

Ukraine Imports Democracy

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External Influences on the Orange Revolution

Do external factors influence democratization? Strangely, students of both international relations and comparative politics have devoted little effort into answering this question. Thirty years ago, Peter Gourevitch outlined a set of arguments for why and how to study the international causes of domestic outcomes.¹ His framework had a profound effect on several literatures, but only a minor ripple in the study of regime change.² In *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, Philippe Schmitter asserted: “[O]ne of the firmest conclusions that emerged . . . was that transitions from authoritarian rule and immediate prospects for political democracy were largely to be explained in terms of national forces and calculations. External actors tended to play an indirect and usually marginal role.”³

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1. Peter Gourevitch, “The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics,” *International Organization*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Autumn 1978), pp. 881–912.

2. Exceptions include Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999); Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy: U.S. Policy toward Latin America in the Reagan Years* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Tony Smith, *America’s Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994); Richard Youngs, *International Democracy and the West: The Role of Governments, Civil Society, and Multinational Business* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004); John M. Owen IV, “The Foreign Imposition of Domestic Institutions,” *International Organization*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Spring 2002), pp. 375–409; Jon C. Pevehouse, “Democracy from the Outside-In? International Organizations and Democratization,” *International Organization*, Vol. 56, No. 3 (Summer 2002), pp. 515–549; Laurence Whitehead, “International Aspects of Democratization,” in Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 3–46; Peter Burnell, ed., *Democracy Assistance: International Cooperation for Democratization* (London: Frank Cass, 2000); and Jeroen de Zeeuw and Krishna Kumar, eds., *Promoting Democracy and Postconflict Societies* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2006).

3. Philippe C. Schmitter, “An Introduction to Southern European Transitions from Authoritarian

As late as the early 1990s, the role of international actors was correctly described as “the forgotten dimension in the study of democratic transition.”⁴ Few studies try to measure international effects on democratic change at the national level.⁵ Instead, the limited literature on evaluating democracy promotion usually begins by focusing on some component of democracy assistance from a single Western country, such as political party assistance, rule of law programs, or civil society development.⁶ This strategy has severe limitations because tracing the causal effect of one kind of foreign assistance on one dimension of democratic development in isolation from all other variables influencing democratization is extremely difficult, while making impossible evaluations of progress toward democracy at the national level.⁷

The relatively underdeveloped academic literature on external dimensions of internal political change contrasts sharply with U.S. and European policymakers’ focus on democracy promotion, especially in the last decade as more and more leaders have embraced the moral and security benefits of democracy as a system of government.⁸ Rhetorically, President George W. Bush elevated the promotion of freedom around the world to one of his top foreign policy objectives.⁹ The European Union has published numerous statements of princi-

Rule: Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey,” in Guillermo O’Donnell, Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Southern Europe* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 5.

4. Geoffrey Pridham, “International Influences and Democratic Transition: Problems of Theory and Practice in Linkage Politics,” in Pridham, ed., *Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester, U.K.: Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 18.

5. For the first comprehensive quantitative study of the impact of U.S. Agency for International Development democracy assistance programs, for example, see Steven E. Finkel, Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Mitchell A. Seligson, “Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building: Results of a Cross-National Quantitative Study,” Final Report (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Agency for International Development, January 2006), ver. 34.

6. See Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom, *Funding Civil Society: Foreign Assistance and NGO Development in Russia* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006); Sarah L. Henderson, *Building Democracy in Contemporary Russia: Western Support for Grassroots Organizations* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003); Sarah E. Mendelson and John K. Glenn, eds., *The Power and Limits of NGOs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); and Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, eds., *Funding Virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000). Assessments of rule of law assistance are fewer. See Erik Jensen and Thomas Heller, eds., *Beyond Common Knowledge: Empirical Approaches to the Rule of Law* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004); and Thomas Carothers, ed., *Promoting Rule of Law Abroad: In Search of Knowledge* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006). The only book on political party assistance is Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).

7. National-level, aggregate assessments include Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*; and Thomas Carothers, *Assessing Democracy Assistance: The Case of Romania* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996).

8. See Michael McFaul, “Democracy Promotion as a World Value,” *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 2004–05), pp. 147–163.

9. See especially George W. Bush, “President Sworn-In to Second Term,” January 2, 2005, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050120-1.html>.

ples that highlight the promotion of human rights, democracy, and good governance as strategic priorities.¹⁰ Both the United States and the European Union spend roughly \$1.5 billion a year on democracy promotion. The United Nations, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the African Union all claim to promote democracy and have programs designated to pursue that objective. While using a different discourse, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development also try to leverage their resources to promote good governance. Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Slovakia, Sweden, and Taiwan have extensive democracy promoting programs, while almost every European aid agency devotes resources to the effort. The purposive promotion of democracy in other countries has become a major activity of states, multilateral institutions, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), yet explanations or assessments of these efforts remain a topic still underdeveloped in academia.

Through the examination of the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, this article offers a unique method for generating answers to this important theoretical and policy question. Rather than starting the analysis from the perspective of donors, this article begins first with a theory of democratization. The analytic innovation is simple: start with a theory of regime change first—that is, identify the set of independent variables that produces democratization (or not)—and then look for how external factors influence the value of these independent variables. The analytic starting point is the exact opposite of most democracy promotion studies. This approach also assumes that domestic actors seek to pull in external resources as much as external actors seek to push resources to local actors. Domestic efforts to import ideas and resources to advance democracy (or impede it) are just as central to the analysis as foreign attempts to export democracy. Obviously, importers can bring in ideas and resources only if exporters are willing to supply them, but because of foreign policy decisions in London and Brussels, congressional earmarks in Washington, and the inertia of the worldwide democracy promotion industry, attempts to export democracy march on with or without consumers of the promoters' products. Tracing the impact of all of these democracy promotion efforts by focusing first on the suppliers and not the consumers is methodologically flawed. With rare exception, domestic actors dominate the drama of regime change; external actors can influence outcomes only by working with and through these domestic actors.¹¹

10. See especially Council of the European Union, *A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy* (Brussels: European Union, December 12, 2003).

11. Obviously, cases of military intervention introduce foreign actors into the drama directly. As

After these internal factors have been assessed, the analysis zooms out to measure to what extent external factors influenced either the strength of Ukraine's autocratic regime or the democratic challengers. Domestic factors accounted for most of the drama of the Orange Revolution, but external factors did play a direct, causal role in constraining some dimensions of autocratic power and enhancing some dimensions of the opposition's power. International assistance in the form of ideas and financial resources was crucial regarding one dimension of the Orange Revolution—exposing fraud. Yet significant international inputs also can be identified regarding the preservation of semi-autocracy, the fostering of an effective political opposition, the development of independent media, and the nurturing of capacity to mobilize protest after the vote.

Ukrainian democracy did not consolidate after the Orange Revolution. The causes of the revolution can be measured independent from the longer-term consequences of this dramatic event on democratic consolidation.¹² Even if Ukrainian democracy does slide back toward autocracy over the long run, the Orange Revolution will still remain a dramatic case of democratic breakthrough, and maybe the most important instance of democratic breakthrough in this decade.¹³

The Orange Revolution is also a critical case for measuring democracy promotion. Although the U.S. government never targeted its financial resources at fomenting revolution, it spent more than \$18 million in election-related assistance efforts in Ukraine in the two years leading up to the 2004 presidential vote.¹⁴ Some observers praised U.S. assistance; others lambasted the intervention; but both critics and supporters claimed to identify a causal role for external actors.¹⁵ Likewise, assessments assigned a major antidemocratic role for

the contemporary cases of Iraq and Afghanistan illustrate, however, even foreign agents with armed forces are severely constrained in shaping local political change when they lack powerful domestic allies.

12. Distinguishing between the causes of transition from the causes of consolidation is common in the literatures on democratization and revolution.

13. Democracy, in other words, develops in fits and starts, and not always on a gradual path.

14. These were official figures provided to the author by staff members in the Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, U.S. Department of State.

15. For a positive assessment of Western intervention, see Jeffrey Clark, "Elections, Revolution, and Democracy in Ukraine: Reflections on a Country's Turn to Democracy, Free Elections, and the Modern World" (Washington, D.C.: Development Associates, October 2005). For critics of the Western, and especially U.S., intervention, see Patrick J. Buchanan, "Who's in Charge of Russia Policy?" *Antiwar.com*, December 29, 2004, <http://antiwar.com>; Sergei Markov, "Oranzhevaya Revolutsiya—primer revolutsii global'nogo soobshchestva XXI veka," in Mikhail Pogrebinskii, *Oranzhevaya Revolutsiya: Versii, Khronika, Dokumenty* (Kiev: Optima, 2005), pp. 52–75; Jonathan Steele, "Ukraine's Postmodern Coup d'Etat," *Guardian*, November 26, 2004; Anatol Lieven, "Ukraine and Europe: A Shotgun Wedding Is Bound to Fail," *International Tribune*, December 21, 2004; and "Congressman [Ron Paul] accuses U.S. Government of Supporting Viktor Yushchenko," *ICPS Newsletter*, No. 258 (December 20, 2004).

Russia. If scholars cannot identify a causal impact of external influences in the Orange Revolution, they are unlikely to find it in other cases.

The analysis proceeds as follows. The first section provides an analytical framework for explaining the Orange Revolution. This framework is derived from a theory of democratization that focuses analysis on the conflict and the distribution of power between autocratic elites and democratic challengers. The second section disaggregates the macro variables described in the first section to develop a more precise understanding of the proximate causes of the Orange Revolution. The third section examines the factors that weakened the ancien régime, including (1) competitive authoritarianism, (2) an unpopular leader, and (3) division among the armed forces. The fourth section details the factors that strengthened the democratic opposition, including (1) a successful opposition campaign, (2) the ability to expose fraud, (3) the means to communicate information about the falsified vote, and (4) the capability to mobilize masses to protest the fraudulent election. The fifth section examines the external dimensions that weakened the ancien régime. The sixth similarly analyzes the external variables that strengthened the democratic opposition. The seventh section concludes by offering a road map for future research about the influence of external factors on domestic regime change.

