

Transnational Networks, Diffusion Dynamics,
and Electoral Change in the Postcommunist World

Valerie Bunce
Department of Government
vjb2@cornell.edu

Sharon Wolchik
George Washington University
wolchik@gwu.edu

Electoral Change and Diffusion Dynamics¹

From 1996-2005, eight countries in postcommunist Europe and Eurasia held elections that replaced illiberal leaders or their anointed successors with leaders of the liberal opposition (see, for example, McFaul, 2005; Beissinger, 2007, 2006; Tucker, 2007; Demes and Forbrig, 2007; Kuzio, 2005; Way, 2005a, 2005b; Bunce and Wolchik, 2008, 2007, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c). The impact of these elections varied, ranging, for example, from ending a dangerous interlude of de-democratization (Slovakia) and consolidating largely democratic orders (Bulgaria and Romania) to shifting politics in a more democratic direction (Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan) to producing a veritable leap from dictatorship to democracy (Serbia and Croatia). Despite these differences, however, all eight elections were pivotal events, because, in removing authoritarian leaders from office, they invested in subsequent democratic development. Indeed, the defeat of dictators has been, more generally, the best predictor of improved democratic performance in the postcommunist region since the collapse of communism and communist states nearly two decades ago (Bunce, 1994, 1999a; Fish, 1998, 2005).

What explains this remarkable wave of electoral change? The easy answer, prompted by the very term, wave (see Beissinger, 2002), is that diffusion dynamics were at work. Such an interpretation flows directly from three related claims. One is that the pattern of electoral shifts is consistent with a diffusion model, given the clustered character of these events with respect to both time and space, and the common focus on elections as the site for democratic change. Moreover, this region has a rich history of the cross-national spread of political change. Here, we refer, for example, not just to the

wave of mass protests that brought down communism and communist states in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from 1987-1992, but also earlier rounds of cross-national protests that took place in Eastern Europe during the communist era and, much earlier, during the revolutions of 1848. Finally and more generally, research on longterm patterns of democratization point to the importance of diffusion dynamics—for example, the intra-regional spread of democratization during the third wave from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s (Huntington, 1991; Finkel, et.al., 2005; Starr and Lindborg, 2003; Brinks and Coppedge, 2006; and for longer-term perspectives on the same question, Wehnert, 2004; Markoff, 1996).

The Constraints on Diffusion

However, at the same time there are several reasons to question whether these clustered cases of electoral change reflected diffusion dynamics at work. One is that a common site for change does not mean necessarily a common approach producing change—with the latter implied in the idea of innovation and its subsequent diffusion. Another is that these elections were profoundly subversive political and, indeed, economic acts, with the two tied together because of the close relationship in the postcommunist region between democratization and radical economic reforms (see Bunce, 1994; Fish, 1998; Fish, 2005). It is one thing to introduce changes in, say, the reach and organization of the welfare system or public sector downsizing—a focus, for instance, of some recent studies of diffusion (see, for instance, Lee and Strang, 2006 and Weyland, 2005)-- and quite another to challenge dictators and their control over the very political and economic systems they have fashioned and they control. The difficulties involved in mounting electoral challenges to authoritarian rule, moreover, are even

greater than this contrast highlights. It is not just that dictators have considerable resources to block challenges to their power, and that their allies have considerable economic and political incentives to maintain the status quo. It is also that, just as dictators can be quite popular, so oppositions, especially in mixed polities that combine democratic features with authoritarian political practices, tend to be both fragmented and unpopular, with the latter reflecting the many ways they have coped with being outside of power, including collaborating with the regime, boycotting elections, and, more generally, from the perspective of many citizens, “whining” about the state of politics without seeming to do much to correct the problems (Bunce and Wolchik, 2008, Ch. 2).

Not surprisingly, therefore, the norm in the postcommunist region, as in, say, Sub-Saharan Africa, where mixed regimes are also common, is for dictators to win one semi-competitive election after another. This is precisely what happened, for example, not just in virtually all the elections that preceded the eight breakthrough cases of interest in this paper, but, also, more recently, in Armenia in 2005 and 2008, Azerbaijan in 2003 and 2005, and Belarus in 2001 and 2006 (see Bunce and Wolchik, 2008, Ch. 9; “Armenia’s Bloody Saturday,” 2008)..

It is also important to recognize that dictators are vigilant (see, especially, Kapusziński, 2006 on Haile Selassie; Silitsky, 2007, 2005a, 2005b). Most obviously, they regularly rig elections. However, they also notice precedents in the neighborhood of successful electoral challenges to authoritarian rule, and they preempt such threats by, for example, closing off central squares during elections; harassing both oppositions and non-governmental organizations; limiting the participation of external actors supporting democratization and free and fair elections; controlling electoral procedures and

tabulation of the vote; and raising student stipends and flooding the market with attractive goods at low prices on the eve of elections. This is precisely the strategies deployed, for example, by Lukashenka in Belarus, Aliyev in Azerbaijan, and Nazarbayev in Kazakhstan from 2003-2007. What makes such strategies particularly successful is that, by taking place during a prescribed period of time, elections are prime targets for preemptive strikes by powerful actors.

Finally, the postcommunist region was in fact very different from the communist region that preceded it with respect to the opportunities provided for easy movement of innovations, whether subversive or moderate, from one national setting to another. During the communist era, the Soviet bloc, which included the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (which was also the WTO!), was a tightly integrated political, economic and security structure that had the simultaneous effects of isolating this region from the rest of the world; placing the Soviet Union at the center of a radial structure; and creating, as a result, a Soviet regional monopoly that was based upon the dependence of identical political-economic regimes in Eastern Europe on the Soviet Union for their political stability, markets and energy products (Bunce, 1999b; Bunce, 1984/5). Such a structure meant that the Soviet Union also functioned as a regional monopsony. As a result, the bloc became an antechamber for the diffusion of innovation, whether the changes involved were desired by the Soviet Union or not and, thus, whether the innovations were new policies and new ideas, on the one hand, or economies crises and political unrest, on the other.

With the collapse of the Soviet bloc, communism and communist states from 1987-1992, however, the structural supports for diffusion collapsed as well. Thus, some

regimes moved into the Western orbit of both NATO and the EU; others occupied a halfway house between the Western and Russian domination; others allied with Russia; and still others, particularly in Central Asia, flirted with the Chinese. At the same time, some regimes in the region move quickly to democracy and capitalism (usually in simultaneous fashion); some embraced systems situated halfway between liberalism and the communist past; and some maintained authoritarian orders. Socialist brotherhood, moreover, was replaced by often conflictual relations with neighbors, with the new states located within both the western Balkans and the Caucasus providing good cases in point. Put simply, therefore, diverse political and economic trajectories, coupled with inter-state tensions worked against the cross-national movement of innovations after communism fell.

Assessing Diffusion

The purpose of this paper is to argue that the cross-national spread of electoral breaks with authoritarian rule from 1996-2005 in postcommunist Europe and Eurasia was in fact a diffusion dynamic. We base this conclusion on analyses of these elections (and a series of other elections that failed to bring oppositions to power) and over 200 hundred interviews conducted from 2005-2007 with participants in these events in Washington, D.C. and in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. We support this interpretation in two stages. First, we review the wave itself, arguing that the pattern is consistent with diffusion, given not just the clustering of similar electoral outcomes over time and space, but also the presence in each case of a similar and distinctive approach to defeating dictators. Second, we turn our attention to the why and how questions, concentrating on three factors in particular that supported the cross-

national movement of what we term the electoral model of democratization. In particular, we argue that this approach to electoral change was unusually well-configured for implementation in multiple sites. Despite the diversification of the region described above, moreover, there were nonetheless a large number of states in the postcommunist area that featured similar political contexts unusually receptive to the import and application of the electoral model. Finally, we focus on the critical role of transnational democracy promotion networks composed of local oppositions, activists from other countries in the region, and American democracy promoters. This network was responsible for developing the model; carrying it from place to place; amending the model in keeping with local conditions; and, finally, carrying out electoral challenges to authoritarian rule.

