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## **India's Watershed Vote**

*Eswaran Sridharan* ■ *Ashutosh Varshney* ■ *Rajiv Kumar* ■ *Sumit Ganguly*

## **External Influence and Democratization**

*Jakob Tolstrup* ■ *Ghia Nodia* ■ *Steven Levitsky & Lucan Way*

## **Indonesia's 2014 Elections**

*Edward Aspinall* ■ *Marcus Mietzner*

## **Euroskepticism Arrives**

*Liubomir Topaloff* ■ *João Carlos Espada*

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*Richard Joseph* on the Nigerian Paradox

*Javier Corrales & Michael Penfold* on Term Limits in Latin America

*Marc F. Plattner* on *The Confidence Trap*

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## **From Politics to Protest**

*Ivan Krastev*

# External Influence and Democratization

## THE REVENGE OF GEOPOLITICS

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The Ukrainian-Russian crisis has undermined many of the Western democratic community's assumptions about Russia, and then some. For the crisis has cast doubt not only on ideas concerning Russia, but also on certain foundational myths that underlie the whole European project. This has direct implications for theories of democratization, since (in Europe's neighborhood at least) that concept has become closely linked with the idea of Europeanization. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way have written a widely cited book in which they single out linkage to the West—meaning especially the European Union—as the most powerful factor driving the success or failure of democratization efforts in ex-communist countries.<sup>1</sup> The story of the eleven once-communist countries that joined the EU in three waves between 2004 and 2013 seems to confirm this assumption: Each country, it is argued, consolidated its democratic institutions in the course of the EU-accession process, with the Union's "transformative power" making itself felt decisively in favor of democracy. The EU, therefore, must be classed as an especially effective external democratizing actor—at least when EU membership is on the table.

Until recently, relations between the EU and four of the so-called Eastern Partnership countries—Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine—were presumed to be moving along the same path. In each case, the concrete task at hand was for Brussels to finalize "association agreements" with Yerevan, Tbilisi, Chişinău, and Kyiv, respectively. It was understood, of course, that the EU's refusal to grant these countries even a general promise of membership would reduce EU leverage on

behalf of democratization, but the underlying dynamic of closer EU relations working in favor of democracy would still be present and could be expected to exert itself in a similar fashion.

Then, in late 2013, the unexpected happened. At the last moment, and despite years of preparatory work, first Armenia and then Ukraine rejected the EU deal. The EU and its influence, it turned out, were not the only forces in play. Countervailing and now outweighing them was the influence of Russia on the governments of both Armenia and Ukraine. Within the latter country, the reversal triggered a series of dramatic and bloody events that included territorial conflicts involving Ukraine's ethnic-Russian minority as well as Russia itself after the latter seized the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine.

This means that the choice made by specific countries in favor of European integration, the very source of the EU's leverage, became a matter of bitter rivalry (usually defined as "geopolitical") between the EU (and, more broadly, the West) and Russia. Some scholars prefer to conceive of this state of things as a rivalry between democracy promotion and autocracy promotion, implying that Russia is the chief exponent of the latter.<sup>2</sup> If this is so, then we can and must speak about a direct link between democracy promotion and geopolitical competition.

When it comes to a topic such as this, perspectives and perceptions are no less important than facts. Let us start with three relevant viewpoints. The first belongs to the United States and the EU as traditional democracy promoters. The second is that of Russia as an "autocracy promoter" (or, as I would prefer to say, a democracy resister). And the third is the view of the countries that are the targets of both democracy promotion and autocracy promotion. These "faultline" countries are caught in the middle. Geopolitically they find themselves between the West and Russia, and in terms of regime type they dwell in a no man's land of hybrid regimes that combine democratic and autocratic features.

### **Near-Tragic Dilemmas**

In the West, and especially in Europe, the predominant view holds that geopolitics and democracy promotion do not, and should not, mix. Their motives are mutually inimical, and in practice one gets in the way of the other. Geopolitics, also known as power politics, is about the naked struggle for power between states that want to expand their dominions and influence. But democratic countries are supposed to be free from such irrational cravings. For them, democracy promotion is a moral imperative based on values and a sense of solidarity.

But democratic governments do not have the power to turn all autocracies into democracies. Moreover, even democratic governments remain obliged to serve the security and economic interests of their own respective nations in an international realm that is still largely the anar-

chy described by Thomas Hobbes as “a perpetual and restless desire of power after power.” Democracies, in other words, have no choice but to carry on pragmatic relations with autocratic governments: signing oil and gas deals with them, balancing less dangerous dictators against more threatening ones, and the like. This inevitably exposes the West to charges of double standards and deprives it of the moral high ground that it would like to claim as a champion of freedom.

