

How Corruption and Anti-Corruption Policies Sustain Hybrid Regimes: Strategies of Political Domination under Ukraine's Presidents in 1994–2014. By Oksana Huss. Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2020. xxiv, 370 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Figures. Tables. €89.90, paper.
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An interesting work, although a little bit outdated, this book by Oksana Huss attempts to answer the overarching question of how corruption and anti-corruption policies sustain hybrid political regimes. In order to do so, she presents the main strategies of political domination under Ukraine's three presidents, Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yushchenko, and Viktor Yanukovich. Accordingly, the timeframe of the study is that from 1994 to 2014, covering two decades of post-communist transformation. No doubt an interesting period in Ukraine's modern history, this timeframe does not capture the rule of Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Zelensky, both distinct with tremendous instability and distinct levels of corruption. Huss identifies Ukraine as a hybrid regime based on the theoretical concept of competitive authoritarianism. The author offers a quite substantial theoretical and conceptual framing on corruption prior to proceeding with her empirical and archival study. A focus on understanding corruption overall prior to describing political corruption in Ukraine adds strength to author's arguments. In order to analyze how public framing of political corruption influences state anti-corruption policies, Huss conducts a very extensive textual analysis of the anti-corruption legislation, introduced under each of the presidents.

Some of the statements, made by the author, are arguable. For instance, Huss suggests that: "The issue of corruption became relevant in Ukrainian politics simultaneously with the country's independence. It was conceptualized as a challenge involving organized crime and associated primarily with economic crimes. The term 'corruption' was subsequently introduced in a legislative context and the names of agencies primarily responsible for the fight against organized crime" (76). In fact, corruption was very relevant in communist Ukraine as well. More importantly, and paradoxically, Kuchma's regime, under which these concepts were formulated, was utterly corrupt. Yushchenko's era was characterized by a different democratic rhetoric, but equally serious levels of corruption. Yanukovich, with his "family" or corrupt clique, became a quintessence of corruption in a hybrid regime as applied not only to Ukraine, but other similarly kleptocratic regimes around the world.

Huss concludes that, "the persistent cycle of corruption is key to understanding Ukrainian politics. . . it is virtually impossible to enter Ukrainian politics without engaging in corrupt activities because considerable investments are needed to build a political party or to win the elections" (317). Indeed, when it comes to Ukraine's high politics, money matters a lot, if not the most. While Yanukovich managed to build the monopolized system of corruption, his predecessors certainly contributed to the emergence of such a corrupt hybrid political monster.

One of the major conclusions one can arrive at after reading Huss's work is that corruption in Ukraine is here to stay for a long while. Corruption has been changing over the decades of economic and political turmoil and will no doubt continue on its path of transition and adaptation to changing economic and political realities. *How Corruption and Anti-Corruption Policies Sustain Hybrid Regimes: Strategies of Political Domination under Ukraine's Presidents in 1994–2014* is not free of minor shortcomings. Nevertheless, this volume by Huss is perhaps among the best books on corruption in a post-communist society written over the last three decades. The strongest feature of the book is its comprehensiveness and political focus, supported by the author's clear longstanding expertise in the country. In addition to researchers, scholars, and graduate students, the book may be highly recommended for those who want to do

business with Ukraine or invest in this rapidly changing economy and wish to look beyond mere clichés for understanding the background processes that shape different socio-economic phenomena, including such the long-term phenomenon of corruption.

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The Causes of Post-Mobilization Leadership Change and Continuity: A Comprehensive Analysis of Post-Color Revolution in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia. By Vasili Rukhadze. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021. xii, 245 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. \$75.00, hard bound.
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In this original and well-researched book, Vasili Rukhadze explores why some governments that come to power after a popular uprising against an authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regime survive, while others collapse. He compares three cases that share the same legacies insofar as they are successor states of the former Soviet Union: Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine. He argues that the survival of post-uprising governments depends on the size and cohesion of the coalition of political forces that constitute them, and that these are not necessarily the same factors that determined the survival of the non-democratic governments that preceded them.

Specifically, Rukhadze argues that a post-uprising government that consists of a small, cohesive coalition is more likely to survive than a large, fragmented coalition. This is because the nature of the coalition sets in motion three key causal mechanisms that fortify or undermine the new government: whether or not there is an active opposition, whether the constitutional question of the extent of executive (presidential) power is settled rapidly, and whether the reforms that the new governments propose succeed in rebuilding state capacity. Small, cohesive coalitions, the author argues, are unlikely to yield the kind of high-profile defections that provide a rallying point for anti-government protests, and as a result the opposition is likely to remain politically dormant for longer. Moreover, such coalitions find it easier to resolve constitutional issues at the outset and are able to agree rapidly on a set of reforms that restore state authority, undercut corruption, and maintain public confidence. Large fragmented coalitions, on the other hand, are likely to be plagued by defections to a burgeoning opposition, fail to resolve the issue of presidential power and fail to deliver meaningful reforms.

The author illustrates his argument by carefully examining the coalition of forces that came to power after the so-called “colored revolutions” in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine in 2003–2005. The new Kyrgyz and Ukrainian governments, he explains, consisted of a large number of political parties (sixteen in the case of Ukraine and thirteen in the case of Kyrgyzstan) with widely different ideologies. These coalitions began to fracture from the outset, as key leaders and parties quit the government and went into opposition. In Ukraine, the new president, Viktor Yushchenko, had been forced to yield many of his presidential powers even before he became president, as a result of pressure both from the outgoing administration of President Leonid Kuchma and from parts of his own coalition. However, this did not prevent an invigorated opposition from further undermining presidential authority once it had achieved a majority in parliament. In Kyrgyzstan, although President Kurmanbek Bakiyev enjoyed sweeping powers, these were ever more challenged by a strong opposition. Finally, in neither country could the main political forces agree on a set of reforms. As