This dissertation studies the causes of post-mobilization leadership change and continuity. Using as examples the fall and survival of the post-Color Revolution governments in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia, the study examines the factors that contribute to post-uprising leadership durability.

Using qualitative methods of structured, focused comparison and within case process-tracing, I argue that the key independent variable that influences post-mobilization leadership change and continuity is ruling coalition size and cohesion. I demonstrate that if the ruling coalitions are large and fragmented, as in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, the coalitions disintegrate and their members defect to the opposition, making possible the emergence of active oppositions. Active oppositions then become persistent in destabilizing the new governments. Also, large, fragmented coalitions politicize the issue of the president’s executive power, an issue which the reactivated oppositions use to undermine the new leaderships. Moreover, large, fragmented coalitions fail to agree on a reform program, impeding the implementation of reforms. The failure to carry out reforms leads to diminished state capacity and popular support. Overall,
active opposition, politicized issue of executive power, and the failed reforms—three intervening variables in this dissertation—contributed to the fall of the post-mobilization leaderships, exemplified by post-Color Revolution Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.

Alternatively, if the ruling coalition is small and cohesive, as in Georgia, the coalition maintains unity. Without defections from the coalition, the opposition stays inactive and allows the new government to solidify its grip on power. Furthermore, a small, cohesive coalition quickly solves the issue of the president’s executive power, thus denying the opposition the chance to politicize this issue and use it to destabilize the leadership. In contrast, a small, cohesive coalition can agree on a reform agenda and enables the leadership to carry out reforms. Successful reforms lead to increased state capacity and strong popular support. Hence the intervening variables, inactive opposition, absence of the issue of executive power, and successful reforms create favorable conditions for the continuity of the post-uprising leadership, as is the case in the post-Color Revolution Georgia.

The arguments developed in this dissertation contribute to the theory building on post-mobilization leadership change and continuity.
THE CAUSES OF POST-MOBILIZATION LEADERSHIP CHANGE AND CONTINUITY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POST-COLOR REVOLUTION UKRAINE, KYRGYZSTAN, AND GEORGIA

A dissertation submitted to Kent State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Vasili Rukhadze

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Except for previously published materials
Dissertation written by

Vasili Rukhadze

B.A., Tbilisi State University, 1998
M.A., Brooklyn College, The City University of New York, 2002
Ph.D., Kent State University, 2014

Approved by

Andrew Barnes, Professor, Ph.D., Department of Political Science, Doctoral Advisor

Joshua A. Stacher, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Department of Political Science, Doctoral Advisor

Jullie M. Mazzei, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Department of Political Science

Stephen Crawley, Professor, Ph.D., Department of Politics at Oberlin College, External Member

Mary Ann Heiss, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Department of History, Graduate Representative

Accepted by

Andrew Barnes, Professor, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Political Science

James L. Blank, Ph.D., Interim Dean, College of Arts and Science
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Throughout my six years in the Political Science Ph.D. program at Kent State University, I was surrounded with some truly remarkable people. These individuals not only provided me with valuable intellectual, logistical, and moral support, but also enriched me as an individual and professional in many ways.

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Chapter One

Introduction, Research Design, and Methodology

1.1 Case Introduction

From 2003 to 2005, so-called Color Revolutions swept through the former Soviet republics of Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan, ousting corrupt and semi-authoritarian post-communist governments.¹ In November 2003, the Rose Revolution deposed Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, bringing into power the young, pro-Western opposition leader Mikhail Saakashvili.² A year later in November-December 2004, anti-government mass protests erupted in Ukraine after departing President Leonid Kuchma’s handpicked successor Viktor Yanukovych tried to rig the presidential elections in his own favor. Protests dubbed the Orange Revolution swept to power the pro-Western Ukrainian politician Viktor Yushchenko and his Orange team.³ Just four months after that, in March 2005, the Tulip Revolution overthrew Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev and opened the way to power for his political enemy, Kurmanbek Bakiyev.⁴

¹ This dissertation uses “government,” “political leadership,” “leadership,” and “president’s administration” (or just “administration”) as synonymous to avoid tautology in the text. This work, however, is aware of the possible real world differences among them. Moreover, the dissertation is mindful of the fact that “administration,” which in the United States means a government under a president, in the former Soviet Union means office of the president, run by the head of a presidential administration, equivalent of a chief of staff in the United States.
Five years after the Color Revolutions, two of the three new governments had lost power, both in 2010. The electorate voted out Ukraine’s President Viktor Yushchenko decisively in the February 2010 presidential elections giving him a mere 5 percent of total votes. Yushchenko lost to the pro-Russian presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovych, the person who had attempted to steal the presidential election back in 2004. In April of the same year, a bloody popular revolt overthrew President Kurmanbek Bakiyev of Kyrgyzstan. The post-Rose Revolution Georgian government was the only one of the Color Revolution governments to survive: President Saakashvili and his ruling United National Movement (UNM) Party maintained an unchallenged hold on power for almost nine years (January 2004-October 2012). Though UNM lost the October 1, 2012 parliamentary elections to opposition “Georgian Dream” (GD) coalition (UNM garnered 40.34 percent of popular votes [65 seats] against GD’s 54.97 [85 seats]), Saakashvili remained as president for another year and his UNM party moved into parliamentary opposition. The GD-dominated parliament weakened the office of president, depriving Saakashvili of his constitutional right to sack and appoint a new government without the parliament’s approval. 

---


Nevertheless, Saakashvili still continued as president and retained huge constitutional powers, completing his second and final term in October 2013. Of the three post-Color Revolution leaders discussed here, only Saakashvili lasted as president for two full terms.

1.2 The Research Question and the Argument

Academic literature on government and regime continuity largely fails to explain why after popular uprisings some new political leaderships fall while others survive. This work fills that gap. The dissertation asks why the post-Color Revolution Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments fell but the Georgian government endured longer. In other words, this research studies the causes of variation in leadership change and continuity in post-uprising settings. The dissertation argues that leadership continuity depends on whether a coalition that leads a successful popular uprising is large and fragmented or small and cohesive. These two types of coalition determine a causal path and the dependent variable. Once in power, a large and fragmented coalition: 1) facilitates the emergence of an active opposition as coalition members defect; 2) politicizes and uses the issue of a president’s executive power to undermine the new leadership; 3) fails to agree on reforms and impedes them, which diminishes state capacity and popular support. Subsequently, these three factors contribute to the fall of a political leadership. Alternatively, a small and cohesive coalition: 1) holds together, thus depriving the opposition an opportunity to activate; 2) agrees quickly to solve the issue of a president’s executive power; 3) agrees on reforms and implements them, which increases state capacity and builds popular support. Consequently, the political leadership stays in power longer. This research’s main finding is that post-uprising governments formed from large, fragmented coalitions fall sooner than those formed from small,

10 The Constitution of Georgia.

11 For the definitions of all the variables see section 1.6 of this chapter.

12 State capacity too is defined below in section 1.6.
cohesive coalitions. The dissertation’s findings contribute to theory development on post-mobilization leadership durability.

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows: The next section offers various definitions of a revolution and discusses why this dissertation treats Color Revolutions as popular uprisings rather than revolutions. The same section draws a difference between state, regime, and government. The following section points to the similarities that the Georgian, Ukrainian, and Kyrgyz cases share, emphasizing why this dissertation has selected these particular three cases for study. A subsequent section lays out the research methodology. The next section discusses the variables, research design, and rival explanations. The last section offers the dissertation outline.

1.3 Were Color Revolutions True Revolutions?

Can the Color Revolutions qualify as revolutions? Assessments vary. Some scholars refer to them as electoral revolutions\(^{13}\) and democratic revolutions.\(^{14}\) Others, however, refrain from


\(^{14}\) Mark S. Beissinger, “Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions,” *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (June 2007): 259-276; Theodor Tudoroiu, “Rose, Orange, and Tulip: The Failed Post-Soviet Revolutions,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 40, no. 3 (September 2007): 315. Tudoroiu, however, further argues that these revolutions failed to deliver revolutionary transformations and turned out to be “a limited rotation of the ruling elites within undemocratic political systems” (340). Therefore, for Tudoroiu Color Revolutions are failed revolutions.
using a term “revolution,” instead choosing to dub Color Revolutions electoral breakthroughs or cyclical changes in regimes. Assessments differ from on case to case bases as well.

If Color Revolutions are not really revolutions, then what are they? Answers depend on which definition of a revolution this work adopts. Indeed there is no a single agreed-upon explanation because many definitions actually contradict one another. As Peter Calvert confirms, scientific study of revolutions faces the problem of the lack of an agreed definition of what qualifies as a revolution. As he states, the lay public uses the word revolution to describe any violent political change and even swift changes of course in every other aspect of life. Trained observers, on the other hand, limit the term to major social and ideological changes which belong to rare cases of historical events and extend over considerable time.

---


For instance, Crane Brinton and Charles Tilly define revolution as substitution of old power holders with new ones. Samuel Huntington and Theda Skocpol, however, consider revolution as much more profound sociopolitical occurrence. According to Huntington, “a revolution is a rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and policies.” Moreover, Skocpol differentiates between social and political revolutions, arguing that “social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society’s state and class structures; and they are accompanied by and in part carried through class-based revolts from below.” Political revolutions, Skocpol adds, “transform state structures but not social structures, and they are not necessarily accomplished through class conflict.”

19 Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), 2; Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978), 193; Charles Tilly, *Regimes and Repertoires*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006, 159-160. Tilly (“From Mobilization”) actually differentiates between revolutionary situations and revolutionary outcomes. As he argues, a revolutionary situation entails multiple sovereignty, when “previously acquiescent members of…population find themselves confronted with strictly incompatible demands from the government” and begin to “obey the alternative body” (192). As Tilly (“From Mobilization”) asserts, a revolutionary situation does not always and necessarily lead to a revolutionary outcome. Hence, what really matters is the revolutionary outcome, which is “the displacement of one set of power holders by another” (193).

Here too, Tilly (“Regimes and Repertoires”) differentiates between revolutionary situation and revolutionary outcome. As he states “a revolutionary situation splits a regime into two or more blocs, each one controlling some significant segment of state power and/or territory, and receiving significant popular support…A revolutionary outcome shifts control over a state to a new set of rulers” (159-160).


21 Huntington,”Political Order,” 264.

22 Skocpol, 4.

23 Ibid. Rod Aya (*Rethinking Revolutions and Collective Violence: Studies on Concepts, Theory, and Method* [Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis Publishers, 1990]) criticizes Huntington’s (“Political Order”) and Skocpol’s definitions as being too focused on a revolution’s outcome. Aya argues that Huntington’s definition is too narrow for any revolution, which Huntington reserves for great revolutions (such as revolutions in France, China, Russia, Mexico, Bolivia, Guatemala, Cuba, Vietnam, and Algeria; see Huntington (“Political Order,” 275)) to qualify as a revolution (16). As Aya holds, all of those revolutions differed greatly in how “rapid, complete, and violent change” of “values, social structure, political institutions, governmental practices, and sociopolitical leadership” really were (16). According to Aya, by “such stiff criteria, the credentials of some ‘great revolutions’ look dubious,” making one question whether real revolution has ever occurred in political history (16). Aya also criticizes Skocpol’s definition of social revolutions on various counts for failing to acknowledge that rapid, basic changes of society and state “can
Some modern scholars have challenged the traditional definitions of a revolution on the grounds of whether they really must be violent, involve class conflict and seizure of power, or bring abrupt changes. None of these scholars, however, object that a revolution must involve fundamental sociopolitical transformation.

This dissertation shares Huntington’s and Skocpol’s above outlined definitions of a revolution. Even a quick examination of the Color Revolutions reveals that none of them brought rapid, violent, and fundamental transformations of social, class, and state structures or political institutions. Color Revolutions certainly raised widespread public expectations of revolutionary changes to address the profound sociopolitical and economic problems. In reality, however, they resulted in more continuity than change: after Color Revolutions, power largely remained in the hands of the same social and political groups that ruled under the previous leadership. In fact, all of the key leaders of Color Revolutions were former regime insiders. They defected to the

be reached by a good many different routes” that may only vaguely resemble Skocpol’s paradigm (170). Aya distinguishes between revolutionary situations, intentions, and outcomes, arguing that “revolutionary situations can start without revolutionary intentions and stop without revolutionary outcomes” (20). He, however, believes that revolutionary outcome involves profound sociopolitical changes. Moreover, Skocpol’s definition is shared by Misagh Parsa (States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua and the Philippines [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000], 6).


26 Farhi, 30-41; Tudoroiu, 319. Tudoroiu further argues that “if the new regime reproduces too many of the views, attitudes, and practices of the previous one” than it is obvious that real revolution has not occurred (319).

opposition when the regimes encountered problems and power struggle intensified. Hence, Color Revolutions reshuffled leaders; they did not replace sociopolitical systems. It follows that this dissertation cannot consider Color Revolutions as revolutions.

Nevertheless, Color Revolutions were more than the ordinary leadership changes which usually take place via routine elections. They were bloodless popular uprisings that, through mass mobilization, deposed long-serving semi-authoritarian and corrupt post-Soviet governments. Subsequently, this work treats Color Revolutions as bloodless popular uprisings (thereafter referred as uprisings, popular uprisings, or popular mobilizations).

Before moving to the next section, the dissertation differentiates between state, regime, and government, relying on the distinction drawn by Robert Fishman. According to Fishman, the state is a “structure of domination and coordination, including a coercive apparatus and the means to administer a society and extract resources from it.” Moreover, state is more permanent than regime. Fishman defines regime “as the formal and informal organization of the center of political power, and of its relations with the broader society. A regime determines who has access to political power, and how those who are in power deal with those who are not.” He


29 Fishman, 428. It has to be noted that Fishman’s (46-47) definition stands close to Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Peter Evans’ definition (Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Peter B. Evans, “The State and Economic Transformation: Toward an Analysis of the Conditions Underlying Effective Intervention.” In Bringing the State Back In, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, 44-77 [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985], 47). According to Rueschemeyer and Evans, the state is “…a set of organizations invested with the authority to make binding decisions for people and organizations juridically located in a particular territory and to implement these decisions using, if necessary, force” (47). Rueschemeyer and Evans see the state as an instrument of domination, where different parts of the state apparatus and the most powerful classes and class fractions determine the “pact of domination” (47). The state is also a corporate actor, which is under pressure from state elites to make sure that the state does not come in conflict with dominant interests (47).

30 Fishman, 428. Fishman also differentiates between regime types: democracy, totalitarianism, and authoritarianism (428). For other definitions of regimes see, for instance, Michael Bratton and Nicholas Van De Walle, Democratic Experiment in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 9-10; Peter Calvert, “Political Succession and Political Change.” In The Process of Political Succession, edited by Peter Calvert, 1-23 (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 18; John Higley and Michael G. Burton, “The
sees regimes as less permanent forms of political organization than the state, yet more permanent than governments. The distinction between the three is vivid. However, while stressing that a state remains while regimes change, Fishman also emphasizes that sometimes (although less frequently and for just brief periods of time) “a regime may remain relatively cohesive and determined to remain in power even as the state on which it relies crumbles away and loses its ability or resolve to coerce, administer, and extract resources.”

If a state does not disintegrate in the process of political transition it may (or may not) serve a new democratic regime just as well as it served previous authoritarian one. It depends on how well a new regime manages to restructure (or “purge”) the state, argues Fishman.

1.4 Case Selection

The selection of these three cases may generate some questions. Are these three cases of Color Revolutions similar enough to be categorized together and compared? There are certainly some differences among these three cases. For instance, Kyrgyzstan’s Tulip Revolution involved some violence and widespread looting in contrast to Georgia’s Rose Revolution and Ukraine’s Orange Revolution, which were largely peaceful. Also, the Orange Revolution involved constitutional agreement between the opposition and the regime to limit the president’s extensive executive powers. One can consider such a move as a step towards more democracy,

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31 Fishman, 428-429.

32 Ibid, 429.

33 During the clashes between the pro-government forces and anti-government demonstrators two people died and about 120 people were injured.

34 Marat, “The Tulip Revolution,” 15, 21. For some other differences also see Radnitz.

35 For the discussions on the constitutional changes, see Robert K. Christensen, Edward R. Rakhimkulov, and Charles R. Wise, “The Ukrainian Orange Revolution Brought More Than a New President: What Kind of
accountability, and balanced distribution of power between three branches of a government. No such developments occurred either in Georgia or Kyrgyzstan. Additional differences could be identified between these three uprisings.

Undeniable differences do exist. Nevertheless, no two or especially three cases can be absolutely identical, nor is the absolute likeness between two or more cases a requirement for a scientific study. The number of highly important similarities that Color Revolutions share overshadows the existing differences among the cases. Hence, these similarities situate the three cases within the scope of the same political phenomenon. First, all the Color Revolutions were mass popular revolts amid massive poverty, pervasive corruption, and largely dysfunctional state apparatus (see Table 1. All the data are from the years when the uprisings took place in the respective countries).

Table 1. Socioeconomic conditions in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia on the eve of the Color Revolutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Growth Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (current USD)</th>
<th>Transparency International Corruption Perception Index</th>
<th>Government Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1.367</td>
<td>Score of 2.2. 122&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; place out of 145 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>Score of 2.3. 130&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; place out of 158 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>Score of 1.8. 124&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; place out of 133 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>-50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Second, all of these uprisings were sparked by faulty elections among competitive authoritarian regimes. Third, the uprisings overthrew corrupt, semi-authoritarian governments. Fourth, Color Revolutions took place in the same time period, within a time span of sixteen months—the Georgian Rose Revolution in November 2003, the Ukrainian Orange  

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<sup>36</sup> Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index looks at the public perceptions of corruption in each country and annually ranks each one of them based on the assigned score. Scores range from 1.0 to 10.0. Higher score indicates lower level of corruption in a country (Transparency International, “Corruption Perception Index,” 2014, accessed July 12, 2013, [http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview](http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview)).

<sup>37</sup> Government Effectiveness is one of the six indicators (all six indicators are outlined below as measures of the state capacity) of The World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators. Government Effectiveness measures “perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government’s commitment to such policies” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction; WGI Data Sources; WGI Aggregation Methodology,” 2013, accessed December 2, 2013, [http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#doc](http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#doc)). The indicators’ scores range from -2.5 to 2.5, with higher values corresponding to better governance.

<sup>38</sup> For the definition of competitive authoritarian regimes, also referred as hybrid regimes, see Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 5-54. In this work, Levitsky and Way offer comprehensive study of competitive authoritarian regimes, in which they include Ukraine and Georgia. They, however, do not study Kyrgyzstan in this particular book. Nevertheless, the authors’ definition of competitive authoritarian regime clearly fits Askar Akayev’s Kyrgyz regime.

<sup>39</sup> By semi-authoritarian governments this dissertation refers to the governments that rule within authoritarian regimes, as defined with Levitsky and Way (“Competitive Authoritarianism,” 5-54).
Revolution in November-December of 2004, and the Kyrgyz Tulip Revolution in March of 2005. Fifth, all these uprisings took place in the former Soviet Union in the same geopolitical region. For all these reasons, an overwhelming majority of scholars fit Color Revolutions within the same category.\(^{40}\)

Sometimes Color Revolutions are referred in the same context with Serbia’s 2000 Bulldozer Revolution\(^{41}\) as being the parts of the same wave of uprisings that occurred in the same post-communist region and deposed post-communist governments.\(^{42}\) Serbia’s Bulldozer Revolution truly shares some similarities with Color Revolutions: they all overthrew post-communist semi-authoritarian governments through mass public protests sparked by fraudulent elections; also, they all occurred in the same time period, within five years’ time span, taking place one after another.

Nevertheless, the Serbian case is different mostly because of its lack of Soviet and then post-Soviet context. In other words, Serbia, although part of Socialist Yugoslavia, was never part of the Soviet Union and thus never shared the same political and socioeconomic experiences that defined Ukraine’s, Kyrgyzstan’s, and Georgia’s political and socioeconomic lives. This dissertation therefore sets these three cases apart from Serbia’s Bulldozer Revolution. Inclusion of Serbia as the fourth case in this study would be inappropriate and would also deprive this research of the near perfect likeness that Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia share in their political and socioeconomic backgrounds.

\(^{40}\) For instance, see McFaul, “Transitions from Communism;” Hale, “Regime Cycles;” Tudoroiu.


Truly striking and profound similarities between the three cases extend to these countries’ pre- and post-uprising political and socioeconomic conditions and developments. First, as members of the Soviet Union for 70 years, all three lived under the same political and socioeconomic system prior to the disintegration of the union. Second, all three countries gained their national independence in 1991 as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Third, all of these countries have secular societies, regardless of the fact that Ukraine is largely Orthodox Christian and Catholic, Kyrgyzstan is Muslim, and Georgia is Orthodox Christian. Fourth, all of these three countries have experienced prolonged socioeconomic and political crisis since gaining their national independence (see chapter three). Fifth, each of the three uprisings in these countries brought immense public expectations for profound socioeconomic and political reforms and changes. Sixth, all three uprisings were followed by widespread public disappointment amid the failure of the new governments to deliver on their promises.\footnote{Even in Georgia, where the new leadership managed to implement many reforms and thus build solid popular support, public disappointment was still extensive due to persisting economic hardships, the government’s authoritarian tendencies, and power abuses. Fall of President Saakashvili’s public support from 96 percent (in 2004) to 55 percent (in 2008) is reflective of the level of public disappointment in the country (On Saakashvili’s popularity see chapter six).} Seventh, in all of the three countries the former high ranking ruling regime members who defected from the regime have played crucial roles: in all three cases they led the uprisings and after they overthrew the governments they managed to capture power for themselves.

Clearly the three countries share largely similar political and socioeconomic backgrounds. That is why this dissertation examines these three cases together to explain the causes of variation in post-uprising leadership change and continuity across those cases.
1.5 Research Methodology

1.5.1 Data Gathering

To study the three cases and gather data I have conducted field research in the capitals of the three countries: in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Tbilisi, Georgia; and Kyiv, Ukraine, in that sequence. My field research lasted from November 2011 to March 2012. My data primarily rely on interviews and print sources.

1.5.1A Interviews

I have conducted about 130 interviews in all three countries. Some of these interviews are anonymous upon respondents’ request. My interviewees included a wide variety of politicians: active and former government and parliament members as well as leaders and high ranking members of the opposition or pro-government political parties and parliamentary factions. Moreover, I have interviewed active security officers, academics, intellectuals, businessmen, heads and prominent members of various non-governmental organizations and think-tanks. I have chosen respondents based on both their prominence in their respective societies’ political lives and the level of their participation and familiarity with the political time-period and processes under study.

I have conducted formal, semi-structured interviews with standardized questions in all three countries. In the beginning of an interview I asked every respondent why the post-uprising leadership fell (in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan) or survived (in Georgia). The rest of each interview posed the questions about the post-Color Revolution political processes, the government policies, reforms, opposition activities, and others. All of these questions were designed to reveal necessary information and uncover the existing narrative in a country.

44 Only two interviews, both with top Georgian diplomats in the US (Georgia’s Ambassador to the US and Georgia’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations) were recorded in the US, one in the New York City and the second one in Washington D.C.
Each interview lasted from 40 minutes to two hours. I usually audio recorded interviews.

In Georgia, I conducted interviews in my native Georgian language and in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan in Russian. Russian is a lingua franca in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan (as well as in the rest of the former Soviet Union) and virtually all Ukrainians and Kyrgyzs speak it fluently.

Field work in my native Georgia enabled several advantages. First, I have developed substantial number of contacts within political circles, civil society, and the academic community during my US State Department funded field research in summer 2009, when I studied Georgian civil society as an US Embassy Policy Specialist (EPS). I used these contacts and expanded them, reaching out to new respondents. Furthermore my extensive network of friends in the country allowed me access to virtually any prominent individual in Georgia. I did use their help on several occasions. Moreover, although in the US for a decade and a half, as a Georgian I followed Georgian political life on a daily and almost an hourly basis. Consequently, I was well informed about the role of almost every major or medium-level Georgian politician, civil society leader, intellectual, and businessmen in the country’s political processes since the Rose Revolution. Hence, I knew well in advance whom should I interview during my field research.

I contacted most of my respondents in Georgia via internet (Facebook). If I could not reach an individual via internet I would obtain a phone number through my Georgian friends or would ask a previous respondent to provide me with contact information, which they generously did. Most of my interviewees were willing to give me an interview after they found out that I was a Georgian Ph.D. student from a U.S. university. Senior members and supporters of the government were, however, less inclined to talk to me once they discovered that I have been studying the country’s political leadership and had questions about it. Several of them ignored
my requests for an interview. Nevertheless, I still managed to interview a number of high profile government members, politicians, and government supporters.

I did not enjoy similar advantages in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan despite my close familiarity with post-uprising political developments in both countries well before starting field work in those countries. Nevertheless, Ukrainian friends in the US gave me a number of initial contacts in Ukraine. Once starting my field work there I asked each of my respondents to give me a guidance and advice about whom else to interview. They almost always kindly helped me connect to those individuals. Eventually I managed to interview dozens of Ukrainian politicians, intellectuals, businessmen, and civil society leaders, among them Victor Yushchenko, the leader of the Orange Revolution and the President of Ukraine (2005-2010).

I built a network of respondents in a similar fashion in Kyrgyzstan. One Kyrgyz friend who is well connected with local political circles provided me with a number of initial vital contacts. He also helped me to hire a medium-ranking parliament employee who assisted me in accessing various prominent Kyrgyz politicians in the parliament and the government. Furthermore, before departing for Kyrgyzstan I applied and was accepted as a Visiting Researcher at Bishkek based Social Research Center (SRC) at American University of Central Asia (AUCA). My affiliation with this university provided me with an opportunity to meet and interview various Kyrgyz academics and intellectuals at AUCA as well as other academic institutions. SRC staff provided me with additional vital help to connect to those whom I was not able to reach on my own. As in Ukraine, respondents generously provided additional contacts with various politicians, civil society leaders and activists, intellectuals and businessmen. More direct methods worked as well: I obtained two dozen parliamentarians’ office phone numbers from the Kyrgyz parliament’s directory, displayed in the parliament building’s front waiting
area. Not all of those contacted agreed to meet, but I still succeeded in interviewing a number of them. Ultimately, I managed to interview dozens of Kyrgyz politicians, civil society leaders, and intellectuals, the most prominent being Felix Kulov, Kyrgyz Prime Minister (2005-2007) under President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, as well as Omurbek Tekebayev, a Speaker of the Parliament (2005-2006) and the leader of the anti-Bakiyev opposition.

Overall, I conditionally divided my respondents into three groups: those who had been in active opposition, those who held government power, and those who had held neither government nor opposition power. Such division helped me keep in mind their possible biases towards their respective governments and political processes in responses to interview questions. The first group includes Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian politicians who were in opposition to the post-Color Revolution governments in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. The second group comprises Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian politicians who were in power during the post-Color Revolution governments’ rule and never went in opposition. The third group consists of leaders and prominent members of various non-governmental organizations and think-tanks, academics, intellectuals, and businessmen: in other words, all those people who were neither in a government nor in an anti-government opposition.

I constantly stayed aware that the answers, information, and narratives which the respondents from the first two groups provided could be biased because of their political affiliations with their governments. I deemed the third group as relatively neutral as it was not directly affiliated with any government or an opposition. Subsequently I would cross check any peculiar information or narrative which the respondents from any of these groups provided with at least one respondent from each of the two other groups. Moreover, I would cross check the information with at least two print sources. Only after such a process of triangulation I would
consider a narrative or piece of information as trustworthy and solid enough to be included in the dissertation.

The main challenge in all three countries was respondents’ fear of retribution from the ruling regime if they talked openly to me and provided me with certain information. This was present to a certain degree in all three countries: about seven percent of all respondents--acting high ranking security officials, presidential administration employees, as well as businessmen--chose to remain anonymous. Their names are not disclosed in this dissertation. Some who agreed to be interviewed did not permit an audio recording of our conversations. Some of those did permit written notes during our meeting; others asked me to refrain from making any written notes while we talked. For those I had to write down the details of our conversation after the meeting. One respondent even refused to talk to me in a building and took me out on a street with few people and a lot of car traffic. We took a long walk during which he answered my questions. Usually, anonymous interviews provided me with valuable information and clues about the ways the ruling regimes worked and operated. Many of this information I was able to cross check with other sources and verify them. Information that could not be verified was discarded.

1.5.1.B Print and Internet Sources

Print sources include academic books, scholarly articles, policy analysis, newspaper editorials and news updates, statistics, and reports of national and international financial organizations, NGOs, and think tanks collected throughout my more than three-year long work on the dissertation. Some materials such as reports, analysis, and statistics, I acquired during my field work directly from local NGOs, political parties, academics, and other respondents. I found much material online. Moreover, local libraries and archives, such as the State Archives
Research Library in Kyiv, Ukraine; AUCA Library and Archive of National Academy of Sciences in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; and Georgian National Library in Tbilisi, Georgia all were available to obtain any kind of document for my study. My print sources are in English, Georgian, and Russian languages.

My internet sources rely on numerous local and international news websites, available in English, Georgian, and Russian. They include invaluably helpful local internet sources with comprehensive online archive systems containing almost hourly updated news feeds stretching back to early 2000s. For Ukraine such a source is UNIAN Information Agency (www.unian.info), available in Russian and English; for Kyrgyzstan, AKI Press (www.kg.akipress.org), also available in Russian and English; for Georgia, Civil Georgia (www.civil.ge), available in Georgian and English. These internet sources are not affiliated with any political party or the government. They represent one of the most neutral news sources and do provide balanced information about their respective countries. I have supplemented these internet sources with the Russian language Regnum Information Agency (www.regnum.ru), which covers all former Soviet republics including Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia and EurasiaNet (www.eurasianet.org), which covers Georgia and Kyrgyzstan but not Ukraine. Since my field work, I have undertaken exhaustive reviews of the archives of these internet sources in order to discern a causal chain of post-uprising political developments in the three countries. Internet sources complemented print sources to obtain the full picture of the post-Color Revolution processes.

Moreover, I regularly used my print and internet sources not only to trace the post-uprising political developments, but also to cross-check the information and narratives acquired through interviews during field work. Similarly, information from my respondents permitted frequent
checks of accuracy and truthfulness in print and internet sources to have full assurance that I had
the real picture at hand.

1.5.2 Case Design

In this research I employ qualitative methods and techniques of comparative case study. More specifically, I use the method of structured, focused comparison as defined by George and Bennett:

The method is “structured” in that the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective and that these questions are asked of each case under study to guide and standardize data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and cumulation of the findings of the cases possible. The method is “focused” in that it deals only with certain aspects of the historical cases examined...with a specific research objective in mind and theoretical focus appropriate for that objective.

In line with a structured, focused comparison I designed standardized, general questions concentrating on the dissertation’s research objective and theoretical focus. The research objective was to identify independent and intervening variables, causal paths, and causal mechanisms that resulted in the variation of the outcome of the dependent variable, which was the change of post-uprising political leaderships in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan and continuity of the political leadership in Georgia. The research’s theoretical focus was to contribute to development of theory on post-uprising leadership stability. Subsequently, through structured, focused comparison I identified one independent variable that had explanatory power across all three

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45 On comparative case studies, see Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005). Overall, the methodology that I use in my dissertation fits within the tradition of Comparative Historical Analysis, the method most often identified with Skocpol’s work. For one of most comprehensive books on Comparative Historical Analysis see James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Although this dissertation investigates recent events instead of a distant or extended historical time period, it still relies on historical analysis.

46 George and Bennett, 67.

47 Ibid, 70.
cases (see section 1.6 for the description of an independent variable). However, I was open to considering other independent variables as well.

My research focused only on a certain historical time span in each country. In Ukraine, I studied the period from the Orange Revolution in 2004 to the downfall of President Yushchenko in January-February 2010; in Kyrgyzstan, the period from the Tulip Revolution in 2005 to the overthrow of President Bakiyev in April 2010; and in Georgia, the time period from the Rose Revolution in 2003 to the transfer of power from the post-uprising leadership to the opposition coalition in October 2013, after the president served two full terms.

I treated the given time periods in each case as the “black box,” which hid a certain sequence and character of causal sociopolitical processes, events, and government policies. In order to open the “black box” and uncover the whole picture of causal processes, I used the method of within case process-tracing.\(^{48}\) This method, as George and Bennett describe, “attempts to identify the intervening causal process—the causal chain and causal mechanism—between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable.”\(^{49}\) Moreover, tracing the process narrows the list of potential causes. However, the method forces a researcher to take into account equifinality, which means that a researcher considers alternative paths through which the outcome emerged.\(^{50}\) This way process-tracing “offers the possibility of mapping out one or more potential causal paths that are consistent with the outcome and the process-tracing evidence in a single case.”\(^{51}\) Furthermore, process-tracing can make causal

\(^{48}\) For the discussion on the growing recognition and use of process-tracing in the last few decades, see George and Bennett (205-206). Moreover, George and Bennett note that process-tracing and structured, focused comparison are employed to test and refine theories, develop new theories, and produce generic knowledge of a phenomenon (229).

\(^{49}\) George and Bennett, 206.

\(^{50}\) Ibid, 207.

\(^{51}\) Ibid.
inference based on a single case as well as on a few cases. Additionally process-tracing is an essential tool for theory testing and theory development as it not only generates numerous observations within a case, but also requires these observations to be linked in a particular way to constitute an explanation of the case.

Using the method of within-case process-tracing of political developments and events, I conducted heuristic case studies. Subsequently, while having considered a number of variables for inclusion, I inductively identified three intervening variables that led to the dependent variable (see section 1.6 for the description of the intervening variables).

In order to identify my variables I traced the processes backward “from observed outcomes to potential causes.” In this process I used *doubly decisive tests*, one of the four tests in process tracing, discussed by Andrew Bennett. Specifically, doubly decisive tests “confirm one hypothesis and eliminate others,” based on the presence or absence of credible evidence. Such evidence would be, for instance, “a bank camera that catches the faces of robbers, thereby

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52 George and Bennett, 207.

53 Ibid.

54 In fact, *analytic explanation*, an intentionally selective type of process-tracing, permitted focus on elements considered to be especially important for an adequate or parsimonious explanation (see George and Bennett for the definition of analytic explanation [211]).

55 The opposite of this would be tracing the process forward “from hypothesized causes to subsequent outcomes,” as Bennett (see Andrew Bennett, “Process Tracing and Causal Inference.” In Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards, eds. Henry E. Brady and David Collier, [Boulder; New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishes, 2010], 209) argues.


57 Bennett, 211.

58 In fact, Bennett (211), based on Van Evera (32) argues that analytic goals of double decisive tests can be accomplished by *hoop tests* and *smoking gun* tests together. Hoop tests eliminate hypothesis if there is no evidence in its support, but having evidence does not confirm hypothesis, just makes it keep under consideration. Smoking gun tests confirm hypothesis if there is evidence in its support, but absence of evidence does not eliminate hypothesis (Van Evera, quoted in Bennett, 210-211).
implicating those photographed and exonerating all others.”

Subsequently, if I found evidence for a certain variable in all of my three cases, I deemed that variable valid for the inclusion in my research design. Alternatively, if I did not find evidence, I deemed that variable invalid.

The method of process-tracing, however, is not without limitations, two identified by George and Bennett. One is the possibility that process-tracing may fail to establish an uninterrupted causal path linking putative causes to the observed effects. In other words, a single necessary intervening variable may contradict the expectation, which subsequently strongly impugns any hypothesis whose causal effect relies on a causal path alone. However, this is a problem if a study tests a theory, something that my dissertation does not do. Moreover, aware of the above limitation, my research did not encounter such a contradictory intervening variable and did manage to establish an uninterrupted causal path. Hence, the first concern does not apply to this work.

A second limitation of the process-tracing, as George and Bennett formulate it, is that “there may be more than one hypothesized causal mechanism consistent with any given set of process-tracing evidence. The researcher than faces the difficult challenge of assessing whether alternative explanations are complementary or whether one is causal and the other spurious.”

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59 Bennett, 211.

60 For illustration see subsection 1.6.3 of this chapter, as well as chapters four, five, and six.

61 George and Bennett, 222.

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid. There is, however, a number of suggested solutions to these problems (see, Olav Njolstad, “Learning from History? Case Studies and the Limits to the Theory-Building.” In Arms Races: Technologies and Political Dynamics, edited by Nils P. Gleditsch and Olav Njolstad, 240-244 [Newbury Park: Sage, 1989], 240-244, quoted in George and Bennett, 223.)
was open to considering alternative causal mechanisms and explanations that seemed plausible from the outset. Nevertheless, after closer examination they lost validity.  

1.6 Variables, Research Design, and Rival Explanations

1.6.1 Variables

Before laying out the research design, this section offers the definitions of the dissertation’s independent, intervening, and dependent variables. The independent variable, coalition size and cohesion, has two values in this work. The first value: large, fragmented coalition refers to a political alliance which contains more than five ideologically diverse political parties and groups. The second value: small, cohesive coalition implies an alliance which includes five or fewer ideologically similar political parties and groups. The first intervening variable, active opposition refers to an opposition that manages to continually destabilize a country’s political leadership by staging anti-government mass protests or paralyzing a government’s work from within legislative and executive branches. In contrast, inactive opposition remains politically dormant because of its failure to mobilize.

A second intervening variable, politicized issue of executive power implies that either a large, fragmented coalition imposes limitations on a president’s executive power and then an opposition uses those limitations to undermine a leadership, or if a president’s powers are not limited, then an opposition demands curtailment of a president’s powers and makes it the biggest rallying point against the government. Alternatively, absence of the politicized issue of executive power means that this issue is not present in any form.

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64 For other critiques and their rebuttals see Bennett, 209-210.

65 By “coalition” this dissertation means the unity of two or more political parties or groups. By “political groups” this dissertation means various political actors that participated in these three uprisings: civil non-governmental organizations, influential business groups, powerful individual oligarchs, and even organized crime networks. Moreover, by “ideology” this dissertation means not only political parties’ and groups’ political philosophies, but also these parties’ and groups,’ as well as their leaders’ domestic political agendas and foreign policy orientations.
A third intervening variable, *failed reforms leading to diminished state capacity and popular support*, refers to a government’s inability to improve a nation’s conditions, which consequently causes decrease of state capacity and loss of public support. Conversely, *successful reforms, leading to increased state capacity and popular support*, implies that a government manages to implement reforms and as a result, strengthens state capacity and builds solid popular base.

This dissertation measures state capacity based on the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators for each country around the globe. These indicators measure 1) Governance Effectiveness, 2) Rule of Law, 3) Control of Corruption, 4) Regulatory Quality, 5) Political Stability and Absence of Violence, and 6) Voice and Accountability. The indicators’ scores range from -2.5 to 2.5, with higher values corresponding to better

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66 Government Effectiveness (also defined above) measures “perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction”).

67 Rule of Law indicator measures “perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction”).

68 Control of Corruption indicator measures “the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction”).

69 Moreover, Regulatory Quality indicator measures “perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction”).

70 Political Stability and Absence of Violence indicator measures “perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction”).

71 Voice and Accountability indicator measures “perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media” (The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators: Introduction”).
governance. Popular support is measured by the national opinion polls about the respective countries’ political leaderships.

The dependent variable *leadership change* refers to the downfall of a country’s political leadership. On the other hand, *leadership continuity* means that political leadership endures and stays in power.

1.6.2 Research Design

Whether a coalition is large and fragmented or small and cohesive has primary significance in this research. This independent variable leads to each of the three intervening variables and each of the intervening variables leads to the dependent variable. In Ukraine, a large, fragmented coalition resulted in the emergence of an active opposition. Shortly after Ukraine’s Orange Revolution ended, Yushchenko’s Orange coalition, once in power, descended into intense infighting. Subsequently, the coalition quickly fell apart. Its key members gradually defected, broadening and enlivening an already formidable anti-Yushchenko opposition. The reinforced opposition managed to fundamentally destabilize President Yushchenko’s administration throughout its entire term in office and eventually succeeded in ousting him.

The opposition managed to undermine Yushchenko thanks to the new constitutional changes that limited the president’s executive powers and increased those of the prime minister and parliament. President Yushchenko inherited these changes from the Orange Revolution as a result of the pact that he and his coalition reached with the departing Kuchma regime that sought to weaken the next president. It is noteworthy that the large and fragmented Orange coalition shared responsibility for limiting a president’s executive powers. Specifically, some powerful members of the coalition preferred a weak president to a strong president after the Orange Revolution. Subsequently, when Kuchma’s regime pushed for the constitutional changes that

would curtail the next president’s authority, powerful members of the Orange coalition supported such arrangements. In other words, because Yushchenko did not have the backing of his entire coalition, he could not withstand the regime’s pressure and guarantee strong executive powers for the next president (thus for himself). A weakened presidency haunted Yushchenko throughout his entire term in office as successive prime ministers from the opposition parties effectively blocked Yushchenko’s every policy initiative and paralyzed the government.

Moreover, the large and fragmented coalition never managed to agree on what kind of reforms the government should implement or even if it should implement any reforms at all. Subsequently, Yushchenko failed to carry out essential reforms. As a result, state capacity diminished and the president’s popularity fell rapidly, his approval rating sinking into single digits. In January 2010, Yushchenko was ousted from office (see Figure 1).

IV  
Large, fragmented coalition

DV  
Leadership change

Intervening variables

1) Active opposition.
2) Politicized issue of executive power.
3) Failed reforms, leading to diminished state capacity and popular support.

Figure 1. The causal path leading to leadership changes in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.

It is noteworthy that the post-Color Revolution president in Ukraine changed via peaceful elections, in contrast to the post-Color Revolution president change in Kyrgyzstan (discussed
below). In Ukraine, this became possible because Yushchenko’s administration held two
democratic and free elections, thus giving the opposition the prospect of changing the leadership
peacefully. In other words, Ukraine had functioning electoral system. Using this system, the
public simply voted out President Yushchenko when his first term ended (see Figure 2).

As in Ukraine, a large and fragmented coalition in Kyrgyzstan quickly began to disintegrate
once it came to power after the Tulip Revolution. Its members one by one left the government
(some resigned; the president and his allies forced others out) and moved into opposition.
Disintegration of the coalition widened and activated the opposition, enabling it to constantly
destabilize the country’s political leadership and ultimately oust it.

Moreover, the large and fragmented Kyrgyz coalition never agreed on how much
executive power the new president should have. Most in the coalition wanted to curtail the
president’s powers. The president, however, vehemently opposed limiting his executive

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Figure 2. Two diverse causal paths leading to peaceful change of leadership in Ukraine and violent change of leadership in Kyrgyzstan.
authority. Subsequently, this issue became the opposition’s single biggest rallying point to undermine and eventually bring down the leadership.

Furthermore, the large and fragmented Kyrgyz coalition never agreed on the reform agenda. Although the majority of the coalition demanded socioeconomic and political reforms, Bakiyev initiated none. Consequently, state capacity decreased, already dire living conditions worsened, and popular discontent rose. The opposition quickly capitalized on widespread public anger and overthrew the government in April 2010 (see Figure 1). In Kyrgyzstan, unlike in Ukraine, the government fell as a result of a violent popular uprising. Events took such a turn because the government falsified all the elections, leaving to the opposition (and public) no other option but a violent uprising to change the leadership. In other words, Kyrgyzstan did not have a functioning electoral system to facilitate peaceful transfer of power (see Figure 2).

Developments took the opposite direction in Georgia. A small and cohesive Georgian coalition stayed united (except three small parties that left the coalition right after the Rose Revolution). For the first three years of the new government’s rule no major coalition members defected to the opposition. This led to the opposition’s remaining inactive and allowed the new government the opportunity to consolidate its hold on power and stay in office.73

The small and cohesive Georgian coalition also quickly managed to reach an agreement on increasing a president’s already vast executive authority. As a result, the question of president’s executive power effectively disappeared from the political agenda.74 Hence, the Georgian

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73 The defections accelerated only from 2007, causing the activation of the opposition and ultimate fall of the government in 2012. Nevertheless, the president managed to stay in power till the end of his second and final term in 2013.

74 The issue of limiting a president’s executive powers did not come up on the political agenda until 2009. When it came up, it was initiated by the President Saakashvili himself. Saakashvili pushed for and signed a new constitution that greatly limited the next president’s powers and increased the power of the prime minister. Public believed that Saakashvili sought to become a Prime Minister after his second and final term ended in 2013.
opposition (in contrast to Ukrainian and Kyrgyz oppositions) could not use the issue of executive power to destabilize the new Georgian government.

Furthermore, the small and cohesive Georgian coalition agreed on the implementation of radical and controversial, although essential, reforms. These reforms helped to increase state capacity (along with strengthening new government’s hold on power) and to build solid popular support. Subsequently, Georgian leadership maintained power longer than Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments did (see Figure 3).

**IV**

- Small, cohesive coalition

**DV**

- Leadership continuity

**Intervening variables**

1) Inactive opposition.

2) Absence of the politicized issue of executive power.

3) Successful reforms, leading to increased state capacity and solid popular support.

Figure 3. The causal path leading to leadership continuity in Georgia.

1.6.3 Rival Explanations

One can argue for the inclusion of other variables in this research to explain the dependent variable. First and foremost, the factor of regional polarization and division stands out. It is undeniable that Ukraine’s Russified, pro-Russian, and heavily industrialized east stands in stark political and cultural contrast with more ethnically Ukrainian, nationalist, western-oriented, and less industrialized west. This factor certainly hurts the cohesion of the Ukrainian state and its
successive governments. Similarly, there are quite deep political and cultural differences between Kyrgyzstan’s more urbanized and Russified north and more traditional and less Russified south. Georgia never faced such regional divisions despite Russian-sponsored separatist wars in Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions. Because these breakaway provinces have largely been outside of the central government’s control since early 1990’s, they have had no capacity to hurt the internal cohesion of the successive Georgian governments.

