflict in October 1993. Yeltsin was able to unlawfully shut down the Duma – even though he possessed weak organizational resources – in part because more people, particularly in Moscow, supported Yeltsin's presidency at the time. Similarly, communist leader Zyuganov, who portrayed himself as the candidate of national-patriotic forces, mounted a serious threat to Yeltsin in the 1996 presidential elections. Indeed, the very "polarized electorate"[9] in this race gave way to the only run-off of modern Russian history. Thus, the question is why these forces are no longer able to effectively resist the Russian regime. In response, my work suggested that Putin's domination of struggle over national idea weakened opposition forces in the parliament which appealed to similar notion of nation and thus resulted in potential challengers' poor electoral showing.

In summary, little work in post-Soviet scholarship has simultaneously examined how autocrats and opposition forces build popular support in their efforts to maintain power or resist it, respectively, in understanding divergent regime outcomes. As a result, most literature focused on one side of the story, while leaving out (particularly) ideational and material bases of support (or the lack thereof) for the other side. Without a thorough analysis of the sources of popular support for both authoritarian regimes and opposition movements within and across cases, we are left with one-sided explanations of post-Soviet authoritarian outcomes.

My work sought to remedy this gap by exploring competing forces' engagement in the symbolic politics of national identity and their access to economic resources in Russia

[9] McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections*, p. 13.

and Ukraine. The two cases reveal that divergent authoritarian trajectories were less about regime dissidents' strong commitment to democratic values and developed civil societies or incumbent rulers' access to well-organized party institutions and strong coercive apparatuses, but more about (dis)agreement over a national identity espoused by autocratic incumbents and opposition forces' ability to mobilize economic resources. When opposition forces framed their struggle against authoritarian rule in national terms *and* acquired access to financial and media resources, incumbent leaders failed to hold onto power. However, when incumbent regimes either popularized their choice of national identity or asserted broad control over economic resources – or both, – this strengthened the authoritarian leaders' ability to retain power.

Chapter III-VI in this study offer empirical evidence to show how the ideational and material bases of mobilizational support both for incumbent leaders and dissident movements shaped the authoritarian outcomes in Russia and Ukraine. In both countries, the presidents, in the absence of a new constitution delineating institutional powers, became locked in severe conflicts with the opposition-dominated parliaments in the immediate post-Soviet era. Neither Yeltsin nor Kravchuk was affiliated with any political party at the time. With declining economies and increasing opposition to their rule, the two presidents were forced to compromise with their parliaments. Yet this process eventually led Kravchuk to lose power in early elections. Most critically, national identity appeals of candidates appeared in the presidential race as a significant source of voter mobilization, along with the regional – economic and political – networks available to them. By contrast, Yeltsin, after facing a serious challenge from communists and national-patriotic forces in the Duma, commanded security forces to end the rebellion. As

noted in chapter III, this was rather a risky decision on the part of Yeltsin, given that the coercive apparatus had occasionally failed to implement orders earlier. Although security forces were reluctant to intervene in the conflict, opposition leaders' failure to appeal to the Russian nation and to mobilize broad support on the ground enabled Yeltsin to convince troops to shell the parliament. Thus, the military's potential commitment to act was arguably less about a concern regarding *capacity*, and more about a question of *will*.[10] In this respect, the low level of popular support on the ground for opposition forces, and the low cost of repression associated with it, eased security forces' decision to engage in an assault on the parliament.[11]

The following period in Russia under Yeltsin and in Ukraine under Kuchma highlight how the two factors analyzed in this dissertation played a key role in authoritarian outcomes. The two leaders established strong presidential systems – even though there were some differences in terms of the power of president and parliament between the two countries. Yet both Yeltsin and Kuchma continued to face serious challenges particularly from the leftist parties in the parliament throughout the 1990s. While Yeltsin and Kuchma made efforts to form pro-presidential parties, they still had to rely on competing factions in exercising their powers. The two leaders also suffered from low-popularity ratings as the economy in their respective countries declined at significant rates.[12] Nonetheless, Yeltsin in 1996 and Kuchma in 1999 won victories in the presidential elections. First, newly emerging group of oligarchs in both countries raised large sums of money for each

[10] The distinction between coercive apparatus' capacity and will is offered by Eva Bellin, see, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 36 (2), 2004, pp. 139-57, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 44 (2), 2012, pp. 127-49.
[11] This part is built upon Eva Bellin's work.
[12] Economy in Russia declined by 40 percent between 1990 and 1996, and in Ukraine by 24 percent between 1994 and 1999. *World Bank*, https://data.worldbank.org/.

president's campaign expenditure while also providing broad coverage to the leaders in their media outlets, with the expectation of gaining further privileges in privatization of state assets. Second, both Yeltsin and Kuchma redefined the content of political debate by capitalizing on the threat of communism with the voters in each country, although the left-wing opposition candidates primarily made appeals to competing visions of national identity.