The Orange Revolution as a Case of Democratic Breakthrough

The fall 2004 presidential election triggered one of the pivotal moments in Ukrainian history. Initially, the election resembled other fraudulent votes in semi-authoritarian regimes.¹⁶ The incumbent president, Leonid Kuchma, and his chosen successor, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych, deployed state resources, national media, and private funding from both Ukrainians and Russians to defeat the opposition candidate, Viktor Yushchenko. When this effort to win the vote fell short, Kuchma's government tried to steal the election by adding votes to Yanukovych's tally in the second round.¹⁷ In response to this fraud, Yushchenko called on his supporters to come to Independence Square (or Maidan Square) in Kiev, and protest the stolen election. Eventually hundreds of thousands answered his call. They remained in the square, with some living in a tent city on Khreshchatyk, Kiev's main thoroughfare, until the Supreme Court annulled the second-round results on December 3, 2004, and set a date for the rerunning of the second round for December 26, 2004. In this

16. On these regimes, see Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (April 2002), pp. 51–65.

17. See Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2005), chap. 6.

round, Yushchenko won 52 percent of the vote, compared with 44 percent for Yanukovich. The victors memorialized this set of events by calling it the Orange Revolution.¹⁸

The Orange Revolution was a unique event in Ukrainian history, but the outcome followed a pattern of democratic breakthroughs or “electoral revolutions” observed earlier in Georgia in 2003, Serbia in 2000, and some would argue Slovakia in 1998 and Kyrgyzstan in 2005.¹⁹ These cases shared several features: (1) the spark for regime change was a fraudulent national election; (2) the challengers to the incumbents deployed extraconstitutional means to ensure that the formal rules of the political game in the constitution were followed; (3) incumbents and challengers both claimed to possess sovereign authority over the same territory; (4) all of these revolutionary situations ended without the massive use of violence by either the state or the opposition; and (5) the conclusion of these electoral revolutions triggered a significant jump in the degree of democracy.²⁰

Scholars have many theories of democratization.²¹ Seymour Martin Lipset’s ideas about modernization as the driver of democratization still command serious attention, while other structuralist analyses have focused on related but distinct variables such as culture, economic inequality, geography, and resource endowments.²² Doing battle with these deterministic explanations of democratization are the actor-centric theorists, who focus on the actions and interactions of individuals—and elites in particular—as the driver of democratization or its absence. The transitologists divide on two issues: whether cooperation between parts of the old regime and the democratic challengers is necessary for democratic change and whether democratization should be viewed as a game between elites, or if societal and mass actors should be included in the analysis.²³

18. On the symbolic codification of the Orange Revolution, see Laura Arzhakovska, *Revolutsiia Duxa* (Lviv: Ukrainian Catholic University, 2005); and the movie *Ukraina: proriv do demokratii* (Kiev: O. Dovzhnko, Fond Rozvitku Ukrain's'kogo Kino/Pro TV, 2005).

19. Mark K. Beissinger, “Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions,” *Perspective on Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (June 2007), pp. 259–276; Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, “Favorable Conditions and Electoral Revolutions,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (October 2006), pp. 5–18; Michael McFaul, “Transitions from Postcommunism,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (July 2005), pp. 5–19; and Joshua Tucker, “Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions,” *Perspective on Politics* (forthcoming).

20. Ukraine’s Freedom House scores jumped from partially free in 2004 to free in 2005.

21. Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?” *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (June 1999), pp. 115–144.

22. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Basis of Politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1960).

23. Those emphasizing elites and the benefits of pacts include Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe

The Orange Revolution offers confirming evidence for those who emphasize conflict as a driver of democratic change and those who assign a central role to coordinated mass action in pressing for democratic change.²⁴ According to this theory, democratization occurs not when the distribution of power is relatively equal and both sides are forced to negotiate, but when societal forces acquire enough power to either demand democracy or defend it against autocratic encroachments. The critical set of independent variables for explaining democratization, therefore, is the distribution of power between the autocratic elements within the state and the pro-democratic elements within society. To measure this balance of power, analysts must evaluate the unity among elites in the state or their ability to control the state, the coercive capabilities of the regime, and the costs of continued autocratic rule. Analysts also must gauge democratic power, including the unity of the opposition and the opposition's capacity to resist coercion or make autocracy costly, especially the society's ability "[to] coordinate their reactions to prevent violations of democratic rights."²⁵

This framework offers a simple, powerful lens for analyzing the Orange Revolution. Ukraine's levels of economic development, literacy, and urbanization, as well as its cultural proclivities for democratic rule, geographic proximity to Europe, and dearth of oil, gas, and diamonds may all have been necessary preconditions for the Orange Revolution to occur. But in the fall of 2004, it was real people, motivated by real ideas and empowered by real resources, who struggled with each other to produce the Orange Revolution. A shift in the distribution of power between autocratic incumbents and democratic challengers produced democratic breakthrough. Those seeking to hold on to power through antidemocratic means were weaker in 2004 relative to earlier periods when they had the resources to retain power in the face of democratic challengers, while the democrats were stronger in 2004 than in earlier periods. The 2004 presidential election and attempts by the ancien régime to

C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, Vol. 4 (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); and Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (October 1990), pp. 1–21. Those downplaying pacts and giving greater attention to masses include Nancy Bermeo, "Myths of Moderation: Confrontation and Conflict during the Democratic Transitions," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (April 1997), pp. 305–322; Ruth Collier, *Paths towards Democracy: The Working Class and Elites in Western Europe and South America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Michael McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World," *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (January 2002), pp. 212–244.

24. Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

25. Barry R. Weingast, "The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of Law," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 91, No. 2 (June 1997), pp. 245–263, at p. 246.

falsify its results gave the opposition a crucial “galvanizing event” to coordinate their behavior and demonstrate their power.²⁶ The absence of either this election date or the regime’s attempt to steal the election would have severely hindered the opposition’s ability to demonstrate its power or make a credible “threat of social disorder,” perhaps *the* critical factor in other cases of democratization.²⁷ In response, Kuchma and his supporters, including those in Moscow, did contemplate using coercion to stay in power. Measuring the distribution of power between state and society, however, was not an abstract exercise during the Orange Revolution; calculations about power could be made based on concrete assessments of crowd sizes and unified will among those in the state wielding coercive power. Democratic society was simply too powerful to repress.

This level of aggregation—the autocratic state versus the democratic society—is useful for generating comparative theory, but it constrains the search for causal mechanisms that could have been influenced by external actors. The next two sections break down these variables into the more specific components that interacted to cause the Orange Revolution.

The Components of Weakened Autocratic Power

Measuring a ruler’s capacity to stay in power through antidemocratic means is extremely difficult. Before regime collapse, autocratic rulers almost always look powerful. After collapse, they almost always look weak. Autocratic power also must be measured in relation to the power of challengers. Some autocrats hang on for decades with very little coercive capacity and very low approval ratings because the opposition is even weaker. Nonetheless, the trajectory of some disaggregated measures of power—degree of autocracy, popularity of the regime, and unity among the coercive forces in the regime—can be captured to give some approximation of the strength of the regime as a whole.

COMPETITIVE AUTHORITARIANISM

All autocratic regimes are vulnerable to collapse at some point, but which kinds of autocracies are the most vulnerable? Some observers posit that competitive authoritarian regimes better facilitate democratization than full-blown

26. The idea of a galvanizing event as a necessary condition for societal coordination is presented in *ibid.*, p. 251.

27. Acemoglu and Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, p. 4.

dictatorships.²⁸ Others argue that semi-autocracies or partial democracies impede genuine democratization to a greater degree than more rigid autocracies, because liberalized autocracies can partially diffuse societal pressures for change and thereby avoid regime collapse more effectively than rigid dictatorships.²⁹

Ukraine offers confirming evidence that competitive autocracies can be conducive to democratic breakthroughs.³⁰ These are regimes in which the formal rules of democracy were never suspended and competition still mattered to some degree. They are also regimes in which some political institutions and organizations had some autonomy from the autocratic regime.³¹ President Kuchma aspired to construct a system of “managed democracy”—formal democratic practices, but informal control of all political institutions—similar to President Vladimir Putin’s model of government in Russia.³² But the Ukrainian president never achieved as much success as his Russian counterpart.

Most important, Ukraine’s oligarchs never united in support of the ancien régime.³³ Ukraine’s three largest oligarchic groups did back Kuchma and wielded their media and financial resources on behalf of his candidate in the 2004 election, but significant if lesser oligarchs backed Yushchenko, as did tens of thousands of smaller businesspeople. Ukraine’s economic elites were divided, not united, in the fall of 2004.

Kuchma’s inept and blunt attempts to squelch opposition voices—be it his apparent collusion in the murder of journalist Georgy Gongadze, his jailing of former Energy Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, or his dismissal of popular Prime Minister Yushchenko—also served to further weaken the state and mobilize

28. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Eastern Europe* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

29. Daniel Brumberg, “Liberalization versus Democracy,” in Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, eds., *Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), pp. 15–36; and Eva Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective,” *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (January 2004), pp. 139–153.

30. A more nuanced hypothesis might be that competitive authoritarian regimes that emerged from partial democracies are more vulnerable than competitive authoritarian regimes that emerged from full-blown autocracies.

31. Levitsky and Way, “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism.”

32. On the model, see Lucan A. Way, “Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave: The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine,” *World Politics*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (January 2005), pp. 231–261.

33. Anders Åslund, “The Ancien Régime: Kuchma and the Oligarchs,” in Åslund and Michael McFaul, eds., *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine’s Democratic Breakthrough* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), pp. 9–28.

even greater opposition. On the eve of the 2004 presidential vote, three-quarters of the Ukrainian voters wanted greater democratization.³⁴ This societal response to autocratic government most distinguishes Ukraine from its Slavic neighbors, Belarus and Russia. The “Ukraine without Kuchma” campaign from December 2000 to March 2001 and the results of the March 2002 parliamentary elections demonstrated that Ukrainian society was active and sophisticated. Especially after the electoral success of the Our Ukraine bloc in the 2002 parliamentary vote, Ukraine’s opposition also had a foothold in an important state institution.

In addition, Kuchma did not control rents generated from oil and gas sales that could have been used to purchase the loyalty of societal challengers. Ukraine’s economy began to grow in 1999 for the first time since independence, peaking at a 12 percent increase in gross domestic product in 2004. But, in contrast to the leadership in other resource-rich states such as Iran, Kazakhstan, and Russia, Kuchma’s regime did not control or own major segments of the Ukrainian economy. Ukrainian growth increased the financial autonomy and independence of the regime’s opponents.

Finally, Kuchma never aspired to construct full-blown autocracy. As he demonstrated in the fall of 2004, Kuchma was prepared to transgress democratic rules to prevent the opposition from coming to power, but he also wanted to keep up the appearance of democracy. He never canceled elections. He did not amend the constitution so he could run for a third term, but instead took the risky move of recruiting a successor, Viktor Yanukovich, to run in the 2004 presidential election—one who was not a Kuchma loyalist.

REGIME UNPOPULARITY

Given that a presidential election triggered the Orange Revolution, an unpopular regime was a necessary condition for democratic breakthrough. Although it may seem obvious, this measure of the regime’s weakness distinguishes Ukraine from countries such as Russia, where President Putin is still popular, or countries such as Mexico during the heyday of semi-authoritarian rule, when the Institutional Revolutionary Party could manufacture electoral victories without major voter fraud.³⁵

When asked on the eve of the 2004 presidential election, only 8 percent of

34. Polling data cited from Taras Kuzio, “Everyday Ukrainians and the Orange Revolution,” in Åslund and McFaul, *Revolution in Orange*, p. 61.

35. Beatriz Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Ukrainian voters approved of Kuchma's tenure; 62 percent disapproved.³⁶ No factor undermined Kuchma's standing more than the murder of journalist Georgy Gongadze, the founder of the internet publication *Ukrainska Pravda*. Tapes of conversations between Kuchma and subordinates leaked to the press strongly suggested that Kuchma ordered Gongadze's execution. Kuchma was not running for office in 2004, but his handpicked presidential candidate, Prime Minister Yanukovich, did little to inspire hope for a break with past corrupt practices. Yanukovich was a convicted felon who still maintained ties with criminal circles in his hometown region of Donetsk. Among voters, he was perceived as the candidate who would preserve the status quo, not change it.

