

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA  
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**Cyber Activism: The Information Revolution, Political Actors and the  
Potential for Regime Transition**

A THESIS  
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WITH EMPHASIS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

By  
Emily Stacey  
Edmond, Oklahoma

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**Cyber Activism: The Information Revolution, Political Actors and the  
Potential for Regime Transition**

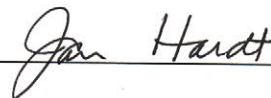
A THESIS

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

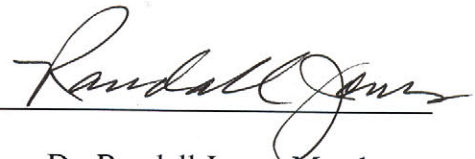
December 1, 2010

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Loren Gatch", written above a horizontal line.

Dr. Loren Gatch, Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jan Hardt", written above a horizontal line.

Dr. Jan Hardt, Member

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Randall Jones", written above a horizontal line.

Dr. Randall Jones, Member

This thesis addresses the role of information communication technologies and the internet in explaining modern revolutions. While previous scholarship has analyzed the significance of social movements and the potential of citizen actors to cause regime change, it has yet to systematically examine the importance of these new technologies for communicating ideology and coordinating protest. By examining four instances of modern political mobilizations (1980 – present), this thesis attempts to elucidate the conditions under which modern communications technologies play a significant role in the outcomes of political mobilization.

## Thesis Summary Document

### **Thesis Title**

Cyber Activism: The Information Revolution, Political Actors and the Potential for Regime Transition

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### **Statement of Purpose**

Innovations in information technology have had profound effects in both domestic and international politics. These innovations have transformed the manner in which nation-states, governments, multinational corporations as well as citizens are able to communicate, transact, and socialize. In particular, the spread of internet and mobile communication technologies are re-shaping the conduct of the much older activities of mass protest and political revolution. This thesis examines the impact of new Information Communications Technologies (ICTs) on mass political movements.

### **Brief Summary of the Literature**

Traditional theories of revolution in political science have stressed role of the state at the expense of analyzing the conditions of citizen mobilization. Scholars such as Skocpol (1979) have downplayed the potential of civic activism alone to produce political change. In contrast, sociologists such as Castells and Bell have explored the salient role that citizens can play in the post-industrial, information age when traditional class distinctions have become a less important basis for political action. The new ICTs have created a more interconnected world that enables citizens to communicate and organize more effectively. Yet the political potential of these ICTs is contingent upon citizens' ability and willingness to make use of these technologies to achieve political change.

### **Hypothesis**

Existing theories of revolution do not take into sufficient account the role of ICTs as well as the potential of citizen actors to effect political change from the bottom-up. Drawing both upon traditional theories of political revolution as well as sociological analysis of movements and technological development, this thesis argues that the adaptation of new ICTs to revolutionary situations provides new mobilizational resources to political actors, and can empower previously disenfranchised, marginalized citizens. In particular, ICTs increase both internal and external pressures on target regimes as citizens gain the ability to share information using alternative modes of communication. However, the availability of such technologies is a necessary yet not sufficient condition for successful revolutions.

## **Statement of Research Methodology**

This thesis uses a comparative historical analysis research method to analyze the significance of ICTs both in cases of movement success and failure. It employs a paired comparison involving two cases in the pre-internet era—one that succeeded, and one that failed—and two cases in the post-internet era that experienced similarly divergent outcomes.

## **Brief Summary of Findings**

In the successful cases of modern political revolution (Philippines 1986 and Ukraine 2004), the available technologies were utilized to engage the entirety of the respective populations to protest existing regimes which, while authoritarian, did not attempt to completely suppress civic mobilization. There were very few sectors of the population that the organizing opposition failed to mobilize in protest against obvious electoral fraud in both cases. Technology was applied in an encompassing fashion in the Philippines by using the power of Radio Veritas to reach a population disenchanted with the rule of President Ferdinand Marcos. In the Ukraine the existence of the internet along with the creation of social networking forums, most notably Maidan, created a political movement that engaged citizens nationwide to pressure the Supreme Court to call a new election in the interest of democracy.

The failed cases (Tiananmen Square, China 1989 and Myanmar 2007) demonstrated an incomplete engagement on the part of the opposition as well as a greater willingness on the part of the two governments to use force against their political opponents. The role of ICTs was relatively marginal in both cases. In Tiananmen, university students used available technologies (student radio, pamphlets, and organizational meetings) that connected to various other campuses in China to engage students without reaching different sectors of the Chinese population. In Myanmar, while the Saffron Revolution garnered widespread attention from the international media and support from transnational civic elites, civic mobilization within Myanmar itself remained minimal despite the unpopularity of the regime.

## **Statement of the Significance of the Findings**

The significance of ICTs for modern political movements is incompletely understood. The existence of, and access to, ICTs does not necessarily lead to successful political revolutions or regime transition. Rather, it is the application of these technologies by citizens in efforts to mobilize and coordinate political movements that can create instances of successful political revolution.

## **Suggestions for Future Research**

There is a need in the study of comparative politics to examine modern instances of political revolution (Thailand 2010, Iran 2009, the colored revolutions 2000-2009) with regard to the role played by ICTs. In order to update theories of revolution for the information age, it is necessary to examine successful cases of revolution (e.g. Orange) against cases of failed movements. There must be a further emphasis on interdisciplinary cooperation between sociology and political science. The prevalence of ICTs suggests that there are no longer solely political explanations for instances of revolution. Political analysis must embrace the new international informational context in order to explain modern events in such a way that takes into account the interconnections between politics, economics, and civic mobilization.

*“Innovations in technology have long been recognized as drivers of social change and the dynamics of communication and conflict are central to the processes of change”- Richard Solomon (Keynote Addresses from the 1997 Virtual Diplomacy Conference – U.S. Institute of Peace)*

## **CHAPTER ONE: Statement of Thesis**

From a comparative historical perspective, revolutionary movements can be seen as either social or political in nature. Social revolutions are characterized as swift, fundamental transformations of the state and class structure, and are traditionally generated by class-based rebellions that seek to overturn existing power relations. In contrast, political revolutions alter the state infrastructure, but not necessarily the social structure, and are not necessarily initiated by struggle among the classes (Skocpol 1979). Yet this distinction between social and political revolutions has been challenged by modern economic and technological developments. The shift from industrialization (an industrial/service-based market) to modernization (an information and knowledge-based market) has brought about the ability to transform the social and political structure of a nation simultaneously by updating the basic elements of communication and participation.

Although typical political revolutions entail a long evolutionary process of innovation and social enhancement, the information revolution has been a rapid transformation that has affected nations’ economic capacities and the citizens’ ability and willingness to participate. The traditional explanation of social class-based revolts which conjectures that an intense disequilibrium within society leads to collective political violence has become antiquated. While the Marxist philosophy of the distribution of wealth and the dichotomous relationship between owner and producer of labor capital still is reflected in most significant revolutions, the class-

based theory alone is no longer adequate to explain the organization and social mobilization that innovations in information technology have made possible.

The increasing diffusion of information communication technologies (ICTs) has transformed the spatial organization of social relations by generating networks of activity. The internet creates a twenty-four hour „virtual’ global community in which governments are less able to intervene in individuals’ participation without disrupting the marketplace, especially the flow of goods and information. The catalyst and mainstay of the „globalized’ world is the internet which connects corporations, banking systems, nation-states and individuals to the international community in a manner that has profound implications for the future of international relations and internal/domestic politics.

The spread of ICTs poses a challenge to existing explanations of revolutionary change. In *States and Social Revolutions*, Theda Skocpol contends “that historically no successful revolution has ever been made by a mass-mobilizing, avowedly revolutionary movement” (Skocpol 1979: 17). Though widely accepted, her argument does not recognize the revolutionary actors beyond the society, state and military. At the time Skocpol wrote, the global society was only just beginning to experience the mobilizing effect of ICTs. Yet Skocpol and comparative theorists from the waning days of the behavioralist period have contended that no oppositional forces, even well-organized and highly inclusive groups (including elites, the majority of the population), have ever created a „revolutionary crisis’ moment successfully exploited for change.

More recently, comparative theorists have recognized the ability and significance of media institutions which have themselves been transformed by ICTs. Only very recently with the introduction of blogging and the spread of social networking capabilities in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century have ICTs become a concern of international relations scholarship (see Castells 2006; Cowhey &

Aronson 2009; Deibert et al. 2008; Wilson III 2006). However, theorists have on the whole (in my research) neglected to focus on the comparative analysis of the use of information communication technologies in modern revolutions. The dynamic possibilities that are offered by communication of revolutionary ideas via information technology and the effect of these innovations on revolutions are the relatively uncharted territory that this thesis intends to address.

I employ a historical comparative focus to analyze two pairs of revolutions, one occurring before the advent of ICTs, the other after their appearance. The People's Power Revolution in the Philippines (1986) and the student revolt in Tiananmen Square (1989) both occurred prior to the emergence of ICTs. The revolutions studied subsequent to the proliferation of ICTs are the Orange Revolution in the Ukraine (2004) and the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar (2007). I also examine more briefly the use of available communication technologies involved in the Iranian revolutions of 1979 and 2009. The People's Power Revolution and the Orange Revolution are the instances of successful political revolution aided by the available information technologies, while Tiananmen Square and the Saffron Revolution failed to achieve political change. In each set of case studies, before and after the emergence of ICTs, I will address the following questions: In what ways do ICTs empower citizen mobilization in democratic movements, particularly in societies with censored or state-controlled media? How does the presence of ICTs affect the likelihood of successful revolutions?

I will argue that the introduction, proliferation and assimilation of advanced technologies in the revolutionary situations enhance the ability of political actors to communicate with both domestic and international audiences, thus increasing their prospects for successful democratic revolutions. In particular, ICTs increase both internal and external pressures on questionable



regimes as citizens gain the ability to share information using alternative modes of communication.

However, the availability of such technologies is a necessary yet not sufficient condition for successful revolutions. Although it occurred prior to the emergence of ICTs, the Peoples Power Movement in the Philippines exploited the communication technology available to mobilize a broad spectrum of Filipino society against the regime of Ferdinand Marcos. In contrast, the Tiananmen Square uprising failed not because of a lack of technological resources, but because student groups were unable to reach out to mass constituencies amongst the workers and peasants. While ICTs have subsequently provided new modes of mass mobilization, their presence per se does not assure the success of revolutionary movements. In the latter pair, the Ukrainian Orange Revolution leveraged the new technologies to overcome authoritarian resistance, while the Saffron Revolution failed to break the control of the Burmese military junta despite the use of ICTs to mobilize popular resistance.

The next section discusses the criteria for a modern democratic revolution, contrasting new theory with traditional theorists of revolution while synthesizing a contemporary explanation of the characteristics for a modern revolution. In the following section I will provide a brief synopsis of the four chosen case studies, and then go into detailed explanation of each revolutionary case and the actors' use of information communication technologies. I conclude by addressing the importance of the proliferation and citizen-adoption of ICTs in creating the political circumstances for regime and/or policy change.

## **CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical Framework**

### **Contemporary Interpretation of Revolution Theories: A Review of the Literature**

Revolutionary theory is dichotomous in the sense that theorists adopt and emphasize either structural (the state) explanations to regime transition or sociological explanations of revolution which stress the significance of the political actors who create and affect political circumstances. Ironically, there is also a distinct division among technological theorists which arguably coincides with that among the revolutionary theorists: technopolitical optimism and technological skepticism. Technopolitical optimism emphasizes the unlimited potential of the internet and information communication technology to produce a well-informed, more democratic international community which is consistent with sociological, actor-based explanations of revolutions. In contrast, technological skepticism stresses the alienating effects of new ICTs and generally downplays the potential of the internet to educate, mobilize or create democratic change.

Theorists have attempted to explain the factors that lead to successful political transformations. Transitions from an authoritarian state to a democracy depend upon many variables, and are not always successful. For example, a prominent scholar, like Phillippe Schmitter claimed that the majority Soviet satellite states would fail in successful democratization (Schmitter 1974, 2002). Another leading theorist on democratization, Adam Przeworski (1986) asserts that the circumstances in which successful democratic movements occur do not have an effect on the prospects of long-lasting regime change. Similarly, Skocpol (1979) does not regard the polity as a prime mover or sculptor of future policy.

Traditional revolutionary theorists stress the significance of mass mobilization in successful transitions. One widely accepted characterization of a revolution is a “forcible transfer

of power over a state in the course of which at least two distinct blocs of contenders make incompatible claims to control the state, and some significant portion of the population subject to the state's jurisdiction acquiesces in the claims of each bloc" (Tilly 2007). Most revolutionary authors contend that there are typically dueling oppositional blocs that hinder the successful goal of regime transformation because it involves great compromise among the opposition about „future winners and losers' in a developing new society.

Traditional revolutionary theories neglect the saliency of both agents (the state and citizen activists) and their perceptions of the others' demands. Structural theories (most visible in Charles Tilly and Theda Skocpol 1985) emphasize the historical events leading toward revolutionary interventions and the actions taken by the state preceding the mobilization of the opposition. Citizen activists are largely ignored in structural theory yet amplified to an unreasonable level in sociological theories that tend to ignore the role of historical analysis and the importance of the state in creating policy or political environments that are unstable and poised for democratic transition. In contrast, comparative theorist Fernand Braudel argued that revolutions are event-centered which heavily rely upon citizen activists to coordinate protests and successfully mobilize to create political transitions (Braudel 1995).

Historical sociologist Richard Lachmann argues that mass mobilization occurs most often during episodes of intense elite conflict where non-elites are able to affect the outcome of the elite conflict. Non-elites mobilize when heightened elite conflict creates the opportunities and alliances which justify the risks of collective action (Lachmann 1997: 74). The pervasive tenets of political elitism have given way to liberal pluralism which encourages participation and mobilization in revolutionary movements. In the information age there is a near mandate for working class participation along with elite support. On the other hand, the case of Ukraine

shows that elite support is unnecessary if the majority of the populace is mobilized effectively. Revolutionary actors, especially opposition leaders, invoke and expand classical ideas of justice, democracy and equality to mobilize the population, as “idea streams transmitted via the people are powerful and pervasive and travel across time and space, people learn, taking into account past experience and factoring in new information.” Revolutions are human creations. They are the culmination of ideas and political actors in revolutionary processes where some “broad sweeps of history are the primary forces” (Selbin 1997: 123, 126).

Comparative theorist Guillermo O’Donnell characterizes the opposition as “opportunistic” parties who vacillate from willingness to accept any conciliatory offer made by the regime to unwillingness to negotiate with the regime at all. The “moderate” opposition, for O’Donnell, is the key to successful mobilization against the regime. Moderates offer the most opportunity for transition toward political democracy because they share a commitment to the goal of establishing democracy. If the revolutionary movement is to succeed, the “moderate” opposition must become the dominant voice of the dissenters (O’Donnell 1999: 37).

The idea of mutually pacified opposition groups is also found in the work of Adam Przeworski, who argues that all opposition groups are attempting to replace a particular regime and they each represent specific ideological interests and parts of the social spectrum. While the opposition is destroying the old regime, it must be simultaneously planning and implementing conditions that are favorable to them under a new regime. Due to the coalescence of the opposition around a main, commonly accepted goal (typically democratization), the need for oppositional consensus about future regime standards is irrelevant until the goal of democratization is achieved; essentially varying opposition bloc goals have given way to the often passionate and intense demand for democracy in where it is absent (Przeworski 1986).

New information technologies pose challenges to both structural and sociological theories of revolution. On the one hand, political actors depend on the state for certain infrastructural necessities (mobile phone services, internet access, and limited censorship). On the other hand, actors use advanced technologies within the politically advantageous circumstance that offer the opportunity for democratic transformation. There is a need to explore not only the attitudes and ideologies of the citizen actors who create contemporary revolutions, but also the state structures that are losing traditional sovereignty in the information age, leaving the state vulnerable to transformative collective action. Citizens and the state have both lost autonomy within the information age in exchange for increased transparency, accountability, education, efficiency in governing and mobilization for various sociopolitically relevant causes. The institutional barriers that once existed between government and citizens, and arguably between the classes, have blurred, thus are opening windows of opportunity for mass-based political change. In short, the increasing salience of new communication technologies means that contemporary revolutionary theory must find a way to amalgamate the sociological and structural explanations of regime transformation.

One way of conceptualizing the significance of ICTs is Castells' notion of the "network society" (Castells 1996). For Castells, the network society is the foundation of social and political (domestic and international) relations in the information age, and ascribes new identities to citizen actors and social movements. The two types of modern social movements are categorized by the type of identity consequently produced via mobilization: resistance identity and project identity. Resistance identity describes social movements that are characterized by their "resistance to the dominant institutions and the values embodied therein" (Castells 2004; Stalder 2006: 86). These movements are initiated and perpetuated by "actors who are in devalued

positions and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination” (Castells 2004: 8). Instead of adopting and accepting the pre-established societal values, these actors build up resistances to the norms and adopt a code of functioning that is completely different from those pervasive in society. The most obvious example of resistance groups in the information age is the anti-globalization/Westernization movement that is prevalent among terrorists and extreme nationalists. These actors do not wish to democratically transform or fit into society but fight to continue the status quo or institute a more rigid way of life.