There is a Kantian theory of democratic peace that is supposed to provide a bridge between democratic moral imperatives and the selfish interests of nations. Democracies do not go to war against each other, this theory goes, and therefore democracies share a natural wish to live in a world where all or most actors are democracies: Such a world is safer for them. This theory is hard to dispute in the long term, but trying to use it as a guide to short-term action may bring serious problems. One need not read Jack Snyder’s critique<sup>3</sup> to recall cases in which democratization has shown itself to be not only messy and unpredictable, but even dangerous and deadly. Countries in the throes of democratic opening can become not less but *more* conflict-prone. Consider the role that “bottom-up” pressure for democratization (in the form of popular protests inspired by the “Arab Spring”) played in triggering the current bloody quagmire in Syria. How many leaders of democratic countries today have entertained a private wish that the Arab Spring had never happened, at least not on their watches?

There is no way to escape the dilemma of national interests versus democratic moral imperatives. The West will be damned whatever it does. If Western countries follow their national interests, they will be criticized for propping up tyrants. Once people living under an autocracy hit the streets to protest their repressive and corrupt rulers, domestic and international public opinion will force democratic governments to drop their pragmatic alliances with the autocracy in question, as happened several times during the Arab Spring. If Western governments arrange their foreign policies around support for democracy and opposition to tyrants just for being tyrants, there will be cries that these governments are naïve and driven by ideology. More than likely, they will also be accused of applying double standards, since no democracy can take on all tyrants at the same time.

In order to suggest a way out of this dilemma, Charles Krauthammer a decade ago coined the term “democratic realism.” The West cannot attack all tyrants all at once and everywhere, he noted, but it can and should act against them selectively, based on its own interests.<sup>4</sup> Yet Krauthammer made this argument while trying to justify the U.S.-led invasion of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. However we may ultimately judge the legitimacy or outcome of that use of force, it surely did not contribute to the international credibility of humanitarian interventions aimed at replacing autocracies with democracies.

To summarize, promoting democracy is never politically safe. The West is doomed to be inconsistent, opportunistic, and exposed to charges of double standards. Democracy promotion also inevitably means poking various autocratic bears, big or small, and there is always a chance that when they become irritated and existing power balances become unsettled, dangerous and unpredictable results may ensue. This is what the European Union learned the hard way in Ukraine.

From the autocrats' perspective, there is no such thing as idealistic, value-based democracy promotion. Rather, it is all hypocrisy: The West plays its old power games, but this time calls them "democracy-promotion efforts" or, in extreme cases, "humanitarian interventions." In particular, this has been the clear and consistent rhetoric of Vladimir Putin—rhetoric, moreover, that he gives every sign of sincerely believing. The West, led by the United States, uses talk of democracy and human rights as part of a strategy to encircle, weaken, and humiliate Russia.<sup>5</sup>

As noted above, it has become fashionable among political scientists to speak of "autocracy promotion" as a kind of symmetrical opposite of democracy promotion. But the taste for equivalence so common among Western scholars turns misleading here. These two phenomena are not equal, and this is not because we like democracy more. What we vaguely and generally call "autocracy" is usually a kind of default setting, a historically entrenched way of ruling in countries that traditionally lack power centers capable of offsetting whoever holds executive authority. In other words, most autocratic behavior is homegrown and not an import: There is no need to "promote" it from abroad. As a rule, democracy is a novelty that has to be introduced in defiance of local resistance; autocracy is something that is already there, and only has to be maintained. In uncertain and hybrid regimes, autocratic behavior is also a matter of old habits, even if superficially transformed, that might or might not be replaced by new democratic norms, institutions, and practices. These innovations may indeed benefit from some foreign help. But what is countering them is democracy resistance, not autocracy promotion.

There is another kind of asymmetry at work here as well. Universalist ideas undergird democracy promotion; autocrats have nothing so all-encompassing to promote. The "divine right of kings" is hard to resuscitate, while concepts such as political Islam or "Asian values" enjoy no currency outside certain culturally defined regions. The "Eurasianism" that lies at the heart of Putin's aggressive behavior is nothing but a new incarnation of the Russian imperial idea: It can only be attractive to Great Russian nationalists.