Yet, in the rerun of the second round on December 26, 2004, Yanukovich captured 44 percent of the vote. This significant level of support reflects both the success and limits of Yanukovich's campaign strategy, which deliberately tried to accentuate ethnic and regional divisions within Ukraine, mobilizing the Russian-speaking voters in the east against the Ukrainian-speaking supporters of Yushchenko in the west.³⁷ Yanukovich also tried to portray Yushchenko as a U.S. lackey who would undermine the stable relationship that Ukraine had developed with Russia under Kuchma's leadership. The Yanukovich campaign called his opponent "Bushenko" and circulated posters and leaflets warning of a U.S.-orchestrated civil war in Ukraine similar to those in Bosnia, Serbia, and Iraq should Yushchenko come to power.³⁸

The campaign strategy worked. Yanukovich won smashing victories in the December round of voting in the eastern regions of Donetsk (93 percent), Luhansk (91 percent), and Crimea (81 percent), but he failed to break double digits in the western regions of Ternopil, Ivan-Frankivsk, Lviv, and Volyn. Fostering polarization did not help Yanukovich win votes in the center of Ukraine, including Kiev, which swung decidedly toward Yushchenko (71 percent). Given the economic boom under way throughout Ukraine in 2004, especially in Kiev, this strong popular support for change suggests a deep, genuine rejection of the regime constructed by Kuchma in the 1990s.

36. See Razumkov Centre Sociological Survey, as reported in "2004 Presidential Elections: How Ukrainians Saw Them," *National Security and Defence*, No. 10 (2004), p. 19; and Natalya Panina, ed., *Ukrainian Society, 1994–2005: Sociological Monitoring* (Kiev: Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences and Democratic Initiatives, 2005), p. 25.

37. Mikhail Pogrebinsky, director, Kiev Center for Political Studies and Conflictology, and campaign adviser to Viktor Yanukovich, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

38. Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, p. 95.

UNRELIABLE COERCIVE CAPACITY

The post-Soviet Ukrainian state never developed the coercive capacities of a full-blown autocracy, including the kind of intelligence services or internal security troops needed to repress popular revolt. Political arrests and even assassination happened, but massive repression never occurred. Unlike Russia in 1993, political competition in Ukraine never devolved into military conflict between state institutions. In contrast to Russia and Armenia, the line between civilian government and military service remained clear in Ukraine.

Consequently, when faced with mass social mobilization against the regime during the Orange Revolution, President Kuchma could not invoke tradition or call upon loyal special forces to disperse protesters. He did, however, threaten to use force. A week into the protest, troops from the ministry of the interior armed and mobilized, with the intention of clearing the square.³⁹ But Orange Revolution sympathizers from within the intelligence services warned the opposition of the impending attack, and commanders within the regular army pledged to protect the unarmed citizens if these interior troops marched into the center of town.⁴⁰ These defections made clear that those with the guns—that is, the military, the intelligence services, and police—could not be trusted to carry out a repressive order.⁴¹ These splits helped to convince Kuchma to call off the planned police activity, even though Yanukovych was urging the Ukrainian president to take action.

Divided loyalties within the security forces are closely intertwined with mass mobilization. Had only a few thousand demonstrators remained, Kuchma might have been less reluctant to use force. To understand why there were hundreds of thousands and sometimes a million people mobilized for two weeks after the vote requires a closer examination of the resources that made the Ukrainian democratic opposition powerful and effective.

Components of Increased Democratic Power

In retrospect, all revolutions seem inevitable. Beforehand, all revolutions seem impossible. The Orange Revolution was no exception. Autocracy in Ukraine was weak, but the democratic opposition seemed even weaker. In comparative perspective, Ukraine's civil and political society looked poorly organized,

39. Interview with Ihor Smeshko, chief of the Ukrainian Secret Service, in *The Orange Revolution*, documentary film written, directed, and produced by Steve York (Washington: York Zimmerman, 2007).

40. Yurii Lutsenko, MP and a key organizer of the Maidan protests, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

41. C.J. Chivers, "How Top Spies in Ukraine Changed the Nation's Path," *New York Times*, January 17, 2005.

ranking well below other countries in the region.⁴² The boldest attempt at mobilization against the regime—the Ukraine without Kuchma campaign in 2001—ended in demoralizing defeat. Everyone knew that the 2004 presidential elections offered a major opportunity for renewed societal mobilization, but few were optimistic about a positive outcome.⁴³ Yet, the naysayers were wrong this time. Several resources were critical for the success of the Orange Revolution.

UNITED AND “EFFECTIVE” OPPOSITION

A united opposition—or at least the perception of one—was crucial for the 2004 democratic breakthrough. In the previous decade, division, disorganization, and the absence of a single, charismatic leader had crippled Ukraine’s democratic forces. Ironically, Kuchma helped opposition unity when he dismissed Yushchenko as prime minister in 2001. At the time, Yushchenko cut an image of a technocratic economist, not a revolutionary. He was a popular prime minister with a record of achievement, an image of not being corrupt, an appealing biography, and a handsome appearance, but his colleagues worried that he did not have the temperament to become a national political leader.⁴⁴

A critical step for forging unity was the 2002 parliamentary elections. To participate in these elections, Yushchenko created a new voting bloc, Our Ukraine, which captured a quarter of the popular vote. Our Ukraine’s success in 2002 made Yushchenko the focal point of a united front for the presidential election. Importantly, Yuliya Tymoshenko agreed not to run for president, but instead backed Yushchenko.⁴⁵

A single candidate was essential for the electoral success of Ukraine’s opposition. Without electoral victory, there would have been no Orange Revolution. Whether Yushchenko was necessary for the opposition’s electoral success in 2004 is impossible to know; that he was a candidate who could unite the democrats was clear.⁴⁶

Beyond acknowledging the importance of unity behind one candidate, assessing the general effectiveness of the opposition’s electoral campaign is difficult. The second round of the vote essentially became a polarized ref-

42. See Marc Morjé Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), chap. 4.

43. Wilson, *Ukraine’s Orange Revolution*, p. 123.

44. Roman Bezsmertny, Our Ukraine MP; and Alexander Moroz, MP and chairman of the Socialist Party, interviews by author, Kiev, July 2002.

45. Yuliya Tymoshenko, interview by author, Kiev, February 2006.

46. On the misplaced emphasis on leaders in such situations, see Kurt Schock, “Nonviolent Action and Its Misconceptions: Insights for Social Scientists,” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (October 2003), pp. 705–712.

erendum on the Kuchma regime. The vote was polarized along geographic lines: the farther west one lived, the more likely one supported Yushchenko, while the farther east one lived, the more likely one supported Yanukovych.⁴⁷ Therefore, measuring the causal impact of campaign efforts in this polarized election about the past is particularly difficult. Yushchenko won, suggesting that he effectively used his campaign assets, such as party organization, his personal appeal, targeted messages, and financial resources to pay for campaign staff, leaflets, and get-out-the-vote activities.⁴⁸ He also stuck to his message: criticizing Kuchma's regime rather than pushing a comprehensive agenda of policy changes.⁴⁹ His message structured the vote as a choice between two different systems of government: one that was corrupt, authoritarian, and criminal versus one that would be "for the truth," "for freedom," and "for our rights." Rather than appealing to concerns of individuals, Yushchenko and his campaign asked voters to make assessments about the overall political and economic health of their country.⁵⁰ Yushchenko also tried to keep his own speeches positive. The use of the word *Tak!* (Yes!) and the color orange were carefully chosen positive symbols.⁵¹ Regrettably, however, no one collected the kind of survey data necessary to trace the effects of the Yushchenko campaign's strategies and tactics.

One aspect of the campaign, however, can be traced: voter mobilization. The Yushchenko campaign believed that a higher voter turnout would help its cause and therefore devoted huge resources to get-out-the-vote efforts. In addition to party activities, the nongovernmental organization Znayu carried out massive voter education and get-out-the-vote efforts, recognized by friends and foes as contributors to Yushchenko's electoral success. The youth groups Black Pora, Yellow Pora and its affiliated Freedom of Choice Coalition, and the Committee of Ukrainian Voters (known by its Ukrainian acronym CVU) also organized extensive get-out-the-vote campaigns, while groups such as Internews-Ukraine placed public service announcements on television educating Ukrainian voters about their electoral rights, which indirectly also in-

47. Razumkov Centre Sociological Survey, as reported in "2004 Presidential Elections," p. 9.

48. Tracing the effects of campaign messages and techniques is difficult even in older democracies. See Henry E. Brady and Richard Johnston, eds., *Capturing Campaign Effects* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

49. Of course, he did have a program, including a list of presidential decrees that he promised to enact should he be elected. These future actions, however, were not emphasized. After the election, two-thirds of the electorate reported that they had never heard about these decrees. See Razumkov Centre Sociological Survey, as reported in "2004 Presidential Elections," p. 10.

50. Donald R. Kinder and D. Roderick Kiewiet, "Sociotropic Politics: The American Case," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (April 1981), p. 132.

51. Ihor Gryniv, Our Ukraine MP and campaign manager, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

creased voter interest. In the second round, voter turnout reached an amazing 80 percent; in the rerun of the second round (the third time Ukrainians were asked to go to the polls that fall), turnout was still very high, 77 percent.

EXPOSURE OF FRAUD

Another component of the opposition's success was the ability to quickly provide an accurate and independent account of the vote after polls closed. Several organizations monitored the count, but CVU played the central role in monitoring all rounds of the 2004 presidential vote. CVU also conducted a parallel vote tabulation (PVT) in all three rounds. In addition, the Ukrainian NGO Democratic Initiatives Foundation coordinated the National Exit Poll conducted by four polling firms: the Kiev International Institute of Sociology (known by its Ukrainian acronym KMIS), the SOCIS Center, the Social Monitoring Center, and the sociological service of the Razumkov Centre.⁵²

CVU had ten years of experience, and the Democratic Initiatives Foundation orchestrated the first exit polls in Ukraine in the 1998 parliamentary elections.⁵³ Compared with their efforts in earlier elections, however, these groups also faced a much more sophisticated voter manipulator in 2004. First, Kuchma's regime falsified the vote at the precinct level and not between the precinct level and higher levels of counting where fraud traditionally occurs.⁵⁴ A parallel vote tabulation attempts to expose fraud by sampling the actual vote count at the precinct level. But if the precinct numbers are already fraudulent, then a PVT will simply reflect the result of the falsified vote, an outcome that CVU encountered. Because CVU figures from its PVT did not expose fraud, the committee did not release its second-round results.⁵⁵ Second, the legitimacy of the National Exit Poll came into question when two firms in the consortium used a different tallying method. In response to the polarized atmosphere of the 2004 vote, preelection opinion polls recorded very high no-response rates, exceeding 70 percent in some regions and more than 50 percent nationwide. As a corrective, two consortium partners, KMIS and the Razumkov Centre, agreed to switch from face-to-face polling to a more anony-

52. The government-sponsored Ukrainian Institute of Social Research and the Russian firm Foundation for Social Opinion (known by the Russian acronym FOM) also conducted exit polls. FOM discontinued its exit poll in the first round because more than 40 percent of all voters refused to reveal how they voted. See Tetiana Sylina, "Exit Poll: A Long Ordeal," *National Security and Defence*, No. 10 (2004), pp. 24–28.

