INTERATIONAL ACTORS IN UKRAINE'S REVOLUTION TO
DEMOCRACY FROM 2004 TO 2014

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Introduction

Since its independence in 1991, Ukraine has gone through two major upheavals in its

transition to democracy, the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Euromaidan in 2014. One

important factor that has influenced both events is international intervention by Russia, the

United States, the European Union, the OSCE, and surrounding post-Soviet countries that have

previously experienced color revolutions. These international actors are interested in the future

of Ukraine for different, and sometimes conflicting, reasons. While Russia has looked to

manipulate the east-west divide in Ukraine in order to reestablish its control over the country, the

United States has been working to institute democracy. The European Union and bordering

countries are concerned with regional security. International actors' conflicting goals for Ukraine

have enhanced tensions inside the country, as some Ukrainians lean toward the west, others lean

toward the east, and still others are caught in the middle. To examine how the international

context shaped the outcome of Ukraine's process to revolution, we will use Theda Skocpol's

theory of revolution on how the international factors influence the outcome of a revolution.

Review of Theories of Revolution

Van Inwegen's Definition of Revolution

In his book, *Understanding Revolution*, Patrick Van Inwegen defines revolution as "a

forcible, irregular, popularly supported change in the governing regime."[1] Forcible does not

necessarily mean violent, but instead using power to make someone do something they would

not do if they had a choice. Irregular means that the action is not an institutionalized part of

routine politics in the country.[2] A substantial portion of the population must support the

movement in order to separate revolutions from smaller revolts that take place by select groups

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[1] Patrick Van Inwegen, Understanding Revolution, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2011): 4.
[2] Ibid, 5.

within a society. This also means that forceful change is started by people within the society and not through an outside force.[3] Van Inwegen lists different types of revolution and classifies them by their intensity. One type he covers is velvet revolutions, which are revolutions with low intensity, or small amounts of violence, that use music, movies, and/or slogans as a way to protest and change the regime.[4]

The Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan can be considered revolutions in accordance with Van Inwegen's general definition. Both of these events were not part of routine politics in Ukraine and both were supported by different social and political groups in Ukrainian society, although the degree of popular support varied.[5] The people inside the country used protests to bring about an unexpected change in the ruling regime. During the Euromaidan, protestors demanded that Viktor Yanukovych be removed as president. He eventually fled to Russia against his own wishes, which constitutes an irregular and forceful change. Both of these revolutions can be classified as velvet revolutions, since there was relatively very little violence, and slogans and protests were the main methods of change. Because both of these examples fit Van Inwegen's definitions of revolution and velvet revolution, they will be referred to as revolutions throughout the rest of the paper.

Theda Skocpol's Empirical Theory of Revolution

Theda Skocpol was one of the first theorists to look at the significance of international structures and factors in relation to the study of revolution. In her book, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*, Skocpol examines social and political revolutions from a structural perspective, which she argues also requires

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[3] Ibid, 6.
[4] Ibid, 15.
[5] Emily Channell-Justice, "Flexibility and Fragmentation: Student Activism and Ukraine's (Euro)Maidan Protests," Berkeley Journal of Sociology, (2014): 1.

considering "transnational relations." These relations can be between states and/or between different groups within a state.[6]

Skocpol then applies the importance of international influence to revolutions through international structure and "world timing." She asserts that countries undergoing revolutions are influenced by the structure of international relations. Unequal competition on an international scale shapes the domestic politics of a country and can lead to revolution. Transnational relations also affect the course of events in a revolution, as other countries become involved in the conflict. International events, such as defeat in war or threats of invasion, lead to the start of revolutions by undermining the political regime and making it possible for conflict and transformation within the state. Lastly, the end results of revolutions are influenced by international politics and constraints from the world economic system.[7]

"World timing" involves looking at how the order of historical events can influence revolutions. Actors in a chronologically later revolution can be influenced by earlier revolutions. One example Skocpol gives is the Chinese Communist revolution, which gained its inspiration from the Russian Bolshevik revolution that took place earlier in history. Another way historical timing can affect revolutions is that revolutions that happen later have more opportunities at hand than ones that occur earlier because they have witnessed important events in world history. This gives them certain tools to use as the revolution unfolds, such as the idea of nonviolent protest as an effective means of resistance.[8]

Skocpol warns that although international factors are important in relation to the outcome of a revolution, transnational dynamics do not usually directly influence the revolution by

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[6] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and* China, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979): 19.
[7] Ibid, 23.
[8] Ibid, 24.

changing the situation or the wants of the people. Generally, the influence of international factors is transmitted to domestic revolutions through state actors who face international pressures and demands. When interacting with the revolutionary forces, the actors from the old regime allow international influences to affect the situation by considering transnational demands in their negotiations with domestic revolutionaries.[9]