And yet democracy resistance does have an international character. This comes from the generic element within it, which is resentment against the main actor behind democracy promotion—the West. Not all criticism of the West is antidemocratic, but the fight against democracy promotion is usually anti-Western. At its ideological core, what is be-

ing called “autocracy promotion” is really nothing but anti-Americanism and anti-Europeanism. Again, Putin’s Russia can serve as a case in point. Russian democracy resistance seeks to claim the high moral ground by “exposing” Western democracy promotion as covert imperialism, but Russian spokespeople do not stop there. They also like to use postmodernist language to present Russia as a champion of multiculturalism and multipolarity against Western attempts to achieve single-handed predominance.<sup>6</sup>

This tactic brings Putin multiple Western supporters and empathizers from both the left and right. The latter are attracted by the way he exposes Western “immorality” as represented, for instance, by gay rights (interpreted as “propaganda” for homosexuality). The left, meanwhile, likes anything that threatens to stick a wrench into the gears of Western military, political, and economic dominance.<sup>7</sup> But ultimately, both are resisting liberal democracy’s status as the “hegemonic discourse” of our times. In the world dominated by democracies, “autocracy promotion” masquerades as defense of the underdog.

### The View from the Faultline

Why do some countries become democratic, but not others? So far, democratization studies have failed to produce a credible theory to answer this question. The view proposed by the modernization school about half a century ago is still the most logically coherent. It claims that a higher level of general development in conjunction with economic freedom will give a society an educated, urban middle class whose mindset and habits will eventually require the institutionalization of democratic pluralism.<sup>8</sup> The obvious fact that rich capitalist countries are much more likely to be stable democracies than are poor countries or countries with state-dominated economies tends to corroborate it. Yet there are too many important exceptions to be content with this approach.

The “transitions” school that invented itself in opposition to modernization theory refused to answer the “why” question and focused instead on the “how” aspect. It generalized that a successful democratization is more likely if both the regime’s power elite and those who oppose the regime are mostly moderates who are reasonable enough to agree to pacts. Where regime hard-liners and radical oppositionists dominate, a democratic outcome is less likely. Fair enough, but this approach does not explain why some countries experience the former, more promising situation while others become stuck in a hazy “gray zone” between autocracy and democracy, or veer from bouts of antigovernment turmoil to autocratic restorations and back again. Democratic transition is a sphere of uncertainty and unpredictability, say transition scholars. But that is equivalent to saying that there cannot be a theory of it.<sup>9</sup>

Focusing on regional regularities appears more promising. For in-

stance, West European countries are all democratic; in some other regions democracy is rare; still other regions are mostly known for uncertain, hybrid regimes. Can this provide a ground for a theory? This is what Levitsky and Way tried to do in their book. The transforma-

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tive power of European norms and institutions, exerted through the mechanisms of linkage and leverage, is the chief explanatory variable. The relative strength or weakness of these mechanisms explains the success or failure of democratic change in each case. But what accounts for the variance of this strength from one case to another? The factor with the most explanatory power seems to be “geographic proximity” to Europe: The closer a country is to Europe, the greater is Europe’s influence

likely to be in that country’s affairs.<sup>10</sup> That makes intuitive sense and there is evidence to support it, but there are glaring exceptions as well. Alyaksandr Lukashenka’s Belarus shares borders with three NATO and EU member states (Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland), yet it has justly been called “Europe’s last dictatorship” and a “Stalinist Jurassic Park.”

Another problem with this approach is that it presumes the countries of the European neighborhood naturally resist democracy, and thus need a powerful outside actor to push them toward that regime type, if not to impose it on them outright. This is democratization through hegemonic, even if “soft,” power. Such a heavy emphasis on external drivers clashes with the basic idea of democracy, which is about the capacity of the *demos* to impose limitations and accountability on its own rulers.

It seems prudent to admit that a strict theory of causation in these matters will continue to prove elusive. In lieu of it, we can still venture to say that a given country’s likelihood of having a democratic political order hinges in the end on the interplay of two factors. One is ideological—we might call it the factor of democratic choice: The country must harbor a critical mass of support for democratic institutions and practices, linked to relevant knowledge and competence in the political elites and the citizenry alike. The other is broadly structural, and brings together a multiplicity of factors such as the level of economic development, the pluralism of the social structure, the strength of the urban middle class, relevant features of the local political culture, and so on.