53. See <http://www.dif.org.ua>.

54. Yevgen Poberezhny, deputy chairman of the board of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

55. Ihor Popov, chairman of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, interview by author, Kiev, March 2005.

mous method in which they essentially placed a second ballot box outside of the polling station into which voters could report how they voted without the interviewer seeing. SOCIS Center and the Social Monitoring Center—allegedly under government instruction—refused to adopt this new method. Not surprisingly, the two methods produced different results: the more anonymous method used by KMIS and the Razumkov Centre reported higher levels of support for Yushchenko than did the results collected by SOCIS and the Social Monitoring Center through face-to-face interviews. The consortium dissolved before the second round. In this round, results released by KMIS and Razumkov gave Yushchenko 53 percent of the vote compared with 44 percent for Yanukovych.⁵⁶ Official results claimed that Yushchenko won 46 percent of the vote, and Yanukovych 49 percent. This discrepancy was essential for mobilizing citizens to protect their votes.

After the PVT and exit polls yielded ambiguous results, qualitative methods came to the rescue. Individual election monitors reported hundreds of irregular procedures.⁵⁷ Turnout levels in some eastern regions were so outrageously high, and jumped so dramatically in the last minutes of voting, that election officials and analysts knew they could not be true.

This combination gave a few members of the Central Election Commission (CEC) the courage not to certify the final count, sending the issue to Ukraine's parliament, the Rada, which then sent the issue to the Supreme Court.⁵⁸ On December 3, 2004, the court used evidence of fraud collected by the CVU and other NGOs to annul the official results and call for a replay of the second round later that month.

The defecting CEC members or the Supreme Court majority might have acted differently if hundreds of thousands of protesters were not in the streets by the time of their deliberations.⁵⁹ At the same time, a necessary condition for

56. Democratic Initiatives, "Final Results of the National Exit Poll 2004 for the 2nd Round of the Presidential Election in Ukraine," November 27, 2004, mimeo.

57. On the second round of the presidential elections, see, for instance, CVU, "Report of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine on Observation of Voting and Vote Tabulation on November 21, 2004," <http://www.cvu.org.ua/doc.php?lang?eng&mid?docs&id?828>. On the OSCE monitoring mission's report following the second round of elections, see International Election Observation Mission, "Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions," November 22, 2004, http://www.osce.org/documents/odhr/2004/11/3811_en.pdf. Election monitoring efforts of NGOs to gather evidence of falsification were facilitated by the multiparty composition of the local election commissions. This method of forming election commissions put Our Ukraine members and supporters in the room in most election districts when counts were taking place. This method of constituting CEC commissions was another attribute of competitive authoritarianism. Full-blown autocracies do not allow opposition parties to participate in vote counting.

58. Roman Knyazevich, Central Election Commission member, interview by author, Kiev, March 2005.

59. *Ibid.*

the court's decision was hard evidence that the results had been falsified in a systematic manner. This evidence came from Our Ukraine election monitors and commission members, CVU monitors, and members of other NGOs. The effort to document violations and then take legal action to prosecute the offenders was much greater in this vote than in previous elections, and proved critical to Our Ukraine's case before the Supreme Court.⁶⁰

INDEPENDENT MEDIA

Independent media were another important ingredient that created momentum for the Orange Revolution. Kuchma's failures as a president could damage the popularity and legitimacy of his regime only if his actions were communicated to the voters. Any media reporting, think tank publication, Our Ukraine press release, or parliamentary hearing that provided objective analysis of the Gongadze affair or exposed corruption played some role in decreasing Kuchma's popularity. Gongadze's murder critically undermined support for the ancien régime and sparked mass mobilization in support of regime change. The initial wave of civic protest in 2001 failed to dislodge Kuchma's regime, but it did help to create the permissive conditions for Our Ukraine's victory in the 2002 parliamentary vote and Yushchenko's rise in popularity. Importantly, *Ukrainska Pravda* and Ukraine's other independent media outlets did not fold or practice self-censorship after Gongadze's death, but continued to investigate and expose Kuchma's alleged crimes, often under threatening circumstances.⁶¹

During the 2004 campaign, Kuchma's regime controlled or enjoyed the loyalty of most national media outlets. By 2004 Ukraine boasted several independent television networks, but all the major channels were owned or controlled by oligarchs loyal to Kuchma and Yanukovich.⁶² Through a system of *temniki*, or secret commands, Kuchma's staff directed the news coverage on these channels, resulting in a massive asymmetry of positive television exposure for Yanukovich compared with Yushchenko.⁶³ Russian television stations ORT, RTR, and NTV, which enjoy considerable audiences in Ukraine, also gave favorable coverage to Yanukovich.

Important independent outlets did remain, however, and others devel-

60. Mikhola Katarynychuk and Yuri Kliuchkovsky, Our Ukraine MPs who argued the Our Ukraine case before the Supreme Court, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

61. Olena Prytula, editor, *Ukrainska Pravda*, interview by author, Kiev, June 2002.

62. Marta Dyczok, "Was Kuchma's Censorship Effective? Mass Media in Ukraine before 2004," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (March 2006), pp. 215–238.

63. For the percentages, see International Renaissance Foundation (IRF), *Promotion of the Fair and Open Election of 2004* (Kiev: IRF, January 2005), pp. 14–19.

oped during the 2004 campaign. In 2003 a wealthy Yushchenko ally, Petro Poroshenko, acquired the rights to a small television station and transformed it into Channel 5. Poroshenko hired a team of professional journalists who aimed to provide media coverage of the entire campaign and not just Yanukovych. Channel 5 did provide positive coverage of the Yushchenko campaign, but with roughly 8 million viewers, the station's audience was much smaller than those of the major channels, and its signal reached only approximately 30 percent of the country.⁶⁴

Regarding radio, Radio Era provided news that was not shaped by the government. External stations such as Radio Liberty, the BBC, and Voice of America were also important channels of independent news for those with the ability to receive shortwave broadcasts—a small fraction of the Ukrainian population.⁶⁵

Important print newspapers such as *Zerkalo Nedeli*, *Ukrayna Moloda*, *Vecherny Visty*, and *Silsky Visty* (controlled by the Socialist Party), as well as internet news outlets such as *Ukrainska Pravda* and *Telekritika*—a web-based forum for discussing television coverage of the campaign—also provided sources of election news that were not controlled by the state or oligarchs tied to the state. But all had limited circulation.⁶⁶ Every region also had at least one opposition newspaper, including such famous examples as *Kafa*, *Hroviyna*, and *Vechirney Cherkassy*. In 2004 the media were skewed in favor of Yanukovych, but independent and pro-Yushchenko outlets did exist.

The impact of Ukraine's independent media outlets on the election results is difficult to measure. Their role in facilitating popular mobilization after the vote was more obvious. Independent media played a critical role in communicating news about the falsified vote and helped mobilize and coordinate popular opposition to the regime after the vote. Channel 5 played the central role, first communicating the results of the exit polls and then reporting the numerous cases of electoral fraud. Channel 5 later provided live, twenty-four-hour coverage of the events in Maidan, broadcasts that helped encourage others to join the protests, especially when viewers saw the peaceful, festive nature of the crowds. By the end of the demonstration, Channel 5 had catapulted from

64. Adrian Karatnycky, "Ukraine's Orange Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 2 (March/April 2005), pp. 35–52.

65. Some FM stations, such as Radio Continent, Radio NART, and Radio Takt in Vinnytsia rebroadcast Radio Liberty, which Liberty officials claimed reached 8 percent of the population. See Olena Prytula, "The Ukrainian Media Rebellion," in Åslund and McFaul, *Revolution in Orange*, pp. 113–115.

66. Internet access in 2004 was limited. Half of internet news readers lived in Kiev. "Media Sustainability Index, 2004" (Washington, D.C.: IREX, 2004), pp. 208–209, 11, http://www.irex.org/program/MSI_EUR/2004/MSI-2004-Ukraine.pdf.

thirteenth place to third place in the national ratings. Its coverage also pressured other channels to stop spewing propaganda.⁶⁷ By the fourth day of protests, staffs at most other stations had defected and joined the street demonstrators. Radio Era, Radio Kiev, and Radio Gala also provided around-the-clock reporting from Maidan.

The Orange Revolution may have been the first in history organized in large measure on the web. During the critical days after the second-round vote, *Ukrainska Pravda* displayed the results of the exit poll most sympathetic to Yushchenko as well as detailed news about allegations of fraud. The website also provided logistical information to protestors. During the second round, *Ukrainska Pravda* grew to 350,000 readers and 1 million hits a day.⁶⁸ Other portals also provided information that helped to make the Orange Revolution. *Maidan.org* was a clearinghouse of information and coordination for protestors. The student group Pora and Our Ukraine also maintained important websites that blasted informational and motivational emails to supporters and observers all over the country and the world. *Telekritika* emerged as a popular site for independent journalists during the campaign, and played an instrumental role in pressuring journalists working at Kuchma-friendly outlets to withdraw their support. As a technology of mobilization and coordination, text messaging was essential for those in Maidan Square who did not have access to the web or email.

POPULAR MOBILIZATION TO "PROTECT THE VOTE"

To put Ukraine back on a path toward democratization, it was insufficient for Yushchenko to win the election, to prove that the results were falsified, and then to communicate this result to a sizable portion of Ukrainian citizens. A final, necessary condition for the Orange Revolution's success was mass mobilization *after* the election to defend the actual voting results. It happened on a scale and for a duration that vastly exceeded the expectations of both the organizers and their foes.

The protest was not spontaneous. Months in advance of the presidential election, Our Ukraine campaign leaders made plans to organize street demonstrations in what they believed was the likely event that the election results would be falsified.⁶⁹ At the last minute, the location of their protest changed and some tactics of mobilization misfired, such as a planned parallel vote

67. Tetyana Lebedeva, head of the board, Independent Association of Broadcasters, interview by author, Kiev, November 2006.

68. Prytula, "The Ukrainian Media Rebellion," p. 110.

69. Taras Stetskiy, MP and Our Ukraine campaign manager; and Gryniv, interviews by author, Kiev, November 2005.

count to be conducted in the tents in Maidan Square. The campaigners did, however, succeed in their central idea of calling on Yushchenko supporters to take to and remain in the streets until the fraudulent vote was overturned. Several components produced success.

First, the regime did not impede the initial mobilization effort. After considering the streets outside the CEC as ground zero of the protest, and because of the police contingent posted around it, Our Ukraine leaders decided instead to make their stand in Maidan Square. The day after the second round of voting, Our Ukraine members of parliament went to Maidan early in the morning to build a stage, and no one tried to stop them (though MPs were assigned this task specifically because they have immunity). The quick appearance of truckloads of tents, mats, and food supplies, which had been secured weeks before, clearly demonstrated the opposition's preplanning.⁷⁰

Second, Our Ukraine leaders coordinated with Yellow Pora activists to set up a tent city downtown. Yellow Pora started with 15 tents in what they called their "territory of freedom," but others spontaneously joined the effort, swelling the number of tents to 2,000, which housed more than 7,000 people from all over Ukraine.⁷¹ This act immediately created a quasi-permanent presence in downtown Kiev. Like the color orange, the tent city and Maidan became major symbols of the revolution.