As chapter III and IV highlight, the two leaders faced growing challenges from regime insiders in the subsequent period. Primakov in Russia and Yushchenko in Ukraine emerged as potential candidates, gaining popularity with the people. Yet the recent poor showing of opposition parties in the 1999 Russian parliamentary elections due to the rise of pro-Kremlin party, Unity, which had access to large financial and media resources to stir nationalist feelings in the face of reignited Chechen war, resulted in Primakov's withdrawing from the upcoming race. Simultaneously, Yeltsin's hand-picked successor, Putin, built an image as "the defender of nation"[13] by sending troops to Chechnia after the Chechen rebels' incursion to neighboring Dagestan and a wave of apartments bombings in Moscow. Unlike Yeltsin whose inability to cultivate a national identity for post-Soviet Russia deprived him of a significant source of popular support, Putin thus made effective appeals to national sentiments to enlist people behind his rule from the beginning. Finally, with the broad financial and media resources provided by various oligarchs, Putin became the next president of Russia in 2000.

In stark contrast to Yeltsin's Russia, in Ukraine Kuchma's chosen successor, Yanukovich failed to gain sufficient support to win the 2004 presidential elections –

[13] Colton and McFaul, *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy*, p. 180.

despite possessing massive resources to communicate pro-Russian campaign messages. As chapter IV points out, when the regime carried out large-scale electoral fraud to ensure Yanukovich's victory, many individuals ascribed to Ukrainophile identity came out to the street in protest. Mark Beissinger's analysis of different surveys tellingly illustrates that a big bulk of protesters came from the western regions which historically had been the breeding ground of Ukrainian nationalism.[14] Remarkably, also, this study reveals that Ukrainian protesters were less motivated by their commitment to democratic values.[15] As highlighted in my work, several oligarchs' financial and media resources furthermore played a crucial role in opposition forces' efforts to stimulate the protest. The high level of opposition mobilization that followed precipitated a disagreement between Kuchma and Yanukovich regarding the use of force against the protesters. All this arguably encouraged different security agencies to resist the government's potential act of repression. In sum, the regime opponents' ability to mobilize strong support based on a competing vision of national identity and their access to economic and media resources together resulted in the fall of the authoritarian regime in Ukraine.

Chapter V and VI pick up from the point that the paths of these two similarly authoritarian regimes sharply diverged. My analysis of Russia suggests that Putin's appeals to (ethnic) Russian traditional values and patriotic sentiments enabled him to gain broad support for his authoritarianism and so legitimized the growing political control of the Kremlin in 2000-2008. Simultaneously, Putin's restoration of state control of the economy provided him with the necessary material resources to sustain popular support while depriving regime opponents of any meaningful financing to mount challenges

[14] Beissinger, "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution," pp. 1-19.
[15] Ibid.

against him. While I do argue that all this partially facilitated Putin's ability to install Medvedev as his successor in 2008, without facing any serious opposition, I do not claim that the two factors offered in this work were sufficient to explain authoritarian consolidation in Russia.

Ukraine – unlike Russia – was able to experience democracy in the post-Soviet era, even though it lasted only a short while. With Yanukovich's ascent to presidency in 2010, the country swiftly slid back to authoritarianism. While it is undeniable that the level of authoritarian consolidation differed in Russia and Ukraine, regime dissenters in both countries were nevertheless able to stimulate protests in the first half of the 2010s. Yet the Russian opposition movement's ability to draw people to the streets and acquire financial resources to maintain protests remained significantly weaker than their Ukrainian counterparts.

As chapter V reveals, Russian protesters' image of themselves as distinctive from the rest of the people hindered their leaders' efforts to construct narratives which might have cultivated a wider sense of collective-self among Russians. Instead, pro-regime forces framed the opposition movement's demand for democracy as an instance of betrayal against the Russian nation. Regime opponents also lacked financial and media resources to convey the protest message to the masses, while the Kremlin exploited its control over the media to mobilize its base of support.