Regardless of the fact that regional differences in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan certainly do exist, this research did not find any credible evidence that those differences played much, if any role in the ultimate downfall of post-uprising political leaderships. In the 2004 presidential elections, pro-western and liberal-nationalist Viktor Yushchenko garnered only 52 percent of votes, winning just western and central regions, while losing all southern and eastern regions. Nevertheless, there were nationwide expectations for positive changes and a sense of a new beginning in the country. Had the Orange coalition held together and the new leadership succeeded in implementing reforms, Yushchenko’s administration certainly would have gained more strength from nationwide public support.

Another fact which shows that regional differences did not have an impact on the downfall of Yushchenko, is the 2010 presidential election. Yushchenko lost the election not only in the country’s east but also in the west, garnering mere 5 percent nationally. Had a regional factor played any role, Yushchenko should have won at least part of the western regions.

Likewise, one cannot blame Kyrgyzstan’s regional differences for the downfall of the post-uprising political leadership. President Bakiyev, a southerner, felt compelled to take a prominent politician Felix Kulov, a northerner, as his running mate and a prime minister, in order to alleviate the country’s north-south divide. Nevertheless, Kulov did not use the regional origin
card to undermine Bakiyev’s administration. In fact, most prominent anti-Bakiyev opposition figures hailed from the country’s south. Many others in the anti-Bakiyev opposition came from the southern regions as well. Bakiyev’s rule certainly did not represent the case of strong northern elites undermining a regime dominated by the southerner.

Moreover, the south did not prove to be much of a help for the president when popular uprising began against him in April 2010. Although the south did not rise up against Bakiyev, neither did it make any meaningful effort to defend his government. After the bloody riots in the capital, Bakiyev fled to his native southern region of Jalal-Abad. Lacking sufficient support, he left Kyrgyzstan after one week. Bakiyev’s ouster was not the desire only of the north. He was an unpopular and failed leader for the entire country, not only for the north. The factor of regional differences simply cannot explain the downfall of Bakiyev.

Another variable that at first glance may seem worthy of inclusion in the research design is the foreign factor, particularly Russian interference against the three governments and Western support for them. However, after the closer examination of all three cases this variable too loses explanatory power. Russia certainly undermined Bakiyev’s administration in the run up to the April 2010 violent uprising. Moscow raised prices on export of fuel to Kyrgyzstan. In addition, Russian media sources, which freely broadcast in Kyrgyzstan, harshly criticized Bakiyev and his family for corruption and abuse of power; Moreover, Kyrgyz opposition leaders openly traveled

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75 Omurbek Tekebayev, the leader of Fatherland Socialist Party; Azimbek Beknazarov, the leader of nationalist Asaba Party; Rosa Otumbaeva, one of the leaders of Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan.

76 The key reason for the Russian government’s animosity against president Yushchenko’s administration in Ukraine and president Saakashvili’s administration in Georgia were these latter two governments’ pro-western foreign policy course, which aimed at taking their respective countries away from the Russian political and economic influence and integrating Ukraine and Georgia with Euro-Atlantic political and economic institutions (particularly, with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Union). On the other hand, the reason for the Russian government’s animosity against president Bakiyev’s administration in Kyrgyzstan was not necessarily Bakiyev’s pro-western foreign policy course aimed at integrating his country with western political and economic institutions. I will not elaborate this theme here because it is discussed in more detail in chapter five (footnote 141).
to Moscow, giving rise to speculations that the Russian regime supported the opposition politically as well as financially. Russian political, economic, and cultural influence is strong in Kyrgyz society, so Moscow’s actions certainly undermined Bakiyev’s administration and to some extent contributed to its downfall.

In Ukraine, however, the impact of Russian interference on the leadership change is not that clear. Moscow certainly subverted Yushchenko’s administration as Russia several times cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine on the pretext of unpaid gas bills. Subsequently, Moscow managed to extract a higher price on its gas exports to Ukraine. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that these acts of sabotage caused the fall of Yushchenko. Moreover, there is no evidence to show whether Moscow resorted to other tactics of interference and subversion and if so, how they impacted the leadership change in Ukraine.77

Even if one finds conclusive evidence that Russian meddling did cause the fall of Yushchenko, then one may ask: what explains the survival of the Georgian leadership in the face aggressive Russian interference? Moscow deployed various subversive tactics against Saakashvili’s administration and Georgia: cutting off natural gas imports, imposing trade embargo, and allegedly carrying out terrorist acts. Moreover, Russia launched a full-scale military invasion of the country in 2008 with the stated goal of overthrowing the regime. Nevertheless, the Georgian government survived. Certainly, Russian interference does not have validity across all three cases.

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77 Some, in fact, suspected that the Russian security services were involved in poisoning Viktor Yushchenko with large dose of dioxin while he was a presidential frontrunner in the 2004 election in the run up to the Orange Revolution (see for instance Askold Krushelnycy, An Orange Revolution: A Personal Journey Through Ukrainian History [London: Harvill Secker, 2006], 234-246). This poisoning badly disfigured Yushchenko and severely shook his health. Nevertheless, it’s hard to measure precisely, how the poisoning per se affected Yushchenko’s downfall in 2010, even if Russian security services were involved in serving a large dose of dioxin to the future president.
Or one may argue that the factor of Western (United States and European Union) support can explain the leadership change and continuity. After all, Georgia, and especially its post-uprising leadership, certainly enjoyed strong Western, particularly US, political and financial support all along. From his first year in office President Saakashvili managed to cultivate a close relationship with George W. Bush’s administration. Georgia even received four billion USD in financial assistance from Western governments and organizations after the disastrous 2008 Russian-Georgian war. Overall, neither Ukrainian nor Kyrgyz leaderships had such strong support from the West as the Georgian government did.

After closer examination, however, the factor of Western support also loses validity. During the 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia the West did not assist the country militarily. As a result, Russia crushed Georgian armed forces in five days and fully occupied breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Indeed, the European Union’s and United States’ political support and diplomatic mediation did succeed in stopping the Russian Army from capturing the capital Tbilisi and overthrowing the government. Nevertheless, the absence of Western military support cost the Georgian leadership a disastrous defeat in the war. The defeat, in its turn, jeopardized the leadership’s hold on power, as opposition and public blamed the president for foolhardily stepping into the Russian trap and dragging the country into armed conflict. In spring 2009, a reactivated opposition launched mass street protests aimed at deposing the government. Nonetheless, Saakashvili’s administration survived 2009 (as well as 2011) mass protests. It survived as a result of its internal cohesion, not Western support.

Moreover, examining Ukraine’s case closely reveals that Western support does not explain outcomes satisfactorily. In the beginning, post-uprising Ukrainian leadership actually enjoyed more Western support and goodwill than its Georgian counterpart. Nevertheless, as Ukraine’s
government descended into perpetual infighting and reforms lagged, the West became increasingly disillusioned and consequently lessened its support to the country’s leadership. Nevertheless, it’s not clear how western support could have helped a constantly bickering and dysfunctional government to hold on to power. For instance, some may argue that an offer of possible European Union membership to Ukraine could have motivated the government to launch reforms that could have strengthened the leadership’s positions. It’s hard, however, to make such a claim with certainty. Even if the prospect of membership could have helped the Ukrainian government survive, one should keep in mind that the Georgian government did not have a promise of membership, yet it survived. This dissertation does not, therefore, consider the foreign factor (Russian interference and Western influence) to have explanatory power across the three cases.

Another variable that seems capable of explaining the dependent variable is whether or not a coalition won a decisive victory over a previous leadership. Gaining a conclusive victory over the old government could strengthen the positions of the incoming government and hence extend its hold on power. By looking at Ukrainian and Georgian cases the inclusion of this independent variable in the research design seems justified at first glance. In Ukraine the coalition failed to win a decisive victory over the old leadership. This is reflected in two facts: first, the departing government garnered enough strength to force the Orange coalition to compromise and agree on limiting the incoming president’s executive powers (discussed in chapter four). This pact certainly weakened Yushchenko’s presidency, setting a stage for profound political instabilities ahead. Second, powerful members of the previous leadership retreated only temporarily, maintaining their political, as well as economic power base largely intact. They used their power to come back later and undermine the post-uprising leadership.
On the other hand, the Georgian coalition won a decisive victory over the old leadership. First, old leadership totally collapsed in the face of the Rose Revolution. Subsequently, it lost capacity to force the coalition into making any compromises, giving a free hand to the new government. Second, once the key members of the previous leadership lost political power, they also lost their economic clout. As a result, they lost their capability to undermine the post-uprising government.

The case of Kyrgyzstan, however, eliminates the independent variable of validity. Like the Georgian coalition, the Kyrgyz coalition too achieved complete victory over the old leadership. First, the previous Kyrgyz leadership collapsed with breathtaking speed and fled the country, thus losing any hope of forcing the coalition into accepting compromises. Second, key members of the ousted leadership completely lost their political and economic power base and thus could not pose a formidable challenge to the new government.

So why did the new Kyrgyz leadership fail to capitalize on its total victory to consolidate power, while the new Georgian leadership succeeded in doing so? It’s clear that a coalition’s decisive victory over a previous government is not a valid variable that can explain the dependent variable across all three cases.

One more variable that may seem worthy of inclusion in the research design is whether or not a new leadership won a landslide electoral victory at the beginning of its rule. After all, strong popular support can help any new government to consolidate its hold on power. This is

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78 The new leadership (specifically new president Bakiyev), in fact, invited many members of the old leadership to serve in new government. Nevertheless, this happened not because that members of the old leadership were powerful, forcing their way into the new government, but because the new leadership wanted to use old cadres.

79 One can argue that the failure of the new Kyrgyz leadership to use its decisive victory over the ousted government and consolidate power can be explained by the fact that the newly elected Kyrgyz parliament (elected in the last month of the previous leadership’s rule) still included a significant number of the ousted president’s supporters, something which could undermine the new government. But the new Georgian parliament had a similar situation: dozens of majoritarian deputies (elected in November 2003) who were supporters of the previous leadership, maintained their seats when Georgia voted in repeat legislative elections in March 2004.
demonstrated vividly in recent presidential elections: in the final round of the 2004 elections, Ukrainian President Yushchenko received just 52 percent of national votes and in 2005 Georgian President Saakashvili garnered 96 percent of votes. In other words, the Georgian leadership right from the outset had an advantage of massive popular support that its Ukrainian counterpart did not have. Kyrgyz case, however, once again stands out, disqualifying this variable too. President Bakiyev received 88 percent of total votes in the 2005 presidential elections\(^80\) demonstrating overwhelming popular support.

Having refuted other possible independent variables from this research design, this section now turns to outline alternative causal paths. As I have mentioned above, the independent variable in this dissertation takes two values (\textit{large, fragmented coalition vs. small, cohesive coalition}). Subsequently, each of these values lead to two sets of variations of the three intervening variables (\textit{a large, fragmented coalition leads to 1. active opposition; 2. existence of a politicized issue of executive power; 3. failed reforms leading to diminished state capacity and popular support}. On the other hand, a \textit{small, cohesive coalition leads to 1. inactive opposition; 2. absence of a politicized issue of executive power; 3. successful reforms, leading to increased state capacity and popular support}). Subsequently, these two diverse causal paths yield two different outcomes.

But there can be six more sets of variations of the same intervening variables and subsequently six more different outcomes. For illustration, the dissertation lays out the intervening variables and their six possible variations in table 2. However, the table does not present six possible outcomes here as they can be speculative, depending on individual cases.

\(^{80}\) There were some concerns, however, about inflated turnout and ballot stuffing. Nevertheless, observers said that results reflected the vote (for instance, see \textit{Washington Post} and \textit{New York Times} articles on this presidential election (July 11, 2005).
For table 2 I coded the first intervening variable, *active opposition vs. inactive opposition*, as active or inactive. Moreover, I coded the second intervening variable, *existence of a politicized issue of executive power vs. absence of a politicized issue of executive power* as issue or no issue. Furthermore, I coded the third intervening variable, *failed reforms leading to diminished state capacity and popular support vs. successful reforms, leading to increased state capacity and popular support*, as reforms or no reforms. Highlighted columns in the figure are the two variations which this dissertation deals with. The rest of the six are possible variations.

Table 2. Alternative sets of variations of the three intervening variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Issue No reforms</th>
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1.7 Dissertation Outline

Chapter two reviews various academic works which have some theoretical relation to this dissertation’s central topic: post-mobilization leadership durability. The chapter also outlines the dissertation’s main theoretical objectives. Chapter three, which is divided into three sections, provides historical backgrounds of Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia, respectively. It focuses on the post-Soviet period from 1991 to the Color Revolutions. The chapter lays out the three countries’ socioeconomic and political conditions in the same time period, reviews the causes of change and continuity of the successive post-Soviet political leaderships, and describes the political processes leading to the Color Revolutions.

Chapters four, five, and six are empirical chapters on Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia, respectively. Chapters four and five outline the causal paths that led to the leadership changes in
Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Chapter six outlines the alternative causal path that led to the leadership continuity in Georgia. Finally, chapter seven, the conclusion, summarizes the main findings and arguments of this work.

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81 I treat Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan as positive cases of leadership change and Georgia as a contrast case of leadership continuity. Subsequently, I treat Ukrainian and Kyrgyz cases before Georgian case. Moreover, I review the case of Ukraine before the case of Kyrgyzstan because the Orange Revolution took place chronologically earlier than the Tulip Revolution.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the scholarly works which have some theoretical connection to the main theme of this dissertation: post-uprising leadership change and continuity. Based on the reviewed works, the chapter sets the dissertation’s theoretical goals. In section two I locate this dissertation specifically within the scholarly literature on political transitions and argue why this study fits into the literature on transitions rather than any other body of works. The same section starts outlining theoretical boundaries that exist within the scholarly literature on the topic of post-uprising leadership durability. Section three reviews transitions literature, dividing it conditionally into bodies of works on 1) democratic transitions, 2) authoritarian durability, and 3) cyclical changes of leaderships within the same type of regime. Section four provides the chapter’s conclusion.

2.2 Locating the Dissertation within the Wider Literature on Political Transitions

The key question that this dissertation asks is why did two of the post-Color Revolution governments (Ukrainian and Kyrgyz) fall, but one (Georgian) endure longer. In other words, what factors explain the post-uprising leadership change and continuity? My dissertation offers two causal paths to answer this question. The Ukrainian and Kyrgyz cases exemplify the first causal path: a large, fragmented coalition facilitates the emergence of active opposition; politicizes the issue of the president’s executive power; and impedes the implementation of necessary reforms that lead to decline of state capacity and popular support. An active
opposition, the politicized issue of executive power, and the failure to reform then contribute to the leadership change. The Georgian case exemplifies the second path in which a small, cohesive coalition creates conditions favorable to the emergence of an inactive, rather than active, opposition; prevents the politicization of the issue of the president’s executive power; and facilitates the implementation of essential reforms that increase state capacity and popular support. The presence of inactive rather than active opposition, absence of the politicized issue of executive power, and successful implementation of reforms make it easier for the leadership to retain power. By providing these explanations I hope to contribute to a theory building on post-uprising leadership change and continuity, as such a theory still has not emerged in political science.

Although there is a sizable scholarly literature on the causes and mechanisms of the 2003-2005 Color Revolutions, works that focus primarily on causes of government change and
continuity in post-Color Revolution Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia are scarce at best. Some of the works that explore post-Color Revolution political developments do offer some helpful insights about the characteristics of the post-Color Revolution governments and identify potential and emerging problems. But because these works were written before 2010, they could not see or analyze the downfall of the two new governments in 2010.

Other works focus on different academic questions, giving only fleeting consideration to the question of leadership change and continuity in the post-uprising Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. For instance, D’Anieri, while studying the influence of Ukraine’s post-Soviet political institutions on national politics, also explores the 2004 constitutional changes that divided control of the executive branch between the president and prime minister83 (discussed in detail in chapter three). Although he underscores these changes’ democratizing potential, he predicts that they will cause “the constant struggle between parliament and the president . . . [and] the president and prime minister.”84 In another work, D’Anieri warns against the “the danger of immobility,” under the 2004 constitutional arrangements if the parliament and presidency are held by opposing political forces.85 Similarly, Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise anticipate the conflict “between a…weakened president and strengthened prime minister, and cabinet of

83 D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics.”

84 Ibid, 146-147.

ministers,” the precise conflict that Arel, Riabchuk and later Hale confirmed was actually taking place.

Moreover, Kubicek, evaluating Ukraine’s progress after the Orange Revolution, underlines that a weakened presidential institution led to the disputes “over the distribution of power between [the president and prime minister]”, which as a result “precipitated serious political crisis.” Furthermore, as he stresses, the politically diverse coalition “began to experience internal schisms” and disintegrated. Nevertheless, neither Kubicek, nor any of the above discussed authors offer consistent analysis how the emerging problems of a weakened presidential institution or a diverse coalition could have affected the downfall of the new Ukrainian government.

86 Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, 226.
89 Hale, “Divided Power,” 86. However, in this work Hale also points to the positive, democratizing value of divided executive.
90 Kubicek, 327.
91 Ibid, 329.

Neither are the scholarly works on post-Tulip Revolution Kyrgyzstan helpful to understand the causes of the fall of the new Kyrgyz government. A few of those works give some minor consideration to the theme of the leadership change. For instance, Temirkulov, studying the causes and mechanisms of mass mobilization during the 2005 and 2010 popular revolts, argues that “neopatrimonial rule . . . the monopolization of main resources flows . . . [and] the oppression of opposition leaders and independent mass media” instigated violent public reaction and subsequently, led to the overthrow of the Kyrgyz government in 2010. Moreover, Engvall offers an account and analysis of the causes and results of the state weakness, as well as of political dynamics in pre- and post-Tulip Revolution Kyrgyzstan, pointing to persisting “legal vacuum…predatory elite control of resources…and breakdown in the power hierarchy from Akayev to Bakiyev,” as the key features of the Kyrgyz state. Both of these works, however, primarily focus on the themes different from the question of leadership change in Kyrgyzstan.


95 Johan Engvall, “Kyrgyzstan: Anatomy of a State,” Problems of Post-Communism 54, no. 4 (July/August 2007): 43. In another work, Engvall (Jonah Engvall, “Flirting with State Failure: Power and Politics in Kyrgyzstan since Independence,” Silk Road Paper [Washington, D.C.: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, 2011]) does the same. Moreover, in this paper Engvall (“State Failure”) explains power change in 2010 (as well as in 2005) as a result of “the nature of power in the country,” referring to the constant and intense (and often violent) power struggle among influential personalities and patronage networks (5-6).

Moreover, none of the works on post-Rose Revolution Georgia focus on the causes of post-uprising leadership continuity.\(^97\) Only Welt’s work comes close to assessing the reasons for the survival of the new government.\(^98\) Specifically, Welt analyzes why the Georgian opposition failed to unseat president Mikhail Saakashvili in the aftermath of Georgia’s disastrous defeat in the August 2008 Russian-Georgian War. As he argues, the opposition failed to translate “social discontent into regime change.”\(^99\) The opposition also remained divided “regarding the ends and means of protest.”\(^100\) Also, the government managed to establish itself “as part of the solution to the problems that the opposition diagnosed.”\(^101\) Nevertheless, Welt’s work primarily focuses on the opposition-government showdown, leaving out a host of factors that could have contributed to the leadership continuity.\(^102\)


\(^100\) Ibid.

\(^101\) Ibid.

\(^102\) Moreover, Georgia’s Rose Revolution generated a number of journalistic and semi-journalistic accounts and analysis about post-Rose Revolution popular disappointment, political instability, and other related developments (for instance, see Robert Parsons, “Georgia after War: The Political Landscape,” Open Democracy, 2008, accessed
Little scholarly literature examines in comparative perspective the reasons for the downfall of post-uprising Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments and the continuity of the Georgian leadership. Certainly, there are multiple works that study these three countries in comparative perspective after the Color Revolutions. Nevertheless, they generally focus on the impact of the Color Revolutions on the democratization process (for instance, Hale, Tudoroiu; Kalandadze and Orenstein). Besides their different thematic focus, these works were written well before Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments were ousted; hence, they could not provide meaningful explanations for the leadership change or continuity.

Moreover, later comparative works on Color Revolutions address the themes of “political-business-criminal nexus of organized crime, and . . . the impact of the three revolutions on this nexus,” the influence of the formal presidential power on “democratization and the arrangement of clientalist networks” in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan and causes and consequences of robustness of newly created state institutions (Parsons), and loyalty of professional police force (Wheatley, “Georgia at a Crossroads”) as important causes of the government survival in the aftermath of the Russian military intervention of Georgia and following anti-government protests.


104 Kalandadze and Orenstein, along with Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia also study a number of other cases in this work.

105 Alexander Kupatadze, “‘Transitions after Transitions’: Colored Revolutions and Organized Crime in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan” (Ph.D. diss., University of St. Andrews, 2010), 2. It has to be mentioned that Kupatadze acknowledges the importance of the opposition forces (to the previous government) unity or fragmentation in post-Color Revolution developments in criminality and corruption. As he argues, more fragmented the coalition, easier it is for the criminal elements to penetrate it as the fragmented opposition forces are more dependent on the criminal world’s financial and political assistance (“Transitions,” 83-88).

106 Hale, “Formal Constitutions,” 582. Specifically, Hale (“Formal Constitutions”) studies the impact of Ukraine’s divided executive power (as a result of the 2004 constitutional changes) on the democratic progress in the country. He compares Ukraine with Kyrgyzstan, where the president’s powers were not limited during or after the Tulip
of Color Revolutions.\textsuperscript{107} None of them, however, focus on the question of leadership change and continuity.

Nevertheless, I still build on this literature on post-Color Revolution political developments and expand it. Specifically, I take the arguments of D’Anieri\textsuperscript{108} and Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise about the possibility of conflict and immobility among the president, parliament, and the prime minister in the conditions of weakened post-Orange Revolution presidential powers.\textsuperscript{109} I explore not just whether a president’s weakened executive powers led to a conflict and political crisis, but exactly what impact a weakened presidency had on the post-Orange Revolution leadership’s durability. I extend this question correspondingly to the Kyrgyz and Georgian cases and study what effect the issue of president’s executive power had on post-Color Revolution leadership change and continuity in those countries. As my research found, the issue of executive power not only facilitated the political chaos and stalemate in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, but also was one of the three key factors that contributed to the change or continuity of the post-Color revolution Ukrainian, as well as Kyrgyz and Georgian leaderships.

Furthermore, I capitalize on Kubicek’s study which observed that politically diverse Ukrainian Orange coalition experienced internal schism and disintegrated.\textsuperscript{110} I investigate how the disintegration of the diverse Orange coalition influenced the political balance of power in the Ukrainian political system. Specifically, I study how coalition disintegration helped the

\textsuperscript{107}Lincoln A. Mitchell, \textit{The Color Revolutions} (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). Mitchell (”The Color Revolutions”), however, attributes Ukraine’s stalemate to the 2004 constitutional arrangement that obliges “the president and prime minister to share power relatively evenly” (“The Color Revolutions,” 120).

\textsuperscript{108}See D’Anieri (“Understanding Ukrainian Politics” and “What has Changed”).

\textsuperscript{109}Others observed that such a conflict actually was already taking place under the new leadership (Arel; Riabchuk, 43; Kubicek, 327).

\textsuperscript{110}Kubicek, 329.
opposition reactivate and then analyze the impact of the reactivated opposition on leadership change in the country. I explore the similar questions in Kyrgyzstan. In contrast, I examine what happens if the coalition is not diverse but cohesive, as was the case in Georgia. As I found, coalition disintegration and defection of its members to opposition helps opposition reactivate. Subsequently, reactivated opposition plays an important role in undermining and ultimately ousting incumbent governments, as happened in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Alternatively, cohesive coalitions deprive the opposition of opportunity to reactivate as coalition members stay united. This factor helps the government to maintain power, as was the case with the Georgian leadership.

Aside from the literature on post-Color Revolution political developments, the scholarship studying post-mobilization political processes in general and post-mobilization leadership durability in particular are also scarce at best. Indeed, the first question that confronts a researcher exploring post-uprising political processes is this: what happens once the dust of popular euphoria settles down and the street protests are over? Some works provide important insights to this question. For instance, Beissinger, who studied the nationalist mobilization and its impact on the collapse of the Soviet Union, found that once nationalist mobilization was over “politics moved from the streets back to the government office,” implying that politics became more routine, or “quiet.”

Moreover, as Beissinger states, “a sense of passivity and helplessness set in . . . [and] the heady days of the streets eventually gave way to disillusionment, cynicism,

\[111\] Mark S. Beissinger, Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 444. Certainly, besides Beissinger there are more authors who wrote about nationalist mobilization, even if we look just at the Soviet and post-Soviet cases. However, I was not looking for to delve into the literature on nationalist mobilization per se. I simply picked Beissinger’s work, among many similar works, just to raise the question of what happens after the popular mobilization; what processes follow after the mobilization. Beissinger perfectly fitted into that question and argument. Although, I am aware that there could be any other author and work which could have been used to raise the same question.
and despair.\textsuperscript{112} However, how some new leaderships manage to address post-mobilization public disappointment and yet manage to keep power are questions which Beissinger does not address.

Another question is what happens to those political coalitions that led the popular mobilization. Specifically, what happens to them after they achieve the goals defined by mass movements or street protests? Beissinger’s work on nationalist mobilization becomes helpful again. As Beissinger states, “the popular fronts that spearheaded independence drives\textsuperscript{113} soon split and fell into disarray after independence, losing their cohesive purpose with the demise of their adversary and splintering with the new and divisive issues intrinsic to the exercise of power.”\textsuperscript{114} Beissinger, however, does not go further to show what kind of political processes followed the disintegration of the popular fronts. Nevertheless, Beissinger’s point on the breakup of the popular fronts is interesting as it could serve as a description of events following the Color Revolution Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions: these coalitions fell apart due to the lack of cohesion over various political issues after they achieved their goal of deposing incumbent governments.

\textsuperscript{112} Beissinger, “Nationalist Mobilization,” 447. As Beissinger argues, worsening socioeconomic conditions contributed to the public disillusionment, cynicism, and despair (“Nationalist Mobilization,” 447). Nevertheless, Beissinger here does not specifically point out whether nationalist mobilization produced high expectations of a better life (not only of national independence) and since those expectations did not materialize after the end of nationalist mobilization, popular disappointment followed. This dissertation, however, holds that popular mobilization produces high expectations of radical positive changes. If the new leadership fails to fulfill those expectations mass popular disappointment follows which can undermine the new government.

\textsuperscript{113} Popular fronts, which Beissinger (“Nationalist Mobilization”) refers to were in fact large coalitions of various nationalist groups that often were united under one umbrella organization. For instance, in Georgia such organization was Round Table-Free Georgia and in Ukraine Rukh (movement).

\textsuperscript{114} Beissinger, “Nationalist Mobilization,” 444.
One may ask whether coalitions matter at all. As Waldner shows, they matter a great deal as they can influence the developmental trajectory of a country.\textsuperscript{115} In his study of the impact of state building on economic development in the Middle East and East Asia,\textsuperscript{116} Waldner argues that high levels of elite conflict during a state transformation (state building) process in a country “results in the construction of broad, cross-class coalitions.”\textsuperscript{117} This is due to the fact that elites are forced to mobilize “popular-sector support as a means of providing a social base for vanquishing their opponents and consolidating their rule.”\textsuperscript{118} These broad coalitions then create a sufficient condition for the formation of a “non-developmental state,” as elites grant “side-payments” (in the form of socioeconomic and political concessions) to the popular sector.\textsuperscript{119} However, a non-developmental state fails to ensure strong, sustainable economic development.\textsuperscript{120} Conversely, low levels of elite conflict leads to the creation of “narrow coalitions” which then form necessary conditions for the emergence of a “developmental state”\textsuperscript{121} which ensures strong, sustainable economic development.\textsuperscript{122}


\textsuperscript{116} Specifically, Waldner studies Turkey and Syria and compares them to Korea and Taiwan.

\textsuperscript{117} Waldner, 8.

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, 3.

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid, 9-37. According to Waldner, the key attributes of non-developmental state are: “(1) a political relationship linking state and society based on the principles of constituency clientelism; (2) a politicized and thus heteronomous bureaucracy; (3) a distributive fiscal policy; and (4) patterns of state economic intervention motivated by the need to maintain political loyalties by protecting constituencies from the vagaries of the market, rather than by the goal of maximizing economic development” (37).

\textsuperscript{120} Waldner, 9-37.

\textsuperscript{121} A developmental state, according to Waldner, is free of the institutional and structural constraints that non-development state has (37). Thus, the main features of developmental state are 1) depoliticized economic policy-making; 2) depoliticized bureaucracy; 3) non-distributive (or minimally distributive) fiscal policy, devoted to economic development and use of state resources in production, capital accumulation, and education; 4) targeted, but relatively limited, state intervention in the economy (including in the financial sector) to aid economic development (142-145).
Waldner, however, does not address how coalitions, particularly their size and cohesion, affect post-uprising leadership change and continuity.\(^{123}\) Nevertheless, Waldner’s, as well as Beissinger’s above discussed works provide good starting points for my dissertation. Waldner makes an important argument about the role of coalition size in complex socioeconomic and political developments and Beissinger offers useful observations about the disintegration of coalitions after popular mobilizations. I build on Waldner’s and Beissinger’s\(^{124}\) works and further expand them. Specifically, I offer a full explanation of the impact of coalition size and cohesion in general, and coalition disintegration in particular, on post-mobilization leadership change and continuity. As I found and illustrated in chapters four, five, and six, large fragmented coalitions are inclined to disintegrate, thus setting a causal path that leads to the downfall of new leaderships. On the other hand, small, cohesive coalitions remain united, thus helping a new government to stay in power.

However, the question again remains, within which body of political science literature does this dissertation belong? As I have mentioned, scholarly works that study the causes of post-mobilization leadership change and continuity is scarce at best. The work that comes closest

\(^{122}\) Waldner, 8. In Waldner’s work Turkey and Syria are the examples of non-developmental states and Korea and Taiwan of developmental states.

It also has to be stated here that this dissertation is partially indebted to Waldner’s work for its research design. Specifically, as in Waldner’s work, my dissertation also offers two causal paths which emerge from an independent variable and lead to the dependent variable. In contrast to Waldner’s work, however, my dissertation does not have first and second causal mechanisms. Instead, it has three intervening variables in each causal path.

\(^{123}\) Similarly, other works on coalitions also fall short of exploring the link between coalition size and cohesion on the one hand, and leadership continuity, on the other hand. Instead, they focus on the causality between the size of ethnic group-based ruling coalitions and the intensity of the civil conflict (Lindsay Heger and Idean Salehyan, “Ruthless Rulers: Coalition Size and the Severity of Civil Conflict,” \textit{International Studies Quarterly} 51, no. 2 [June 2007]: 385-403), as well as on the coalition formation process in non-democratic societies, primarily in the Politburo of Stalinist Soviet Union (Daron Acemoglu, George Egorov, and Konstantin Sonin, “Coalition Formation in Non-Democracies,” \textit{The Review of Economic Studies} 75, no. 4 [October 2008]: 987-1009).

\(^{124}\) Beissinger, “National Mobilization.”
to the theme of this dissertation is Levitsky and Way’s study of the causes of durability of revolutionary and post-revolutionary authoritarian regimes.¹²⁵ As the authors summarize,

…armed liberation struggle, post revolutionary state-building, and the violent conflicts triggered by efforts to carry out radical social change leave four legacies that enhance authoritarian durability: 1) the destruction of independent power centers; 2) cohesive ruling parties; 3) tight partisan control over the security forces; and 4) powerful coercive apparatuses. These revolutionary legacies help to inoculate revolutionary regimes against elite defection, military coups, and mass protest—three major sources of authoritarian breakdown.¹²⁶

Because of these legacies the revolutionary regimes end up in strong position to survive, argue Levitsky and Way.¹²⁷ Though their study, like this dissertation, focuses on the durability of post-mobilization leaderships, there are more differences than similarities. They study revolutionary and post-revolutionary authoritarian regimes that emerged out of ideological and violent revolutionary struggle from below aimed at transforming state institutions and the existing social order. This study, in contrast, examines post-Color Revolution leaderships, none of which were revolutionary or post-revolutionary authoritarian regimes¹²⁸ and none of them

¹²⁵ Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, “The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes,” Journal of Democracy 24, no. 3 (July 2013): 5-17. Levitsky and Way define revolutionary regimes “as those which emerge out of sustained, ideological, and violent struggle from below, and whose establishment is accompanied by mass mobilization and significant efforts to transform state structures and the existing social order” (“Revolutionary Regimes,” 5). Moreover, they define post-revolutionary regimes as “all revolutionary regimes in which the generation that participated directly in the revolutionary struggle has died off” (5). The authors include in revolutionary and post-revolutionary regimes those regimes that emerged after revolutions in countries ranging from China and Cuba to Vietnam and Zimbabwe.


¹²⁷ Levitsky and Way, “Revolutionary Regimes.”

¹²⁸ Though the Georgian and Kyrgyz governments certainly had strong authoritarian tendencies, they nevertheless cannot qualify as authoritarian regimes. Nor can they qualify as post-revolutionary regimes, since, as I have explained in a footnote above, Levitsky and Way (2013) define post-revolutionary regimes as “all revolutionary regimes in which the generation that participated directly in the revolutionary struggle had died off” (p.5) and subsequently, post-revolutionary rulers inherited power from the revolutionary regime. In contrast, none of the post-Color Revolution leaderships inherited power from the previous revolutionary regime.
emerged out of violent revolutionary struggle aimed at altering state institutions and existing social structures.129

Levitsky and Way emphasize the role of revolutionary violence in destroying independent power centers and imposing tight control over state institutions.130 But the Color Revolutions were peaceful protests that did not have an opportunity to use revolutionary violence to physically destroy independent power centers or take control of state institutions in the midst of violence. The post-Color Revolution leaderships had to employ other means and strategies to strengthen their hold on power.

Given that scholarly works on post-mobilization leadership change and continuity are rare, into which category of academic literature does this dissertation fit? At first glance one may mistakenly place this work within the sizable literature on the durability of coalition governments (cabinets) in western parliamentary democracies. This can be due to the fact that a coalition, or more exactly a coalition’s size and cohesion, is an independent variable in this dissertation. And indeed, some of those scholarly works on coalition governments point out the role of a coalition size131 and ideological homogeneity132 in the stability and longevity of coalition governments.133

129 These distinctions also mean that the post-Color Revolution leaderships’ style of rule is different from the revolutionary and post-revolutionary authoritarian regimes’ style of rule.

130 Levitsky and Way, “Revolutionary Regimes.”

131 Michael Laver, “Dynamic Factors in Government Coalition Formation.” European Journal of Political Research 2, no. 3 (September 1974): 260, 269; Michael Taylor and V. M. Herman, “Party Systems and Government Stability.” The American Political Science Review 65, no. 1 (March 1971): 30-37. Specifically, Taylor and Herman find that high number of parties and fractionalization (disagreements) in the parliament and the government negatively affects the government stability. Moreover, they argue that one-party governments turn out to be more stable than coalition governments. Moreover, as Laver argues, minimal winning coalitions are preferred. Subsequently, such coalitions should get rid of surplus members. Size of the coalition is the focus of many other works as well. For instance, Heger and Salehyan argue that smaller size of the coalition contributes to the higher level of violence during civil conflicts. As elites try to maintain patronage and power, they use violence more severely when the size of the ruling coalition decreases and subsequently, ruling elites find themselves less constrained to use repression.
Nevertheless, these works on coalition government durability in western parliamentary democracies is not really comparable to a work on post-mobilization leadership change and continuity in the former Soviet Union. Three major differences explain how they are unlike.

First, western parliamentary democracies have stable political systems; Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia are the countries still in transition with highly unstable political institutions. Second, regardless of the fact that post-Color Revolution governments were actually coalition governments, the Georgian and Kyrgyz regimes after those popular uprisings still did not qualify as democratic regimes. Third, none of the three countries under my study had parliamentary systems of governance. ¹³⁴ Parliamentary democracies with stable political institutions generally

¹³² Laver, 260, 269; Paul V. Warwick, “The Durability of Coalition Governments in Parliamentary Democracy,” *Comparative Political Studies* 11, no. 4 (January 1979): 465–498; Paul V. Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Others however, disagree that ideological disagreements play decisive role. As Taylor and Herman argue, what really destabilizes the government is ideological division between anti-system parties (such as Communist Party) and pro-system parties in the parliament (32–37). Moreover, as Nyblade (Benjamin Nyblade, “Reconsidering Ideological Diversity and Government Survival” [paper presented at the annual meeting for the *American Political Science Association*, Chicago, Illinois, September 2–5, 2004], accessed November 5, 2013, http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=38fd637d-668d-4e27-aacc-7ed4242d597c%40sessionmgr4005&vid=5&hid=4104) argues, it’s not necessarily the ideological diversity of political parties within coalition governments that affects their stability, but the government’s ideological diversity relative to other alternatives. In other words, political parties in government consider the appeal of alternative coalitions when deciding whether to continue with the present coalition or bring down the government. Grotz and Weber’s (Florian Grotz and Till Weber, “Party Systems and Government Stability in Central and Eastern Europe,” *World Politics* 64, no. 4 [October 2012]: 703) findings, however, entirely contradict all of above presented findings on the role of ideological diversity and coalition size. Grotz and Weber argue that the most stable coalitions are those which “include either a higher number of parties or a broader ideological range” (703).

¹³³ Yet other authors focus on different factors. Roosendaal (Peter V. Roosendaal, “Government Survival in Western Multiparty Democracies: The Effect of Credible Exit Threat via Dominance,” *European Journal of Political Research* 32, no. 1 [August 1997]: 87–88) holds that “the presence of dominant parties in governments, and thus the impact of [their] credible exit threats as a sanctioning device, has a positive effect on government durability” (87–88). Furthermore, Taylor and Herman (31–37), Laver (260, 269), and Warwick (“Coalition Governments,” 490), largely in line with Roosendaal, find majority governments more stable and durable than minority governments. Robertson (John D. Robertson, “Inflation, Unemployment, and Government Collapse: A Poisson Application,” *Comparative Political Studies* 15, no. 4 [January 1983]: 440) looks at economic factors, arguing that the failure of governments to “manage both inflation and unemployment…will contribute significantly to the changing probability of government collapse” (440).

¹³⁴ The political agreement between the Ukrainian incumbent regime and the opposition during the 2004 Orange Revolution transformed the country into a parliamentary-presidential republic, significantly reducing presidential powers. Nevertheless, post-Orange Revolution Ukraine still does not qualify as a parliamentary republic. It more resembles mixed parliamentary-presidential system with a weakened president and strengthened parliament.
give rise to drastic differences in political dynamics and style of governance from those of non-parliamentary non-democracies with unstable political institutions.

It may also be tempting to mistakenly identify this dissertation as a work about state building and state capacity. After all, post-Color Revolution leaderships’ ability to implement essential reforms and succeed (or fail) to increase state capacity played important role in their downfall or survival. Consequently, this fact can naturally lead any scholar to relate the dissertation to the abundant academic literature on state building, among them the works of Charles Tilly and Samuel Huntington on this topic.

Nevertheless, this dissertation is not a work about state building; it is a work about post-uprising leadership change and continuity. As I have mentioned, state capacity (more exactly its decrease or increase) certainly played an important role in the change or continuity of the post-Color Revolution governments. Yet state capacity and state building is just one small part of one of the three intervening variables (successful reforms, leading to increased state capacity and popular support) of this work. Other intervening variables of active or inactive opposition and the issue of executive power played equally important roles in leadership change and continuity. State capacity is just one component of the causal process set in motion by a certain type of a coalition (large, fragmented vs. small, cohesive).

Having shown what kind of literature this dissertation does not relate to, I now turn to the literature on political transitions,¹³⁵ the body of works into which this dissertation fits most comfortably. Transitions literature studies the causes of a regime change and continuity more systematically than does any other political science literature. The Color Revolutions and the

¹³⁵ O’Donnell and Schmitter (Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, vol. 4, Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986], 6) define “transition” as “the interval between one political regime and another” (6).
ensuing political developments were, in fact, the continuation of long process of postcommunist transitions that large majority of formerly Soviet countries are still undergoing.

The next section traces and reviews key academic works on transitions which relate to the topic of this dissertation--leadership durability. I conditionally divide the scholarly works on transitions into three parts: literature on democratic transitions; literature on authoritarian durability; and literature on cyclical changes of leaderships within same type of a regime. Without focusing on those works’ democratization frame, I single out the factors that explain leadership durability. In this literature review, however, I do not try to base this dissertation theoretically on the previous scholarly works, since there is no single consistent theory which could explain the post-uprising leadership change or continuity. Neither do I try to assess whether those works are different or similar to my work or whether those works can explain my cases. In fact, what I try to do by reviewing those studies is to lay out the boundaries of the existing scholarly literature on leadership durability and then point out the direction in which I extend that literature.

2.3 Tracing the Literature of Transitions

2.3.1 Democratic Transitions

The literature on democratic transitions proliferated in the mid-1980s as authoritarian regimes began to fall one after another in southern Europe while similar collapses remained ongoing in Latin America. In this regard Guillermo O’Donnell’s and Philippe C. Schmitter’s 1986 seminal work Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies is highly influential. The authors analyze transitions that took place from the 1940’s to early 1980’s in southern Europe and Latin America. O’Donnell and Schmitter argue that the key factor in transitions is divisions within the authoritarian regime itself, specifically,
between regime “hard-liners” and “soft-liners.”\textsuperscript{136} In particular, hard-liners believe that the authoritarian rule can and should be maintained, while soft-liners think that some degree of democratization must be allowed. Subsequently, the emerging “opening” of authoritarian rule produces a sharp and fast increase in general mobilization.\textsuperscript{137}

In some cases the process moves gradually towards striking a pact between the authoritarian regime and its challengers. The pacts, as O’Donnell and Schmitter observed, are most likely in the situations where neither of the conflicting sides can impose its desired outcome on another. The pacts are “typically negotiated among a small number of participants representing established (and often highly oligarchical) groups or institutions.”\textsuperscript{138} These pacts deliver a negotiated compromise on a wide array of political and socioeconomic issues, which alter power relations and “set loose new political process.”\textsuperscript{139}

O’Donnell’s and Schmitter’s description of the pact-making process here is particularly interesting as it bears striking resemblance to the pacted transition that took place 18 years later during Ukraine’s 2004 Orange Revolution. This pact, reached between narrow groups of Ukrainian elites, ensured power transition from President Kuchma to opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko.

O’Donnell and Schmitter, however, also emphasize that a pact may not occur during a transition, because “the outgoing rulers may be so discredited and in such disarray that it is not possible for them to negotiate with their successors.”\textsuperscript{140} In such a case, authoritarian leaders,

\textsuperscript{136} O’Donnell and Schmitter, 15-19.

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid, 26.

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid, 38.

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid, 39.
being under pressure, simply abandon power without exchanging reciprocal guarantees. Thus, the outcome is “left open to the subsequent uncertainty of factional struggle or electoral competition.”

Here again, O’Donnell’s and Schmitter’s argument brings to mind the Color Revolutions, specifically, the dramatic collapse of President Shevardnadze’s and President Akaev’s administrations in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan respectively. Facing mass street protests, both of these governments left power in haste and without striking a pact with the challengers. Consequently, the final outcome was left to factional conflict and electoral competition in both countries. This dissertation builds on O’Donnell’s and Schmitter’s arguments about pacts and further expands them. Specifically, I explore how exactly the Ukrainian pact influenced durability of the post-Orange Revolution leadership. Moreover, I investigate how the unpacted power transitions influenced post-uprising leadership change and continuity in Kyrgyzstan and Georgia. Overall, based on O’Donnell and Schmitter’s work, I ask, whether pacts matter in post-uprising leadership durability. As I illustrate in my empirical chapters, pacts do not matter, since post-mobilization governments fell or survived regardless of having pacted or unpacted power transitions.

In *The Third Wave of Democratization* in 1991, Samuel Huntington introduced another major work on transitions. He traces transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule which took place in different parts of the world in 1974-1990. He names those transitions the third wave of democratization to differentiate them from the previous two waves in the 19th and 20th centuries. Huntington outlines five causes that separately or in combination played an

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141 O’Donnell and Schmitter, 39.


143 According to Huntington, the first wave of democratization occurred in 1828-1926 and the second wave in 1922-1942. The both waves of democratization were followed by reverse waves (“The Third Wave,” 16).
important role in the third wave transitions: 1) “the deepening legitimacy problems of authoritarian systems,” caused by poor economic performance and military defeats; 2) “the unprecedented global economic growth of the 1960s,” which expanded urban middle class, improved living standards, and enhanced education; 3) remarkable changes in the Catholic Church’s doctrine, which turned national churches into “proponents of social, economic, and political reform;” 4) changes of the policies of major external actors “toward the promotion of human rights and democracy in other countries;” and 5) “snowballing” or demonstration effects… of the first transitions,” which provided “models for subsequent efforts at regime change in other countries.”

Once the authoritarian regimes crumbled and transitions started, Huntington holds, then the key roles were played by “standpatters” and “reformers” (he divides “reformers” into two subgroups, “liberal reformers” and “democratic reformers”) in the regime and “democratic moderates” and “revolutionary extremists” in the opposition. The balance of power among these groups determined the nature of the democratic transitions. If standpatters dominated the government and the extremists the opposition, then democratic transition was not possible as both groups opposed democracy. Moreover, if pro-democratic groups dominated both the government and the opposition then democratic transition was certainly possible. Furthermore, if democratic groups were dominant in the opposition, but not in the government, then the success of democratic transition “depended on events undermining the government and bringing the opposition to power.”


145 Ibid, 121-123.

146 Ibid, 123.
but not in the opposition, then democratic transition “could be threatened by insurgent violence and by a backlash increase in power of standpatter groups possibly leading to a coup d’etat.”