Third, Yushchenko appeared on television to call upon his supporters to come to Kiev and occupy the square immediately after the falsified second-round results had been released. Strangely, Yushchenko's first postelection speech was covered on all major Ukrainian television stations. Later in the process of mobilization, as already discussed, independent media outlets encouraged demonstrators to come to Kiev and also helped coordinate the massive logistics required to keep a million people fed and warm.

Fourth, Yushchenko credibly committed to sustaining the protest until the election results were reversed or annulled when, on November 23, he took the oath of office for president before 191 MPs in the Rada. At that moment, Ukraine had two groups claiming to be the sovereign power over the same land—a classic definition of a revolutionary situation.⁷² This bold and controversial move meant that there could be no compromise between "Presidents" Yanukovich and Yushchenko—one had to step aside. The move also inspired the demonstrators to rally behind their president.

70. According to Stetskiy, Our Ukraine began purchasing tents and supplies a month before the protest began. See his remarks in York, *The Orange Revolution*.

71. Pora, "Civil Society and the Presidential Elections," *Times of Change*, No. 11 (November 27, 2004).

72. Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), chap. 9.

Fifth, NGOs that focused on get-out-the vote activities during the campaign also played an important role in urging voters to “protect their vote” after election day. The Znayu information campaign devoted particular attention to educating voters about their responsibility to ensure that their vote was accurately counted.⁷³ Other NGOs developed and distributed similar messages during the campaign, helping indirectly to mobilize civic resistance against fraud after official second-round results were announced.

Sixth, regarding the logistics of the Maidan demonstration, Yushchenko and his team benefited tremendously from the support of the Kiev city government and Mayor Oleksandr Omelchenko. While initially reluctant to take sides, the Kiev city government eventually provided logistical support for the provision of food, water, and sanitation. They also opened more than a dozen government buildings for out-of-town protesters to use as warm shelter. Had politicians loyal to Kuchma been in charge of the capital, they could have severely constrained the opposition’s capacity to protest.

Seventh, Ukraine’s civil society and the middle class more broadly helped increase the numbers in Maidan from the several thousand who planned to show up to the million or so who spontaneously joined the protest. Our Ukraine leaders made preparations for tens of thousands to protest a rigged election, but they did not anticipate that their supporters would swell to more than a million people. Providing for such large numbers required the volunteer work and donated supplies of thousands of individuals who previously had no direct relationship with Our Ukraine.

A final feature of the mobilization’s success was nonviolence. Our Ukraine organizers and Pora activists did not prepare for an armed conflict: no guns in Our Ukraine headquarters and no pro-Yushchenko militias waiting in the wings. On the street, where protesters and soldiers stood eye to eye for days, demonstrators used humor and music to defuse tension. At several moments during the seventeen-day standoff, some political and Yellow Pora leaders, including Tymoshenko, wanted to end the crisis by storming the president’s office.⁷⁴ They calculated, not without reason, that the government’s armed forces would not stop them, that Kuchma would flee, and that they could therefore seize power with a minimum amount of violence as the Serbian and Georgian oppositions had done in 2000 and 2003, respectively.

73. Dmytro Potekhin and Pyotr Kosuchev, Znayu leaders, interviews by author, Kiev, March 2005.

74. Vladislav Kaskiv, Yellow Pora leader and one of the advocates for seizing the building, interview by author, Kiev, March 2005; and Lutsenko, an opponent of seizing buildings, interview by author. See also the testimonials of Our Ukraine leaders David Zhvania and Roman Bezsmertny, in York, *The Orange Revolution*.

Yushchenko, however, categorically rejected these tactics, and no one was prepared to act against their leader.

The protesters stayed in place for more than two weeks. They achieved a major victory on December 3, when the Supreme Court ruled that the second-round results were invalid because of systemic fraud, and therefore a rerun must be held on December 26.

External Factors That Weakened (or Failed to Strengthen) Autocratic Power

Most evaluations of democracy assistance focus on those programs and resources that enhance democratic institutions and democratic actors. In cases of democratic transition or breakthrough, however, external actions and resources that constrain autocratic actors can be just as important as aid provided to democratic actors. Democratization is not always an engineering problem, but a political struggle in which the relative power between the forces of democratic change and forces of autocratic continuity determines the outcome. Measuring how external factors influence both sides of the equation is essential to a complete assessment of international influences on domestic regime change.

INTERNATIONAL INPUTS SUSTAINING COMPETITIVE AUTOCRACY

Ukraine never became a full-blown autocracy. Western linkage, coupled with aid to institutions that checked presidential power, helped keep it between dictatorship and democracy, a regime type that proved conducive for the Orange Revolution. The West—Canada (a big player in Ukraine due to the large Ukrainian émigré community there), Europe, and the United States—remained a constant pull on Ukrainian government officials. Kuchma was a ruthless leader who erected a corrupt and criminal regime. But he did not attempt to construct a truly repressive tyranny, because he wanted a cooperative relationship with Europe and the United States. Strikingly, even in the face of harsh criticism, Kuchma sent Ukrainian troops to Iraq, maintained ties to NATO and the European Union, and unlike Slobodan Milošević in Serbia, avoided becoming a pariah in the West.

In contrast to Russian officials during the Putin era, Kuchma and his government continued to believe that Ukraine was a Western country that belonged in Europe. The modalities of membership were tricky: Ukrainian membership into the World Trade Organization was a high and attainable priority in the Kuchma era (though never realized), but Ukraine was too big and too poor to apply for European Union candidacy anytime soon, while a full place in

NATO also presented difficulties because a majority of Ukrainians did not support the idea of joining. The goal of European integration or Western integration more generally, however, remained real and widely supported. Kuchma even turned up for a NATO summit in Prague in November 2002 to which he personally was not invited.

Kuchma's desire to be in the West created points of leverage for U.S. and European diplomats. Rather than isolating Ukraine completely as Kuchma's regime became more autocratic, U.S. and most other European policymakers working on Ukraine advocated a policy of constructive if sometimes critical engagement.⁷⁵ Serious sanctions were discussed but never applied.⁷⁶ After Gongadze's murder, the Bush administration did deny Kuchma a presidential visit to Washington, which the Ukrainian president desperately desired. At the Prague summit attended by Bush and Kuchma, the official language was changed from English to French so that the two presidents, whose countries' names begin with the same letter in English but different letters in French, would not sit next to each other. Kuchma understood the snub. More generally, U.S. ambassadors in Ukraine actively engaged Ukraine's democratic forces, especially after the murder of Gongadze, in a manner that Ukrainian government officials called meddling. Yet direct contact with Kuchma never ended, and active courtship of some of Kuchma's closest confidants, including his billionaire son-in-law, Viktor Pinchuk, continued even during the Orange Revolution. The U.S. strategy was to keep the regime leaders interested in the West, so as to raise the costs of seriously bad behavior during the 2004 presidential vote. U.S. State Department officials stated clearly in 2003 that "the conduct of the presidential campaign and election" was "the primary focus of U.S.-Ukraine relations."⁷⁷

Western assistance and moral support also helped sustain pockets of pluralism within the regime and independent, opposition actors outside of the state. Within the state, the independence of the Rada was especially critical in checking executive power. Technical assistance provided by the Indiana University Parliamentary Development Project helped make this institution more effective. Party development efforts by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) also helped ensure that Kuchma's party did not win an overwhelming majority of seats in the parliament, as oc-

75. Carlos Pascual, U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, 2000–03, interview by author, Kiev, June 2002.

76. Richard Youngs, "Ukraine," in Ted Piccone and Youngs, eds., *Strategies for Democratic Change: Assessing the Global Response* (Washington, D.C.: Democracy Coalition Project, 2006), p. 104.

77. Ambassador John Tefft, U.S. deputy assistant secretary for European and Eurasian affairs, "Ukraine's Election: Next Steps," testimony before the House International Relations Committee, 108th Cong., 2d sess., December 7, 2004, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/39542.htm>.

curred in the Russian Duma during the Putin era. IRI and NDI worked with several parties that won representation in the Rada, and in turn helped maintain this institution's independence from the president. State Department officials also went out of their way to court the Rada speaker during the crisis. As Ambassador John Tefft testified, "We welcomed Rada Speaker [Volodymyr] Lytvyn to Washington five days before the run-off to underscore our support for a legislative body committed to ensuring an outcome that reflected the will of the people."⁷⁸

Russian leaders and organizations, to varying extents, played the opposite role and encouraged autocratic methods as an effective strategy for holding on to power. Years before the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election, Putin embraced Kuchma without criticizing his antidemocratic ways. Through the provision of subsidized gas, Russia offered direct financial support to Ukraine's government. Putin's own system of growing autocratic rule provided a model for Kuchma to emulate. Obviously, Russian ideological and financial assistance was not sufficient to build a stable authoritarian regime in Ukraine, yet it is equally true that the Ukrainian regime would have looked less authoritarian and perhaps would have been even less tempted to steal the 2004 presidential election without Russian support. Ukraine's geographical proximity and significant Russian-speaking population facilitated the flow of ideas about the Russian model as an alternative to the Western model of democracy.

After the second round, Putin tried to strengthen Ukraine's "managed democracy" by quickly acknowledging Yanukovich as the winner in the presidential vote, even before the official results were released. Throughout the Orange Revolution, Putin stood firmly on the side of Yanukovich and against reconciliation, flatly denouncing the idea of rerunning the elections.⁷⁹

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE REGIME'S (UN)POPULARITY

Kuchma's own actions, monitored by independent media, drove his government's decline in popularity. Indirectly and marginally, Western reactions to Kuchma's behavior helped magnify his image as an illegitimate and criminal leader. Most important, U.S. and European leaders strongly denounced the manner in which Kuchma handled the investigation into the murder of Georgy Gongadze.⁸⁰ When Oleksandr Moroz released tapes implicating

78. *Ibid.*

79. Daniel Williams, "Putin Opposes Rerun in Ukraine: Kuchma Gets Support in Election Crisis," *Washington Post*, December 3, 2004.

80. See U.S. Ambassador Stephen Pifer, U.S. deputy assistant secretary for European and Eurasian affairs, testimony before the House International Relations Committee, 108th Cong., 2d sess., May 12, 2004, p. 3.

Kuchma in the murder, the U.S. government granted the producer of these tapes, Yuri Melnichenko, asylum. Miroslava Gongadze, Gongadze's widow, and his two children also received asylum. Miroslava Gongadze eventually took a job working for the Ukrainian division of Voice of America, a U.S. government-funded radio and television network. After the murder, as discussed earlier, the Bush administration never invited Kuchma to the United States and tried hard to marginalize him at international gatherings. The Bush administration further downgraded contacts with the Kuchma regime after it became known that the Ukrainian government had tried to sell its Kolchuga air defense radar system to Iraq.⁸¹ Kuchma did receive some praise from the White House for his decision to send Ukrainian troops to Iraq. The general message coming out of Washington and the U.S. embassy in Kiev, however, was that Kuchma and his regime were not held in high regard.