From Independence to Revolution - Key Actors

Ukraine became independent in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and a referendum by the Ukrainian people. Leonid Kravchuk, general secretary of the Ukrainian Republic of the Soviet Union, became the first president of Ukraine, and many former Soviet bureaucrats became dominant in the new ruling elites. As the country switched from a socialist to a capitalist system it privatized previously state-owned sectors of the economy. Elites under the old system who had connections with the government were able to buy these formerly state-owned industries very cheaply. These "businessmen" became known as the oligarchs and wielded political influence as well as economic wealth in the new system.[10]

Leonid Kuchma, a politician from Dnepropetrovsk, an eastern industrial city, was prime minister under Kravchuk and ran against him for the presidency in 1994. In his campaign, he emphasized strengthening relations with Russia, which many eastern Ukrainians looked favorably upon because of their strong economic and cultural ties to Russia.[11] Kuchma was able to use his many connections from his various business interests to finance his presidential campaign and win the presidency. Kuchma continued a patronage system with these new elites after he became president.[12]

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[9] Ibid, 24.
[10] Serhy Yelechyk, Ukraine: Birth of a Modern Nation, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): 194.
[11] Ibid, 201.
[12] Ibid, 203.

In 1999, Kuchma was up for reelection, and to secure his return to power, he systematically picked off his most likely competitors through bribes, killings, and moles placed within the opposition.[13] He also had ballots stuffed and threatened heads of collective farms to produce votes. With the choice being between him and the leader of the Communist Party, a majority of voters saw Kuchma as the lesser of two evils and reelected him.[14]

Viktor Yushchenko was appointed prime minister by Kuchma in 1999, because the Ukrainian economy was experiencing a steady decline, and Yushchenko had successfully run the national bank of Ukraine for many years.[15] Yushchenko was from Sunny, a region that had close ties to the Soviet Union.[16] At the same time, he had strong connections to the West and was married to a Ukrainian-American woman who worked for the State Department.[17] While serving as prime minister, Yushchenko appointed Yulia Timoshenko as his deputy. Timoshenko was an important oligrach in the energy sector from Dnepropetrovsk. Timoshenko founded the political party Fatherland, which advocated Ukrainian nationalism.[18] A radical nationalist, she advocated the use of the Ukrainian language only and once said that the Russian-speaking east should be fenced off from the rest of Ukraine, an assertion that she later denied every making.[19]

In 2002, Viktor Yanyokovch replaced Yushchenko as prime minister, a sign that Yanukovych was the government's candidate in the 2004 presidential elections. President Leonid Kuchma picked Yanukovych for a couple of reasons. Earlier in his career, Yanukovych had constructed a powerful local political machine in the Donbas region, an eastern region known for its corruption and use of state resources for regional gain, which allowed him to deliver Kuchma

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[13] Andrew Wilson, Ukraine's Orange Revolution, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2005): 42-43.
[14] Ibid, 44.
[15] Yekelchyk, 2007, 207.
[16] Wilson, 2005, 14.
[17] Ibid, 15.
[18] Ibid, 21
[19] Ibid, 64.

the vote in 1999 in exchange for a hands-off approach to the region.[20] Kuchma also saw that Yanukovych represented the strongest clan of the oligarchs in Donetsk and that he received support from three groups of oligarchs in Donetsk, Dnepropetrovsk, and Kiev, making him the best possible candidate for the government that was mostly comprised of oligarchs and policies that benefited their interests.[21]

Yushchenko became president in 2004 after the Orange Revolution. He spent much of his time traveling to Western countries and discussing with Western leaders the possibility using the Orange Revolution as a model for Belarus or Cuba.[22] He appointed Timoshenko as prime minister and only a few politicians were left from the Kuchma regime, which seemed to create new political elite, something independence in 1991 failed to do.[23]

However, problems soon arose, signaling that not everything had changed after the Orange Revolution. The political relationship between Timoshenko and Petro Poroshenko, an oligarch in the candy industry who was a close friend of Yushchenko and a competitor for the post of prime minister deteriorated. Poroshenko was the head of the Council of National Security and Defense and tried to build the power of the organization, while at the same time exerting a significant amount of influence on the president. Both sides accused the other of corruption, which led to Poroshenko's resignation from the Council and to Yushchenko firing Timoshenko.[24]

Although he lost the presidency in 2004, Yanukovych did not disappear from politics and still enjoyed voter approval and support in eastern Ukraine. With the help of a poor economy and

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[20] Ibid, 12.

[21] Anders Aslund, "The Ancien Regime: Kuchma and the Oligarchs," *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 16-17.