Thus, rather than choosing among competing explanations for diffusion and between, at the extremes, a structural or an agency-based explanation, we embrace in effect all of the above by emphasizing the importance of the model itself, similar conditions and transnational networks (for competing perspectives on diffusion, see Jacoby, 2004 and 2006; Strang and Soule, 1998; Kim and Strang, 2006; Tarrow, 2005; Bookman and Eyal, 2002; Glenn, 2000; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2007; Elkins and Simmons, 2005; Simmons and Elkins, 2004; Beissinger, 2002, 2006, 2007; Osa, 2001; Muiznieks, 1995; Diani, 2003; McAdam and Rucht, 1993). Our decision to embrace a three part model that bridges explanatory families, however, was not based on resistance to “taking a stance.” Rather, in our view, all three factors were necessary for the simple reason that the spread of subversive innovations has unusually stiff requirements. These exacting conditions, moreover, are also a major reason why the wave of electoral change

missed some countries and why the wave came to an end—a set of issues we address in more detail in other work (see Bunce and Wolchik, Chs. 8 and 9).

Defining Diffusion and its Mechanisms

Diffusion can be defined as a process wherein new ideas, institutions, policies, models or repertoires of behavior spread geographically from a core site to new sites, whether within a given state (as when the movement of new policies invented in one political subunit spreads to other subunits within a federal polity) or across states (as with the spread, for example, of public sector downsizing or non-governmental organizations) (see, for example, Ackerman and Duvall, 2000; Aksartova, 2005; Lee and Strang, 2006; Beissinger, 2002; Brinks and Coppedge, 2005; Markoff, 1996; Tarrow, 2005a, 2005b, 2003; Tarrow and della Porta, 2005). Diffusion, therefore, implies, on the one hand, a significant change in previous practices, and, on the other, the subsequent movement of this change within a limited time span to new settings that tend to be geographically clustered. When applied to the case of interest here, diffusion refers to a new approach to defeating dictators through elections that was applied in one country and that then reappeared in a series of other countries in the postcommunist region—though elsewhere as well, as the recent electoral confrontations in Mexico, Kenya, Togo, Ghana and the Ivory Coast remind us.

How do we know when diffusion has taken place? We would argue that a two-stage explanation is required. First, central to claiming diffusion is the ability to demonstrate that similar innovations appear in staggered fashion in multiple locales. Such a pattern, however, is only suggestive of diffusion in the absence of evidence demonstrating both how and why international transmission occurred.² Thus, unlike

some students of diffusion, we see the cause of diffusion not as a question for further study, but, rather, as an issue inseparable from the assertion of diffusion itself. This is because, in the absence of insights into what propels innovations to travel, we cannot be secure in the claim that “clustered adoptions” reflect cross-national transmission of the innovation.

Competing Explanations

In fact, there are several alternative explanations for cross-national similarities in adoption patterns. One is that domestic actors can be simply responding to similar conditions in similar ways, albeit at different times, given variations in domestic conditions. At the same time, diffusion can also be an illusion (to borrow from Brinks and Coppedge, 2006) when similar cross-national developments reflects the work of powerful international actors orchestrating the introduction of innovations in a number of dependent countries. To provide two examples: can diffusion explain the rise of communism throughout eastern Europe (minus Greece!) along with China following the end of the Second World War? It is true that the victory of communism was “innovative,” and that the march to communism was a process that was both lagged in time, yet clustered in terms of geography. However, transnational transmission—the foundation of diffusion—is largely absent from this dynamic, because the victory of communist parties reflected, first, Soviet imposition of communism in many of the countries in Eastern Europe, and, second, looking to both Yugoslavia and China, where communism was “home-grown,” a common response to very similar local conditions (and see Bookman and Eyal, 2002, on misrepresenting the spread of neoliberal orthodoxy in eastern Europe).

If common responses to common conditions or international orchestration of cross-national change are inconsistent with diffusion, then what kinds of dynamics can be hypothesized to drive the cross-national transmission of innovation? The literature presents two extremes, with a number of explanations falling in between these poles. One extreme emphasizes the power of structural similarities among units—or what sociologists have termed structural isomorphism. It is fair to say that this process is usually understood as an accidental byproduct of similarities, with agents of change playing a limited role. The other extreme is actor-rich—for example, conscious decisions by local actors, given the appeal of positive precedents elsewhere, to import the innovation through the adoption of similar goals and strategies. Here, the emphasis is on purposive actions. In between are a variety of other arguments that contain elements of both structure and agency, planned as well as accidental cross-national adoptions of specific innovations—for instance, demonstration effects that change the calculus of outside observers by lowering the costs of emulation, while increasing the incentives to follow suit; the rise of transnational networks that support the spread of an innovation in both a purposive way and as a byproduct of their geographical spread; and the characteristics of specific innovations with respect to their ease of transfer among sites (see, for instance, Tarrow, 2005; Beissinger, 2006, 2007; Glenn, 2000; Bookman and Eyal, 2002; Soule and Strang, 1998; Simmons and Elkins, 2004; Elkins and Simmons, 2005).

In our view, this thicket of competing explanations can be boiled down to three lines of argument that bridge structure and agency, purposive actions and accidental transmission. The first is that diffusion occurs because the model itself is amenable to

cross-national applications. This can be because the model is a tidy package of transportable tasks; because conditions in a number of locales provide opportunities for application; and because the model resonates with important local constituencies by tapping into their values and interests and by capitalizing on earlier efforts at change. The second is the presence of similar local conditions in both the “sending” and the “receiving” sites. These conditions, however, are not just objective, as in structural accounts, but also subjective. Thus, potential local adopters must perceive similarities in contexts before they translate appealing precedents in the neighborhood into relevant and “doable” actions. Finally, diffusion can occur because of the existence of transnational networks supporting the spread of the model. These networks typically bring together both domestic and international actors who share the same goals and who have converged on similar approaches to achieving these goals (see Tarrow, 2005; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). If all three of these explanations speak to the “why” question, the third also speaks to the “how” issues; that is, how innovations are transported from one context to another.

With these arguments in mind, let us return to the puzzle at hand: why and how electoral challenges to authoritarian rule moved across the postcommunist region. We begin by providing an overview of the eight electoral challenges to dictatorial rule. The purpose of this discussion is to flesh out the pattern of electoral change and provide evidence that a specific and similar innovation appeared in each electoral contest. .

The Electoral Wave

.The story of the electoral defeat of dictators begins with four inter-connected political struggles that took place in Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia from 1996-

1998 (for a more detailed discussion of the wave, see Bunce and Wolchik, 2008, Chs. 5 and 6). The first was the massive three-month-long protests in Serbia from 1996-1997—protests that were motivated by Milosevic’s attempt to deny the opposition its significant victories in many of the local elections that took place in 1996 (Lazic, 1999; Pavlovic, 2005). These protests (as in the cases that followed) built upon previous rounds of anti-regime mobilizations—in the Serbian case going back to the early 1980s and in Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia to 1989 (and even during the communist period, as in Slovakia from 1967-1968 and the miner’s strikes in Romania during the 1980s). Although the Serbian protests failed in the short-term (while victorious mayors, for example, were finally allowed to take office, their powers were significantly curtailed, especially in Belgrade, the capital), they contributed in important ways to a subsequent round of election-based protests in the fall of 2000 that succeeded in bringing down Slobodan Milosevic (see St. Protic, 2005; Bieber, 2003; Pribecevic, 2004). Also helpful in producing a new generation of protesters and expanding the geography of anti-Milosevic sentiment were Milosevic’s decisions following these protests to crack down on the autonomy of universities, local governments and the media (Pavlovic, 2005; Goati, 2000; Spasic and Subotic, 2000).

The second set of struggles took place in Romania, where the liberal opposition finally came together and ran a sophisticated political campaign that succeeded in replacing the former communist incumbent president with a candidate with far stronger liberal credentials and commitments (see, for example, Romanian Coalition for a Clean Parliament, 2005; Mungui-Pippidi, 2005; but see Bunce, 2002 and Grzymala-Busse, 2007 on the advantages of political turnover in general). The third set of struggles took place in Bulgaria at roughly the same time.