Project identity describes social movements that are focused on redefining “their positions in society, and by doing so, see the transformation of overall social structure” (Castells 2004: 8). Project identities seek to transform societies in order to find their place within them, unlike the resistance identities who wish to preserve their separation from dominant social values. Project identities act in order to carve out a path toward integration into existing society by changing the norms by which they function. Yet Castells argues that social conflicts are no longer products of workplace tension or Marxist class struggle but is cultural conflict and understood as a broad set of social institutions including economic (Castells 2006). While Castells asserts that the established network society is concerned less with the owners of production (bourgeoisie) than with how humanity can exist in an essentially useful manner, it is still necessary to consider the economic and social history of the network society and perhaps the process of globalization and ICT diffusion that assist in identity transforming social movements.

Sociopolitical movements are a basic aspect of Castells’ network society theory, which emphasizes social transformations arising from the evolution of the internet and proliferation of wireless communication technology. As individual network societies have evolved into the global network society, antiquated social movements of the pre-information age which typically

involved a limited number of political actors (coalitions, nation-states, classes, regimes) have given way to movements that are able to “accommodate heterogeneity without fracturing [the mobilization effort] and enable previously marginalized cultures to re-affirm themselves. The cultural orientation and the reliance on information flows (one-way through the mass media or two-way through the internet) connect social movements with the broader cultural transformation characterizing the network society” (Stalder 2006: 99).

I argue that ICTs reduce the need for competing oppositional forces to solicit popular support for their version of regime change. Thanks to the use of ICTs opposition groups can coalesce against the regime, without having to agree on any specific vision of a post-regime environment. O’Donnell’s assertion that the success of revolutionary transformations is contingent upon the “moderate” opposition’s ability to manipulate the subsequent opposition forces to diminish the role of the mobilized citizenry is particularly useful in the information age in which those who possess the ability to organize via new ICTs leads to a more powerful majority in the middle instead of relying on extremist opposition groups (O’Donnell 1999). While it is the case that extremist groups are obtaining and utilizing new information technologies to communicate a message within their ranks and abroad, the availability of resources to the mainstream (middle majority) can compete with the powers that attempt to oppress.

In „new’ revolutionary circumstances there seems to be a distinct lack of “moderate” opposition willing to negotiate concessions to real democratic change. Global citizens who have been oppressed or find themselves in a politically advantageous moment are no longer relying on a „level-headed’ center to strike accords with existing regimes. Opposition leaders are mobilizing citizens and engaging them in ideological debate, dialogue and potentially action that may be

considered „extreme’ by theorists such as Guillermo O’Donnell (1999). Castells’ analysis of the two identities that can be fostered within the information age for and against modernization of the state emphasizes the role of citizen actors in movements. Castells asserts that the attitudes, scope of the movement and potential for success are equal in the information age depending on the effective use of the available networks (Castells 2004).

Oppositional forces have increasingly become an amalgamation of forces opposing the status quo. While there are still clear and distinct groups that are more extreme than others in their willingness to achieve the stated political goal, the majority of popular modern uprisings include participation of all or most of the sectors of society. Successful regime transformations have been the product of inclusive mobilization of the populace via the available channels of communication and idea-exchange. The new era in revolutions allow the participants to gauge the type of opposition group they are joining. The extremist groups are identifiable and are deemed as illegitimate actors, making any action they take against existing regimes questionable.

In the studied cases it became evident that new information technologies have shifted the opposition’s center of gravity to the middle. The availability of resources, including information and communication technologies, has been dispersed among the masses instead of being concentrated in the hands of the elite or extremists. The centralization of protest has become the first step in modern revolutions. The potential for opposition leaders’ messages to reach further than ever before has mobilized the mainstream population armed with various rapid modes of communication. The introduction of the network society in the information age has contributed to a new manner of explaining social movements and political revolutions that requires analysis of types of identity within societies. Castells’ description of the dichotomy of modern social



protest in the context of the network society creates a substantial foundation for new revolutionary theory.

### **‘Network Society’ as the ‘New Civil Society’: Analysis of Modern Technological Theory**

Often theorists, such as Schmitter & Karl (1991), O’Donnell (1999), Przeworski (1986), argue that the first step toward democratization is the ‚repoliticization’ of society. In many nations that have experienced successful democratic revolutions, the opposition groups have emphasized the reintroduction of politics to the masses as they attempt to mobilize them in support of the cause. Throughout the evolution of the internet, research and development efforts have introduced a variety of more inclusive forms of ICTs that have established the internet as an authoritative communication entity. In particular, innovative new apparatus’ equipped with wireless internet capabilities offer the potential to create a ‚mobile network society’. The mobile network society stresses the diffusion of “networking logic in all domains of social life by means of wireless communication technology” (Castells 2007: 6). The network society creates an increased element of sociopolitical inclusivity that allows citizens to discover their interests, goals and agendas while coalescing with other similar identities worldwide, sometimes forming organizations of collective action (Gimmler 2001).

The information age and subsequent network society have essentially combined the private and public sector into the network society; there is no longer a distinction between individuals and the state, but instead a blurred barrier that becomes porous with every new technology. Nicholas Negroponte emphasizes the creation of the new civil society and argues that the proliferation of ICTs and particularly, the individualization offered in the information age extends to the sociopolitical realm which allows citizens to “transcend old social boundaries”

(Negroponte 1995: 156). The global proliferation of the internet and its accompanying technologies, especially wireless communications are “the material backbone of a global interdependence that, of course, was not technologically-driven but technologically-mediated” (Castells, 2005: 10). This intensified global interdependence has put increased strain on national sovereignty.

Manuel Castells argues for the emergence of the ‘global civil society’ which derives from whereby the new communication technologies increase coordination and cooperation among pre-established civil societies. The “global civil society” is constructed from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), interest groups and global issue activist movements which cultivated the “network state” as a proactive mechanism in the international community that spans across borders and cultures to create a new international standard. As interdependence (economic, political, security) increases, the state attempts to adapt to the new circumstances. Nonetheless, “there is a growing gap between the space where the issues are defined (global) and the space where the issues are managed (nation-state)” (Castells, 2005: 10).

This ambiguous space of stalled governance (response to international/domestic crises) exacerbates various crises of efficiency, which occur when problems cannot be managed properly (global warming, recent global financial breakdowns, or terrorism). These efficiency crises are characterized by the growing disconnect among citizens from their nation-state and culture which blurs into a further disconnect from the globalized international system of government and organization. Instead of the state closing this expanding gap between the international (global) civil society and established populations (existing within nation-states), it is resisting involvement in the international realm of communication, political and market relations.

The proliferation of the global civil society will also have network effects which Castells describes as the “shared sovereignty, responsibility and flexibility of procedures of governance and greater diversity of times and spaces in relations between government and citizens” (2005: 11). According to Castells, within the framework of the network society, the autonomy of the traditional nation-state is diminished because the ‘global civil society’ is not necessarily concerned with maintaining the modern world system (nation-states). Instead, the network society is concerned with filling the holes in governance brought upon by the expansion of the globalized world, its technologies and ideologies.

Although Castells sees the necessity and argues for nation-states to adapt to the global civil society and its network qualities, Castells recognizes that the modern nation-state resists relinquishing sovereignty. Yet national barriers are almost eliminated by the increased access (unhindered) to the internet and the ability to cultivate an identity not related to the State but to international causes for justice, peace or other global movements. According to Castells, while movements can exist now independently of political institutions and mass media, “it is through media politics that non-state actors influence people and foster social change” (2005: 14).

Yet the construction of the global network society is also replacing the sense of local political identity, according to Shaw & Shaw (1999). They argue that the network society is making it increasingly difficult for people to identify with those closest to them within their own neighborhoods, “as our society becomes more complex, many communities have become less cohesive. Frequently, we have lost the sense of the tight-knit neighborhood, of the village, and the place where everybody knows each other’s name” (Shaw & Shaw 1999: 317). Although the initial construction of the rise of the network society may erode social and communal relations,

the Shaws argue that digital networks can have the potential for rebuilding fragmented communities via online social groups, message boards and social networking.

According to Shaw & Shaw, “neighborhood computer networks can be used to support and augment the social infrastructure that is at the core of the cohesiveness in tight-knit communities” (1999: 323) which can lead to a more connected society and electorate. The message boards employed in the Orange Revolution initiated by Ukrainian citizens in protest of fraudulent electoral results are a good example. The large population which is scattered throughout the oblasts (provinces) used information technology via the internet to organize mass demonstrations in the capital city and surrounding regions. However, effective social mobilization and meaningful networking are dependent upon the availability of uncensored, unrestricted technologies and the skill to apply ICTs by the citizenry.

Manuel Castells argues that the obsolescence of the state in the globalized world system is overstated, and that the ‘network society’ is in fact the post-modern state system. The age of globalization is not concerned with stifling wars and disputes over contiguous territories and access to ports but is becoming an international movement via the internet for sociopolitical justice and representation. The state, as Skocpol was concerned with, does not exist in the same manner as it did in the 1980s or even in the 1990s, “the process of global governance is enacted in practice by the global network state. The network society in its changing forms of representation and articulation is the state of the global age. This state must link the state actors with interests in each particular process of governance” (Castells, 15: 2005). While Castells recognizes that not all states will accept the globalized world order or “new global democracy”, those who reject the new state system “may well become the new form of failed states. The political outcasts would not be designated by the superpowers, in terms of their own interests,

but stigmatized by the global civil society acting on behalf of the values of humanity” (16: 2005).

Theorists in the same vein as Skocpol maintain that the state is not only still relevant but is still the cornerstone of international relations in the globalized era. Daniel Drezner updates Skocpol’s thesis and stands in direct opposition to Castells, a well-known „technopolitical optimist.’ Drezner (like Ann McIntosh, Morozov) does not see the internet as a transformative mechanism that requires adjustments to the international system of governance. The state, according to Drezner, remains the “primary actors for handling the social and political externalities created by globalization and the internet” (2004: 478).

The effect of NGOs (which Castells argues are the prime actors in the globalization age) is marginalized because the state, especially modern hegemons have alternative protocol to advance their national interests. According to Drezner, “powerful states will use a range of foreign policy substitutes, such as coercion and forum-shopping across various international institutions to advance their desired preferences into desired outcomes (2004: 478). Clearly the separation between Castells and Drezner articulates the division in globalization theory; the first is characterized by technopolitical optimism in which the internet proliferation spreads international awareness and mobilizes social movements beyond traditional barriers, at the expense of traditional state sovereignty (Castells). The second strand adheres to the state system that was adopted in the post-World War II era that emphasizes the saliency of the established political and social institutions in governance (Drezner, Skocpol).

The global network society changes nations into networked strategic actors as opposed to the sovereign states that existed in the pre-information age. The internet creates a “seamless global economic zone, borderless and unregulatable, the internet calls into question the very idea

of the nation-state” (Barlow 1996: 76). For Drezner and other technoskeptics, the internet is a controllable mechanism that can conform to state regulation and national technological policies. However, technopolitical optimists maintain that the global civil society is being established via the intense proliferation and adoption of internet and ICTs.

Castells breaks from new idealistic theories of the media in the information age, theorists such as Chadwick, Hansen and Gimmmler argue that the internet has increased interconnectedness between media, economic, political and sociological actors. For Castells, the “new pattern of interaction between media and the state is characterized by the tension between globalization and identification” (Castells 2004: 319). The tension is exacerbated by the availability and openness offered by the internet which is largely beyond state control. The internet produces major problems for states: if states do not allow their citizens access to the internet or restrict their ability to use it, states risk losing economic development opportunities. The second issue is most worrisome for authoritarian states: allowing the free flow of the internet abdicates control over what citizens are producing and taking in online (Stalder 2006).

The recent struggle between international internet service providers (ISPs) and national governments (China) on censorship on web providers has solidified the amalgamation of public and private sectors and international and national sovereignty. Authoritarian governments such as China, Iran and Cuba who want to assert absolute control over their populations have adopted stringent technological policies that restrict available information; “governments have discovered that by pressuring ISPs, they can exercise significant control over access to content” (Drezner 2004: 488). Government attempts to control internet access and internet-filtering have proliferated in authoritarian states and have put increased pressure on ISPs (the majority of which are Western) to respect national sovereignty while consciously disregarding basic

democratic rights. These authoritarian governments act to censor and control citizens while simultaneously reaping the benefits from participation in the global market economy. These governments want to “exploit the internet’s commercial opportunities while restricting the use of the internet for political criticism” (Drezner 2004: 488).

The question in the information age seems to be moving away from whether or not the state is losing sovereignty and towards the question of how multinational corporations (MNCs), NGOs and ISPs reconcile authority within the national framework so that the state remains the authority. A modern example occurred in 2002 when Chinese officials were successful in persuading over three hundred internet service providers and web engines including Yahoo! to voluntarily sign a pledge refraining from “producing, posting or disseminating pernicious information that may jeopardize state security and disrupt social stability” (Bodeen 2002).

Modern technological theorists such as Evgeny Morozov (2010) have grown skeptical of the unifying and democratizing promises of the internet age. At first, the internet encouraged technopolitical optimism. Theorists and technological advocates alike touted the democratizing, leveling and unifying potentials that the information age offered to global citizens. In *The Death of Distance*, Frances Cairncross prophesized that the information revolution would “increase understanding, foster tolerance and ultimately promote worldwide peace” simply by existing and proliferating throughout the global society (1997: xvi). Yet Morozov (2010) argues that the internet has done little or nothing to enhance global awareness and interconnectivity. In fact, according to Morozov, the internet has resulted in heightened nationalism and restrictive political measures adopted by governments like China and Iran, to control technological proliferation and respond with subsequent policy. The concept of “information sovereignty” has improved upon classical arguments of border security and national autonomy, as the proliferation of internet

technologies increases the susceptibility of global citizens to new (predominately Western) forums of information and knowledge-sharing.

Many governments are concerned that the dominance of internet technologies by American corporations will introduce the American value system and thoughts into their societies. The information revolution has tested the traditionally accepted concepts of international relations such as sovereignty and autonomy. The porous nature of the internet allows users and subsequently, internet service providers to circumvent the ascribed technological policies of the host/operating nation and provide citizens with information often to the chagrin of authoritarian leaders who wish to manipulate and create public knowledge. The rise of national technology policy and the creation of nationalized internet service providers is seemingly inevitable (Castells 2005, 2007).

I am proposing an addendum to revolutionary theory that attempts to modernize explanations of mobilization in contemporary movements which involves the centralization of opposition protest toward the mainstream that includes a wider population of actors as opposed to reliance upon the state for political change. The success of democratic revolutions using information technology as a mobilization resource and the modern social movement emphasized by the network society theory of Castells' stands in contrast to his continued advocacy of the state as "primary locus of power, defined by its exclusive control over the means of violence within a given territory" (Stalder 2006: 104). Castells centers his analysis of power and social movements on the state and while he argues that nation-state theory and traditional sources of power are shifting from existing institutions, he does not give much detail on new sources of power that arise in the network society. Yet I argue power sources are not only arising from the well-informed, mobilized (global) citizenry, but also from the simultaneous deterioration of



national sovereignty because of rise of ISPs which has foster increased interdependency among NGOs and MNCs has also contributed to the decline in authority that the state possesses.

Skeptics of the efficacy and impact of the information revolution on political mobilization argue that scholars tend not to address the self-mobilizing citizens who organize collective action without the aid of the mass media. Dissenting theorists such as Michael T. Greven contend that technological determinists naively prophesize the deterioration of traditional institutions of the mass media and its replacement with the global network society which creates a public sphere poised for action (Greven 1995). Leo Marx (1999) argues that the impact of information communication technologies and the internet is diminished because of the lack of “internet literacy” (99). Marx believes that computer technology is limited to those within the population who possess a degree of education, literacy and the ability to understand its potential which is not present within the minority and working classes. The complex nature of the internet and its accompanying technologies prevent it from being a “widely unifying or transformative in disadvantaged communities” (Marx 1999: 134). This line of reasoning ignores institutionalized barriers that impede genuine political discussion to the point that even the highly networked citizen cannot hope to penetrate the status quo.

However, cyberspace is providing marginalized portions of the political community with a new forum to coalesce and mobilize (e-mobilization) for change, whether in protest or to spread ideology. According to Gimmler, “the plurality of the public sphere is no longer an unwelcome fact which must be accommodated but instead a diversity to be welcomed” (2001: 28). In the pre-internet (before 1995) global society, advancements and adoptions of new modes of communication were partially contingent upon a nation’s willingness/tendency to embrace democracy and inherently, capitalism. Citizens are dependent upon journalists and media outlets

for information that may or may not be state-sponsored, controlled or biased. Authoritarian regimes rely upon state-controlled media outlets to propagandize and to legitimize their rule to an oppressed population.