[22] Yekelchyk, 2007, 218.

[23] Ibid, 219.

[24] Ibid, 222.

a divided opposition, Yanukovych was able to secure the presidency in 2010. He consolidated

his power by overturning the constitutional changes that were made after the Orange Revolution.

Yanukovych used his new powers to replace all government officials with those who were loyal

to him, giving his political party full control.[25] Yanukovych also had Timoshenko sent to jail on

the charges that she had made a bad business deal with Russia.[26]

The Ukrainian revolution of 2014 was sparked by the refusal of Yanukovych to sign the

EU Association Agreement after he had been moving in that direction for a while, due to

perceived economic benefits from Europe. As protestors took to the streets in November 2013,

Yanukovych met them with force. However, this repression backfired as more public anger was

aroused in reaction to the violence. People demanded the president's resignation and after more

protests, Yanukovych finally fled the country in mid-February.[27] After Yanukovych fled, an

interim government was set up. Presidential elections were held in June, and Petro Poroshenko

was elected the new president.[28]

<p align="center">**The International Context**</p>

<p align="center">*The Relationship between Russia and the United States*</p>

In the twenty-first century, Russia has been trying to reestablish its influence over post-

Soviet states. Before the events of 2004, Russia and the United States were experiencing

difficulties in improving their relations due to disagreements over the legitimacy of using the

military to change a regime and carrying out military intervention without a sanction from the

United Nations. While Russia emphasized the importance of non-intervention, the United States

under President George W. Bush was pushing the so-called "Freedom Agenda" that emphasized

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[25] Serhiy Kudelia, "The House that Yanukovych Built," *Journal of Democracy,* no. 2 (2014): 21.
[26] Ibid, 22.
[27] Ibid, 30-31.
[28] "Ukraine Crisis: Timeline," *BBC News,* September 9, 2014.

the principle that democracies do not go to war against one another and that it is United States'

responsibility to promote democracy around the world. The United States viewed the post-Soviet

region as a good place to put its Freedom Agenda into action.[29]

Russia still viewed the countries that had once formed the Soviet Union as a part of its

general sphere of influence, which gave it certain rights and privileges in relation to these

states.[30] Russia had wielded its influence over ex-Soviet states commercially by maintaining

close ties with their oligarchs and wealthy businessmen. It also maintained influence through

"linguistic, educational, and cultural ties."[31] While the United States asserted that the two

countries were not rivals in the region, Russia continued to see the United States' agenda as

competing with Russia for influence in the region and imposing its will throughout the world.[32]

Because the regimes in the former-Soviet states were similar to the Russia's semi-authoritarian

political system, Moscow saw the color revolutions that were aimed at changing these regimes as

a threat to its power and influence.[33]

Both countries tried to influence the direction of Ukraine's movement to democracy.

According to Angela Stent, the United States was more interested in Kiev holding free and fair

elections than it was about supporting a candidate during the campaign, although unofficially it

supported Viktor Yushchenko.[34] As prime minister, Yushchenko worked to clean up the corrupt

political system by abolishing tax breaks and other financial assets that benefited the rich,

privatizing many large firms, and destroying the rent-seeking system.[35] Yushchenko's reforms

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[29] Angela Stent, *The Limits of Partnership: US-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014): 101.
[30] Ibid, 97.
[31] Ibid, 100.
[32] Ibid, 98.
[33] Ibid, 101.
[34] Ibid, 113.
[35] Aslund, 2006, 13-14.

helped the Ukrainian economy and as result made him popular among the middle-class. This upset President Kuchma and other government officials, because they incurred financial losses with these reforms. Yushchenko's popularity also set him up as serious contender for votes from those who supported liberal democracy.[36]

Leading up to the 2004 election, Yushchenko focused on the widespread discontent with corruption. While Yushchenko did lean toward the West and explicitly stated a commitment to turning Ukraine towards Europe, this was not the main focus of his campaign. Many Ukrainians supported democracy more than closer ties with Russia, and Yushchenko was able to gain support from a large number of voters in the central region, and even some in the east, who wanted to see a change toward democracy.[37] His focus on improving democracy and fighting corruption, which lined up with the United States' goals for Ukraine, was one of the main reasons the United States unofficially supported him.[38]

Officially, the United States did not support a particular candidate. US ambassador to Ukraine John E. Herbst expressed that the United States was willing to work with any winning candidate as long as the elections were "honest and transparent."[39] US President George W. Bush sent an open letter to Kuchma making it clear that "a tarnished election will lead us to review our relations with Ukraine."[40] One of the most symbolic contributions from the United States government during the 2004 elections was when Secretary of State Colin Powell asserted that the United States could not accept the election results as legitimate.[41] The United States not only got