Ukraine's independent media, parliament, and political opposition also noted the West's negative reaction to Kuchma. Media reporting, think tank publications, Our Ukraine press releases, and parliamentary hearings that provided an objective analysis of the Gongadze affair or corruption played some role in decreasing popular support for the Kuchma regime. Many of these critical sources received Western technical assistance or financial support, including *Ukrainska Pravda*, the Razumkov Centre, and the Rada. Freedom House provided direct assistance to Znayu and indirect assistance to Yellow Pora and the Freedom of Choice coalition by sponsoring and helping to organize a summer camp for Yellow Pora activists and activists from other organizations. Another organization that received a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation, funded and organized the major portion of the Znayu campaign. Indirectly, these efforts all contributed to more critical coverage of the Kuchma regime and a decline in its popularity.

In addition, independent analysis and reporting from these sources helped inform U.S. and European government officials and analysts, who in turn influenced their own governments' perception of Kuchma.⁸² For instance, *Ukrainska Pravda* would publish an article about corruption, which would be read by an analyst at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington or a researcher at the German Marshall Fund (GMF) in Brussels. In turn, he or she might speak out on television, in the op-ed pages, or in

81. Michael Wines, "Report of Arms Sale by Ukraine to Iraq Causes Consternation," *New York Times*, November 7, 2002.

82. This is the "boomerang" effect discussed in Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998).

briefings to government officials about corruption in Ukraine, and thereby influence how the Bush administration or the European Union acted on Ukraine. Such information flows also influenced Ukraine's Freedom House scores, which in turn helped shape Western assessments of the Kuchma regime. Ukrainian publications that had the resources to translate a portion of their work into English, including *Zerkalo Nedelya*, *Ukrainska Pravda*, and the Razumkov Centre's journal, *National Security and Defence*, were especially effective in reinforcing the determination of Western nongovernmental campaigns to expose Kuchma's illegitimacy. During the final weeks of the campaign and during the Orange Revolution, emails sent and websites operated by the CVU, Pora, Our Ukraine, Internews-Ukraine, and several others also helped inform the outside world about the machinations of Kuchma and Yanukovych, influencing the way foreign governments reacted to the falsified results of the second round of voting.

The Kremlin did not invest major resources in trying to improve Kuchma's international image, but Russian officials coordinated and sponsored various activities aimed at helping Yanukovych win the election. At the urging of the Kremlin, Russian businesspeople contributed to Yanukovych's campaign.⁸³ Some reports claimed that Russian sources provided \$300 million to his campaign, with the lion's share coming from Gazprom.⁸⁴ Several Russian public relations consultants, including some closely tied to the Kremlin, worked directly for the Yanukovych campaign, while others participated in projects in Ukraine designed to bolster indirectly the Yanukovych efforts.⁸⁵ For instance, in 2004 Russian public relations professionals created the "Russian House" in Kiev, which organized public events to emphasize Russia's pivotal role for Ukraine's economy and security. To help Yanukovych, Putin personally traveled twice to Ukraine in the fall of 2004. A Russian-sponsored election-monitoring group observed the Ukrainian vote and declared the first and second rounds free and fair.

The Ukrainian prime minister and his financial backers also hired U.S. law firms and public relations specialists to help with the campaign, including Barbour, Rogers, and Griffith and DBC Public Relations Experts. These Western public relations efforts included the fielding of an electoral monitoring group consisting of former members of the U.S. Congress. The impact was

83. Sergei Markov, interview by author, Moscow, September 2005.

84. These numbers are reported in Jackson Diehl, "Putin's Unchallenged Imperialism," *Washington Post*, October 25, 2004.

85. Russian public relations experts who worked for Yanukovych included Marat Gelman, Sergei Markov, Vyacheslav Nikonov, and Gleb Pavlovsky.

marginal, but the effort was real. Resources aimed at bolstering Yanukovich's campaign came not only from Moscow but also from Washington.

EXTERNAL FACILITATORS OF DIVISIONS WITHIN THE SECURITY SERVICES

Identifying a direct Western impact on division within the security forces is difficult. Some observers have claimed that soldiers who participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace programs were more likely to support the demonstrators than those who did not.⁸⁶ To date, however, the evidence marshaled to support this claim is far from convincing.

Western actors did contribute indirectly to keeping the peace during the standoff between armed forces and the Orange demonstrators. Well before the election, U.S. diplomats explicitly warned officials in Kuchma's government that they would become pariahs if the vote was not free and fair. Ambassador John Herbst called upon visiting U.S. dignitaries, such as Madeleine Albright, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Richard Holbrooke, Henry Kissinger, and Thomas Pickering to communicate threatening messages about the negative consequences of bad behavior should the election process become tainted.⁸⁷ As a signal of its seriousness, the U.S. government denied a visa to Ukrainian oligarch Hryhoriy Surkis to warn Kuchma and his family (including Kuchma's billionaire son-in-law, Viktor Pinchuk) that they too could face a similar fate of *persona non grata* status in the West. In the end, these threats did not prevent Kuchma and his team from trying to steal the vote. Yet the threats and warnings against violently breaking up the peaceful demonstration did continue throughout the standoff, including a late-night phone call from U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell to Kuchma (which Kuchma refused to take) on the night when security forces were getting ready to try to clear the square. The U.S. embassy learned of these troop movements from an anti-Kuchma source within the Ukrainian security service.⁸⁸ Throughout the crisis, Pinchuk was a consistent and accessible channel of communication for U.S. government officials who wanted to get a message to Kuchma. Polish President Aleksandr Kwasniewski, who was working with a European Union delegation to help mediate the crisis, also used his contacts with the regime to discourage the use of force on this critical evening. Measuring the impact of these efforts, how-

86. See comments of Maj. Gen. Nicholas Krawciw at a panel discussion titled "Ukraine's Armed Forces: On the Way to Join NATO?" at the American Enterprise Institute event "Ukraine's Choice: Europe of Russia?" held in Washington, D.C., on December 10, 2004.

87. U.S. Ambassador John E. Herbst, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005. See also Celeste A. Wallander, *Ukraine's Election: The Role of One International NGO* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2005).

88. Herbst, interview by author.

ever, is difficult. Several participants in the standoff did report that the U.S. interventions were useful in providing moral support on a very tense and critical day.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the number of protesters on the streets was the decisive deterrent to violence, not a phone call from Washington.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Kremlin supported Yanukovich's desire to use force to clear the streets. Some press accounts even claim that Russia sent its own special forces to Kiev to assist in the protection of the presidential administration building, which at one point was under threat of forceful takeover by Orange leaders.⁹⁰ Press reports also claim that Putin ordered his special forces unit, Vypel, to Kiev to evacuate Kuchma and his family, as well as remove secret documents, if the moment to flee arose.⁹¹ Definitive evidence of Russian military involvement never materialized, and statements made subsequently by Orange Revolution leaders implied that the Russian military threat was greatly exaggerated.⁹² Moscow's ability to influence the internal cohesion and actions of Ukrainian armed forces was just as limited as the West's.

External Factors That Strengthened Democratic Power

Ukrainians made the Orange Revolution. Ukrainians provided the leadership, ideas, organizational capacity, and financial resources to prevail against the Kuchma regime in the fall of 2004 and overturn a falsified election. In the margins, however, intellectual and financial imports from the West helped to strengthen Ukraine's democratic opposition and offset resources transferred from Russia in an effort to weaken the challengers to the Kuchma regime.

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO A UNITED AND EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION

Assessing the role of external actors on the formation of a united and effective opposition in Ukraine (or anywhere else) is a challenging task because of the nature and sensitivity of the work. The nature of the work is difficult to evaluate because the process of making an impact occurs indirectly over extended periods of time and in parallel with local inputs. The transfer that takes place between groups such as the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute, on the one hand, and Our Ukraine on the other, is essentially one of ideas and know-how, the most difficult variables to trace systematically.⁹³ Assessing this work is sensitive because Ukrainian actors do

89. Tymoshenko and Lutsenko, interviews by author.

90. United Press International, "Russian Troops in Ukraine Capital," November 24, 2004.

91. Nikolai Petrov and Andrei Ryabov, "Russia's Role in the Orange Revolution," in Åslund and McFaul, *Revolution in Orange*, p. 151.

92. *Ibid.*

93. Because tracing causality in this sector is so difficult, few have tried. Serious attempts include

not want to taint their reputations or legitimacy by reporting that Western actors contributed to their domestic success, whereas Western actors seek to protect their partners and also maintain a claim of acting as nonpartisans. Despite these constraints on analysis, observations about the role of external actors on the development of Ukraine's opposition coalition can still be made.

There is no evidence that the United States or any European government contributed financial resources directly to the campaign of Viktor Yushchenko and Our Ukraine.⁹⁴ Our Ukraine did receive financial contributions from citizens living in the United States and Canada, though the greatest source of foreign funding for the Yushchenko campaign came from Russia.⁹⁵ The Yushchenko campaign also hired U.S. and Russian campaign consultants.⁹⁶ But foreign governments or NGOs did not pay for these professional services.⁹⁷ Ukrainians did.

As discussed above, the Our Ukraine campaign had greater organizational reach than any other party in Ukraine. Our Ukraine leaders accomplished this feat primarily on their own through years of hard work. At the same time, they reported that the development of their organizational capacity benefited from years of close relationships with IRI and NDI.⁹⁸ Well before the formation of the Our Ukraine bloc in 2002, IRI and NDI worked closely with many of the individuals who later assumed senior positions in the Our Ukraine organization and campaign. After the creation of the party, IRI and NDI provided additional training assistance, though using different strategies. IRI conducted multiparty training programs focused almost exclusively on regional party leaders outside Kiev, while NDI provided trainers to programs organized by Our Ukraine, a service it provided to other parties as well.⁹⁹ NDI staff also fo-

Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*; and Sarah E. Mendelson, "Democracy Assistance and Political Transition in Russia: Between Success and Failure," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Spring 2001), pp. 68–106.

94. Kathryn Stevens, director, Office of Democracy and Governance USAID Ukraine; Chris Holzen, resident director, Ukraine, International Republican Institute; David Dettman, resident director, Ukraine, National Democratic Institute; and Stetskiv—all interviews by author, Kiev, November 2005.

95. Anonymous board member of a major Russian corporation who gave funds to the Yushchenko campaign, interview by author, Moscow, June 2005.

96. The U.S. firm Aristotle International provided some marginal campaign advice to Our Ukraine. The Russian firm Image Kontakt, headed by Aleksei Sitnikov, also worked for Yushchenko. Sitnikov and Dettman, interviews by author.

97. The head of NDI's office in Kiev, David Dettman, used to work for Aristotle International and most certainly facilitated the initial contacts between Our Ukraine and that firm. Interestingly, in the 2006 parliamentary election, this company worked for Kuchma's former chief of staff, Viktor Medvedchuk. Likewise, Yanukovych and his Party of Regions dumped the Russian consultants for the 2006 contest and hired one of the Washington's most prominent Republican firms, Davis Manafort, which had previously worked for Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. See Jeremy Page, "Revolution Is Reversed with a Little Spin from the West," *Times* (London), March 28, 2006.