This reliance on the media adds to the personalization of identity politics which via media messages helps to mobilize various causes in an online forum and gives voices to diverse, fragmented political actors. In the industrialized nations, arguably more opportunity of access is offered and “there is a fundamental qualitative shift in the politics of Western nations, it is clear that the internet reduces the levels of expertise and professional knowledge required for the production of cultural forms of political appeal, narrowing the gap between oppositional voices and the institutionally-produced messages of powerful groups” (Chadwick 2006: 31). Wireless communications considerably increase the information and communication power of the people, making them more independent of the formal institutions of information (print and traditional broadcast).

Castells (1996, 2005) points to the loss of national control over the media as a direct contributor to the decline in authority of the state, in particular by the citizen activists who use new technology to facilitate communication beyond state control. Castells breaks from what I would consider the trajectory of modern revolutionary theory in his discussion of how the „narrowcasting’ news media should act in the information age. Castells argues that in order for media outlets to survive the competition, they must attract viewers that are a much broader portion of the population to compete in the market and attract advertisers (Stalder 2006). Castells also warns the media outlets not to become closely associated with partisan politics or specific political positions to continue reaching the broadest segment of the population.

However, in the age of cable television, narrowly casted news channels, information, sitcoms and reality television provide economic incentives for media outlets (particularly in the form of advertising) and also help legitimize the status quo. Media outlets have diversified and the niche channels have become the engine of popular political protest and outrage (Fox, MSNBC) and the reaction of advertisers is essentially the same as in the pre-information age. While it is riskier to be affiliated with the gadflies and often the network society witnesses pop culture figures hit with drops in advertising after controversial events, media outlets, instead of becoming non-partial beacons of professionalism, have embraced and in many ways exacerbated the factions in politics.

It is through the resurrection of the civil society (particularly political society: the electorate, citizen activists) and the engineering of the network society that transitional regimes meet their greatest contemporary challenge, the “revived identities and capacity for collective action of working, low-ranking unionized workers” (Foran 1997: 102). According to Castells, “ultimately the power of the global civil society acting on public opinion via the media may overcome the resistance of state apparatuses to limit their power in exchange for increasing their legitimacy and, ultimately their efficiency” (2005: 12). Yet authoritarian nations such as China and Iran maintain that their sovereignty is violated by multinational internet service providers who do not adhere to the national technological and information policies, often internet content filtering or the complete obstruction of certain websites.

There has been a popular pattern in the global civil society within revolutionary movements that provides for the coalescence of associations, trade unions, religious groups, community organizations along with elites to form the aggregate known as ‘the people,’ as opposed to the typically factionalized class-based rebellions of the pre-internet era. In the

information age citizen-actors are able to create revolutionary movements and mobilize via the internet, while advanced technologies allow supporters to receive information immediately and mobilize at a rapid pace.

## **Technology and Democratic Theory**

Transformation from authoritarian regimes toward more democratic governance is historically known as a methodical process that requires national economic efforts in development as well as increases in education (Przeworski 1986). The new information technologies enhance the ability of bottom-up, grassroots movements to demand adherence to democratic ideals and to establish institutions that favor citizens over government officials. Contemporary movements for democratization, most recently the various „colored’ revolutions, have embraced the urgency of political reform during advantageous sociopolitical circumstances without the necessity of violence on the part of both the state and the political activists. Although this new wave of non-violent yet successful transformative revolutions that have accompanied the information age most often stand in contrast to traditional revolutionary theories, “transitions can also develop into widespread, violent confrontations, eventually giving way to revolutionary regimes which promote changes going far beyond the political realm” (Schmitter & O’Donnell 1986: 3) which has proven to be true in the latter revolutions of this decade (Thailand, Kyrgyzstan).

Adam Przeworski describes the conditions of authoritarian regime and the open opportunity structure that allows opposition movements to succeed at democratic change. The condition most relevant to the case studies analyzed in this thesis is the loss of political legitimacy. In order for authoritative regimes to survive there must be some sort of societal

acceptance of the regime as a legitimate political actor that is protecting society in some manner. Once the legitimacy barrier has been lost it is no longer necessary for the regime to exist. This new legitimacy also creates an opportunity for the opposition to demand that the regime act in accordance with its democratic interests (Przeworski 1986).

Often when authoritarian regime leaders begin to fear the breakdown of their legitimate authority, they begin a process of liberalization to impede democratization and as “liberalization advances so does the strength of demands for democracy (Schmitter & O’Donnell 1986: 10). In our two examples of successful revolutionary democratic transitions (Ukraine and Philippines), the loss of authoritarian legitimacy was signaled to the public by the existing regime in policy concessions that moved away from the regime’s stated agenda. The shift from strict martial law in the Philippines to a more free press in the latter years of the Marcos regime signaled to the population that the regime was willing to make partial democratic concessions in order to maintain their power and legitimacy. Yet the incremental moves toward a more democratic society only ignited the people’s desire to replace the existing regime.

The loss of legitimacy equates to the deterioration of public trust in the regime and “may indeed constitute a persuasive signal [of opportunity for opposition] if this loss consists of more than a change of the individual states of mind and is manifested in a clear message that something will have to be done” (Przeworski 1986: 55). In the case of the Ukraine, it was not the existing regime that offered the democratic ‘window of opportunity’ but the judicial institutions that declared the need for a new election in the name of electoral justice.

Although the loss of legitimacy could act as the deciding factor for the opposition as to whether or not the political circumstances are favorable toward regime change, Przeworski maintains that the “objective factors” constitute constraints such as is possible under a concrete

historical situation, but do not determine the outcome of such (revolutionary) situations (Przeworski 1986). Even in the information age the “objective factors” (fraudulent electoral turnouts, intense economic downturn due to governmental corruption, long-standing sociopolitical oppression) are essential for creating the revolutionary environment. Providing that the citizenry is mobilized and coordinated properly, the “objective factors” can and in cases like Ukraine (2004), the Philippines (1986), Kyrgyzstan (2005) and various other revolutionary examples, do determine the outcome and in cases such as Moldova (2008) not always democratically. Nonetheless, the existence and availability of ICTs creates an expanded political opportunity structure that enhances the ability of the opposition to espouse ideology and put pressure (including international allies) on „bad’ regimes.

New ICTs are the foundation of global network societies. New technological modes and systems are important in our daily lives. Consciously or unconsciously, societies are choosing to build infrastructure that supports technologies that influence how people are going to work, communicate and consume. Nations willing to allow capitalism to destroy inefficient companies and to use the information revolution to replace ineffective modes of communication, will also invest in new innovations. The nations that “rely on their governments to protect them from such creative destruction will fall behind in the era” (Friedman 2000: 11).

Democracies require on-going dialogue over policy and opinion to foster a healthy, legitimate government. The invention and diffusion of new ICTs creates more opportunities for citizens to be mobilized so they can participate and create a meaningful relationship with the government. Although these technologies offer more opportunities for the population to become politically aware, many theorists believe that the selectivity of the internet allows its users to bypass information that does not pique their interest. According to Gimmler, “modern

democratic theory has been preoccupied with the principle of publicity in the realm of law or the state, and with the participation of citizens in the process of discussion and decision-making” (2001: 22). The internet alone cannot educate a citizen actor; the citizen must be an active participant in the search for knowledge whether engaging in an online discussion, watching the current local and international news, or mobilizing mass demonstrations for regime change.

Governments everywhere have recognized the importance of the internet in effectively communicating goals to their constituents. Chadwick characterizes “the concept of e-democracy as associated with efforts to broaden political participation by enabling citizens to connect with one another and their government via new information communication technologies” (2006: 84). The political opportunity structure available to citizens is measured by the form of government that represents their interests. Sociological theorist van der Heijden argues that “the more decentralized a state system is, the more balanced the power relations among legislative, executive and judiciary are, the more proportional the electoral system is, and finally, the more available the instrument of referendum is, the larger the number of points of access for new social movements.” The latter points fit the cases of the People’s Power and Orange Revolutions (van der Heijden 2006: 31).

E-democracy offers the public complete autonomy from national authority to build social capital which can be turned into effective political dialogue. The information revolution encourages the strengthening of the populace in educational terms. The public must be informed in a ‚network democracy.‘ As Rahman states, “the ideological urges of enlightened popular forces are clearly for a meaningful form of democracy that gives effective power to the people rather than to local, national and international elite groups to guide the course of society and the world” (2004: 20). Nation-states must not only adopt and foster new technological innovation

and education, but also adopt capitalist economic policies. Authoritarian regimes, particularly post-World War II, that were using the promise of economic growth to legitimize their oppressive rule have been exposed in the information-free market era (Friedman 2000).

Global theorists emphasize the connecting and leveling effect that the information revolution has had on world development. However, in practice the information age can only be accessed by nations that can afford to compete. The gap between „have’ and „have not societies is created by the costs of producing and diffusing information. Information requires great investment in intelligence and publication/broadcast infrastructure. Nations that cannot afford or are not willing to engage their citizenry with a “plentitude of information” are now seen as repressive and less able to compete in a meaningful way in the global market (Nye & Keohane, 2004: 88).

The users of new communication processes enhance the autonomy of individual citizens by utilizing wireless modes. The user of wireless ICTs can control the diffusion of information and the message itself. Castells describes the concept of “safe autonomy” in which new information communication technologies essentially insulate the individual from outside judgment or bodily harm. According to Castells, “mobile communication facilitates a combination of autonomy and safety by making individuals free to relate to the world while relying on his or her infrastructure of personal support” (2007: 248). At the same time nations, economies, and governments have become interdependent upon the technologies that connect them to each other and maintain their ability to structure business. Interdependence is characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or political actors in different nations. This is often the result of international transactions which are now virtual and essentially costless to transmit crucial information across boundaries.



As a result, the independence associated with the traditional nation-state is being replaced by the era of transnational actors, such as multinational corporations, transnational social movements and international organizations that have overshadowed the state's authority. The information revolution has altered the dependency pattern that a state may have fostered prior to the adoption of new ICTs and telecommunication policies. The democratic state has an advantage in the information age due to the inherent principles of democratic ideology, such as the free exchange of information, accountability, and transparency in government transactions. Protesting has returned to an acceptable place in political participation, and has thus reinstated a sense of communal place in which "demonstrations can be seen as another way in which people can connect to public life; the social ties forged in country associations and unions create the social networks and bonds that may also encourage people to participate in democracies" (Norris 2005: 200).

Theorists like Ann McIntosh doubt the democratic potential of new ICTs to engage citizens, stating that there is "nothing democratic about technology" (McIntosh 2001: 2). In fact, the information revolution has separated citizens into education levels: those who are able to exploit information and those who cannot. Thus information (network) democracies may empower minority elites. Citizens who are able to utilize legislative and parliamentary bill text/tracking systems and process debate transcripts are more likely to use their knowledge to influence the powers that be (Kampen & Snijkers: 2003).

Although McIntosh downplays the democratic potential of the internet, there are many democratic ideals and features attached to the users of technology and the internet. Those citizen activists who can coordinate ideology, disseminate information and organize protests have the potential to create campaigns for democracy, place demands on their governments and increase

international pressure on illegitimate authoritarian regimes. The information age advances the ability of citizens to make political change from the bottom-up as opposed to waiting for change from the top-down. In the information age, the “human actors are not simply the corners of structures but also the generators of them” (Selbin 1997: 124).

However, most global theorists maintain that the information revolution has manifested a modern view of political participation that involves the government increasing its transparency which in turn leads to greater public awareness. Globalization has fostered a knowledge-based market economy requiring nations to encourage the technological education of their citizens. The development and general accessibility of internet technology and its innovations acts as a new mode for communication and the rapid speed at which it can diffuse information and ideology has “made it an especially effective resource for activists” (Ayres 2003: 96).

## CHAPTER THREE: Case Study Explanation

Comparative historical analysis is a predominately qualitative research approach that emphasizes the juxtaposition of two or more “historical trajectories” of nations, institutions or civilizations (Skocpol 1979: 36). It is appropriate to apply comparative historical analysis to the events leading to revolutionary movements. Exploring the recent history (previous 10-20 years) of a state and its society can reveal the policies and regime factors that are relevant to explaining the impending revolution. Due to the relatively recent proliferation of our independent variable of interest (ICTs), it is necessary to compare the equivalent media outlets and technologies from the pre-information revolution age: radio, alternative newspapers, university press associations or structured state media institutions.

This thesis adopts Ted Gurr’s definition of ‘political violence’ from his theoretical work *Why Men Rebel*. Political violence is defined as “all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime, its actors – including competing political groups as well as incumbents or its policies. The concept represents a set of events, a common property of which is the actual or threatened use of violence...the concept subsumes revolution...it also includes guerilla warfare, coups d’état, rebellions and riots” (Gurr 1970: 3). Although half of the case studies are not necessarily violent revolutions, they do all involve a certain degree of coercion by the government via well-organized acts of political mobilization and dissent.

The use of comparative historical method can also illuminate the role of ICTs in democratic movements. The history of the national media and the traditional modes of information dissemination must be viewed using comparative analysis, in order to judge the progression of the national media institutions into the information age. An information-deficient society will perhaps be more likely to exploit alternative routes to receiving news and ideology.

This thesis argues that the preexisting democratic institutions in a nation affect its willingness and ability to adopt new information technologies, giving the citizens opportunity to utilize ICTs in political participation and mobilization efforts. In the years before the information revolution, news and information dissemination was contingent upon institutions that were beyond the scope of citizen's control. Activists relied upon structured communication devices like radio, pamphlets, audio cassettes and communal gatherings to engage others in protest. The focus in the pre-internet age will be on the failed political revolution in China's Tiananmen Square and on the successful ousting of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos.

The People's Power Revolution occurred in 1986. However, there was much political turmoil and transition that began to brew in the Philippines beginning in the early 1980s. President Ferdinand Marcos instituted a series of economic reforms that affected not only the peasant-class but the elites as well. Aided by Radio Vertias, mobilization against Marcos was swift and all-encompassing, ranging from the rural areas to the country's urban economic centers. The People's Power Revolution was a successful example of a population using the available communication technologies in advantageous political circumstances to force change.

The failed student revolution at Tiananmen Square, China in 1989 emphasizes the need to have a more prominent portion of the population mobilized against the status quo or at least in favor of the attempted reforms. The majority of the population, including the peasant-working class in China at the time of the Tiananmen revolt, was economically stable and disinclined to pressure the CCP. A major difference in the case of China and in Myanmar is that those revolutions did not occur under electoral circumstances; both cases involved failed protests against existing rule because of economic (in the case of the students, future economic) reforms that negatively impacted the people for government gains.

In both revolutionary cases, the political actors used the resources available to them in attempt to mobilize and overthrow existing regimes in their respective nations. It is crucial to the study to recognize the significant difference between the Philippines in the 1986 People's Power Revolution and China in the 1989 revolt at Tiananmen. While both nations were authoritarian by Western standards, the Philippines had embraced far more democratic institutions by the mid-1980s, allowing its citizens to effectively utilize broadcast television and radio to successfully overthrow a repressive government. However, the lack of resources and the intense restriction on the flow of information in China led to the relatively swift extinguishing of the student-worker dominated protests in the streets.

New information technologies have altered older patterns of citizen mobilization. Yet their effect on the successful political change or democratization has not been examined in a systematic way. While there are obvious correlations between democratic tendencies in nations and their adoption of technology, it is the extent to which their citizens are able to use ICTs that empowers them politically. The information era is just beginning to unfold and the new forms of technology that are vital to networked communication have only started to peak. As scientists and engineers study internet technologies, they develop more personalized, effective tools of communication and social organization, i.e. the expansion of the social communal network and its availability on any mobile communication technological device.

The post-information age revolutions that are analyzed begin with the successful Orange Revolution in Ukraine (2004). The „colored revolutions’ are characterized by the pattern of non-violent revolutionary popular uprisings predominately occurring in the Soviet satellite nations, many of which (2004 to present) relied upon internet and mobile communication technology to express disapproval of the fraudulent elections. The Orange Revolution was a direct result of an

intensely divided electorate and ideology of the candidates, Russia-endorsed President Viktor Yanukovich and Western-oriented challenger Viktor Yushchenko. When the news of electoral fraud leaked to the population, millions of Ukrainians began constructing online forums, blogs and message boards that organized citizen protests over a period of weeks for democratic electoral reform. This resulted in the replacement of Yanukovich by Viktor Yushchenko. New ICTs were not only pivotal in efforts to organize and activate citizens, but also in terms of rallying international support for the replacement of a non-democratically elected official.

