

JACQUES BAUD

# OPERATION



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## OPERATION Z: THE HIDDEN TRUTH ABOUT THE WAR IN UKRAINE

*Posted on February 1, 2023 by Jacques Baud*



We are so very pleased to bring our a readers a sample from Jacques Baud's book on the conflict in the Ukraine, which has just been translated into English. It is called [Operation Z](#) (which is the code-name of the Special Military Operation launched by Russia on February 24, 2022). We have been waiting eagerly for this translation to come out, so we can get the truth about this conflict.

Please support Jacques Baud's great work and purchase a copy of his book, and also please spread the word about this translation.

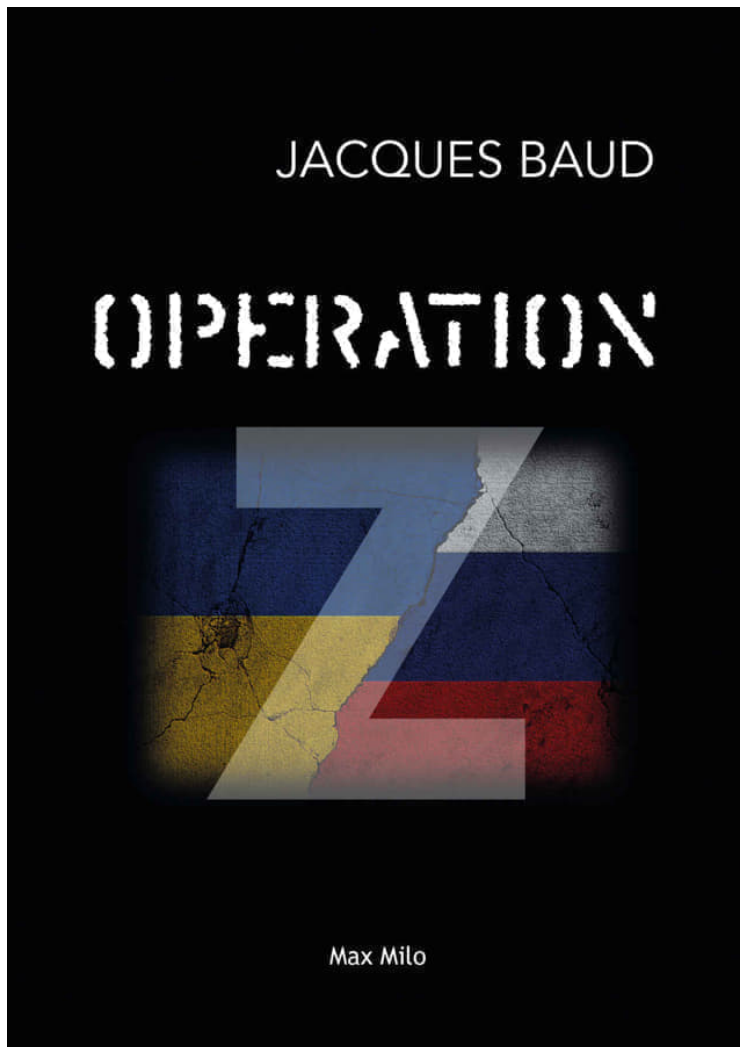
Without further ado, here is an excerpt from [Operation Z](#).



## **The Ukrainian Question**

EU defenders claim that Russian foreign policy is guided by the fact that "*Putin hates the European Union*" and "*supranational constructs*," and that he aims to "*humiliate the European Union*," as it is his "public enemy number one."

This myth stems from a simplification of the sequence of events that led to the Maidan crisis in 2013-2014. Vladimir Putin was accused of refusing to allow Ukraine to sign an agreement with the European Union.



However, Russia and its leaders have always been aware of their economic weaknesses. As a result, they have never tried to compete with Europe or the United States. Since the Tsarist era, Russia has never managed to develop an industrial base equivalent to that of Europe or Asia; and it knows it. In the post-Cold War era, Russia has seen itself as complementary to Europe, not its equal.