Given this, it makes sense to start with the first factor and ask: What makes political actors prefer democracy? Without, again, trying to produce a general theory, I will focus on the postcommunist European neighborhood. I would follow Levitsky and Way in saying that this choice indeed correlates with “proximity” to Europe. But by proximity I

mean not just geographic location but mainly a sense of European *identity* that usually expresses itself through a wish to join such institutions as NATO and the EU. Why some countries have such a wish and others do not is a topic best left for another occasion.

Identity implies two things: One is to have a certain image of the self, the other is to have that image recognized by others. In order to “be European,” one should consider oneself European and also be recognized as European by others, meaning first of all those West European countries that for the most part belong to the European Union.

Looked at from this angle, the postcommunist countries break down into three groups. The first consists of those nations whose European vocation is not seriously contested either internally or externally: They both consider themselves European and are recognized as such. All of them are already members of both NATO and the EU, or on the way to becoming such. The second group comprises those countries which, for reasons that may differ from one to another, have rejected the European choice. Russia is the most important of these, though as the longstanding “Westernizers versus Slavophiles” debate in Russian culture attests, it is torn by questions of identity: It has a tradition and an inclination to identify itself as European, but cannot fit itself into the contemporary European democratic project, and still less into the “postmodern” or “Kantian” model of international relations. Therefore, it has now opted, under Putin, to define its identity and its political direction in opposition to the West.

And then there is the third group. These countries fill the contested or faultline region that is my focus here. Their European identity is in dispute both internally (there are powerful internal forces opposing it) and externally: To their west, the EU stops short of fully rejecting their European vocation, but at the same time refuses to grant them even the distant prospect of membership. To their east (or north), meanwhile, Russia cannot bring itself to recognize Ukraine or Georgia as European nations. Even if Moscow has reluctantly accepted Bulgaria, Estonia, and Poland as parts of the European space, it still views the non-Baltic former Soviet republics as belonging to its sphere. It wants to see them integrated not into Europe, but rather into the Russian-led Eurasian Union that the Kremlin has been building.

Within the faultline countries, members of both the political elite and society at large understand that their choice of Russia or Europe means more than a choice of which union (Eurasian or European) they will join—it also means choosing what kind of country they want their nation to be. The idea of Europe is linked to democratic institutions, while the “Eurasian” way would purport to legitimize some kind of hybrid but mostly autocratic political regime.

This can be demonstrated by a simple correlation. In 2009, the EU came up with the concept of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) as a special

cooperation format for use in dealing with the former Soviet republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Membership in the EU would not be on the table, but so-called association agreements would be. In practice, such an agreement would grant each country preferential trade treatment (based on a complex treaty known as the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement), as well as visa-free intra-European travel for its citizens. Four of the six countries (all except the dictatorships in Azerbaijan<sup>11</sup> and Belarus) entered lengthy negotiations with the EU and were ready to sign their respective association agreements in 2013 or 2014.

Much to the EU's surprise, this project soon came to be seen as involving much more than trade relations or visa regimes. Russia took it as a geopolitical challenge and responded by using pressure and blackmail to stop countries from signing. At the last minute, it managed to force the leaders first of Armenia and then of Ukraine to abandon their plans to sign. In the Ukrainian case, this decision was later reversed. But that required mass protests that turned bloody, an elected president's forcible ouster from power, territorial dismemberment (the loss of Crimea to a Russian invasion), and the ongoing "hybrid war" with Moscow and the ethnic-Russian separatists of eastern Ukraine. Those who died in the EuroMaidan did not give their lives for better trade terms or handier visas. They were fighting for a European and hence a democratic Ukraine. Bureaucrats in Brussels may think of the association agreements (Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine each signed one on 27 June 2014) in dry, technical terms, but in the eyes of the partner countries these documents pave the high and hopeful road that leads on to Europe.

A country's tendency to make the "choice for Europe" correlates strongly with its level of democratic development. Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine are governed by hybrid regimes, but political life in each is more democratic than autocratic. For the years 2009 through 2013, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine received a combined average Freedom House score of 3.3 (anything below 3 would qualify them as "Free" countries). Autocratic Azerbaijan and Belarus, meanwhile, have averaged a 6, well into "Not Free" territory. Armenia scores a 4.9, indicating that it is a hybrid regime which leans autocratic.