Huntington’s analysis of the problems associated with the consolidation of new democratic regimes is particularly interesting, drawing clear parallels with post-Color Revolution situations, particularly in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. As Huntington argues, new democratic regimes faced a number of profound problems, among them extreme poverty, socioeconomic inequality, and substantial external debt (with accompanying inflation). As the new regimes were unable to solve these problems (just as the previous authoritarian regimes could not) public disappointment grew. Enthusiasm and euphoria generated by the collapse of authoritarianism transformed into “indifference, frustration, and disillusionment.” New leaders of the democratic governments gradually lost public support. They “often came to be viewed as arrogant, incompetent, or corrupt, or some combination of all three.” Disillusionment produced anti-incumbent and anti-establishment responses as voters rejected the incumbent parties.

Huntington provides valuable observations here. In fact, by describing what may follow post-mobilization popular disappointment, Huntington went further than Beissinger who merely registered popular disillusionment after nationalist mobilization without arguing how public

147 Huntington, “The Third Wave,” 123.

148 Ibid, 253-254. Huntington identifies them as contextual problems, along with five other problems (see pages 253-254 for the full list of all eight problems). Huntington also identifies two main transition problems which new leaderships face: “1) how to treat authoritarian officials who had blatantly violated human rights…and 2) how to reduce military involvement in politics…” (“The Third Wave,” 209).

149 Huntington, “The Third Wave,” 255.

150 Huntington, “The Third Wave,” 256. Here, Huntington (“The Third Wave,” 256) also observes, similarly to Beissinger (“Nationalist Mobilization,” 444), that the democratic coalitions which led the transitions fragmented after the first democratic governments came to power.

151 As Huntington argues, disillusionment with the new democratic governments also created anti-system responses, creating powerful incentives for authoritarian alternatives (“The Third Wave,” 270).
disappointment could have influenced new regime durability.\textsuperscript{152} This dissertation builds on Huntington’s above discussed work. Specifically, I examine what impact public disappointment, present with various intensity in all of my three cases, had on the post-uprising leadership change and continuity.\textsuperscript{153} Moreover, I ask if government performance, specifically a government’s ability to implement reforms and hence, alleviate the causes of public disappointment, played any role in the change and continuity of post-mobilization governments. As I found, popular disappointment is one of the main threats to post-uprising government durability. If new leaderships fail to implement necessary reforms to address persisting socioeconomic and political problems, they are prone to fall due to public discontent.

Michael McFaul’s 2002 work, \textit{The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship},\textsuperscript{154} challenged so-called third wave literature, including O’Donnell’s and Schmitter’s\textsuperscript{155} and Huntington’s\textsuperscript{156} works. McFaul criticized the third wave literature’s “actor-centric, cooperative approaches” to democratic transitions,\textsuperscript{157} primarily for putting too much emphasis on pacts, negotiations, stalemates, and bargains among political elites.\textsuperscript{158} As McFaul argues, the transitions from communism to new regime types were so different from the third wave in the 1970s and

\textsuperscript{152} Beissinger (“Nationalist Mobilization”) is discussed above in this chapter. Also see, Beissinger, “Nationalist Mobilization,” 447.

\textsuperscript{153} In this work, public disappointment is reflected in popular support (measured by opinion polls) for a certain post-Color Revolution government. Lower popular support indicates higher public disappointment.


\textsuperscript{155} O’Donnell and Schmitter.

\textsuperscript{156} Huntington, “The Third Wave.”

\textsuperscript{157} McFaul, “The Fourth Wave,” 220.

\textsuperscript{158} For the full discussion, see McFaul, “The Fourth Wave,” 214-220.
1980s that “they should not even be grouped under the same rubric.”\(^{159}\) He asserted that “decommunization” triggered a whole new “a fourth wave of regime change.”\(^{160}\) As McFaul observed, one major difference between the third and fourth waves is that the latter has been characterized not by negotiations and elite-led pacted transitions, but by conflict and societal mobilization from below.\(^{161}\) Moreover, according to McFaul, in the fourth wave not all transitions were from dictatorship towards democracy, but also from dictatorship to dictatorship, to partial dictatorship, or to partial, unstable democracy.\(^{162}\)

Particularly interesting is McFaul’s explanation of the causes of the new, post-transition regimes’ stability. As McFaul argues, here largely in line with Huntington,\(^{163}\) “balance of power”\(^{164}\) between the ancient regime and its opposition is an important factor influencing

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\(^{161}\) McFaul, “The Fourth Wave.” It’s noteworthy that Bunce (Valerie J. Bunce, “Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations,” Comparative Political Studies 33, no. 6/7 [August/September 2000]: 703-734; Valerie J. Bunce, “Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience,” World Politics 55, no. 2 [January 2003]: 167-192), in line with McFaul (“The Fourth Wave”), also emphasizes the important role of mass mobilization in democratic transitions.

\(^{162}\) See McFaul (“The Fourth Wave,” 220-225) for the assessment of other differences between the third and fourth waves of democratic transitions.

\(^{163}\) Huntington, “The Third Wave.”

\(^{164}\) McFaul, “The Fourth Wave,” 226. Measurement of the balance of power is based on the legislative elections that determined the composition of a state’s or republic’s legislature in 1989-1992. Specifically, if the regime or its challenger political forces garnered more than 60 percent of votes that political force (the regime or its challengers) deemed to have balance of power in its favor. Where neither side won a clear majority those countries are classified as having equal balances of power (McFaul, “The Fourth Wave,” 226-228).
whether or not a country embarks on democratic transition. McFaul, however, goes further than Huntington and holds that the balance of power also helps determine whether the new, post-transition regime will be stable or not. Specifically, if the balance of power is starkly in favor of either the regime or its opposition, then the stronger side, whether authoritarian or democratic, will dictate rules of the game to the weaker side, maintain or reconstruct institutions, and establish a consolidated, stable regime. If the balance is relatively equal, McFaul argues, then the outcome will be fragile partial democracies or even civil war.

From mid-1990s to 2005, a new wave of mass mobilizations swept through Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. It deposed about a dozen postcommunist governments with authoritarian tendencies. Bunce and Wolchik called these events (which also included the Color Revolutions) “electoral revolutions.” The key characteristics of the “electoral revolutions” were the opposition-led popular mobilizations, which ousted semi-authoritarian governments through election or subsequent mass protests. The protests usually broke up due to the electoral fraud to which the governments resorted to stay in power.

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165 McFaul, “The Fourth wave,” 226-228. On exact differences between these two authors about how the balance of power affects transitions, see McFaul (The Fourth Wave,” 226) and Huntington (“The Third Wave,” 123).

166 McFaul, “The Fourth Wave,” 212-239. By making this argument McFaul challenged the third wave literature which asserted that stalemated transitions would produce “both stable and liberal democracies” (“The Fourth Wave,” 234). Moreover, McFaul holds that territorial disputes can influence democratic transitions, as such disputes can spark wars and in turn empower “nationalist leaders with poor democratic credentials” (“The Fourth Wave,” 240). Also, according to McFaul, the factor of the West is important. Specifically, the prospect of membership in Western institutions, such as European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), stimulate the countries in transition to become more democratic (“The Fourth Wave,” 240). In his 2004 book chapter, with the same title, McFaul (Michael McFaul, “The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World.” In After the Collapse of Communism: Comparative Lessons of Transitions, edited by Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, 58-95 [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 88) adds that “skills and ideological orientations” of the leaders matter too in transitions (88).

167 Bunce and Wolchik, “Favorable Conditions,” 5.

168 See Bunce and Wolchik, “Favorable Conditions.”
As “electoral revolutions” proliferated, the scholars of postcommunist transitions focused their attention on studying the reasons for those “revolutions,” in the process providing important insights about the causes of leadership change and continuity in general. In this regard, the works by Michael McFaul, Valerie Bunce, and Sharon Wolchik, three highly influential scholars on postcommunist transitions, are largely representative of the literature on the fourth wave of transitions. These authors outlined a number of factors that contributed to the downfall of postcommunist governments and facilitated political transitions. For instance, Bunce and Wolchik laid out several long-term structural factors: “the absence of a tradition of a politicized military…long experience with elections in general and fraudulent elections in particular,” high levels of education, international donor support, and regional diffusion of “electoral revolutions.”

In their later work Bunce and Wolchik focused on the short-term structural factor, such as the opposition’s ability to run “ambitious political campaigns, [orchestrate] elaborate voter registration and voter turnout drives, and [put] in place electoral monitoring procedures.” As the authors argued, use of such strategies made opposition “more politically attractive to voters...

169 I am using McFaul’s (“The Fourth Wave”) term here in order to differentiate from the third wave transitions all the transitions that occurred since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

170 Similarly, Bunce argues that the fact that military traditionally was under civilian control in much of the postcommunist world undermined authoritarian regimes and thus greatly contributed to the democratic transitions in the region (“Rethinking Recent Democratization”).


172 Bunce and Wolchik, “Favorable Conditions.” In another work Bunce and Wolchik (Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, “International Diffusion and Postcommunist Electoral Revolutions,” Communist and Post-Communist Studies 39, no. 3 [September 2006]: 283-304) ascribe a key role to the factor of regional diffusion in spreading “electoral revolutions” across the Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union.

[and] created a widespread sense that victory was possible."174 This in turn complicated the regime’s ability to win elections and stay in power after the electoral defeat.175

Similarly, McFaul also emphasized the role of the opposition--specifically of its unity and ability to mobilize masses--in the success of “democratic breakthroughs,” as he called the unfolding Color Revolutions in the former Soviet Union.176 Additionally, McFaul laid out five more factors that he thought were necessary preconditions for a “democratic breakthrough,” and thus, for a leadership change. These factors are 1) existence of a semi-autocratic rather than fully autocratic regime, as semi-autocracies leave more room for political pluralism and popular mobilization than autocracies; 2) an unpopular incumbent; 3) independent electoral monitoring capabilities; 4) a modicum of independent media to inform citizens about the falsified vote; and 5) split among the “guys with guns,’’177 thus within a regime’s coercive apparatus.

I enter into theoretical discussion with above discussed literature on post-communist transitions. In particular, I explore whether the factors that played important roles in the downfall of the postcommunist governments during the Color Revolutions (the absence of a politicized military, experience with elections, high levels of education, international donor support, regional diffusion effect;178 opposition tactics;179 opposition unity, and split within the coercive

174 Bunce and Wolchik, “Defeating Dictators,” 73.
175 Ibid. Bunce and Wolchik in their later work (Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon Wolchik, Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011]) make largely similar argument about the role of the opposition in democratic transitions.
178 See Bunce and Wolchik, “Favorable Conditions.”
179 See Bunce and Wolchik, “Defeating Dictators.”
apparatus\textsuperscript{180}, also played any role in the change of the post-Color Revolution leaderships. As I found, the factors that influenced the change of pre-Color Revolution governments are diametrically different from the factors that contributed to the fall of post-Color Revolution governments.

2.3.2 Authoritarian Durability

Another body of literature on transitions focuses on the causes of authoritarian regime durability. Lucan Way’s and Steve Levitsky’s works on postcommunist regimes in the former Soviet Union provide some valuable insights in this regard. For instance, Way argues that “authoritarian stability is most affected by: 1) the strength of a country’s ties to the West; and 2) the strength of the incumbent regime’s autocratic party or state.”\textsuperscript{181} Specifically, Way holds that in the former Soviet Union where the countries’ economic, political, and social ties with the West have been weak, western countries were less likely to invest in regime change, as western commitment to democratization was less intense. Weak ties with the West make the survival of the autocratic regimes more dependent on their access to at least one of the three mechanisms of autocratic organizational power: a highly institutionalized ruling party which could provide a regime with support base and internal cohesion; extensive, well-funded, and experienced coercive apparatus that would enable a regime to harass opposition and crush protest; and the state’s discretionary control over economy or energy revenues, which could deny the opposition

\textsuperscript{180}See McFaul, “Transitions from Postcommunism” and McFaul, “Conclusion.” Although I have placed the works by Bunce and Wolchik (“Favorable Conditions” and “Defeating Dictators”) and McFaul (“Transitions from Postcommunism” and “Conclusion”) in the subsection on democratic transitions, those works, in fact, also study the causes of the Color Revolutions.

\textsuperscript{181}Lucan A. Way, 2008, “The Real Causes of the Color Revolutions.” \textit{Journal of Democracy} 19, no.3 (July 2008): 60. In this work Way, in fact, studies the causes of the Color Revolutions. Nevertheless, since the dominant theme across this article is the causes of authoritarian durability I have located it under the subsection on authoritarian durability.
economic means of mobilization. The regimes that were not secure in one or more of these key dimensions were less likely to survive.\textsuperscript{182}

In the later work, Way makes a largely similar argument.\textsuperscript{183} As he states, autocratic regimes were more likely to keep power if they had the ability “to rely at least on one of the three pillars of autocratic strength--strong ruling party, strong coercive apparatus, and/or state economic control.”\textsuperscript{184} A strong, institutionalized ruling party allows the regime to maintain tight discipline within its ranks; strong coercive apparatus helps the regime to successfully fight back the opposition; and the state control over the economy enables the regime to buy support and starve the opposition. In another work Way and Levitsky specifically emphasize the role of state coercive capacity in autocratic regime stability.\textsuperscript{185} Kendall-Taylor, on the other hand, underlines the key role of natural resources, specifically of oil, in authoritarian durability.\textsuperscript{186} As the author argues, oil resources enable regimes to increase pre-electoral spending in order to buy popular support and thus to “deter political rivals . . . [and] secure the loyalty of the elite.”\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{182} Way, “The Real Causes.”


\textsuperscript{184} Way, “Resistance to Contagion,” 251.

\textsuperscript{185} Way and Levitsky, “Autocratic Coercion.” Specifically, Way and Levitsky (“Autocratic Coercion”) argue that authoritarian durability depends on a scope and cohesion of the state coercive capacity. By scope the authors refer to the effective reach. By cohesion they refer to the level of compliance within the state apparatus. High scope and cohesion enable a regime to maintain power in the face of anti-regime mass mobilization.

\textsuperscript{186} Andrea Kendall-Taylor, “Purchasing Power: Oil, Elections and Regime Durability in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan,” Europe-Asia Studies 64, no. 4 (June 2012): 737-760.

\textsuperscript{187} Kendall-Taylor, “Purchasing Power,” 757. Others emphasize the role of natural resources in authoritarian durability and stability beyond Soviet Union. For instance, Bjorvatn and Naghavi (Kjetil Bjorvatn and Alireza Naghavi, “Rent Seeking and Regime Stability in Rentier States,” European Journal of Political Economy 27, no. 4 [December 2011]: 740-748), argue that rents in resource rich countries (by rents, the authors here refer to the incumbent regime’s practice of distributing patronage employment in public sector to the opposition in order to neutralize and tie to the regime the opposition groups) may increase regime stability. Specifically, the incumbent ruler grants patronage public sector employment to the opposition. Such step per se does not guarantee the regime
The factors that contribute to authoritarian durability in the former Soviet Union do not seem to be any different from the factors that contribute to authoritarian durability in the Middle East, East Asia, or beyond, as the transitions literature shows. For instance, Brownlee sees ruling parties as the prime factors in authoritarian regime durability in Egypt, Iran, Malaysia, and the Philippines.\textsuperscript{188} He argues that ruling parties enable authoritarian regimes “to maintain dominant ruling coalitions and deny their rivals electoral success.”\textsuperscript{189} Specifically, parties are important “when potential elite allies for the opposition [arise] within the regime.”\textsuperscript{190} At this point, ruling parties fulfill the function of the institutions of mediation and prevent “broad public rifts, ensuring both elite cohesion and electoral control.”\textsuperscript{191} Thus, parties deprive alternative political forces “a position for contesting control of government.”\textsuperscript{192} On the other hand, “the failure to institutionalize ruling parties . . . [generates] intense discord within the regime and [allows] the opposition to seize command of the electoral arena.”\textsuperscript{193} This provides the opposition with the opportunity for regime change.

stability. Nevertheless, distribution of rents raises the cost of conflict among increasing number of groups involved. “If conflict is very costly, this could serve as a disciplining force, ensuring that agreements will be honored, and thereby promoting regime stability,” conclude Bjorvaan and Naghavi (748). Moreover, Snyder (Richard Snyder, “Does Lootable Wealth Breed Disorder?: A Political Economy of Extraction Framework,” \textit{Comparative Political Studies} 39, no. 8 [October 2006]: 943-968) underlines that along with natural resources, a regime’s extracting capacities of those resources are important to maintain stability. As he argues, “if rulers are able to forge institutions of extraction that give them control of revenue generated by lootable resources, these resources can actually contribute to the maintenance of order by providing the income with which to govern” (946-947); [According to Snyder lootable wealth includes high value goods with low economic barriers to entry]) Alternatively, failure to build and maintain resource extraction capabilities produces instability in two ways: first, fiscal crisis makes state vulnerable to collapse; second, it makes easier for rebels to organize (Snyder, 947).

\textsuperscript{188} Jason Brownlee, “Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2004).

\textsuperscript{189} Brownlee, “Authoritarianism,” 31.

\textsuperscript{190} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid.
Slater and Fenner, however, do not agree that political parties are the key mechanisms in authoritarian durability. They deem strong state apparatus (thus state power) to be more effective and argue that “party strength is more often a product of state strength than vice versa.” The authors outline four state infrastructural mechanisms that determine authoritarian regime durability: 1) strong coercive capacity; 2) revenue extracting capacity; 3) effective registration of citizens to establish surveillance on them; 4) ability to cultivate dependence of citizens to a regime through patronage, state employment, and provision of various public services. Bellin, in line with Slater and Fenner, also attributes the durability of authoritarian regimes to the “robustness of the coercive apparatus.” State strength in general and coercive capacity in particular certainly figure as important factors in my cases and I incorporate them in this dissertation.

Furthermore, other works on authoritarian durability highlight additional variables and mechanisms. For instance, Aspinall (2005), focusing on the opposition’s structure and strategies during Suharto’s authoritarian regime in Indonesia, argues that “the structural weakness of opposition” can help explain the longevity of Suharto’s rule. Alternatively, Stacher puts

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195 Slater and Fenner, 24.


198 Bellin, 144.

emphasis on the role of institutions. In particular, Stacher studying the Egyptian and Syrian cases, argues that institutional type, or whether institutions (presidency, ruling party, coercive apparatus) are “politicized (decentralized) or depoliticized (centralized)…determines a system’s ability to co-opt, affirm, and shed established and new elites….” The system’s propensity to co-opt other factions thus determines its ability to adapt to political changes (instead of implementing genuine political reforms) and therefore to survive. As Stacher finds, depoliticized (centralized) institutions are more flexible and able to adapt.

Geddes offers explanations for the durability of three types of authoritarian regimes: military, personalist, and single-party regimes. She argues that internal splits within a military regime, a narrow support base, and the absence of viable successor within a personalist regime negatively affect these regimes’ long-term durability. Geddes finds single-party regimes to be the most stable, not least for allowing “greater participation and popular influence on policy without giving up their dominant role in the political system.” Moreover, single-party regimes claim the loyalty of many upwardly mobile individuals with peasant and urban marginal backgrounds through the regime’s “control over the allocation of educational opportunities, jobs, and positions in government…. “ Geddes’s arguments about the importance of internal splits and broad support base certainly are noteworthy and this dissertation included these factors in its study.

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201 Stacher, 10.

202 Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?” Annual Review of Political Science 2 (June 1999): 121. Overall, Geddes’s goal in this article is to study the transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule.

203 Geddes, 135.

204 Ibid, 134.
Moreover, I challenge the literature on authoritarian durability. Specifically, I explore whether factors such as state strength (Way; Slater and Fenner), strong coercive apparatus (Bellin; Way), institutional type (Stacher), strong ruling parties (Brownlee; Way), regime support base (Geddes), and natural resources (Kendall-Taylor), all factors that played important roles in authoritarian regime durability according to the above mentioned authors, also had any influence in the change and continuity of the post-uprising leaderships in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. My research illustrates that factors impacting authoritarian regime durability are not at all the same as the factors contributing to post-mobilization leadership continuity.

2.3.3 Regime Cycles

A number of works address the cyclical changes of leaderships within regimes. Such changes, however, might not produce a shift towards neither democracy nor authoritarianism. Nevertheless, they reveal the mechanisms and institutions that explain regime instability. For instance, O’Donnell examines the impact of delegative democracies on the emergence of certain cycles within presidential systems. As O’Donnell formulates, “delegative democracies rest on the premise that whoever wins election to the presidency is thereby entitled to govern as he or she sees fit, constrained only by the hard facts of existing power relations and by a constitutionally limited term of office.” In fact, the voters intentionally delegate large powers to the president to address the country’s profound problems, primarily its socioeconomic problems. According to O’Donnell, every new president comes to power as “the embodiment

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205 Way, “The Real Causes.”
and the interpreter of the high interests of the nation.” Subsequently, he launches a flurry of policies to take the country out of the crisis. However, the legislative branch and political parties are virtually excluded from the decision making process and have little stake in implementation. Failures accumulate, and a strong, almost dictatorial presidency and widespread popular hopes are replaced by passivity and disarray of public policy while a now widely reviled president tries to hang on till the end of his term. What follows is another cycle of crisis in delegative democracy.

The system of delegative democracy described above closely resembles the constitutionally powerful presidencies of post-Color Revolution Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. Moreover, the high hopes that crisis-stricken societies ascribe to every new president in a delegative democracy look a lot like high hopes which crisis-stricken Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian societies ascribed to new post-Color Revolution presidents. Furthermore, Ukrainian and Kyrgyz presidents fell from power largely because they failed to solve the country’s profound problems, just as O’Donnell says will happen to every new president in delegative democracies.

Hale, like O’Donnell, underscores the role of a presidential institution in producing regime cycles. Specifically, Hale studies the impact of elite contestation on top leadership

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210 O’Donnell, 60.

211 See O’Donnell.

212 Although the Ukrainian president’s powers were limited as of January 2006 as a result of the 2004 pact between the government and the opposition. Nevertheless, post-Color Revolution president Viktor Yushchenko still held large executive powers in the first year of his rule.

213 See Hale, “Regime Cycles.”
changes in patronal presidentialism. He describes patronal presidentialism as an institution in which “a directly elected presidency is invested with great formal powers relative to other state organs… [and]… also wields a high degree of informal power based on widespread patron-client relationships at the intersection of the state and the economy.”

As Hale argues, a focal point for patronal presidentialism comes during the time of succession when it’s uncertain who will be the next president. Hale calls this situation “lame duck syndrome.” In such a case, if a lame duck president does not pick a sufficiently popular presidential candidate to challenge the opposition, elites may defect to a more promising candidate and cause the leadership to fall, leading to one more regime cycle. As Hale argues, this is exactly what happened in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia in 2003-2005. The events known as Orange, Tulip, and Rose Revolutions respectively were “just another swing in a fairly regular cyclical process,” not a transition to a new regime type, asserts Hale. Hale does not, however, go further to show whether the next cycle of leadership change in those three countries did occur and if so, whether elite contestation and patronal presidentialism again played important role in them. Hale just hypothesizes that cyclical change will happen once more and it will happen due to new contestation phase.

214 I have placed Hale’s (“Regime Cycles”) work in the subsection on regime cycles as it describes the revolving changes of leaderships within regimes. Yet, in this work, Hale makes his argument on the examples of the Color Revolutions, in fact, identifying the factors that led to the Color Revolutions.


217 Ibid.

218 Ibid.

Leadership changes really occurred in Ukraine and in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, as post-Color Revolution governments fell barely after five years in office. Building on Hale’s work, I examine first, the role of elite defections in those leadership changes and the role of elites in general, on leadership continuity in Georgia; and second, whether patronal presidentialism still influenced new cyclical changes of leaderships. After all, soon after the Orange Revolution, Ukraine no longer could qualify as a patronal presidential system because of the weakening of the president’s formal (and informal) powers (see chapter four), while Kyrgyz president retained his strong formal (and informal) powers (see chapter five). Furthermore, I examine if a “lame duck syndrome” is really a necessary precondition for elite defections to occur.

As I found, the factor of elite defections certainly played important role in the change and continuity of post-Color Revolution governments. However, elite defection for itself did not lead to the fall of leadership. It was the fragmentation of large coalitions overall, together with other factors, which contributed to leadership changes. Moreover, the factor of patronal presidentialism does figure in my research, as both Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments fell, regardless of the fact that the former no longer qualified as patronal presidential system, while the latter did. Moreover, “lame duck syndrome” is not essential requirement for elites to defect. As I show in chapters four and five, respectively, neither Ukrainian, nor Kyrgyz presidents were “lame duck presidents.” Nevertheless, elites defected anyway.

Prime minister in Ukraine created incentives that complicated the coordination of clientelistic networks around one power center. Specifically, in Ukraine’s case constitutionally divided power did split clientelistic networks (thus elites) mainly in two parts, coalescing them around two power centers, the president and the prime minister. Although, such an arrangement created policy paralysis as the two centers constantly fought each other for power, it also had democratizing effect on the Ukrainian political system. (In fact, Hale warns to keep in mind that “this study’s central claim is not that divided-executive constitutions automatically produce two separate clientelistic networks that will always compete and produce political openness…[but] that divided-executive constitutions produce incentives that (unlike presidentialist constitutions) significantly complicate the coordination of clientelistic networks around a single power pyramid” [Hale, “Formal Constitutions,” 604-605]). Nevertheless, Hale in these two works does not directly address the theme of leadership change and continuity.
2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, first I laid out two causal paths that my dissertation offers to explain the change and continuity of the post-uprising leaderships. I then reviewed different bodies of works which at certain degree are related to the theme of leadership change and continuity. Furthermore, I outlined existing boundaries within scholarly literature on leadership durability. As I illustrated, there is no single theory that can explain the causes of post-uprising leadership change and continuity. Nevertheless, from the reviewed works I have singled out a number of factors that influence leadership durability in general. I have used all these works to define the theoretical direction of this dissertation.

The empirical chapters of this study build on the above reviewed works or expand and challenge them and at the same time fill the existing gaps in academic literature on leadership durability. Those empirical chapters introduce a host of new variables such as the role of coalition size and cohesion, active opposition, the issue of executive power, and successful reforms—the variables that have not yet been used by scholars to explain leadership change and continuity. At the end, this dissertation offers one of the first systematic explanations of the causes of post-uprising leadership change and continuity. These explanations can lay one brick in the future theory building on post-mobilization leadership durability.

The next chapter now turns to provide historical background of Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia from the collapse of the Soviet Union to the Color Revolutions.
Chapter Three

Historical Background

3.1 Introduction

This chapter has several objectives. First, it outlines basic socioeconomic and political conditions in the three countries from the collapse of the Soviet Union to the Color Revolutions. Second, it shows the causes of change and continuity in post-Soviet political leaderships in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia before the Color Revolutions. Third, it reviews the processes leading to the Color Revolutions in each country.

Overall, this chapter argues that the unity of the ruling elite is the major factor governing change and continuity in pre-Color Revolution leaderships. So long as a leadership maintains unity and control over its ruling elites it stays in power regardless of existing socioeconomic conditions in a country. However, when leadership succession is in question, power struggles intensify, thus accelerating the defection of important elite members to the opposition. These were the conditions that caused leaderships to fall in what became known as the Color Revolutions.220

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220 This chapter’s main argument is in line with Hale’s (“Regime Cycles”) work, which holds that the Color Revolutions were the results of the succession struggles and consequent elite defections in “patronal presidential” systems of Ukraine Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia (see, Hale, [“Regime Cycles,” 137-138] for the definition of the “patronal presidentialism”). This chapter, however, does not argue that the existence of “patronal presidentialism” is a necessary precondition for the occurrence of succession struggle and accompanying elite defections.
3.2 Ukraine

Paradoxically, post-Communist, independent Ukraine’s first leader was a former chief Communist ideologue, Leonid Kravchuk. He led the country from July 1990, first as a Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (legislature) and after December 1991 as a popularly elected president.

In the aftermath of the economically and politically defunct Soviet Union, Ukraine’s leadership faced deepening socioeconomic and political crises. The country’s annual GDP fell dramatically after 1990, reaching almost -23 percent in 1994 (see Table 3).

Table 3. Ukraine’s annual GDP, 1990-1994

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<tr>
<td>GDP growth</td>
<td>-6.3</td>
<td>-8.4</td>
<td>-9.7</td>
<td>-14.2</td>
<td>-22.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>(annual</td>
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<td>percentage)</td>
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GDP per capita shrank by almost one third in 1990-1994 (see Table 4). Inflation stood at staggering 10,200 percent in 1993. The government either stopped paying salaries to public employees or paid them with irregular and long intervals, sometimes once in every six or twelve months.

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221 Ukrainian parliament declared the country’s independence on August 24, 1991. Three months later, 90.3 percent of Ukrainians voted in support of Ukraine’s independence in a popular referendum held on December 1, 1991 (Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 31).

222 Krushelnycky, 101.

223 Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 31-32.

224 Ibid, 38.

225 Krushelnycky, 103-104.
Table 4. Ukraine’s GDP per capita, 1990-1994

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<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (current USD)</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>1.490</td>
<td>1.418</td>
<td>1.258</td>
<td>1.012</td>
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Furthermore, Kravchuk’s presidency saw the rise of mass government corruption. Those with connections to the government had effective license to steal state assets or acquired millions of dollars in loans from banks that distributed state funds. Also, when Ukraine’s industries were privatized, those who paid bribes were able to buy enterprises cheaply. Oligarchic groups emerged in 1992 during Kravchuk’s presidency.

In addition to corruption problems, Kravchuk faced near constant political crises. Because the executive powers of president, prime minister, and parliament were ill-defined by the constitution, prolonged conflicts among these state institutions created power struggles that undermined Kravchuk’s administration. In this conflict, Kravchuk did not have a political coalition or a political party of his own to rely on. He simply kept former Communists in

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226 Krushelnycky, 104-105.


228 D’Anieri (“Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 79-81).
power\textsuperscript{229} and ruled through dividing, bargaining with the elite, and co- opted his opponents and various feuding clans.\textsuperscript{230}

Kravchuk’s failure to keep ruling elites under control facilitated his ultimate downfall. He faced a strong challenge from his former Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma (1992-1993) and powerful eastern Ukrainian clans that supported Kuchma. An intense economic and political crisis forced Kravchuk to call early presidential elections for summer 1994.\textsuperscript{231} He lost the elections to Kuchma.\textsuperscript{232} Hence, elite defection turned out to be a major factor that ousted post-Soviet Ukraine’s first leadership.

Like Kravchuk, Kuchma presided over a deep socioeconomic crisis. GDP continued to fall for five consecutive years. After 2000, however, the country’s economy began to grow thanks to the successful economic reforms that Kuchma’s new reformist Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko (1999-2001) implemented\textsuperscript{233} (see Table 5).

\textsuperscript{229} Although during Kravchuk’s rule power was firmly with former Communist Party officials, he shared some high ranking posts with national-democratic leaders and reform democrats (Adrian Karatnycky, “The Fall and Rise of Ukraine’s Political Opposition: From Kuchmagate to the Orange Revolution,” in Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine’s Democratic Breakthrough, ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul, 29-44 [Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006], 30).


\textsuperscript{231} There is no evidence that Kravchuk called early elections under the pressure from eastern Ukrainian clans.

\textsuperscript{232} Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 36-38; D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 82.

\textsuperscript{233} On Yushchenko’s reforms see, Aslund (“The Ancien Regime,” 14) and Wilson (“Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 45-48).
Nevertheless, ordinary Ukrainians did not feel economic growth. GDP per capita kept falling until 2000. It approached (although, did not reach) its 1992 level only in 2004 (see Table 6).

Moreover, corruption continued to be a major problem under Kuchma. Various oligarchic clans with close links to the president used bribery, direct theft, rent-seeking, and tax evasion to amass huge wealth in different sectors of the economy. Oligarchs controlled various state agencies and bought parliamentary seats for their factions.\(^234\) Sale of public offices was endemic not only in parliament but also at all levels of central and regional government. Bribery was a regular occurrence in daily lives of Ukrainians. In fact, corruption permeated all spheres and

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\(^{234}\) Aslund, in fact, calls Kuchma’s regime oligarchic regime (“The Ancien Regime, 9-26).
levels of bureaucracy and public services. Ukraine under Kuchma consistently ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world (see Table 7).

Table 7. Level of Corruption in Ukraine, 1998-2004

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<tr>
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<th>1998</th>
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<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<td></td>
<td>69th place out of 85 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>75th place out of 99 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>87th place out of 102 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>83th place out of 91 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>85th place out of 90 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>106th place out of 133 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>122th place out of 145 surveyed countries.</td>
</tr>
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Furthermore, the question of allocation of powers between executive and legislative branches of a government continued to destabilize Ukraine’s political system. Threatening parliament with dissolution, Kuchma coerced its agreement to increase presidential powers first with the 1995 “Law on Power,” and then with the 1996 constitutional reform. Nevertheless, this issue has not disappeared from the political agenda. On the one hand, leftist and rightist political parties continued to push for the increase of parliament’s powers. On the other hand,

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in 1999-2000, President Kuchma tried to increase his powers even more, but parliament never ratified Kuchma’s constitutional changes that would grant the president more authority.\textsuperscript{238}

In spite of dire socioeconomic and political conditions, Kuchma managed to stay in power for two full terms (1994-2004). He was able to keep the ruling elites--oligarchic clans and high ranking state bureaucracy--more or less united and relatively under his control, something that Kravchuk failed to achieve.

The so-called “Kuchmagate” scandal clearly demonstrated elite unity under Kuchma. One of Kuchma’s bodyguards had recorded hundreds of hours of audiotape. Oleksandr Moroz, the leader of the opposition Socialist Party, revealed tens of hours of these tapes in November of 2000. These tapes suggested that the President gave consent to the murder of opposition journalist Heorhiy Gongadze.\textsuperscript{239} Moreover, the tapes revealed the massive scale of power abuses, authoritarian methods of governance, electoral fraud, and corruption in which the regime was engaged. A loose opposition coalition, commonly referred as the “Ukraine without Kuchma” movement, launched street protests in December 2000 to depose the president. Protests lasted until March 2001. The scandal fundamentally discredited Kuchma domestically and internationally. Nevertheless, he managed to stay in power. Kuchma survived thanks to the fact that the ruling elites stayed with the regime and did not defect to the opposition.\textsuperscript{240}

\textsuperscript{238} On this topic see, Krushelnitsky, 181-182; D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 90-92; Kuzio, “Oligarchs,” 50; Kudelia, 167-175.

\textsuperscript{239} Gongadze disappeared on September 16. His beheaded body was found in November in woods south of Kyiv.

\textsuperscript{240} By the time of “Kuchmagate” protests the only former regime insider in the opposition was Yulia Tymoshenko, Vice Prime Minister in 1999-2000. She actually led anti-Kuchma protests in winter 2001, albeit only briefly. Also, as Wilson argues, the protest movement contested her leadership (“Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 59).
Yushchenko, then Prime Minister and future leader of the Orange Revolution, condemned the protests and sided with the regime.241

Nevertheless, as Kuchma’s second and final term neared its end, a succession struggle intensified and the ruling elites began to defect. First, Yulia Tymoshenko, a powerful oligarch who had been Vice Prime Minister for Energy (1999-2001) under Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko defected to the opposition in winter 2001.242 Then Yushchenko himself moved from regime insider to the opposition as well. After Kuchma and anti-reformist oligarchs dismissed Yushchenko from the post of a head of a government in April 2001, Yushchenko became a leader of anti-Kuchma opposition. He founded a political bloc *Nasha Ukraina* (Our Ukraine) to challenge the regime in the upcoming 2002 parliamentary and then in the 2004 presidential elections.243

Yushchenko gained strength when about 20 powerful businessmen who had close ties to the regime joined Our Ukraine. Furthermore, some high-ranking regime insiders such as Oleksandr Zinchenko (Chairman of the Parliament’s Freedom and Information Committee in 2000 and then First Vice Chairman of the Parliament in 2002-2004),244 Ivan Pliusch (Chairman

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243 In July 2007, the bloc reorganized itself into Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc. Nevertheless, this dissertation will keep referring to Our Ukraine with its initial name, Our Ukraine.

of the Parliament in 1991-1994 and 2000-2002), Yurii Yekhanurov (First Vice Prime Minister in 1999-2001), Roman Bezsmertnyi (President Kuchma’s Representative in the Parliament in 1999), Volodymyr Lytvyn (Head of the President Kuchma’s Administration in 1999-2002 and then Chairman of the Parliament in 2002-2006), and Anatoliy Kinakh (Prime Minister in 2001-2002), all gradually abandoned regime and moved to the growing opposition under Yushchenko.246

Yushchenko sought to build as broad coalition as possible to have a better chance of defeating the regime. And indeed he succeeded in building broad-based support that ultimately helped him to unseat the country’s leadership. However, the broad coalition that helped to oust the leadership turned out to be too large and fragmented to govern the country afterwards. Our Ukraine alone united about ten political parties and groups from left, center, and right of political spectrum. Moreover, powerful businessmen who joined Yushchenko made up three main groups with separate interests within Our Ukraine. These groups were Petro Poroshenko’s business empire (and his Solidarity Party); Yevheni Chervonenko and his business group; and a looser group that included powerful businessmen Davyd Zhvania, Mykola Martynenko, and Oleksandr Morozov.247

By the summer 2004 Yushchenko had made a pact with Tymoshenko, forming the People’s Power Coalition, commonly known as the Orange coalition. Tymoshenko brought

245 In fact, Ivan Plyushch served as a Chairman of the Parliament on three different occasions within above indicated years.

246 Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 61-64.


248 The pact included an agreement to appoint Tymoshenko a prime minister after Yushchenko’s alleged victory in the presidential elections (Karatnycky, “From Kuchmagate,” 36; Katchanovski, “The Political Realignment,” 10-11).
her own bloc with her to the Orange coalition, the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko (BYuT). It was an eclectic alliance with right-wing and populist ideological streak.\textsuperscript{249} The bloc united Tymoshenko’s own \textit{Bat’kivschyna} (All Ukrainian Union “Fatherland” Party; hereafter, Fatherland) Party, as well as the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party. BYuT also absorbed a faction of the nationalist Ukrainian Republican Party, the oligarchic party \textit{Yabloko} (Apple), another oligarchic faction from the For United Ukraine bloc, and many former Kuchma and Yanukovych loyalist MPs and businessmen.\textsuperscript{250}

By the second round of the 2004 presidential elections the Orange coalition added to its ranks Oleksandr Moroz’s Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU)\textsuperscript{251} and Anatoliy Kinakh’s Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs.\textsuperscript{252} The Orange coalition also incorporated the vocal student and youth organizations Pora and Znayu movements, as well as activists in independent trade unions.\textsuperscript{253}

For its part, the ruling regime was preparing for the leadership succession. In fact, the ruling elites engaged in a three-way strategy to keep power: first, to allow Kuchma to run for the third term despite the constitution’s clear prohibition of third terms; second, if the first option were not possible then to guarantee the election of one of their own elite groups who would continue Kuchma’s policies; and third, to changing the constitution to shift power from a

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{249} Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 64.
\footnotetext{251} Oleksandr Moroz actually ran in the 2004 presidential elections, and finished fourth in the first round. He eventually backed Yushchenko.
\footnotetext{252} Anatoliy Kinakh also ran in the 2004 presidential elections. He, however, garnered less than one percent of total votes in the first round.
\footnotetext{253} Kubicek, 329.
\end{footnotes}
president to a prime minister and a parliament, thus making the next president’s victory meaningless.\(^{254}\)

Kuchma’s attempts to run for a third term\(^{255}\) caused intense international criticism.\(^{256}\) Ultimately, Kuchma chose not to run and instead put forth the candidacy of Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych.\(^{257}\) The Prime Minister represented the interests of powerful eastern Ukrainian oligarchic clans. He led the Party of Regions (PoR), with formidable electoral and financial bases in the country’s east and south. The ruling regime also pushed for a constitutional proposal that would shift power from the president to the prime minister. By a slim majority parliament rejected the proposal.\(^{258}\) Nevertheless, the question of limiting a president’s executive powers stayed on the political agenda until the Orange Revolution.

As the 2004 presidential campaign unfolded, the ruling elites fought back by all means, even poisoning presidential candidate Yushchenko. The attempt nearly killed him and eventually left him badly disfigured. After the government massively falsified two rounds of elections, millions of Ukrainians took to the streets in the protest that has become known as the Orange Revolution. Eventually the regime compromised, arranging an unprecedented third round of elections in December. Yushchenko defeated the ruling elites’ candidate Viktor Yanukovych

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\(^{254}\) On this topic see, Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, 215-216.

\(^{255}\) Ibid, 217.

\(^{256}\) Kurshelnycky, 182-185.

\(^{257}\) D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 95.

\(^{258}\) Ibid, 96; Kudelia, 175.
with 52 percent of the votes against the latter’s 44 percent.²⁵⁹ Ukraine began the year of 2005 with the new leadership of President Yushchenko. President Kuchma’s rule was over.

In sum, against the background of severe socioeconomic and political crisis in the country Kuchma held on to power for ten years, two full presidential terms. He succeeded in doing so mainly because he maintained the unity of the ruling elites until well into his second term. In this sense, Kuchma fared far better than the first president Kravchuk, who after only three years in office was ousted by powerful elites led by his former Prime Minister Kuchma. Nevertheless, eventually Kuchma could not entirely escape Kravchuk’s fate. In the midst of the intensifying power struggle towards the end of Kuchma’s second term, large parts of the ruling elites defected to the opposition. Subsequently, Kuchma failed to transfer power to his handpicked successor. Hence, an incumbent leadership lost power. As the following section on Kyrgyzstan illustrates, the factor of elite unity played an equally important role in the change of pre-Color Revolution Kyrgyz leadership as well.

3.3. Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan, the first post-Communist, independent²⁶⁰ leader was also a former Communist, Askar Akayev.²⁶¹ He was a President of the Kyrgyz Academy of Science and the member of the Congress of the People’s Deputies of the Soviet Union before the Kyrgyz

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Akayev faced a profound socioeconomic crisis throughout his entire rule. Collapse of the Soviet Union and its unified economy had near catastrophic effects on the Kyrgyz economy. Soviet budget subsidies to Kyrgyzstan stopped and local enterprises were no longer able to access all-union markets. Subsequently, the country’s national economy went into free fall. In the years 1993 and 1994 Kyrgyzstan’s GDP shrank by 15.5 and 20.1 percent, respectively (see Table 8).

Table 8. Kyrgyzstan’s annual GDP, 1990-2005

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth (annual percentage)</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-7.9</td>
<td>-13.9</td>
<td>-15.5</td>
<td>-20.1</td>
<td>-5.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>-0.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth (annual percentage)</td>
<td></td>
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The economy began to recover slowly starting in 1996, but ordinary Kyrgyzs continued to live in crushing poverty. GDP per capita kept falling, reaching dismal USD 258 in 1999. It approached its 1993 level of USD 449 only in 2004 (see Table 9).


Moreover, President Akayev presided over a highly corrupt political regime. The president’s family and the clans close to the president controlled large segments of the economy, among them three main sources of the state revenues: gold, electricity, and foreign aid. Furthermore, the regime (and the family) engaged in the sale of government posts and other high level public offices. Corruption and theft penetrated all levels of state bureaucracy and public services and debilitated state institutions.\textsuperscript{265} Kyrgyzstan under Akayev ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world (see Table 10).

\textbf{Table 9. Kyrgyzstan’s GDP per capita, 1990-2005}

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (current USD)</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (current USD)</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Source:} The World Bank, “GDP Per Capita.”

\textbf{Table 10. Level of corruption in Kyrgyzstan, 1999-2005}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency International Corruption Perception Index.</td>
<td>Score of 2.2.</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Score of 2.1.</td>
<td>Score of 2.2.</td>
<td>Score of 2.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87\textsuperscript{th} place out of 99 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>118\textsuperscript{th} place out of 133 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>122\textsuperscript{nd} place out of 145 surveyed countries.</td>
<td>130\textsuperscript{th} place out of 158 surveyed countries.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Despite such critical socioeconomic conditions Akayev managed to maintain power from 1990 to 2005, winning a third term in 2000 in a clear violation of the constitution.\(^{266}\) Continuity of the Akayev’s leadership is explained by the fact that he succeeded in keeping his broad, informal coalition unified. This coalition included former Communist nomenclature, Kyrgyz intelligentsia, and major regional clans that yield significant influence in deeply clan-based Kyrgyz society.\(^{267}\) Akayev maintained balance by distributing political and economic resources among rival factions\(^{268}\) and decentralizing political power to regional administrative elites.\(^{269}\)

Akayev began to increase his presidential powers. In 1993, Kyrgyzstan adopted a new constitution that granted the president broad authority over the prime minister and the parliament, creating conditions for the president’s domination of the political system.\(^{270}\) As a result of constitutional amendments approved in the manipulated 1996, 1998, and 2000 national referendums, the president further expanded his powers at the expense of a parliament and a

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\(^{266}\) Actually, the president’s loyal Constitutional Court ruled that Akayev’s first term did not count, because it began before the adoption of the new constitution in 1993. Hence, the Court held, the president’s first term began in 1995, which made him eligible to run for another term in 2000 (Huskey, 85-86; Askat Dukencybaev and William W. Hansen, “Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan,” [Demstar Research Report No. 16, Aarhus University; American University of Central Asia, 2003], 30-31; Spector, 21). According to official results, Akayev won the elections with almost 85 percent of votes (Alisher Khamidov, “Akayev Wind Reelection Amid Fraud Claims,” Eurasianet, October 29, 2000, accessed February 16, 2014, [http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav103000.shtml](http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav103000.shtml)). The observers, however, deemed that elections failed to meet international standards (Huskey, 87).