In Bulgaria, Serbian protests next door had been very influential in motivating the unions, eventually joined by intellectuals and leaders of the opposition, to carry out large-scale protests that brought down the communist-led government and that led to a new election where a united liberal opposition emerged victorious (see, especially, Petrova, 2007; Ganev, 2007). The process then moved to Slovakia. In a pivotal meeting taking place in the Vienna airport at the end of 1997, leaders of the Slovak opposition, the American ambassadors to Slovakia and the Czech Republic, political activists from Romania and Bulgaria, and representatives of the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, Freedom House and the National Endowment for Democracy came together to devise a strategy for unseating Vladimir Meciar, the illiberal Slovak Prime Minister, in the upcoming parliamentary elections. This meeting led to the OK98 campaign, where all the components of the electoral model (as described below) came together—for example, the formation of a cohesive opposition (bringing together no less than eighteen parties); ambitious campaigns to register voters, advertise the costs of the Meciar regime, and get out the vote; and the deployment of both domestic and international election-monitoring, as well as exit polls. As a result of their efforts and especially the turnout of first-time voters, Meciar lost the election.

The next application of the electoral model was in Croatia in 2000, where the death of the long-serving dictator, Franjo Tudjman, in 1999 had weakened the governing party and provided an opportunity for the opposition to win power. The Croatian opposition then applied the “Slovak model” to their own situation, with Slovak activists and European and especially American democracy promoters providing money, strategic advice and even election playbooks.

Later in 2000, Serbia finally experienced its own electoral breakthrough (see Bunce and Wolchik, 2006a). Here, there were several key differences—as is typical of foreign innovations

when they are domesticated. One was that the struggle against Milosevic was severely constrained by the heavy authoritarian hand of the regime. Thus, for example, there were no external election monitors in Serbia in the fall 2000 elections; the media were closely controlled by Milosevic; the opposition faced continual threats; and the assistance provided by the international community was important, but located necessarily outside the borders of the state, given the political impossibility of a domestic presence as a result of the NATO-led bombing of Serbia in 1999 (though the Canadian Embassy substituted in effective fashion for the closed American embassy). Moreover, a student group, Otpor, played the central role in the struggle against Milosevic, and the size, dedication and geographical spread of this movement are what, arguably, proved to be politically decisive. Finally, the victory of the opposition (which was composed of eighteen parties that came together around the candidacy of a moderate nationalist, Vojislav Kostunica—thanks in part to the willingness of the far more charismatic Zoran Djindjic to play a secondary role) was delayed by Milosevic's refusal to cede power. In contrast to the previous cases discussed, where authoritarian leaders immediately left office, Milosevic stepped down only after the opposition mounted massive Serbia-wide protests (St. Protich, 2005; Pavlovic, 2005).

The Georgian opposition then followed suit in the 2003 parliamentary elections—though this produced, it is important to recognize, a coup d'etat by the opposition, since the long-serving President, Eduard Shevardnadze, resigned, but was not in fact up for reelection (Papava, 2005; Wheatley, 2005). In Georgia, the political context was less constraining than in Serbia, especially given the lackluster campaign run by Shevardnadze's allies, the defection of so many key players from the ruling group to the opposition (such as Mikheil Saakashvili, the current president), and the relative openness of the Georgian media. However, the playbook was

nonetheless remarkably similar—for example, the formation of both a united opposition and a youth group in support of political change (Kmara); the generation of opposition versus regime vote totals that exposed regime fraud; close collaboration between the opposition and the third sector; and, finally, an extraordinarily ambitious campaign by Mikheil Saakashvili that brought him to virtually every village in Georgia..

The next successful electoral revolution occurred in Ukraine a year later (see, in particular, Kuzio, 2005; Kubicek, 2005; Way, 2005a, 2005b). As in the Georgian case, a single charismatic politician—in this case, Viktor Yushchenko—played a critical role. As in both the Georgian and Serbian cases, the successful political breakthrough exploited a record of a leadership that had grown increasingly corrupt, careless and violent; benefited from defections from the ruling circles; built upon earlier rounds of protests and recent successes in local elections; and reached out to diverse groups, with young people playing nearly as important a role as one saw in Serbia with Otpor. Moreover, as in Serbia and Georgia, political protests after the election (which were as large and as persistent as those in Serbia) were again necessary to force the authoritarian challenger to admit defeat.

The electoral model then moved to a Kyrgyzstan, where it succeeded, as in Georgia, in deposing the long-serving president, despite the fact that these elections were also parliamentary, not presidential. It is here where we see less evidence than in the previous seven cases of a well-orchestrated electoral challenge being mounted. Instead, dissatisfaction with electoral outcomes in the south of the country produced protests that then spread to the north, where the capital, Bishkek, is located. The result in very short order was that the President of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akayev, abdicated and fled to Moscow (on the Kyrgyz case, see, especially, Weyerman, 2005; Huskey, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c.; Radnitz, 2006; Fuhrmann, 2006) However, even here we find a

variant on contagion effects. President Akayev, who had been in power since the early 1990s and who had become increasingly authoritarian over time, was so taken by his own fears of a “colored revolution” (as they have been commonly called) in Kyrgyzstan that he wrote a book a month before his forced abdication about why such electoral challenges would never succeed in his country! It appears that a major reason why he left office so quickly was his assumption that he was wrong.

Patterns of Diffusion

This brief narrative highlights all the familiar components of a diffusion dynamic. The breakthrough elections took place in lagged fashion across a large group of countries located within the postcommunist region. Moreover, the contexts within which these elections took place were roughly similar. While varying in their extent of both levels of repression and democratic “decorations,” all of these regimes nonetheless fell into that large space between full-scale democracies and full-scale dictatorships. Thus, as mixed regimes, they combined, more specifically, democratic institutions, such as parliaments, courts, a sprinkling of civil liberties, and at the least semi-competitive elections, with authoritarian incumbents and political practices. Perhaps the most important indicator of diffusion, however, is that these elections marked a sharp departure from the past in two ways. They all used elections to end the rule of dictators, and oppositions used both new and yet similar strategies to win power—what we have termed in other work the electoral model.

While familiar to most citizens, political activists and political scientist in established democracies, the tasks associated with the electoral model were new to this region and very difficult—and often dangerous—to carry out. These tasks involved, for example, exerting considerable pressures on the regime (in alliance with their international allies) to reform

electoral procedures; organizing large-scale voter registration and turnout drives; forming a united opposition; carrying out unusually ambitious political campaigns that forced opposition candidates for the first time to go outside the major cities; and conducting (where politically tolerated) sophisticated public opinion polls, parallel tabulation of votes, and exit polls (see, especially, see, especially, Gel'man, 2005; van de Walle, 2005, 2006; Howard and Roessler, 2006; Garber and Cowan, 1993). All these features were critical, because they made it harder for authoritarians to win elections and to stay in power. Moreover, they often made all the difference. Electoral turnout had declined over time in most of these countries, because citizens had become divided and demobilized, as well as skeptical about the ability of the opposition to win and even about the advisability of such a victory (see, for instance, Djordjevic, 2005 on Serbia). Winning citizens over, in short, was difficult, because it involved a three-part proposition: registering to vote, voting, and voting for the opposition. It is telling, for example, that electoral turnout was unusually high in many of these elections (especially in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia and Ukraine), and that most of these elections were in fact very close (especially in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Serbian and Ukraine). Also revealing is what happened in the 2000 Serbian election. With two hours left before the polls closed, CeSID, a non-governmental organizations involved in voter turnout, registration and parallel vote tabulation, realized that turnout in key areas was too low to guarantee a victory for the opposition. As a result, they mobilized an ambitious and targeted get-out-the-vote campaign at the last minute that delivered a narrow victory to Vojislav Kostunica, the opposition presidential candidate.

In addition to these core features of the electoral model outlined above, there were other similarities across these electoral episodes in strategies deployed and the distinctiveness of those strategies in comparison with previous elections. For example, in many of these elections

extensive use was made of rock concerts, street theatre, marches, and unusually widespread distribution of posters, stickers and t-shirts in order to expand interest in the election and voter registration. In addition, a large number of new organizations formed to monitor elections, get out the vote, tabulate the vote, and engage young people; close ties were forged for the first time between civil society groups and the opposition; and in more repressive polities, protests were organized to force recalcitrant dictators to admit defeat and leave office. Central to the success of these protests, moreover, were conversations during the campaign between opposition leaders and members of the security apparatus.