The most recent revolution is the on-going violence in the nation of Myanmar (formerly Burma). The military junta that took control of the nation in 1962 instituted a stringent model of socialism and nationalized private industry while maintaining strict control over trade (Head 2007). The Saffron Revolution began in direct response to a dramatic increase in commodity taxes, and the removal of subsidies on gasoline. The economic pain inflicted by these reforms prompted a wave of protests in the streets, to which the junta responded forcefully. While more recent revolutionary episodes have proven equally or more violent than the Saffron Revolution (Thailand, Kyrgyzstan), it certainly evoked international outrage.

The Saffron Revolution of 2007 quickly achieved global notoriety because of mass celebrity and political responses to the public beating and murder of peaceful protesters, including a large portion of the Burmese religious community. The most notable international response was the address given by President George Bush in September 2007 at the United Nations, which caused the Myanmar delegation to walk out during his speech. The protest was led by local Buddhist monks who elevated the issue due to the obviously peaceful resistance and nature of Buddhism. Although there was intense diffusion of background information and corresponding global outcry, the Saffron Revolution failed to achieve regime or economic policy

changes that were sought by the people. Although the effects of mass mobilization via the broadcast media are relatively inconsistent given the national circumstances, mass media outlets played a significant role in initiating global action, predominately in the form of pressing governments to respond to and renounce humanitarian injustices, but did not place sufficient pressure on the junta in Myanmar.

In each case, the availability of information, freedom of the press and limitations on citizen access to ICTs all have an impact on the role information technologies play in democratization. While I argue that the existing democratic institutions and tendencies of a nation greatly affect its ability and willingness to subscribe to the information revolution, it is the role of the citizenry and their utilization of new modes of communication that can transform a movement into a successful political revolution.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: Pre-Information Revolution Case Studies**

The proliferation of ICTs within the international community has created the opportunity for more educated citizens and transparent governments. If allowed, the benefit of globalization and the network society it fosters have the potential to establish sustainable democratic institutions. In the pre-information revolution there was an abundance of technologies available that led to the creation of a revolutionary environment if accessed and coordinated effectively by opposition leaders.

In the study of contemporary (latter 20<sup>th</sup> century) revolutions a common theme appears; there is a correlation between the successful establishment of democratic institutions via socio-political uprising and the accessibility of modern communication technologies. This is even present in the pre-internet revolution period where political actors were bound by conventional media (radio, television, newspaper) to capitalize on or to create effective political movements. The most successful example of political actors harnessing the power of the available communication technologies in the pre-information revolution age is the Philippine People's Power Revolution, which capitalized on a crumbling regime and a Catholic-owned broadcast radio station to organize a swift and orderly disposal of the Marcos regime.

### **The Power of the People: Marcos' Timeline to the People's Power Revolution**

The Philippines has a turbulent history marked by American interference in its domestic politics. Although the foundation of the Philippine democracy was shallow, the people were eventually able to recognize the oppression and lack of sound leadership within the Marcos administration. Until the declaration of martial law by President Ferdinand Marcos in 1972, the



Philippines had been regarded as the most democratic of the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) members. Among the notable democratic institutions was a widely revered free press. The declaration of martial law or Proclamation 1081 was justified as the precursor to the “New Society” that Marcos was attempting to construct.

The progression of Marco’s regime coincided with the expansion of the global free market which caused multiple crises within the nation due to the corruption present within the Philippine democratic institutions. Marcos quickly began a campaign of reform, in particular land reform for the peasant farmers who were sustaining the nation’s export economy. Although Marcos, who was first elected in 1965, established symbolic programs that were intended to assist farmers and landowners, by the mid-1970s reform had proven to be ineffective and development stagnated. While the Ministry of Agrarian Reform announced that growing numbers of Certificates of Land Transfer were being issued it failed to mention that after issuance, they were stored in a safe at the Ministry instead of being given to tenants (Overholt 1986: 1143). Marcos and the Congress of landlords denied the majority of the population the ability to own the land that they worked.

The Marcos administration’s economic policies focused on capital-intensive sectors of production, such as nuclear power, steel and copper, during the period of martial law, ostensibly to bring about the “New Society” (Overholt 1986). The emphasis Marcos placed upon knowledge-based economic sectors was extremely limited, as most of the nation’s workers were unskilled. The monopolization of the Philippine industries by Marcos and his cronies, especially the agricultural sector kept unemployment rates high, undermined the middle class and put great strain on the farmers.

Global market pressures encouraged these exploitative economic policies, as many peasants were displaced from their land in order to make room for additional money-producing export crops. While the rapid expansion of agricultural exports positioned the Philippines to profit from the boom in commodity prices, the increase in revenue was not distributed evenly within the Filipino society. Estimates by the Philippine Commission for Good Government of the amount of money that Marcos illegally acquired and moved abroad ranged up to ten billion dollars (U.S.) (Hawes 1990: 275).

Essentially, the Marcos regime systematically destroyed the nation's economic entrepreneurial spirit and ability to compete in the international market. Marcos disabled national economic institutions; "by turning them into instruments of patronage, he [Marcos] deprived the Philippine society of its skeleton" (Overholt 1986: 1149). The 1981 crisis in the Philippines was a direct result of the self-interested economic policies enforced by Marcos. The collapse of the coconut oil market, for example, affected 16 million Filipinos, one-third of the nation. The National Coconut Authority raised prices drastically after determining that the Philippines owned 60 percent of the world's coconut oil market. Marcos issued decrees that forced international conglomerates out of the coconut oil market, where they were paying world market prices for the coconut produce. Simultaneously, Marcos was encouraging a takeover of the coconut oil market and crops by legislating a monopoly run by cronies who paid half the market price to the nation's farmers. When the coconut oil market collapsed in the Philippines, the peasant class began to form coalitions with opposition forces. The revolution was brewing.

The lack of economic leadership was accompanied by Marcos' complete disregard for the 'common good' or the protection of citizens. The Marcos administration stretched the preexisting constitution and led multiple constitutional 'conventions,' the first being prompted by

his impending term limitation which was justified rhetorically by nationalist arguments for altering the American-imposed constitution. However, the convention actually delayed the interim/transitional period between the old constitutional powers of the president and the new powers of the prime minister (Youngblood 1981; Overholt 1986).

### **The Marcos Declaration of Martial Law**

Using the justification of imminent Communist guerilla warfare, the president declared martial law in 1972 after a series of government-coordinated attacks on the government itself to create a perceived threat of chaos and legitimize his declaration. While the Filipino people knew that Marcos exaggerated the intensity of the communist threat, a majority of the citizens initially supported the authoritarian takeover of the Philippine society (Youngblood 1981). The United States remained neutral on the declaration, believing that an unfettered Marcos would institute some necessary social and economic reforms that the more democratic government which preceded him failed to implement. Under martial law, Marcos implemented reforms that improved public security at the cost of civil liberties. These measures included prohibiting demonstrations against the government, severely limiting the ability of the Philippine mass media to disseminate accurate information and seizing weapons from common citizens (Hawes 1990).

When he declared martial law, President Marcos took complete control of the Filipino mass media and arrested popular dissenting journalists and publishers. In his *Letter of Authority No. 1*, Marcos ordered the press secretary and the Secretary of the Department of National Defense to “jointly take over and control all such newspapers, magazines, radio and television facilities and all other mediums of communication wherever they are, for the duration of the present national emergency” (Youngblood 1981: 712). Marcos ceased publication of fifteen of

the sixteen Manila newspapers and allowed only the *Voice of the Philippines* and the Far East Broadcasting Company to operate.

The president dismantled the American press model that was established during American occupation. The press in the Philippines had been regarded as among the most free in Asia until the introduction of martial law and the suppression of the Filipino media. Marcos justified his domination of the media by insisting that the Filipino media had experienced a communist infiltration and would later in his rule justify his control in the name of building his “New Society”. Under the new martial law provisions, the Philippine Broadcasting Service (PBS) was amalgamated into the Bureau of Broadcast Services and was turned into a mouthpiece of the Marcos regime.

The regime established various national media oversight committees and councils in order to maintain complete authority over who had the license to publish and what type of information was being allowed into the public sphere. The Mass Media Council (initially known as the Committee on Mass Media) was established in October 1972 by Secretary of Information Francisco Tatad and Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, who would later lead the revolt against the Marcos regime in 1986. Under Presidential Decree No. 36, the council was officially established and given the authority to issue media operating licenses under the indirect supervision of Marcos.

The Philippine government also attempted to influence the freedom of the press in the neighboring nations. A Philippine proposal drafted in 1978 suggested that any publication banned in a member nation of ASEAN should be automatically banned in other nations. While most of ASEAN members rejected the proposal outright, the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia agreed in May 1980 to a cooperative news exchange program (Youngblood 1981: 715). Marcos

utilized his domination of the media to propagandize his authority and elevate his wife Imelda into the international spotlight. Imelda is most notoriously known for spending the Philippine economic profits on a prolific collection of shoes and accessories amidst national economic woes.

Although Marcos called an end to martial law in 1981, the liberalization of the Philippine press was incremental. Marcos' opponents began to implement plans to publish a newspaper and establish a broadcast network. Marcos abolished the media councils to allow Filipino media industries to grow independently of government control. The Broadcast Media Council, however, announced that it was still the reigning broadcast authority in the Philippines (Youngblood 1987: 727). Although Marcos relaxed the restrictions, the regime maintained strict control over the dissemination of information to the public via institutional licensing boards and regulatory agencies. Intense centralization of the mass media accompanied the Marcos regime's stern grip on the Filipino society. Marcos' media became the source of his legitimacy, and state-created propaganda and news were framed to the regime's liking.

Marcos chose to liberalize the regime's stated policies in light of the popular unrest in the nation. The economic disparities that continued to plague the Philippines caused the population to coalesce against the Marcos government. Business elites joined peasants and deserters in the streets to force Marcos out of office. The cessation of martial law and the allowance of more liberalized media policies signaled to the Filipino population that the leader recognized the inevitable deterioration of the regime and led the population to more effective coordination under the opposition leaders led by Benigno Aquino.

The ninth constitutional revision in January 1981, which accompanied the cessation of martial law, brought about changes to the constitution that solidified Marcos' rule. Marcos

eliminated the role of the vice-president within the executive branch and implemented a fifty year old minimum age requirement to run for the presidential office. This coincided with the return of his main competition, exiled senator Benigno Aquino. The symbolic election called by President Marcos in 1984 to demonstrate his willingness to participate in democratic institutions (predominately displayed for the international media) occasioned the first coordinated, public demonstration by democratic coalitions opposing the reelection of Marcos.

The communist-organized National Democratic Front mobilized support from students, the middle class and human rights groups. The Catholic clergy along with leftists and democrats joined together to boycott the 1984 election. Although the peaceful boycott of the election underscored the people's increasing weariness of the Marcos' regime, when Marcos won reelection with 62 percent of the vote, the democratic opposition was rendered ineffective and the protest polarized Filipino society further (Overholt 1986).

By the mid-1980s, it was clear that the Marcos' authoritarian reform government had become an oppressive dictatorship that was hostile toward national development and did not benefit the nation directly. A series of bad economic decisions, predominately the selling off of Philippine industrial sectors to Marcos' friends and family, alienated the Filipino business community due to the failing national economy. In the fall of 1982, United States' banks began to warn the Philippine Central Bank that immediate rescheduling of funds was required to avoid an economic crisis. The official reserves declined by \$1.4 billion between December 1982 and July 1983 (Overholt 1986). The Philippine financial crisis of 1983 established the slippery slope toward revolution. Yet it was the blatant and broadcasted assassination of beloved Senator Benigno Aquino upon setting foot inside the nation that transformed social indignation into political action.

President Marcos viewed the return of Senator Aquino from exile as a threat to his power. Aquino had actively spoken against the anti-democratic Marcos regime. In an editorial that was written days before his departure to the Philippines and published in the *New York Times* on Tuesday, August 25, 1983, Aquino emphasized the necessity for democracy in the Philippines: “the battle being fought in the Philippines is between those who have been mesmerized by the ‘efficiency’ of authoritarianism and those who still hold that democracy with all its flaws and inefficiency is man’s best hope for betterment and progress” (Aquino 1983: A23). Aquino understood that Marcos’ attempts to preserve his authority tainted the prospects of democracy emerging organically.

The Marcos regime explained away the death of Aquino by using the rogue communist attack justification. The alleged murderer was killed by the government within moments of the assassination. However, the regime was never able to give a detailed description of the murder creating suspicions about its involvement in the murder while igniting a revolt against the Marcos administration. The funeral procession for Aquino turned into a massive demonstration against Marcos and a show of support for the mother of government-accused murderer Rolando Galman.

The Filipino public refused to believe the Marcos’ tale of the Aquino assassination which became evident in multiple mass demonstrations that took place afterward, most notably the funeral procession for Aquino in November 1983, where “about 10,000 people, carrying banners identifying themselves with 14 organizations of doctors, dentists, lawyers and other professional groups, marched through the Makati financial district” (Trumbull 1983: 5). The Aquino funeral turned into one of the largest anti-government demonstrations allowed by the Marcos government since the declaration of martial law.

During a Reagan-sanctioned visit in October 1985, Senator Paul Laxalt, (R-Nevada) warned Marcos that the domestic and economic health of the Philippines were in jeopardy and the president himself was out of touch with the Filipino society (Keller 1985). Marcos prepared for the election that would end his empire, in order to appease the disenchanted Reagan administration that was busily fighting communist and authoritarian regimes worldwide. While Marcos manipulated the mass media in attempt to steal the election, the element of interest in the 1986 Filipino election is the manner in which the broadcast media was utilized by the opposition to organize the People's Power Revolution. The citizens were mobilized via information communication technology in the form of broadcast radio that was organized by the democratic opposition and disseminated nationwide.

### **The Revolution and the Role of 'Radio Veritas'**

Anti-Marcos sentiment in the 1980s swelled with the deterioration of the national economy and his unrelenting will to hold onto authority. The opposition forces became an amalgamation of normally dissenting coalitions who generally opposed the Marcos brand of governance. The stealing of the election on February 7, 1986 ignited a three-day revolt that deposed the Marcos administration. The socio-economic events leading up to the election were clear indicators that the results would be transformative. The entrance of Corazon Aquino into the presidential election gave voice to the opposition forces and introduced their catalyst for change.

The February 7<sup>th</sup> election occurred with predictable violence and fraudulent results; "according to the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), at least 3.3 million people were systematically kept from exercising their right to vote, 91 people were killed in election day violence" (Villegas 1987: 195). On February 15, Marcos announced himself as the



winner of the election, provoking a storm of dissent among the populace. Most notably, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines initiated an organizational campaign of the citizens using the Catholic-owned and operated Radio Veritas to reach the masses. The next day, Corazon Aquino held a protest rally in Rizal Park in Manila and with nearly a million in attendance she called upon the people to organize on February 25 against Marcos' stolen election. (*NYT* 1986: A12).

The People's Power Revolution officially began on the evening of February 22, 1986, with the resignation of the Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile and Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Lieutenant General Fidel V. Ramos and their collective call for Marcos to turn over the rightful powers of the presidency to Aquino. Radio Veritas and Aquino challenged the Filipino people to support and mobilize in defense of the rebels, which included units of military fighting the Marcos regime. Cardinal Jamie Sin, operator of Radio Veritas encouraged the people to support the Ramos-Enrile coup and emphasized that the people chose "peaceful change" in the February 7 election (*NYT* 1986: A12).

President Marcos declared a state of emergency on February 24, ordering a national curfew. Marcos, recognizing the power of the broadcast radio, ordered the closing of all radio stations. The military was instructed to take necessary precautions to impede the revolution. Contrary to Marcos' unenforced orders, however, Radio Veritas continued to transmit opposition messages encouraging the people to stand strong in the streets against Marcos' attempts to break-up demonstrations. Veritas was sabotaged and temporarily put out of operation for the evening of February 24, in the heat of the revolution, but was returned to power shortly after the attack. The Filipino people mobilized on the streets of Manila in protest of continued Marcos rule (*NYT* 1986: A12).

The revolution percolated over the course of three days. Finally on February 25, 1986, both Corazon Aquino and President Marcos scheduled their respective inaugurations while thousands of rebel Filipinos defied Marcos' curfew and continued to surround the captured defense ministry. Aquino was inaugurated along with her running mate Salvador Laurel and immediately appointed the regime opponents Enrile and Ramos back to their positions held under the Marcos regime. Although the Marcos inauguration continued as scheduled, television coverage of the event was interrupted, symbolizing the abrupt end to the regime.

After days of continued battle with the rebel Filipinos in the streets and the crumbling of his military, Marcos with the aid of former Senator Laxalt was given sanctuary by the U.S. and relocated to Honolulu. The "Laxalt Doctrine" initiated a new procedure in American international relations in which authoritarian leaders are given asylum from the often violent deposing of their administration (Bolton 2000). The Filipino oppositional forces, with the organization offered by Radio Veritas, swiftly defeated the illegitimate Marcos administration with minimal violence. Laxalt's international version of American diplomacy provided a deposed authoritarian leader with an excellent retirement package.