\(^{267}\) On clans and clan politics see the seminal work of Collins. Also, Dukencybaev and Hansen, 25-26.


\(^{270}\) Dukencybaev and Hansen, 30. Overall, the new constitution was more liberal and democratic than the previous Soviet one. It divided the government into executive, legislative, and judiciary branches, established some checks and balances over the president’s powers, and put emphasis on human rights. Furthermore, it shifted some executive powers to the regional governors (oblast *akims*). Nevertheless, the president was enabled to appoint governors without the parliamentary oversight (Collins, 183). As Collins argues, the main problems with the constitution were the lack of clarity in the relationship between different branches of power and lack of experience and efficacy on the part of legislative branches to implement checks on the president and the executive branch (184).
prime minister. Through another fraudulent national referendum in 2003, Akayev won additional constitutional changes that granted immunity to the president and his family. Furthermore, the referendum confirmed that he could serve his term till 2005. As Akayev consistently increased his authority, the issue of limiting a president’s executive powers became one of the central demands of anti-Akayev opposition.

The succession question began to loom large and power struggles intensified near the end of the 1990’s. Akayev’s broad coalition crumbled and defections from the ruling elites accelerated. Akayev began to cut rival clans from economic resources and political power, favoring his entrenched family and closest clans in the country’s north at the expense of southern clans. As a result, prominent parliamentarians and public figures with close clan ties in the country’s southern regions united in anti-Akayev opposition, notably Azimbek Beknazarov, Adakhan Madumarov, Omurbek Tekebayev, Dooronbek Sadyrbaev, Absamat and Iskhak Masalievs, Bekturn Asanov, and Alisher Abdimomjunov. Moreover, former Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiyev (2000-2002), who belonged to one of the southern clans, joined the opposition.

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271 On the constitutional changes see, Dukenbaev and Hansen, 30; Engvall, “State Failure,” 31-32.

272 Dukenbaev and Hansen, 31.


274 Akayev himself belonged to one of the northern clans, called Sarybagysh.

275 Collins explains this by decreasing economic resources (245-250). This dissertation, however, holds that cutting off of rival clans and subsequent ruling elite disintegration was a result of intensified power struggle that emerged because of the looming succession question.

276 On disintegration of Akayev’s coalition and rising clan tensions see Collins, 245-249; Alisher Khamidov, “Kyrgyzstan’s Unrest Linked to Clan Rivalries,” Eurasianet, June 4, 2002, accessed April 16, 2014, http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav060502.shtml. 2002. Moreover, Akayev’s political position became even weaker after March 17, 2002. On this day, Police killed five anti-government protesters and wounded from 50 to 100 people in Aksy district of Jalal-Abad region. The protest was taking place in defense of
Akayev sidelined some northern clans as well. For instance, he sacked Askar Sarygulov, an influential representative of Talas clan, from the posts of the director of State Investment Committee, as well as State Property Fund. In addition, Akayev marginalized a highly influential former Communist functionary and member of the parliament Turdakun Usubaliev and his clan. As a result Usubaliev became Akayev’s outspoken critic. Moreover, Felix Kulov, a powerful northern clan leader, former governor of Chui Oblast and mayor of capital Bishkek, split with Akayev. Kulov formed his own Ar-Namys (Dignity; hereafter Dignity) political party and moved into opposition.277

In 2004-2005, anti-Akayev forces began to unite in a large and fragmented coalition, which lacked common platform. Its only unifying goal was to oust Akayev and his ruling elites. The core of this coalition was People’s Movement of Kyrgyzstan (PMK), founded in September 2004. PMK included nine political parties, some of them as diverse as Communists, Democrats, and nationalist Asaba (the acronym stands for Banner National Revival Party [Kyrgyzstan]; Hereafter, Asaba Party, because of its acronym) Party. PMK elected as its leader Kurmanbek Bakiyev, a former Prime Minister (2000-2002) from south. Bakiyev was a compromise figure among different groups and clans. These groups hoped that by electing politically weak Bakiyev they would be able to pursue their own agendas.278 PMK, however, served to create nationwide

Azimbek Beknazarov, one of the emerging leaders of the opposition. The crackdown caused a major political crisis in the country (on the Aksy events see ICG [International Crisis Group], Kyrgyzstan’s Political Crisis: An Exit Strategy; ICG Asia Report N37, [Osh/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2002]; Dukengbaev and Hansen, 7, 9-10, 33-34).

277 Collins, 245-247.

278 Azimbek Beknazarov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 11, 2011.
network of opposition elites by forging new ties and strengthening older ones. This way it channeled isolated outbursts of dissent into consistent wave of anti-government protest.  

Moreover, the anti-Akayev coalition included almost all of Kyrgyzstan’s major politicians and political parties: Omurbek Tekebayev and his Ata Meken (Fatherland) Socialist Party (hereafter, Fatherland Socialist Party); Almaz Atambayev and his Social-Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK); Felix Kulov\(^\text{280}\) and his Dignity Party, and Rosa Otunbayeva and her Ata-Zhurt (Fatherland, synonymous with Ata Meken Party. Hereafter, Fatherland Party).

In addition to these major political actors, crucial roles in the Tulip Revolution were played by other unaffiliated local politicians; NGO activists; civil and youth organizations;\(^\text{281}\) local businessmen; informal local patronage networks; and clans based on blood, friendship, and village ties.\(^\text{282}\) The powerful criminal world also joined the anti-Akayev cause, providing much needed financial resources and manpower to the March 2005 protests.\(^\text{283}\)

Public discontent reached a tipping point after the February 2005 fraudulent parliamentary elections, erupting in the south into street protests in support of the losing candidates. Demonstrations spread to the north, reaching the capital Bishkek by the end of March. The mass protests, known as the Tulip Revolution, forced Akayev and his family from power and out of

\(^{279}\) Radnitz, 138-139.

\(^{280}\) Felix Kulov was serving a prison term on politically motivated charges by the time of the Tulip Revolution. He was actually released from prison on the day of the revolt (see chapter five for details of Kulov’s biography).

\(^{281}\) Youth organizations such as, KelKel and Birge (Temirkulov, “Informal Actors,” 326; Marat, “The Tulip Revolution,” 13).


the country. Akayev’s rule collapsed with staggering speed. The opposition coalition immediately assumed power in the country.

President Akayev had maintained his unchallenged grip on power for almost fifteen years despite the dismal socioeconomic conditions that he and his administration faced. So long as Akayev managed to keep the ruling elites together he seemed politically secure. But Akayev’s hold on power started to look precarious when he began to marginalize some clans within the ruling elites. This key mistake alienated influential clans and political actors in the country. These disgruntled groups defected to the opposition and formed a broad anti-Akayev coalition, which ultimately contributed to his downfall. Hence, as in Ukraine in Kyrgyzstan as well, elite defection turned out to be the main factor that facilitated the change of pre-Color Revolution leadership. The next section on Georgia illustrates a similar pattern.

3.4 Georgia

Georgia was one of the few former Soviet republics whose first government did not emerge from the Communist Party bureaucracy. Nationalist bloc Round Table-Free Georgia, led by Soviet dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia, won the October 1990 parliamentary elections with landslide. Gamsakhurdia ruled the country first as a Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (October 1990-April 1991) and then as a president (April 1991-January 1992).

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285 Georgia declared independence on April 9, 1991 (Areshidze, 23).
286 Round Table-Free Georgia garnered 54 percent of votes and 155 seats out of total 250 (Darrell Slider, “Democratization in Georgia.” In Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and Caucasus, ed. Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 175; De Waal, 134; Areshidze, 19).
287 Thus the parliament.
288 Areshidze, 19; De Waal, 134.
289 Slider, 166.
Gamsakhurdia’s administration turned out short-lived due to the quick disintegration of his ruling coalition. Certainly, his government faced number of daunting problems such as rising ethnic tensions in separatist Abkhazia, a Russian-sponsored separatist conflict in South Ossetia, and a rapidly declining economy (see Table 11), all of which destabilized his administration.

Table 11. Georgia’s annual GDP, 1990-2003

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth (annual percentage)</td>
<td>-14.8</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>-44.9</td>
<td>-29.3</td>
<td>-10.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth (annual percentage)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
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Nevertheless, Gamsakhurdia’s real troubles began when his key allies Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani defected along with the National Guard.


291 Areshidze, 22; Zurcher, 90-92, 107; Slider, 171. For pro-Ossetian view of the conflict see, De Waal, 139-142. Post-Soviet Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan also had ethnic problems. Ukraine faced Russian separatism in Crimean Peninsula (President Kravchuk actually ended up granting wide autonomy to Crimea’s ethnic Russian-dominated local authorities to contain Russian separatism and retain the peninsula (see. Krushelnycky, 103), while Kyrgyzstan experienced mass ethnic riots in summer 1990 between Kyrgyzs and Uzbeks living in southern Kyrgyzstan (Spector, 6-7). Nevertheless, neither of these two ethnic issues turned into full-blown ethnic-separatist wars as in Georgia’s Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions. That is why previous sub-sections on Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan do not touch the issue of ethnic and separatist problems.

292 National Guard, in fact, was the whole of newly born Georgian Army.
in August 1991, depriving the president of an effective military force. Their defection galvanized Gamsakhurdia’s opposition which consisted of various marginal political parties, as well as pro-Russian former Communist nomenclature, intelligentsia, and criminal paramilitary groups, such as Mkhedrioni (Horsemen; hereafter, Mkhedrioni). Months of street protests since September 1991 turned into a civil war by December 1991. After two weeks of bloody battles in the center of capital Tbilisi, anti-government military forces overthrew Gamsakhurdia in January 1992. Ultimately, he fled to neighboring Chechnya. Georgian civil war continued in western part of the country.

A military junta formed the so-called Military Council to rule the country. The council consisted of Tengiz Sigua, Tengiz Kitovani, and Jaba Ioseliani, a former Mafia boss and leader of Mkhedrioni paramilitary group. As civil war raged and the country rapidly descended into chaos, the Military Council invited Eduard Shevardnadze, former Soviet Foreign Minister who then resided in Moscow, to return to Georgia and take over power. In March 1992, Shevardnadze returned to the country. In 1992-1995, he ruled as a Head of State, a

293 Zurcher, 93-94; Areshidze, 24; De Waal, 134.
294 The author’s field research in Georgia in December 2011-February 2012.
295 Areshidze, 24-25; Slider, 166-167; De Waal, 134-135; Zurcher, 94. In fact, Russian military openly backed anti-government forces. On this topic see for instance, Dimitri Shvelidze, Politikuri dapirispirebebi da ervonuli khelisuplebi damkhoba sagartveloshi [political rivalries and the ouster of the national government in Georgia] (Tbilisi, Georgia: Universali, 2008), 452-453.
296 De Waal, 134-135; Areshidze, 25; Slider, 166-167; Zurcher, 94.
297 Slider, 166-167, 181; Zurcher, 94.
298 On Ioseliani and Mkhedrioni see Slider, 165; Zurcher, 104; De Waal, 133.
299 Areshidze, 26; Zurcher, 94.
300 Gamsakhurdia and his supporters always accused Shevardnadze of masterminding an anti-Gamsakhurdia coup. His return to Georgia was a proof for them that Shevardnadze organized and led the coup in order to take over the power in the country.
special position that the parliament established for him.\textsuperscript{301} Starting in 1995 he governed as a president.

During Shevardnadze’s first few years in office, ongoing civil war and two Russian-supported separatist wars in South Ossetia (1991-1992) and Abkhazia (1992-1993) brought Georgia near to collapse. No other former Soviet republic experienced similar calamity.\textsuperscript{302} The country descended into a contemporary version of a Hobbesian state of nature: in the absence of effective state institutions paramilitary clans and mafias battled one another for power, armed gangs extorted money on the highways, traders hoped for more predictable racketeers, and normal wages fell below one dollar in a month, distributed in valueless currency. The state lost its influence over the country’s economy and the entire society lost the ability to rely on the state for their economic needs.\textsuperscript{303} The government was unable to deliver the most basic commodities, such as bread, causing long queues on the streets. Natural gas, water, and electricity outages were massive, sometimes lasting for days and weeks.\textsuperscript{304} Georgia’s economy simply collapsed, shrinking by 45 and 29 percent in 1992 and 1993, respectively (see Table 11). Georgia’s defeats in the South Ossetian and Abkhaz wars made matters even worse. Besides effectively losing control over the most parts of these two provinces,\textsuperscript{305} the country incurred over 20,000 civilian

\textsuperscript{301} Areshidze, 33-35; Zurcher, 97. From March to October of 1992 Shevardnadze ruled as a Chairman of unelected State Council (Areshidze, 26), or pseudo-parliament (as Slider calls it [188]), made up of Georgian intelligentsia, and representatives of over thirty parties and twenty social movements (Slider, 188).

\textsuperscript{302} One exception could be Tajikistan, because of its destructive civil war in 1992-1997.

\textsuperscript{303} See Nodia (Ghia Nodia, “Georgia’s Identity Crisis,” \textit{Journal of Democracy} 6, no. 1 [January 1995]: 105) for this concise summary of the situation in Georgia during the first years of Shevardnadze’s rule following Gamsakhurdia’s overthrow.

\textsuperscript{304} The author’s personal life experiences in Georgia, 1991-1995.

\textsuperscript{305} Until the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, in South Ossetia Georgians still maintained control over Akhalgori district and dozens of villages around capital Tskhinvali; in Abkhazia Georgians kept under their control Kodori Gorge, in the northeastern part of Abkhazia.
casualties and had to absorb more than 200,000 refugees as a result of the ethnic cleansings against Georgians.\textsuperscript{306}

Shevardnadze was scrambling to salvage his regime and consolidate power. With Russian military help he defeated Gamsakhurdia and his forces in 1993.\textsuperscript{307} Gamsakhurdia died in mysterious circumstances. The official version claimed suicide.\textsuperscript{308} Then Shevardnadze gradually sidelined Kitovani and Ioseliani, on whose paramilitary units he relied since 1992 to keep power and fight in the civil war.\textsuperscript{309} In 1995, Shevardnadze actually arrested Kitovani\textsuperscript{310} and Ioseliani, as well as Ioseliani’s Mkhedrioni.\textsuperscript{311} That same year Shevardnadze adopted the new constitution granting broad powers to the president,\textsuperscript{312} soon to be Shevardnadze himself. He in fact won the November 1995 presidential elections with 74 percent of the votes.\textsuperscript{313} In 1993, Shevardnadze

\textsuperscript{306} On war in South Ossetia see, Zurcher, 94-95. For pro-Ossetian view of the war see, De Waal, 142-145. On war in Abkhazia see, Zurcher, 96, 107-108; Slider, 172. For pro-Abkhaz view on the war see, De Waal, 157-164.

\textsuperscript{307} Areshidze, 28. Shevardnadze’s victory, however, happened at the cost of capitulation to Moscow. He joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (Georgia was initially opposed to join Russian-dominated commonwealth (Zurcher, 96) in October 1993, agreed to renew leases on Russian military bases, and accepted Moscow’s nominee as defense minister. In May 1994, Shevardnadze signed a Russian-mediated ceasefire agreement with Abkhaz separatists and agreed to deploy a Commonwealth of Independent States’ peacekeeping force, but in fact Russian peacekeeping military contingent, in the Abkhaz conflict zone. Furthermore, a United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) was established, which committed just one hundred unarmed monitors on the ground (De Waal, 164; Zurcher, 96-97).

\textsuperscript{308} Alexander Mikaberidze, Historical Dictionary of Georgia (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2007), 49.

\textsuperscript{309} Slider, 167, 187; Areshidze, 188; Zurcher, 106.

\textsuperscript{310} Zurcher, 97; Slider, 167.

\textsuperscript{311} Areshidze, 40-41; Slider, 167-168.

\textsuperscript{312} Areshidze, 36-40. Actually, on the inauguration day of the constitution, on August 24, Shevardnadze suffered an assassination attempt (Shevardnadze survived a car bomb attack in 1995. He survived a second assassination attempt in 1998, this time by Gamsakhurdia’s supporters, who attacked his convoy in capital Tbilisi). Shevardnadze and Georgian public blamed the Russian-backed Minister of National Security Igor Giorgadze, as well as Mkhedrioni leaders for this attack. Giorgadze, accused of organizing a terrorist act, fled to Russia and has lived there ever since. Moreover, Shevardnadze used this terrorist act to crush Mkhedrioni (Areshidze, 40-41; Slider, 167-168).

\textsuperscript{313} Slider, 189; Areshidze, 41; Zurcher, 97.
established his own political party Citizens Union of Georgia (CUG), which swept almost half of parliamentary seats in the November 1995 legislative elections. Consolidation of Shevardnadze’s power was complete.

When Georgia returned to some degree of normalcy in 1995 the economy consequently began to grow (see Table 11). Nevertheless, years of wars and anarchy had heavy political and economic legacies. Georgia emerged as a weak state. Formal structures of the state either ceased to exist or paramilitary and mafia groups corrupted them. After fighting destroyed most of the Soviet era infrastructure, criminal gangs and dishonest officials alike looted anything remaining. The government simply did not have means to rebuild. Even worse, the authorities still were unable to provide even the most basic public services: electricity, natural gas, running water, and healthcare. Regardless of some economic growth, Georgians lived under utter poverty with GDP per capita ranging from USD 569 in 1995 to USD 922 in 2003 (see Table 12).

Table 12. Georgia's GDP per capita, 1990-2003

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (current USD)</td>
<td>1.611</td>
<td>1.310</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (current USD)</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The World Bank, “GDP Per Capita.”

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314 CUG united former Communist Party nomenclature, intelligentsia, and some fractions of the Georgian national movement, such as Green Party and its leader Zurab Zhvania, the key figure in the Shevardnadze’s leadership (Areshidze, 35; Mitchell, 29).

315 Slider, 181-185, 189; Areshidze, 41.

Furthermore, Georgia under Shevardnadze experienced pervasive corruption, ranking as one of the most corrupt countries in the world (see Table 13). Government officials got rich by accepting bribes from business interests or stealing revenues and foreign assistance money.\(^{317}\) The sale of public offices was common practice.\(^{318}\) The president’s family and other business clans close to the president captured various sectors of the economy\(^{319}\) amassing huge wealth by bribery, tax evasion, and favoritism.\(^{320}\) Corruption penetrated all levels of state bureaucracy including the education system, healthcare system, and all other services. Overall, it was impossible to find a sphere of Georgian life untainted by corruption.\(^{321}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 13. Level of corruption in Georgia, 1999-2003</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency International Corruption Perception Index.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Score of 2.3.</td>
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<td>84(^{th}) place out of 99 surveyed countries.</td>
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Regardless of such dire socioeconomic conditions Shevardnadze managed to stay in power until 2003. This became possible because he was able to control and play against each other all the main informal and semi-independent power centers that had emerged in the country since mid-1990s. These power centers were 1) Shevardnadze and the state chancellery; 2) the Ministry


\(^{318}\) Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 105.

\(^{319}\) For instance, the president’s nephew Nugzar Shevardnadze owned fuel import business in Georgia, while president’s son-in-law George (Ghia) Jokhtaberidze owned the mobile communications company Magticom.


of Internal Affairs; 3) Adjara Autonomous Republic’s authoritarian ruler Aslan Abashidze; 4) the leadership of the parliament and “reformers” team; 5) selected businessmen; and 6) regional power brokers. 

This situation changed after the 2000 presidential elections as the looming succession question intensified the power struggle. Consequently, key ruling elite members began to defect and move into opposition. In 2000, major Georgian businessmen Davit Gamkrelidze and Levan Gachehiladze left CUG. In 2001, Gamkrelidze formed the opposition New Rights Party (NRP). In 2001, Mikhail Saakashvili, a key member of the “reformers” team and Minister of Justice, resigned. He formed his own National Movement (NM) political party. In the same year, the most influential member of Shevardnadze’s team, Parliament Chairman Zurab Zhvania stepped down to found an opposition United Democrats Party. In 2003, another Chairperson of the Parliament Nino Burjanadze moved into opposition. She joined Zhvania’s United Democrats, which Zhvania relabeled “Burjanadze-Democrats” (BD) to make use of Burjanadze’s popularity and name recognition, both greater than Zhvania’s own. The rest of the CUG split into different factions.

Various political forces saw the approaching November 2003 parliamentary elections as a test for the 2005 presidential election. As expected, the regime grossly falsified the legislative

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322 On the detailed description of these power centers see, Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 109-120.
323 President Shevardnadze’s second and final term in office would expire in 2005.
325 Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 128, 173. NM was backed by parliamentary faction “For Democratic Reforms.” The faction included ten MPs and was created to support NM.
326 Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 172-175.
elections. Resulting mass street protests began, and as these broke up, several parties united to form the Rose Revolution coalition: thus was the Rose Revolution born. The coalition was small and cohesive, consisting mainly of the alliance of just two major political parties whose political ideologies were hard to distinguish from one another: Saakashvili’s NM and Burjanadze’s and Zhvania’s BD.\textsuperscript{328} In November 2004, soon after the Rose Revolution, BD merged with NM, forming United National Movement (UNM) party\textsuperscript{329} under the leadership of Saakashvili. The merger further contributed to the cohesion of post-uprising ruling coalition.

The Rose Revolution coalition did include three small parties. NM made an alliance with Republican Party (RP) and Union of Patriotic Forces (UPF) in March 2002, forming single electoral bloc.\textsuperscript{330} Similarly, BD formed electoral bloc with the Union of Georgian Traditionalists (UGT) in September 2003.\textsuperscript{331} Nevertheless, these political parties were too few to affect the coalition cohesion.

Other major opposition political parties such as the Labor Party and New Rights Party refused to participate in the Rose Revolution, believing the protests futile and that Shevardnadze’s rule would continue until 2005. As Wheatley argues, had these parties joined the protests, the Rose Revolution leaders may have been forced to include them in a power sharing

\textsuperscript{328} The key similarities between these two parties were their belief in free market economic system and Georgia’s pro-western foreign policy orientation.

\textsuperscript{329} Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 204.

\textsuperscript{330} Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 174; Areshidze, 57.

\textsuperscript{331} Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 181; Mitchell, “Uncertain Democracy,” 52. Furthermore, as anti-government protests unfolded, one more small party, Ertoba (Unity), led by Soviet Georgia’s former Communist boss Jumber Patiashvili, joined the protests. Its participation, however, was temporary, lasting only for several days. Moreover, I found no evidence that Unity continued to participate in political processes after the Rose Revolution. That is why I do not include this party as a member of the Rose Revolution coalition.
deal after Shevardnadze’s ouster. Had that happened, a post-Rose Revolution political elite would be far more pluralistic than it was. Such a balance of powers could have easily led to fragmentation within the future ruling coalition. However, political developments did not take that direction.

As in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, in Georgia various civil society organizations played active role in organizing the Rose Revolution. The difference, however, between Georgia and those two countries is that most important civil organizations within the Rose Revolution coalition, Liberty Institute and Kmara (Enough), were aligned with the NM. Even more so, many qualified cadres from the Georgian civil organizations joined the post-uprising government, contributing to its further cohesion.

As street protests went on, Saakashvili quickly emerged as a leader of the Rose Revolution. On November 22, the angry crowed that he led stormed into the hall where the session of the newly elected parliament was taking place. On the next day, Shevardnadze

333 Ibid.
335 Mitchell, “Uncertain Democracy,” 54. There were some former coalition member civil organizations, for instance the Georgian Young Lawyers Organization (GYLA), which challenged the post-uprising government on multiple occasions. Its impact on the post-uprising ruling coalition’s fragmentation or cohesion, however, was not significant.
336 Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 200, 205. In Ukraine too, a part of Pora youth movement joined post-Orange Revolution pro-government political forces. Nevertheless, it was just a part of Pora. More specifically, Pora split into Yellow Pora and Black Pora. The former formed a political party Yellow Pora and joined pro-government political forces. Black Pora, however, formed separate movement. It demanded more radical reforms, posing challenge to the government (also discussed in chapter four). Thus Ukrainian civil organizations did not have an alignment similar to Georgian ones.
resigned. His almost 12-year-long rule was effectively over. The opposition coalition that spearheaded the Rose Revolution took power.

Overall, Shevardnadze lasted in office far longer than the first Georgian president Gamsakhurdia did. This was mainly due to the fact that Shevardnadze was more successful than Gamsakhurdia in keeping ruling elites united despite near-complete state collapse and persisting socioeconomic malaise in the country. Nevertheless, Shevardnadze eventually failed to maintain elite cohesion, as his former political partners left his team and some of them even turned on him to unseat the incumbent president. Subsequently, in Georgia, as in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, ruling elite disintegration brought down the post-Soviet leadership.

3.5 Conclusion

As this chapter illustrated, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia all experienced profound socioeconomic crisis after gaining their national independence amid the collapse of the Soviet Union. This crisis was characterized by mass impoverishment, pervasive corruption, and state weakness in all three countries.

It was against the background of such dire conditions that the post-Soviet governments fell or survived in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. Nevertheless, the key factor that contributed to the change or continuity of the pre-Color Revolution leaderships in those countries was the elite cohesion rather than the existing socioeconomic conditions. Regardless of the depth of the prevailing socioeconomic crisis, as long as the leaderships kept the ruling elites united, those

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339 In fact, this crisis began when these countries still were constituent parts of the Soviet Union. The crisis was the result of the overall crisis of the Soviet system.
leaderships managed to stay in power. If the governments could not maintain elite unity, then those governments fell.

Elite fragmentation was the main factor that facilitated the downfall of the Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian leaderships during the Color Revolutions. As the developments leading to the Color Revolutions showed, the post-Soviet Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian presidents failed to secure the unity of the elites during their final terms in office. Specifically, the looming succession question deepened the power struggle, which contributed to the large scale defection of the key elite members to the opposition. As a result, incumbents lost power.340

The following three empirical chapters on Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia, respectively, outline the causes of post-Color Revolution leadership change and continuity in these three countries. Those chapters also point out the differences between factors that contributed to change and continuity of the Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian leaderships before and during the Color Revolutions on the one hand, and the factors that contributed to the change and continuity of the Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian leaderships after the Color Revolution on the other hand.

340 In fact, these same incumbent presidents survived in the midst of catastrophic fall of their respective countries’ GDP’s in 1990’s (see tables 5, 7, and 10). Paradoxically, they lost power during the Color Revolutions in the first half of 2000s, when Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia all were experiencing from about five to 12 percent annual GDP growth (see, tables 5, 7, and 10). For the Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian incumbent leaderships the key difference between the 1990’s and 2000’s was the fact that in 1990’s they kept ruling elites united, while in the run up to the Color Revolutions they failed to do so and subsequently fell from power.
Chapter Four

The Case of Ukraine

4.1 Introduction

I met ex-president Viktor Yushchenko, internationally recognized leader of the Orange Revolution, in early spring 2012, in Kyiv, Ukraine, at the headquarters of his Our Ukraine Party. Since my research suggested that the breakup of the Orange coalition was the main facilitator of the processes that sealed President Yushchenko’s political fate, my first question pursued this.

He responded with concealed attentiveness:

The disintegration of the Orange coalition was unavoidable…it was not a united, cohesive body. [The coalition] was ideologically very diverse…it included 15-20 different political forces, with their own agendas and ideologies. The only thing that united these forces was their dislike of the government, which did not mean that they would stick together once they came to power…moreover, high personal ambitions and subsequent personal enmities among various members of the coalition simply broke down the possibility of any political dialogue within the new [coalition] government.\textsuperscript{341}

Although many Ukrainians have trouble believing anything that the highly unpopular ex-president says or does, his words here are hard to dismiss. The Orange coalition, the broad alliance of many disparate political groups, crumbled shortly after it ascended to power. Its collapse facilitated the political developments that then led to the demise of President Yushchenko himself. This chapter studies these political developments.

Ukraine’s case illustrates the impact of the independent variable, \textit{large, fragmented coalition or small, cohesive coalition}, on the three intervening variables; \textit{i.e., active or inactive}

\textsuperscript{341} Yushchenko, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 7, 2012.
opposition, presence or absence of politicized issue of executive power, and failure or success of reforms; and finally the impact of these intervening variables on the dependent variable, leadership change or continuity. Following this introduction, the chapter includes a section illustrating the emergence of an active opposition,\textsuperscript{342} as a result of the disintegration of the large, fragmented Orange coalition. This reactivated and reinforced opposition managed to destabilize President Yushchenko’s administration and ultimately ousted it. The third section illustrates how the large, fragmented coalition first limited the president’s executive powers and then politicized the issue of the president’s limited executive power to paralyze the country’s leadership and lead to its downfall. Section four describes how the large, fragmented Orange coalition failed to agree on what kind of reforms the new leadership should carry out or even if it should carry out any reforms at all. The failure to implement reforms led to the decline of state capacity, the drastic fall of President Yushchenko’s popularity, and his subsequent electoral defeat. Section five offers the chapter’s conclusion.

4.2 Active Opposition

The first key factor that facilitated the downfall of Yushchenko’s administration was the active opposition that emerged as his Orange coalition disintegrated. From the first months of coming to power, the Orange coalition suffered ideological and policy differences, power struggles, and deep running personal animosities among the alliance members. These differences created fertile ground for the fierce infighting that took the form of backstage deals; undermining of each other’s policy agendas in both government and parliament (see section 4.4); appointing

\textsuperscript{342} By opposition this dissertation refers to any political force (thus politician, political party or group) that opposes the president and his administration, even if this force shares part of an executive or legislative power with the president and his political forces.
loyal cronies in key government positions; and frequently accusing one another of mismanagement, corruption, and abuse of power; and even coup attempts.\footnote{343}{For instance, see Aslund, ‘The Economic Policy,” 340; Also, Roman Bezsmertnyi, interview by author, Kyiv Ukraine, March 2, 2012; Taras Chornovil, interview by author, Kyiv Ukraine, February 24, 2012; Evgeniy Chervonenko, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 19, 2012; Volodymyr Filenko, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 1, 2012; Irina Gerashchenko, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 6, 2012; Alyona Getmanchuk, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 1, 2012; Volodymyr Kurennoy, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, February 24, 2012; Igor Losev, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, February 27, 2012; Viktor Pynzenyk, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 16, 2012; Oleg Rybachuk, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 14, 2012; Borys Tarasyuk, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 5, 2012; Vera Ulyanchenko, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 7, 2012.}

The intense, regular conflicts took place between the president Viktor Yushchenko and his Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council Petro Poroshenko on one side and Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko\footnote{344}{President Yushchenko appointed Yulia Tymoshenko as a prime minister on January 24, 2005. The parliament approved her on February 4.} and her allies in the cabinet and the coalition, on the other side.\footnote{345}{For instance, see “‘Konets medogo mesiatsa’ novoi Ukrainskoi vlasti: Ukraina za nedeliu,” Information Agency Regnum (Hereafter, IA Regnum), March 25, 2005, accessed March 24, 2014, \url{http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraine/427641.html}; “Ministr iustitsii Ukraini obviniaet kabmin Tymoshenko v lobirovanii,” IA Regnum, March 29, 2005, accessed March 24, 2014, \url{http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraine/428984.html}.} Within a year of the Orange Revolution the ruling coalition began to disintegrate. Many of its members gradually moved into opposition. The September 2005 government scandal was the first major blow to the unity of the coalition, accelerating its disintegration.\footnote{346}{The first signs of the division within the coalition came as early as January 2005, barely a month after the coalition came to power, when its member major youth movement PORA split into two parts: Yellow PORA and Black PORA (Taras Kuzio, “Pora! Takes Two Different Paths,” Eurasia Daily Monitor 2, no. 23 (February 1, 2005), accessed March 3, 2014, \url{http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=27471&tx_ttnews[backPid]=176&no_cache=1#.VA2YEWPvZjI}. Originally, PORA represented the unity of these two factions. Their split, in fact, was the return to the original condition). In March 2005, Yellow PORA formed a separate political party with the same name and allied with Party of Reforms and Order (PRO, which was also falling off from the coalition [discussed below]) to run together for the 2006 parliamentary elections. Black PORA, on the other hand, formed a separate civic organization, challenging the government to implement more radical reforms (on PORA division see, for instance “Grashdanskaia voina vntrui ‘Pori’ (Ukraina),” IA Regnum, February 28, 2005, accessed March 9, 2014, \url{http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraine/413961.html}).} On September 5, Oleksandr Zinchenko, Chief of the President’s Administration,\footnote{347}{Equivalent of a Chief of Staff to a President of the United States.} alleged that President Yushchenko’s top aides were guilty of mass corruption, naming specifically Petro Poroshenko,
close Yushchenko ally and Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council. In a dramatic press conference, Zinchenko ominously declared that, “corruption and bribery again [were] gaining strength, in many cases exceeding their previous scale [under president Kuchma].” He resigned as of October 2005 to lead the opposition Party of Patriotic Forces of Ukraine. The damaging effect of Zinchenko’s revelations on the coalition’s unity widened in the following days. To contain the scandal and the raging conflict within the government, President Yushchenko dismissed Poroshenko, as well as Poroshenko’s (and Yushchenko’s own) main opponent, Prime Minister Tymoshenko and her cabinet. The president blamed the prime minister for the political conflict and economic slowdown. Tymoshenko and her powerful bloc BYuT quickly moved into opposition, becoming archrival to the president for the rest of his term in office.


352 After this split, Tymoshenko and her BYuT made temporary alliances with Yushchenko several times during Yushchenko’s term in office (for instance in 2006 and 2007). Moreover, Tymoshenko a number of times verbally expressed her readiness to mend ties with Yushchenko’s bloc and renew the Orange coalition. Nevertheless, the original Orange coalition never was restored after the initial split.
After the September 2005 split, the Orange coalition’s disintegration accelerated. In the same month, the Rukh political party left Our Ukraine’s parliamentary faction.³⁵³ Then in October another former partner of the coalition, Volodymyr Lytvyn, formed his own electoral bloc to run separately from the Orange coalition in the March 2006 legislative elections.³⁵⁴ Another defection occurred in June 2006 when Socialist Party leader Oleksandr Moroz, concerned that he would not have support from the entire coalition for his candidacy for Speaker of Parliament, also moved into the opposition.³⁵⁵

Instability within the Orange coalition and consequent defections from the alliance facilitated even more defections. In October 2006, Viktor Pynzenyk, former Minister of Economy (2005-2006) and the leader of the rightist Party of Reforms and Order (PRO) joined Timoshenko’s bloc BYuT.³⁵⁶ In March 2007, Anatoliy Kinakh, former Secretary of National Security and Defense Council (2005-2006) and the leader of the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (PIE), defected to the opposition, allying with the Party of Regions (PoR).³⁵⁷ In February 2008, Roman Bezsmertnyi, one of the leaders of Our Ukraine, left that bloc along with


³⁵⁵ In fact, Moroz’s Socialist Party participated separately in the March 2006 elections, as Moroz said back in March 2005 that it would do.


five other high ranking party members. Some of them established the United Center party in the following month. Furthermore, President Yushchenko lost support of powerful businessmen such as Yevheni Chervonenko and David Zhvania who had joined the coalition in the run up to the Orange Revolution. In February 2008, even the Chief of the President’s Secretariat Viktor Baloha left Yushchenko’s Our Ukraine bloc. Some regional governors followed suit. In December 2008, 37 MPs from Our Ukraine’s 72 member large parliamentary faction broke ranks with the bloc and in defiance of the president formed a parliamentary coalition with the BYuT and Lytvyn bloc (also discussed below and in section 4.3). At this point, the Orange coalition fully collapsed.

As the coalition disintegrated, President Yushchenko lost more and more of his political support base as members gradually defected and joined the ranks of the opposition. Consequently, after the September 2005 split in the Orange coalition Yushchenko faced an increasingly reinvigorated, active opposition.

It’s hard to underestimate the role of Ukraine’s active opposition in the downfall of Yushchenko’s administration. This active opposition was the critical force that constantly and


361 “Yushchenko wants to expel lawmakers who supported coalition,” IA UNIAN, December 17, 2008, accessed March 10, 2014, http://www.unian.info/politics/172703-yushchenko-wants-to-expel-lawmakers-who-supported-coalition.html). Yushchenko threatened to expel them from the party and deprive them of their MP mandates. Nevertheless, his threat never materialized. Some MPs were expelled from the party’s political council, but not the party itself.
fundamentally destabilized and undermined the president’s administration through battles in the parliament, cabinet, and courts (and sometimes on the streets). Had this force not existed, Yushchenko’s government would have remained stable and prolonged its term in office. The presence of an active opposition offered an alternative political force which attracted growing numbers of anti-Yushchenko voters. Or to put it another way, had the force of this active opposition not been present to harness popular discontent, the government would not have been defeated repeatedly in elections, including the 2010 presidential election. The rest of this section provides empirical evidence to demonstrate how the Ukraine’s active opposition constantly destabilized and undermined Yushchenko’s administration throughout its entire term in office and eventually succeeded in ousting him.

In the showdown with Yushchenko’s administration, all opposition coalesced around two major players: Viktor Yanukovych and his PoR and Yulia Tymoshenko and her BYuT. Yanukovych had been prime minister under president Kuchma. Although Yanukovych and the PoR falsified the vote in the 2004 elections, he nevertheless did not win the presidency. Despite this defeat, PoR maintained its formidable electoral base in the country’s pro-Russian eastern and southern regions, also retaining the financial backing of eastern Ukraine’s

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362 These two forces fought not only against the government, but also against each other. Sometimes they even made temporary alliances with one another. And at times, the Yushchenko administration reached out to one of them to make an alliance against another.

363 On this topic see, for instance, Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 105-155.

influential oligarchic clans. Consequently, before the disintegration of the Orange coalition, Viktor Yanukovych and his PoR already were arguably the strongest opposition force in Ukraine. BYuT, on the other hand, derived its strength from its growing party membership and high popularity of its leader Yulia Tymoshenko, who emerged as a national hero for her key role in the Orange Revolution.

Tymoshenko’s and BYuT’s departure from the coalition rapidly changed the government-opposition dynamics in the opposition’s favor, putting Yushchenko under pressure. Some sources claimed that the discontented Tymoshenko was even plotting to impeach the president. Without BYuT on his side, a weakened Yushchenko lacked votes to approve his new candidate for the Prime Minister Yuriy Yekhanurov. To break the deadlock, the beleaguered president made a move that was highly unpopular among his supporters: in September, he signed a pact with PoR’s leader Viktor Yanukovych. By this pact, in return for PoR’s support in confirming Yekhanurov, Yushchenko granted legal amnesty and parliamentary immunity to the leaders and the members of PoR who had organized the falsification of the 2004 presidential elections (also discussed in section 4.4).

365 Author’s interview with anonymous Ukrainian businessman, March 4, 2012. Also, IA Regnum, November 28, 2005.
367 Krushelnycky, 302-304.
368 Katchanovski, “Political Changes,” 372.
370 Katchanovski, “Political Changes,” 372. As it turned out later Yushchenko did not need PoR votes to confirm Yekhanurov (Kubicek, 334). Aslund, on the other hand, argues that Yushchenko could garner enough votes for Yekhanurov’s confirmation, but he decided to play safe and made a deal with Yanukovych (“How Ukraine Became,” 210).
The pact fully rehabilitated Yanukovych and his allies as a legitimate political opposition. As Igor Losev, a professor at Kyiv-based National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, stated in the interview, by striking a deal with the PoR leader, Yushchenko in fact, “granted a new life to Yanukovych…[and] made him [Yanukovych] as his equal political partner,” thus contributing to the PoR’s further growth and strength. Nevertheless, Yanukovych never actually gave parliamentary votes to Yushchenko, which the pro-western president needed to push for a new agreement on cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), or to implement reforms for joining World Trade Organization (WTO). Moreover, in January 2005, in violation of the September 2005 pact, the PoR parliamentary faction voted for the ouster of Yushchenko’s ally Prime Minister Yekhanurov and his government.

Infighting within the ruling coalition, its disintegration, and the unpopular agreement with Yanukovych continued to weaken Yushchenko’s position and strengthen that of the opposition. This fact is clearly reflected in the results of the March 2006 parliamentary elections. PoR and BYuT capitalized on growing popular disappointment with Yushchenko and delivered an impressive electoral victory. PoR won a plurality in the elections, garnering 32.14 percent (186 seats out of total 450 seats) of the total votes. BYuT came in second with 22.29 percent (129 seats) of national votes. President Yushchenko’s ruling Our Ukraine bloc could do no better than

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371 Losev, interview by author.

372 Kubicek, 334-335.

third place with just 13.95 percent (81 seats). Clearly, the opposition delivered a major blow to the president. Worse was yet to come.

From the March 2006 elections, a four-month long political crisis gripped the country as the opposition, now in control of parliament, effectively blocked Yushchenko’s efforts to form a government. Negotiations dragged on until June, when the remnants of the Orange coalition (Our Ukraine, the Socialist Party, and the BYuT) agreed to support Tymoshenko for prime minister if her BYuT supported Yushchenko’s ally Petro Poroshenko for Speaker of the Parliament. But as it turned out, Socialist Party leader Moroz, himself harbored ambitions for the speakership. Tymoshenko was ready to support Moroz’s candidacy too, something that President Yushchenko opposed, according to the interview with Oleh Rybachuk, the former Chief of the President’s Secretariat. As I show below, Moroz quickly found other allies to satisfy his ambition.

The PoR, on the other hand, pushed for its own agenda and was ready to exploit internal disagreements in the Orange coalition. The PoR wanted to hold on to the prime minister’s and parliamentary speaker’s portfolios. It also demanded leadership positions in certain parliamentary committees as well as governorships of the regions where it won elections. On June 27, PoR began to blockade parliament to prevent a vote on Tymoshenko’s nomination. Furthermore, PoR offered Moroz the post of parliamentary speaker if he supported PoR’s

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376 Rybachuk, interview by author.


378 Varfolomeyev.
candidacy for a prime minister. Moroz, eager to become speaker, broke ranks with Yushchenko and defected to so-called “anti-crisis coalition” of PoR and the Communists. In July, this coalition elected Moroz as a parliamentary speaker. The opposition coalition nominated PoR leader Yanukovych as a Prime Minister.

Initially, Yushchenko refused to recognize the constitutionality of the “anti-crisis coalition” and even implied the possibility of dissolving parliament. In response, the Yanukovych-led opposition staged popular protests in the streets, while on the legal front the Constitutional Court gave its consent to the coalition. Eventually, Yushchenko accepted Yanukovych’s candidacy after the two sides reached a written agreement called the Declaration of National Unity (known as “Universal”) that committed Yanukovych’s coalition to pursuing Ukraine’s pro-European foreign policy course and implementing reforms. In August, parliament elected Yanukovych as a prime minister.

Yanukovych’s election as a prime minister was a major setback for Yushchenko. Yanukovych never intended to stick to the agreement. He dedicated his stint in office to consolidating his power while undermining the president and other political opponents. First of all, Prime Minister Yanukovych gradually deprived the president of more and more executive

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379 There were allegations that PoR also bribed Moroz with USD 300 million to switch allegiances.


Then he took on the president’s allies in the cabinet of ministers (hereafter, cabinet), ousting Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk in December 2006. His cabinet started investigations and civil lawsuits against its political opponents, pressured regional media, closed down political talk shows on state television, and raided small businesses.

Yanukovych, however, did not stop there. In spring 2007, the PoR began an active campaign to bribe and recruit Yushchenko allies in parliament in order to achieve a veto-proof two-third majority of 300 MPs. As Borys Tarasyuk, former Foreign Minister, stated in the interview, “Party of Regions was buying out the deputies in the parliament like potatoes and they [PoR] were very close to create constitutional majority to oust him [President Yushchenko]…and to change the constitution to do whatever they wanted to.” Some Yushchenko supporters, among them most notably Anatoliy Kinakh, the leader of the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, defected to PoR. On April 2, 2007, the besieged Yushchenko reasserted his eroded powers by dismissing parliament. The country plunged into another long political crisis as the opposition battled Yushchenko in both the courts and the street, about the legality of the

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385 Kubicek, 334-335. Moreover, Yanukovych suggested delay of any talk of entering NATO and instead stressed the need of closer ties with Russia. Furthermore, Yanukovych rewarded his allies. For instance, he sold a lucrative power-producing enterprise to his main ally, powerful oligarch Rinat Akhmetov, and re-nominated his another loyalist to the post of the head of Central Election Commission (Kubicek, 334-335).

386 Chornovil, Losev, Tarasyuk, Ulyanchenko, interviews by author.

dismissal (see section 4.3 for details of this crisis). Ultimately, on May 27, Yushchenko and the opposition agreed to hold early legislative elections in September 2007.388

By the September elections the opposition had demonstrated its strength, thus reinforcing the existing balance among major political forces. PoR achieved a plurality 34.37 percent (175 seats) of total votes compared with BYuT’s 30.71 percent (156 seats) and President Yushchenko’s diminished Our Ukraine party’s 14.15 percent (72 seats).389

This time the win was not enough to install Yanukovych as prime minister since his coalition partner, the Socialist Party, failed to overcome the minimal electoral threshold. Nevertheless, Yanukovych and PoR remained a formidable opposition force. In October, Our Ukraine and BYuT agreed to form a coalition, albeit temporarily and with slim majority.390 In December 2007, parliament appointed Tymoshenko, another Yushchenko enemy, as a Prime Minister.391 The government entered new phase of crisis.

The period from early 2008 to the January 2010 presidential elections was dominated by debilitating conflict between Yushchenko’s administration and the opposition led by Tymoshenko and her BYuT. The confrontation between Tymoshenko and Yushchenko resumed several weeks after Tymoshenko re-assumed premiership. The president and the prime minister again began to attack and undermine each other on almost every domestic and foreign policy


The standoff was especially intense in the legislature. BYuT, PoR, and Communists physically blockaded the parliament, disrupting the legislature’s work, sometimes for weeks. For instance, in February 2008, the president could not even deliver his State of the State address because the parliament’s hall was blocked by the opposition MPs. By that time about 600 laws were registered but stalled in the legislature. Out of 151 envisaged plenary sessions in 2008, parliament held only 55.

