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978-1-107-08834-4 - Property, Predation, and Protection: Piranha

Capitalism in Russia and Ukraine

Stanislav Markus

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Property, Predation, and Protection

What threatens the property rights of business owners, and what makes these rights secure? This book transcends the conventional diagnosis of the issue in modern developing countries by moving beyond petty bureaucratic corruption or expropriation by the state ruler. It theorizes “agent predation” as a novel threat type, showing it to be particularly widespread and detrimental. The book also questions the orthodox prescription: institutionalized state commitment cannot secure property rights against agent predation. Instead, this volume argues that business actors can hold the predatory state agents accountable through firm-level alliances with foreign actors, labor, and local communities. Beyond securing ownership, such alliances promote rule of law in a rent-seeking society. Taking Russia and Ukraine between 2000 and 2012 as its empirical focus, the book advances these arguments by drawing on more than 150 qualitative interviews with business owners, policy makers, and bureaucrats, as well as an original large-N survey of firms.

Stanislav Markus is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Chicago. His research has been published in *World Politics*, *Socio-Economic Review*, and *Polity*. He is the winner of the 2014 Gregory Luebbert Article Award for the best article in comparative politics awarded by the American Political Science Association. Professor Markus received the Academy Scholar award from the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, 2008–2009 and 2011–2012. He holds a PhD in government from Harvard University.

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In memory of my grandmother, Lina Andreevna Gvozdeva

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Piranha Capitalism in Russia and Ukraine

STANISLAV MARKUS

University of Chicago



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32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

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Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107088344

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First published 2015

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Markus, Stanislav, 1977–

Property, predation, and protection : piranha capitalism in Russia and Ukraine / Stanislav Markus.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-08834-4 (hardback)

1. Privatization – Russia (Federation) 2. Privatization – Ukraine. 3. Right of property – Russia (Federation) 4. Right of property – Ukraine. 5. Political corruption – Russia (Federation) 6. Political corruption – Ukraine. 7. Russia (Federation) – Politics and government. 8. Ukraine – Politics and government. I. Title.

HD4215.15.M364 2015

338.947'05–dc23 2014025985

ISBN 978-1-107-08834-4 Hardback

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Acknowledgments

No author is an island; the lucky ones rely on the intellectual, logistical, and emotional support of others. This is the story of my exceptional luck.

This book would have been impossible without stellar professors in college who encouraged me to pursue a PhD in political science. Stephen Whitefield's tutorial in Russian Politics at Oxford University literally changed my life. Rudra Sil at the University of Pennsylvania fanned the flames of my incipient interest, inviting me to accompany him on a research trip to Moscow. I was hooked.

As a graduate student and junior professor, I continued to have phenomenal mentors. Peter Hall at Harvard University and Dan Slater at the University of Chicago commented on numerous drafts while providing invaluable professional advice. Some of the best metaphors in this book are Dan's. Peter's suggestion to move beyond the narrow issue of "corporate governance" and focus on the more important topic of "property rights" changed the course of my research. Both intellectually and personally, these mentors represent what is best in the discipline.

My dissertation committee was nothing less than ideal. Tim Colton, Peter Hall, Yoshiko Herrera, and Torben Iversen: as a group, these scholars provided both feedback and encouragement while letting me explore freely, always trusting that I would find my way. I am deeply grateful to them for caring.

Many others at Harvard and MIT made my intellectual journey an exhilarating challenge. I am particularly grateful to Rawi Abdelal, Jim Alt, Jorge Dominguez, Grzegorz Ekiert, Jeffry Frieden, Gary King, Beth Simmons, Michael Piore, and David Woodruff.

Several colleagues affiliated with the Max Planck Institute cheered me on with enthusiasm and helpful tips. I would like to thank Margaret Levi, Sven Steinmo, and Wolfgang Streeck for their encouragement.

The book morphed into its current shape after an extremely helpful manuscript conference generously sponsored by the Harvard Academy. For their

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tough love, I am immensely indebted to the participants: Bob Bates, Scott Gehlbach, Peter Hall, Dan Slater, Kathy Thelen, and Dan Treisman.

The Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago has been a stimulating and nurturing place to develop ideas and write. As department chairs, Cathy Cohen, Bernard Harcourt, and Lisa Wedeen have ensured that administrative responsibilities do not stymie research, while also helping me through some medical issues at the start. Like other colleagues in the department, my fellow comparativists are a wonderful and supportive group of people who made my book better while also making it more fun to write. I am grateful to Mike Albertus, Gary Herrigel, Ben Lessing, Monika Nalepa, Tianna Paschel, Alberto Simpser, Dan Slater, Paul Staniland, Lisa Wedeen, and Dali Yang. I also thank our graduate students; in my courses on Business and State, Economic Development, and Plutocracy, I benefited tremendously from the discussions, and so did the book.

The list of people at various institutions in the United States and abroad who have provided feedback or helped with fieldwork is long, and I am afraid I will not be able to repay all. I'd like to make a start by expressing my deep gratitude to Anders Åslund, Harley Balzer, Bat Batjargal, Lisa Blaydes, Martin Dimitrov, Jordan Gans-Morse, Peter Gourevitch, Sergei Guriev, Masha Hedberg, Terra Lawson-Remer, Ed Malesky, Melanie Manion, Cathie Jo Martin, Gerald McDermott, Harris Mylonas, Simeon Nichter, Jean Oi, John Padgett, Jessica Pisano, Heiko Pleines, William Pyle, Mark Roe, Andrea Rutherford, Jefferey Sellers, Andrei Shleifer, Konstantin Sonin, Bill Tompson, Kellee Tsai, Sergey Tsukhlo, David Vogel, David Weimer, Andrei Yakovlev, Jin Zeng, and Alexei Zudin.

I acknowledge gratefully the input of two anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press as well as two reviewers for Oxford University Press and, while we are at it, five reviewers for *World Politics*. These reviews have guided me in streamlining the argument and presenting the data, and I thank the reviewers for their time and advice.

Parts of Chapters 1, 2, 6, and 7 have appeared previously in my article "Secure Property as a Bottom-Up Process: Firms, Stakeholders, and Predators in Weak States," in *World Politics* Volume 64, No. 2, April 2012, pages 242–77. Copyright © 2012 Trustees of Princeton University Press; used with permission. Portions of Chapter 5 appeared in my article "Capitalists of All Russia Unite! Business Mobilization under Debilitated Dirigisme," in *Polity* Volume 39, July 2007, pages 277–304. Parts of Chapters 6 and 7 appeared in my article "Corporate Governance as Political Insurance: Firm-Level Institutional Creation in Emerging Markets and Beyond," in *Socioeconomic Review* Volume 6, No. 1, 2008, pages 69–98.

A special *spasibo* is reserved for my interviewees in Russia and Ukraine. Without any reward, these officials and entrepreneurs, journalists, and politicians have shared their experiences and ordeals. I owe this project to them.

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My research required many trips to the region and the implementation of a survey. These undertakings were supported by fellowships and grants from several Harvard institutes, including the Center for European Studies, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, and the Ukrainian Research Institute. I am also grateful to the Institute for Humane Studies and the University of Chicago for their research support.

My family has given me everything. My mother enabled me to pursue my dreams, despite the hardships of our immigration from the Soviet Union to Germany. My sister is the most caring person in the world. My grandmother, to whom this book is dedicated, began to teach me English when I was a kid; she was the most devoted friend I will ever have. With them at my side, I've been lucky indeed.