One we step back from this wave of electoral change, moreover, we see some other patterns that are typical of diffusion dynamics. One is that, while maintaining a core set of tasks, the model was nonetheless amended as it made its cross-national journey—for instance, the use of parliamentary elections to oust presidents, the elaborate coordination of food and shelter for protesters in Kyiv and other major cities in Ukraine, and the addition of massive public protests in more authoritarian political contexts. At the same time, we see a familiar cycle, wherein the “early risers” (as Mark Beissinger, 2002 has termed them) tended to combine unusually supportive contexts for change, more planning and a more faithful application of the model than “late risers,” where domestic conditions were less supportive and where attractive precedents outran careful preparations. Also important was the learning that took place on the part of those defending the status quo. This is why the wave skipped certain elections and why it came to an end.

The Benefits of the Electoral Model

What we have argued thus far is that the democratizing elections that took place from 1996-2005 in the postcommunist region conformed in many respects to a diffusion patterns,

especially given their wave-like character and similarities in both sites used and political strategies deployed. However, what we do not know as yet—and what is equally vital for an interpretation of diffusion—is why and how cross-national transmission of the model took place. We can begin to answer this question by focusing on the model itself and its amenability to transplantation. Here, several characteristics stand out. One is that elections are ideal sites for contesting the power of authoritarian leaders. Authoritarians feel compelled to hold regular and at least semi-competitive elections because of international pressures to do so and because of calculations on the part of authoritarian incumbents that they can control the results while using the elections to “smoke out” the opposition, recalibrate patronage, and legitimate their rule (Schedler, 2006; Lust-Okar, 2005, 2006). Moreover, democracy has become a global norm; elections are central to public understandings of democracy; and voting is associated in the public mind with evaluating the regime and making choices (which choice the root word, for example, for election in Slavic languages) (see, especially, Bratton, Mattes and Boadi, 2004 and Dalton, Shin and Chou, 2007 on this point). Elections are also ideal activities for challenging authoritarian rule, because they occur at regular intervals, thereby facilitating planning while asking citizens to become engaged in politics during a circumscribed period to time. Because of their ties to political participation and regime assessment, moreover, elections are also associated with popular protest cycles (Trejo, 2004).

Beyond these general points about elections are some specific characteristics of the electoral model that make it a good candidate for cross-national application. One is the core argument underlying the model. Thus, its very purpose is to exploit electoral opportunities for turnover in regimes and governing officials by limiting the ability of the regime to control elections while selling the opposition to the citizenry and thereby enhancing their capacity to win

power. It is a model that is designed to solve, therefore, two related constraints on democratic change in mixed regimes: the collective actions problems that limit the ability and the willingness of citizens to reject authoritarian politics *and* the collective actions problems that limit as well the ability of oppositions to mount effective challenges to the power of authoritarian leaders (Tucker, 2007). In addition, the electoral model has a record of success that dates back to the 1986 election in the Philippines that led to the ouster of Ferdinand Marcos and the Chilean Referendum in 1988 that had the surprising outcome of rejecting the “shoo-in” proposal put forward by the Pinochet dictatorship.. Such successes are widely-recognized for the simple reason that elections, especially if they feature surprising outcomes, make the news—largely because they are discrete events that are widely covered by the media and that are easily used by the media to summarize a country’s politics and even its likely future directions. Thus, electoral challenges to authoritarian rule have received a lot of international attention, and they have influenced politics in some surprising places. For example, just as protesters in Lebanon in 2005 made repeated references to the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004 and the opposition in Kenya in 2007 named itself after that very revolution, so student leaders of a movement opposing the constitutional amendments proposed by Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 2007 indicated that they had been influenced by what the student movement in Serbia had accomplished in 2000.

A final asset of the electoral model, as Mark Beissinger (2007) has observed, is that it is an unusually modular innovation (and see Tarrow, 1998, 2005 on this argument). Most innovations associated with struggles for political power are unwieldy bundles of activities. By contrast, the electoral model combines clear premises,, clear goals, and a tidy bundle of tasks and strategies. Indeed, during its travels through the Balkans, the electoral approach produced a

playbook of activities that was easy to share across national boundaries—though not always easy, we must remember, to implement, especially in more authoritarian settings where democratization elections were attempted later in the wave.

Similar Conditions

As already noted, the fall of communism and communist states produced a far less “regional” region; that is, a far more diverse set of states that were less connected to one another. While correct, this observation ignores several critical points. One is the rise in this region of an extremely attractive model of simultaneous and rapid transitions to democracy and capitalism provided by the experiences of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia in particular (Bunce, 2006). This model, we must remember, featured rates of economic growth considerably above the regional norm; stable polities; and membership in the EU and NATO. Just as important is the one commonality among these trend-setting states: their sharp break with authoritarian rule through the defeat of the communists and the introduction of significant economic reforms (Bunce, 2003). In addition, to downplay the potential of the postcommunist region for diffusion is to ignore the fact that by far the most common successor to communism in the region was mixed regimes that straddled democracy and dictatorship (and see Levitsky and Way, 2008, 2002). These regimes shared a number of other characteristics as well. These commonalities included not just a communist past, but also: 1) recent statehood or recently regained sovereignty; 2) earlier rounds of political protests; 3) culturally heterogeneous populations which illiberal leaders often used to divide and demobilize the liberal opposition, and ; 4) generally poor economic performance and/or rapidly growing socioeconomic inequalities that contrasted sharply with communist-era patterns. With

some variation, this profile describes every country in the region where successful electoral breakthroughs took place, along with some other countries where significant attempts at challenging authoritarian rule also occurred—for example, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

Subjective Similarities

These similarities, however, are objective in nature. While they enhance the willingness and the ability of citizens and oppositions to exploit electoral opportunities for change, they hardly guarantee that this will happen, especially given the threats to the status quo posed by electoral challenges to authoritarian rule. Here, what seems to be critical is an assumption of fundamental similarities on the part of both those who carried out such challenges and those who wanted to follow in their footsteps. In our interviews, we found considerable support for this assumption—which is surprising, given the tendency in this region of the world, as in others, for many citizens to construct in effect regions within the region and to make a sharp distinction in particular between, say, the distinctive politics, history and culture of their countries or, more generally, east-central Europe, on the one hand, and other countries or the former Soviet states, on the other. What is critical to recognize here is that the electoral model “jumped” several divides in this region, when it moved from Slovakia to the western Balkans and when it moved, in turn, from Serbia to Georgia. This suggests a more complex story of the assumptions underlying cross-national transmission than one based upon a list of objective similarities.

What we discovered in our interviews is that in the minds of many opposition leaders, political activists, and intellectuals, just as communism produced similar

contexts, so leaving communism successfully had a common set of preconditions. While recognizing that certain legacies and situations made the break with communism easier or more difficult, this “to do” list was understood nonetheless to be applicable across the region. Thus, it was widely assumed, for example, that a successful break with communism required broad anti-regime movements that brought together disparate oppositions and citizens; exploitation of opportunities for change as a result of both divisions among the elites and changes in the international system that weakened authoritarians; progress in reaching out to authoritarian reformers and political “fence-sitters;” and mass mobilization against the regime. It was also assumed that failed challenges preceded successful ones; that is, that valuable lessons could be culled from earlier confrontations with the regime. This understanding of how authoritarianism could be challenged was not just well-known to political activists throughout the region and had the additional selling point of having succeeded in bringing down communism; it was also amenable to recycling, with some tinkering, to the new conditions posed by mixed regimes and semi-competitive elections.

As a result, just as both older activists and newer ones learned from one another, so the dissident past—which was, we must remember, a dissident, but not a distant past—carried another powerful lesson: the value of sharing strategies across national boundaries when the common motivation was one of defeating dictators in the streets, at the bargaining table, or at the polls (and see Kenney, 2002 on Solidarity and regional outreach during the 1980s). What further facilitated this perception of similarities across both time and space was continuity in dissident communities. Some of the very people who had been, for example, in Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia during the communist

period later participated in the struggle against Meciar in Slovakia and, indeed, against dictators in Croatia and Serbia. Similarly, many of the most important dissidents in Serbia, dating back from the 1970s and 1980s and the anti-war movement of the 1990s played key roles in the defeat of Milosevic.