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[36] Yekelchyk, 2007, 208.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Stent, 2014, 113.
[39] Oleksandr Sushko and Olena Prystayko, "Western Influence," *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 132.
[40] Ibid, 133.
[41] Stent, 2014, 114.

involved by using its political weight to pressure Ukraine's elite, but it also put money into providing for election observers in Ukraine in order to ensure a free and fair election, along with promoting its Freedom Agenda.[42]

Russia, on the other hand, believed the United States had engineered the entire revolution to secure its favored candidate and influence in the region. In order to counter what it viewed as U.S. aggression, Russia took its own steps during the Orange Revolution. Moscow decided early on to support Kuchma and his government, regardless of who actually won the election. Russia's strategy was to emphasize the confrontation between the Russian-leaning eastern and nationalistic western Ukraine, hoping to spread eastern Ukraine's Russian tendencies to the center of the country. With the aid of Russian public relations specialists, the regime emphasized the fact that 70 percent of Ukraine's gross domestic product was provided by the eastern regions, and Russia capitalized on eastern fears about western Ukraine by claiming that they were the equivalent of Nazis.[43] Russia contributed large amounts of money to Yanukovych, although the exact amount is controversial and unknown.[44] Russia also used its soft power to "force the idea of friendship with Russia, which was possible only under a Yanukovych presidency."[45]

In his 2004 campaign, Yanukovych relied heavily on the regional divide between eastern and western Ukraine to support his position. It has generally been the case that western Ukraine, which includes the regions west of the Dnieper River, has always had closer ties to eastern European countries because of past invasions by Germany, Austria, and Poland.[46] Due to this physical invasion of European empires, western Ukrainians have adapted characteristics of European society, such as high levels of political participation and activism. The eastern regions

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[42] Ibid, 115.
[43] Ibid, 148.
[44] Ibid, 152.
[45] Ibid, 2006, 155.
[46] Yelechyk, 2007, 62-63.

on the other side of the Dnieper have strong historical, economic, and cultural ties to Russia, falling under its control for most of eastern Ukraine's history.[47] Russia's influence on eastern Ukraine can be seen in the fact that eastern Ukrainians prefer using Russian language over Ukrainian, and they are accustomed to accepting the heavy-handed rule of the state.[48]

Victor Yanukovych's heavy emphasis on regionalism hurt his campaign. Although he understood his own eastern region well and catered to it, he could not capture the center of the country with his promises. Working alongside Russia's strategy, Yanukovych began to emphasize regional differences between eastern Ukraine and the rest of the country and promised closer ties with Russia. However, "these populist Russophile polities served to further undermine Yanukovych in central Ukraine."[49] Most Ukrainians were not interested in closer ties with Russia because that would not bring them democracy.[50] Yanukovych's efforts to play on regional differences only helped solidify the idea that eastern Ukraine's identity is significantly different from the rest of the country.

Yanukovych tried using the threat of separatism to scare Ukrainians in the center of the country from participating in the demonstrations in Kiev. At the end of November, leaders in eastern Ukraine gathered in a summit, in order to hold a referendum on federalism and to discuss the possibility of making eastern Ukraine an autonomous region. However, many oblasts (sub-regional districts) in the east did not participate in the summit and the leaders decided to simply hold another referendum later, a promise which they eventually forgot. While there was also rhetoric about creating a "new Russia," no concrete steps were taken and things slowly

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[47] Ibid, 57.
[48] Ibid, 148.
[49] Ibid, 39.
[50] Nikolai Petrov and Andrei Ryabov, "Russia's Role in the Orange Revolution," *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 1155.

dissipated. Russia threatened to intervene militarily to help the eastern regions separate, but it never followed through.[51]

In reaction to the Euromaidan in 2014, Russia became involved in the eastern regions once again, encouraging separatism. In March, a referendum was held in Crimea, in which citizens of Crimea decided to separate from Ukraine, which led to the region's annexation by Russia later in the month. Russia has openly supported Crimea's decision, asserting the people have a right to decide how they want to govern themselves.[52]

In the Donbas and Luhansk regions a civil war erupted in 2014, as separatists declared their independence from Ukraine and took over key government and public buildings in the region. In response, Ukrainian troops were deployed to put down the insurrection, intensifying the war.[53] Russia's speculative involvement includes sending Russian troops and military support to assist the separatists in their endeavors. Russia has denied claims from the West that it is involved militarily in eastern Ukraine and has asserted that any Russian troops in eastern Ukraine are either lost or taking a vacation in the region. However, NATO satellite images show Russian weaponry in eastern Ukraine and OSCE observers have confirmed that they have seen "people in military uniforms crossing the border in both directions."[54]