Although the sample is small, there are grounds for thinking that pro-European governments in these countries behave in more democratic ways than do their domestic opponents. In Ukraine, the pro-Western government that came in with the 2004 Orange Revolution was ineffectual and often corrupt, but it held fairly clean elections in 2010 and peacefully gave up power when it lost them. Under its Moscow-favored successor, President Viktor Yanukovich, freedom declined as he gave rein to his own autocratic tendencies and then allowed the Kremlin to maneuver him into the about-face that led to the EuroMaidan and his own fall from power and flight into exile. The pro-Western Georgian

government of President Mikheil Saakashvili earned much criticism for its democratic deficits, but in 2012 it nonetheless became the first administration in Georgia's history to lose an election and then peacefully hand power to the opposition. In Moldova in 2009, the ruling Communist Party, which generally backed EU integration but with much less conviction than its opposition, had to lose an election and suffer considerable public turmoil before it would step aside for a pro-Western coalition (it remains to be seen, of course, how the latter will behave when it loses an election). Governments that strongly prioritize European integration may be imperfect in many ways, but if they lose at the ballot box they leave quietly. The same cannot always be said for their opponents.

Why, then, are Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine still only partly democratic? Why did the pro-European Rose and Orange revolutions fail to bring about democratic consolidation? Here, we must turn our gaze to structural factors such as weak party systems and civil societies, entrenched autocratic ways, and the like. Yet it remains the case that if we take countries which are all fairly close to Europe on the map (Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine are right next door while the South Caucasus is not far); whose respective European vocations the EU felt were alike enough to be dealt with as a unit (the EaP); and which come out of similar historical, economic, and cultural backgrounds, then by process of elimination we are left with geopolitical choice as the factor that explains why some of them have achieved significantly higher levels of democracy than others.

### The European Myth Shattered

We have seen that different actors have dramatically different perceptions of the relationship between power politics (or geopolitics, as many prefer) and democracy promotion. The West, especially Europe, tries to take a "never the twain shall meet" approach. Democracy promotion, *because* it is about values, can have nothing to do with geopolitics. Russia, by contrast, sees democracy promotion as *nothing but* geopolitical, a mere cover for Western power grabs. Prodemocracy elites in democratizing countries also closely link geopolitics with democracy promotion, but they see the relationship as positive: The democratic West is their chief ally in fending off threats to both genuine national independence and democratic development.

The European myth that the Ukrainian crisis shattered was the idea that Europe's democratic values and institutions could be extended without provoking geopolitical struggle. The 2008 war between Russia and Georgia was widely interpreted in the West as Russia's way of stopping the spread of NATO,<sup>12</sup> but not the expansion of EU values and institutions. European analysts assumed that this was the case because NATO is about geopolitics and thus provocative to Russia, while the

EU is about functional cooperation and thus not something that Russia would deem a threat. I myself have personally witnessed both Europeans and Americans tell the Georgian government many times that Georgia should not make joining NATO a priority for fear of angering

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Russia, while a process of Europeanization would be politically harmless. What are we to make of such advice when we reflect that only a very mild attempt to expand European norms to Ukraine stirred the most open showdown between Russia and Europe since the Cold War?

There is something in the EU's founding narrative that prevents Europeans from recognizing the reality that Russia sees things so differently. The EU was invented to overcome power politics by drowning it in a

sea of technicalities defined as instruments of "functional cooperation." In Robert Cooper's words, power politics is "modern," while the EU is meant to be a postmodern (that is, post-power-politics) institution.<sup>13</sup> The Ukrainian crisis exposed the futility of this myth: The EU may be "postmodern" within, but it has to deal with the world outside itself, a world of states that believe solely in power politics. Russia is the closest and hence the most dangerous such neighbor.

This has made the reactions to the Ukrainian crisis of the EU (as well as of some non-European analysts who believe in the European myth) confused and inconsistent. The first instinct has been reality avoidance, as manifested by statements such as "let's not make it geopolitical," "this should not be about competition between Europe and Russia," and the like.<sup>14</sup> But there is no way to ignore that in this case Russia saw the EU as a geopolitical rival and behaved accordingly. Europe must base its policies on the recognition of this fact.

First, one should admit that the most important and successful foreign-policy project of the EU, its expansion into the former communist world, has been geopolitical from the start, and Russia is right to see it as such. It was a concerted effort between the EU and NATO, two organizations with a heavily overlapping membership as well as shared values and institutions. This project dramatically changed the balance of power in Europe and consolidated the victory of the democratic West in the Cold War.