Starting in September 2008, the opposition launched new attacks on the administration, plunging the country into another four-month long political crisis. On September 1, BYuT and PoR introduced a bill to make it easier to impeach the president. On September 2, BYuT, PoR, and Communists adopted the changes to “Law on Cabinet,” further limiting the president’s powers (see section 4.3 for details). In response, the president immediately pulled his Our

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395 Tymoshenko, however, declared that these changes would apply to the future presidents, not the current one (“Tymoshenko ‘calms down’ Baloha saying his chief must not be concerned,” IA UNIAN, September 1, 2008, accessed March 12, 20114, [http://www.unian.info/politics/141722-tymoshenko-calms-down-baloha-saying-his-chief-must-not-be-concerned.html](http://www.unian.info/politics/141722-tymoshenko-calms-down-baloha-saying-his-chief-must-not-be-concerned.html).

Ukraine from the coalition with BYuT, dismissed parliament and scheduled an early election for December 7. The opposition, however, fiercely resisted President Yushchenko’s decision. "When every kopeck [cent] is accounted for…against the world financial crisis, spending [money] on a reckless election is nothing other than acting against the national interest… an early election is a disaster for Ukraine and there is no logic in financing it,” aggressively declared Tymoshenko. She refused to resign and the opposition-dominated cabinet and parliament refused to finance the early polls. The opposition challenged the president in the courts, leading to a ferocious judicial battle about the legality of holding early elections. After encountering fierce resistance as well as an increasing financial crisis in the country, in

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397 “Snap Election Called in Ukraine,” BBC News, October 8, 2008, accessed September 6, 2013, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7660058.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7660058.stm). Later, however, Yushchenko postponed election for December 17. There were speculations that the coalition collapsed because of the disagreement between the president and the prime minister over the 2008 Russian-Georgian war. The president strongly sided with Georgia, while the prime minister took more neutral position so as not to aggravate Russia and gain its support in the 2010 presidential election (on this topic see for instance, Tony Halpin, “Ukraine Government Teeters Amid President Yushchenko’s ‘Coup’ Claim,” Times, September 4, 2008). This dissertation does not share this view. It holds that the coalition collapsed because of the BYuT’s and PoR’s subversion of presidential powers.


399 “Tymoshenko Declines to Give Money For Early Ukrainian Poll,” RFE/RL, October 14, 2008, accessed February 12, 2014, [http://www.rferl.org/content/Tymoshenko_Declines_To_Give_Money_For_Early_Ukrainian_Poll/1329769.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Tymoshenko_Declines_To_Give_Money_For_Early_Ukrainian_Poll/1329769.html).


November-December the president dropped plans to hold early elections. President Yushchenko lost the standoff and the opposition won.

The opposition continued its onslaught. On November 12, the legislature dismissed Yushchenko’s ally Arseniy Yatsenyuk from the post of the Speaker of the Parliament. Furthermore, in December, the opposition eroded Yushchenko’s position within his own Our Ukraine party: 37 members out of his 72 member Our Ukraine’s parliamentary faction broke ranks with the party and formed a coalition with Tymoshenko’s BYuT and small parliamentary faction Lytvyn’s Bloc, led by Volodymyr Lytvyn. This new parliamentary coalition elected Lytvyn as a parliamentary speaker. Yushchenko opposed the formation of this coalition, but he was unable to prevent it. Overall, the already politically weak president emerged even weaker from this latest crisis. He failed to dismiss the opposition-controlled parliament and the cabinet, and lost the speakership of the legislature plus almost half of his parliamentary faction. The next year brought even more problems to Yushchenko.


405 IA UNIAN, “Yushchenko wants t expel.”


408 By this time BYuT and PoR were once again discussing the possibility of impeaching the president, holding early presidential and parliamentary elections, and elections of the president by parliament. On this last clause Tymoshenko did not agree then.
In 2009, as the presidential campaign officially kicked off, the opposition onslaught on the president’s administration intensified. They began by going after Yushchenko’s supporters in the cabinet and firing them one by one. In February 2009, parliament dismissed the president’s ally Foreign Minister Volodymyr Ohryzko. In June, the legislature fired another Yushchenko ally, Defense Minister Yuri Yekhanurov. At the same time parliament had pending opposition-introduced motions to dismiss the Minister of Justice, Minister of Culture, Minister of Industry, Minister of Agro-policy, Minister of Coal, and one Vice Premier. By mid-2009, the political chaos was so deep that the country was without a Minister of Defense, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Transport and Communication, and Minister of Finance.

Nevertheless, the opposition continued to undermine the president. By May-June, BYuT and PoR held talks to form a grand coalition. The main theme of the talks was the election of a

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next president by parliament. Such an outcome would allow Tymoshenko to stay as a prime minister and Yanukovych to become the next president without popular vote. The talks, however, collapsed as “Yanukovych withdrew from the negotiations in the last minute, fearing that Tymoshenko eventually would trick him and default on the agreement,” according to a Ukrainian businessman, close to those political developments.\footnote{Anonymous Ukrainian businessmen, interview by author; Also Losev, interview by author; Korduban; IA Regnum, June 5, 7, 12, 2009.}

By the end of 2009, Ukraine was in deep political as well as economic crisis.\footnote{On economic crisis, for instance see The World Bank, “The World Data Bank,” accessed July 15, 2013, \url{http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx}.} After almost five years of continuous conflict, the active opposition had managed to paralyze the work of Yushchenko’s administration. Naturally, the public blamed the country’s president for political paralysis. Yushchenko was so weakened that in October 2009, mere three months before the January 2010 presidential elections, his popular support stood at only 4.2 percent.\footnote{Razumkov Centre, “Sociological Poll,” accessed August 13, 2013, \url{http://www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/poll.php?poll_id=67}.} Well before the elections, in fact, the opposition’s constant subversion had destroyed Yushchenko’s chances of winning the second term.

Hence, obvious frontrunners of the 2010 elections were not the incumbent president but two major opposition candidates BYuT leader Yulia Tymoshenko and PoR leader Viktor Yanukovych. The president entered the race but earned just 5.45 percent of votes and was eliminated in the first round of the elections.\footnote{“CEC processed 100% of ballot papers,” IA UNIAN, January 20, 2010, accessed March 14, 2014, \url{http://www.unian.info/politics/314382-cec-processed-100-of-ballot-papers.html}.} After two rounds of voting Yanukovych won the elections with 48.95 percent of national votes.\footnote{Central Election Commission, “Vibori presidenta Ukraini 17 sichnia 2010 roku” accessed March 6, 2014, \url{http://www.cvk.gov.ua/vp_2010/}.} The opposition again prevailed.
4.3 Politicized Issue of Executive Power

The second factor that contributed to the downfall of Yushchenko’s administration was the politicized issue of executive power. To put it another way, the opposition managed to undermine and oust Yushchenko’s administration thanks to the 2004 constitutional changes that limited the president’s executive powers and increased those of the prime minister and parliament. As chapter three stated, prior to the Orange Revolution President Kuchma tried but failed to weaken the next president’s authority. The issue came back with a new force during the Orange Revolution. Mass street protests followed first two rounds of the rigged 2004 presidential elections. The Kuchma administration realized that election fraud would not work. In exchange for ending the political crisis (thus calling for the rerun of the second round) it pushed for the constitutional reforms that would limit the next president’s powers.

At that point, all major power centers within the ruling regime supported the curtailment of president’s authority. Among these power centers the key was President Kuchma (along with his office, or as it was called then in Ukraine, the Presidential Administration), who was the central arbiter among different ruling clans, skillfully playing them against one another. Other power centers, in fact, were powerful oligarchic clans that controlled various main state institutions. Among them the three clans were the most influential. One of them was the so called Kyiv clan led by powerful oligarch Viktor Medvedchuk.\textsuperscript{419} He served as a Head of President Kuchma’s Administration (during Yushchenko’s presidency the Administration was renamed President’s Secretariat) in 2002-2004. Medvedchuk wielded strong influence over the president and over

\textsuperscript{419} Besides Medvedchuk Kyiv clan was also led by another powerful oligarch Hrihoriy Surkis. In fact, this clan was sometimes referred to as Surkis-Medvedchuk clan. Surkis, however, did not occupy high positions in the government. Nevertheless, he (along with the rest of the clan) controlled various companies, among them Kyiv-based famous soccer club Dynamo. Because of the Kyiv clan’s control over Dynamo, the clan sometimes was also called Dynamo group (Aslund, “The Ancien Regime,” 17-18).
national policy making process in general. Medvedchuk also controlled government appointments in the Ministry of Interior and in regional administrations.\textsuperscript{420}

The second power center was the Dnipropetrovsk clan led by another powerful oligarch, steel magnate Viktor Pinchuk. He was married to President Kuchma’s only daughter and therefore had direct access to the president. A third power center was the Donetsk clan led by another steel magnate Rinat Akhemtov. The Donetsk clan’s representative Viktor Yanukovych, served as a Prime Minister in 2002-2004. Besides possessing huge financial resources and controlling key government institutions, these clans also had own oligarchic political parties,\textsuperscript{421} large parliamentary factions, and major TV channels.\textsuperscript{422}

Out of these four power centers, President Kuchma and the Head of the President’s Administration Viktor Medvedchuk were the most vocal and active in pushing for the constitutional changes. Right after the second round of the elections, Kuchma and Medvedchuk accelerated calls for constitutional reform. They soon launched talks about this issue with the Orange coalition, as the alliance was looking for ways out of the political turmoil. As demonstrations raged in the capital Kyiv in November-December, the government and opposition were engaged in intense negotiations over the question of curtailing the president’s authority.\textsuperscript{423} During these talks, the administration still was backed by large part of security forces, including the Interior Ministry troops, which did not defect to the opposition.\textsuperscript{424}

\textsuperscript{420} Aslund, “The Ancien Regime,” 16-18; Krushelnycy, 204-209.

\textsuperscript{421} Surkis-Medvedchuk’s Kyiv clan had (United) Social Democratic Party of Ukraine; Pinchuk’s Dnipropetrovsk clan had Labor Ukraine party; Akhmetov’s Donetsk clan had Party of Regions.

\textsuperscript{422} Aslund, “The Ancien Regime,” 17-21. On Akhmetov and Pinchuk also see Krushelnycy, 332.

\textsuperscript{423} Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, 220-221.

\textsuperscript{424} Krushelnycy, 304-353.
Yushchenko had always opposed limiting the president’s powers.\textsuperscript{425} Nevertheless, during the Orange Revolution he changed his stance and compromised. Scholars, politicians, and journalists long questioned why Yushchenko agreed to cut the president’s authority when, in fact, the mass protests had put huge pressure on the government and made the opposition’s victory feasible. Some scholars argued that compromise took place because the regime and the opposition, being engaged in a long confrontation, realized that they had reached a standstill which neither side could break without negotiating some agreement. Although the government made certain that its coercive and administrative apparatus (especially its special law enforcement units) did not defect to the opposition, the regime was still aware that it lacked “hard power” to impose the desired election outcome and defeat the challengers. The opposition also realized that its “soft power” – moral authority, power of its ideas, ability to mobilize people – had limits. These scholars hypothesize that the opposition, stretched thin, was unable to push for the complete surrender of the ruling elite.\textsuperscript{426}

While this argument may have some validity, it fails to offer the full picture. As my field research discovered, Yushchenko compromised with the government primarily because his large, fragmented coalition failed to give him the support necessary for preserving a strong presidency. The Orange coalition had always included political forces that wanted the next president’s powers curtailed. The primary force was Oleksandr Moroz and his Socialist Party which had

\textsuperscript{425} Kudelia, 174-175. Also see, D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 95-96.

\textsuperscript{426} Kudelia, 160-189. Also see, D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 51; Wilson, Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 148-149. Moreover, there certainly existed the possibility of violence from the regime, which also convinced the opposition to make a compromise (Chervonenko, interview by author; Petro Koshukov, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, February 18, 2012; Volodymyr Ohrzyko, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 7, 2012; Dimitry Potekhin, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, February 18, 2012; Rybachuk, interview by author; Tarasyuk, interview by author). Some, however, disagreed that coercive apparatus would obey president Kuchma’s orders (Taras Stetskiv, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 3, 2012).
pushed for limiting the president’s authority for years before the Orange Revolution. Moroz, who ran for president in 2004, won 5.82 percent of total votes in the first round. In the second round, he endorsed Yushchenko and joined the Orange coalition. Moroz’s alignment with Yushchenko certainly widened the latter’s support base. Moroz’s support, however, came with a caveat. Since Socialists wanted to limit the president’s powers, Yushchenko made an agreement with Moroz that Our Ukraine’s 100-member parliamentary faction would discuss and vote on constitutional reform before the end of the year.

Later when the regime pressed for limits on the next president’s powers Yushchenko ended up under double pressure, both from the government and from the Socialists. If he rejected this constitutional reform and defaulted on his agreement with the Socialists he could risk losing the almost six percent of electoral support that Moroz brought with him to the Orange camp. Six percent of the national vote may not seem like much, but in a tight race where Yushchenko received 39.90 percent of votes against Yanukovych’s 39.26 in the first round and then 46.61 against 49.46 in the second round, every percent mattered a great deal. Moreover, in the midst of the Orange Revolution Yushchenko needed the backing of the Socialists’ 20-member large parliamentary faction, especially against the background of a fragmented legislature where the

427 Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, 215-216.


429 For instance, see Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, 220; Roman Woronowycz, “Moroz, No. 3 in Presidential Race, Endorses Yushchenko,” The Ukrainian Weekly, November 14, 2004, accessed July 3, 2013, http://www.ukrweekly.com/old/archive/2004/460403.shtml. Krushelnycky states that Moroz agreed to support Yushchenko’s Our Ukraine (in exchange for supporting constitutional changes), not to actually join the coalition (266). This dissertation holds that the line of “joining” and “supporting” the Orange coalition is thin. The Orange coalition was not a formal alliance. It was a loose unity of various political parties and groups. Subsequently, this dissertation treats Moroz and his Socialist Party as parts of the Orange coalition because of their backing of Yushchenko.

430 For the 2004 presidential election results in all three rounds see, Central Election Commission of Ukraine, “On Elections.”
opposition did not even have a majority. With the third round still ahead and the opposition in parliament fighting to invalidate the fraudulent elections’ results, Yushchenko had to keep the Socialists’ electoral base and parliamentary faction with him at any cost, even if it meant giving up part of the presidential powers.

Besides Moroz, another supporter of limited presidential power was former Kuchma ally Volodymyr Lytvyn, Speaker of the Parliament, who had sided with Yushchenko during the Orange Revolution. In December 2004 Lytvyn offered to implement political reform which would transfer part of the president’s powers to the prime minister largely in line with the administration’s wishes. As he stated, such a constitutional change was one of the viable ways to resolve the political crisis.431

Moroz with his Socialist Party and Speaker Lytvyn were not the only political forces within the Orange coalition who sought to limit the president’s power. Yushchenko’s powerful business allies also supported curtailing the president’s authority.432 Political scientists who study post-Color Revolution Ukraine have completely overlooked the role of that group. As my research and interviews in Ukraine revealed, the businessmen within the Orange coalition feared that a strong president would limit their political and economic influence and therefore wanted to divert power from the president.433 The author’s interview with Taras Stetskiv, Viktor


432 Among them were such powerful businessmen as Davyd Zhvanya, Petro Poroshenko, and Mykola Martynenko (Stetskiv, interview by author). Some even argued that Yushchenko’s close ally, powerful businessmen Petro Poroshenko talked to president Kuchma at the height of the Orange Revolution, who offered him the post of prime minister and support of necessary parliamentary factions if Poroshenko backed constitutional changes (see Kost Bondarenko, “Naperedodni premieriadi,” Pravda, January 10, 2005, quoted in Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 160).

433 Stetskiv, interview by author. Also, author’s interviews with four anonymous Ukrainian businessmen who requested anonymity. Kyiv, Ukraine, February 25-March 10, 2012. Some even argued that majority of Yushchenko’s team supported limiting the president’s powers (Bezsmertnyi, author’s personal correspondence, March 28-April 3, 2014).
Yushchenko’s close political ally during the Orange Revolution, is very revealing in this regard. As Stetskiv stated:

[Yushchenko’s] friends…powerful businessmen… thought that it was dangerous when a president had as much powers as [president] Kuchma did. So they decided, let’s better do so that Yushchenko has less powers or he will become like Kuchma, nailing us to the ground. But, in fact, they were guided only by their own personal interest: they did not want a strong president…this was all clear…a weak president is always beneficial for oligarchs. 434

Hence, as the talks with the administration went on, Yushchenko’s business allies repeatedly demanded that he agree to limit the president’s powers in order to end the political crisis quickly.435 Consequently, during intense negotiations with the government Yushchenko lacked the backing of his entire coalition to retain a strong presidency and felt compelled to compromise. On December 8, 2005, after long talks among different political forces parliament adopted a constitutional reform bill known as “On Amending the Constitution of Ukraine.”436

When these constitutional changes went into force on January 1, 2006, they effectively turned Ukraine from a strong presidential-parliamentary to a strong parliamentary-presidential system.437 These changes gave the opposition the means to destabilize the president’s rule

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434 Stetskiv, interview by author. By oligarchs Stetskiv referred to Yushchenko’s ally powerful businessmen.

435 Stetskiv, interview by author; four anonymous Ukrainian businessmen, interviews by author.


437 The details of the constitutional changes required Ukraine to adopt a fully proportional electoral system with parties requiring 3 percent threshold to enter parliament. In addition, the agreement introduced “imperative mandate” that would cause the dismissal of deputies if they formally switched their party affiliations or failed to join a parliamentary faction of his or her political party (Kubicek, 327; D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 247-249; Some argued that by that time Yushchenko’s compromise was a minor issue as the president could get back his powers if he achieved victory in the March 2006 parliamentary elections (for instance, see Wilson, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 149). Yushchenko, however, lost the 2006, as well as all other elections and the issue of the president’s executive power became a major handicap for him.

The commission’s new constitutional proposals, to be adopted during Yushchenko’s term in office, envisaged returning to a presidential-parliamentary system with strong presidential powers, and creating the upper chamber of the legislature, to be staffed by president-appointed regional governors (Serhii Rakhmanin in Dzerkalo Tyzhnia, February 3, 2007, as quoted in Katchanovski, “Political Changes,” 361). Here, Katchanovski does not provide a title of this newspaper article. Consequently, I cannot refer to the title and hence, I refrained from entering that particular source on the bibliography. President Yushchenko submitted the new constitution to parliament in March 2009 (“Yushchenko vnes na rasmotrenia Verkhovnoi radi svoei proekt novoi konstitutsii Ukraini,” IA Regnum, March 31, 2009, accessed March 14, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1144261.html). Nevertheless, in the face of the opposition’s resistance to Yushchenko’s version of the constitution, the president never garnered enough political force to adopt this constitution via either referendum or legislative process in parliament.

On the other hand, limiting the president’s powers facilitated further actions on behalf of the opposition to weaken the president even more. For instance, in August 2006, Yanukovych’s cabinet deprived the president of the right to instruct the government. Moreover, the president no longer could change the cabinet’s decrees. Instead, he could only stop them and at the same time appeal to the constitutional court if he thought they were unconstitutional (“Pravitelstvo Ukraini izmenilo reglament v chasti zaimodeistvia s prezidentom,” IA Regnum, August 30, 2006, accessed March 14, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/696918.html). Moreover, in December 2006, the PoR-dominated parliament adopted so called “Law on the Cabinet of Ministers” (for the law, see “The Law on the Cabinet of Ministers,” Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, accessed March 12, 2014, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/anot/en/514-16) that even further increased the powers of the cabinet at the expense of the president. According to the new law, if the president did not nominate the prime minister within 15 days after the parliamentary majority proposed someone, then the parliamentary coalition, without the president, could nominate the prime minister. Moreover, the new law gave parliament the right to nominate the Minister of Defense and Minister of Foreign Affairs if the president did not do so within 15 days after the parliamentary coalition proposed a candidate for a prime minister. Furthermore, ministries became subordinate and accountable to the cabinet. Additionally, the cabinet acquired full administrative and financial control over state-owned businesses, enterprises, institutions, and organizations. The cabinet obtained the right to identify the main managers of funds of the State Budget and on its basis to develop the draft law on the State Budget for each year. Also, the law significantly expanded the cabinet’s powers over the regional governments. The cabinet acquired the power to guide and coordinate all the activities of the local state administrations. Heads of local state administrations became subordinated and accountable to the cabinet. The cabinet could now discuss issues related to the dismissal and appointment of the heads of local state administrations and make proposals to the president (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “The Law”). The president vetoed this law twice, but parliament overrode it both times with the help of Yulia Tymoshenko’s BYuT faction. The law went into effect on February 2, 2007 (Katchanovski, “Political Changes,” 362-363; Anders Aslund, How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy [Washington, DC.: Peter G. Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2009], 217-218. Eventually, parliament annulled most of the 2006 law in spring 2008 (“Verkhovna Rada prinila novuu redaktsiu zakona “O Kabinete Ministrov,” usilivaishie polnomochia presidente,” IA Regnum, May 16, 2008, accessed March 14, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1001305.html).

On top of these moves, in December 2006, parliament approved the “Law on Opposition” which could further weaken an increasingly unpopular president. According to this law, the opposition could form an opposition government (not a coalition government as the 2004 constitutional changes envisaged), lead 12 parliamentary committees, and staff the National Bank, National Council of Radio and Television, and Higher Council of Justice (“Ukrainski parlament zakonodatelnogo uregilirovanye deiatelnost pravitelstva,” IA Regnum, December 21, 2006, accessed December 21, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/759210.html). In September 2008, the opposition once again tried to further weaken the president constitutionally. On September 2, BYuT, PoR, and Communists in parliament adopted changes to the December 2006 “The Law on the Cabinet of Ministers,” according to which the cabinet acquired the right to appoint city mayors and regional governors (“Rada Clipping Yushchenko’s Wings by Reassigning Prosecutor General and Heads of Oblast and City Administrations,” ZIK, September 4, 2008, accessed March 2, 2014, http://zik.ua/en/news/2008/09/04/148874). The president was deprived of the right to reject a candidate for a prime minister, appoint the head of the State Intelligence Service. Also, the amendments facilitated the procedure for the president’s impeachment (Krasnolutskaya). Moreover, the president lost the power to dismiss Defense, Interior, and Foreign Ministers (Yuri Zarakhovich, “Why Ukraine’s Pro-Western Coalition Split,” Time, September 4, 2008, accessed April 3, 2014, http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1838848,00.html). As I have mentioned in the section 4.2, Tymoshenko claimed that these changes on impeachment would affect the new president, elected in 2010 (IA
permanently, leading to its ultimate downfall.\footnote{As constitutional changes shifted the political power from the president to the prime minister and parliament, the post of a head of a government became an ultimate price for the opposition forces, because its increased powers enabled them to undermine the president and promote their own political agendas. Actually, just before the March 2006 elections Tymoshenko stated that the post of the prime minister was worth fighting for because of the new constitution that deprived the president practically all of his powers (RFE/RL, \textit{Newsline}, February 29, 2006, as quoted in Hale, “Formal Constitutions,” 599-600. Here, Hale does not provide a title of RFE/RL news update. Consequently, I cannot refer to the title and hence, I refrained from entering that particular source on the bibliography).} First of all, the constitutional reform deprived the president of the right to appoint a prime minister and gave that right to parliament. The new constitution stated that the parliamentary factions were to establish a parliamentary majority within a month from the legislature’s first sitting and name a prime minister. Formally, the president had a right to nominate a prime minister, but only in agreement with a parliamentary majority. So in reality, parliament selected the head of the cabinet.\footnote{D’Anieri, “What Has Changed, 86; D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 244-245; Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, 221-226; Oleh Protsyk, “Ukraine” In \textit{The Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe}, eds. Sten Berglund, Joakim Ekman, Kevin Deegan-Krause, and Terje Knutsen (Northampton, USA and Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013), 732; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “On Amending the Constitution.”}

Such an arrangement would not be a problem for a president if his party held a majority in parliament because then he could easily nominate an acceptable candidate for a prime minister. Yushchenko’s Our Ukraine, however, never held more than 18 percent of seats (or 81 seats out of total 450), let alone a legislative majority in 2006-2010.\footnote{For the 2006 and 2007 parliamentary election results see, Central Election Commission of Ukraine, “Official Website.”} This meant that the president was entirely dependent on the opposition to appoint a prime minister. Consequently, the opposition could hold the president hostage: he could either accept the opposition’s candidate or precipitate a long and destructive political crisis.

This is precisely what occurred after the March 2006 and the September 2007 (early) parliamentary elections. The defeat in both of these elections put Yushchenko in a situation...
where he and his Our Ukraine had to form a parliamentary majority with one of the two winning opposition blocs: PoR and its leader Yanukovych or BYuT and its leader Tymoshenko and consequently, nominate one of them as a prime minister (see section 4.2 for these elections’ results). The alternative was protracted political standoff with the opposition. In 2006, a four month-long political crisis from April to August ultimately forced Yushchenko to nominate his political enemy Yanukovych as a prime minister. Again in 2007, Yushchenko avoided one more prolonged political crisis, but at the cost of nominating another archrival Tymoshenko as a head of the cabinet.\(^{441}\)

Thus the president lost the control over the cabinet. He had lost most of the control over the appointment and dismissal of the ministers and could now nominate only the Minister of Defense and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, both subject to parliament’s consent. The president could appoint and dismiss a Prosecutor General, but only subject to parliament’s approval.\(^{442}\) It was now the Prime Minister who had the authority to nominate rest of the ministers—as well as the Head of the State Committee on Television and Radio Broadcasting, the Head of the State Property Fund of Ukraine, and the Chairperson of the Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine. Parliament, however, still had to approve any nomination. The legislature also had the power to dismiss all these officials individually.\(^ {443}\) Moreover, parliament could impeach a Prosecutor General on its own initiative.

\(^{441}\) The aftermath of both of these elections is discussed in more detail in section 4.2.

\(^{442}\) Regarding other rights retained by the president: he could appoint and dismiss a Chair of the Security Service after submitting a proposal to parliament. The president could appoint and dismiss 50 percent of the composition of the Council of the National Bank, 50 percent of the composition of the Council of the National Television and Radio Broadcasting, and one third of the composition of 18-member Constitutional Court (see Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “On Amending the Constitution”).

\(^{443}\) On the constitutional changes see, D’Anieri, “Understanding Ukrainian Politics,” 145-146; 244-245.
Successive prime ministers used these constitutional additions to their power to further weaken the president’s influence over the cabinet. In 2006-2009, the cabinet and parliament fired two of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defense (see section 4.2). All of them were Yushchenko’s close political allies and appointees. On another occasion parliament delayed the issue of a vote of no-confidence against Prosecutor General Oleksandr Medvedko, whom Yushchenko had dismissed.  

The constitutional changes had shifted control over the cabinet’s policy making process from the president to the prime minister and parliament. The cabinet became subordinated and accountable only to parliament (which was usually under the opposition’s control during Yushchenko’s presidency). As a result, successive prime ministers and the cabinets set their own socioeconomic and political agendas that contradicted the president’s policies and undermined him. For instance, in August 2006, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych re-initiated the return of earlier abolished free economic zones, a policy that the president opposed. Furthermore, in February, 2008, Prime Minister Tymoshenko’s government unveiled an anti-inflation plan that, according to a statement from the president’s office, used administrative rather than market mechanisms and was not approved or agreed to by President Yushchenko.

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445 As the 2004 constitutional reform law states (see Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “On Amending the Constitution”) the government is responsible to the president (as well as to parliament), but not accountable or subordinated to the president.

446 These zones, in fact, were the heavens for tax evasion and were abolished by the government in 2005, as section 4.4 also mentions in one of its footnotes.


In response, the president frequently issued decrees to stop the cabinet’s policies and orders or challenged them in the courts, while parliament tried to override the president’s rulings. The whole process constantly brought the Ukrainian political system to a gridlock. Moreover, successive cabinets regularly produced state budgets that either ignored the president’s preferences for fiscal conservatism or did not envisage allocating funds for the president’s social or defense projects. As a result, the president often vetoed budget laws, while opposition-controlled parliaments overrode the veto. These chronic budget wars fundamentally disrupted the political system, leaving the country without a budget for months at a time.

449 The conflicts, however, occurred not only over domestic, but also over foreign policy. In fact, on several occasions, prime ministers directly torpedoed the president’s pro-western foreign policy course. For instance, in September 2006, pro-Russian Prime Minister Yanukovych refused to support NATO Membership Plan of Actions for Ukraine (“Yanukovych claims that National Unity Pact does not oblige him to support NATO Membership Plan for Actions,” IA UNIAN, September 15, 2006, accessed March 14, 2014, http://www.unian.info/world/16383-yanukovych-claims-that-national-unity-pact-does-not-oblige-him.html). Moreover, during the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, when president Yushchenko firmly supported Georgia, Prime Minister Tymoshenko, trying to court Russia in the run up to the 2010 presidential elections, stated that Ukraine should take more neutral position in this conflict (I have also discussed this particular disagreement over the 2008 Russian-Georgian war in section 4.2 in one of the footnotes).

450 On this topic see for instance, “Yushchenko opiat zablokiroval finansirovanie podgotovki k Evro-2012,” IA Regnum, September 4, 2009, accessed March 15, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1202553.html. At times Yushchenko successfully demanded inclusion of additional funds in the state budget for some social programs. For instance, one such a program which Yushchenko also supported was a program that gave one time payments to families for each child born after December 31, 2007. The government approved this program in February, 2008. Yushchenko also engaged in occasional streaks of populist (and destructive) economic policies such as wage increases in the middle of global financial crisis that hit Ukraine harshly in 2008-2009. Nevertheless, Yushchenko could not be considered as an economic populist. He always warned against increased spending, feared inflation, and consistently warned Tymoshenko’s government against it. On the other hand, Tymoshenko was a habitual big spender, pushing for populist economic policies. For instance, in 2008 she initiated several wage increases. In 2009, she introduced a law for seven hour work day and 35 hour work week. Moreover, Tymoshenko revisited the theme of Soviet-era bank savings. The cabinet began to return at least USD 200 to each Ukrainian citizen who lost their savings in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse. The entire program would cost USD 4 billion (“Yushchenko, Tymoshenko rivalry emerges onto public stage,” Kyiv Post, February 14, 2008, accessed March 15, 2014, http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/yushchenko-tymoshenko-rivalry-emerges-onto-public--28383.html). Although the president vetoed the bill earlier, this time he restrained openly opposing this highly popular policy. His administration, however, gave only lukewarm support to this program and offered to the cabinet occasional, but harsh criticism for unsatisfactory organizational work. Tymoshenko faced opposition over her fiscal policies even within her own team. Her political ally Finance Minister Viktor Pynzenyk resigned in the beginning of 2009, citing deep disagreements over economic policies with the prime minister. He warned of the economic collapse in the country (“Ministr finansov Ukraini podal v otstavku,” IA Regnum, February 12, 2009, accessed March 15, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1124216.html).

451 IA Regnum, “Yushchenko opiat zablokiroval.”
At that point the political situation in the country was so chaotic that even Prime Minister Tymoshenko complained about it, rightly blaming the 2004 constitution reform for the turmoil. She said that the 2004 constitutional changes “completely ruined the balance…between the government, president, and the legislative branches…[and as a result] we have a unique fact, when we ended up not just with two, but with three governments…” lamented Tymoshenko. Nevertheless, her acknowledgement of the cause of the problem did not ultimately mean that she and the opposition would no longer exploit the issue of the executive power. Subsequently, standoff within the government continued.

Frequent and intense conflicts occurred over the allocation of powers between the president and the prime minister in Ukraine’s oblasts (regions) too. The new constitution maintained the president’s authority to appoint and dismiss regional governors, but gave the prime minister power to oversee the implementation of cabinet’s policies, including in the regions. Such an arrangement created an uncomfortable overlap: the governors, appointed by the president, had to obey to the president’s rival prime ministers. This caused multiple standoffs between the president’s office and the cabinet. For instance, in April and May of 2008, Prime Minister Tymoshenko negotiated a new price with Moscow (BBC News, “Gas to Flow”). The government, as well as PoR, harshly criticized Tymoshenko for signing the agreement that they deemed unfavorable for Ukraine (I also discussed this particular gas deal in section 4.2 in one of the footnotes).

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452 Another cause of conflict within the government was natural gas prices. Specifically, after Russia cut-off gas to Ukraine as of January 1, 2009 over its gas debts, Premier Minister Tymoshenko negotiated a new price with Moscow (BBC News, “Gas to Flow”). The government, as well as PoR, harshly criticized Tymoshenko for signing the agreement that they deemed unfavorable for Ukraine (I also discussed this particular gas deal in section 4.2 in one of the footnotes).


Tymoshenko complained on other occasions too that the constitutional changes created overlapping powers between the president and the prime minister and formed two centers of executive power, so called dvoevlastya that made the governing the country very difficult (“Tymoshenko predlagaet ustranit libo dolshnost premiera, libo dolshnost prezidenta,” IA Regnum, March 1, 2008, accessed March 14, 2013, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/964639.html).


455 Bezsmertnyi, interview by author.
Minister Tymoshenko tried to oust five governors for failing to carry out the cabinet’s policies effectively. The president’s administration quickly fired back, stating that the prime minister had overstepped constitutional limits of her office. In June 2008, when the prime minister summoned those governors to reprimand them for their poor work, the president simply forbade all governors to attend the cabinet’s sessions from that moment.\(^{456}\) Such a boycott could only damage governors as they regularly found themselves at the mercy of the cabinet, which controlled the national budget.\(^{457}\) The result was a permanent stalemate.

Nevertheless, the president could not dismiss the hostile prime ministers and the cabinets, having lost that power as a result of the constitutional changes.\(^{458}\) Now only parliament could fire the cabinet. The president could get rid of an undesirable prime minister and the cabinet only by dismissing parliament and calling new elections. New elections would produce a new legislature and hence, a new cabinet and its head. The dismissal of parliament, however, could cause a ferocious and prolonged political crisis, bringing the entire political system to a standstill. In fact, this is exactly what took place twice during Yushchenko’s rule. In April 2007, the president dismissed parliament and called early elections to throw out Prime Minister Yanukovych, but his efforts gradually eroded his own powers. The opposition-controlled cabinet and parliament fiercely resisted. They challenged the constitutionality of the dismissal and the legislature appealed to the Constitutional Court. A ferocious judicial battle ensued.\(^{459}\) Furthermore, the


\(^{458}\) The president could only propose (to parliament) to examine the issue of the responsibility of the cabinet (see Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “On Amending the Constitution”).

\(^{459}\) In April and May, the president intervened and sacked the chairman of the Constitutional Court and two judges who were likely to rule that the dismissal was unconstitutional.
opposition employed street protests and even the Special Forces’ Berkut unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs which was under the cabinet’s control (according to the new constitution).\(^{460}\)

During this political crisis Yushchenko issued three various decrees about the dissolution of parliament. The political leadership came close to employing such measures as declaring a state of emergency, the declaring presidential rule, and using force to seize the legislature and the cabinet and to disperse mass actions of protest staged by the opposition.\(^{461}\) Eventually, the sides

\(^{460}\) This occurred in May, when the president sacked Prosecutor General Svyatoslav Piskun. The president said he dismissed Piskun for refusing to give up his seat in parliament which, as Prosecutor General, he was no longer legally allowed to hold. Piskun, however, claimed he was dismissed for resisting the president’s order to remove three Constitutional Court judges (“Ukraine Leaders Spar over Troops,” BBC News, May 25, 2007, accessed January 12, 2014, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6691371.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6691371.stm)). Defiant Piskun, accompanied by several MPs from PoR (Communist Party leader Petro Simonenko and supporters of PoR joined him later), attempted to use force to enter his own office. When the State Protection Department (SPD) resisted their entering, the Minister of Internal Affairs Vasily Tsushko supported Piskun, sending a Berkut unit of the Special Police Forces to his defense. Special Forces quickly captured the Prosecutor General’s Headquarters and evicted the SPD (Vladimir Solovyev, “Ukrainian State in Meltdown,” Kommersant, May 25, 2007, accessed March 15, 2014, [http://www.kommersant.com/p768566/Ukraine_crisis](http://www.kommersant.com/p768566/Ukraine_crisis)). Then Minister Tsushko blocked Yushchenko’s new appointee from taking the office and ordered the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (hereafter, Interior Troops) not to make any movements without his personal written approval (Maria Levitov and Julian Nundy, “Ukraine’s Interior Ministry Troops Moving Toward Kiev,” Bloomberg, May 26, 2007, accessed March 16, 2014, [http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a_r6ZboYQo7E&refer=europa](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a_r6ZboYQo7E&refer=europa)). In May, Prosecutor General’s Office (PGO) initiated criminal proceedings against Tsushko on charges of power abuse for his seizure of the PGO. In June, Pechersk District Court invalidated the resolution. PGO appealed the ruling. Eventually, Tsushko resigned in September 2007 (“Tsushko podal v ostavku,” Korrespondent, September 30, 2007, accessed March 15, 2014, [http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/politics/209688-cushko-podal-v-ostavku](http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/politics/209688-cushko-podal-v-ostavku)). Beleaguered Yushchenko issued a decree, trying to take over Interior Troops. The Prime Minister Yanukovych, however, fired back, criticizing the decree as unconstitutional (BBC News, “Spar over Troops”). Furthermore, parliament declared the decree illegal and the Ministry of Internal Affairs refused to carry out the presidential order. Nevertheless, Yushchenko still managed to march about 3,500 Interior Troops from the different regions to capital Kyiv. Traffic Police, however, blocked the entrance to the capital ("Partia regionov zaiavliaet, chto vnutrennie voiska iz regionov ushe pitaiutsia vekhat v Kiev," IA Regnum, May 26, 2007, accessed March 15, 2014, [http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukrainska/833835.html](http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukrainska/833835.html)). Nonetheless, Interior Troops did not have any lethal weapons during this march. When Special Forces and Traffic Police blocked the road, Interior Troops walked to the city ("Vnutrennie voiska poshli na Kiev peshkom. U nikh net ognestrnelogo oruzhia," Korrespondent, May 26, 3007, accessed March 16, 2014, [http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/events/191962-vnutrennie-vojska-poshli-na-iev-peshkom-u-nih-net-ognestrnelogo-oruzhiya-obnovleno](http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/events/191962-vnutrennie-vojska-poshli-na-iev-peshkom-u-nih-net-ognestrnelogo-oruzhiya-obnovleno)). Tensions defused after negotiations between the president and the prime minister (and as a result of negotiations, Yushchenko and Yanukovych actually agreed to hold early elections in September 2007; See Korrespondent, “Itog vstrechi”). Nevertheless, these events sent shockwaves across Ukraine and clearly demonstrated how vulnerable Yushchenko in fact was. It became clear that the use of force was possible and that the opposition had the capacity to use it.

agreed to hold elections in September 2007. Nevertheless, the crisis lasted for three months, reducing the entire political system to gridlock.

A similar situation occurred in September 2008. After BYuT, PoR, and Communist factions voted for further curtailment of the president’s powers, Yushchenko again dismissed parliament, this time in order to get rid of Prime Minister Tymoshenko, who had initiated the vote. As section 4.2 also shows, the opposition again stood its ground. Tymoshenko refused to resign and the cabinet and the legislature declined to allocate funds for the early elections. Moreover, the opposition once again challenged the president in the courts, causing intense judicial battles. Eventually, Yushchenko dropped plans to dismiss parliament and hold early elections. The political crisis, however, lasted for four months, paralyzing the entire political system once more (see section 4.2).

Overall, the 2004 constitutional changes that shifted power from the president to the prime minister and parliament had a devastating impact on Yushchenko’s administration. In fact, the increased powers of the cabinet and the legislature gave the opposition a platform from which they could undermine the president. And indeed, the opposition made a full use of it. As this section has illustrated, the political system had become largely dysfunctional due to the conflict between the president on one hand, and the prime ministers, parliament, and the opposition on the other hand. The political leadership was simply unable to execute power to govern the paralyzed country. As Dimitry Shukalo, an Ukrainian journalist, summed it up in the interview, “Ferocious, constant conflict among the key power-holders in the government has become a trademark of Ukraine for five years…this all-consuming conflict and intrigues made us feel that we did not have a government…” Consequently, the fall of Yushchenko became inevitable.

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462 Korrespondent, “Itog vstrechi.”
4.4 Failed Reforms, Leading to Diminished State Capacity and Popular Support

The third factor that created favorable conditions for the downfall of Yushchenko’s administration was the failure of the country’s leadership to implement reforms. It turned out to be an ominous failure. Ukraine’s Orange Revolution produced high hopes and widespread public expectations of far-reaching socioeconomic and political reforms to address the country’s multiple problems. Viktor Yushchenko himself, then opposition leader and the presidential candidate in the 2004 elections, contributed to such expectations. He promised to build effective state institutions and public services, establish the rule of law, and fight corruption. Hence, implementing the reform agenda was an important factor in creating suitable environment for the durability of the new leadership. Nevertheless, once the Orange coalition came to power it never managed to deliver on its promises.

During my field work in Ukraine, a large majority of my respondents—Ukrainian intellectuals, civil society leaders, businessmen, President Yushchenko’s long time political foes, as well as his former political allies—primarily blamed Yushchenko’s personal ineptitude and poor leadership qualities for failing to reform Ukraine. Most of them had only harsh words for the president; some of them very harsh indeed. “Absolutely talentless, very lazy, and too fake...he [is someone who simply] failed to be a strong...president,” is how Taras Chornovil,

463 Dimitry Shukalo, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, February 27, 2012.

464 On this topic see for instance, Taras Kuzio, “With or Without Baloha, Yushchenko’s Unelectable,” Kyiv Post, May 28, 2009, accessed July 22, 2014, http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/with-or-without-baloha-yushchenkos-unelectable-42373.html; Also, Viktor Yushchenko, “Programma kandidata na post Prezidenta Ukrainy Yushchenko Viktora Andreyevicha,” Viktor Yushchenko’s Official Website, 2004, quoted in Aslund (“The Economic Policy,” 337). Yushchenko’s election program was called “Ten Steps Towards the People,” which some consider (along with “14 Draft Decrees” that also was part of Yushchenko’s pre-election program) as a populist program (see for instance, Kuzio, “Yushchenko’s Unelectable”). Indeed, it may have some populist clauses, just as Yushchenko’s economic policies during his term in office had streaks of populism. But judging from his work as a president, it is hard to characterize Yushchenko as a populist politician.
former head of Viktor Yanukovych’s electoral campaign headquarters, described Yushchenko. Some evaluated the ex-president with even harsher words.

It soon became clear to me that livid assessments of President Yushchenko’s personal qualities by his former political partners or disgruntled rivals would not be able to provide me with a valid explanation why reforms were not implemented in Ukraine. After I have carefully traced political processes in the post-Orange Revolution Ukraine, an actual picture became vivid. As I illustrate in this section, the real cause of the failure of reforms was the sheer inability of the large, fragmented coalition to agree on what kind of reforms the government should implement, how it should implement them, or even to implement them at all. Absence of reforms then led to the bigger problems: it facilitated decline of state capacity, rapid loss of popular support, and the ultimate downfall of Yushchenko’s administration.

Nonetheless, in the beginning of Yushchenko’s rule things had looked promising for the coalition and the country. The new government’s so-called Action Program seemed to be the elaborate reform agenda which reflected Yushchenko’s pre-election program.\(^{465}\) Nevertheless, intense conflict over the reforms’ direction and content emerged within the first months of the new leadership’s term in office. Primarily, this conflict took place between the president and the prime minister, each backed by their political blocs.

One of the most contentious issues in the new government was the re-privatization of formerly state-owned enterprises which various oligarchic clans had acquired through flawed

\(^{465}\) “Programma deyatel’nosti Kabineta Ministrov Ukrainy: Posledovatelnost’. Efektivnost’. Otvetstvennost,’” Kyiv, Ukraine, 2005, quoted in Aslund, “The Economic Policy,” 338. Moreover, the government’s Action Program stood close to the United Nation-sponsored Blue Ribbon Commission’s 2005 report that identified five key areas in the need of reform: Reshaping political domain so that citizenry acquired effective control over state machinery; Making social transfers and creating effective health care and education; Overhauling the tax system and legal foundations of financial system to stimulate economic growth; Strengthening divisions between state and private enterprise to ensure the protection of property rights; and facilitating efforts to join World Trade Organization and European Union (Blue Ribbon Commission for Ukraine, Proposals for the President: A New Wave of Reform, [Kiev: United Nations Development Programme, 2005], quoted in Aslund, “The Economic Policy,” 338.
privatizations before the Orange Revolution. This issue was part of Yushchenko’s reformist program and pre-election promises and was highly popular policy with Ukrainian public. As the March 2006 parliamentary elections approached, all major political forces saw an opportunity to win votes by taking up this issue. Prime Minister Tymoshenko took the lead and Socialists in her government quickly allied with her. Tymoshenko demanded the re-privatization of 3,000 enterprises and criminal prosecutions of thousands of violators. President Yushchenko, however, preferred to limit re-privatizations to 30 companies. Heated disagreements about what to re-privatize and how to achieve the objective lasted for months. Overall, the government reversed only one re-privatization deal. The debate seriously damaged Ukraine, shaking investors’ confidence, freezing the ongoing privatization program.


467 Besides political opportunism, Tymoshenko was motivated by her belief in state capitalism: she supported not only re-privatization, but also renationalization of formerly state-owned assets, as well as state ownership of big enterprises and partial ownership of private enterprises.


and slowing the economic growth to 2.7 percent from the previous year’s 12.1 percent.\textsuperscript{471} In June 2005, President Yushchenko tried to end the re-privatization debate by introducing a memorandum guaranteeing property rights.\textsuperscript{472} Furthermore, he declared that no re-privatization would occur.\textsuperscript{473} Nevertheless, the damage was already done.