The legacy of American political practices in the Philippines, such as press freedom, but most importantly the appearance of consistent elections had been relatively successful before the Marcos' „New Society' project. Until the election of Marcos, the nation held presidential elections every four years and its media institutions remained relatively autonomous of the government. These democratic liberties had allowed the Filipino people to recognize economic oppression and the deprivation of their rights which contributed to the demise of a dictator. The preexisting Filipino constitution, while influenced heavily by the United States, after amendments offered by Marcos established self-interested prerequisites for becoming president

which led to the blatant stealing of the 1986 election amidst a failing economy. The self-interested amending of the constitution was the catalyst the people needed.

The use of the Catholic-owned Radio Veritas by Marcos' opposition allowed them to disseminate information about the Aquino assassination and to organize of the people in the streets of Manila. The Filipinos were able to reinforce the Enrile-Ramos takeover of the defense ministry and stop the movement of Marcos' militia throughout the capital city. The entirety of the Filipino society, including business, government and military elite, turned away from the Marcos administration and collectively mobilized to create a new democratic republic.

The unity observed in the People's Power Revolution is unmatched by the following case studies. In very few observable cases has a society coalesced around the common goal of not only ridding the nation of an authoritarian government that was fleecing the nation of its wealth but of crafting a more durable transition to a democratic regime that served elements of the population, not just some. The Filipino people were not subject to "the electoral fallacy" (Schmitter & Karl 1991) or the urgency of now which plagues many revolutionary movements. The Filipinos had a plan of action for deposing a dictator, reinstating a democratic form of government, and had institutionalizing their newly founded democracy.

It is arguably because the medium (Vertias) the opposition used to mobilize the population was transcendent among all the Filipino classes and involved every sect (cleavage) of the society that the people were successful not only in eliminating Marcos from power, but establishing a form of government which was conducive to the long-term goals of the opposition movement for governance. However, the Chinese case provides an excellent pre-information revolution example of the perpetuation of the Marxist interpretation of class/identity-based social movements. While Marx argues that mobilization of the classes against existing power could be

successful in defeating tyranny, the events at Tiananmen Square are a clear example of how more than one class must rise against the powers that be, in order to create a successful and meaningful political transformation.

## **Tiananmen Square**

The 1989 revolution in Tiananmen Square, China included similar elements of societal repression and economic turmoil that had become institutionalized by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The political organization of the Chinese academic elite and the mobilization of other contentious factions within society contributed to the international awareness of the protest that escalated into a harsh regime crackdown. The Chinese populace, mindful of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the People's Republic, was poised to celebrate and emphasize the importance of institutions within the society. Nevertheless, the student-mobilized rebellion at Tiananmen Square failed to engage the entirety of the Chinese population.

The Chinese political and economic balance had actually shifted in 1984 with The Resolution of the Economic System Reform by the Central Committee (Dittmer 1990). The resolution mandated a substantial restructuring of the economy, from planned to market, without providing the safety nets necessary to sustain the massive population during the ensuing inflationary period. The CCP resolved that price reform would be necessary to establish market „discipline’ and in 1985 the CCP decided to “decontrol the price of the means of production” (Shi 1990: 1190).

The reformation of the Chinese price code initiated a wave of activity among prominent political families to establish intermediary firms through which producers would sell products well below the market price. The firm would resell those products in the open market, a practice

known as “official profiteering” (Shi 1990; Deng 1997). The shifting balance between power and money created a new class of Chinese political leaders. These “third echelon cadres” reflected the corruption in the Chinese political society that entitled the first-generation of every Politburo member to have at least one offspring promoted to the bureau-chief level of bureaucracy (Shi 1990). This blatant and procedural corruption aggravated the populace and led to small-scale student protesting to pressure the government to address its grievances (Dittmer 1990).

Chinese Communist Party Secretary Hu Yaobang offered proposals calling for the punishment of profiteers, which included many family members of party leaders. Conservative Chinese officials along with economic reform leaders feared that Hu’s proposals would become effective and imprison their family members that participated in profiteering. These forces came together politically to dismiss Hu in 1987 for failing to stop student demonstrations against the third echelon.

Economic dissatisfaction was exacerbated in the latter part of 1988 when the reform coalition leader Zhao Ziyang came into power and attempted to deregulate retail prices, setting off an “inflationary binge” and precipitating a wave of financial panic among the population (Dittmer 1990: 26). The distribution of wealth among social classes was altered due to the reforms. Peasants had been oppressed in society, and when reforms were instituted the pattern of distribution had shifted and they became less affected by inflation. Factory owners and managers were able under the new reforms to reinvest their profits within their own establishment and workers were offered high incentives to increase productivity (Shi 1990).

For the economically privileged social classes, intellectuals and government workers, living standards dropped considerably under the high inflation. Intellectuals lacked employment opportunities, while government employees also had to live on shrinking wages due to inflation.

Those officials who were able opted to employ their political power to produce additional sources of wealth. Directly following the institution of economic reforms that severely cut the living standard of the intellectual class was a 1988 State Educational Committee initiative that left students responsible for their own post-graduate job assignments, which previously had been a duty of the state.

The student job assignment was established by the Chinese government to control students' activities and behaviors through a basic carrot and stick method. Those students who did well and did not cause trouble for the government would receive preferred job assignments while „bad' students often were given village assignments (Shi 1990). The students, who were now free to organize and protest against the government without fear of retaliation through job assignments, became concerned that only the children of prominent families would receive quality job opportunities.

The CCP under the leadership of Mao adopted a policy of “redemption to seduce intellectuals into cooperating with the regime” (Shi 1990: 1193). Under the redemption policy, the Chinese government employed academics at high salaries in order to contain and control their knowledge. As the economic circumstances of the intellectual class worsened, their opposition to the government grew. The government assault on the intellectuals' privileges became the catalyst of the 1989 revolution.

## **The Student Revolution**

The events that led to the massacre in Tiananmen Square began on April 15, 1989, with the death of the beloved student-sympathizer and former Party Secretary Hu Yaobang. His death caused the newly energized students to violate rules against demonstration and memorializing mandates. Pictures of the dead leader were displayed in Tiananmen, which was strictly

prohibited by the CCP. The student revolution was made official on April 22, 1989, when the new regime under Zhao Ziyang prohibited hundreds of thousands of Chinese citizens from entering Tiananmen during Hu's memorial service in the Great Hall of People (Shi 1990). Thousands of the Chinese students held a sit-in over the night of April 21 and remained in the Square to protest the ban on their freedom. Finally, on April 24, the students announced a strike of classes for an "indefinite duration and the establishment of a national students' federation preparatory committee" (Dittmer 1990: 32).

The students placed demands upon the CCP establishment that seemed to shake the party to its core. First and most threatening to the government was the demand to permit the students to form their own organizations independently from the CCP, yet still be fully recognized by the government (Shi 1990). This was a contentious idea for CCP leaders who had held strict control over student organizations. The students also demanded that the government lift the ban on the news media to allow a free flow of information instead of the regular government-sanctioned coverage.

Since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, the Chinese government has held tight control over its media institutions, restricting the flow of accurate information to its people and eliminating its people's right to form associations, resulting in the elimination of vocal expression of opposition toward the government. According to the official CCP doctrine, "the news media is an instrument of the state and its function is to mobilize people to carry out the regime's agenda" (Shi 1990: 1195). The CCP controlled the flow and content of information modes to prevent any outside interests or other party affiliations from spreading oppositional ideas amongst the Chinese people. This restriction on the amount of information readily

available to the citizens prevented the student movement from gaining the support of the entire Chinese community.

The Chinese press existed in a bifurcated state: the party-censored media and the non-party alternative media that distributed information independently (and illegally) to the population. The party-established media existed solely to legitimize the role of the CCP in society and subsequently, the menagerie of non-party dominated publications that were licensed to produce their own “specialized” papers, equating them to an alternative Chinese media outlet (Akhavan-Majid 2004: 557). Authorization to accept advertisements was given to the media in 1979. The policy was intended to emphasize the power of the media as the primary means of state communication with the masses and stimulate modernization (Lynch 1999).

The significant result of the CCP domination of the press was the creation and rapid diffusion of the various non-party newspapers to provide the alternative information that citizens were not able to receive via mainstream Chinese press outlets. There was an obvious drop in readership; between 1980 and 1996, the circulation of the *People's Daily*, the CCP's favored publication, dropped from eight million to two million readers (Huang 2001: 446). The state-controlled and censored media acted as the propaganda machine which disenchanting many of the Chinese people, in particular the student organizations during the build-up to Tiananmen. The unfettered flow of information in Chinese society was squelched by the CCP's necessity to organize and filter popular knowledge of government activities that might have provoked opposition.

The students made no effort to include the peasant-laboring class, which was outside of the student communication network (student newspapers, informational meetings held on campuses, campus radio stations). Peasants and workers were reluctant to protest a government



that was actually allowing them to live a sustainable life. Student organized groups such as the Beijing University Student Association and the Dialogue Delegation mobilized students at their respective institutions, organizing meetings, setting agendas and supervising print and broadcast information technologies. Throughout the duration of the movement, however, they too narrowly focused their fight within the realm of academia (Guthrie 1995).

The various and intense acts of political theatre in the Beijing streets were the most direct dialogue the students had with the masses. The direct engagement and deliberate action involved with political protest theatre stirred on-lookers to join the mass movement in the streets. In lieu of traditional outlets (newspapers, magazines, radio/television stations) reporting on the build-up and massacre at Tiananmen Square, the students used the tool of mobilization in the streets to engage other sectors of the population. According to Esherick and Wasserstorm, political theatre or the theatrical display of culturally powerful symbolic messages, became *the* important mechanism of mass communication and mobilization in the Chinese movement of 1989 (Esherick & Wasserstorm 1992).

The government's perception of the student revolution evolved through three phases over the course of three months. Suppression was the first mode of the Chinese government (which in Zhao's absence was led by conservative „hardliners' of the CCP, the most vocal being Deng Xiaoping). The government believed that the student revolution was just that, involving only students and that the great majority of workers and farmers were on the side of the regime. On April 26, an editorial published in the *People's Daily* expressed the sentiments of Deng Xiaoping and the CCP warning that “a very small number of people who crave nothing short of nationwide chaos are trying to stir up trouble on the spot or behind the scenes” (Shi, 1990: 1197). Deng then

ordered over 20,000 soldiers to Beijing, sending the message that extended student protests would be punished to the highest degree.

Deciding not to heed the call of Deng to halt the protests, the students organized the largest demonstration against the government in PRC history on April 27, 1989; an estimated 100,000 students marched for 17 hours in the streets of Beijing, breaking through police and military barriers. The protesters were clear in their intentions not to blatantly oppose the government and call for the overthrow of the CCP but to show overall support for the basic tenets of communism. Slogans and posters showing support for their government such as “Support Socialism and support the Communist Party” were ubiquitous, showing the government that the students were not out for a regime transformation (Shi 1990: 1197).

The Chinese officials were overwhelmed at the size of the demonstration and had deployed insufficient unarmed troops to handle the protests in the streets. While the government did not immediately crackdown against the student protest, it also did not make any immediate political concessions to the protesters. This ended the first phase of Tiananmen events. Students perceived the threat of government retaliation for their protests as unlikely, while the government viewed the actions of the citizens as an empty protest which was evident as it deployed unarmed troops to resolve the protests. The inaction by the Chinese government led the students to overestimate their political power, encouraged by the government’s allowing of the media to cover the student movement in early May. The students viewed this as a victorious concession.

The second escalation of the student movement began in mid-May. After the media concession and the return of Zhao, the students changed the course of their protest by employing peaceful methods, such as the massive hunger strike that began on May 13, in order to pressure the government to respond to their main demand - their right to organize associations that were

grounded in free speech and freedom of expression. The CCP concern was palpable at this stage in the game. The Gorbachev summit that was scheduled to encourage cooperation between the two nations began on May 15, 1989, and threatened to steal international press coverage away from the student protest yet ended up emphasizing the Chinese domestic conflict to the international community. It was during the summit that the CCP decided to take a stand against the protest. On May 19 martial law was officially declared in a public meeting in which Secretary General Zhao failed to show up and was formally stripped of his political power by the CCP leadership because of the concessions he had made to the student movement (Dittmer 1990).

However, the expulsion of Zhao did not slow the movement. On May 20, when troops headed to the square to disengage the protests, they were stopped by a massive outpouring of citizens with an estimated two million people filling the streets of Beijing (Dittmer 1990). For the next two weeks, the students dominated the Square, and while throughout the duration of the sit-in their numbers dwindled, they maintained enough dissenters to cause the government to hold off on violent persecution. Yet again the students warded off a showdown with the CCP due to the unwillingness of the Chinese government to use violence against its citizens, particularly under the watch of the entire international community, which was facilitated by Gorbachev's visit. The students made no political gains during this second round of protests. The government refused to recognize or hold dialogue with any student associations, setting up the finality of the Tiananmen Square revolution.

The student revolution came to a violent end on the night of June 3, 1989; the new leadership under Deng Xiaoping sanctioned the use of violent attacks to suppress and finally stop the protest and infiltration of Tiananmen Square. The CCP had at least two reasons for utilizing

force to end the three month long student-mobilized saga: the ineffectiveness of the declaration of martial law to dissuade protesters and the need to enforce respect for the existing power structure (Dittmer 1990; Shi 1990; Deng 1997). The concentrated military effort in Tiananmen Square caused approximately 1000 deaths, mostly of citizens who attempted to block the military advancement. The number of arrested revolutionaries “exceeded 2500 in early July, but unofficial estimates put it at over 10,000; the official list of executions at last count was around 26” (Dittmer 1990: 34).

### **The Chinese Media: Keeping the State in Control**

The Chinese media have been an institutionalized pillar of the state since the establishment of the People’s Republic in 1949. The press existed as a direct outlet of state-sponsored propaganda in the Mao era that used the Chinese media to impose a top-down flow of information to the masses and lead them toward acceptance of socialist policies. Thus the media was not allowed to report on inner turmoil or the politics behind the socialist advancement; the press was sanctioned to report favorably on the agenda of the Communist Party (Berlin 1993). The most relaxed media control in history directly preceded the events at Tiananmen Square when Deng Xiaoping relaxed media controls in 1982 to allow the internal media wider reporting opportunities. This relaxation of media restrictions resulted in an advertising boom and cries for journalism laws that would protect freedom of the press (MacKinnon 1997).

The CCP’s adoption of liberalized media policies did not have a lasting effect on the nation socially. China eventually became one of the world’s technological leaders in terms of new innovation and research design in the latter years of the information revolution once the economic sector was allowed to flourish. The national policy of cultural and social indoctrination imposed via the top-down flow of news and policy attitudes controlled information access in

Chinese society. As a result, the research and development sector of the economy was isolated from the similar international programs of the time because of restrictive Chinese social policy attitudes. Chinese leaders recognized the stagnant economic climate and barriers to innovation brought upon by the Cultural Revolution. In reaction, they began to implement policies that fostered scientific development.

The "Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the Reform of the Science and Technology Management System," released in 1985, loosened up the Chinese research and development sector. The 863 strategic research program was established in 1986 and focused on the nation's biotechnology, nanotechnology, information, and automation technology. China embraced information technology development while simultaneously depriving its citizens the freedom to use the innovations (DiCapua 1998). The resulting international relations term „Chinese democracy’ summarized a situation in which a regime adopted liberalizing policies that had a positive impact on economic/business development without affecting the political arrangements.

The Chinese investment in research and development technology sector began indirectly, in 1978 with the government's decision to open its market to global technologies and new innovations. Foreign imports coming in at the time were running on satellite technology and fiber optics while the Chinese technologies were running on low-speed analog. This open policy, combined with the nation's underperforming research and development sector of the economy, led many multinational corporations to court China in hopes of partnering with the nation to develop its high-tech industry while capitalizing on new innovations that were to come from its students (DiCapua 1998). Imports to China improved significantly with the introduction of the

„open policy;’ machinery and other technological imports increased eightfold from \$2 billion (U.S.) in 1978 to over \$16 billion by 1989 (Ho 1997: 85).

Yet the boost in technological imports to China did not soften the CCP’s strict control of the citizens’ access to new innovations or increased information. The CCP kept a state monopoly on the broadcast media outlets in China with the introduction of economic reforms in 1978. The government also revived Beijing Television, whose regular broadcasting rights had been suspended in 1967 due to the “Cultural Revolution” which embraced a “make revolution – stop working” mentality and led to an essential shutdown of the national infrastructure (Miller 2003: 360). The CCP introduced a new national television network, China Central Television (CCTV) which quickly became the voice of the nation. CCTV acted as the state-controlled news media, reporting on events deemed newsworthy by the CCP. This effectively limited the public’s information and knowledge about their government, including potential revolutions and policies that would be adverse to the government’s interest. The ownership of televisions improved dramatically after the lift in media control; in 1978 every 100 urban families had only 0.59 color set. The number increased a hundredfold during the 1980s (Cooper et. al 1989).