As examined in chapter VI, the Ukrainian protest movement – unlike its counterpart in Russia – was strongly imbued with nationalist feelings and was able to benefit from oligarchs' various resources. Yet the fact that the early protest emerged in response to Yanukovich's refusal to sign the EU Association Agreement raises the role of linkage in

the fall of the authoritarian regime. Although Ukraine's engagement with Europe markedly increased under Yushchenko's presidency, it shall be noted that the country has not been offered a membership in EU up to now. Along the same line, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way state that "[a]lthough trade shifted toward Western Europe in the 2000s, Ukraine's overall linkage score remained well below the threshold for high linkage."[16] Then, my work contends that the two factors which led to the victory of opposition forces in 2004 played the same role in 2014.

Overall, this study seeks to shed light on how ideational and material resources available to both incumbent leaders and opposition movements are important in shaping authoritarian outcomes. While the recent literature on post-Soviet regime trajectories has devoted more attention to the role of national identity in respect to the Ukrainian case, this factor has largely been sidestepped in examining authoritarian durability. My approach is intended to illustrate how the degree of popular agreement over a notion of national identity evoked by an incumbent leader can be a significant source of popular support both for an authoritarian regime and for an opposition movement seeking to challenge it. Moreover, the importance of economic resources available to competing political forces is underlined in my work to demonstrate that an autocrat's broad control over the economy induces cooperation of the political and economic elite – particularly in the absence of a strong pro-regime political party – and facilitates authoritarian survival, while dispersed economic resources stimulate authoritarian instability – even when a leader enjoys a relatively well-institutionalized party. Where contested national identity and access to economic resources promote a high level of anti-regime

[16] Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, fn. 283, p. 215.

mobilization, my findings additionally suggest that this plays a critical role in discouraging the state coercive apparatus from engaging in repression. Yet the question of the *will* and *capacity* of the coercive apparatus in understanding authoritarian outcomes invites further research.

In sum, my work proposes that opposition forces' effective appeal to a competing vision of national identity and autocrats' limited control over wealth provides a sufficient explanation for the collapse of authoritarianism. Yet incumbent leaders' preeminence over the symbolic struggle of national identity and broad control of economic resources enable them to mobilize support both from masses and the political and economic elite, while depriving potential opposition forces of meaningful sources of popular support. My conclusions are drawn from in-depth interviews in Russia and Ukraine and a myriad of primary and secondary sources. Whether the theoretical framework presented in this study can be applied to understanding authoritarian outcomes in other post-Soviet states will require further study.

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Appendix: The In-depth Interviews

The primary fieldwork for this study was carried out between July and December of 2015 in Russia and Ukraine. During this time, I interviewed with sixty-two political activists, journalists, politicians, and ordinary protest participants in the two countries. I also returned to Ukraine between mid-June and mid-July of 2017 and conducted several follow-up interviews. While all Russian respondents in this study either observed or partook in anti-regime protests in late 2011 and 2012, all Ukrainian respondents also observed or partook in anti-regime protests in late 2013 and early 2014. Majority of the interviews were conducted in Moscow and Kyiv. The choice of these cities derived from a simple fact that they witnessed the most intensive and frequent protest events in the countries examined by this study. The interviewees were recruited through snowball sampling – in other words, through referrals of respondents, acquaintances, and friends. The sampling, however, was not random because I choose respondents to include all the political views that were present in the popular protests. The duration of interviews varied from fifty minutes to two hours. All the interviews were recorded. The majority of interviews were conducted in English, while the remaining interviews were in Russian.

The interviews consisted closed-ended and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions were designed to compile demographic data including age, gender, city of birth, city of residence, education, occupation, socio-economic status, native language, and religion. I used the collected data to compare the social composition of respondents with the results of larger surveys on protest events. The open-ended questions were structured to find out what did motivate respondents to participate in anti-regime protests, what were

the ways they organized, how did they view and relate to the other protest participants, activists, and groups, how did they perceive and express protest demands, what type of protest activities did they engage, what were the slogans they shouted and banners and placards they carried, what were the meaning of the aforementioned slogans, banners, and placards, and what did they think about why other people choice not to join protests. The interviews also contained questions in an effort to understand how did respondents imagine their "nation" and how did they associate with it. By asking open-ended questions, I was able to gain an in-depth understanding of events, narratives, and emotions that led respondents' protest behavior. My interviews with protest organizers, journalists, and politicians also allowed me to discuss broader political issues in the countries examined by this study.

Upon the completion of fieldwork, all interviews were transcribed in English. I conducted the analysis of transcripts manually and sorted the quotations by theme. The amount of time I allocated to analyze each theme varied depending on the focus of an interviewee. I then compiled all the quotations of a relevant theme in one document to draw comparisons between respondents. The transcribed interviews introduced me to a variety of issues that I might not have captured otherwise and thus enriched the theoretical framework of this work.