Other reform failures followed soon. President Yushchenko’s reformist agenda included abolishing the tax police, who were notorious for raiding private businesses. Prime Minister Tymoshenko, however, defied him, by insisting on more rigorous tax collection.\textsuperscript{474} In addition, Yushchenko’s promise of a balanced budget did not materialize either: Tymoshenko, with an eye on the March 2006 parliamentary election, actually raised salaries for all public employees by 60 percent, thus increasing public expenditures. She also refused to scale back pension hikes from Kuchma era.\textsuperscript{475}

Similar disagreements and intensifying conflicts within the ruling coalition caused the administration to abandon other initiated reform projects as well. For example, Vice Premier Roman Bezsmertnyi, who was in charge of implementing territorial-administrative reform,


\textsuperscript{471} The World Bank, “GDP Growth.”


\textsuperscript{474} Aslund, “The Economic Policy,” 346. Furthermore, the government postponed tax and social reforms. Instead of promised tax cuts, it actually eliminated tax reductions for certain industries (for instance, automotive). Moreover, In March 2005, the government enacted the law that obliged small entrepreneurs (applicable to about six million people) to pay value added tax in addition to keeping accounts of incomes that also would be taxed. This step caused public outrage which transformed into street protests. As a result, the government backed down and parliament reintroduced simplified tax schemes (Aslund, “The Economic Policy,” 345-346).

\textsuperscript{475} Aslund, “How Ukraine Became,” 205, 207. As Alsund states, the government’s early populist fiscal policies increased inflation to 15 percent in April 2005 in comparison to 8.2 percent in 2003 (“The Economic Policy,” 346).
recalled in the interview one such instance when he and his reform came under attack from Prime Minister Tymoshenko:

Territorial-administrative reform was very important undertaking for the country. It, in fact, meant the overhaul of the entire system of national governance… I remember this very well… Tymoshenko went against me ferociously… she stated that this reform could not go forward before the 2006 parliamentary elections, because the results of the reform would deprive the government power over regions and would require the redistribution of resources from central to local budgets just before the important elections. To undermine me, she even sent a letter or a report to the president about this matter… In other words, instead of implementing reforms, the people [in the government] fought each other… and this is how it happened in regards to all other reform projects…

Bezsmertnyi resigned in July, stating that the entire political power system in Ukraine was fighting against the president and making work impossible. Consequently, the administration gradually abandoned the reform. That same month, Yushchenko signed an order abolishing traffic police in lieu of reforming entire police system. But the government, being engaged in ferocious internal conflict, continually neglected its plans to create new patrol police and reform all law enforcement agencies. The government also initiated and then quickly abandoned its anti-corruption campaign.

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476 Bezsmertnyi, interview by author.


480 The government’s early anti-corruption measures increased budget receipts by 26 percent. Moreover, in the first months of 2005 customs duties increased by 50 percent (Taras Kuzio, “Ukrainian Economic Policy after the Orange Revolution: A Commentary on Aslund’s Analysis,” Eurasian Geography and Economics 46, no. 5 [July/August, 2005]: 359). Nevertheless, the government’s anti-corruption campaign lost momentum and allegations of corruption grew. One of the biggest among them came in September 2005, when Oleksandr Zinchenko, the Chief of Staff of
One of Yushchenko’s (and the Orange Revolution’s) main promises was to establish a rule of law, vowing to send “Bandits to Prison.” By this Yushchenko meant prosecuting Kuchma-era bureaucrats who were responsible for the 2004 presidential election rigging, as well as those involved in corruption, other power abuses, and crimes, including the murder of prominent internet journalist Heorhy Gongadze. The involvement of President Leonid Kuchma and other high ranking officials in these events was all but clear. Yushchenko further promised to rein in powerful oligarchic clans.

At the beginning of his rule, Yushchenko seemed to deliver on this promise. In the first nine months of the new government’s term in office, the Prosecutor General’s Office opened over one hundred criminal cases against those civil servants who participated in the 2004 election fraud. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Prosecutor General’s Office arrested or charged numerous officials. The President’s family was also implicated in corruption, including the president’s brother for his alleged dealings with gas transportation company RosUkrenergo (Kyiv Post, “Georgia Outshines Ukraine at Recent NATO summit in Riga,” December 20, 2006, accessed February 6, 2014, http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/georgia-outshines-ukraine-at-recent-nato-summit-in.html?flavour=mobile; Filenko, interview by author). On several occasions, the opposition and media implicated even President Yushchenko himself for halting the anti-corruption campaign (Roman Kupchinsky, “Ukraine: Battle against Corruption Grinds to a Halt,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, September 26, 2005, accessed February 2, 2014, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1061677.html).

Nevertheless, my research has found only unsubstantiated accusations, but no credible evidence of the president’s involvement in corruption.

Also, it has to be noted that the new leadership did implement some reforms. For instance, by June 2005, the government reduced the number of armed forces to 260,000 and took measures to strengthen civilian control over the military (Stephen F. Larrabee, “Ukraine and the West,” Survival: Global Politics and Strategy 48, no. 1 [Spring, 2006]: 101). Also, the president reduced military service from 18 months to 12 months (“Yushchenko sokrashaet armiu na 40 tisiach chelovek,” IA Regnum, April 3, 2005, accessed March 19, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/431863.html). The Presidential Administration was transformed into the Secretariat and recruited educated, reform minded outsiders. In addition, the government merged or abolished a great number of state agencies and cut the average number of deputy ministers from ten to three in each ministry. The government abolished all free economic zones, which were seen as schemes for tax evasion. The administration cracked down on smuggling, the campaign that eventually resulted into increased state revenues and lowered customs tariffs to liberalize legitimate trade (Aslund [“The Economic Policy,” 339-340; 345-346]; Aslund [“How Ukraine Became,” 205]). In addition, the government annulled 3,600 unnecessary regulations (Aslund, “How Ukraine Became,” 209). Most of these reforms, however, were too few, inefficient, or not pursued long enough by the government.

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President Yushchenko, accused Petro Poroshenko, Yushchenko’s ally and the head of the Defense and Security Council, as well as other high ranking officials, in mass corruption (discussed in section 4.2). On other occasions even the President’s family was implicated in corruption, including the president’s brother for his alleged dealings with gas transportation company RosUkrenergo (Kyiv Post, “Re-Privatization and the Revolution,” February 23, 2006, accessed February 5, 2014, http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/re-privatization-and-the-revolution-23911.html).

Krushelnycky, 129-167.
initiated criminal cases not only on charges of electoral fraud, but also on abuse of power, racketeering, and corruption against some former high ranking bureaucrats, most notably against the ex-governors of Donetsk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Transcarpathian regions.  

Nevertheless, Yushchenko never managed to fulfill his promise to establish an effective rule of law. The primary reason for this failure was the fact that while he was engaged in intense conflict within his own coalition, the president could not afford to launch a new fight either with Kuchma-era bureaucracy or with the powerful oligarchy. By doing so, he would on the one hand, simply stretch himself thin on different political fronts, and on the other hand, deprive himself of necessary financial and political support, particularly from the oligarchs. Consequently, the administration abandoned early attempts to prosecute corrupt and abusive Kuchma-era bureaucrats, many of whom moved in opposition to the new government after the Orange Revolution. Consequently, in September 2005, Yushchenko made a pact with the opposition (specifically with the PoR leader Yanukovych), granting amnesty to all those who organized and participated in the vote rigging during the 2004 presidential elections. In exchange, PoR faction in parliament promised its votes to approve Yushchenko’s candidate for the Prime Minister Yuri Yekhanurov (also discussed in section 4.2). Moreover, the administration failed to find (or decided to never reveal) the organizers of the high-profile murder of opposition journalist

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484 For instance see, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Corruption Watch.”

Heorhy Gongadze. To the public’s dismay, a years-long investigation launched by the new government fizzled into charges only for those who had actually carried out the assassination. Furthermore, the president did not pursue corrupt oligarchic clans, instead choosing to co-opt them and bring them into the government to counter his opposition. Also, president Yushchenko never attempted to root out corruption in the notoriously corrupt energy sector, as many of the oligarchs and corrupt bureaucrats were tightly linked to this sphere.

With the Orange coalition’s disintegration in September 2006, reforms lost momentum until the end of 2007 because of constant political instability. In September 2006, the president’s ally Yuriy Yekhanurov became prime minister. His government, however, was just a caretaker government to lead until the March 2006 parliamentary elections and so his cabinet initiated no reforms. Moreover, from March 2006 to December 2007 the administration and the

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486 Krushelnycky, 129-167; 355.


489 Shukalo, interview by author; Sushko, interview by author.

490 For instance, see Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Corruption Watch.” Some argued that Yushchenko received financial shares from this corrupt sector or at least was involved in it at some degree (Bohdana Kostiuk, interview by author, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 9, 2012; Losev, interview by author; Rybachuk, interview by author; Stetskiv, interview by author).

491 Yekhanurov, in fact, served as a prime minister until August 2007. Nevertheless, the period from March to August was a period of fierce political crisis which paralyzed the government. For instance, from March 16, 2006 to July 20, 2006 parliament did not adopt a single law (see “Laws of Ukraine,” Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, accessed March 25, 2014, [http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/en/annot/page11](http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/en/annot/page11)). One of the most important periods during Yekhanurov’s stint in office was the January 2006 Ukraine-Russia gas crisis. As of January 1, 2006, Moscow cut off gas supplies to Ukraine, accusing Kyiv of non-payment and diverting gas from the major pipeline running from Russia through Ukraine to European Union. In reality, Russia was forcing Ukraine to agree to pay higher prices. The government did negotiate a new deal with Moscow accepting higher price (“Ukraine and Russia Reach Gas Deal,” BBC News, January 4, 2006, accessed February 5, 2014, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4579648.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4579648.stm)). The opposition harshly criticized the government over this new gas deal.

opposition were engaged in two parliamentary election campaigns, near constant political crisis, and accompanying power struggles (see sections 4.2 and 4.3). Consequently, the government had neither time nor resources to implement reform.

By the end of 2007, reforms seemed to regain momentum. In October 2007, former Orange coalition partners, Our Ukraine and BYuT formed a new, although slim, coalition in parliament. In December 2007, the legislature elected opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko as a Prime Minister (see section 4.2). Tymoshenko, reenergized and fresh out of the eight-month long political crisis, promised far-reaching reforms.493

Nevertheless, her reforms never materialized either. Once again, the coalition quickly descended into permanent infighting. The president and prime minister, with their political blocs, began to clash constantly over almost every single reform initiative. One such conflict occurred concerning the privatization of state-owned enterprises, which Tymoshenko had returned to the political agenda with new intensity. This time, Tymoshenko wanted to privatize large state enterprises, but Yushchenko still supported the privatization of only some of them, while emphasizing their strategic importance for the government of others. Ultimately, the president blocked the cabinet’s decrees in January-February 2008 to sell certain enterprises494 and annulled the cabinet’s decisions on land privatizations.495


From the other side, the prime minister and cabinet undermined the president’s own reform agenda. For instance, the president’s military reform, which envisaged the reduction of the size of the armed forces, improvement of its combat readiness, and transfer to a contract system, came to a halt as the cabinet delayed transfer of necessary funds.\footnote{For instance, on this topic see “Yushchenko obvinil Tymoshenko v sabotashe perekhoda armii na kontrakt,” IA Regnum, September 19, 2008, accessed March 16, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/ld-abroad/ukraina/1057296.html.} In fact, in June 2009, the president acknowledged that military reform had failed and that it failed because the prime minister and the cabinet did not allocate enough finances in the state budget.\footnote{“Yushchenko v ocherednoi raz rasskazal , chto Ukrainkaia armia razrushena,” IA Regnum, December 3, 2009, accessed March 19, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/ld-abroad/ukraina/1231468.html.}

Furthermore, parliament often hampered the president’s legislative initiatives. For instance, by March 2008, parliament still had not acted to approve the president’s 12 various laws, stalled since fall 2007.\footnote{“Yushchenko trebuet ot Verkhovnoi Radi priniat 12 zakonov, kotorie eshcho oseniu bili oboznacheni kak “neotloshnie,”IA Regnum, March 17, 2008, accessed March 19, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/ld-abroad/ukraina/972468.html.} Similarly, as a result of the sheer lack of agreement among the coalition partners, the president’s renewed calls for a comprehensive anti-corruption campaign, territorial-administrative reform, judicial reform, and law-enforcement agencies’ reform never materialized either. On some occasions the prime minister and the president deliberately launched opposing reform projects that actually hindered each other’s activities. For instance, in 2008, Tymoshenko and Yushchenko both ran rival anti-smuggling programs, as well as competing government housing subsidy initiatives.\footnote{Kyiv Post, “Yushchenko, Tymoshenko Rivalry.”}

The conflict within the leadership was so profound that the government could not unite even when the global financial crisis hit Ukraine heavily in 2008, bringing the country to the
verge of financial default in 2009.\footnote{On Ukraine’s dire financial conditions see for instance “Yushchenko ‘absolutno uveren,’ chto Ukraine izbeshit defolita,” IA Regnum, March 25, 2009, accessed March 22, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1141899.html.} In May 2008, inflation reached 31 percent.\footnote{Aslund, “How Ukraine Became,” 229.} In 2009 alone, the country’s economy contracted by almost 15 percent\footnote{The only exception was Ukraine’s accession to WTO in May 2008.} but the government still failed to come up with a coordinated policy response to help the economy. In February 2009, the president and the prime minister could not even agree on putting their signatures together on a petition to International Monetary Fund (IMF).\footnote{The World Bank, “GDP Growth.”}

As Yushchenko’s term in office neared its end it was clear that his administration had failed miserably to address any of the country’s most pressing problems: tackling corruption, improving the rule of law, and reforming state institutions and public services.\footnote{“Yushchenko naotrez otkazalsia podpisat petitsiu Tymoshenko k MVF,” IA Regnum, February 25, 2009, accessed March 24, 2014, http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1129475.html. The government engaged in populist economic policies on the eve of the January 2010 parliamentary elections. For instance, President Yushchenko enacted 20 percent wage and pension increases against the objections of inflation, fiscal deficit, and unemployment. The situation was so difficult that the government had to take USD 16. 8 billion loan from IMF to cover the fiscal deficit. USD 11 billion of this loan was disbursed by July 2009. Nevertheless, IMF, frustrated with the government’s inability to get the budget under control, withheld a USD 3.5 billion installment to the country in December (Judy Dempsey, “International Monetary Fund Withholds $3.5 billion Loan to Ukraine,” New York Times, December 11, 2009).} As a result of failed reforms, Ukraine’s already weak state capacity declined even more. Scores in Government Effectiveness, Rule of Law, Control of Corruption, and Regulatory Quality all fell from 2004 to 2009.\footnote{I assess decrease or increase of state capacity from 2004 to 2009 for Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan and from 2003 to 2012 for Georgia. In other words, I assess decrease or increase of state capacity during the new governments’ entire terms in office. I realize that the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments simply had fewer years at their disposal to improve their respective countries’ state capacity than the Georgian government did. Nevertheless, this is the only way to measure the impact of the government’s performance on state capacity during its entire term in office, whether its term was short or long. Moreover, as table 1 shows, I provide data for 2010 as well, both for Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, even though, the post-Color Revolution Ukrainian government ruled just for one month in 2010 and the post-Color Revolution
showed some improvement (see Table 14). Nevertheless, even in these last two categories where the country showed some modest progress it still fell well behind in comparison with the rest of the world: in 2009, Ukraine with its Political Stability and Absence of Violence score of -0.31 stood between Sierra Leone (with the score of -0.30) and Nicaragua and Honduras (both with the score of -0.33). In the same year, Ukraine’s Voice and Accountability score of 0.03 set the nation between Mali (the score of 0.04) and Papua New Guinea (the score of 0.02).

Table 14. Ukraine’s state capacity, 2004-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government Effectiveness</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Law</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
<td>-0.77</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of Corruption</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>-0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Quality</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Stability and Absence of Violence</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice and Accountability</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The government’s failure to address Ukraine’s multiple problems was quickly reflected in widespread public disapproval of the country’s political leadership. As early as October 2005,

Kyrghyz government ruled just for three months in the same year. I do so to present the full picture of Ukraine’s and Kyrgyzstan’s state capacity in 2004-2010. Yet, I do not take the 2010 data into account, as just several months in 2010, spent under those two countries’ respective post-Color Revolution governments, cannot capture completely and accurately those countries’ progress of regress.

Source: The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators.” This dissertation deliberately does not use the three countries’ economic showings to assess their success and failure. This is due to the fact that all three countries experienced largely similar economic trends since the Color Revolutions: overall economic growth (in all three cases), and later crisis (in Georgia and Ukraine), and slowdown (in Kyrgyzstan). By 2008 poverty rates, however, Kyrgyzstan leads with 31.7 percent, followed by Georgia, with 22.7 percent and Ukraine with 2.9 percent (for instance, see The World Bank, “Data: Countries and Economies.”
barely one year after the Orange Revolution, Yushchenko faced mass street protests from the disappointed public.\textsuperscript{507} The president’s popular support began falling almost irreversibly immediately after he took office in January 2005. According to the Kyiv-based Razumkov Centre, the percentage of those who fully supported the president’s activities fell from 46.7 percent in February 2005 to 11.6 in April 2007 and further to 4.2 in October 2009. Meanwhile the percentage of those who did not support the president’s activities rose from 19.8 percent to 45.8 percent and further to 71.6 percent, in the same time period\textsuperscript{508} (See Table 15).

As the Razumkov Centre’s polls show, Yushchenko’s chances of winning a second term in the January 2010 presidential elections were already slim if not nonexistent by 2008, almost two years before the elections (see Table 15). In fact, in 2009, over 75 percent of Ukrainians thought that he should not stand in the elections.\textsuperscript{509} Nevertheless, he still entered the race. Catastrophic loss of public support logically led to his outright defeat and he won a mere 5.45 percent of national votes.\textsuperscript{510} Consequently, he was obliterated in the first round of the elections. Yet Yushchenko’s rule was effectively over even before the elections.


\textsuperscript{508} Razumkov Centre’s poll also provides the percentages of those who “support certain actions” of the president. However, this research is not particularly concerned for those numbers, but rather with the growing percentage of those who “Do not support”, which clearly reflects declining support for the president (see Razumkov Centre, “Sociological Poll,” 2013, accessed August 13, 2013, \url{http://www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/poll.php?poll_id=67}).

\textsuperscript{509} Kuzio, “Yushchenko’s Unelectable.”

\textsuperscript{510} Central Election Committee of Ukraine, ““Vibori presidenta Ukraini 17 sichnia 2010 roku.”” In fact, this was the first case in history when a sitting president garnered such a low percentage of votes. Yushchenko actually beat President of Slovakia Rudolph Shuster, who received 7.4 percent of votes in the 2004 elections (“Yushchenko voidiot v mirovoiu istoriu so svoim rezultatom na viborakh,” IA Regnum, January 17, 2010, accessed March 25, 2014, \url{http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/ukraina/1243308.html}).
Table 15. Ukrainian leadership’s popular support, 2005-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feb 05</th>
<th>Jun 05</th>
<th>Dec 05</th>
<th>Jul 06</th>
<th>Dec 06</th>
<th>Apr 07</th>
<th>Dec 07</th>
<th>Jun 08</th>
<th>Dec 08</th>
<th>Apr 09</th>
<th>Oct 09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully support</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not support</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Razumkov Centre, “Sociological Poll.”

4.5 Conclusion

The case of Ukraine serves as an example of how the independent variable—large, fragmented coalition— influenced the emergence of three intervening variables: active opposition; politicized issue of executive power; and failed reforms, leading to diminished state capacity and popular support. Consequently, these three intervening variables contributed to the downfall of Yushchenko’s administration. Specifically, the chapter illustrated how the large, fragmented Orange coalition failed to maintain unity and disintegrated. As the coalition collapsed, its members moved to the opposition, reinvigorating and reactivating it. The active opposition then managed to subvert Yushchenko’s administration during its full term in office, eventually ousting it.

Moreover, this chapter showed that the large, fragmented Orange coalition, in fact, prevented Yushchenko from maintaining strong presidential powers. Yushchenko’s compromise agreement on limiting presidential authority and expanding that of the prime minister and parliament turned out to be crucial. Successive heads of the cabinets from the opposition used the increased powers of the prime minister and parliament and the diminished powers of the president to obstruct Yushchenko’s every policy step and undermine his administration.
Furthermore, this chapter illustrated that the large, fragmented coalition was never able to agree on what kind of reforms the new government should implement, how to implement them, or whether to implement them at all. As a result, the political leadership failed to carry out any reforms. This failure led to the decline of state capacity, a dramatic fall of Yushchenko’s popular support, and his consequent defeat in the 2010 presidential election.

The next chapter will examine the similar case of Kyrgyzstan, where a different large, fragmented coalition played an equally crucial role in the downfall of a post-uprising political leadership.
Chapter Five

The Case of Kyrgyzstan

5.1 Introduction

On a cold and cloudy November day, I sat in the vestibule of Hotel Pinara in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, interviewing well-known Kyrgyz politician Azimbek Beknazarov, one of the leaders of anti-Bakiyev opposition in 2005-2010. As we both sipped our tea, Beknazarov recalled how the anti-Akayev Tulip Revolution coalition came to existence in November 2004 and how Kurmanbek Bakiyev, then former Prime Minister, became the alliance’s leader and then the country’s president. Beknazarov's voice reflected his disillusion:

We ourselves elected Bakiyev as a chairman of the coalition…we thought we would make him a leader of our movement and then of Kyrgyzstan, hoping that we, his team members, would be the ones pushing for and implementing constitutional reforms, social reforms, democratic reforms…we were sure we would be the ones doing all these.\(^{511}\)

Bakiyev, first alliance leader and then president of Kyrgyzstan, did not turn out so compliant as his coalition partners had thought and hoped he would be. Because of the resulting conflicts between Bakiyev and his partners, the Kyrgyz coalition began to crumble soon after it came to power. Its disintegration helped set in motion the processes that contributed to the downfall of the Bakiyev administration. This chapter sets out to examine these processes.

Kyrgyzstan’s case is similar to that of Ukraine. This case too demonstrates that the independent variable, a large, fragmented coalition, led to the three intervening variables;

\(^{511}\) Azymbek Beknazarov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 11, 2011.
i.e., active opposition, presence of politicized issue of executive power, and failure of reforms; and then these intervening variables helped produce the dependent variable, leadership change. After this introduction, the chapter’s next section shows how the breakup of the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition facilitated the emergence of an active opposition. This reactivated opposition played an important role in destabilizing President Bakiyev’s administration, eventually ousting it in a violent popular uprising. The third section shows how the large, fragmented coalition politicized the issue of the president’s executive power. The Kyrgyz coalition never succeeded in limiting their president’s authority to the extent that the Ukrainian coalition did. Nevertheless, after the Kyrgyz coalition disintegrated and moved into the opposition, it still managed to use the question of executive power to destabilize and ultimately overthrow the government. Section four illustrates how the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition failed to agree on whether or not the new administration should carry out any reforms. The failure to implement reforms led to the decline of state capacity and the severe loss of popular support for President Bakiyev. The question for the Kyrgyz opposition and public became not whether, but how to push the administration out of office. The Kyrgyzstan government had routinely falsified elections to the point that the electoral system was not even functional. The Kyrgyz opposition and public therefore had to seek more forceful ways of changing the government: Bakiyev was overthrown in a bloody popular revolt led by the opposition. Section five provides the chapter’s conclusion.

5.2 Active Opposition

As in Ukraine, an active opposition emerged in Kyrgyzstan due to the disintegration of the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition. This was the main factor contributing to the downfall of the
Bakiyev administration. Once in power, the new ruling coalition began to fragment quickly due to disagreements over key policy issues such as the curtailment of the president’s executive powers (discussed in section 5.3) and the new government’s reform agenda (or absence of it, therefore; discussed in section 5.4).

Major figures had various but similar reasons for moving to the opposition. In September 2005, President Bakiyev, irritated at Attorney General Azymbek Beknazarov’s rigorous anti-corruption campaign, simply dismissed him. Beknazarov, along with his Asaba Party, moved to the opposition. In the same month parliament failed to approve Rosa Otunbayeva’s re-nomination to the post of Foreign Minister. She too went into the opposition. In February 2006, Speaker of Parliament Omurbek Tekebayev resigned that post, adding to the opposition his Fatherland Socialist Party and harshly criticizing the government for corruption, mismanagement, and authoritarianism. In April 2006, Almaz Atambayev, the Minister of Tourism, Trade, and Industry, and the leader of Social-Democratic Party (SDP), resigned from the cabinet as well, condemning the government for failing to implement reforms and tackle corruption and nepotism. He too joined the opposition. In February 2007, Felix Kulov, Prime Minister and the leader of the Dignity Party moved into opposition after parliament twice rejected his re-nomination as a Prime Minister and President Bakiyev did not re-nominate him

512 Radnitz, 141-142; Tudoroiu, 334.


for the third time\(^\text{517}\) (see section 5.3 for details on Kulov’s fallout). The Kyrgyz coalition entirely collapsed.

The disintegration of the alliance created favorable environment for the emergence of an active opposition, as the opposition’s ranks swelled by the additions of prominent politicians and former high ranking members of the government. As early as spring of 2006, barely one year after the Tulip Revolution, the Bakiyev administration faced vibrant opposition\(^\text{518}\) as the active opposition launched nearly uninterrupted attacks on the government via mass protests. These street demonstrations helped the opposition destabilize the Bakiyev administration for the years to come, eventually ousting it via violent uprising in April 2010. The words of a former high ranking administrative official during the Bakiyev administration well summarize the destabilizing effect of the active opposition on the government:

Bakiyev spent two years constantly fighting the opposition’s demonstrations on the streets…it was complete instability. After this he made a mistake not to negotiate and strike a compromise with them [the opposition]. If he negotiated, he could have avoided his demise…he [Bakiyev] simply failed to contain and neutralize the opposition.\(^\text{519}\)

In the opposition’s showdown with the government the main power center within the ruling regime was President Bakiyev and his office, known as President’s Administration in Kyrgyzstan. Bakiyev also controlled two smaller power centers on which he relied for coercive power and financial resources. First, the president’s brother


\(^{518}\)Marat, “The Tulip Revolution,” 115-116. Kyrgyz political parties institutionally are weak with poorly developed party structures. Logically, anti-Bakiyev opposition parties had the same problems, on top of having such issues as the lack of financial resources and unity among themselves. Nevertheless, it will be wrong to assess the strength and effectiveness of anti-Bakiyev opposition based only on above listed factors. Its strength derived not from institutional prowess and abundant finances, but from its component political parties’ clan-based extensive patronage networks in the country’s regions that empowered opposition to mobilize its supporters, stage demonstrations in the capital, and destabilize the new regime and the country in general.

\(^{519}\)Former high ranking official within President Bakiyev’s administration (anonymous), interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 4, 2011.
Janysh Bakiyev and some other close associates were in charge of the Kyrgyz security services, specifically, the National Security Service (NSS)(See section 5.4 for more detailed discussion on this topic.) Second, the President’s other four brothers and his son Maxim Bakiyev controlled almost all legal and illegal businesses in the country (also see section 5.4 for more detailed discussion).  

In this power struggle with the government the opposition’s main rallying point was a demand for constitutional reform to limit the president’s powers and turn Kyrgyzstan into a parliamentary system (discussed in section 5.3). The opposition also demanded implementation of various socioeconomic and political reforms, including the launch of anti-corruption and anti-criminal campaigns. As the opposition realized that the government would not commit to any reforms, its aim gradually turned to the ouster of the Bakiyev administration.

In April 2006, the reactivated opposition formed the “For Reforms” movement. In April-May, the new movement staged mass demonstrations with thousands marching in the streets. When President Bakiyev rejected demands for reforms, the opposition dispersed and began to gear up for a new wave of protests for the coming fall. The

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520 Beknazarov, one of the opposition leaders, stated that Janysh and Maxim, in fact, were the leaders of two different clans and they bitterly fought each other for power (Beknazarov, interview by author). Another opposition leader Tekebayev, however, stated that there was no rivalry between these two groups. It was the government who was spreading the rumors about imagined rivalry in order to test the opposition (Omurbek Tekebayev, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 23, 2011).

Moreover, as my research found, it was widely believed in Kyrgyzstan that in the later years of Bakiyev’s presidency his son Maxim actually ruled the country. Even if this assumption is true, President Bakiyev still remained the main power center within the regime, setting its overall agenda.

521 The author’s interview with Beknazarov, interview by author; Temir Sariev, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 19, 2011; Tekebayev, interview by author.

Bakiyev administration’s nervousness about upcoming demonstrations showed in its blundering attempts to undermine the opposition. For instance, in September 2006, the government landed itself in an infamous heroin scandal when drugs were planted on opposition leader Omurbek Tekebayev in Poland’s Warsaw airport. The whole operation looked so crude and unsophisticated that Polish officials quickly realized that they were dealing with a set up. Subsequently, a Polish court released Tekebayev after two days, without any complications.\(^{523}\) The Kyrgyz public and opposition believed that the President’s brother Janysh Bakiyev, Deputy Chair of National Security Service, personally masterminded this conspiracy.\(^{524}\)

After this fiasco, the government tried to launch negotiations with the opposition in an attempt to avoid planned November protests. After the talks failed, the opposition began mass demonstrations in the capital on November 2, again mobilizing thousands of people. This time they upped their demands to include the resignations of President Bakiyev and Prime Minister Felix Kulov as well as constitutional reform. Though this attempt to dissolve the tandem that the two men formed back in May 2005\(^{525}\) (see section

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\(^{523}\) Tekebayev, interview by author. As Tekebayev stated in the interview, the package with the drugs smelled strongly of vinegar, a substance that usually attracts search dogs’ attention at customs. Apparently, whoever planted the drug deliberately sprayed too much vinegar on the package to attract search dogs to the smell. Polish customs officials quickly realized that someone who sought to smuggle drugs across the borders would not put vinegar on a package. Moreover, as Tekebayev stated, the package did not contain pure heroin. It was mixed with some other non-narcotic substances, one more proof that it was from Kyrgyz police, as Kyrgyz law enforcers often confiscate non-pure narcotics, which they retain and reuse for planting on other people, while putting back into circulation confiscated pure narcotics in order to make illicit money.


\(^{525}\) In September, parliament even ruled that Bakiyev-Kulov tandem was anti-constitutional. Overall, parliament, despite challenging the president on several occasions (see for instance, Radnitz, 140-141; Marat, “Drug Trade”),
5.3 on Bakiyev-Kulov tandem) did not succeed, the administration compromised after nearly a week of protests and clashes between the demonstrators and the pro-government forces.\textsuperscript{526} Both Bakiyev and Kulov stayed in power, but Bakiyev agreed to limit the president’s authority and adopted the new constitution.\textsuperscript{527}

He didn’t keep the agreement: less than two months after the November events, Bakiyev defaulted on his promises. On December 30, he used a threat to dissolve Parliament to coerce its consent to adopt a new constitution restoring the president’s powers.\textsuperscript{528} The opposition could not fight back at that time. Timing was all: as one opposition leader, Omurbek Tekebayev, stated in his interview, anti-Bakiyev forces simply could not mobilize people and take them out on the streets right on New Year’s Eve, the biggest holiday in the country. Bakiyev had caught them off-guard, picking the perfect time for his political revenge. (These battles about the president’s executive power and accompanying constitutional changes is discussed in details in section 5.3.)

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{526} According to the opposition, pro-government forces were made up of police, the members of the criminal world, and even foreign mercenaries (Anwar Artikov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 14, 2011).


\textsuperscript{528} Nichol, “Constitutional Crisis,” 3.
Nevertheless, the opposition made plans to push back, gearing up for new protests in April 2007. The country was about to enter the new phase of instability. This time the demonstrations were led by Felix Kulov, a former prime minister who had lost his post and moved to the opposition (discussed above). The opposition launched street protests on April 11, demanding revocation of the December constitution and the resignation of the president. After more than a week of protests and some clashes on April 19th, the government forcefully dispersed the demonstration.

In fall of 2007, Bakiyev capitalized on his April victory. On October 22nd 2007, he dismissed parliament and held new elections on December 16th. Bakiyev’s newly established Ak Jol (White Path) Party swept 71 of total 90 legislative seats in the election, which international organizations criticized for multiple violations and irregularities and the opposition condemned as entirely rigged. Moreover, on October 21 2007, the

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529 By this time, however, opposition was split. Almazbek Atambayev, Azimbek Beknazarov, and Rosa Otumbayeva left the “For Reforms” movement, disagreeing with the so-called radical wing, which demanded the president’s resignation, early presidential elections, and the formation of an interim government. They formed the United Kyrgyzstan movement. Azimbek Beknazarov stated that they actually did not trust Felix Kulov because they were convinced Kulov was bargaining with President Bakiyev, trying to make a backstage deal with him (Beknazarov, interview by author). Omurbek Tekebayev, on the other hand, stated that Almazbek Atambayev and Felix Kulov had personal problems between each other (Tekebayev, interview by author). Moreover, Edil Baisalov, former president of the Coalition for Civil Society and Democracy and one of the prominent members of the Kyrgyz opposition, stated that the part of the opposition, including himself, did not ally with Kulov and others because they feared civil war between north and south (Edil Baisalov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 22, 2011). In any case, Bakiyev intentionally further deepened the division within the opposition by appointing Atambayev as a Prime Minister in March 2007 (“Kyrgyz Parliament Approves Atambayev as PM,” “RIA Novosti, March 30, 2007, accessed April 23, 2013, http://en.ria.ru/world/20070330/62847978.html”).


president had held a referendum in which 76.1 percent of voters supported the Bakiyev version of the constitution that retained strong presidential powers (see section 5.3 for discussion on this topic). After years of tumult president Bakiyev appeared to have consolidated power. His reign, however, was not to last for long.

Although the Kyrgyz opposition temporarily stopped mass street protests as of 2007, it remained active. In December 2007, nine opposition parties and 10 civic groups formed the “For Justice” movement, which later established the so-called societal parliament (shadow parliament), a sort of public forum for the opposition. Moreover, in January 2008, Azimbek Beknazarov, one of the opposition leaders, established the Kyrgyzstan Revolutionary Committee with the sole goal of ousting the president. In fact, the opposition began to consider deposing Bakiyev by any means, even violent


means if necessary. (Reasons for the radicalization of the opposition are discussed in more details in section 5.3.)

In their efforts to depose the president, anti-Bakiyev forces started to make headway within the president’s administration itself. Opposition leaders were discussing the overthrow of the government with one of the most senior figures in the ruling regime Medet Sadyrkulov, highly influential Head of the President’s Administration. As Beknazarov stated in the interview, Sadyrkulov was even ready to contribute USD 10 million to a potential uprising against Bakiyev. In January 2009, Sadyrkulov resigned and moved into the opposition, making connections and working with various political forces and businessmen to overthrow the president. In March, he was found burned in a car with his driver and another political associate. Although the official version claimed it was an ordinary car accident, Kyrgyz opposition overwhelmingly accused the

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537 Beknazarov, interview by author; High ranking Kyrgyz security official (Anonymous), interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 7, 2011; Also see, Temirkulov, “Kyrgyz Revolutions,” 597.

538 Beknazarov, interview by author.

539 Also, former Minister of Defense and the Secretary of the Security Council Ismail Isakov began to criticize the government in 2008. He too resigned from his post and moved into opposition. In retaliation, the government brought three criminal charges against him. In January 2010, Isakov was sentenced to eight years in prison on politically motivated charges of corruption (Temirkulov, “Kyrgyz Revolutions,” 596; Ismail Isakov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 15, 2011).


government of murder, declaring that it was “a political assassination, customized accident… [to liquidate] a real threat to the existing regime.”

To defuse the political tensions exacerbated by Sadyrkulov’s death, Bakiyev called early presidential elections for July 2009. The elections, however, added to the overall political instability. Bakiyev won his second term with 87.7 percent of votes in the election that international organizations and Kyrgyz opposition again widely condemned as rigged. Although most of the opposition forces united to field a single presidential candidate, Social-Democratic Party leader Almazbek Atambayev, he withdrew his candidacy on the Election Day amid widespread election-rigging, harassment, and finally detention of one of his campaign managers. As future developments show, after the presidential elections the opposition simply waited for the right moment to launch a decisive attack on the government.

The opposition ultimately found such a moment in spring 2010. The anti-Bakiyev forces quickly capitalized on rising public discontent, caused mainly by failed reforms and worsening living conditions in the country. In the first week of April, part of the opposition flocked to the northern region of Talas to lead public protests there. On April 6, demonstrators captured the administrative buildings in Talas. The government, alarmed, moved quickly to try to demoralize and weaken anti-government forces. That night and early the next morning (April 7) the government arrested three key opposition

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542 Eurasianet, “Customized Accident;” Artikov, interview by author.

543 Beknazarov, interview by author.


545 Moreover, demonstrators detained local regional governor Beishen Bolobekov and captured and heavily beat the country’s Interior Minister Moldomusa Kongantiyev.

Djakupova, interview by author; Alikbek Jekshenkulov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 20, 2011; Sariev, interview by author; Asiya Sasykbayeva, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 22, 2011; Tokhtaim Umetalieva, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 19, 2011.} But the arrests failed to slow the opposition movement: middle-ranking, experienced activists of the opposition political parties rapidly took charge.\footnote{During my field research in Kyrgyzstan, I have encountered multiple conspiracy theories about why and who started the April 2010 events. Among those theories the most widespread was the one, pointing to the Bakiyev government for provoking the April 7 demonstrations in order to finally destroy the opposition and crash any popular resistance to the regime. I have not found any credible evidence, however, to back up this version of the April events.} On April 7, they organized a protest rally in the capital Bishkek in front of the headquarters of the Social-Democratic Party. Within hours, the rally had become a huge anti-government demonstration which soon swelled into a violent popular uprising. On the same day, protesting masses captured the government buildings with force and overthrew Bakiyev (See section 5.4 for the detailed discussion of the April 2010 uprising). The Kyrgyz opposition prevailed.\footnote{Except brief time period between November and December of 2006.}

5.3 Politicized Issue of Executive Power

Kyrgyzstan’s case also resembles Ukraine’s in the politicization of the president’s executive power, a key factor in the downfall of the Bakiyev administration. In Kyrgyzstan the new president’s authority was never curtailed as had been the case in Ukraine.\footnote{In fact, the question of constitutional reform to curtail president’s authority and turn the country into a parliamentary republic was a major rallying point of the anti-Akayev opposition before and during the Tulip Revolution.} Nevertheless, as this section demonstrates, the post-uprising Kyrgyz government inherited the contentious issue of presidential power limits from the previous government (also see chapter three).\footnote{550} Once the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition came to power it never agreed on how much executive

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547 Djakupova, interview by author; Alikbek Jekshenkulov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 20, 2011; Sariev, interview by author; Asiya Sasykbayeva, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 22, 2011; Tokhtaim Umetalieva, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 19, 2011.

549 Except brief time period between November and December of 2006.

550 In fact, the question of constitutional reform to curtail president’s authority and turn the country into a parliamentary republic was a major rallying point of the anti-Akayev opposition before and during the Tulip Revolution.
authority the new president should have. After the ruling coalition disintegrated and its majority moved to the opposition, the government and the opposition engaged in bitter conflict over whether or not to limit presidential powers and turn the country into a parliamentary republic. In other words, the opposition politicized the issue by making its main rallying point the question of curtailing the president’s authority. Demanding limits to presidential power and adoption of a parliamentary system of governance, the opposition used constant mass street protests to challenge the government, destabilizing both the country’s leadership and the entire political system. Between them, the government and the opposition produced more than a dozen versions of the constitution during this period, two of which were adopted and later revoked. By the end of 2007, the government prevailed, although temporarily, with its version of the constitution that retained strong presidential powers. Nevertheless, this question never went away from the political agenda: the opposition continued to rally around this issue, demanding constitutional reform. This problem increasingly destabilized the government until its violent downfall.  

The new government had considered the issue of executive power immediately after the Tulip Revolution. In April 2005, prominent Kyrgyz politicians and Kyrgyz civil society called for constitutional reforms.  

Interim president Bakiyev, however, opposed changes, voicing his support for the existing constitution.  

Nevertheless, parliament formed a 104 member

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551 It has to be mentioned, however, that Kyrgyz society at large did not care much whether the president’s powers would be limited or not. Nevertheless, this issue appealed to the Kyrgyz opposition, who rallied and united around this question. When the opposition staged street protests with the demand of the constitutional reform they, in fact, capitalized on the rising popular discontent caused by worsening living conditions and the government’s power abuses, not by the public’s desire for the parliamentary form of governance.


Constitutional Assembly (CA) in late April 2005 to draft new constitutional amendments. The number of CA members later reached 114 members. The Assembly consisted of MPs, wider civil society, political party leaders, and representatives from the various government institutions including the president’s own administration. Regardless of his opposition earlier, Bakiyev, in a televised address in April, promised that constitutional reforms would go on.556

Bakiyev’s change of rhetoric can be attributed to the fact that he was under double pressure from his coalition. First of all, almost the entire Tulip Revolution coalition strongly supported and pushed for limiting the president’s powers. Bakiyev, still an interim unelected president, could not oppose outright the whole coalition at that time. His victory was by no means certain in the upcoming presidential elections in July 2005. In the elections Bakiyev could face highly popular contender Felix Kulov, the leader of the Dignity Party.557 Had Bakiyev


555 In fact, on June 3, 2005, a working group of the CA adopted constitutional changes, which envisaged limiting the powers of the president and increasing that of parliament. Kyrgyz political parties and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) expected that that the president would sign the new constitution after which it would go into force in January 2006 (for these constitutional changes see for instance, “Konstitutsionnoe soveshanie rasmotrit okonchatelni variant proekta po novoi redaktsii konstitutsii KR,” AKIpress, June 3, 2005, accessed September 28, 2013, http://kg.akipress.org/news:20055.


557 Kulov declared his candidacy for president in April 2005 (Marat, “The Tulip Revolution,” 28; Nichol, “Coup in Kyrgyzstan,” 4-5. On Kulov’s popularity also see, “Sotsopros: F. Kulovu simpatiziruiut 52,2%, a Bakiyevu -18,3% bishhekchan,” AKIpress, April 12, 2005, accessed October 3, 2013, http://kg.akipress.org/news:18707). In fact, when the Tulip Revolution unfolded Kulov was in prison (as I have also mentioned in chapter three, footnote 69), serving seven year long sentence on politically motivated charges of corruption and abuse of official position, as sentenced by the Akayev administration, specifically by military courts. Kulov was one of the most prominent, if not the most prominent, politician in Kyrgyzstan. He served as the country’s vice-president in 1992-1993. Then he served as a governor of Chui region in 1993-1997, the Head of the National Security Services in 1997-1998, and the mayor of capital Bishkek in 1998-1999. When he moved into opposition against President Akayev the government arrested Kulov in 2000 and prosecuted him on above mentioned charges. In fact, Akayev administration tried to punish and neutralize Kulov for his political opposition (on Kulov’s biography see for instance “Background on Felix Kulov,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed January 5, 2013, http://kyrgyzstan.carnegieendowment.org/2010/06/background-on-felix-kulov/). While Kulov was in prison his party joined the electoral bloc People’s Congress of Kyrgyzstan with three other parties and named Kulov as its chairman (See, “Background on the Political Party Ar-Namys,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,”
spoken out strongly against curtailment of the president’s powers, the coalition would simply have backed Kulov instead of Bakiyev and limited Bakiyev’s chances of becoming president. So Bakiyev had to compromise on the constitutional reform question—at least verbally.

In April 2005, Bakiyev and Kulov launched negotiations to form a tandem to run on a joint ticket in the July 2005 presidential elections. Constitutional reform was one of the main conditions for forming Bakiyev-Kulov tandem. In May 2005, after weeks of tensions, deliberations, and negotiations the two finally agreed to run together.\(^{558}\) According to the agreement, Kulov would support Bakiyev’s candidacy in the upcoming July 2005 presidential elections. In exchange, after the latter’s assumed victory Bakiyev would appoint Kulov Prime Minister.\(^{559}\) Additionally, Bakiyev pledged to support constitutional reform that would transfer unspecified presidential powers to the prime minister.\(^{560}\)

But after Bakiyev secured his victory in the July 2005 presidential elections, he felt powerful enough to default on that part of the agreement. He certainly appointed Kulov Prime Minister,\(^{561}\) but did not implement promised constitutional reform. Instead, Bakiyev chose to manipulate the time and the process of constitutional reform through obstruction and delay.\(^{562}\)

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\(^{559}\) Marat, “The Tulip Revolution,” 33; Radnitz, 140.

\(^{560}\) Hale, “Democracy or Autocracy,” 315.


\(^{562}\) Nichol, “Constitutional Crisis,” 2.
One civil society leader during the Bakiyev’s rule, Asiya Sasykbaeva, stated in an interview that in October 2005, President Bakiyev deliberately increased the number of CA members from 114 to 289. Many of these were government employees, added by Bakiyev to ensure obedient voting in the Assembly in line with the president’s wishes. Moreover, the president, in order to prolong the constitutional reform process, tasked those at the CA to create three different versions of the constitution and then he discarded them all. On one occasion, Bakiyev demanded that the acting constitution to stay in effect until 2010. On another occasion, he tried to hijack the Assembly’s working process: some members of the Assembly stated later that the new November 2005 version of the constitution had nothing to do with the work of the constitution’s editorial commission and was entirely drafted by the president’s supporters. It was very clear that Bakiyev did not intend to give up any of his presidential powers.