The Chinese have adopted a unique policy of information cooperatives that adhere to and are extensions of the Central Party’s authority. As in the case of China Central Television, the state maintained control over the broadcast radio station of Central People’s Radio as well as the newspaper, the People’s Daily, which is the daily publication distributed amongst the population. Although the regime offered and implemented a liberalized media policy, the CCP maintained control over which information was allowed to become public knowledge. The students that would peaceably demonstrate against certain government policies (careful to respect the regime’s right to exist and affirming their consent to still be governed, albeit with minor tweaks)

were given a major advantage when Chinese journalists were allowed to cover the doomed revolution. However, not even local media coverage was sufficient to mobilize other sectors of the population around the students' plight and their demands for increased liberalization in society. The Chinese demonstrations relied upon state-censored media institutions that advocated the regime's agenda, and in so doing fostered unwillingness on the part of the business and working classes to join in the student revolution (DiCapua 1998).

### **Mobilized Movement Failure**

The student-initiated mobilization at Tiananmen Square was a highly sophisticated and well-operated movement. However, the students failed to read many of the political attitudes of the government and certainly failed in their engagement of the entirety of the Chinese society. While the students' demands for increased democratic institutions and an end to economic policies that benefitted narrow elites were shared by other social classes within Chinese society, no other social classes were in such dire economic circumstances to make them willing to fight for any political changes to the status quo. The students made use of available communication outlets, the student radio, university newspapers and concentrated meetings on campuses around the nation. The chosen forums of public awareness hampered the students' ability to send a broad message to the masses. Instead, they engaged in a form of elitist protesting, mobilizing only the students and academics who were most harmed by the CCP's policy changes.

The acts of „political theater' did engage many ordinary Chinese citizens. Unfortunately for the students, however, there was never a clearly defined engagement of labor unions or peasant groups. Although the demands of the students would have increased the rights for other social groups as well, the weakest point of the student revolution was its clear overestimation of its political power after the return of soft-liner Zhao, who conceded the relative freedom of the

press demand. This was the turning point that led to the students' demise, believing that if they fought harder and put more pressure on the CCP they would emerge victorious with all their agenda intact. However, the hunger strike maneuver only angered and embarrassed the CCP while it hosted Gorbachev. This delay and stalling of the movement led the new class in politics to persuade the government hardliners to dispose of Zhao and use more violent methods to end the protests.

Once the CCP decided to engage in violence to undermine and dissolve the movement there were not enough protesters to put up a fight against the military onslaught. This is where the failure to adequately mobilize the masses doomed the student movement (Shi 1990; Dittmer 1990; Guthrie 1995; Deng 1997). Because the students did not organize a more democratically inclusive movement, the government read and understood that the majority of the populace did not stand with the students and eventually the government used this knowledge to its advantage.

### **Comment on a Similar Revolution**

Although the 1979 Iran Revolution was a decade before the student mobilization at Tiananmen Square, the opposition leader, (Khomeini) utilized the available technologies of the time to coordinate an effective revolution that resulted in the desired regime change. Khomeini employed cassette tapes to disseminate his accusations of the existing regime's devotion to westernization and secularism in his exiled state. While the Iranian Revolution was certainly not a democratizing movement, its political actors were able to effectively organize the population from the rural areas of the nation, tactics which have now generated broad support for Ahmadinejad in the urban centers of the nation against the western conformity advocated by Shah Reza. There were many innovations that could have been used to move the student's



message outside of the „ivory tower’ realm of communication in the efforts at Tiananmen Square. However, the Chinese population was widely ignored in organizational efforts until acts of political theatre engaged them indirectly. The actions of the student activists did not necessarily establish support for the cause, but only a dynamic of actors caught up in a semi-revolutionary moment.

Although the Iranian government never established a clear monopoly on the state’s media, there was an obvious bias toward the establishment, causing public information to be skewed. Religious opposition became the prominent mobilizing organization in the revolution; when in 1977 the press published a series of „open letters to the Shah’ that questioned his governing practices, this was a test of what the Shah was willing to permit. Aside from the occasional risqué article denouncing the Shah, the citizens relied primarily upon the traditional modes of communication/information transfer, as exemplified in mosques and bazaars, to express their opposition to the Shah’s anti-traditionalist agenda.

Khomeini began to publicize his dissent against the government from exile first in Iraq and then in Paris, utilizing a large network of revolutionaries who were predominately students distributing speeches on audiocassette tapes. The cassettes on which Khomeini called for the removal of the Shah “became the main form of revolutionary communication between the revolutionary religious leadership outside of Iran and the growing religious opposition movement inside the country” (Al-Marashi 2004). It was the underground, opposition media that mobilized and galvanized the movement that ultimately ousted the monarch on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979. The ideology and message of Khomeini was disseminated in audiocassettes, leaflets, ad-hoc alternative media outlets and radical displays of graffiti along the walls of the community.

These media tactics became the catalyst for the mass revolution, playing a central role in building popular support for radical change in Iranian political life.

The use of the available media technologies and outlets in the 1979 Iranian Revolution led to the successful ousting of the deeply unpopular Shah and an equally unpopular monarchy. The flow of information, in combination with the need for traditional insulation of religious and social norms within the nation against the Shah's reforms, empowered the citizens in a revolution that reinvented the nation as an Islamic republic. The type of information technologies available to mobilize the Iranian citizens against the Shah required a much more intense level of social interaction than the technologies utilized in the 1989 revolution. It required the community of opposition groups to interact with the citizens to solidify the protest.

Although many revolutionary theories stress the importance of elite support in successful movements, the events in China at Tiananmen Square are a clear example of the necessity of organizing the working and peasant classes. With broad support, as seen in the People's Power Revolution where the business class joined the poor in the streets to oust the Marcos regime, acts of revolution have been able to achieve political goals.

### **Effects of Pre-Information Revolution Mobilization**

Among the differences between the People's Power Revolution and Tiananmen Square uprising, the critical variable was the level of inclusiveness with the respect to the significant sectors of society. The People's Power Revolution was markedly more inclusive than the student revolution at Tiananmen Square. The entirety of the Filipino population had been exposed to Marcos' failed economic policies, and at the final stages of the People's Power Revolution the

entire Filipino community, including members of Marcos' own government and military, had joined the movement.

The declaration of martial law in Filipino society and the shift toward economic policies that solely benefitted Marcos' cronies, led the nation to mandate democratic change with the election of Corazon Aquino in 1987. The utilization of Radio Veritas to organize all of the Filipino citizens undoubtedly aided the movement and brought citizen activists to the streets. The governmental institutions in the Philippines were relatively more democratic than in China; citizens were able to organize and engage in marches, including the funeral procession for Aquino.

The CCP foundation in Chinese politics was institutionalized and revered by the Chinese people; this much was evident in the student revolution, which aimed not to replace the regime, but to alter the way it governed. Because the students did not have a clear majority consensus on the demands they placed upon the government, it was not necessary for the establishment to take them seriously. The students neglected the majority of Chinese society, and this was the major weakness of the Tiananmen revolution. The ICTs that were utilized by the Chinese students only reached other university students and those living in the urban areas of Beijing. They failed to engage rural peasants, farmers and the working class, which are the groups that typically play significant roles in successful revolutions. The elitist structure of the Tiananmen Square movement for increased democracy embodied an internal contradiction. By excluding major portions of the populace, the students failed to grasp the democratic ideals for which they were protesting.

Arguably, the successful and inclusive use of communication technology in the Philippines led to the mobilization of the entire population. However, the dissatisfaction with the

Marcos government was widespread, while in Tiananmen Square only a select and socially distinct group of the population opposed (and were affected by) new government policies. Seemingly, one necessary condition for a successful pre-information revolution protest is the inclusive mobilization of the populace and its grievances.

The quasi-American democratic foundation within the Philippines assisted the People's Power Revolution because the citizens were acclimated to a certain degree of freedom and civil liberties. The CCP stringently governed the People's Republic of China since its establishment in 1949. Citizens were controlled by various policies that prevented them from organizing against the government or forming private associations. Political mobilization in China was confined to universities and student organizations which produced an intellectual revolution that fizzled out due to the lack of inclusivity. The information revolution that followed the case studies just explored has expanded the available technologies and the political opportunity structure for global citizens to effectively coordinate protests against their government.

The rise of globalization and the emergence of ICTs have allowed global citizens to connect and engage in revolutionary movements in more efficient ways. New technologies accompanied with internet (and wireless) capability have created publics everywhere that have the potential to be more aware, educated and politically transformative. In the following sections of this thesis, I will explore revolutions initiated in the information age and discuss the impact of new ICTs on citizen mobilization efforts in terms of successful political transformation.

## CHAPTER FIVE: Post-Information Revolution Case Studies

The rise of ‚PC-ism‘ (affordable personal computer ownership) became an international movement in the 1980s with the introduction of the IBM PC (Model 5150) in August 1981 followed by the Apple Macintosh in 1984, which was the first mouse-driven computer. Early models of the personal computer spanning from the mid-1960s were devoid of user-compatible systems and were produced for technical and professional uses and cost up to \$10,000 (Allan 2001). The diffusion of personal computers and the networking innovations that followed led to the blossoming of globalization and the global market economy (Friedman 2000; Castells 2001; 2005; Gimmler 2001; Cairncross 1997). The introduction and diffusion of internet capabilities in 1994 instituted a new global medium and eventually a standard of communication, cooperation and coordination beyond their local control. The citizens of the international community openly embraced the intertwining innovations that have accompanied globalization. This would logically occur when a regime understands the importance of adopting information technologies in governance and educating the populace in their use. The introduction of the network society has emphasized the porosity of the traditional boundaries and facilitated new world institutions that engage global citizens via internet and mobile ICTs.

In terms of revolutionary theory, the information age transformed the terms and conditions of civic engagement. Problems that were once dealt with at the national level now have transnational significance. Issues of autonomy, civil and human rights, energy consumption and the environment have become hot-topic international concerns and have initiated a spirit of humanitarian involvement. The colored revolutions in the Soviet bloc nations and the increased anti-globalization protests became internationalized local issues as the Western media consistently reported on the grassroots movements for democracy. In nations like Moldova

(2008), Georgia (2003) and Kyrgyzstan (2005, 2010), political actors have embraced new internet technologies, like Twitter, to mobilize scattered populations (predominantly in capital cities) for a democratic goal. Contemporary revolutionary movements and their leaders understand that “the internet has become of the most important new tools for activists involved in non-violent resistance – they use it to promote their message, to network and organize clandestinely, and to evade censorship and communicate with the world situations where the government controls the media or shuts down alternative outlets” (Wasley 2007: 52).

Similar to the Philippines, the Orange Revolution was a lesson in revolutions or transitions achieved in the backdrop of significant elections which “are more often symptoms of the problems of hybrid and authoritarian regimes, rather than solutions to their ills” (Kalandadze & Orenstein 2009: 1404). This ideal is known as the “electoral fallacy,” (Schmitter & Karl 1991) and while electoral revolutions may be successful in causing a certain degree of democratic change within a nation, the revolutionary aspects and demands of the citizens are extremely narrow and do not address the foundational grievances in national governance (Schmitter & Karl 1991). While there may be some democratic changes permitted to appease the dissenting populace in the electoral process, instant or at least relatively quick gratification via the election mechanism is typically not enough to force overwhelming and lasting democratization. This deficiency could explain the recent digression in governance back to a more conservative Russian-backed administration in the 2009 Ukrainian election.

According to Samuel Huntington, globalization has brought on an international ‘third wave’ as the increased availability of information to citizens has encouraged a wave of democratization at least in certain institutions; “thanks in large part to the impact of global communications, by the mid-1980s the image of a ‘worldwide democratic revolution’

undoubtedly became a reality” (Huntington 1991: 102). The democratic ideals emphasize the freedom and rights of the individual, which is intensified by the availability of mobile technologies that have become synonymous with instant revolutions/movements. The post-information revolution protests in this study have incorporated the international media, and in the successful case utilized new internet technologies to mobilize support for their cause. As Cottle (2008) has noted, “it is in and through the news media especially that the politics of protest and dissent is now generally conveyed to wider audiences, and it is by this same means that wider support and legitimacy for their actions and aims can be potentially won or lost” (854).

### **The Orange Revolution: Another Electoral Demand for Democracy**

The history of the Ukraine has been entwined with Russia ever since its 18<sup>th</sup> century absorption into the Russian Empire. Even following its eventual independence with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Ukraine adhered to the tenets of state authoritarianism and continued a legacy of oppression. The trajectory of events leading to the 2004 Orange Revolution originated with the people’s continued oppression and rampant corruption inflicted by their government. Due to its fractionalized national identity and relative newness, modern Ukrainian political history has been marked by the pull between pro-Western democratic candidates and the safety of the status quo. The Ukraine nation existed as a pseudo-democracy, amalgamating the basic tenets of the Soviet-style communism that governed prior to independence with superficially democratic institutions, particularly by adhering to economic theories that promoted privatization.

The era of the non-violent revolution began in the late-1980s with the Velvet Revolution on the streets of Prague in the spirit of democratizing preexisting institutions. Arguably, the new

wave of democratization/globalization coincided with the rise in non-violent revolutionary tactics. The efficacy of the movement was enhanced by new technological innovations. Adoption and effective application of new information communication technologies have essentially reduced the need for citizen actors to engage in violence in order to create change in political revolutions. Ideological demonstrations are highly organized and mobilization is voluntarily inclusive, allowing more pockets of potential opposition to join the movement. According to Kaufmann (2005), “over the last 30 years, the stereotype of mass uprising has radically changed...much more common now are hordes of unarmed people, often young, filling the streets to voice their hopes and wishes to their countrymen, their leaders and perhaps most importantly, to the world watching on television” (6).

### **Ukrainian Politics: The Fragmented Build-Up to Orange**

The deeply interconnected (and in recent years, hostile) Ukrainian-Soviet/Russian relations played a major part in the discontent among the Ukrainian population that came to a head with the Orange Revolution. The Ukraine is divided between the southern and eastern regions that made up parts of Imperial Russia, and remain pro-Russian. While western and central Ukraine were less influenced by Russian thought. The traditions and Ukrainian state institutions, particularly under Kuchma, who was the second president of the Ukraine from 1994 through 2005, continued the nation’s adherence to post-Soviet ideals of governance and use of the media to propagandize. The establishment of a fractionalized civil society was emphasized in the media’s portrayal of national politics, which was predominately Kuchma-filtered for negative content to be removed from circulation. This constant censorship of the media and government activities led to a deepening of the distrust amongst Ukrainian citizens toward their semi-



authoritarian government. While the nation legally independent, the executive officials of the state remained loyal to traditions of their mother country.

The political landscape in Ukraine began to shift in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the ousting of then Prime Minister Yushchenko and his cronies from within the Kuchma administration in April 2001 (Aslund & McFaul 2006). The „Ukraine Without Kuchma’ movement was already in progress, but gained momentum with the dismissal of Yushchenko and the emergence of popular opposition groups. In response to the abrupt Kuchma reorganization of the executive cabinet, opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko (who would become prime minister and then 2010 presidential candidate) organized a broad political coalition that joined her ‚Front for National Salvation,’ the Socialist party and Yushchenko’s newly formed ‚Our Ukraine.’ While the coalitions did relatively well in the 2002 parliamentary elections, with ‚Our Ukraine’ receiving nearly 33% of the vote, the ruling elite under the leadership of Kuchma maintained its majority in the national parliament.

Yet the relative success of the opposition blocs in the parliamentary election encouraged the formation of a more solid coalition behind a presidential candidate in 2004. The Socialists were unwilling to back Yushchenko, thus opting out of the coalition while ‚Our Ukraine’ and ‚Front for National Salvation’ united to form the political collective that included the main opposition groups mobilized in the Orange Revolution (Aslund & McFaul 2006). President Kuchma had a vested interest in seeing Viktor Yanukovich, a hand-picked ally, win the presidential election; with a pro-Russian status quo replacement, Kuchma was guaranteed de facto immunity from investigation into his corrupt regime.

Former President Kuchma was implicated in the multiple disappearances of journalists, while the privatization of media outlets to gain wealth and influence in the form of the

ensorship had become public knowledge late in his second term. Kuchma, who was elected president in 1994, after serving as the nation's prime minister, replaced the pro-Western Leonid Kravchuk and immediately implemented sweeping policy changes that increased Russian influence in state politics/economics. Although he was the prime motivator in drafting a post-Soviet rule constitution in 1996, "Kuchma's record in promoting democracy was mediocre at best" (Klobucar et al. 2002: 315). As was the case in the Philippines, the attempt to steal the presidential election became the main catalyst for mobilized activism. The citizens of the Ukraine had become restive under the Kuchma regime's corruption and its filtering of public knowledge. The presidential election of 2004 offered the people new hope for democratic change.