In response to the Euromaidan and Russia's involvement in Ukraine, the United States provided Ukraine with a $291 million assistance package plus a $1 billion loan. The funds were allocated to provide humanitarian aid to those in eastern Ukraine in the conflict, and support Ukraine's military and border guards in the civil war. Along with these funds, the US has sent commanders and military equipment to help train Ukraine's military. The US has also focused

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[51] Wilson, 2008, 145.
[52] Benjamin Bidder, et al., "Undeclared War: Putin's Covert Invasion of Eastern Ukraine," *Spiegel Online International*, September 2, 2014.
[53] Wilson, 2008, 145.
[54] Benjamin Bidder, 2014.

on helping Ukraine support its civil society, independent media sources, and constitutional reforms. Following the revolution and the change in government, the U.S. gave advisors to Ukraine to help change economic policy that would benefit the private sector and lead to development.[55]

Europe's Involvement

Europe was also interested in influencing Ukraine's revolution to democracy. This relationship was not only based on ideological differences but on Ukraine's geographic location, which gives it geostrategic importance in relation to the stability of Europe. Therefore, from 1992 to 2014 Europe worked to develop its relationship with Ukraine in order to promote its values, such as democracy and a free market system, and ensure its own security.

During the Soviet Era, Ukraine was expected to defend the Soviet republics from any attack from the West, as outlined in the Warsaw Pact. Its duty was to protect the Union from NATO aggression, and because of its frontline location Ukraine received a large number of nuclear weapons and well-equipped military bases.[56] However, after the breakup of the Soviet Union and Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1991, Ukraine found that the West was no longer the threat and that the threat came from Russia, which was trying to reestablish its control over Ukraine. This created an opening for European institutions, such as the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to work with Ukraine, and address its security concerns while enhancing Europe's security in the east.[57]

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[55] White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *FACT SHEET: U.S. Support for Ukraine*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. United States Printing Office, 2014).

[56] Natalie Mychajlyszyn, "From Soviet Ukraine to the Orange Revolution," *Europe's last Frontier? Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine between Russia and the European Union,* ed. Oliver Schmidtke and Serhy Yekelchyk (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 36.

[57] Ibid, 38.

The OSCE had already begun to fill Ukraine's void in 1992 when Ukraine joined the CSCE, which was the predecessor of the OSCE. In the early years of the partnership, the OSCE developed numerous mechanisms to help prevent conflict in Ukraine, focusing its attention on Crimea. In 1994, the OSCE conducted a field mission to monitor the situation in Crimea, and by 1999 a coordination office was established to address Ukraine's non-traditional security issues.[58] Thus, when it came to addressing security issues in Ukraine during the Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan, the OSCE already had some experience in the country and was ready to help again.

The OSCE played an important part in the 2004 elections and the Orange Revolution by orchestrating the largest election monitoring mission in the history of the organization. The OSCE election observation mission, in cooperation with other monitoring organizations, was critical in calling the elections in the first round undemocratic and unrepresentative of the people's choice.[59] In its report, the OSCE highlighted the fact that Ukraine's Central Election Commission did not ensure that the law was uniformly applied throughout the elections and also noted that there were a large number of omissions and errors on voter lists, which caused confusion at polling states.[60] The OSCE report was also the grounds for the popular demands made during the Orange Revolution.

After the events of the Euromaidan and the upheaval in the east that resulted, the OSCE was called upon by the Ukrainian government to send a security-monitoring mission to Ukraine, which was agreed upon by all 57 OSCE member countries. The mission's mandate was for all of Ukraine, but the OSCE has concentrated its efforts in the eastern region of Ukraine, where the fighting is continuing. While the mission does not have the ability to use military force, it gathers

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[58] Ibid, 39.
[59] Mychajlyszyn, 2008, 39.
[60] Sushko and Prystayko, 2006, 138.

information on the security in the country and documents all facts surrounding violent incidents. Many observers have been stationed along the Russian-Ukrainian border to establish the truth of claims of border crossings by both sides.[61] Throughout the course of the revolution the OSCE has played an important role in monitoring the elections and finding evidence in order to paint a picture of the situation in the country, as contradicting stories continue to surface.