This is why the barrage of sanctions it has suffered since February 2022 only partially affects it—Europe is dependent on Russia for its raw materials, while Asia supplies Europe its consumer products.

Secondly, it is important to remember that the Ukrainian population was not unanimously in favor of an

agreement with the European Union. In November 2013, a poll conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) showed that it was then split 50/50 between an agreement with the European Union and a customs union with Russia.

Like President Yanukovich, many believe that the Ukrainian economy is structurally adapted to the Russian market. With an industrial base that complements that of the former USSR countries, it is not ready to face the very competitive European market. A too rapid rupture of commercial links with Russia would weaken its own economy. This would be confirmed by what happened next.

For its part, Russia was not opposed to an agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, but sought to maintain its economic relations with its main historical partner. This is why it proposed a tripartite working group, the aim of which was to reconcile Ukraine's desire to join the European Union while preserving its ties with Russia. According to Mykola Azarov, the Ukrainian Prime Minister, studies showed that this proposal did not conflict with the European proposal and that it was therefore possible to have a solution that satisfied Ukrainian interests.

However, José Manuel Barroso, then President of the European Commission, refused and asked Ukraine to choose. The Ukrainian government therefore asked the European Union to delay the signing of the agreement in order to better study the implications of the agreement with the European Union on its relations with Russia and to better prepare its economy for this situation. It stated:

*There is no alternative to reforms in Ukraine and no alternative to European integration... We are going down this road and not changing direction.*

The then Ukrainian Prime Minister confirmed this:

*I can say with full knowledge that the process of negotiating the Association Agreement is continuing and that the work of bringing our country closer to European standards is not stopping for a single day.*

This suspension was clearly only temporary, but it was presented by the Western press and the Ukrainian opposition as a refusal to move closer to Europe under Russian pressure. Ukrainian public opinion, which had been promised visas or salary increases, was quickly polarized and its discontent instrumentalized—this was the beginning of the Maidan events.

It was therefore the European Union which created the tensions between Ukraine and Russia, as Arnaud Dubien notes in *Le Monde*:

*Ukraine is a very fragmented country with multiple identities and cannot make a clear-cut choice, either in favor of the West or Russia. One of Brussels' mistakes was to ask it to do so and to turn its back on Russia, a suicidal option for the country.*

The Europeans deliberately pushed Ukraine towards suicide. In the *Washington Post*, Henry Kissinger, National Security Advisor under Ronald Reagan, noted that the European Union "*helped turn a negotiation into a crisis.*" Ironically, the new government that emerged from Euromaidan was forced to take the same time for reflection that Yanukovych had hoped for, and was only able to sign the agreement with the European Union in 2017.

As researcher Frederico Santopinto of the Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security (GRIP) in Brussels put it, Russia was not opposed to an agreement with the EU, but not at the expense of its relationship with Ukraine. It was the EU that refused the coexistence of two agreements: European diplomacy saw Ukraine as a border between East and West, while Russia saw it as a bridge. As in 2022, European diplomacy has failed to take into account three factors that are of key concern to Ukraine:

- Eastern European countries have—whether they like it or not—cultural, economic and historical links with Russia. This is particularly true of the former USSR republics (such as the Baltic States, Belarus and Ukraine), which have large Russian-speaking minorities and whose industries were largely complementary to Russia's.
- The EU has not succeeded in integrating the Eastern countries into a common European spirit. These countries have been brutally plunged into a European culture of tolerance and cooperation, slowly forged since the Second World War. However, not only do these countries of the "new Europe" not have a democratic tradition, but they do not have the same values as the western part of the EU. In the Baltic States and Ukraine, hatred of the Soviets has turned into hatred of the Russians, which is conveniently exploited by the US. Unlike the rest of Europe, they still see the Third Reich as a liberator. The use of torture, social issues (abortion, LGBT, etc.), their unconditional alignment with American foreign policy, do not show a deep attachment to European values.