Self-Interest

We would be remiss in our discussion of perceived similarities, however, if we did not recognize the power of self-interest in nudging oppositions to construct an interpretation of their political situation that was remarkably similar to situations in the neighborhood where dictators were defeated. After all, for the opposition the electoral model held the promise of winning power, rather than continuing to sit on the sidelines alienating publics and bickering with one another about whether to cooperate with the regime, win some seats in parliament and support modest reforms, or boycott elections entirely. Put in stark terms: what opposition would not like to win power; what opposition would not like a playbook that shows how to accomplish that; and, therefore, what opposition would not appreciate precedents showing that these feats could be accomplished? In this sense, self-interest constructed a self-serving perception of common contexts and transferable strategies—even if these perceptions amounted in some cases to wish fulfillment. For example, there is a significant difference, it can be argued, between the situation in Slovakia in 1998 and in Kyrgystan in 2005, let alone Armenia and Azerbaijan in the same year.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that self-interest also motivated exporters. They were eager to guarantee the success of their electoral breakthroughs by encouraging similar developments in neighboring countries. This was a particularly

powerful argument in the cases of Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Croatia and Serbia, where shared borders placed a premium on a collective democratic effort. However, these assumptions, at the same time, were sometimes misplaced. Dissident cultures, as in Russia, were not always receptive to the ideas and strategies put forward by successful practitioners of electoral change (see, especially, Mendelson and Garber, 2005).

Regional outreach, moreover, was facilitated by the changing nature of democracy assistance in the region. Membership in the EU in 2004 carried with it a transition for Slovaks, Czechs, Poles and Hungarians in particular from being the recipients of democracy aid to becoming donors—and donors with not just money and projects, but also considerable expertise in struggling against authoritarianism in the communist, as well as postcommunist world. The recent decision by the European Union to focus assistance on the countries that neighbor the expanded EU—that is, the European Neighborhood Policy—facilitated this process (see Fischer, 2005). As a result, over the past few years casual ties have become more institutionalized, though with the proviso that external assistance was for building democratic capacity, not challenging dictatorial rule.

Thus, postcommunist structural similarities, the self-interest of both senders and receivers, common political goals, similar political opportunities as a result of the tensions between authoritarian politics, yet regular and semi-competitive elections, and political habits and networks that dated back in many cases to the communist era, all worked together to all work together to facilitate the geographical spread of electoral challenges to authoritarian rule. While these factors hardly guaranteed that the model would remain the same or necessarily produce the same results, they nonetheless

rendered this region, as during the communist era, a supportive site for the diffusion of political change. Like the electoral model itself, so similarities among these countries—in structure and in the perceptions of similar conditions among political actors—created opportunities, incentives and capacity for the successful cross-national diffusion of the electoral model. In this sense, the phrase, “similar conditions,” over-simplifies what is really a more complex story of an environment unusually conducive to the diffusion of both the electoral model and electoral change. It is not surprising, therefore, that this region stands out, in comparison with others, with respect to both more attempts to defeat dictators at the polls and more success in accomplishing this objective (see bunce and Wolchik, 2006b).

American Orchestration

The discussion above hinted at the importance of not just local actors in democratizing elections, but also transnational collaborative networks which were involved in all the phases of the innovation process; that is, developing, implementing and transferring the electoral model. It is precisely this question—that is, the “who” and the “how” of transmission, rather than conditions facilitating transmission—where we are forced to confront an earlier argument that casts a shadow on the interpretation of diffusion; that is, the role of powerful international actors orchestrating changes across a group of weaker countries. As Vladimir Putin, Hugo Chavez, and the Chinese leadership have argued in concert, these electoral “revolutions” (as they prefer to characterize them) are the work of the United States, which, in their view, is bent on both exporting its political model to other countries and, as a result, drawing those countries into its political, economic and security orbit (see, for example, Herd, 2005; Nyrgren, 2005;

Silitsky, 2007; and, see, especially, the interpretations of the 2005 election in Kyrgyzstan in Kniazov, 2005 and the interview with Vladimir Meciar in Fukic and Capin, 1999).

Thus, while the electoral model is portable and cross-national conditions similar enough to support transfer, the transmission process can nonetheless be reduced to a United States, in collaboration with, say, the EU and American-based foundations, such as the Open Society, orchestrating the defeat of dictators throughout the postcommunist region. From this perspective, for example, while common strategies for defeating dictators speak to the power of a single player, the lags in adoption merely reflect variations in the electoral calendar.

There is little doubt that the United States has been very supportive of democratization through free and fair elections, that the United States has favored the postcommunist region over other parts of the world in its efforts to support democratic development in general; and that the United States was a strong and consistent supporter of democratic change in *all* of the countries that experienced electoral breakthroughs (see Bunce and Wolchi, 2008, Ch. 2 and Bunce and Wolchik, 2006b). Moreover, a recent statistical study of USAID democracy and governance outlays from 1990-2003 has suggested that, of all the forms that American democracy assistance takes, investments in elections have the strongest relationship to improvements in democratic performance (Finkel, et.al., 2006). At the very least, therefore, it is fair to conclude that the United States played a role in the electoral breakthroughs that took place in the postcommunist region from 1996 to 2005.

However, it would be mistaken to conclude, at the same time, that these electoral episodes can be reduced to the machinations of the American government and democracy

promotion community. The first problem with this interpretation is that the electoral model itself was not invented by the United States. Rather, it developed through trial and error in the Philippines, with the eventual success in defeating Marcos in turn providing important lessons to the Chilean opposition. What is striking about this story is that both of these events played a pivotal role in weakening American commitment to support of dictators during the Reagan and then the Bush I administrations. Moreover, the United States has actively promoted free and fair elections throughout the postcommunist region. However, elections are still regularly stolen—as we saw most recently in the 2008 Armenian elections (which did not stop the U.S. from continuing development assistance through the Millennium Challenge Account, despite the tie of that assistance to democratic performance).

Third, the relationship between American pressures for genuinely competitive elections, on the one hand, and electoral breakthroughs, on the other, is uneven. Just as the United States (along with its European allies) has pressed hard for free and fair elections in Belarus, but to no avail, as the 2001 and 2006 presidential elections in that country demonstrate, for example, so it provided little electoral assistance in the case of Kyrgyzstan in 2005. Moreover, there is little evidence that the United States supported either the coup d'etats, albeit with some basis in elections, in both Georgia in 2003 and Kyrgyzstan in 2005. Indeed, in the Georgian case, pressures on Shevardnadze in the summer of 2003 to clean up the Georgian elections that were to take place later in that year were not followed up in any consistent way. Thus, while the United States was very supportive of the defeat of Meciar in 1998, the victory of the opposition in Croatia in 2000, the defeat of Milosevic in 2000, American involvement in the other cases was

either limited or inconsistent—though the United States was quick to side with those challenging the official results of the Ukrainian election in late 2004.

However, there is a more general point here that requires emphasis. While democracy promotion has risen on the American foreign policy agenda, especially since the Carter administration (and, thus, before the end of the Cold War), American commitment to the defeat of dictators, to put it mildly, has been quite inconsistent. This is especially the case when this priority collides with concerns about political stability, oil, and national security, not to mention the practical politics of base placement (as in, say, American policies toward Uzbekistan for some years, along with Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakhstan), and when the United States learned—for instance, from what happened in Palestine—that electoral competition can produce the “wrong” winners (see Cooley, 2008; Bunce and Wolchik, 2008, Ch. 3). Thus, while the United States may target the defeat of dictators in some countries, it is far less willing to do so in others.