98. Stetskiv and Katarynychuk, interviews by author.

99. Dettman and Holzen, interviews by author.

cused more of their efforts on working with Our Ukraine's senior leadership in Kiev. Measuring systematically the results of these interactions, be it NDI's engagement with senior party officials or IRI's regional training efforts, is beyond the scope of this study.¹⁰⁰ That there were purposive efforts by both IRI and NDI to strengthen Our Ukraine's campaign abilities is without question.

Indirectly, both IRI and NDI also helped to increase the respectability of Yushchenko in Washington. IRI organized a trip to Washington for Yushchenko and his senior staff in February 2003, at which time the Ukrainian presidential candidate met with key Bush administration officials and members of Congress. Significantly, he met Senator Richard Lugar, who would eventually play a key role in helping to impede U.S. endorsement of the second-round result of the 2004 vote.¹⁰¹ Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, chair of NDI's board, traveled to Ukraine in February 2004 to meet with Yushchenko and other Our Ukraine officials. Upon returning to Washington, she also spoke favorably of Yushchenko's candidacy. These kinds of contacts helped assure the Bush administration that the Ukrainian opposition was viable and worth supporting. Our Ukraine ties with other European parties also bolstered Yushchenko's image in the West. More generally, elite networks between Our Ukraine leaders and Western leaders nurtured Our Ukraine allies in the West when debates erupted in Washington and European capitals about how to respond to the Orange protesters.¹⁰²

Turnout in regions supportive of Yushchenko were much higher in the 2004 election than in previous elections. Several U.S. and European organizations, including IRI, NDI, the International Renaissance Foundation (IRF, the Ukrainian affiliate of the Soros Foundation), Freedom House, Internews-Ukraine, and the Eurasia Foundation contributed direct financial assistance to the get-out-the-vote projects organized by their Ukrainian partners.¹⁰³

For years before the 2004 vote, Russian state authorities tried to weaken and divide the Ukrainian opposition. In August 2001 Russian prosecutors charged

100. To measure the impact of these programs on party development would require surveying recipients of this technical assistance and then comparing the results to the ideational and organizational development of parties not exposed to this kind of aid. Such data do not exist.

101. Lorne Craner, president, International Republican Institute; and Steve Nix, director, FSU Programs, International Republican Institute, interviews by author, Washington, D.C., October 2005.

102. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Adrian Karatnycky, William Miller (former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine), and Lech Walesa are examples of private citizens with close ties to Our Ukraine who played active roles in shaping Western debates regarding the Orange Revolution.

103. Eric Boyle, regional director, Kiev regional office, Eurasia Foundation; Yevhen Bystrytsky, executive director, International Renaissance Foundation; Juhani Grossman, senior program officer, Civic Participation in Elections in Ukraine, Freedom House; Petro Koshukov, co-director of Znyayu project; and Inna Pidluska, president, Europa XXI Foundation—interviews by author, Kiev, November 2005.

Yuliya Tymoshenko with “complicity in bribe-giving.”¹⁰⁴ In 2004 Russian media outlets with reach inside Ukraine described Our Ukraine as having fascists within its coalition. These same sources also cast Yushchenko as a U.S. puppet, controlled by his wife, an American and former Department of Defense official.

EXTERNAL FACILITATORS TO EXPOSING FRAUD

Many of the Ukrainian activities that contributed to the exposure of campaign fraud had significant assistance from external actors. In fact, the West’s central contribution to the Orange Revolution was in the form of long-term support of voters’ rights groups, think tanks, youth groups, and other civil activist organizations and media organizations that would be instrumental in monitoring, polling, conducting PVTs and exit polls, and disseminating information about voters’ rights and violations of those rights.

Even with the mixed results of the PVTs, the Committee of Ukrainian Voters still played a leading role in exposing fraud (and creating the perception of fraud) during the second round of the presidential vote, first through its network of 10,000 monitors (the number cited in CVU press releases), second through the CVU-initiated legal actions that helped challenge the legitimacy of the official results, and third through the evidence of falsification gathered by CVU officials and then used by the Our Ukraine lawyers before the Supreme Court. Based on its experiences first in the Philippines and later in other countries in postcommunist Europe, NDI provided the original idea for a Ukrainian election monitoring organization and also substantial technical and financial assistance to CVU.¹⁰⁵ In 2004 other Western donors, including most importantly the IRF, also contributed major financial resources to CVU.¹⁰⁶ The PVT technology used by CVU was also imported from the United States.¹⁰⁷

CVU was the largest and most visible NGO effort supported by Western funds dedicated to exposing fraud, but not the only effort. At the end of its voter education and voter mobilization campaigns, the Znayu campaign, supported financially by the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation and Freedom House, also turned to exposing fraud, including one leafleting campaign that threatened Central Election Commission officials about the legal consequences of commit-

104. Jan Maksymiuk, “Yuliya Tymoshenko Now Faces Criminal Charges from Russia,” *Ukrainian Weekly*, Vol. 69, No. 36 (September 9, 2001).

105. On this technology, see Eric C. Bjornlund, *Beyond Free and Fair: Monitoring Elections and Building Democracy* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

106. The figures are listed in IRF, *Promotion of the Fair and Open Election of 2004*.

107. Popov and Poberezhny, interviews by author. On this method for exposing fraud, see Larry Garber and Glenn Cowan, “The Virtues of Parallel Vote Tabulations,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (April 1993), pp. 95–107.

ting electoral fraud.¹⁰⁸ Yellow Pora, Black Pora, Chysta Ukraina, and hundreds of smaller NGOs also used various tactics to expose fraud. Using its small grants program, Freedom House funded many of the NGO activities at the regional level through its Citizen Participation in Elections in Ukraine program.¹⁰⁹ Our Ukraine also worked hard to expose fraud, first by training its party representatives serving on CEC commissions on the rules for vote counting and mechanisms for recording irregularities, and second by organizing a parallel network of election monitors. NDI played a major role in training Our Ukraine monitors.¹¹⁰

The Democratic Initiatives Foundation's exit poll, which also played a critical role in undermining the legitimacy of the second-round official results, was also an imported technology. Its use in Ukraine was funded almost entirely by Western donors, including the IRF, Eurasia Foundation, Counterpart, and several Western embassies.¹¹¹ IRF even financed the participation of Russian and Polish polling experts in the exit poll project.¹¹²

In addition to Ukrainian poll watchers, the OSCE, IRI, NDI, and the U.S.-Ukrainian Foundation deployed international monitoring teams to observe the Ukrainian election. Most innovatively, NDI and Freedom House cooperated to bring to Ukraine the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), which comprised 1,000 observers from seventeen electoral monitoring organizations in formerly communist countries. ENEMO brought trained electoral monitors, experienced in exposing postcommunist vote rigging (many observers also spoke Russian) and at a fraction of the cost that it would have taken to bring in Americans or Western Europeans. All of these international teams released critical reports about the election process, which were instrumental in generating unified U.S. and European condemnation of the voting procedures.¹¹³

Another successful innovation in the Ukrainian observation efforts was the presence of a special envoy, Senator Richard Lugar, who visited Ukraine during the second round of voting as a personal representative of President Bush. An experienced foreign affairs specialist and the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Lugar had the authority to make his judgments mean-

108. Koshukov and Potekhin, interviews by author.

109. Grossman and several Ukrainian recipients of these funds, interviews by author.

110. Vadim Galaychuk, general director, Moor and Krosondovich, and coordinator for Our Ukraine Election Monitoring Program, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

111. See Democratic Initiatives Foundation, <http://www.ukma.kiev.ua/pub/DI/>.

112. IRF, *Promotion of the Fair and Open Election of 2004*.

113. "Declaration by the Presidency of the European Union on Ukraine," November 22, 2004, <http://www.um.dk/en/servicemenu/News/NewsArchives2004/DeclarationByThePresidencyOfTheEuropeanUnionOnUkraine.htm>.

ingful in Washington and European capitals. His press statement on the vote was scathing: “[I]t is now apparent that a concerted and forceful program of election-day fraud and abuse was enacted with either the leadership or cooperation of governmental authorities.”¹¹⁴ Lugar’s statement in turn bolstered the negative evaluation and tone of Secretary of State Powell’s first remarks on the vote, which were much more damning than initial reactions from the White House. Powell unequivocally declared the official result illegitimate, “because it does not meet international standards and because there has not been an investigation of the numerous and credible reports of fraud and abuse.” He went on to warn that “[i]f the Ukrainian government does not act immediately and responsibly, there will be consequences for our relationship, for Ukraine’s hopes for a Euro-Atlantic integration, and for individuals responsible for perpetrating fraud.”¹¹⁵ Our Ukraine leaders and NGO activists reported that Powell’s remarks provided a major boost of inspiration for their supporters.¹¹⁶ His statement also raised doubt within President Kuchma’s entourage about its ability to make the “official” results stick.

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDEPENDENT MEDIA

During the 2004 presidential campaign, Internews-Ukraine subsidized and supported a whole series of activities, including the production of public service announcements, television talk shows, press conferences around the country, and funds to support local coverage of the national campaign and voters’ rights in the print media.¹¹⁷ These activities occurred only at the margins because pro-Kuchma forces still dominated the national electronic media. The survey data needed to measure the causal impact of these externally supported activities do not exist.

During the Orange Revolution, several journalists—including Andrei Shevchenko and Roman Skrypin, both at Channel 5, as well as Natalia Dmytruk, the official sign-language interpreter for state-run television—assumed heroic roles in their coverage of the campaign and the civic resistance triggered by the electoral fraud.¹¹⁸ At various stages in their careers, many of these people had contact with Western donor programs, most notably USAID-

114. “Remarks by United States Senator Richard Lugar on the Ukrainian Presidential Elections,” Kiev, November 22, 2004, http://kiev.usembassy.gov/files/041122_lugar-qa_eng.html.

115. Quoted in William Branigin, “U.S. Rejects Tally, Warns Ukraine,” *Washington Post*, November 25, 2004.

116. Lutsenko, Tymoshenko, and Pora student leaders, interviews by author.

117. Sue Folger, Ukrainian director, Internews-Ukraine, interview by author, Kiev, November 2005.

118. When translating the spoken broadcast into sign language, Dmytruk told her viewers that the announcer was not telling the truth.

funded media projects.¹¹⁹ *Ukrainska Pravda*, which played a central role in the Orange Revolution, received major support from the National Endowment for Democracy.¹²⁰ Telekritika, an internet publication sponsored by Internews-Ukraine, was a useful source of information and debate during the 2004 campaign and its immediate aftermath. Discussions on Telekritika were especially instrumental in spurring the “journalists’ rebellion” on October 28, 2004, when forty journalists from five different television stations declared that they would no longer obey the Kuchma regime’s secret instructions (*temniki*). *Maidan.org*—another media outlet critical for the coordination of “revolutionary” activities—received major financial assistance from Western donors.¹²¹

EXTERNAL INPUTS INTO MASS MOBILIZATION

Several weeks in advance, Our Ukraine planned the first actions of civic resistance after the second round of voting. There is no evidence that it received any Western intellectual or financial assistance in making these preparations. Nor did U.S. or European government sources support its two-week operation in Maidan Square. The assertion that demonstrators were paid a daily wage for their efforts is a complete myth.