- The EU struggles to bring together the individual interests of its members into a coherent approach and a genuine common foreign policy. As a result, Germany, France and sometimes Italy often have to represent Europe's voice informally. The Ukrainian crisis and the economic crisis resulting from its decisions show that Europe comes together more around a common hatred than around common interests.

## **Euromaidan and the Militarization the Conflict**

The Maidan revolution was a series of sequences, with different actors. Today, those who are driven by hatred of Russia are trying to merge these different sequences into a single "democratic momentum"—a way to validate the crimes committed by Ukraine and its neo-Nazis.

At first, the population of Kiev, disappointed by the government's decision to postpone the signing of the treaty, gathered in the streets. There was no mention of revolution or change of power, but a simple expression of discontent. Contrary to what the West claims, Ukraine was deeply divided on the question of rapprochement with Europe. A poll conducted in November 2013 by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) showed that it was split exactly 50/50 between an agreement with the European Union and a customs union with Russia. In the south and east of the country, industry is strongly linked to Russia. People feared that an agreement that excluded Russia would kill their jobs. This is what did happen.

At this stage, it did not appear that Ukrainians were generally hostile to Russia. But the situation was quickly co-opted by the US, which was working behind the scenes to exploit the popular momentum and instrumentalize it to tighten the noose on Russia.

In 2014, I was at NATO and I observed the Ukrainian crisis from the inside, so to speak. From the outset, it was clear that the situation was being fueled by the West. Videos show that the coup plotters were supported by armed men speaking English with an American accent. The German magazine *Der Spiegel* mentioned the presence of mercenaries from the firm Academi (formerly Blackwater, of sinister memory in Iraq and Afghanistan). The German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) apparently informed the German government. I informed my diplomatic contacts at the OSCE—but this was soon forgotten.

A telephone conversation between Victoria Nuland, then Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia, and Geoffrey Pyatt, the US ambassador to Kiev, revealed by the BBC, shows that the Americans themselves selected the members of the future Ukrainian government, in defiance of the Ukrainians and Europeans. This conversation, which became famous thanks to Nuland's famous "*F\*\*\* the EU!*" testifies to the fact that the European Union was only a doormat in this affair.

In order to present this revolution as democratic, the real "hand of the West" was cleverly concealed by the imaginary hand of Russia. By claiming that the rebellions in Donbass and Crimea were the result of Russian intervention, it was hidden that a large part of the population did not approve of the overthrow of the government, which was both illegal and illegitimate. For the same reason, the ultra-nationalism of the coup plotters was systematically downplayed, as was the legitimacy of the claims of the Russian speakers who were accused of being agents of Moscow.

The beginning of the Euromaidan events was popular and good-natured. But just after an agreement was reached with the demonstrators to hold elections at the end of 2014 and have a democratic transition, the players changed. Ultra-nationalists and other neo-Nazis supported by the West took over. The signed agreement was not respected and violence broke out. Far from being the expression of a democratic revolution, it was the work of radical groups from the west of Ukraine (Galicia), who were not representative of all Ukrainians. They were the ones who overthrew President Yanukovich.

So Euromaidan was popular but not democratic. In May 2022, during a conference in Switzerland, a far-right journalist called out to me: "*What is popular is democratic!*" In fact, he was stating the principle of populism which is at the origin of the fascism that inspired the Ukrainian neo-Nazis, as we will see later. Indeed, a former participant in the Maidan events warned that "*this revolution reflects the rise of fascism.*"

As L'Obs reminds us, the 2014 Maidan revolution was nothing more than a coup d'état, led by the United States with the support of the European Union. In December 2014, George Friedman, president of the US geopolitical intelligence platform STRATFOR, said in an interview with the Russian magazine Kommersant:

Russia defines the event that took place at the beginning of this year as a coup organized by the US. And in truth, it was the most blatant in history.