But it was geopolitics in an essentially different sense (let us call it "postmodern," if that sounds better). It was not about conquest, glory, and broader "spheres of influence." Instead, it was about competing norms and institutions. It expanded the space of Kantian peace—a peace that can only be based on a liberal-democratic order—and was able to do so because the nations involved were eager of their own free will to embrace liberal-democratic norms and institutions. It is in the interest of

the EU, in the national interest of the countries that constitute it, and in the interest of the faultline nations to expand this space further (through instruments such as the European Neighborhood Policy). In such a case, one cannot say where democracy promotion ends and geopolitics begins: They are inseparable.

The only wrong here lay in assuming that such a project could be uncontroversial and unthreatening. The relative ease with which NATO and the EU expanded in tandem via the “big bangs” of the early 2000s created the illusion that only two things were at issue: the West’s readiness and capacity to absorb new members into its two chief institutions, and the willingness of the aspirant countries to remodel their institutions along European lines. Speculation about possible impediments to further EU expansion focused on Europe’s own “absorption capacity” and “enlargement fatigue.” The prospect of external opposition went unacknowledged and undiscussed. Meanwhile, just offstage, Russia was nursing its resentment. The tandem “big bang” expansions had in fact irked Moscow, but at the time it had lacked the power and resources to stop them. When the EaP came along, Russia decided to flex its muscles. It remains to be seen how successful this gambit will turn out to be.

We are left, meanwhile, with the reflection that democracy’s advance may bring Kantian peace in the long run, but there is no safe way to promote democracy in areas where it is still controversial. Advancing the democratic cause is an enterprise that is hostile and threatening to autocrats, and they will fight back. It is a lesson that needs to be learned by politicians, as well as by scholars and practitioners of democracy promotion.

## NOTES

1. Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 23–24.

2. See Peter Burnell, “Promoting Democracy and Promoting Autocracy: Towards a Comparative Evaluation,” *Journal of Politics and Law* 3, no. 2 (2010): 3–14.

3. Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).

4. Charles Krauthammer, *Democratic Realism: An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World* (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 2004).

5. For instance, Vladimir Putin has described both the Orange Revolution and the EuroMaidan as purely the work of a Western conspiracy, and has added: “We understand what is happening; we understand that these actions were aimed against Ukraine and Russia and against Eurasian integration.” See <http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/6889>.

6. Putin also said, in the same set of remarks made on 18 March 2014: “They [the West] are constantly trying to sweep us into a corner because we have an independent position, because we maintain it and because we call things like they are and do not engage in hypocrisy.”

7. For instance, on democracy promotion as a hidden form of Western imperialism, see Gerald Sussman, "The Myths of 'Democracy Assistance': U.S. Political Intervention in Post-Soviet Eastern Europe," *Monthly Review*, December 2006, 15–29.

8. For the most influential exposition of this theory, see Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53 (March 1959): 69–105.

9. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 3–5.

10. Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, 44.

11. Azerbaijan may be considered a special case in that it is more pro-Western than pro-Russian in its foreign policy, albeit solidly autocratic within. Yet Azerbaijani elites (save for members of the county's brave but small prodemocracy groups) lean toward the West for reasons of cultural secularism (as is the case with many autocratic regimes that rule historically Islamic nations) as well as for security reasons related to the needs of the country's crucial oil industry. Indeed, Azerbaijan's extensive oil wealth makes its negotiating position vis-à-vis Europe qualitatively different from the relation between Europe and other postcommunist "faultline states." Most importantly, Azerbaijan's pro-Western policies have never led to any express wish for even the mildest level of integration with the EU.

12. Later, Russian president Dmitri Medvedev defined this war's goal as stopping NATO's advance into Russia's neighborhood. See "Medvedev: yesli by ne voija s Gruzijej, v NATO priniali by neskolko stran, vopreki pozitsii Rossii" [Medvedev: Had it not been for the war with Georgia, NATO would contrary to the Russian position admit several countries], 21 November 2011, available at [www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2011/11/21/n\\_2104434.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2011/11/21/n_2104434.shtml).

13. Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Atlantic Books, 2003), 26–37.

14. See, for instance, Samuel Charap, "Ukraine's False Choice: There Are No Winners in the Geopolitical Tug of War Between Russia and the West," *ForeignPolicy.com*, 7 February 2014, available at [www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/02/07/ukraines\\_false\\_choice\\_russia\\_eu](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/02/07/ukraines_false_choice_russia_eu).