### **The Ukrainian Media: Journalism in a Vacuum**

The Ukrainian media existed in tension between government-regulated outlets and peripheral entities. With the declaration of independence, the state ended its formal censorship of the mass media and, in 1992, the Ukrainian parliament passed legislation that legalized private ownership of the media. The privatization of the Ukrainian media allowed for new information outlets to legally operate within the nation. Along with the privatization came liberalization, and greater global integration (Dyczok 2006). The „new media’ and its accompanying information communication technologies, cable, satellite television and most notably, the internet, changed not only the demographic of the news-watching population but also increased the availability of news information throughout the citizenry. Censorship resurged in the latter 1990s, with the deepening of the media oligarchy and the Kuchma state manipulating the content of news in order to legitimize his authority and cover indiscretions.

Availability of internet technologies in the Ukraine increased rapidly, particularly after the 2000 Gongadze case, in which journalist Heorhii Gongadze disappeared (and was eventually ruled as murdered) for opposing incumbent Kuchma's re-election campaign in the press (Dyczok 2006; Korduban 2009). Opposition activists began to coalesce in 2000-01 with the establishment of the „Ukraine Without Kuchma' movement which predominately was composed of anti-establishment journalists and activists. The intensifying of dissenting activist coalitions seems in hindsight to have foreshadowed the 2004 demonstration. The opposition movement was triggered by the public's belief that the regime played a role in the disappearance of Gongadze and other prominent anti-Kuchma media figures. Ukrainian internet usage increased from 3.8 million people in 2003 to 5.9 million people in December 2004, in the midst of the Orange Revolution when youth opposition groups used a website named Maidan to post information and documents from disenchanted government officials (Dyczok 2006; Wasley 2007).

Although private, the Ukrainian press had been restricted for much of the Kuchma administration, remaining in control of elite oligarchs that viewed the media as an instrument of power. Under the Kuchma regime, the National Television and Broadcasting Council of Ukraine which issues broadcast licenses began to apply pressure to opposition applicants. Under this strategy, “the state retained ownership of approximately 10% of television and radio stations and newspapers at the national, regional and local levels” (Dyczok 2006: 221). In an interview conducted in 2003, Iryna Pohorelova, editor and founder of the website *Telekrytyka* made this statement about the state of the Ukrainian media: “there is an absence of information in the mass media. Now the mass media is a shield which covers and does not give information out. Ukraine is experiencing an information deficit – this is why the internet is flourishing – it provides a source of information” (Dyczok 2006: 224).

The restriction on Ukrainian journalists and the content of information available to the citizens arguably played a considerable role in encouraging the Orange Revolution, yet it also emphasized the division between the pro-State media and the „opposition’ that accounted for everyone else. While alternative media outlets were allowed to exist under the semi-authoritarian Kuchma regime, their presence merely allowed the ruling elites to deny that censorship occurred. The Ukrainian media and its politically factionalized government had a difficult time deciphering whose side they were on; “With political alliances being forged and broken and new ones being forged again, it is often difficult for the media to work out if it is for or against the government, especially with two of the original groups within the Orange Revolution composing both the government and elements of the opposition” (Foley 2006: 14).

### **The Color of Revolution**

The revolution began on November 21, 2004, with the fraudulent presidential election when both Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych declared themselves the victor, while the Central Electoral Commission validated an alleged Yanukovych victory the next day. The international community, and in particular election monitors worldwide, condemned the Ukrainian election as not adhering to democratic standards. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Parliament, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe published a “preliminary report declaring that the election did not meet democratic standards” (Chivers 2005: A1).

The first rally against the impending Yanukovych presidency took place in Kiev’s Independence Square on November 22, where hundreds of thousands demonstrators came to oppose the stolen election. The findings of the international election commission included the abuse of state resources by the flagrant registration of millions of new voters on election day that

shifted voters in favor of the prime minister. According to one newspaper report, “the pressure on students to vote for the state’s choice, widespread abuse of absentee voters, including reports of voters being bused from region to region and overt bias of the state-financed news media” all put the legitimacy of a Yanukovich victory in question (Chivers 2005: A11).

Although the Ukrainian Supreme Court halted the publishing of the election results on November 25 to investigate the claims of election-tampering, the Ukrainian media entities that were Kuchma-backed reported a Yanukovich victory, while Yushchenko supporters took to the streets (Chivers 2005: A1). On November 27, the democratic movement became a revolution; the Parliament declared the vote invalid and adopted a “symbolic, non-binding vote of no-confidence in the electoral commission” (*BBC News* 2005). An estimated 700,000 Yushchenko supporters swarmed Independence Square and surrounded the Parliament building as their president demanded a new election. Another revolutionary victory occurred on December 1, when the Ukrainian Parliament passed a no-confidence vote on Prime Minister Yanukovich and his cabinet, effectively ousting him from government. Simultaneously, Yushchenko gave directions to his 400,000 plus supporters to “remain in the streets” for the tenth night and condemned the use of force or violence. Yushchenko also called for cessation of the obstruction of government buildings (Kiev City Guide 2010).

The Ukrainian citizens received the belated gift of democracy on December 26, when the third round of presidential voting proceeded with more than 12,000 election observers who were registered to monitor the race for quality. The Ukrainian Committee of Voters, which had issued an initial, comprehensive report on the corruption during the first rounds of the presidential election, commissioned 10,000 monitors for the final round. The committee released a statement

late on election night, stating that it had not “documented the kinds of ‚massive falsifications’ seen in the first two rounds of voting” (Chivers 2005: A1).

Nearly all the votes were counted on December 27 and the election committee declared that Yushchenko’s lead was considerable and Yanukovych could not catch him in the polls. While Yanukovych attempted to appeal to the Ukrainian Supreme Court with complaints of electoral fraud, the court dismissed all four claims and the Central Election Commission rejected his appeal of the overall vote on December 30. The following day, Mr. Yanukovych resigned from his prime minister position, citing an unwillingness to work with Yushchenko loyalists and finally, on January 11, 2005, the Ukrainian Electoral Commission declared Mr. Yushchenko the official winner of the second presidential election with 51.99% of the vote (*BBC News* 2005).

On January 23, 2005, Viktor Yushchenko was sworn in as the new Ukrainian President solidifying the colored ‚people’s power’ revolution for democracy and justice. The election of Yushchenko was more than a victory for the supporters of the orange revolution. The movement was proclaimed “a triumph for all Ukrainians, who showed they were capable of using their own institutions to correct the voting fraud that marred the earlier election” (*NYT* 2004: A20). The 11-day encampment on the streets of Kiev by hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians was an international scene for democratization that elicited support from the Western world. Michael McFaul stated that “the Orange Revolution may have been the first in history to be largely organized online” (McFaul & Aslund 2005: 16).

The citizens used Maidan, a website that was established on December 20, 2000, in the midst of the ‚Ukraine Without Kuchma’ movement, to become an online pro-democracy activist group. Maidan provided a virtual forum in which citizen activists could exchange information and organize protests. The main activity of Maidan was election monitoring and networking with

other pro-democracy organizations around Eastern Europe (Goldstein 2007: 14). The Ukrainian opposition used the information and the efficiency of online message boards to mobilize the population against the Kuchma corruption in effort to stimulate democratic change. Another major grassroots movement that utilized ICTs to spread democratic ideals around Ukraine was PORA (It's Time). PORA (Black Pora!) is a volunteer organization and a political party (Yellow Pora!) composed predominately of students and youth that coordinated non-violent advocacy of increased democracy.

A report issued by PORA in 2005 asserted that Kuchma's campaign existed "under the conditions of far-reaching censorship and absence of independent media, the main idea of PORA was the creation of alternative „mass media”" (PORA 2005). By October 2004, Pora had joined the Yushchenko campaign and assisted the pro-democracy movement by organizing public protests and student strikes. The Ukrainian government vacillated between support of media outlets that provided sanctioned information to citizens and applying a more restrictive media policy to impede online political mobilization. The anti-Kuchma/pro-Yushchenko citizens and opposition activists effectively used the latest emerging technologies (mobile phone, wireless internet and network online societies) to engage and successfully demand democratic institutional changes via massive demonstrations. While new technologies do not always stimulate mass citizen involvement, the fragmented political climate in the Ukraine, combined with intense desire to correct the flawed elections and establish a less authoritarian government, cultivated a revolutionary environment.

## **Saffron: Revolutionary Failure in the New Era**

The diffusion of ICTs has been uneven across the world. As discussed in previous sections the presence of a ‚digital divide‘ continues to impede the progress of certain regions. South Asian countries in particular have been slow to adapt to the contemporary ICTs. There are obvious socioeconomic reasons for this. Education and economic development levels in many of the South Asian countries (Nepal, Bhutan, India, and Myanmar) have been retarded by colonialization and imperialism in their recent histories. The South East Asian or ‚tiger economies‘ have encouraged economic development by harnessing the potential offered in new information technologies and have started to emphasize the importance of ‚knowledge-based economies,‘ yet “the countries of South Asia have been drastically left behind, with the exception of parts of India” (Akhtar & Gregson 2000: 9).

Burma has been living in an era of stalled development with the continuation of the longest active civil war in the world. The nation which was a British possession between 1824 and 1886 has a factious population that has been at odds for over sixty years. The 1974 Constitution identifies seven ethnic states – Chin, Kachin, Karen, Kayah (Karenni), Mon, Rakhine (Arakan) and Shan, along with various other prominent minority groups in the region, plus Chinese, Tamils, Bengalis and Indians (Brooten 2006). Upon the declaration of independence in 1948, civil war broke out in Burma between ethnic minorities and the Burmese government. The nation was governed under civilian rule until the military coup in 1962, which exacerbated dissension among the people.

The establishment of a military junta led to a major outbreak of anti-government protests (initially student-orchestrated) in 1988 in which hundreds of thousands of Burmese civilians began an insurgency in the streets. The military regime responded to the 1988 protests with a



strategic counterinsurgency plan using the nation's land resources as leverage to halt the demonstrations. The military regime cleverly recognized that the "ethnic power has a major role to play in Burmese politics, so immediately it picked up the armed ethnic groups and spread out their power. ....its leaders recognized that he who rules the ethnics, rules Burma" (Brooten 2006: 356).

The contemporary opposition groups in Burma are coalitions of differing ethnic minorities with weak ties among each other, yet with the shared democratic goal of autonomy for the ethnic nationalities and increased governance. The State Peace and Development Council, which is the military regime's legitimate face, has systematically restricted the civil rights and freedom of the Burmese people. The Council continues to perpetuate an environment of hostility. In late 2004, an estimated 650,000 people were internally displaced in eastern Burma alone, and at least 240 villages have been destroyed, relocated or abandoned since 2002 (Brooten 2006).

The political environment in Burma as alluded to earlier, is highly contentious and violent; the socioeconomic development of the nation also comes into play when considering the Saffron Revolution of 2007. The colonial history, along with the militaristic uprising that ousted a civilian government and implanted the military junta that exists to this day, has contributed to intense discontent among the public. The crucial alliance within Saffron involves the peasant and clergy classes, which initiated the movement in the streets protesting the government's exorbitant tax increases on fuel subsidies that increased inflation on everyday consumables and commodities. When the military junta took power in 1962 it declared that the „Burmese Way to Socialism' would be the model of economic governance including the nationalization of the majority of the private industries along with tight government control over the Burmese trade sector (Head 2007).

The Burmese population has suffered at the hands of the junta. More than half of the annual budget goes to the military and Burma is also internationally sanctioned for the ongoing detention of democratic opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. This set of obstacles puts public policy goals like reducing poverty, out of reach (*BBC News* 2007). At the end of 2006, the cost of essentials drastically increased by 30-40% which added an additional economic burden on the Burmese people, who were barely sustaining themselves. When the Burmese government decided on August 15, 2007 to lift the subsidies on gasoline, its price rose by 500%. The price of diesel, which generates power for the entire nation, also doubled (Head 2007), setting off national outrage. The impact of the government's decision was significant. As gas prices increased, so did the price of food and other imports due to higher cost of transportation.

Demonstrations began on August 19, 2007, and were immediately condemned by the government's newspaper, the *New Light of Myanmar*, where it was reported that the protesters caused "civil unrest aimed at undermining the peace and security of the State" (Kessler 2007). The U.S. government condemned the arrests of the Burmese protesters, calling on the military regime to free the dissenters and work to establish democratic institutions. In September 2007, the protests intensified, becoming more frequent and mobilizing more of the population against the government. On September 22, around 12,000 laymen and monks marched through Yangon and Mandalay, bringing new prominence to the movement swelling in Burma (*BBC News* 2007). The next day or eighth day of protest, around 150 nuns joined nearly 15,000 monks in the streets of Yangon and pledged to demonstrate until the junta was removed from power (*BBC News* 2007).

The government, after more than a week of dissolving small pockets of protests around the populated regions of the nation, finally moved decisively on September 24 after an estimated

50,000 to 100,000 people marched on the largest city, Rangoon. The military junta began its crackdown, placing armed soldiers and vehicles in the streets to contain the protests. On September 26, the government enforced a “dusk-to-dawn” curfew on Yangon and Mandalay, both hotbeds of political dissent (*AFP* 2007). The military police reacted violently to the mass demonstrations. Much like at Tiananmen, the government held off of a public display of force due to pressure from the international media and political community. However, once the government had had enough, it retaliated against its citizens, many of whom were revered members of the Buddhist monastery, in a manner that far surpasses the transgressions in China. The regime began by raiding monasteries across the nation, arresting and detaining monks in attempt to quell potential demonstrations. Reuters reported that 200 monks were arrested in Yangon in the first raid, and another 500 from the northeast were also detained (*Reuters* 2007).

International media outlets such as the BBC, Al Jazeera and various Western/American organizations covered the massacre in Burma, mobilizing an intense wave of global supporters for the monks and laypeople. The United Nations Human Rights Council held a special session in October 2007 to address the worsening situation in Burma and adopted *Resolution S-5/1: Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar*, in which the Council urged the government to “ensure full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms and unhindered access to media information for the people” (U.N. Human Rights Council 2007).

The government onslaught against the democratic opposition went on for over a month, and did not lead to any definitive resolution. Although the massive civilian protests drew international media attention, causing the government to eventually hold talks with the detained democratic opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the demonstrations for peace and democracy dissipated without the monks and citizens accomplishing their goals for “lower commodity

prices, national reconciliation and immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all the political prisoners" (*BBC News 2007*).

The Saffron Revolution was a modern-day peasant movement that was framed by the international media's coverage of the peaceful monks who attempted to create a more free society for the people of Burma. Mobilization efforts were absent within the nation, other than the constant coverage by the mainstream global media and re-publication on the internet; mobilization was achieved essentially by word of mouth, and the equality in oppression was expressed via protesting in the streets – each protest drew additional supporters. Thousands of Burmese citizens were arrested, beaten and killed in order to stop the demonstrations against the government. While journalists on the ground reported thousands dead, the U.N. Human Rights envoy to Burma, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, reported that the official death toll was merely thirty-one. The *New Light of Myanmar* reported on October 11 that 2,100 people had been arrested and 600 of those had been released, which is in stark contrast to the 6,000 people that the international media reported being arrested (*Al Jazeera 2007*). Even more ominous is the fact that the SPDC has failed to account for hundreds of citizens who have “disappeared” since the protests, leaving families unable to confirm if their missing relatives have been detained or killed (*Human Rights Watch 2007*).

### **The Burmese Media: On the Borderline**

The Burmese media is obviously highly restricted due to the military regime that governs the country. There are regulatory entities established in Myanmar that control the dissemination of information and what is kept from the public. The Press Scrutiny and Registration Board (PSRB) is under the control of the Ministry of Information. The PSRB manipulates and applies censorship standards to the Burmese media, as cited in the Printers and Publishers Registration

Law of 1962 (Nordahl 2009). However, the borderland between Thailand and Burma provides a semi-autonomous region for opposition journalists, where alternative publications such as *Irrawaddy* and *New Era Journal* have evaded government censorship and could therefore flourish and be distributed (Callahan 1998). These alternative publications followed the goals and agenda of various ethnic groups in Burma and addressed international issues that pertained to the nation. Some publications also focused narrowly upon individual ethnic minority news. Political scholars have argued that the Burmese nation was born out of a “series of military actions aimed at restricting dissent and emphasizing unity, defined as uniformity or unanimity,” and that even during the „democratic age’ of civilian governance which occurred after the 1988 citizen uprising that resulted in the resignation of General Ne Win (the first junta leader) - the nation was engrossed in violence (Callahan 1998; Nordahl 2009).

The Burmese people rose from under British rule only to be co-opted by a violent, oppressive military junta that has restricted their freedoms and any opposition that may be directed towards the government. The independent media has recently started emphasizing the importance of ‚independence’ over ‚unity,’ but when publishing groups like the KNG (Kachin News Group), under the umbrella of KIO (Kachin Independence Organization), began to report on the power struggles among the opposition and the military junta, they were forced to flee. This is a typical reaction regarding unsanctioned information in repressive regimes. The Burmese government has connections within both the alternative media and state media to halt the dissemination of inconvenient information. The junta restricted connections to unfiltered information because it was unwilling to compromise its authority; “without cooperation we cannot distribute the paper inside Burma...so if we are working very independently, which we

can do, because we are in Thailand, we cannot reach the people inside Burma” (Brooten 2006: 364).