The European Union had also been working with Ukraine in order to strengthen relations and encourage Ukraine's integration with European norms, which include democracy and open-market principles. In 1998, Ukraine and the EU signed the Partnership Cooperation Agreement, which spelled out Ukraine's relationship with the EU and its obligations in the areas of trade, investment, democratic reform, and economic development.[62] Ukraine also joined the European Commission's European Neighborhood Policy, making it a target state in the EU's efforts to create "a ring of friends" that share European values. These partnerships prepared the ground for the EU to get involved in Ukraine during the Orange Revolution and Euromaidan.[63]

The European Union was rather divided in its response to the events in 2004, but it still managed to play a vital role. The EU members that consisted of "old" Europe, such as France and Germany, initially did not want to get involved. While they wanted to see democratic values spread to Ukraine, they did not want to upset Russia because they depended on it for their energy supplies.[64] Throughout the political campaign, the EU continued to express its disapproval of the fraudulent elections. However, as the situation escalated into a revolution, these states threatened

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[61] Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, "OSCE Monitoring Mission to Ukraine: The facts, (2014).

[62] Ibid, 44.

[63] Sushko and Prystayko, 2006, 130.

[64] Sushko and Prystayko, 2006, 131.

that if Ukrainian authorities continued to hamper free and fair elections there would be serious

consequences for the EU-Ukraine relationship.[65]

The newest members of the EU were more willing and quicker to act. Many of these

countries had their own velvet revolutions after the break up the Soviet Union, giving them

insight into the internal politics of Ukraine's revolution. They were more sympathetic after

having just experienced their own fights against an undemocratic system. Because many of these

newer EU members were located in Central and Eastern Europe, the fact that Ukraine was their

neighbor made the issue even more important for them. They realized that the issue in Ukraine

directly affected the security, stability, and democratic principles of the region, especially with

Russia and its semi-authoritarian influence looming close by.[66]

The new EU members encouraged the opposition in Ukraine by sending election

observers, publishing statements supporting their cause, and mediating in the negotiations

between the two sides to bring about a peaceful and democratic resolution to the conflict.[67] The

two main mediators sent from Europe to Ukraine were Poland and Lithuania. The mediators met

with various Ukrainian actors, including Yushchenko, Yanukovych, to a lesser degree, President

Kuchma, and Volodymyr Lytvyn, the speaker of the Ukrainian parliament. The mediators held

three sets of roundtable talks from various sides of the conflict in order to find a solution. From

the beginning, they emphasized the importance of no violence, a solution that adhered to

Ukrainian law, and political talks.[68]

In December, with the help of mediators from Europe, both sides were able to come to a

compromise. The Ukrainian Supreme Court finally declared the second round election results

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[65] Ibid, 132.

[66] Ibid, 130.

[67] Ibid, 131.

[68] Steven Pifer, "European Mediators and Ukraine's Orange Revolution," *Problems of Post-Communism*, no. 6 (2007): 31.

invalid and called for a repeat election on December 26. The Supreme Rada voted on a compromise package on December 8, which included constitutional reform that would give the parliament more power, new election laws that would allow for the repeat of the second round of elections for the presidency, and the removal of the head of the Central Electoral Commission. The new elections resulted in Yushchenko's victory. [69]

Steven Pifer argues that the mediators played an important part in the outcome of the revolution, even though it was mostly accomplished by Ukrainians. The mediators continually discouraged the use of violence on both sides of the conflict. They convinced Yanukovych to abandon his plan to have miners from the Donbas march upon Kiev, which could have caused serious clashes between the two sides. The European mediators also played an important role in starting negotiations and discussion and continuing them until a solution was found. Up until that point, neither side had made any effort to talk with the other. [70]

In 2014, the EU has once again looked to mediate and ease the situation in Ukraine. EU leaders have met with Russian and Ukrainian leaders in order to find a solution to the civil war in the east. These talks have taken place in Berlin and Milan with top EU members, such as the chancellor of Germany, the prime minister of Italy, and the president of France, joining to discuss the situation and find a solution. While a memorandum was created in Minsk to alleviate the situation, it has not been followed, resulting in European sanctions against Russia. So far European mediation has not helped bring about any concrete outcome to the revolution. [71]

In order to see how important geographic location was in influencing Ukraine's revolution to democracy and drawing foreign powers' support, we can compare events in Ukraine to the Tulip Revolution that occurred in 2005 in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan also has a

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[69] Yekelchyk, 2007, 218.
[70] Ibid, 36.
[71] "Ukraine Crisis: 'No Breakthrough' in Putin-EU talks," *BBC News,* October 17, 2014.

regional divide, but it is between the north and the south. During Kyrgyzstan's color revolution, the people protested against the country's dictator, Askor Akayev, and the corruption used in the parliamentary elections of 2005.[72] Akayev was connected with a northern clan, a smaller division within a tribe, which was supported by Moscow.[73] His connections to this northern clan helped him become president in the 1990s.[74] This is similar to Viktor Yanukovych, who came from a region in Russian-backed eastern Ukraine, and used his connections there to gain power in the government. In both the Orange Revolution and the Tulip Revolution, some candidates were supported by Russian-speaking regions and both revolutions looked to oust corrupt officials who had pre-existing loyalties to certain regions of the countries.[75]