Unlike European observers, the Atlantic Council, which is very supportive of NATO, was quick to note that the Maidan revolution was hijacked by certain oligarchs and ultra-nationalists. It notes that the reforms promised by Ukraine were not been carried out and that the Western media adhered solely to a "black-and-white" narrative, without any critical insight.

Thus, what Raphaël Glucksmann called a "*democratic revolution*" was nothing more than a coup de force, carried out without any legal basis, against a government whose election had been qualified by the OSCE as "*transparent and honest*" and one which "*offered an impressive demonstration of democracy.*" Subsequently, the democratically elected President Yanukovich was convicted of "high treason" for having defended the constitutional order.

Far from being democratic, the coup d'état that concluded the events of Maidan was not unanimous among the Ukrainian people, either in its content or in its form. The nationalists were taking over the regional governments in the north of the country, while in the south the loyalists sought to maintain constitutional order.

### **The Rise of Right-Wing Extremism in Ukraine**

Since 2014, in order to legitimize their support for the new regime in Kiev and the fight against Russia, the West has been at pains to minimize the importance of the far right in Ukraine. They cover up the crimes committed since 2014 against the population of Donbass in order to challenge Vladimir Putin's objective of "denazification."

The mention of "neo-Nazis" in the Ukrainian regime is systematically dismissed as Russian propaganda by media, journalists and politicians who promote neo-Nazi and Russophobic ideas. As the American media outlet The Hill notes, this is not simply Russian propaganda.

It is important to understand the terms used. Indeed, the term "ultra-nationalist," often used to describe Ukrainian extremists, is only partially relevant. It refers to Ukrainians in the west of the country who seek to create a "pure" Ukraine, i.e., free of all non-Ukrainian minorities.

The foreign volunteers were probably not "nationalists" or "ultra-nationalists." Their motives were obviously very diverse, but there was the constant of a fight for a white Europe. The Europe envisaged



here has nothing to do with the EU, which most Ukrainian paramilitaries reject. It is a "racially pure" Europe, united by a natiocratic ideal.

The term "Nazi" refers to National Socialism (Nazism), a doctrine that takes us back to the 1930s in Germany. Without going into detail, it combines nationalism and socialism into a "compact" ideology, postulating that the main obstacle to the application of both is the presence of Jews in German society. It is a coherent doctrinal system.

What is described as 'neo-Nazism' is not a compact, constructed doctrine. It is more of a social phenomenon than a political doctrine. It is a heterogeneous collection of ideologies that combine hatred of everything and everyone in a kind of theatrical representation of violence, associating Nazi symbolism. There are individuals who see in the hatred of the other a glorification of their conception of the nation.

It is paradoxical that essentially nationalist movements have such international collaboration. The answer lies in the approach itself. The foreign fighters who engage with the Ukrainian far-right movements are not fighting for Ukraine but for the "Idea of Nation." In other words, they are fighting for the principle of power given to the nation. This is why, alongside Nazi symbols, one finds white supremacist symbols, such as the Celtic cross.

The term "neo-Nazi" is therefore somewhat misleading. Despite appearances, "neo-Nazis" are not the descendants of "Nazis." Rather, they are the second cousins of consanguineous marriages, who share the same brutality. The link of kinship appears clearly through the "Idea of Nation," described in four principles by Andriy Biletsky, founder of the AZOV movement:

- The nation has an ethnic basis, defined by blood.
- The interest of the nation is superior to that of the individual.
- Society is structured around an ethnic hierarchy and power is held by members of the ethnic elite.
- The members of this nation constitute an elite group of full citizens, while the others are "second class citizens."

In fact, the Idea of Nation is a common theme in many extreme right-wing movements. It is symbolized by an 'N' crossed by a capital 'I,' which is nothing but the inverted representation of the *Wolfsangel* rune found in Nazi symbolism.

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