Reactivated by the gradual disintegration of the Kyrgyz coalition, the opposition pushed back energetically. The question of turning Kyrgyzstan from presidential to parliamentary republic became the opposition’s single most important rallying point. In the words of one opposition leader Timur Sariev, “above all other issues, we pushed for the constitutional reform…this was the most important question for all of us. Hence, this was the political issue

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563 Sasykbaeva, interview by author.

564 Sasykbaeva, interview by author. In the beginning the Bakiyev was not a Chairman of CA. He became the Chairman later, based on the August 2005 offer of the Parliamentary Speaker Omurbek Tekebayev. The latter stated that he offered chairmanship to Bakiyev because he believed that the leader of the country should occupy this post (Tekebayev, interview by author). Bakiyev, however, used the CA chairmanship to hijack the Assembly’s work and delay (or even kill) the reform.

565 Beknazarov, interview by author; Sasykbaeva, interview by author.

around which all of us could unite.”

In April-May 2006, the reinvigorated opposition staged mass street protests to demand constitutional reform. (These protests are also discussed briefly above in section 5.2.) Bakiyev refused to compromise, so the April-May demonstrations dissolved without achieving anything. Nevertheless, the opposition came back with a new force in fall 2006.

In November 2006, the opposition pulled together larger forces. After almost a week of mass street protests and some violent clashes, the government compromised and agreed to limit presidential powers. Parliament adopted the new constitution on November 8 and President Bakiyev signed it on November 9. Although the new constitution fell short of turning Kyrgyzstan into parliamentary republic, the changes significantly increased the powers of the legislature at the expense of the president. This new constitution turned Kyrgyzstan into a mixed parliamentarian-presidential form of governance. Most significantly, the president lost the right to appoint a prime minister: instead, the leader of the political party that won the majority of parliamentary seats would automatically become prime minister. If no party won a majority, then the president would entrust the party that won the most votes to select the head of the cabinet. Subsequently, the prime minister would form the new cabinet and the president would approve it. In fact, the president lost control over the prime minister and the cabinet. Additionally, the

567 Sariev, interview by author.

568 In fall 2006, besides the constitutional reform the opposition also demanded the resignation of Bakiyev-Kulov tandem.

569 Besides street protests, a group of opposition MPs set up so called Constituent Assembly to adopt the new constitution. 39 out of 71 MPs put their signatures on the new constitution’s draft (Jean-Christophe Peuch, “Kyrgyzstan: Bakiev Accuses Opposition of Seeking to Usurp Power,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, November 7, 2006, accessed February 8, 2013, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1072558.html; Also, Tekebayev, interview by author). Although, MPs lacked necessary two-third majority to change the constitution their move gave an impetus to the opposition’s attack on the government.

president lost control over the National Security Service and Prosecutor General’s Office, two key power agencies. Parliament, not the president, now had authority over them.\textsuperscript{571}

Because President Bakiyev did not intend to stick to the November agreement, the political crisis continued. In December 2006-January 2007, he skillfully outmaneuvered Prime Minister Kulov, parliament, and the entire opposition to reclaim the powers he had given up in November. Prime Minister Kulov’s resignation on December 19, 2006 paved the way for dismissing parliament and holding early legislative elections. Kulov cited parliament’s constant conflict with the cabinet as his reason for resigning.\textsuperscript{572} In fact, by leaving his post, Kulov intentionally did a favor to President Bakiyev (allegedly as a result of a covert verbal agreement between the two,\textsuperscript{573} discussed below): after a Prime Minister’s resignation Bakiyev had a constitutional right to dismiss the parliament and call for early elections if the legislature did not approve a new cabinet.\textsuperscript{574} Bakiyev used this very threat of dissolution to coerce parliament in agreeing to restore his presidential powers. On December 30, 2006, the legislature voted for Bakiyev’s version of the constitution under which Bakiyev regained his powers. Crucially, the president took back the authority to nominate the prime minister, though Parliament had to approve the choice.

Moreover, the president was again able to appoint ministers with only the prime minister’s

http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav110906.shtml. The President also lost power to dismiss the heads of the Central Election Commission and the Accounting Chamber without parliament’s approval. The sides also agreed to increase number of MPs from 75 to 90 (effective as of 2010). Also, half of the MPs now would be elected by party lists and the other half in single-mandate constituencies. Moreover, the opposition agreed to let President Bakiyev and Prime Minister Kulov stay in office till 2010.

\textsuperscript{572} News update, aired December 19, 2006, on Piramida TV Channel.

\textsuperscript{573} Two former high ranking officials within President Bakiyev’s administration (anonymous), interviews by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 29, December 4, 2011.

recommendation rather than approval of the entire parliament. On January 15, 2007, Bakiyev signed the new constitution.

After the November 2006 constitution, the next casualty was Kulov. Although President Bakiyev had promised Kulov that he would keep re-nominating him until parliament confirmed his candidacy, Bakiyev broke his word. After the legislature twice rejected Kulov’s nomination in January 2007, Bakiyev did not re-nominate him for the third time and Kulov finally lost the post of the prime minister. Enraged at Bakiyev, Kulov moved into opposition.

Bakiyev seemed to be on top, but the opposition was again planning mass protests for spring 2007. After long months of constant turmoil, the country waited anxiously for a new phase of political instability. As I have also discussed in section 5.2, the opposition launched a new wave of street demonstrations in April 2007. This time Kulov was one of the main protest leaders, demanding both revocation of the December 2006 constitution and Bakiyev’s

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578 Sershen, “Opposition United.”
resignation. After more than a week of mass protests and clashes, the government violently broke up the demonstrations.

After the April showdown with the opposition, Bakiyev pushed to remove from the political agenda the question of presidential executive power. On September 14th, the president’s obedient Constitutional Court ruled adoptions of both the November and December 2006 constitutions non-constitutional, using the grounds that the 2003 constitution had been adopted by referendum and should be changed only through referendum. Thus the Constitutional Court stated that parliament exceeded its powers both times, violating the power of people. This opened the way for Bakiyev to hold a new referendum on his version of the constitution. On September 19th, he scheduled the referendum for October 21, 2007, giving the public only one month to get acquainted with the document.

Bakiyev’s version of the constitution preserved for the president all the powers laid out in the December 2006 constitution, including the right to dismiss any government member and to control the appointment of defense and security officials. Additionally, the new constitution would bring internal affairs and foreign policy under the president’s direct supervision and give the president greater leverage over appointing local judges. The new constitution also made

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579 As I have mentioned in footnote 20, the opposition was divided by this time. See the same footnote for the causes of the opposition division.

580 Sersen, “Bishkek Protest.”


583 Sersen, “Constitutional Wrangling.”
presidential impeachment procedures so complicated that impeachment of the head of state became impossible.\footnote{See, The Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic. The opposition heavily criticized the new version of the constitution. The opposition stated that the constitution was written by the president and three other people and it actually increased the president’s powers.}

The constitution was approved in the October 21 referendum. Official results reported that more than 82 percent of voters turned out at polls and 76 percent of them supported the new constitution.\footnote{Sershen, “President Strives.”} Bakiyev signed the document on October 23, 2007. It seemed as if President Bakiyev finally succeeded: he approved the constitution retaining strong executive powers. After two and a half long and contentious years, the conflict over the president’s executive power, the very conflict that was one of the main sources of instability for the government, apparently faded from Kyrgyz politics.

Nevertheless, reality was different. The question of the president’s executive power never really disappeared. It remained as strong as ever on the political agenda, continuing to destabilize the Bakiyev administration. First of all, the October referendum lacked support among Kyrgyz political circles and wider public. The Kyrgyz opposition, civil society, and international organizations all condemned the referendum as falsified, citing widespread ballot stuffing, pressure on state employees to vote in a certain manner, inflating the numbers of voters artificially, and other flagrant and systematic legal violations. One observer group\footnote{The observer group’s name was Taza Shailoo.} that conducted a parallel turnout count estimated that the number of voters was not officially reported 82 percent, but between 40-45 percent of the total electorate, thus failing to pass required 50
percent threshold for validating the referendum.\textsuperscript{587} Hence, for the Kyrgyz opposition and the public the referendum, and therefore the new Kyrgyz constitution, was simply not valid.

The Kyrgyz opposition continued to demand real constitutional reform that limited presidential power by turning the country into a parliamentary republic. Although after the violent breakup of the April 2007 demonstrations, the opposition ceased staging mass anti-government street protests,\textsuperscript{588} the issue of executive power remained the opposition’s single biggest rallying point against the government. Regardless of the opposition’s continued demands to limit the president’s authority and change the political system,\textsuperscript{589} the government not only resisted all such attempts but actually increased the president’s powers even more from 2008 to 2010. For instance, in December 2009, Bakiyev’s White Path Party led the Kyrgyz parliament to adopt a law giving the president the right to appoint even vice-governors of regions.\textsuperscript{590} The issue of executive power remained one of the most contentious issues between the opposition and the government, thus contributing to overall political instability.

Moreover, the persistence of this issue had a radicalizing effect on the opposition. In its turn, radicalization of the opposition continued to destabilize the administration, ultimately bringing about its violent overthrow in April 2010. As President Bakiyev tightened his monopoly over the executive and legislative branches, he entirely excluded the opposition parties

\textsuperscript{587}Sershen, “President Strives;” Marat, “March and After,” 232.

\textsuperscript{588} In fact, right after the December 2007 parliamentary elections, the opposition began so called “I do not believe” campaign, which included street demonstrations and hunger strikes, protesting against the gross falsification of the legislative elections by the government. Nevertheless, the scale of these protests was smaller than of the previous protests in 2006-2007.

\textsuperscript{589} For instance in January 2010, opposition demanded to reinstate the 1993 Constitution. The 1993 constitution gave less power to the president than Bakiyev had by that time.

from the policy-making process. The opposition justifiably blamed the country’s overly powerful presidential system. Furthermore, as the administration’s authoritarian tendencies increased, the opposition again pointed to the country’s presidential system that provided no checks and balances to stop the abusive government.

Excluded from the country’s policy-making process and unable to check the government’s authoritarian policies, the opposition saw only one way out of the constant political crisis: change the administration. As Sariev, one of the leaders of the opposition stated, “It was after we [the opposition] saw that Bakiyev would not implement constitutional reforms that we began to push for his resignation.” Consequently, in 2008-2010, anti-Bakiyev political forces more and more often emphasized the need for the ouster of the president, rather than the implementation of any reform.

The remaining question was how the government would be replaced: peacefully or violently. As the April 2010 events showed, the political developments took violent turn. The opposition-led popular uprising overthrew Bakiyev on April 7, 2010, putting an end to his five year long rule. (The reasons why developments became violent rather than peaceful is discussed in section 5.4.) Importance of the issue of executive power in Kyrgyzstan is further emphasized

591 High ranking official within President Bakiyev’s administration (Anonymous), interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 29, 2011.


593 Sariev, interview by author.

by the fact that one of the first steps which the post-Bakiyev interim government undertook was
the adoption of the new constitution that effectively turned the country into parliamentary
republic. 595

5.4 Failed Reforms, Leading to Diminished State Capacity and Popular Support

The third factor that contributed to the demise of the Bakiyev administration was its failure
to implement reforms. After Kyrgyzstan’s Tulip Revolution, the Kyrgyz public expected that the
new government would carry out sweeping reforms to address the long-standing problems of
corruption, nepotism, powerful criminal forces, and failing state institutions and public services.
The new ruling coalition, including new president Bakiyev, made multiple verbal promises of
drastic reforms. 596 Nevertheless, none of them materialized. The main reason for this failure: lack
of consensus within the Tulip Revolution coalition over the reform agenda. The majority of the
coalition called on Bakiyev to launch various socioeconomic and political reforms but Bakiyev
and his close circle put no serious effort into implementing them. 597 Instead, he used his power
not for reform but to consolidate his grip over corrupt and dysfunctional state institutions for his
personal gains.

The Bakiyev administration spouted anti-corruption rhetoric while never really addressing
the country’s endemic and pervasive corruption. (See chapter three on the depth of corruption in
Kyrgyzstan.) In fact, the new government incorporated and even extended corrupt practices from
the previous leadership. The customs department, notorious for corruption under former

595 “New Kyrgyz Constitution Approved,” Aljazeera, June 28, 2010, accessed February 27, 2013,
constitution via the June 28, 2010 referendum in which 90 percent of the voters (at almost 70 percent turnout)
supported the constitution (Aljazeera, “New Kyrgyz Constitution”).

596 For instance, see Eurasianet, January 9, 2008; October 27, 2009.

597 Artikov, interview by author; Beknazarov, interview by author; Isakov, interview by author; Kulov, interview by
author; Sariev, interview by author; Tekebayev, interview by author.
president Akayev, continued to pay a share of illegal customs revenues to the new power holders in the country.\textsuperscript{598} Illegal payments to high ranking public officials for various government positions tripled under Bakiyev: the cost of being appointed as a minister increased from USD 100,000 to 300,000.\textsuperscript{599} To become a judge one had to pay from USD 30,000 to 50,000, depending on the region or district. A position in a central tax department cost USD 20,000 or in regional tax offices USD 5,000.\textsuperscript{600}

The most corrupt institution in the country was the tax system, followed by the Prosecutor’s Office, Courts, State Agency for Registering Real Estate, State Architecture Directorate, and the Education and Health Ministries.\textsuperscript{601} Corruption remained widespread among traffic police\textsuperscript{602} and generally in police, security services, and all other state institutions.\textsuperscript{603} Being corrupt was not really risky for a public employee: the government rarely, if ever, prosecuted anyone for this crime. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, according to their own records, brought just eight charges against customs officials and 26 charges against tax officials during the first eight months of 2006.\textsuperscript{604}

\textsuperscript{598} Finance Minister cited in newspaper \textit{Delo No}, 14, no 591, April 13, 2005, quoted in Kupatadze, “Transitions,” 126.


\textsuperscript{600} Ibid, 101.


\textsuperscript{603} For instance, see Kupatadze, “Underworld Networks,” 287; Kupatadze, “Transitions,” 110.

\textsuperscript{604} Kupatadze, “Transitions” 94. Corruption was so pervasive in the country that the Kyrgyz government even refused to join The World Bank’s proposed Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative (The World Bank initiated it in 2006) that would allow debt relief to heavily indebted Kyrgyzstan (Kyrgyzstan’s debt reached USD 2.287 Billion in the first half of 2009. See, “Kyrgyzstan: Foreign Debt Hits 45 Percent of Gross Domestic Product,” Eurasianet, April 15, 2009, accessed February 17, 2013,
President Bakiyev never addressed the issue of family nepotism in the country, continuing and even expanding President Akayev’s policy of family rule. Bakiyev distributed various high ranking public positions to family members, naming one brother, Janysh Bakiyev, first Deputy Head of National Security Service in 2006 and then Head of State Protection Service in 2009. Four other brothers were given various diplomatic and administrative positions, though one of them chose a business career instead. Each of these brothers had his own sphere of influence. Janysh Bakiyev oversaw the top level nominations in police, security services, and counter-narcotics. Marat Bakiyev, an ambassador to Germany, was believed to dispense patronage within the judiciary system. A brother who was attached to the embassy in China played major role in lucrative trade with that country. The president and his family assured the loyalty of his own southern clans by appointing their members to various public offices.

The president’s family came to dominate almost the entire national economy. Son Maxim Bakiyev, called “The Prince,” managed to take control of various important businesses, among them the businesses previously owned by President Akayev’s family. Furthermore, in October


608 See for instance Saidazimova, “Rampant Nepotism.”

609 Engvall, “Anatomy of a State,” 40. Generally, under Bakiyev, new ruling elites got hold of the state and private properties that were controlled and owned by Akayev’s family or the groups close to Akayev.
2009, Maxim became the head of Central Agency for Development, Investments, and Innovations (CADII, or Russian acronym TSARII or Kings). CADII controlled all investment operations and money flow in the country.\(^{610}\) As Prime Minister Kulov summed it up in the interview, “Maxim practically subjugated the country’s entire economy.”\(^{611}\)

Moreover, Maxim was believed to be a *Krysha* (word by word means *roof* in Russian. A *krysha* takes protection money from the profits of all businesses in the country, both legal and illegal).\(^{612}\) On the whole, state racketeering flourished.\(^{613}\) Money extorted from private enterprises became more centralized as it now flew to just one hoard, the Bakiyev family, instead of various MPs, ministers, and officials as was the case under president Akayev’s rule. In other instances, regime members eschewed extortion in favor of simply taking ownership of private businesses.\(^{614}\) This whole practice of racketeering was cynically called “*obzherenya*” or literally “taking the fat off,” referring to leaving a person without means to survive and challenge the government.\(^{615}\) The Bakiyev family ruled the country. As Alikbek Jekshenkulov, the Foreign Minister during Bakiyev’s rule, put it, “Bakiyevs had a family politburo…consisting of the president’s sons and brothers. No outsiders were allowed in this circle. And during their regular

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\(^{611}\) Kulov, interview by author. In fact, besides economy, the new ruling family and generally, new government also got control over media outlets.

\(^{612}\) As Kupatadze claims, Maxim was a *krysha* along with the president’s brother Janish ("Transitions," 188).

\(^{613}\) Elmira Ibraimova, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, December 14, 2011.


\(^{615}\) Kulov, interview by author.
meetings they exclusively decided whom they should prosecute, whom they should destroy, whose business they should takeover, and whom they should promote...”

Bakiyev’s government failed to crack down on traditionally powerful organized crime instead merging with the criminal world as more and more high ranking officials were involved in various criminal activities. For instance, the Bakiyev era parliament alone had roughly ten MPs who were either criminal leaders or provided kryshas (protection) for criminal groups. Furthermore, president’s family took over the illicit drug-trafficking business running through Kyrgyzstan from Afghanistan and Tajikistan to Russia. One of Bakiyev’s five brothers Akhmat, (Chair of Jalal-Abad city council, but in fact informal governor of that entire region) controlled organized crime and drug trafficking in southern Kyrgyzstan. Other high ranking officials too were involved in drug trade. In fact, in 2009, Bakiyev even abolished the Drug Control Agency (DCA) and merged its functions with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the move

616 Jekshenkulov, interview by author.

617 On this topic see Kupatadze, “Transitions;” Kupatadze, “Underworld Networks,” 290-291. Strong influence of the criminal world on the state became clearer in the aftermath of the Tulip Revolution. In fact, the criminal world formed a parallel authority structure (Marat, “The Tulip Revolution,” 117). Brutal and chaotic re-division of political and economic powers between the regime and the leaders of the organized crime claimed the lives of a number of MPs, politicians, public figures, and criminal leaders (For instance, see Marat “The Tulip Revolution; Marat, “State-Crime Nexus,” 88-99).


619 This parliament, however, was elected during President Akayev’s rule, as I have also mentioned above in one of the footnotes.

620 Kupatadze, “Transitions,’ 94; Radnitz, 140-141. Assassinations of a Bayman Erkinbayev in September 2005, a prominent criminal leader in southern Kyrgyzstan and of another notorious criminal kingpin Rysbek Aktambayev in May 2006, who terrorized entire Kyrgyz political class, high ranking security officials, and police, was interpreted as an attempt of the new government to destroy competition coming from the criminal world (Engvall, “Anatomy of a State,” 41). After the murder of Aktambayev the dynamics of state-criminal world relations changed as state got upper hand over the organized crime and came to control it (on state-criminal relations after Tulip Revolution see, Kupatadze, “Underworld Networks”). In fact, it was believed that Aktambayev had links with Bakiyev and his regime. Aktambayev actually managed to get elected in the parliament shortly before his murder. In fact, he was elected after being acquitted of triple homicide and numerous other charges (Marat, “March and After,” 234)

621 Marat, “March and After,’ 234.

that certainly reduced the effectiveness of anti-drug policy in the country. That move reveals that Bakiyev was centralizing illicit control over drug economy and was “disinterested in international initiatives to control narcotics.”

During Bakiyev’s entire administration the government regularly employed the criminal world as its informal oppressive apparatus, frequently using members of organized crime to coerce, intimidate, punish, or murder political opponents and business challengers.

The new government also failed to reform the country’s coercive apparatus which included the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), National Security Service (NSS), and Police. As the former Head of the NSS, Ismail Isakov, stated in his interview, instead of implementing reforms President Bakiyev tried to establish his control over law enforcement institutions by putting his relatives and close associates in top positions at the law enforcement agencies (MIA and NSS). Other tactics of control included staffing northern police forces (specifically those in Chui Oblast, the region that contains the capital) with people from Bakiyev’s own southern provinces in order to assure police loyalty to the regime. Nevertheless, staffing of power agencies with nepotistic cadres did not ultimately strengthen those institutions: the government had failed to undertake necessary measures to provide better training, equipment, and working conditions for those employed at the power agencies. As Kyrgyz scholar Shairbek Juraev


624 Aliasbek Alimkulov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 11, 2011; Artikov, interview by author; Beknazarov, interview by author; Jekshenkulov, interview by author; Kulov, interview by author; Also see, Engvall, “Anatomy of a State,” 42; Kupatadze, “Underworld Networks.”

625 Isakov, interview by author. As I have mentioned above, President Bakiyev appointed his brother Janysh first in 2006 as a Deputy Chair of NSS and then in 2009 as the Head of State Protection Service. In fact, the president’s brother informally was in charge of all power agencies. Moreover, President appointed his elder son Marat as deputy director of National Security Forces (Temirkulov, “Kyrgyz Revolutions,” 594-595).

626 Kulov, interview by author; Sasykbaeva, interview by author.
formulated it in the interview, “appointing your loyalists in top positions at the power agencies and attempting to impose your control over them…do not constitute a reform.”

There was only rhetoric, but no actions, regarding reform of law enforcement institutions. For instance, in November 2009, Prime Minister urged heads of defense agencies to use a comprehensive approach in training Special Forces officers. No such approach was ever employed, however. Starting in 2008, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) did provide some limited help to train Kyrgyz police, but without much long-term positive impact. President Bakiyev’s promise to resolve housing problems for police officers never materialized. These deficiencies left the country’s law enforcement agencies under-trained, under-paid, ill-equipped, and demoralized. Similarly, the government never implemented meaningful reforms in the military to improve the army’s poor defensive capabilities and combat readiness.

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627 Shairbek Juraev, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 16, 2011.


630 Irina Karamushkina, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 9, 2011.


632 In 2008, Bakiyev, however, asserted that a professional, contract-based army should be created in two to three years (“President Bakiev: Contract-Based Professional Army Should be Created Within 2-3 Years,” The Free Library, May 26, 2008, accessed October 3, 2013, http://www.thefreelibrary.com/President+Bakiev%3A+Contract-based+professional+army+should+be+created...a0179752318).
The government not only failed to reform the state institutions but also failed to improve public goods and services. In fact, delivery of public goods even worsened under Bakiyev. The country had always been rich in hydroelectric resources, but because of the corruption and mismanagement in the energy sector, Kyrgyzstan began to experience mass electricity outages as of 2008.\textsuperscript{633} The energy crisis caused the government to recommend that citizens switch from electric heating to coal, sending coal prices skyrocketing. The poorest villages were even advised to collect cow dung in case if coal was unavailable.\textsuperscript{634}

As the Bakiyev administration failed to implement reforms, Kyrgyzstan’s already weak state capacity declined further. The scores for Governance Effectiveness, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption all worsened significantly under the new government. The Regulatory Quality and Voice and Accountability scores each improved only by an insignificant 0.01 point in 2004-2009. In fact, they both stagnated. Only Political Stability and Absence of Violence score improved from -1.16 to -0.64 (see Table 16). Nevertheless, in this category too Kyrgyzstan fell behind the rest of the world. In 2009, with its score of -0.64 Kyrgyzstan stood between Egypt


and Guyana (both with the score of -0.62) and Guinea-Bissau (with the score of -0.65). Overall, by most indicators Kyrgyzstan performed much worse than Ukraine (see chapter four) and certainly even worse than Georgia (see chapter six).

**Table 16. Kyrgyzstan’s state capacity, 2004-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government Effectiveness</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
<td>-0.83</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
<td>-0.94</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Law</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>-1.37</td>
<td>-1.33</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of Corruption</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-1.17</td>
<td>-1.26</td>
<td>-1.24</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>-1.24</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Quality</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Stability and</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>-1.38</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of Violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice and Accountability</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>-0.95</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: The World Bank, “Worldwide Governance Indicators.”*

The government’s multiple failures created fertile ground for the quick rise of public discontent. According to the Ministry of Interior, 400 rallies took place in the country in 2007 alone. Bakiyev’s popular support had begun to evaporate barely six months after he was elected president. Polls showed that by January 2006, 74 percent of Kyrgyz citizens distrusted

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635 Partially as a result of the April 2010 popular uprising and the government’s subsequent violent crackdown (and partially because of the summer 2010 ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan) the country’s Political Stability and Violence situation worsened dramatically by 40 points in 2010 (see The World Bank, ”Worldwide Governance Indicators.”)

President Bakiyev, while only 17 percent trusted him. In the following years Bakiyev’s already dismal popular standing worsened even more (see Table 17).

Table 17. Kyrgyz leadership’s popular support, 2006-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distrust the president</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust the president</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Nevertheless, the question was how the Kyrgyz public would express its discontent and change the government: peacefully via elections, or violently via uprising. Unlike Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan did not have a functioning electoral system. Bakiyev’s administration had falsified virtually all elections held during its rule: the October 2007 referendum, the December 2007 early parliamentary elections, the October 2008 local elections, and the July 2009 early presidential elections.

In such conditions, it was clear that dissatisfied public could not rely on fair elections to remove Bakiyev. In fact, the opposition, clearly seeing the rising popular discontent, already was

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637 Agym newspaper poll, poll obtained via my personal communications with Agym newspaper’s former staff and journalists, February 25-December 5, 2011, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.


planning to get rid of Bakiyev and his regime by any means, if necessary by violent uprising. (This topic is also discussed in section 5.2.) Such an opportunity for the opposition came in April 2010, when public discontent, fueled by utility price hikes in winter 2010, reached the tipping point and became full-blown mass anti-government protests. After the opposition-led mass protests in the country’s northern region of Talas on April 6, street demonstrations began also in the capital Bishkek on April 7 (see section 5.2). The government deployed whatever forces it could harness against the Bishkek protestors. First it sent Special

642 Beknazarov, interview by author. 

643 Temirkulov, “Kyrgyz Revolutions,” 597.


Besides worsening living conditions there were other causes of massive public disappointment in Kyrgyzstan. First and foremost such a cause was the government’s increasing authoritarianism, crackdown on media, regular attacks and assassinations of journalists and opposition politicians. Moreover, shady privatizations (in 2009-2010) of state-owned energy enterprises, such as Severelectro (for instance, see “Kyrgyz Government Sells its Stake in Power Distribution Company Severelectro,” The Free Library, February 3, 2010, accessed October 3, 2013, http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Kyrgyz+Government+sells+its+stake+in+power+distribution+company...-a0218163613), further angered Kyrgyz public, adding to popular notion that the ruling regime was enriching itself even more by these deals.
Force unit ALFA. The demonstrators counterattacked ALFA and routed it. When the protestors converged on the capital’s main Ala-Too Square, the government stationed riot police on the place and posted snipers on the rooftop of the so-called White House, the simultaneous seat of parliament and the president. Snipers opened live fire on the demonstrators, killing dozens of them. News of the killing spread in the city, bringing thousands of people to the square to attack the police in waves. After hours of shootings and bloody clashes, which killed over 80 people and injured about 1,500, protestors overwhelmed the White House defenders. Demoralized police disintegrated and ran away. Bakiyev fled the capital. His government fell with astounding speed in a mere 10 hours after the start of the violent showdown between the police forces and protesters. Bakiyev’s rule was over.

5.5 Conclusion

Kyrgyzstan, like Ukraine, demonstrated that the independent variable, a large, fragmented coalition helped the emergence of three intervening variables: active opposition; politicized issue of executive power; and failed reforms, leading to the decline of the state capacity and popular support. Finally, these three intervening variables led to the dependent variable, leadership change. Specifically, the chapter showed that the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition failed to maintain unity and collapsed. Its members gradually moved to the opposition, helping it to

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645 In fact, the White House is located mere one street block away from Ala-Too Square.


647 The author’s interviews with the uprising participants: Klus Alabaev, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 26, 2011; Alimkulov, interview by author; Amanbol Bakhulov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 26, 2011; Almaz Jolidoshaliev, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 26, 2011; Abdraim Kasimov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 24, 2011; Dinara Oshurakhunova, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 22, 2011; Marat Oskunov, interview by author, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 26, 2011; Sasykbaeva, interview by author; Umetalieva, interview by author.
reactivate. This active opposition managed to undermine Bakiyev’s administration and eventually ousted it via violent uprising.

Furthermore, this chapter illustrated how the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition politicized the issue of the president’s executive power. Unlike the Ukrainian coalition, the Kyrgyz coalition failed to curtail the president’s authority. Nonetheless, after the Kyrgyz coalition broke up and moved into the opposition, it still succeeded in using the issue of executive power to destabilize and in the end, depose the Bakiyev administration.

Also, this chapter showed that the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition failed to agree what reforms, if any, the new government should implement. The failure to carry out reforms contributed to the decline of state capacity and drastic loss of popular support for President Bakiyev. Without a functioning electoral system to change the government peacefully via elections, the Kyrgyz opposition resorted to violence. As a result, the Bakiyev administration was overthrown in a bloody popular uprising.

The next chapter will examine the contrast case of Georgia, where a small, cohesive coalition played a key role in the continuity of the post-uprising political leadership.
Chapter Six

The Case of Georgia

6.1 Introduction

In 2012, when I interviewed Georgia’s former parliamentary speaker Nino Burjanadze, she no longer was a powerful member of the Rose Revolution coalition that came to power in 2003.\(^\text{648}\) She left the alliance in 2008. Since then she was an opposition politician, often lingering on the margins of the Georgian politics. Burjanadze was widely disliked by Georgians as a turncoat for her newly acquired pro-Russian stance.\(^\text{649}\) Nevertheless, I still decided to meet her, as I wondered why she left the ruling coalition in 2008, more than four years after its ascent to power. Why not earlier? Or why did she leave it at all?

“…Saakashvili still did not exhaust [by 2008] the mandate of trust [from people], she said. “…There still were very many people, including myself, who did not like lots of things about Saakashvili, but [we] thought that this team and personally Saakashvili still had serious resources…which could be used for the benefit of the country…I can tell you with full confidence that Saakashvili’s government had real resources to move the country on the road of full democratic development; had real resources to continue positive reforms and start correcting its own mistakes, but what happened was absolutely opposite: Saakashvili and his team learned well how to conceal their real intentions, how to tighten the loose bolts… and instead of taking

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\(^{648}\) Burjanadze was one of the three key leaders of Rose Revolution and then one of the three key members of the post-Rose Revolution ruling coalition. She served as a Parliamentary speaker (2001-2008), the stint twice interrupted by her tenure as the country’s acting president (November 2003-December 2004; November 2007-December 2008).

\(^{649}\) Burjanadze championed Georgia’s pro-western foreign policy course while serving as a Speaker of the Parliament. In the opposition, however, she called for close ties with Russia and in 2010 even met Russian President Vladimir Putin, the man whom Georgians see as an aggressor for launching war against Georgia in 2008 and partially dismembering it by occupying the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Russian government also recognized these regions as independent states. For her increasingly pro-Russian stance Georgians simply began to see Burjanadze as someone who could easily sell out the country’s crucial national interests to Russia for her own political goals. Moreover, Burjanadze occasionally made highly controversial statements on foreign policy and various social issues that contributed to her marginalization.
the country on the road of democracy [they] took it to the opposite direction…in reality this is what caused my departure [from the government],” stated Burjanadze assertively.  

It’s hard to say whether Burjanadze’s disillusionment with Saakashvili’s democratic intentions was the real reason for her break from him and the coalition. After all, Saakashvili’s non-democratic style of governance was evident well before 2008. No matter what the real reason, the fact is that Burjanadze stayed with the ruling coalition till 2008, thus contributing to its cohesion. Had she departed earlier and joined the opposition, the Georgian coalition could have disintegrated and consequently, the fate of the post-uprising Georgian leadership could have well been similar to that of post-uprising Ukrainian and Kyrgyz leaderships. Yet, the political developments took a different direction in Georgia. This chapter now turns to examine those developments.

The two previous empirical chapters on Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan illustrated that the independent variable of a large, fragmented coalition favored the emergence of three intervening variables, active opposition, politicized issue of executive power, and failed reforms. These three intervening variables then led to the dependent variable, downfall of the post-uprising leaderships. But what happens when the independent variable is not large, fragmented coalition, but rather a small, cohesive one, as was in Georgia? This chapter demonstrates that a small, cohesive coalition contributes to the emergence of different causal chain of events, which then create favorable conditions for the leadership continuity. The chapter shows that the small, fragmented Georgian coalition did not experience major defections. This fact helped the coalition to keep unity, especially in the first three years of its rule. Because major power blocs did not switch sides, the Georgian opposition that at that time included about ten major political

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651 For instance, see Tudoroiu, 324-325.
parties, remained inactive, as shown in section 6.2. The new government was able to consolidate power. When defections from the coalition to the opposition began in 2007, Saakashvili’s administration had established a strong enough position to fend off the reactivated opposition’s attacks and keep power until 2012-2013. The third section points out how the small, cohesive Georgian coalition managed to curtail debate about the president’s executive powers. Instead, the coalition actually managed to increase the president’s authority, depriving the opposition of the opportunity to undermine the government by politicizing this issue. Section four makes plain that the small, cohesive Georgian coalition always stood united about the reforms the new leadership should implement and how to implement them. Such unity aided the government to carry out far-reaching socioeconomic and political reforms. These successful reforms, in turn, increased state capacity, built firm popular support for President Saakashvili, and helped him stay in power for longer than the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments did. Section five provides the chapter’s conclusion.

**6.2 Inactive Opposition**

The first key factor that contributed to the continuity of the post-uprising Georgian leadership was the absence of active opposition with the power to undermine and ultimately oust the government. In Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan the collapse of their respective coalitions reinvigorated the opposition. Not only did the Georgian coalition not disintegrate, it actually increased its cohesion. First, in January 2004, the alliance’s two key political parties, the National Movement (NM) led by Mikheil Saakashvili, and the United Democrats (UD, formerly an electoral bloc called Burjanadze-Democrats) led by Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burjanadze, officially established a single electoral bloc for the March 2004 parliamentary elections.\(^{652}\) In

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\(^{652}\) News program *Courieri*, aired January 28, 2004, on Rustavi 2. Republican Party, which still was the part of the Rose Revolution coalition, stated after NM and BD formed an electoral bloc that if the two merged as a single party,
November of that same year UD actually merged with NM, adopting the new name United National Movement (UNM).\textsuperscript{653}

Certainly some disagreements existed among the coalition’s key leaders. For instance, in January 2004, Burjanadze made clear her opposition to increasing the president’s powers (discussed below in section 6.3). She sparred with Zhvania over the composition of the party-list of MP candidates for the March 2004 parliamentary elections because Burjanadze wanted to get more of her allies on the roll. Zhvania, wanting more slots for his own allies, threatened to split from the coalition if Saakashvili’s NM did not comply with his own request for more slots.\textsuperscript{654} Zhvania and his team members also clashed with Saakashvili’s team members, particularly with Defense Minister Irakli Okruashvili. Tensions between Okruashvili and Zhvania surfaced in January 2005 when Okruashvili accused former high ranking officials at the Defense Ministry of misappropriation of funds. Zhvania’s team member, State Minister for Euro-Atlantic Integration Giorgi Baramidze, had served as Defense Minister at that time. Baramidze and Zhvania quickly counterattacked, dismissing Okruashvili’s accusations as groundless, aimed only at splitting the government.\textsuperscript{655}


\textsuperscript{653} Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 204. Burajandze, however, declared that she would not join the party. Yet, she added, she would remain the part of Saakashvili’s political team and her decision did not mean a split in the ruling party (News program \textit{Chronika}, aired November 21, 2004, Imedi TV).

\textsuperscript{654} News program \textit{Mzera}, aired February 26, 2004, on Mze TV. Zhvania and Burjanadze clashed over the 2005 budget in October 2004 (News program \textit{Courieri}, aired October 19, 20, 2004, on Rustavi 2).

\textsuperscript{655} On this topic see, for instance, news program \textit{Courieri}, aired January 4, 6, 2005, on Rustavi 2. In fact, the January 2005 conflict illustrated the ongoing rivalry not only between Saakashvili’s team and Zhvania’s team, but also personally between Saakashvili and Zhvania, which dated back from pre-Rose Revolution period between the two men. In general, Prime Minister Zhvania, a highly skilled political operator and a veteran of Georgian politics, with extensive political contacts in Georgia and abroad, could have posed a formidable challenge to president
Although such disagreements and conflicts were neither frequent nor intense, President Saakashvili still fully realized their destructive potential. First of all, he always tried to solve the conflicts in the closed circle, hidden from public eye, to prevent the argument from spilling over. Moreover, he personally and immediately involved to mediate and solve any quarrels among the government members. He mainly used threats of dismissal from the post if the sides did not cease bickering. For instance, Saakashvili’s handling of the above mentioned conflict between Baramidze and Okruashvili, is illustrative how he and his administration managed the coalition. Right after the argument between the two, Saakashvili convened both of the men, heavily scolded them and threatened with dismissal: “I am not going to tolerate squabbling between the government members. Your both are my friends, but if you want to deal with each other [publicly] through press conferences, then our door is open and you are free to go,” declared Saakashvili menacingly.\(^{656}\) The conflict between Baramidze and Okruashvili ceased, or at least it faded away from the public eye.

The threat of falling out from the government and the ruling coalition worked effectively: its members already had examples that anyone who left the coalition relegated to the margins of the Georgian politics, spending their time in political wilderness (discussed below). Saakashvili’s administration and Saakashvili personally, still were vastly popular in the first years of the new government’s rule. For instance, in 2005, Saakashvili’s public support stood at 61 percent.\(^{657}\) For

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\(^{656}\) News program \textit{Courieri}, aired January 6, 2005, on Rustavi 2.

\(^{657}\) Georgian Opinion Research Business International (GORBI) poll, 2004-2013, poll obtained via e-mail correspondence of an author with the GORBI’s management, August 18-September 11, 2013.
any politician, falling out with the highly popular president meant certain political death for the foreseeable future. Consequently, disagreements within the coalition never transformed into open, protracted political conflicts. The small coalition always managed to solve their differences quickly so that disagreements within the alliance did not lead to its disintegration. It’s difficult to say whether the differences would have eventually resulted in the actual split of the alliance, taking into consideration the developments that followed in 2005.

In the early morning on February 3 of that year, Zurab Zhvania suddenly died in mysterious circumstances. The official version claimed that he died of carbon monoxide poisoning from a faulty gas heater during a meeting with the Kvemo Kartli region Deputy Governor Raul Usupov at the latter’s Tbilisi apartment. Zhvania’s political allies, the opposition, and some Georgian media sources claimed that circumstances of his death were highly suspicious, which gave way to the theory that he may have been murdered.658 With Zhvania conveniently out of the way, odds of coalition disintegration further decreased. After Zhvania’s death, Saakashvili successfully incorporated Zhvania’s entire team into UNM, thus further increasing the cohesion of the ruling coalition.659

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659 The new leadership faced potentially strong and active opposition from the authoritarian leader of Adjara Autonomous Republic, Aslan Abashidze. Regardless of previous conflicts with the central authorities, particularly with President Eduard Shevardnadze, Abashidze saw a bigger danger in Saakashvili and allied with Shevardnadze during the Rose Revolution (Areshidze, 157-162). After Shevardnadze’s ouster, Abashidze secluded himself in Adjara and made several attempts to cut off political ties, as well as road links with the rest of Georgia. Nevertheless, on May 5, 2004, after mass street protests in the regional capital Batumi, Abashidze fled to Russia (News program Courieri, aired May 5, 2004, on Rustavi 2). The central government quickly reinstated control over the entire region. Shortly afterward, Abashidze’s political party Union of Democratic Revival declared its own dissolution. The conflict was effectively over.
With Zhvania gone and the BD merged with UNM, only Burjanadze remained as a leader who could potentially threaten the coalition’s unity. She, however, proved to be an amenable rather than a conflict-ridden partner, at least until her resignation and eventual move to the opposition in 2008. Except for a few minor disagreements with Saakashvili and his allies over some government appointments, she always sided with Saakashvili’s administration and supported its every policy move and initiative.

Overall, the small Georgian coalition firmly maintained cohesion even during the times when its grip on power seemed tenuous. For instance, on November 7, 2007, when the government violently dispersed the opposition-led street protests and forcefully closed down opposition TV Channel Imedi, Saakashvili and his administration came under heavy domestic and international criticism for the heavy-handedness and anti-democratic style of governance. In order to defuse the political crisis, on November 8, Saakashvili resigned and called the early presidential elections for January 2008. According to the constitution, Parliamentary Speaker Nino Burjanadze became an acting president. The time period from November 2007 to January 2008 was extremely difficult episode for the government. Its international and domestic reputation had been seriously shaken by the use of force against protestors and the opposition TV channel. Moreover, the reinvigorated opposition was gearing up for the presidential elections and it was unclear if Saakashvili would actually win the polls.

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660 In fact, Burjanadze broke away from Saakashvili in April 2008, declaring that she would not run for the reelection in the May 21, 2008 parliamentary elections because of the persisting disagreements amongst the UNM over the makeup of the party lists for MP candidates (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Georgia: In Surprise Move, Burjanadze Says She Won’t Seek Reelection,” April 22, 2008, accessed October 15, 2013, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1109610.html. Her formal move to the opposition happened later in the same year, after the Russian-Georgian war.


662 Burjanadze, interview by author.
Within those three months any defection from the ruling coalition, whether by Burjanadze personally, by Zhvania’s former team members, or even by any of Saakashvili’s close associates could have delivered a mortal blow to the alliance and to the government’s hold on power in general. Nevertheless, not even a single member of the ruling coalition left it, let alone moved to the opposition.663

Saakashvili won the January 2008 presidential elections with over 53 percent of votes664 and the government successfully weathered November 2007-January 2008 political crisis.665 Koba Subeliani, Minister for Refugee Affairs666 in the Saakashvili’s Administration, attributed the ruling coalition’s unity to the negative memories of the 1991-1993 Georgian civil war, when major schism within the government led the country to the years of bloodshed and destruction. “Difficult experience of the civil war is what scares us all…[and compels us all in our team to] diligently maintain unity…we got to this point with bitter experiences. Civil war in [Georgia was caused by] nothing more than internal splits and rivalries which finally ruined the country…” stated Subeliani in the interview back in 2012.667 It can be debated whether it was a noble prudence against the civil war or some more mundane considerations such as personal material well-being or the fear of political retribution from the government which convinced those in the

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663 On November 16, 2007, Prime Minister Noghaideli resigned, citing health problems. In fact, Noghaideli was pushed out by Saakashvili, to appoint the new prime minister in order to create public impression of change in the country. Moreover, Noghaideli did not move to the opposition till September 2008, after the August 2008 Russian-Georgian war.

664 The opposition, however, cried foul that the government resorted to the electoral fraud and vote rigging and hence, the poll results did not reflect the will of the people.


666 The full name of the agency is the Ministry for Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia.

coalition to stay united. Nevertheless, as I have already mentioned above, the fact is that the Georgian coalition did maintain cohesion.668

This is not to suggest, however, that absolutely all coalition members remained within the alliance. Certainly, some minor groups did leave the coalition soon after the Rose Revolution. Three small parties, the Union of Georgian Traditionalists (UGT), Republican Party (RP), and Union of Patriotic Forces (UPF, transformed into the Conservative Party in November 2004), broke away from the alliance because of political disagreements and moved into the opposition from December 2003 to June 2004.669 But the departure of just three small parties did not shake the unity of the ruling coalition and their defection had no reinvigorating impact on the Georgian opposition, unlike the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz cases where almost all coalition member parties and key leaders defected en mass, reactivating the entire opposition. In Georgia, after the UGT, RP,

668 Moreover, the Georgian ruling regime did not have such power centers as Ukraine (described in chapter four) or even Kyrgyzstan had (described in chapter five). Certainly, during Saakashvili’s rule there were talks of various power centers (or clans, as they are often called in Georgia), operating within the ruling regime. Such talked about clans were for instance, Vano Merabishvili’s (Minister of Internal Affairs) and Zurab Adeishvili’s (Prosecutor General) clan, Gigi Ugulava’s (Mayor of capital Tbilisi) clan, Irakli Okruashvili’s (Minister of Defense) clan, Bacho Akhalaia’s (Minister of Defense and then Minister of Internal Affairs) clan. There were even some reports of existing rivalries among above mentioned agencies and individuals (Anonymous high ranking Georgian security official, interview by author, Tbilisi Georgia, February 4, 2012). Nevertheless, to call those state institutions and individuals in charge of them, “power centers” is inaccurate at best. Indeed, they exercised significant influence on the execution of the government’s policies. Yet, those agencies and individuals were not independent, or even semi-autonomous in their decision making. They were firmly under the control of President Saakashvili, who was strongly in charge of the government and its entire policy-making process (Sozar Subari, interview by author, Tbilisi Georgia, February 15, 2012). Furthermore, Saakashvili could easily remove any of those agency heads from their positions, as he had routinely done whenever he saw such a need (discussed in section 6.3).