Transnational Networks

Another and more fundamental problem with reducing these electoral breakthroughs to the machinations of the United States is that this assertion misrepresents both how American democracy promotion in general and efforts to challenge dictatorial rule actually work on the ground. For example, U.S. democracy assistance has focused far less on opposition support than on support of free and fair elections and a wide range of civil society organizations (though the U.S. did play a role in helping fragmented oppositions become more cohesive in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania). Second, outside groups also played a role, as in the substantial support Russia provided to Yanukovich in the Ukrainian elections in 2004—support that by Russian accounts

(though hardly endorsed by the Kremlin!) far outstripped direct campaign contributions by the United States. Third, American support lacks the consistency and the coordination that is in keeping with the idea of an American “plot”—though this was less true, it is fair to say, for the cases of both Meciar and Milosevic. Finally, both the participants in these elections and members of the American democracy promotion community who were on the ground during these elections all agree that, while American support was helpful, it was beneficial only at the margins (see, especially, Carothers, 1999, 2004, 2007a, 2007b; Demes and Forbrig, 2007). Moreover, and again, by all accounts, it was most helpful with respect to identifying strategies for campaigning and getting out the vote; long-term support for civil society; withdrawal of support for illiberal incumbents (though this was relatively slow in coming in Georgia); and rapid, as well as quite vocal critiques of unfair elections (as in Ukraine and Serbia in particular) (see Bunce and Wolchik, 2008, Ch. 3),

However, perhaps the most important qualification is that all of the successful electoral breakthroughs were a product of complex transnational collaborations that brought together not just American democracy promoters and even in some cases U.S. ambassadors as well, but also two other key groups: regional democracy promoters who had carried out their own electoral breakthroughs, and experienced, dedicated local activists willing to work hard, think in new ways and take personal risks. With the exception of Kyrgyzstan, moreover, these collaborations involved significant planning. Such planning is necessary, given, for example, the details and the difficulties involved in forming effective oppositions that participate in elections, rather than boycott them, and that succeed in mounting effective campaigns; convincing voters to register, vote, support the opposition, and demand that their votes count; winning the election while

gathering the data necessary to demonstrate that victory while convincing citizens that the opposition tally is more accurate than the “official” version; and, finally, preparing themselves and citizens for the possibility that victory will not lead to taking office. As argued earlier, moreover, there were a number of factors in place that laid the groundwork for such planning—for example, the many similarities, perceived and objective, between the countries where electoral breakthroughs took place and other mixed regimes in the region.

Also important was the existence of practice runs with earlier elections, particularly at the local level (which was critical in Croatia, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine); prior rounds of political protest; invigoration of divided and dispirited dissident networks; and even earlier experiences with both public opinion polling, election monitoring and exit polls (all of which, for example, were already in place in Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and Georgia). But when all is said and done, there were international coalitions that were particularly vibrant, flexible, persistent, and, it must be said, geographically expansive, if not restless, in the postcommunist region. If electoral challenges to authoritarian rule were a moving target, given the timing of elections and changing political opportunities, so were the people who promoted the electoral model as a region-wide political weapon..

Thus, Bulgarian and Romanian activists, emerging from their successful defeat of dictators, then shared their strategies for success with Slovak activists, who then involved themselves, along with the Bulgarians and the Romanians, in both the Croatian and the Serbian elections. Serbian activists, in turn, building upon a longer-term relationship between the older Serbian opposition and the Georgian opposition, shared the “secrets of

their success” with their Georgian counterparts before the breakthrough election in 2003. The story continues with Ukraine in 2004, though to a lesser extent in Kyrgyzstan in 2005.

The importance of these ties was emphasized repeatedly in the interviews we conducted with American and European democracy promoters and with members of the opposition, political parties, youth organizations and ngo leaders in Croatia, Georgia, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Washington, D.C. (also see Meladze, 2005; Kandelaki, 2005; Devdariani, 2003). Perhaps the most common theme, however, was the deeply-held belief among local activists throughout the region that the struggle for democracy in countries that fell short of democratic standards in the postcommunist region was in large measure the *same* struggle. Illiberal leaders and their allies, it is widely assumed, use similar strategies, in part because of their experiences under communism (where there were also, we must remember, regular elections) and in part because they committed similar transgressions and provided, as a result, similar opportunities for political change.

Thus, for “graduates” of successful electoral revolutions, the assumption is that their experiences are relevant to oppositions in neighboring countries where such revolutions are needed, but have not yet occurred. Just as interesting is a strong belief that they have a responsibility to share their insights about effective strategies for political change through elections and later through other mechanisms, such as assistance in the development of more robust local governments and civil society. The activities of the Pontis Foundation in Bratislava in training democratic activists in Belarus, Ukraine and even Uzbekistan are cases in point. In part, these activities stem from the belief that their democracy is not safe until it is embedded in a larger democratic community; in part

it reflects a local version of the EU model of spreading democracy (helped by the Good Neighbor Policy); and in part it is simply a tradition carried on from the communist era, wherein dissidents felt compelled, since they were struggling against the same enemy, to share their ideas and strategies with others in Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Kenney, 2002).

Importers of these strategies, moreover, also assumed that they could and should model themselves after the successful local cases—albeit recognizing the importance of modifications based upon local conditions. Again, in the interviews we have conducted, it was frequently observed that, while local conditions and local struggles were important, knowing that it had been done elsewhere successfully and learning from participants in these cases about how it was done—in short, both precedent and emulation—were critical to both the decision to try to defeat dictators and in the quality of the implementation of the electoral model. From the vantage point of local activists, therefore, electoral breakthroughs elsewhere contributed to optimism and energy, and, because of shared information, strategies as well.

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper has been to argue that diffusion dynamics were in play in the cross-national spread of electoral challenges to authoritarian rule in the postcommunist region from 1996 to 2005. As evidence, we pointed, first, to the clustering over time and space of these electoral episodes, as well as striking similarities in the innovative strategies used to defeat dictators. Second, we identified three factors that enabled the cross-national transmission of the model. Just as the model itself was a tidy to-do list that tapped into self-interest and that was easy to share among opposition

communities (though hard to implement, especially in more authoritarian political settings), so similarities, objective and widely-perceived, among “sending” and “receiving” countries facilitated the adoption of the model in a variety of countries. However, central to transmission was the hard work of a transnational network, co-organized by the United States, regional democracy promoters, and local oppositions and non-governmental organizations. It was this community that fashioned, applied and exported the model.

This case study of one wave of innovation has some implications for our understanding, more generally, of diffusion. One is that the claim of diffusion rests not just on new ways of doing things and patterns of adoption, but also on evidence regarding how and why innovations move from one setting to others. This two-stage explanation is important because it allows for the elimination of alternative explanations for clustered commonalities—for example, similar conditions giving rise to similar innovations and powerful external actors forcing similar innovations on less powerful actors. Second, it can be argued that, for subversive innovations, the commitment to choosing among different diffusion models may be misplaced. It may be the case that there are stiff requirements for an innovation that challenges the status quo in a fundamental way to embark on a successful cross-national journey. Thus, where conditions are not so similar or not perceived as being similar by key actors, where the model in question lacks easy transportability, where goals converge, but interests are untapped, and/or where local actors lack both a game plan and international and regional allies, subversive innovations may be easily blocked from leaving their home site. Indeed, this is one explanation of why some attempts to defeat dictators failed in this region and why the electoral wave

came to an end, as well as why, earlier, the revolutions of 1989 that brought down communism were limited in their regional reach.

¹ We are thankful to the International Center for Non-Violent Conflict, the Smith Richardson Foundation, the Einaudi Center for International Studies, and the Institute for the Social Sciences at Cornell University for their support of this project. In addition, we thank Vlad Micic, Sara Rzyeva, Nancy Meyers, and Melissa Aten for their research assistance and Sidney Tarrow for his helpful comments on an earlier draft. The arguments presented in this paper are based upon over 200 interviews conducted from 2005-2007 with American and European democracy promoters and ambassadors, along with leaders of opposition parties, democratic activists, and civil society organizations. These interviews took place in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Ithaca, NY, along with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine.

² For purposes of simplifying our discussion, we refer to the cross-national spread of innovation, rather than the more accurate characterization of the process as one that simply involves multiple sites—which can, of course, occur within, as well as across states.

References

Ackerman, Peter and Jack Duvall. 2000. *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: Palgrave.

Ackerman, Peter and Adrian Karatnycky (2005). "How Freedom is Won: From Civic Resistance to Durable Democracy." www.freedomhouse.org.

Aksartova, Sada (2005b). "NGO Diffusion in the Former Soviet Union and its Effects," Ch. 4. In *Civil Society from Abroad: U.S. Donors in the Former Soviet Union*, Ph.d. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Princeton University.

Angell, Alan. 2001. "International Support for the Chilean Opposition, 1973-1989: Political Parties and the Role of Exiles." In Laurence Whitehead, ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 175-200.

Beissinger, Mark. (2007). "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/ Rose/ Orange/ Tulip Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics*, 5 (June).

Beissinger, Mark (2006). "Promoting Democracy: Is Exporting Revolution a Constructive Strategy?" *Dissent*, 53, no. 1 (Winter): 18-24.