The major difference between the two revolutions is the amount of international involvement in the events surrounding the revolutions. While Kyrgyzstan had Russia supporting one region, it did not have Europe tugging on the opposite side. Europe did not play an important role in supporting the region that was not pro-Russia.[76] This can be contributed to the location of Kyrgyzstan in comparison to Ukraine. Kyrgyzstan is tucked away in Central Asia, landlocked by Russia and China. It does not border any European country (see figure 1), and therefore is relatively off the map for Europe. It is not an important eastern border, like Ukraine, which explains why Europe did not play a major role in Kyrgyzstan's color revolution.

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[72] Erica Marat, *Tulip Revolution: Kyrgyzstan One Year After* (Washington, D.C.: The Jameson Foundation, 2006).

[73] Kathleen Collins, "The Logic of Clan Politics: Evidence from the Central Asian Trajectories," *World Politics 56*, 2 (2004): 234.

[74] Ibid, 246.

[75] James DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movement* (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2011): 81-82.

[76] Richard Youngs, "Is European Democracy Promotion on the Wane?" *Centre for European Policy Studies* (2008): 4.

World Timing in Relation to other Color Revolutions

World timing was not just important in encouraging the new EU members to take action, but it was also important in giving Ukrainian civil society the necessary tools it needed during the revolutions. The fact that Serbia's peaceful Bulldozer Revolution in 2000 and Georgia's Rose Revolution in 2003 occurred before the Orange Revolution helped Pora and other civil society organizations in Ukraine sharpen their tactics during the revolution. These prior color revolutions are important because they set the precedent of nonviolent revolutions that used youth organizations to challenge the status quo of the government and its corrupt presidents.

In 2000, Ukraine experienced widespread protests in reaction to the killing of opposition journalist, Hryhorii Gondaze, after tapes of Kuchma were leaked to the public that detailed the extent of fraud used in the 1999 presidential elections. This became known as Kuchmagate, and in response some activists launched the "Ukraine without Kuchma" campaign. However, the state swiftly dealt with that campaign by conducting conflicting analysis of the tapes that made it appear unclear whether or not the president had really ordered the killing of Gondaze. The government labeled the protestors Ukrainian fascists and paid fake protestors to admit they were fascists. Kuchma also got rid of possible opposition leaders by having them killed or threatening to kill them.[77]

These initial protests were not successful in changing the system under Kuchma, but civil society gained valuable experience in protesting, which it put to good use in 2004. While this domestic experience was the first step in preparing the Ukrainian people for peaceful protests against government corruption, the international experience that came before the revolution in 2004 would be a deciding factor in influencing the people to partake in non-violent protest activity to change the regime.

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[77] Wilson, 2005, 58-59.

The youth group, Pora, was known as the vanguard of the Orange Revolution and led the

people in protest for democratic freedoms. This youth movement formed that largest civil society

coalition during the Orange Revolution in order to guarantee free and fair elections.[78] Pora's

responsibilities in working with civil society included strengthening democracy and voter turnout

of the Western-oriented democracy supporters. Pora was made up of 78 subdivisions that

spanned throughout the country, which allowed the organization to tailor its message to specific

regions and their local cultures and societies.[79] Pora sent personal letters to local officials to

inform them of their legal obligations and penalties under the law if they were to violate election

procedures, and it also distributed mass information on the elections to counter the state-

controlled media. After the regime tried to get away with election fraud, Pora shifted its attention

to calling upon the Ukrainian people to protest and providing them with makeshift tents in the

streets of Kiev, along with protest tents in Kharkov, Donetsk, Cherkassy, and Dnepropetrovsk.[80]

In Serbia the resistance movement Otpor, which was mostly led by students, protested

against President Slobodan Milosevic, who tried to eliminate anyone who questioned his tight

grip on the country.[81] The goal of the organization was to do away with President Milosevic and

establish an effective democracy in his place.[82] It protested the president's power through the

duration of the campaign and created the widely used slogan that was plastered everywhere

during the revolution: *He* [Milosevic] *is finished*.[83] When the electoral commission declared a

run-off poll instead of a decisive win for the opposition, people took to the streets, trashing and

[78] Pavol Demes and Joerg Forbrig, "Pora- It's Time for Democracy in Ukraine," *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough*, ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 87.
[79] Ibid, 89.
[80] Ibid, 93-94.
[81] Matthew Collins, *The Time of the Rebels*, (London: Serpent's Tail, 2007): 40.
[82] Ibid, 27.
[83] Ibid, 51.