Less directly, external sources played a role in facilitating mass mobilization. A model for “electoral revolution” already existed and had succeeded in two postcommunist countries within the previous three years—Serbia in 2000 and Georgia in 2003. Serbian and Georgian activists from Otpor and Kmara helped reinforce these demonstration effects through direct interaction with their Ukrainian counterparts.¹²² In particular, Yellow Pora leaders had significant contacts with civic resistance activists from Slovakia, Serbia, and Georgia, through the facilitating efforts of Freedom House and the German Marshall Fund. For instance, Freedom House organized and funded a summer camp for Ukrainian youth activists and invited trainers from the Serbian youth movement, Otpor, to attend. Pavol Demeš, a leader of the OK 98 movement in Slovakia, traveled to Ukraine several times in the months leading up to the Orange Revolution to train and provide support for Yellow Pora. Znaytu also

119. Andrei Shevchenko, Channel 5, and Kateryna Myasnykova, executive director, Independent Association of Broadcasters, interviews by author, Kiev, November 2005; and Natalya Ligachova, project director and chairman of the board, Telekritika, interview by author, Kiev, February 2006.

120. Nadia Diuk, senior program officer, National Endowment for Democracy, interview by author, Washington, D.C., October 2005; and Olena Prytula, editor, *Ukrainska Pravda*, interview by author, Kiev, March 2005.

121. Remarks by Andriy Ihnatov, board member, Maidan Inform, at a workshop on the Orange Revolution, International Renaissance Foundation, Kiev, March 18, 2005.

122. Andriy Kohut, board member, Black Pora, interview by author, Kiev, March 2005.

used trainers from Serbia and Georgia.¹²³ It is difficult to trace exactly what knowledge about nonviolent resistance was transferred in these interactions, but it is without question that Ukrainian activists received inspiration from successful civic organizers from other countries.¹²⁴ Moreover, nearly all of these civic mobilization training programs received at least partial funding from Western sources, including the IRF, Freedom House, the U.S-Ukrainian Foundation, GMF, NDI, the Westminster Foundation, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, as well as grants from Western embassies in Kiev.¹²⁵ Black Pora and Yellow Pora received direct financial assistance from several Western sources, including the Westminster Foundation, GMF, and several Western embassies. USAID and its implementers, however, never provided any direct assistance to these youth groups, as they were considered too radical and partisan.¹²⁶

Western condemnation of the falsified election also inspired the demonstrators. When Secretary of State Powell's words of condemnation were read in Maidan Square, the crowd applauded enthusiastically. Former Solidarity leader Lech Walesa addressed the demonstrators in Maidan, assuring them that the West was on their side. Similarly, several Western ambassadors met with Our Ukraine leaders during this period to express support and empathy. The impact of these acts of solidarity is difficult to quantify, but many leaders of the Orange Revolution subsequently testified that Western support for their protest played a significant role in keeping people in the streets.¹²⁷

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CRISIS MEDIATION

In parallel with these activities was a mediation effort between Kuchma, Yanukovych, and Yushchenko that was facilitated by Presidents Aleksandr Kwasniewski of Poland, Valdas Adamkus of Lithuania, and Javier Solana of the European Union. Kwasniewski was especially influential in pressing for not only a negotiated but the correct solution—that is, a reversal of the falsified vote—to the crisis; Solana followed his lead. The Bush administration deliber-

123. Potekhin, interview by author.

124. Potekhin and Kosuchev from Znayu, and Kaskiv and Yevgen Zolotarev from Yellow Pora, all participants in these transnational meetings, interviews by author.

125. Altogether, in the year before the 2004 vote, the International Renaissance Foundation, the local Ukrainian arm of the Soros Foundation, contributed \$1,653,222 to nongovernmental organizations implementing election-related projects. See IRF, *Promotion of the Fair and Open Election of 2004*, p. 1. Yellow Pora received several IRF grants.

126. USAID officials and Pora members, interviews by author, Kiev, March and November 2005.

127. Tymoshenko, Lutsenko, Gryniv, Galaychuk, Stetskiiv, Katarynchuk, and Yellow and Black Pora activists, interviews by author.

ately did not seek a public role in the negotiations, but stayed closely involved behind the scenes through contacts with Kwasniewski, Adamkus, and Solana. This international effort helped diffuse tensions between polarized enemies. Western mediators also helped persuade Yushchenko to accept constitutional changes that would weaken the power of the president and strengthen the power of the parliament, a compromise that certainly made it easier for Kuchma and Yanukovych to agree to a third round of elections. Whether the roundtable negotiations were *necessary* for the breakthrough, however, is disputable. Critics of the negotiations, including Tymoshenko, have argued that the Western-anchored mediation efforts were not central to the outcome and actually tied the opposition's hands after the breakthrough.¹²⁸ Ironically, after the 2006 parliamentary elections, Yanukovych became prime minister again, this time with more enhanced powers as a result of the Orange Revolution.

Conclusion

The Orange Revolution resulted from miscalculations by the ancien régime. President Kuchma had successfully manipulated the vote to retain power in 1999. He and his aides believed they could do the same for Yanukovych in 2004. They underestimated the opposition's ability to win the election, expose fraud, and mobilize citizens to protect their votes through mass demonstrations. They overestimated their ability to withstand or stop the protests. The Orange Revolution was a contentious struggle for power between a semi-autocratic regime and a democratic opposition, in which the opposition had enough power—the necessary strategies, resources, and popular support—to prevail. Between 2001 (the last time these two sides had clashed) and 2004, the balance of power between autocratic incumbents and democratic challengers had shifted in favor of the latter.

The set of necessary conditions needed to produce this favorable balance of power was large and complex. The presence of only a few of these factors would not have generated the same outcome. A more popular or more ruthless autocrat might have been able to outmaneuver the democratic opposition. A less organized electoral monitoring effort might not have been able to convince people to take to the streets. Thousands on the streets, instead of tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands, might have tempted the regime to use force, and they might have succeeded. A myriad of factors must be in play to produce dramatic events such as the Orange Revolution.

128. Tymoshenko, interview by author.

Of this long list of factors, external actors played a role in influencing only a few. Given the extremely precarious distribution of power, however, these *imported* inputs from the West were consequential in tipping the balance in favor of the democratic challengers.

Regarding policies, actions, and programs aimed at weakening the semi-autocratic regime, the Ukrainian experience suggests that it is hard for outsiders to foster splits within such régimes and also difficult for them to directly influence its popularity. The West played no measurable role in facilitating splits within the security forces. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Western criticism of Kuchma contributed to his declining popularity at home, but no hard data exist to isolate the independent causal role of foreign rebuke. More generally, however, the West did seem to play a role in impeding the full-scale consolidation of autocracy. Western resources helped strengthen institutions such as the Rada, which checked presidential power. Western long-term aid to civil society also helped keep semi-autocracy in Ukraine from becoming a full autocracy. Russia provided technical assistance and resources for constructing a stronger autocracy, but these resources were insufficient. It also remains unclear if Kuchma actually wanted to develop a full-blown autocracy. In the margins, Western engagement of Kuchma, his aides, and his family members raised the costs of completely turning away from democracy.

Regarding policies, actions, and programs targeted at strengthening the opposition, the Ukrainian experience suggests that it is difficult to influence the effectiveness of opposition candidates in elections. In the margins, external actors can encourage unity among the democratic opposition, but the real drivers of unity will always be local actors. Western imports were crucial in exposing electoral fraud. The ideas and technology for uncovering fraud—exit polls, parallel vote tabulation, and poll monitors—were imported from the United States. Funding for these activities came largely from Western sources, and the presence of international monitors provided moral support for local monitors. External actors also contributed to the development of independent media in Ukraine. One of the most effective media outlets, *Ukrainska Pravda*, relied almost exclusively on external financial support. Finally, imported ideas and resources strengthened electoral mobilization, both before and after the vote. If financial assistance for these mobilization activities came from U.S. and West European sources, intellectual and inspirational input came from Serbs, Georgians, and Slovaks. Tracing the intellectual origins of nonviolent civic resistance ideas goes back even farther. Indian and U.S. ideational inputs—that is, the ideas and practices of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King—are also present in the making of the Orange Revolution.

This article has focused specifically on the precipitants of the Orange

Revolution and the external factors that influenced them, and not the longer-term structural factors that produced the precipitants. Pushing the causal arrow back and assessing, for instance, how external dimensions influenced the development of the middle class, economic growth, or civil society is a necessary next step in constructing a complete explanation of the domestic and international causes of the Orange Revolution.

This article also has offered a new method for the study of democracy promotion, starting first with a theory of democratization based on domestic variables and then zooming out to see how these were influenced by international factors. This article has deliberately recorded nonfindings; some significant domestic factors for producing the Orange Revolution had no external influence, even when it is possible to identify external actions designed to influence these domestic factors. This single case study cannot generate a new or complete theory for external dimensions of regime change. More modestly, this article provides a research strategy for how to isolate the causal mechanisms connecting the international to the domestic regarding democratization, with the expectation that future case studies structured in similar ways might eventually contribute to theory development in this undertheorized field.

Important policy lessons for those interested in democracy promotion can also be learned from this case. First, domestic actors drive the drama of democratic change. Attempts to manufacture democracy without strong, local partners are likely to fail. Second, state-to-state constructive engagement with a semi-autocratic regime can create the space for democratic assistance to societal actors. Think of the counterfactual. If Ukraine had no diplomatic relations with the United States in 2004, the regime would have been less constrained in cracking down on opposition activities and more likely to limit, if not cut off entirely, Western democracy assistance efforts. Freedom House, IRI, and NDI do not have offices in Tehran today. Third, technologies and financial support used to expose fraud were the most effective imports for the Orange Revolution. And international norms helped. The right to a free and fair election is now an internationally recognized norm embedded in international organizations such as the OSCE. Access to aid and technology that facilitate this right, therefore, is harder to limit than other forms of democracy assistance such as training for political parties or direct aid to opposition movements. Western statements condemning electoral fraud also played a direct role in mobilizing protest. Fourth, aid to independent media—a frequently underfunded element of democracy promotion programs—played a direct and consequential role in exposing fraud and mobilizing citizens to protect their vote. Finally, in the margins, external actors provided ideas about how to build an effective political opposition and how to mobilize protest after the vote.

It is also important to identify international inputs that did not play a constructive role in promoting democratic breakthrough in Ukraine. Technical assistance to the regime—that is, aid to try to make the Kuchma government reform—did not work. Programs that try to reform institutions from the ancien régime should be avoided and implemented only after breakthrough. The pull of the European Union and NATO—a major factor in democratic *consolidation* in other postcommunist countries in Europe—played only an abstract, minor role in this case of *breakthrough*. Finally, several factors had to come together to produce the Orange Revolution. The stars must really be aligned. In countries where all of these factors are not present, breakthrough is unlikely, and foreign assistance to try to foster breakthrough might even be counterproductive.