Beissinger, Mark. (2002). Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bieber, Florian. 2003. "The Serbian Transition and Civil Society: Roots of the Delayed Transition in Serbia." *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 17 (Fall): 73-90.

Bockman, Johanna and Eyal, Gil. 2002. "Eastern Europe as a Laboratory for Economic Knowledge: The Transnational Roots of Neoliberalism." *American Journal of Sociology*, 108, no. 1 (September): 310-52.

Bratton, Michael, Robert Mattes, and E. Gyimah Boadi, eds. (2004). *Public Opinion, Democratization and Market Reform*. Cambridge University Press.

Brinks, Daniel and Michael Coppedge (2006). "Diffusion is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy." Comparative Political Studies, 39, no. 7 (September): 1-23.

Bunce, V 2006 Enabling and Enhancing Democracy: Global Patterns and Postcommunist Dynamics. Paper presented at the first meeting of the Project on Democratic Transitions, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia, January 19.

Bunce, V 2003. "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience." *World Politics*, 55 (January): 167-192.

Bunce, Valerie. 2002. "The Return of the Left and Democratic Consolidation in Poland and Hungary." In Andras Bozoki and Jon Ishiyama, eds., *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe*. M.E. Sharpe, pp. 303-322.

Bunce, V. 1999a. The Political Economy of Postsocialism. *Slavic Review* 58 (Winter), 756-93.

Bunce, V 1999b. *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

Bunce, V 1994 "Sequencing Political and Economic Reforms." In John Hardt and Richard Kaufman, eds., East-Central European Economies in Transition. (Washington, D.C.: Joint Economic Committee, 1994), pp. 46-63.

Bunce, Valerie (1984/5). "The Empire Strikes Back: The Transformation of the Eastern Bloc from a Soviet Asset to a Soviet Liability." *International Organization*, 39 (Winter): 1-46.

Bunce, Valerie and Sharon Wolchik (2008). *American Democracy Promotion and Electoral Change in Postcommunist Europe and Eurasia*. Unpublished book manuscript in progress.

Bunce, Valerie and Sharon Wolchi, (2007). "Democratizing Elections in the Postcommunist World: Definitions, Dynamics and Diffusion." *St. Antony's International Review*, 2 (Winter): 64-79.

Bunce, V and Wolchik, S. 2006a. "Defining and Domesticating the Electoral Model: A Comparison of Slovakia and Serbia." In Valerie Bunce, Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, eds., *Waves and Troughs in Postcommunist Transitions*. Book manuscript under review.

Bunce, V. and Wolchik, S. 2006b. "Favorable Conditions and Electoral Revolutions." *Journal of Democracy*, 17, no. 4 (October): 5-17.

Bunce, V. and Wolchik, S. 2006c. "International Diffusion and Postcommunist Electoral Revolutions." Communist and Post-Communist Studies 39, no. 4 (September): 283-304..

Diani, Mario. 2003. "Introduction: Social Movements, Contentious Actions and Social Networks: From 'Metaphor' to Substance?" In Mario Diani and Doug McAdam, eds. *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*. Oxford University Press: 1-20.

Carothers, Thomas. 2007a. "U.S. Democracy Promotion Before and After Bush." Carnegie Endowment Website, September.

Carothers, Thomas. 2004. *Critical Missions: Essays on Democracy Promotion*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment.

Carothers, Thomas. 1999. *Aiding Democracy Abroad; The Learning Curve*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Cooley, Alexander. 2008. *Base Politics*. Cornell University Press, forthcoming.

Cooley, A and Ron, J 2002. The NGO Scramble: Organizational Insecurity and the Political Economy of Transnational Action. *International Security* 27 (Summer), 5-39.

Dalton, Russell, Doh L. Shin and Willy Jou. 2007. "popular Conceptions of the meaning of Democracy: Democratic Understanding in Unlikely Places." Center for the Study of Democracy, University of California at Irvine, Paper 07-03. <http://www.respositories.edlib.org/esd>

Devdariani, Jaba. 2003. "The Impact of International Assistance." IDEA website and conference, May.

Djordjevic, Jasna Milsovec. 2005. "Cinioci izborne apstenincije v Srbiji." In Zorin Lutovac, ed., *Politicke stranke u Srbiji: Strukture I funkcionisanje*. Belgrade: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung/Institut drustvenih nauka. Pp. 137-156.

Elkins, Zachary and Beth Simmons. 2005. "On Waves, Clusters, and Diffusion: A Conceptual Framework." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 598: 33-51.

Finkel, Steven F., Anibal Perez-Linan, Mitchell A. Seligson, and Dinorah Azpuru. (2006). "Effects of US Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building: Results of a Cross-National Quantitative Study." Final Report, USAID, September, version #34..

Finnemore, Martha. 2003. *The Purpose of Intervention*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

M Steven Fish, "Democratization's Prerequisites." *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 14 (July-September, 1998), pp. 212-247

M. Steven Fish. 2005. *Democracy Derailed in Russia. The Failure of Open Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fisher, Sabine. 2005. "The EU's Strategy of 'New Neighborhood' and its Impact on International Relations of the Former Soviet Union." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Honolulu, March 1-5.

Forbrig, Joerg and Pavol Demes, eds. 2007. *Reclaiming Democracy: Civil Society and Electoral Change in Central and Eastern Europe*. Washington, D.C.: German Marshall Fund.

Fuhrmann, Matthew. 2007. "A Tale of Two Social Capitals: Revolutionary Collective Action in Kyrgyzstan." *Problems of Postcommunism*, 53, no. 6: 16-29.

Fukic, Marko and Zeljko Capin. 1999. "Vladimir meciar, bivsi premijer Republike Slovacke: Hrvatski prijatelji voci izbora mogu uciti na nasim pogreskama." *Vecernji list*, Wednesday, November 17, p. 17.

Garber, Larry and Cowan, Glenn. 1993. "The Virtues of Parallel Vote Tabulations." *Journal of Democracy*, 4 (April): 95-107.

Glenn, John III. 2000. *Framing Democracy: Civil Society and Civic Movements in Eastern Europe*. Stanford University Press.

Goati, V 2001. The Nature of the Order and the October Overthrow in Serbia. In: Ivana Spasic and Milan Subotic (eds.) *R/evolution and Order: Serbia After October 2000*. Beograd Institute for Philosophy and Sociology, Belgrade, pp. 45-58.

Grodeland, A. 2006. "It really strikes me as suspicious when people buy a jeep or a luxurious car and drive around in it after two or three successful projects': Public Perceptions of Non-Governmental Organizations in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*.

Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2006. *Rebuilding Leviathan: Party Competition and State Exploitation in Postcommunist Democracies*. Cambridge University Press.

Herd, Graeme. 2005. "Colorful Revolutions and the CIS." *Problems of Postcommunism*, 52 (March-April): 3-18.

Hermann, Robert (2005). "NGO Sustainability in a Time of Hope and Apprehension." In USAID, The NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Washington, D.C., May.

Howard, Marc (2002). "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society." Journal of Democracy, 13, no. 1: 157-169.

Howard, Marc Marje and Roessler, Philip. G. 2006. "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *American Journal of Political Science*, 50, no. 2 (April),

Huntington, Samuel. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Huskey, Eugene. 2005a. "Eurasian Semi-Presidentialism: The Development of Kyrgyzstan's Model of Government." Unpublished manuscript.

Huskey, Eugene. 2005b. "Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution: An Interview with Roza Otunbayeva." *Demokratizatsia*, forthcoming.

Huskey, Eugene. 2005c. *Nations in Transit 2005: Kyrgyzstan*. Draft, January 24.

Jacoby, Wade. 2006. "Inspiration, Coalition and Substitution." *World Politics*, 58, no. 4 (July): 623-651.

Jacoby, Wade. 2004. *The Enlargement of the EU and NATO: Ordering from the Menu in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kandelaki, Giorgi. 2005. "Rose Revolution: A Participant's Story." USIP.

Karumidze, Zurab and James V. Wertsch, eds. 2005. *Enough! The Rose Revolution in the Republic of Georgia 2003*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Cornell University Press.

Kenney, P 2002. *Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe, 1989*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Kapucinski, Ryszard. 2006. *The Emperor*. Pentland Press.