With financing aid from the Norwegian government the opposition established a shortwave radio station in 1992, the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), and began to report on the daily activities of the democratic activists, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity in information distribution. The DVB had a relative independence due to the fact that its editorial board that consisted of members of the displaced democratic government (civilian) operated just outside of the country in Thailand (Brooten 2006; Nordahl 2009). The DVB maintained its duty to present the Burmese people with democratic opposition and cover events that were going unreported in the mainstream government media. The DVB acted as a “mediator between the various peoples in Burma and the leadership” and a dispenser of crucial information (Brooten 2006: 367).

The Burmese activists utilized the internet to publicize to audiences within and outside of their nation the government’s violent reaction to their peaceful protests for democracy. The protesters used digital photography, wireless internet access and online forums to engage the international community in their cause. The citizens, particularly the youth, have found pathways around the governmental obstacles in order to gain unhampered internet access. Authoritarian regimes that block and filter the available content on the internet are now being outsmarted by “bloggers [who] are teaching others to use foreign-hosted proxy sites – such as your-freedom.net to view blocked sites and tip-toe virtually unseen through cyberspace” encouraging protests and spreading ideology (Holmes 2007). Burma, in 2005, had only two state-controlled internet providers that filtered political websites and only 0.56% of the population had access to internet capabilities (Myanmar Posts and Telecom/Myanmar Teleport). The Myanmar Teleport is the

“infrastructure arm of Myanmar’s internet system and is the entity responsible for blocking content” (OpenNet Initiative 2005).

The regime became lax in supervising the internet activities of its citizens online after the former Prime Minister Khin Nyunt was ousted in October 2004 in a power struggle, leaving the state’s internet usage more open. Ian Brown, Oxford research fellow in internet privacy stated that “the Burmese government has a very repressive filtering regime...but it can be a bit inconsistent – one of the service providers blocks only international sites, the other only regional ones” (Holmes 2007). Yet the government still had heavy restrictions on the utilization of the internet and technologies by citizens. For example, any person failing to register a computer with a state-approved internet provider could face up to fifteen years in prison. Various international campaigns for democracy in Burma, and support for the protesters, littered online social forums and even took on celebrity status with Western actors such as Angelina Jolie commenting on the human rights abuses. Campaigns like Burma Campaign UK, the U.S. Campaign for Burma, and the Facebook group Burma Global Action Network brought international publicity to the plight of the monks and citizens.

The Burma Global Action Network, which at its peak had 440,000 members, organized a „Global Day of Action for Burma’ on October 6, 2007. Major cities around the world (San Diego, Paris, and Sydney, New York) held public demonstrations urging their governments to declare support for the people of Burma (*Human Rights Watch* 2007). Although most nations expressed deep concern and support for the protests and urged the Burmese government toward democratic reforms, nations like China and India maintained their commitment to nonintervention (Grice, Buncombe & Osborne 2007). In fact, the Chinese government refused to place sanctions on the military junta in Burma after many Western nations, most notably the

United States, called for pressure. The Chinese government also vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution in January 2007 that would have called for punishment for the generals directly involved in the human rights violations (*Human Rights Watch* 2007).

The propping up of the Burmese military junta by crucial allies in the region like China and India became the key to the Saffron Revolution's failure. The citizens and monks garnered the attention of the international community in their quest for democracy, yet the brutality of the regime, supported by regional authoritarian governments, nullified the demands for change. The junta allowed the citizens to protest the rise in commodity prices for days without obvious retaliation, but when the demonstrations escalated into a nationwide movement to oust the regime it became necessary to quell any further action. Among the conditional possibilities for coaxing the military out of power and inducing them to tolerate a transition toward democracy, "the longer term issues – and hopes – involve gradual change in the military's image of itself as the ultimate guardian of national interest. The success of transition may depend even more on whether some civilian, as well as military, leaders have the imagination, the courage and willingness to come to interim agreements on rules and neutral guarantees" (Schmitter & O'Donnell 1986: 36).

Information communication technology is limited in Myanmar due to a concentration of resources in the major cities equipped with internet cafes; the opposition leaders have been unsuccessful in effectively mobilizing the entirety of the population to overthrow the regime. An implication of modern technology is that rational actors are necessary in order to create the network of dissent and coordinate protest demonstrations; as of 2008 only 0.1% of the Burmese population (40,000 users) had access to internet technologies -- certainly not enough of the population to be mobilized to significant action (Internet World Stats 2010). The international



media played a large part in the mobilization of the Burmese population in the Saffron Revolution; it was the international media reporting from outside the nation and the usage of blogs and alternative access to the Burmese internet that coordinated support for the protesters, especially for the monks. The national media infrastructure is highly restrictive and inhibits the public from networking with each other and coalescing around policy goals besides those offered by the junta.

The increased mobilization potential offered by the advancement of the internet technologies can only create successful revolutionary movements if the population has access to it. The presence of international support was helpful to say the least, but without a wide base of local opposition the movement against a violent junta was hampered. The intense pressure for the military junta to liberalize was coming from outside the nation. While there were massive organized protests in the streets of Burma, they were largely coordinated by religious leaders instead of the typical opposition leaders who leave the option of violence on the table. The demonstrations in Burma became an on-going battle between the violent state apparatus and the peaceably assembled opposition.

The mobilization of the citizens occurred in the online network society as international media coverage of events encouraged the public awareness of Myanmar. Yet the willingness of the Burmese government to handle the anti-government protests by any means necessary, including the murders of thousands of people, particularly revered members of the religious community, was unforeseen. The demands for civil rights and economic stability were staved off by the sheer desire to survive the government crackdown, leaving the Burmese democratic opposition back in the shadows of society under military rule.

## The Effects of ICTs on the Third Wave

The post-information revolution case studies, the Orange and Saffron Revolutions, illustrate the vast differences in the efficacy of new ICTs. While in both movements the citizens made use of ICTs to pressure the powers that be to adopt democracy or at least some democratic ideals, the Orange Revolution was a clear movement of democratization. The internet provides a public forum for engaging citizens in their home nation, while also providing a space for global campaigns for humanitarian intervention and support. International campaigns have the ability to grow from minute pockets of dissent to media-dominating pleas for governments worldwide to „do the right thing,’ whether in the form of humanitarian intervention or military/diplomatic action. The revolutions explored in the post-information revolution era were advantageous in their use of information technologies, particularly the underground internet exchange of information during the Saffron Revolution to mobilize global citizens. The differences between the Ukrainian movement and the Burmese are the obviously more flexible democratic tendencies of the people in the Ukraine; the people of the Ukraine had relatively more democratic institutions compared with the military junta which has existed in Burma for over three decades.

However, the relevance of ICTs was more problematic in the Saffron Revolution, where despite the state-controlled media and the tight grip on the access to information, the citizens were still able to operate publications, maneuver the internet, and exchange pertinent ideology around the regime. Although the revolution in Burma did not have a definitive conclusion, it was an example of a democratizing grassroots movement that failed yet the majority of the population grasped of the importance of democratic values, most obviously, the freedom of the press.

While scholars would expect citizens in semi-Western democracies to mobilize their revolutions by engaging in ICTs, there is a logical association among regimes that censor and/or strictly control the flow of information in a nation and the use of internet technologies. The internet, “while certainly no panacea for continuing inequalities of strategic and symbolic power mobilized in and through the mass media, evidently contains a socially activated potential to unsettle and on occasion even disrupt the vertical flows of institutionally controlled „top-down’ communication, by inserting a horizontal communicative network into the wider communications environment” (Cottle 2008: 859). While there was not a definite democratic revolution in Burma, the citizens embraced the tenets of a free press to disseminate accurate information about the junta’s massacring of monks and peaceful protesters.

The success of the Orange Revolution in 2004 in Ukraine was due to the availability of mobile communication technologies that could harness the internet. The Ukrainians exchanged information and documents via Maidan, the online social forum and message board. The mass mobilization and the political circumstances led to the successful establishment of a pro-Western democratic administration for the first time since independence. The Ukrainians took advantage of the politically contentious moment in the election of Yushchenko and the collective demand for a democratic election. The Orange Revolution was insulated by an international dynamic of democratization and allies willing to pressure Russia to halt interference in the politics of the Ukraine.

The media institutions in the Ukraine were relatively free compared to those of Burma, and the people rationally assessed the government’s non-willingness to respond in a violent manner. Although the Kuchma regime was guided by corruption, it was not a violent authoritarian regime, only one willing to prosper at the expense of its citizens’ rights. The junta

in Burma willingly suppressed dissent using brutal and bloody means. The Burmese protesters did not have the international support in the form of military assistance, which was necessary due to the hostile response taken by the junta. The Ukrainian regime was more willing to bend to the demands of the citizens because of the inherent Western influence on its politics. More importantly, however, the mobilization of the democratic opposition greatly influenced the Supreme Court's decision to enforce a re-election in the interest of justice.

The availability of increasingly more advanced technologies allowed the citizens of both post-information revolution case studies to harness their potential through increased awareness of their causes. The potential is significant for „new media’ technologies to expand support networks throughout the international community, and thus intensify the pressure on illegitimate governments and lead to successful establishment of democratic institutions, especially when imposed from the bottom up. The availability of ICTs has increased the ability of citizens to influence not only the foundation of their own politics but to raise international awareness of their causes. New information technologies have the power to facilitate the free exchange of information and ideologies in a manner that has changed the way citizens mobilize and protest.

## CHAPTER SIX: Conclusion

Revolutionary theories emphasize the importance of individual agents and whether the state matters, while neglecting the saliency of the public. Other theories instead focus entirely on the role of the public at the expense of the state's undeniable role in the creation of revolutionary moments (traditionally due to unfavorable state policy, attitude). As the political landscape is an ever-changing aspect of every nation's existence, so the international community experiences ebbs and flows in its accepted theories and applied practices. The adoption of new information technologies has been no different. There are nations that are pre-disposed to use advanced ICTs to govern, compete in the current world market economy and grow into the knowledge-based economy of the future. ICTs have encouraged the spread of the dissemination, which is related to freedom of the press. These developments arguably increase the demand for liberalization of regime policy. Significantly, the internet has become a substitute for the press in nations that restrict and manipulate public information, especially where citizens are hungry for information and willing to search for it.

Prior to the emergence of ICTs, news and information were disseminated by newspaper, wire, telephone and took hours (even days) to reach around the world. The media outlets were very much a part of the state-apparatus in the pre-information revolution era, and often were only allowed to report on the news that the regime saw „fit to print.’ The availability of information was limited. Although outlets for information dissemination existed, they operated in a relatively restricted environment. In today's mobile, wireless environment, communicating breaking news internationally takes only an instant. The world is more interconnected than ever before, offering to disenfranchised citizens the opportunity to mobilize efforts to instill democratic institutions. According to Cottle, “today's media ecology, comprising different and overlapping media

formations, horizontal and vertical communication flows and new interactional capabilities, offer unprecedented opportunities for wider dissemination of political protest and dissent – from the local to the global” (2008: 855).

Contemporary revolutions and campaigns for change encompass both state and citizen sovereignty issues. For example, the use of internet technology to mobilize a protest requires a substantial infrastructure to be in place. The state plays an important role in the establishment and advancement of multinational internet service providers within their borders. While there are alternative means by which citizens otherwise restricted from obtaining internet access might acquire service, the internet infrastructure must be a national adoption. The institution of the media has evolved to give representation to the people who were once ignored in society through alternative outlets that do not involve the professional journalist’s decree of worthiness. Issues that were once marginalized have come to occupy the forefront of national and international policy. This is due primarily to the general population’s increased awareness.

Globalization has forced an evolution in the mass media. Whereas institutions of the press once were integrated entities of the government, the transnational and the world system of mass media has emerged, creating a layer of freedom of information that can no longer be restricted by the government (Gunaratne 2002). While the government still has the authority to tax, impede and place massive obstacles in front of the freedom of information, citizens’ access to information via the internet can no longer be effectively blocked due to numerous ways to „hack’ around government and into the network.

The assertion that I am making about contemporary revolutionary theory is actor-centered. Technology on its own is inanimate. Without a rational political actor to effectively use the available innovations of the era/time, technology on its own cannot explain or constitute an

explanation of contemporary revolutionary movements. While Skocpol and various other historical comparativist scholars argue the merits of state-based revolutions, the modern revolution is actor-technology centered, and cannot have a modern actor without supposing the variety of modern communication technologies that accompany him/her. The technology used to disseminate information and mobilize revolutionary protests in the information age requires political actors to engage effectively, persuasively and inclusively in order to succeed in political regime transformation.

The liberal assumption that accompanies the notion of freedom of the press emphasizes an autonomous and competitive media acting as an educator of society and as the institution for the exchange ideas and information without government interference or censorship. Of course, this assumption does not recognize the necessity for a population that is hungry for knowledge and that understands the need for and potential of information in bringing about change. The press has always acted as a catalyst for the public's dissent. At least in the West, major revolutions have occurred within a scope of media framing via the citizens involved that has mobilized sympathizers worldwide.

However, the new media is providing an invisible social network in which information, sympathy, documents, ideology and protest have the potential to be shared within seconds. Demonstrations can be held at a moment's notice on a variety of grievances. In both the Philippines and the Ukraine, the perceived technopolitical optimism shared by the protesting masses resulted in the successful completion of the revolutionary goal, even if it was only temporary in the case of the Ukraine. The successful cases (Ukraine, Philippines) involved a media environment that was less restrictive than the failed case studies (China, Myanmar) which allowed the people a certain amount of optimism, not only about the availability of new forms of

communication, but also their ability to coalesce around a common revolutionary goal via these new mediums of communication. In all four case studies here, the utilization of the media available at the time of revolution allowed the citizen activists to mobilize broad support for their causes, and, in the later case studies, organized international campaigns.

The state-controlled media infrastructure that was present in the Philippines and the Ukraine was lax compared to the institutions of China and Burma. The leaders in the Philippines, the Ukraine and even in Deng Xiaoping in China were willing to liberalize stated policy goals in order to avoid democratization. There was a prominent alternative media in both the Philippines and the Ukraine that allowed citizens to receive information that the government did not want covered. This was accomplished with little fear of retaliation, due to the political climate in both revolutionary circumstances. The electoral factor cannot go unnoticed in both the Ukraine and the Philippines; the successful revolutions not only employed the available ICTs to enhance their protests, but also took advantage of the intense climate of democratic change associated with elections to effect change.

Adam Przeworski argued that the circumstances in which successful democratic movements occur do not have an effect on the prospects of long-lasting regime change; yet the „electoral fallacy’ still remains intact. The politically intense circumstances of regime change within the Ukraine caused the public to coalesce around a temporary democratic goal instead of building the foundation for a permanent regime change which was evident in the 2009 presidential election. Although the „electoral fallacy’ remains a valid theory in the explanation of failed revolutions, Schmitter and O’Donnell offer a slightly more contemporary thought that asserts the shorter and “more unexpected the transition from authoritarian rule, the greater the likelihood of popular upsurge and its producing a lasting impact on the regime transformation”



(Schmitter & O'Donnell 1986: 52). The infrastructure of both successful revolutionary nations was foundationally more democratic than those of Burma and China respectively. The American occupation of the Philippines and the Westernized regions of the Ukraine assisted the citizens in demanding the rights they were entitled to, particularly the access to unfiltered information.

While China and Burma, both arguably grounded in authoritarian histories, had little infrastructural or governmental capacity to establish democratic institutions amidst a citizen revolt, both of these unsuccessful revolutions were rooted in regimes that were completely unwilling to accommodate their citizens or to acknowledge the desire to make changes in governance. The citizens overestimated their chances of success. In the case of China, the students underestimated the brutal lengths to which the CCP would eventually go to end the protest with minimal international fallout. The mass media in the failing revolutions were considerably more restrictive, causing the citizens to rely on alternative media outlets for information about the events occurring in the respective nation. The Chinese case study is somewhat different from Burma; the Chinese revolution relied solely on university press outlets that reached only as far as the students who wanted to disseminate information. This deprived the revolution of wider public support. While the protest in Burma reached the global population due to the international media and the availability of technology to support the spread of ideology.

The availability of new ICTs, while enhancing a group's ability to organize and mobilize citizens globally, does not necessarily lead to successful democratic revolutions. Yet emerging internet capabilities have emphasized democratic opposition's efficacy in disseminating ideas, information and documents that differ from the official information coming from governments. As ICTs become more advanced and portable, they are allowing citizens to share ideas and philosophy about government policies. Whether these tools are harnessed to their full potential to

create successful revolutionary environments is dependent upon the circumstance and the political actors, but the availability of information technologies and the internet offers increased opportunities for all citizens to effect democratic change within their nation and beyond.

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