burning symbols of the state, including the parliament building. The final result of the revolution was Milosevic admitting defeat and being sent to The Hague to answer for his war crimes committed earlier in the county's history.[84]

The next piece of inspiration came from Georgia, where President Eduard Shevardnadze ruled a regime that never tried to hide the fact that it was corrupt, but instead made it very clear that nothing was going to change.[85] This led to the creation of the mass organization Kmara, which began its campaign in spring 2003 with graffiti, asserting "enough."[86] Kmara's tactics included slogans, shouting at police officers and politicians, putting up banners, and creating posters that carried the message of change.[87] Kmara reacted to the November parliamentary elections that were corrupted through empty ballot boxes being taken, filled, and returned.[88] After the election results declared Shevardnadze's party in first place, protests erupted in the capital city of Tbilisi. The revolution gained momentum as people called for the president's resignation and stormed parliament, ultimately resulting in Shevardnadze's resignation.[89]

After viewing the events that took place in Georgia, Yulia Timoshenko wrote a letter to the interim president of Georgia, Nino Burjanadze, asserting that "the experience of Georgia, [of] a peaceful, democratic revolution must be borrowed by the democratic forces of Ukraine."[90] Timoshenko was not the only one who thought this way about the prior color revolutions in the region. In fact, a year before the 2004 elections, Pora began cooperating with trainers from Serbia and Georgia, who taught the Ukrainian activists how to use non-violent means to topple

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[84] Ibid, 55.
[85] Ibid, 70.
[86] Ibid, 71.
[87] Ibid, 80.
[88] Ibid, 82.
[89] Ibid, 88-89.
[90] Mark MacKinnon, *The New Cold War: Revolutions, Rigged Elections, and Pipeline Politics in the Former Soviet Union*, (Vintage Canada, 2007): 152.

the government as they had in their own countries.[91] Otpor leaders went to Kiev to teach the Ukrainians the importance of organization and using the media to send strong images to the public. They explained that the strategy was to start with legal elections, and if the victory of the opposition was not recognized then demonstrations and a non-violent revolution was permissible.[92] This Serbian training was important because it helped Ukrainian activists bring legitimacy to their cause by not breaking the law.

World timing not only taught the Ukrainians tactics from Serbia, but it also gave them inspiration from Georgia. When the images of people storming the parliamentary building in Georgia reached the people in Ukraine, activists were attentively watching. After seeing a peaceful uprising in a former Soviet republic meet success, Ukrainians began to have hope. It gave them faith in their cause and their success because they saw that Georgia has little training or experience in activism, but still managed to pull off a successful revolution. One member of Pora asserted that if Georgia could do it, Ukraine could do it.[93] Without this boost of encouragement from Georgia right before 2004, the Orange Revolution may have not occurred.

The Ukrainian government was also responding to the events of the Rose Revolution, but in a different way. David Dettman, who took part in activist training sessions in Ukraine, asserted that organizers did not try to hide the fact that they were organizing something big and that they were relying on the aid of Serbs and Georgians. This was done as a scare tactic, which worked to some extent because Ukraine's leadership had also seen what happened in Georgia and Serbia earlier. However, they did not know how to stop what was coming.[94]

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[91] Collins, 2007, 106.
[92] Ibid, 107.
[93] Ibid, 108.
[94] MacKinnon, 2007, 165.

President Kuchma was very concerned about Western approval, which stopped him from expelling organizations such as Freedom House and the Renaissance Foundation, even though he knew they were working to get rid of him. This had major consequences on the course of the revolution because, as MacKinnon points out, "by tolerating the activities of the big American NGOs, he essentially signed his own dismissal papers."[95]

The Euromaidan is even more advantaged in relation to world timing, as it came after the Orange Revolution. Many of the protesters of the Euromaidan had already protested in 2004 and knew that things could be changed (at least at the top) with a peaceful, nonviolent revolution. They were willing to demand more in the Euromaidan because they already had practice during the Orange Revolution, which gave them confidence. They also had other examples of failed and successful color revolutions that came after the Orange Revolution to examine and learn from, such as the Denim Revolution in Belarus.

Conclusion

International actors played a key role in aggravating, as in the case with Russia, and mediating, as in the case with the United States and Europe, the volatile situation from 2004 to 2014 in Ukraine. Russia sought to emphasize regional differences and encourage separatism in the east, which has escalated the conflict between Ukrainians who support Ukrainian nationalism, those who advocate strong ties with Russia, and those who want a democratic Ukrainian state. All of the international actors involved with Ukraine's revolution to democracy have something at stake in the conflict. What remains to be seen is how far each actor willing to go to achieve its goals.

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[95] Ibid, 167.

Figure 1   **Source: http://www.centralasiatravel.com/**

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