Kniazev, Aleksandr. 2005. *Gossudarstvennyi perevorot. 24 Marta 2005g v Kirgizii*. Moscow: Europa.

Kubicek, Paul(2005). "The European Union and Democratization in Ukraine." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 38: 269-92.

Kuzio, Taras. 2005. "From Kuchma to Yushchenko: Orange Revolution in Ukraine." *Problems of Postcommunism*, 52 (March-April 2005): 29-44.

Lazic, Mladen, eds.. 1999. *Protest in Belgrade*. Budapest. Central European University Press.

Lee, Chang Kil and Strang, David. 2006. "The International Diffusion of Public Sector Downsizing." *International Organization*, August.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2008. *Competitive Authoritarianism: The Origins and Evolution of Hybrid Regimes in the Post-Cold War Era*. Unpublished book manuscript.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way. (2002) "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." Journal of Democracy, 13, no. 2 (April), 51-65.

Lieberman, Robert C. (2002). "Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change." *American Political Science Review*, 96, no. 4 (December): 697-712.

Lowenthal, Abraham. 1991. *Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lust-Okar, Ellen. 2004. "Divided They Rule: The Management and Manipulation of Political Opposition." *Comparative Politics*, January: 159-179.

Lust-Okar, Ellen. 2005. "Elections Under Authoritarianism: Preliminary Lessons from Jordan." Undated paper, Department of Political Science, Yale University.

Mainwaring, S and Perez-Linan, A. 2005. Why Regions of the World are Important: Regional Specificities and Region-Wide Diffusion of Democracy." Kellogg Institute, University of Notre Dame, Working Paper 322, October.

Markoff, J 1996. *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change*. Pine Forge Press, Thousand Oaks, Ca.

McAdam, Doug. 1993. "The Cross National Diffusion of Movement Ideas." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 528 (July): 56-74.

McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly. 2007. "Comparative Perspectives on Contentious Politics." In Mark Lichbach and Allen Zuckerman, eds., *Ideas, Interests and Institutions: Advancing Theory in Comparative Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

McFaul, Michael (2004/5). "Democracy Promotion as a World Value." The Washington Quarterly, 28: 1 (Winter): 147-163.

McFaul, Michael (2005). "Transitions from Postcommunism" Journal of Democracy, 16, no. 3: 5-19.

Meladze, Giorgi (2005). "Civil Society: A Second Chance for Post-Soviet Democracy: A Eurasianet Commentary." <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/civilsociety/articles/eav090605.shtml>

Mendelson, Sarah. 2004. "The Seven Ingredients: When Democracy Promotion Works." *Harvard International Review*, 20 (Summer): 87-88.

Mendelson, Sarah and Glenn, John, eds. 2002. *The Power and Limits of NGOs: A Critical Look at Building Democracy in Eastern Europe and Eurasia*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mendelson, S and Gerber, T 2005 Local Activist Culture and Transnational diffusion: An Experiment in Social Marketing among Human Rights Groups in Russia. Unpublished manuscript, April.

Miller, Eric. 2004. "Georgia's New Start." *Problems of Communism*, 51, no. 2 (April): 12-21.

Muiznieks, Nils R. 1995. "The Influence of the Baltic Popular Movements on the Process of Soviet Disintegration." *Europe-Asia Studies*, 47, no. 1: 3-25.

Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina. 2005. "Europeanization without Decommunization: a Case of Elite Conversion." Need to get exact citation from Alina.

Nygren, Bertil. 2005a. "The Beauty and the Beast: When Electoral Democracy Hit Eurasia." Unpublished manuscript.

Nygren, Bertil. 2005b. "Putin's Attempt to Subjugate Georgia: From Sabre Rattling to Purse Policy." Paper presented at ICSEES, Berlin, July.

Osa, Maryjane. 2001. "Mobilization Structures and Cycles of Protest: Post-Stalinist Contention in Poland, 1954-9." *Mobilization*, 6: 211-31.

Papava, Vladimer. 2005. *Necroeconomics: The Political Economy of Post-Communist Capitalism*. New York: universe.

Pastor, Robert. 1999a. "A Brief History of Electoral Commissions." In Andreas Schedler, Larry Diamond, and Marc Plattner, eds., *The Self-Restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*. (London: Lynne Rienner): 75-82.

Pastor, Robert, 1999b. "The Third Dimension of Accountability: The International Community in National Elections." In Andreas Schedler, Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner, eds., *The Self-Restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*. London: Lynne Rienner: 123-144.

Pavlovic, Dusan (2005). Akteri I modeli: ogledi o politici u Srbiji pod Milosevic. (Belgrade: B92).

Pribicevic, Ognjen. 2004. "Serbia After Milosevic." *Southeast Europe and Black Sea Studies*, 4, no. 1 (January): 107-118.

Radnitz, Scott. 2006. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyzstan?" *Journal of Democracy*, 17, no. 2 (April): 132-146.

Romanian Coalition for a Clean Parliament. 2005. *A Quest for Political Integrity*. Bucharest: Polirom.

St. Protich, Milan (2005). *Izneverena revolutiutsija*. (Belgrade: Chigoya

Santa-Cruz, A. 2005. *International Election Monitoring, Sovereignty, and the Western Hemisphere Idea: The Emergence of an International Norm*. Routledge, New York.

Schedler, Andreas. 2007. "Blunt manipulation, Incisive Protest Explaining Election Outcomes under Authoritarian Rule." Paper delivered at the workshop, "Democratization by Elections?", the University of Florida, November 30-December 2..

Schedler, Andreas, eds. 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Silitsky, Vitali. 2007. "Another Contagion? Preemptive Authoritarianism in the Former Soviet Union Following the Coloured Revolutions." In Valerie Bunce, Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, eds., *Waves and Troughs in Postcommunist Transitions*. Book manuscript under review.

Silitsky, V 2005a. Is the Age of Post-Soviet Electoral Revolutions Over?" *Democracy at Large* 1 (4), 8-10.

Silitski, V 2005b. *The Long Road from Tyranny: Post-Communist Authoritarianism and Struggle for Democracy in Serbia and Belarus*. Unpublished book manuscript.

Simmons, Beth and Zachary Elkins. 2004. "The Globalization of Liberalization Policy: Diffusion in the International Political Economy." *The American Political Science Review*, 98, no. 1 (February): 171-189.

Starr, Harvey and Christina Lundborg. 2003. "Democratic Dominoes Revisited." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 47, no. 4 (August): 490-519.

Strang, David and Sarah Soule. 1998. "Diffusion in Organizations and Social Movements: From Hybrid Corn to Poison Pills." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24: 265-290.

Tarrow, S 2005. *The New Transnational Activism*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, S 1998. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge University Press..

Tarrow, S and della Porta, D 2005. Globalization, Complex Internationalism and Transnational Contention. In: della Porta, Donatella and Tarrow, S (eds.) *Transnational Protest and Global Activism* Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, 227-246.

Thomas, Robert. 1999. *The Politics of Serbia in the 1990s*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tucker, Joshua (2007). "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and the Second Wave of Post-Communist Democratic Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics*, 5 (September).

Van de Walle, Nicolas. 2006 "Tipping Games: When do Opposition Parties Coalesce?" In Andreas Schedler, ed., *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, pp. 77-94.

Van de Walle, Nicolas. 2005. "Why Do Oppositions Coalesce in Electoral Autocracies?" Einaudi Center for International Studies Working Paper Series, No. 01-05, Cornell University, August.

Van Wersch, Jos and Jeroen de Zeeuw (2005). "Mapping European Democracy Assistance: Tracing the Activities and Financial Flows of Political Foundations." Conflict Research Progress, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, November.

Way, L 2005a. *Authoritarian State-Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave: The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine*. *World Politics* 57 (January), 231-261

Way, L 2005b. *Ukraine's Orange Revolution: Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism.* *Journal of Democracy*, 16 (April 2005): 131-145.

Weyerman, Reto. 2005. *A Silk road to Democracy? FAST Country Risk Profile: Kyrgyzstan*. Working paper. Swiss peace Foundation, February.

Wheatley, Jonathan. 2005. *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution: Delayed Transition in the Former Soviet Union*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

USAID, "The NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia." Washington, D.C.: USAID, May, 2005.