669 UGT, the member of Burjanadze-Democrats electoral bloc, refused to back Mikheil Saakashvili’s presidential candidacy and left the coalition in December 2003, mere one week after the Rose Revolution (“Opposition Party Leader Refuses to Back Saakashvili in Presidential Elections,” Civil Georgia, December 1, 2003, accessed October 16, 2013, http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=5714&search=). In June 2004, RP left the alliance citing alleged electoral fraud in Adjara Autonomous Republic, for which the party blamed the government (News program Chronika, aired June 21, 2004, on Imedi TV; Also, David Berdzenishvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 26, 2012). Berdzenishvili also stated that one of the reasons of RP’s split with Saakashvili was its opposition to the curtailment of the Adjarian autonomy in 2004 by Saakashvili’s administration). Furthermore, in the same year, UPF, Conservative Party since November 2004, broke away from the coalition (Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 206-207).
and UPF left the Rose Revolution coalition, they found themselves on the margins of politics for the years to come.⁶⁷⁰

As the Georgian ruling coalition maintained its cohesion, the Georgian opposition remained inactive, especially in the first three years of the new government’s rule, and was unable to undermine and then oust the government, as happened in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. The March 2004 legislative elections revealed the opposition’s inactivity: only one opposition bloc, the Rightist Opposition coalition (consisting of New Rights Party and Industry Will Save Georgia party), managed to overcome seven percent electoral threshold with just 7.62 percent of total votes. In general, the entire opposition received only about 40 seats in 235 member parliament.⁶⁷¹

Such a poor showing meant that the opposition got no cabinet portfolios and had no influence in the cabinet’s policy-making process. Moreover, the opposition’s limited minority status in the parliament (about 20 percent of total legislative seats) meant that the opposition could not challenge effectively, let alone block, the new administration’s actions either in the legislature or outside of it. As Levan Berdzenishvili, one of the leaders of the opposition Republican Party, humorously put it, non-ruling party parliamentary factions during Saakashvili’s rule could not pass single bill “even if the bill [was] about birds flying overhead.”⁶⁷² The inactive opposition was limited to occasional court appeals on a number of political issues and to casual but ineffective verbal criticism of the government’s activities. Only once from 2004 to 2007 did the opposition’s parliamentary factions manage to come together

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⁶⁷⁰ Also, in 2004-2007, several UNM activists and MPs left the UNM and its parliamentary coalition. Their departure, however, did not have any negative impact on the coalition unity.


and, at the end of March 2006, stage a seven-month boycott of the legislative sessions. They demanded a more democratic electoral environment,\textsuperscript{673} reorganization of overly powerful Ministry of Internal Affairs, and resignation of Interior Minister Vano Merabishvili for his failure to investigate the beating of the opposition MP Valery Gelashvili\textsuperscript{674} and the high profile murder of the Georgian citizen Sandro Girgvliani. The absence of about 40 opposition MPs, however, create no procedural or political problems for the rest of the legislative chamber. Eventually the opposition ended its boycott in October without achieving any of its demands.\textsuperscript{675}

The opposition was equally inactive on the streets. Regardless of growing popular dissatisfaction with the government’s painful reforms, heavy-handedness, and power abuses, opposition parties managed to stage only couple of protest demonstrations, with the number of participants ranging from just several hundred to several thousand. On some occasions, the opposition politicians merely joined the small crowd of street protesters to confirm their solidarity, taking no initiative to capitalize on increasing popular discontent.\textsuperscript{676}

Overall, the inactive opposition and its consequent ineptness during the first three years of the new leadership’s term in office allowed the government to consolidate its hold on power. Within this time period, Saakashvili’s administration managed to increase presidential executive powers (discussed in section 6.3) and implemented radical reforms that formed solid popular

\textsuperscript{673} Specifically, the opposition demanded formation of new election administrations by the political parties on a parity basis, creation of transparent and accurate voter lists, and direct elections of city mayors and regional governors. Additionally, it demanded improvement of the business climate.

\textsuperscript{674} On March 31, 2006, parliament also stripped Gelashvili of his MP credentials for his alleged involvement in the management of his business (news program \textit{Chronika}, aired March 31, 2006, on Imedi TV).


support for the new leadership (discussed in section 6.4). By the time the ruling coalition’s key members began to defect in 2007, thus reactivating and reinvigorating the dormant opposition, the government was in a strong position to face them. As David Aprasidze, Political Science Professor at Tbilisi-based Ilia State University, summarized in the interview, since 2007 when the revitalized opposition intensified its attacks on the government, the country’s leadership “had the means and the capacity…and the support base to confront any type of challenge…confront even [most] radical steps [of the opposition] and stop them…” Consequently, Saakashvili’s administration successfully weathered mass street protests in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2011 and repeatedly defeated the opposition in elections in the January 2008 (early) presidential elections.


678 David Aprasidze, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 9, 2012.

679 In fact, most of the opposition leaders blamed not the government’s strength, but rather the opposition’s weakness, specifically its lack of unity and clear strategy and tactic for ousting the government, as the main reason for its failure to depose through street protests the Saakashvili administration (David Berdzenishvili, interview by author; Levan Berdzenishvili, interview by author; Burjanadze, interview by author; Guram Chakhvadze, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 20, 2012; Bachuki Kardava, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 21, 2014; David Zurabishvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 11, 2012).
the May 2008 parliamentary elections, and the May 2010 local elections. As a result, the ruling coalition managed to keep power till 2012.

In 2011-2012, however, the political situation changed. Georgian billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, who was formerly allied with president Saakashvili, defected uniting most of the opposition in a broad coalition called Georgian Dream (GD). GD defeated ruling UNM in the October 2012 parliamentary elections. GD garnered almost 55 percent of total votes and 83 seats out of total 150 seats, while UNM received about 40 percent of votes and 67 seats. Constitutionally, president Saakashvili had the power not to appoint GD leader Ivanishvili (or any other person that he did not like) as a prime minister (see section 6.3 on this topic). But the president did not dare go against the voters’ verdict and named Ivanishvili as the next prime minister. Ivanishvili quickly formed a new cabinet. After the October 2012 elections, UNM effectively lost power. Nevertheless, Saakashvili remained a president and despite a highly

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680 The Georgian opposition, however, cried foul that the government grossly falsified all of these elections (Alasania, interview by author; David Berdzenishvili, interview by author; Koba Davitashvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 18, 2012; Zviad Dzidziguri, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 13, 2012; David Gamkrelidze, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 23, 2012.

681 Ivanishvili had, in fact, split with Saakashvili earlier in 2008, but did not engage in politics till 2011. Before the split, Ivanishvili was the new government’s one of the key financiers.


683 News program Moambe, aired October 17, 2012, on Channel 1.

684 The defections of Bidzina Ivanishvili and other high ranking coalition members, as well as the ruling coalition’s eventual defeat, once again prove the main argument of this section: coalition disintegration causes the reactivation of the opposition. In its turn, a reactivated opposition undermines the government and eventually ousts it. To put it another way, without coalition disintegration the opposition remains inactive and the inactive opposition lacks the capability to undermine and oust the government.
conflict-ridden cohabitation between him and the opposition prime minister, managed to complete his second and final presidential term.\footnote{In fact, right after GD’s electoral victory Ivanishvili called on Saakashvili to resign (News program \textit{Courieri}, aired October 2, 2013, on Rustavi 2). Moreover, in March 2013, the opposition-controlled parliament somewhat limited the president’s powers, depriving president Saakashvili the authority to appoint and dismiss the government without the parliament’s consent (News program \textit{Moambe}, aired March 21, 22, 25, 2013, on Channel 1). Nevertheless, Saakashvili managed to complete his second term.}

\textbf{6.3 Absence of Politicized Issue of Executive Power}

Another factor which provided favorable environment for the continuity of the post-uprising Georgian leadership was that the new Georgian government did not face the issue of politicized executive power. Specifically, Georgia’s Rose Revolution coalition did not compromise with the previous administration to limit the powers of the next president, as happened in Ukraine. Nor did it inherit the intense debate about turning the country into a parliamentary republic as had been the case in Kyrgyzstan.\footnote{The new Georgian government did inherit a mild debate about increasing the presidential powers from Shevardnadze’s government. In 2000, Shevardnadze actually considered increasing the president’s powers (Wheatley, “National Awakening,” 172; Mitchell, “Uncertain Democracy,” 80]). Some experts and politicians, however, before and after the Rose Revolution preferred the parliamentary system of governance. Nevertheless, even supporters of such a system realized that it was unrealistic to push for its adoption (For instance, see Nino Khutsidze and Giorgi Sepashvili, “Triumvirate to Redistribute Power Through Constitutional Changes,” Civil Georgia, January 22, 2004, accessed October 27, 2013, \url{http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=6066&search=}).} This is not to say, however, that the question of limiting the president’s authority was absent altogether within the coalition. Such a debate, although weak, existed. But the difference between Georgia and other two cases is that the small, cohesive Georgian coalition managed to agree quickly, increasing the president’s already huge executive powers\footnote{See the Constitution of the Republic of Georgia.} and effectively solving this question. Subsequently, the Georgian opposition could not use the issue of executive power to undermine the new leadership.

This was not immediately clear in the early aftermath of the Rose Revolution. Coalition partners had implied that the next president would not have such vast powers as the previous president had. On November 26, 2003 the coalition leaders, Nino Burjanadze, Mikhail 

\footnote{In fact, right after GD’s electoral victory Ivanishvili called on Saakashvili to resign (News program \textit{Courieri}, aired October 2, 2013, on Rustavi 2). Moreover, in March 2013, the opposition-controlled parliament somewhat limited the president’s powers, depriving president Saakashvili the authority to appoint and dismiss the government without the parliament’s consent (News program \textit{Moambe}, aired March 21, 22, 25, 2013, on Channel 1). Nevertheless, Saakashvili managed to complete his second term.}
Saakashvili, and Zurab Zhvania jointly declared that they would introduce constitutional amendments “to avoid unilateral governance in the country.”688 But as subsequent events showed, Saakashvili had no intention of weakening or sharing powers with anyone either within or outside his coalition. On the contrary, he planned to expand them. 689

He was in a strong position to do so. On January 4, 2004, Saakashvili won the presidential elections with staggering 96 percent of votes and moved quickly and secretly to increase his authority. He tasked the Ministry of Justice to develop the necessary constitutional amendments. The Ministry did so, largely hidden from the public eye.690 Overall, these constitutional amendments envisaged two major changes. First, they would expand the president’s powers over the legislature and executive bureaucracy of the government. Second, they would establish the Cabinet of Ministers and the post of the Prime Minister to satisfy the political ambitions of Saakashvili’s key coalition partner Zurab Zhvania, who was to become the prime minister. (The powers that the president acquired over the newly established cabinet, as well as over the parliament, are discussed in detail below).

The move to increase the president’s authority at the expense of other branches caused some disagreements within the coalition. One of the main leaders of the alliance, Nino Burjanadze, was in line to take the Speakership of Parliament.691 She opposed the constitutional changes since they would reduce the power of the legislature. She stated that she was “not going

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688 News program *Courieri*, aired November 26, 2003, on Rustavi 2. Mitchell even argues that Zhvania and Burjanadze agreed on Saakashvili’s candidacy for a president only if the presidency would be reduced to a symbolic position like that of presidency of Israel (“Uncertain Democracy,” 72).

689 Koba Davitashvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 18, 2012.


691 In fact, Burjanadze was to return to her old position of the parliamentary speaker. She served as a speaker in 2001-2003.
to be a Chairperson of the weak parliament,” and admitted that there were “small disagreements between the revolution leaders about the constitutional amendments.\textsuperscript{692} To protest further increase of presidential power, Koba Davitashvili, the political secretary of Saakashvili’s National Movement Party, went so far as to quit the party.\textsuperscript{693}

Nevertheless, president Saakashvili found it much easier to manage the issue of executive power with his small, cohesive coalition than did the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz presidents with their large, fragmented coalitions. Unlike Ukrainian and Kyrgyz leaders, Saakashvili had to deal only with the coalition’s two key members, Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burjanadze. And Saakashvili quickly and effortlessly did so. As it has been mentioned above, by establishing the post of Prime Minister, the president satisfied the political ambitions of Zhvania. This way Saakashvili brought Zhvania to his side against Burjanadze. The latter found herself isolated, forced either to move to the opposition or accept the constitutional amendments and undertake leadership of a weakened parliament. Burjanadze had just moved from the opposition to power as a result of the November 2004 Rose Revolution. She certainly did not want to move back to the opposition barely three months after the November events. Hence, after brief negotiations between the three leaders, Burjanadze agreed in February to support the constitutional amendments\textsuperscript{694} and assumed the speakership of the newly elected parliament.

\textsuperscript{692} News program \textit{Mzera}, aired January 22, 2004, on Mze TV.

\textsuperscript{693} “Saakashvili’s Close Ally Quits President’s Party, Slams Constitutional Changes,” Civil Georgia, February 3, 2004, accessed October 29, 2013, \url{http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=6159&search=}. Also, Davitashvili, interview by author. Davitashvili specifically stated that he was against changing the constitution for one man, Zurab Zhvania, to satisfy his ambitions to become the Prime Minister (News program \textit{Courieri}, aired February 3, 2004, on Rustavi 2). Moreover, Davitashvili was against the merger of NM with Zhvania’s United Democrats Party at the end of January 2004. This was one of the reasons of his resignation.

\textsuperscript{694} On this topic see for instance, Giorgi Sepashvili, “Georgia to Have Transitional Constitution,” Civil Georgia, February 3, 2004, accessed October 23, 2013, \url{http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=6158&search=}. 

\textsuperscript{205}
Davitashvili’s departure from the coalition did not have any negative impact on the unity or stability of the new leadership. Since no one else left the alliance to protest the constitutional amendments, his departure was viewed as just an isolated incident and Davitashvili quickly found himself on the margins of the Georgian politics. As a result, the dispute within the Rose Revolution coalition over executive power lasted for barely a month. When the time came in early February for parliament to adopt the relevant constitutional amendments, Saakashvili had the full backing of his coalition.

Only muted and short-lived objections to these constitutional changes came from outside of the coalition. Some civil society leaders and Georgian opposition politicians began to protest against the amendments shortly after it became known that the government was planning to change the constitution. Their protests, however, never went beyond verbal expression of dissatisfaction. Moreover, even these verbal protests died down soon after the parliament adopted the amendments on February 6. Even more so, as David Losaberidze, one of the leaders of the Georgian civil society, stated in the interview, large part of the country’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academia actually supported the increase of the president’s powers, declaring that “the president should not be stopped and his hands should not

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695 For instance, see Sepashvili.

696 The legislature approved the changes without any resistance soon after Saakashvili rushed them into the parliament (Mitchell, “Uncertain Democracy,” 80; Areshidze, 205-206). Areshidze (205-206) has argued that to ensure the passage of amendments the government intimidated some MPs to back the changes, in some cases even threatening them with investigations and persecutions. Overall, from the Rose Revolution to the March 2004 elections, Georgia still had the old, Shevardnadze-era parliament. This was due to the fact that the new leadership reconvened the legislature and in fact, extended its tenure until the new parliament was elected. The old Parliament was a subservient Parliament, which would not, and could not, challenge the new government. Some called for waiting until the new parliamentary elections so that constitutional amendments could be considered after that (Khutsidze and Sepashvili). This was exactly what the President did not want. He wanted a change quickly, capitalizing on his electoral victory and submissive parliament. Moreover, the government minimized or blocked altogether public debates about the constitutional changes (Areshidze, 205).
be tied [by the constitution]…in order for him [Saakashvili] to achieve whatever he needed to achieve [for the nation]…” In fact, the constitutional debate in Georgia was effectively over.

Overall, the Georgian leadership solved the issue of executive power swiftly, increasing the president’s authority. Solving this question quickly and solving it by expanding the president’s powers had a double effect on the durability of the post-uprising Georgian government. First, the speedy solution allowed the new leadership to hide the issue from sight. It never reappeared in a meaningful way until the end of Saakashvili’s rule. Since the question faded so rapidly, the Georgian opposition could not use it as a key rallying point against the government as the Kyrgyz opposition did to undermine the Kyrgyz government (see chapter five).

Second, increasing the president’s authority gave the Georgian leadership extensive executive powers, the very powers that the Ukrainian leadership lacked to fend off the attacks of the opposition to retain power. In fact, constitutional changes gave the president unchallenged control over the Georgian political system. He could fully control the composition of the cabinet and even appoint the prime minister, although subject to parliament’s approval. The prime minister needed the president’s consent to appoint any other cabinet minister. In December

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697 David Losaberidze, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 1, 2012.

698 This issue did reappear in 2009, but in a different context (See footnote 74 in chapter one). There were other minor developments too. For instance, on December 14, 2006, on the president’s initiative the parliament adopted constitutional changes according to which the president would no longer be the chairman of the Justice Council. Instead, Chairman of the Supreme Court would replace him. That meant that the president would no longer have the power to appoint the judges (“Parliament Endorses Constitutional Amendments,” Civil Georgia, December 14, 2006, accessed October 23, 2013, http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=14299&search=). This change, however, has not diminished the president’s executive power much, if at all. Also, as I mentioned in chapter one, in March 2013 the opposition-controlled parliament somewhat limited the president’s powers, depriving president Saakashvili the authority to appoint and dismiss the government without the parliament’s consent. Nevertheless, this happened after UNM lost power and the president was counting his last months in office.

699 Furthermore, it was the president, not the prime minister or some legislative faction or coalition, who submitted the composition of the cabinet to the parliament. Also, the president, rather than the prime minister, accepted or declined the resignation of the cabinet or individual cabinet members.
2005, Saakashvili further strengthened his control over the cabinet through new constitutional amendments that gave him the power to dismiss the Ministers of Defense and Internal Affairs\(^{700}\) and now brought these two key power agencies under the president’s direct control. Moreover, the president acquired the authority to dismiss the entire cabinet.\(^{701}\)

Sakashvili’s power to appoint and dismiss the prime ministers insulated him from potential confrontations with prime ministers, unlike president Yushchenko whose entire term in office was spent in destructive conflicts with the hostile heads of the cabinets from the opposition. From 2005 to 2012, the Georgian president selected all prime ministers at his discretion, always appointing his obedient individuals: Zurab Noghaideli, Lado Gurgenidze, Grigol Mgaloblishvili, Nika Gilauri, and Vano Merabishvili.\(^{702}\) If any Georgian prime minister posed a challenge to the president, Saakashvili could immediately remove him from office with no danger of a political crisis. In fact, even when not experiencing problems with his prime ministers, president Saakashvili regularly replaced them with ease whenever he felt that their replacement was politically more expedient for him.\(^{703}\)

The constitutional changes gave Saakashvili control over the appointment not just of prime minister but of every minister, eradicting any possibility of aggressive challenge from the

\(^{700}\) The president could nominate a candidate for the prosecutor general but parliament still had power to approve the appointment.

\(^{701}\) See the Constitution of Georgia.

\(^{702}\) This is especially true since the time of Zurab Zhvania’s death in February 2005, as Zhvania can hardly be considered as an obedient prime minister. Nevertheless, even Zhvania never created significant problems for president Saakashvili. Moreover, the assessment laid out here of the impact of the 2004 constitutional amendments on the leadership durability applies only to the period until October 2012, when the president Saakashvili’s party lost the parliamentary elections and opposition GD coalition formed a new government and elected the new prime minister. From this point, Saakashvili had, in fact, lost power.

\(^{703}\) For instance, after the November 2007 crackdown on the opposition, prime minister Zurab Noghaideli was replaced with Lado Gurgenidze and after the August 2008 Russian-Georgian war, prime minister Lado Gurgenidze was replaced with Grigol Mgaloblishvili. In both cases the government tried to send out the message of political change and renewal, although none of them came.
cabinet. Saakashvili regularly removed ministers as soon as they became a threat to his grip on power. For instance, in November 2006, Saakashvili removed his former friend and political ally Irakli Okruashvili from the post of the Defense Minister\textsuperscript{704} when the latter turned the ministry into an increasingly closed and non-transparent agency. To keep ministers weak and dependent on the president, Saakashvili engaged in “government merry-go-round” by shuffling individuals from one agency to another, depriving them of the time and opportunity necessary to strengthen their positions anywhere. The opposition politician David Zurabishvili even labeled the president’s tactic of frequent reshuffling of agency heads as “Saakashvili’s model” of governance, which the president customarily used to ensure the personal loyalty of his ministers.\textsuperscript{705} In Ukraine, president Yushchenko had no similar power: parliament and the head of the cabinet had the authority to appoint and dismiss ministers. As chapter four discussed, the Ukrainian legislature and head of the cabinet regularly used their power to oust the president’s loyal ministers and hence, weaken the president.

The 2004 constitutional amendments gave the Georgian president overwhelming powers. He had authority to control the cabinet’s policy-making process. The prime minister became responsible to the president (as well as to the parliament). The president even acquired the right to suspend or abrogate acts of the government if they contradicted the constitution, international

\textsuperscript{704} News program \textit{Courieri}, aired November 10, 2006, on Rustavi 2. In fact, Saakashvili appointed Okruashvili as a Minister of Economy, but as it turned out, against Okruashvili’s wishes. A week after, disgruntled Okruashvili resigned from his new post (“Okruashvili Quits Government,” Civil Georgia, November 17, 2006, accessed October 22, 2013, \url{http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=14113&search=}).

\textsuperscript{705} David Zurabishvili, interviewed by the news program Echo, \textit{TV 9}, July 18, 2012. Zurabishvili and the opposition in general, however, did not explicitly state that “government merry-go-rounds” were designed to keep ministers weak and dependent on the president. They thought that Saakashvili used this tactic simply to keep his loyal cadres in key positions. Some even argued that Saakashvili lacked loyal and professional cadres and that is why he shuffled them around.
treaties, agreements, laws, or the President’s normative acts. Without the president’s consent the cabinet could not even submit a State Budget to the Parliament.\(^{706}\)

Consequently, president Saakashvili easily set and executed all his reforms and policies without encountering challenges from any branch of the government. In fact, my research in Georgia has not found even a single case when either cabinet or the parliament blocked a president-initiated project or launched its own project to undermine the president’s program. Actually, the president’s control over the policy-making process was so complete that as a Georgian journalist Aleko Elisashvili wittily noted, Saakashvili “personally decided even the installment of statues in the country.”\(^{707}\) Contrary to this, as chapter four argued, Ukraine’s president lacked control over the cabinet’s policy-making process: hostile cabinets and the parliaments constantly torpedoed almost every Yushchenko policy initiative, bringing the Ukrainian president’s agenda to a halt.

For the first time in independent Georgia’s history, the constitutional changes granted the Georgian president the right to dismiss parliament if the legislature failed to approve the State Budget within three months after the cabinet submitted it. He could also dismiss them if the legislature failed to approve the president-nominated prime minister, the cabinet, and its program. And if the parliament failed to approve president’s nominee for the prime minister, the president alone could appoint the head of the cabinet without the parliament’s consent.\(^{708}\)

Indeed, president Saakashvili never faced the need to dismiss the parliament in the years 2004-2012. In fact, the president’s party, due to its landslide victories in the 2004 and 2008

\(^{706}\) See the Constitution of the Republic of Georgia.

\(^{707}\) Political talk show Barieri, aired February 3, 2012, on Kavkasia TV.

\(^{708}\) See the Constitution of the Republic of Georgia. Moreover, all of the parliament’s draft laws already before the constitutional changes were the subject to the president’s approval.
legislative elections came to control solid majority of parliamentary seats. As Guram Chakhvadze, the opposition MP from the National-Democratic Party, stated in the interview, during Saakashvili’s years “the parliament [was] not a force to be taken into account by the executive branch, [as] the ruling party [in the legislature] and the government merged with one another,” the fact which prevented the parliament to provide any counterbalance to the executive branch.\footnote{Chakhvadze, interview by author.} Additionally, the constant threat of dismissal hanging over MPs’ heads surely discouraged legislature from defying the president over such key issues as the approval of the state budget, the prime minister, the cabinet, and its program—strong pressure to assure overall loyalty to the head of state. In contrast, the Ukrainian president had nothing resembling such power.\footnote{Actually, Ukraine’s president could dismiss parliament under just three conditions: 1) if it failed to form a coalition of parliamentary factions within one month; 2) if it failed to form the cabinet of ministers within sixty days after the dismissal of the previous cabinet; 3) if plenary sessions failed to start within thirty days of one scheduled session of the parliament (see Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “On Amending”).} In fact, approval of the state budget, the prime minister, the cabinet, and its program—the vital issues for Yushchenko’s administration became almost entirely the prerogative of the parliament. Control over these issues, as chapter four illustrated, allowed the legislature to paralyze Yushchenko’s administration.

Overall, the Georgian coalition succeeded where Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions failed: it managed to solve the issue of the executive power quickly, increasing the president’s already extensive authority. The resolution of this question deprived the Georgian opposition an opportunity to politicize the issue and use it undermine the new government. This, on its part, helped the Georgian leadership attain much greater stability than other two post-uprising leaderships did and subsequently, provided more favorable environment for the continuity of the Georgian government.
6.4 Successful Reforms, Leading to Increased State Capacity and Popular Support

The third factor that helped the Georgian leadership to stay in power longer than the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments was its ability to implement fundamental, often controversial yet essential reforms. The Georgian government’s success in carrying out far-reaching reforms owes much to the fact that the small, cohesive Georgian coalition managed to agree on reform agenda. As chapters four and five illustrate, the large, eclectic Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions failed to agree on reform program which then contributed to their failure to implement reforms.

From the very start of coming to power, the Georgian coalition’s key leaders, Mikhail Saakashvili, Zurab Zhvania, and Nino Burjanadze repeatedly stated that the new government needed immediately to implement radical socioeconomic and political reforms in order to rescue Georgia from deep crisis. For instance, one week after the Rose Revolution Zhvania vowed to create new system of governance and fundamentally reorganize the existing structures. “The real revolution starts now,” he said, “We are opening a new page in our history and we should use this chance as much as possible,” assertively declared Zhvania.711 Similarly, Burjanadze vowed that the parliament was ready to endorse proposals and decisions “which [would] improve Georgians’ living standards,” and emphasized that the new authorities “should not disappoint expectations of those people who staged revolution of roses.”712 Their statements were not just empty words: they backed rhetoric with actions. The coalition leaders, Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania and Parliamentary Speaker Nino Burjanadze consistently supported all the president’s reform initiatives, often aggressively pushing them both in the cabinet of ministers and the


712 News program Courieri, aired April 22, 2004, on Rustavi 2. Burjanadze delivered this speech to the new parliament, elected in March 2004, when the latter elected her as its chairperson.
As a result, the cabinet and the parliament quickly discussed and adopted police reform, administrative reform, tax reform, anti-criminal legislation, and every other reform bill that Saakashvili’s administration initiated. In fact, after carefully tracing the reform process in Georgia, I did not encounter even one instance when any of the coalition partners opposed, let alone thwarted, the president’s any reform proposal.

The coalition bonded even more strongly when reform projects came under attack from the opposition or disenchanted public. For instance, as part of the 2005 higher education reform, the Ministry of Education abolished the privilege of students at one of the Georgian medical preparatory school (so called State Medical College) to enroll at Tbilisi State Medical University without entrance examinations. Students responded in March 2005 by staging street protests. Several dozen even began hunger strikes to demand that the privilege be restored. The ministry, however, did not back down. The opposition, sensing the opportunity to politicize this issue, supported students and even initiated an impeachment proposal against Education Minister Alexander Lomaia. During this standoff, Parliamentary Speaker Nino Burjanadze put her full support behind Lomaia, who had never even been her political ally, just a coalition partner. Moreover, she made sure that the parliament rejected the opposition’s impeachment proposal by 80 votes against 21. The education reform continued.

Such unity allowed the new government to engage Georgia in most sweeping reforms that the country ever experienced in its modern history. First and foremost came a crackdown on corruption at all levels at almost all state institutions. Anti-corruption became the trademark of

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715 On these events see for instance news program Courieri, aired March 15, 22, 2005, on Rustavi 2.
the new administration’s reform agenda. Consequently, the government fired thousands of old corrupt cadres from various public agencies. Many of Shevardnadze-era high ranking bureaucrats were arrested: some were prosecuted, others bought their freedom by paying huge fines (sometimes as high as USD 10 million) after reaching plea bargaining agreements. The government also vigorously arrested and prosecuted corrupt officials among its own ranks. In 2003-2010, about 1,000 public officials faced corruption charges. Among them were 6 MPs, 15 deputy ministers, and 31 deputy chairpersons of city councils. Moreover, the government established strict oversight at public agencies to prevent corrupt practices.

The government also fundamentally reformed the state’s entire coercive apparatus. The merger of the Ministry of Security into the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), as well as other

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716 Ex-president Shevardnadze’s son-in-law even paid USD15.5 million (“Shevardnadze’s Relative Released after Paying $15.5 million," Civil Georgia, April 26, 2004, accessed October 30, 2013, http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=6771&search=). Although there were suspicions that some corrupt officials paid higher fines, but the government concealed them for personal gains or to accumulate necessary funds for some unidentified projects.


718 Alexander Kupatadze, “Similar Events, Different Outcomes: Accounting for Divergent Corruption Patterns in Post-Revolution Georgia and Ukraine,” *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, 26 (April 2011): 2. It has to be noted, however, that high level corruption remained a problem in Georgia. One of its illustrations was the widespread practice of public contracts being awarded via nepotism and cronyism to those in the government or close to the government (Kupatadze, “Transitions,”108. Also, Levan Avalishvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 22, 2012; Davitashvili, interview by author; Dzidziguri, interview by author; Gamkrelide, interview by author; Kitsmarishvili, interview by author; Girogi Kldiashvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 22, 2012; Nino Zuriaishvili, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 12, 2012.


mergers and restructurings within MIA greatly increased this key power institution’s coordination and effectiveness. While retaining some old cadres with valuable work experience, the government cut the overall number of employees at power agencies from 53,000 to 22,000, gradually replacing them with new cadres, mostly hired on the basis of competitive tests. Furthermore, MIA boosted its funding, increased the number of internal intelligence spies, attained new surveillance technologies and other material equipment, and formed a united system of information acquisition and utilization. The administration disbanded the notoriously corrupt and ineffective Traffic Police, firing 16,000 police officers.


723 Darchiashvili, “Usaprkhoebis seqtoris reporma,” 35; Krunic and Siradze, 54. Actually numbers of fired MIA employees vary. According to some estimates, overall, MIA has been downsized from 56 thousand to 33 thousand (Alexander Kupatadze, George Siradze, and George Mitagvaria, “Policing and Police Reform in Georgia,” in Organized Crime and Corruption in Georgia, ed. Louise Shelley, Erik R. Scott, and Antony Latta, 93-110 [New York: Routledge, 2012]). Other estimates put the number of downsized personnel from 40 thousand employees to 17 thousand (see, Duncan Hiscock, “The Commercialization of Post-Soviet Private Security,” in Private Actors and Security Governance, ed. Alan Bryden and Marina Caparini, 129-148 [Zurich: LIT Verlag, 2006]). However, it is not entirely clear whether these numbers include just MIA employees or former Ministry of Security’s employees as well.


726 Two Anonymous high ranking Georgian security officials, interviews by author, Tbilisi Georgia, February 4, 12, 2012.

overnight. In its place they created new, professional, well-equipped, well-paid, well-trained, and relatively corruption-free Patrol Police. In addition, the administration’s reforms in the army established civilian control over the military. A massive rearmament and retraining program turned the rag-tag Georgian army into formidable military force. In general, the reforms in power agencies turned out to be effective.

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728 Puppo, 4.

729 On Patrol Police reform see, Krunic and Siradze, 24, 54; Devlin, 5-8; Puppo, 1; Zachary Fillingham, “Nation Building and Police Reform: Lessons from Georgia,” Geopolitical Monitor (July 4, 2012), accessed June 29, 2013, http://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/nation-building-police-reform-lessons-from-georgia-4696; The World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms,” 16-18; Darchiashvili, “Usaprkhoebis seqtoris reporma,” 35; Krunic and Siradze, 55. In fact, Patrol Police enjoyed 84 percent popular support by the October 2010 poll of the International Republican Institute (The poll quoted in the World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms,” 22). Actually, the Patrol Police ranked as the third most popular institution after the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Army according to another poll by the International Republican Institute (The poll quoted in Devlin, 10-11). Nevertheless, some problems in the police remained, such as rooting out corruption among mid-level ranks and inadequate and poor training of newly recruited law enforcement employees (Devlin, 10). Moreover, extensive police reforms did not take place without serious side effects. Police have become tightly centralized and politicized (Puppo, 3). Furthermore, Georgian police have often been criticized not only for being used as a tool of political control, but also for heavy-handedness and brutality (Kakachia and O’Shea, 5; Gavin Slade, “Georgia: Politics of Punishment,” Open Democracy, September 30, 2012, accessed November 25, 2013, http://www.opendemocracy.net/gavin-slade/georgia-politics-of-punishment; Also, Alasania, interview by author. Lack of accountability, human rights abuses, and persistent patronalism in hiring new cadres and reporting on corruption were prevailing in law enforcement agencies (Puppo, 2-4; Rondeli, interview by author). Above all, the role and power of police increased so much that some even thought Georgia looked like a benign police state (Thomas De Waal, “Reform in Georgia,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 20, 2011, accessed November 2, 2014, http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/06/20/reform-in-georgia).


731 Although, during August 2008 five-day Russian-Georgian war Georgian forces were quickly overrun by the Russian invading army (for instance, see Ronald D. Asmus, A Little War that Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012]), Georgian military still represented unchallenged and most powerful force domestically, before and after the war, against any potential challenger to the government. This is proved by the fact that the Georgian military succeeded to put down within two days the armed rebellion of the Georgian warlord Emzar Kvitsiani in July 2006 in the northwestern mountainous Georgian region of Kodori Gorge (News program Courieri, aired July 25-27, 2006, on Rustavi 2). Moreover, in May 2009, the government, relying on its loyal troops and security services, quickly thwarted military mutiny, organized by a small group of officers at Mukhravani military base in eastern Georgia, near capital Tbilisi (“Officials Say Russian-Backed Mutiny is thwarted,” Civil Georgia, May 5, 2009, accessed November 7, 2013, http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=20851&search=).

732 Those close to the government considered the reforms in the coercive apparatus as one of the most important reforms that strengthened the new government (Darchiashvili, interview by author; Alexander Lomaia, Interview by author, New York City, March 21, 2012; Ghia Nodia, interview by author, Tbilisi, Georgia, January 13, 2012).
Furthermore, the Georgian leadership cracked down on the organized criminal world and actually broke their power. The police arrested and prosecuted dozens of “thieves in law” (equivalent of Italian mafia boss), while others fled the country. The government confiscated many of their properties. Overall, the administration eliminated the criminal world’s powerful influence over the Georgian economy, politics, and social culture at large.

Tax collection had been the country’s other chronic problem. The government established rigorous anti-corruption and administrative reforms within the failing tax collection system and customs service, and was able to increase tax revenue collection by 400 percent in 2004-2009 and customs revenue collection by almost 600 percent in 2003-2008.

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736 Ibid, 37-44.

737 Lado Gurgenidze, “Georgia’s Search for Economic Liberty: A Blueprint for Reform in Developing Economies (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 2009), 2, accessed June 30, 2013, http://www.aei.org/files/2009/06/04/02%20DPO%20June%202009%20newg.pdf. Areshidze, however, is more reserved about government’s achievements in state revenue increase. He acknowledges that state budget increased from Georgian Lari (GEL) 1.18 billion in 2003 to GEL 1.77 billion in 2004 (50 percent increase). Nevertheless, he argues that collection of direct taxes remained problematic for the new government, as collection increased by mere 12 percent to GEL 901. The change in the total budget number was possible mainly because of foreign grants, social-tax income and non-tax income (193-194).
The aggressive tax collection campaign was accompanied by massive tax cuts and business deregulation. The government reduced the overall number of taxes from 21 to 7, cut tax rates, and simplified tax filing.739 Between 2005 and 2011 they removed the requirements for 772 of 909 kinds of business licenses and permits, closed 20 of 40 inspection agencies, and created “one stop shops” so that businesses could apply for a license at one office.740

The administrative reforms were equally drastic. At the national level, the government ruthlessly cut the number of ministries from 18 to 13 and amalgamated various departments with overlapping functions.741 Locally, the administration merged 1,100 local self-governments with territorial districts (rayons, renamed municipalities), reducing the number of local governments to 67. The central government assumed authority for providing education, healthcare, and social assistance, all previously local government functions.742 The administration laid off half of

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739 Ibid, 29-31; Bennet, 10.


741 Bennet, 7.

742 The World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms,” 84-86.
As tax revenues increased and the number of public employees halved, the government gradually increased salaries 15-fold. In place of old, ineffective employees the government began to hire and train new, young, and motivated cadres at all government agencies.

Since the 1991-1992 civil war, Georgia’s government had failed in delivering public goods and services. Saakashvili’s administration achieved significant improvement of municipal infrastructure and municipal service delivery. Municipal roads’ rehabilitation increased from 10 percent to 75 percent. Electricity was delivered around the clock and water delivery increased from 4 hours to 16 hours a day. The government dealt with the persistent problem of non-payments for utility services, increasing collection rates from 20-30 percent in early 2000s to 70-75 percent in 2011. In addition, the administration repaid months of arrears to public employees and pensioners and ensured regular payments of wages. Reforms in public and civil registry agencies created simplified, professional, and corruption-free service (known as Public Service Halls as of 2011). Corruption in university entrance examinations was replaced with a

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743 Kupatadze, “Similar Events,” 2; Bennet, 6-10.
744 The World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms,” 84-86.
745 Kupatadze, “Similar Events,” 2; Bennet, 6-10.
746 For instance, see Bennet, 10-11. In fact, the Georgian government during Saakashvili’s years in office was a young government, the age of ministers ranging from mid-20s to mid-30s. Generational change, from old to new generation, was one of the trademarks of Saakashvili’s rule.
748 For the reforms in the energy sector see, The World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms, 45-51.
749 For reforms in municipal services see, The World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms,” 83-89.
standardized United National Examination and further reforms in higher education offered higher quality education to public.\textsuperscript{751}

The Georgian leadership’s comprehensive and successful reforms contributed to rapid and significant increase of Georgia’s state capacity. For instance, as the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators show, Georgia’s score of Governance Effectiveness increased from -0.50 in 2003 to 0.57 in 2012, staggering 107 point increase under the new leadership. Moreover, the country’s Control of Corruption score increased from -0.65 in 2003 to 0.25 in 2012, an overall 90 point improvement (see Table 18).

\begin{table}[h]
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Governance Effectiveness & -0.50 & -0.49 & -0.42 & -0.18 & 0.11 & 0.30 & 0.28 & 0.29 & 0.55 & 0.57 \\
Rule of Law & -1.00 & -0.67 & -0.73 & -0.47 & -0.34 & -0.26 & -0.21 & -0.21 & -0.13 & -0.03 \\
Control of Corruption & -0.65 & -0.61 & -0.36 & -0.04 & -0.25 & -0.22 & -0.22 & -0.12 & -0.02 & 0.25 \\
Regulatory Quality & -0.66 & -0.46 & -0.51 & -0.12 & 0.28 & 0.48 & 0.52 & 0.59 & 0.65 & 0.68 \\
Political Stability and Absence of Violence & -1.35 & -0.86 & -0.68 & -0.94 & -0.62 & -0.91 & -0.94 & -0.72 & -0.66 & -0.67 \\
Voice and Accountability & -0.21 & -0.15 & -0.12 & -0.14 & -0.29 & -0.29 & -0.22 & -0.18 & -0.21 & -0.02 \\
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\end{tabular}
\caption{Georgia's state capacity, 2003-2012}
\end{table}


Under the new leadership Georgia showed impressive progress on all indicators, while Ukraine demonstrated further regress on four indicators, showing some progress on Political Stability and Absence of Violence, as well as on Voice and Accountability. Kyrgyzstan showed regress or stagnation on five indicators and only limited improvement on Political Stability and

\textsuperscript{751} For reforms in higher education, see, The World Bank, “Chronicling Georgia’s Reforms,” 75-82.
Absence of Violence. (For comparison see chapters four and five for Ukraine’s and Kyrgyzstan’s scores, respectively).

More specifically, Georgia far outperformed Ukraine on the first four indicators by extent of improvement (measuring the extent of improvement by the difference between each indicator’s beginning and the final score), as well as by the final level of improvement (measuring the final level of improvement by the final score of each indicator). On the Political Stability and Absence of Violence indicator, Ukraine’s final level of improvement with the score of -0.31 was higher in comparison to Georgia’s -0.67. Nevertheless, Georgia had greater extent of improvement on this indicator, increasing its score by 68 points (from -1.35 to -0.67) in comparison to Ukraine’s just 17 point improvement (from the score of -0.48 to -0.31). On the Voice and Accountability indicator Ukraine outperformed Georgia both on the extent, as well as on the final level of improvement. Although, as I have mentioned above, Georgia showed progress on this indicator too.

Georgia far outperformed Kyrgyzstan on five indicators by the extent of improvements, as well as by the final level of improvements. The exception was Political Stability and Absence of Violence, where Kyrgyzstan slightly outperformed Georgia by the final level of improvement. Kyrgyzstan registered the score of -0.64 against Georgia’s -0.67. Nevertheless, Georgia outperformed Kyrgyzstan by the extent of improvement. Georgia’s score of Political Stability and Absence of Violence improved by 68 points (from -1.35 to -0.67), while Kyrgyzstan’s improved by 52 points (from -1.16 to -0.64).

Success in addressing many of Georgia’s most crucial problems produced solid popular support for the country’s leadership and helped Saakashvili’s administration stay in power. As

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752 This partially can be explained by the fact that democratization process certainly has not been the Georgian leadership’s priority.
the years went on, the president’s public support gradually fell from staggering 96 percent that he won in the January 2004 presidential elections. Nevertheless, from 2004 to 2012, Saakashvili’s reforms aided in maintaining strong popular support for the political leadership. According to polls by the Tbilisi-based Georgian Opinion Research Business International (GORBI), between 2004 and August 2012 the percentage of those who thought that the president was doing his job well never fell below 55 percent\(^{753}\) (See Table 19). As Ghia Nodia, one of the leaders of the Georgian civil society,\(^{754}\) summarized in the interview, “regardless of the fact that…there [were] many people dissatisfied [with the authorities, Saakashvili still] maintained popularity…[and] support of “critical mass” [of people]. The government achieved this by establishing the…effective governance and providing public goods…which significant part of society considered as a positive occurrence…”\(^{755}\)

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<td>Approve the president’s performance</td>
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Source: GORBI polls.

\(^{753}\) The results represent the aggregate percentage of those respondents who thought that the president Saakashvili was doing his job “undoubtedly well” or “better than others” (GORBI, 2004-2013). Also, it has to be mentioned here that one brief period when Saakashvili’s public support did fall below 55 percent was during the January 2008 presidential election. Saakashvili garnered 53.47 percent of total votes in that election.

\(^{754}\) Nodia also served as a Minister of Education and Science in January-December of 2008.

\(^{755}\) Nodia, interview by author.
After August 2012, however, a number of factors\(^\text{756}\) sent Saakashvili’s approval ratings into free fall. First came the notorious September 2012 prisoner abuse scandal that facilitated the defeat of Saakashvili’s ruling party in the October 2012 parliamentary elections.\(^\text{757}\) Moreover, in 2012-2013, the highly conflict-ridden cohabitation with the new prime minister from the opposition GD coalition further undermined the president’s popular standing. Nevertheless, the strong popular support that the Georgian leadership built as a result of many successful reforms in 2004-2012 guaranteed it greater longevity than the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz leaderships achieved.

6.5 Conclusion

As this chapter illustrated by the example of Georgia, the independent variable, a small, cohesive coalition, favored the emergence of three intervening variables: inactive opposition; absence of the politicized issue of executive power; and successful reforms, leading to increased state capacity and popular support. Consequently, these three intervening variables led to the continuity of Saakashvili’s administration.

Specifically, the chapter illustrated how the small, cohesive Georgian coalition managed to maintain unity, particularly during the first three years of its rule. Since no major defections occurred within the alliance the Georgian coalition remained inactive, allowing Saakashvili’s

\(^{756}\) Such as Saakashvili’s authoritarian tendencies, power abuses, police violence, persistent economic hardships, and the monopolization of business sector by those close to the government or in the government (Georgians referred to the monopolization of business sector as “elite corruption” [Chakhvadze, interview by author]).

\(^{757}\) On September 18, 2012, a whistle-blower, the former prison guard Vladimir (Lado) Bedukadze, released secret videos which showed Georgian prisoners at Gldani # 8 prison in capital Tbilisi being repeatedly and viciously beaten by prison guards and raped using broom handles. The videos confirmed the widely held assumptions among the Georgian public about ongoing massive abuses of inmates in Georgian prisons under Saakashvili’s rule. These revelations caused general outrage against the Georgian government that was already becoming increasingly unpopular because of systematic power abuses, authoritarian rule, and economic hardships in the country (on Georgian prison abuse scandal see for instance, William Dunbar, “Georgia’s Abu Ghraib: The horrific stories of prisoner abuse,” \textit{Independent}, September 20, 2012, accessed November 14, 2013, \url{http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/georgias-abu-ghraib-the-horrific-stories-of-prisoner-abuse-8160286.html}.}
administration to strengthen its hold on power. Defections reactivated the opposition starting in 2007, but the government remained strong enough to repel the attacks of the reinvigorated opposition and keep power till 2012-2013.

Moreover, this chapter demonstrated that the small, cohesive Georgian coalition swiftly ended debate about the president’s executive power and increased the president’s already vast authority. This deprived the Georgian opposition of the chance to politicize the issue of executive power and thus to undermine Saakashvili’s administration.

Furthermore, this chapter showed that the small, cohesive Georgian coalition consistently maintained unity on the reform agenda, enabling drastic socioeconomic and political reforms. The successful reforms consequently helped to increase state capacity and produce solid popular support for President Saakashvili, extending his administration’s hold on power. The next and the last chapter of this dissertation lays out the main findings and conclusions of this work and its contribution to the theory development on post-uprising leadership continuity.
Chapter Seven

Conclusions

7.1 Main Findings

Political science literature which focuses on the causes of the post-uprising leadership change and continuity is scarce. Consequently, there is no systematic theory or even an explanation that would shed light why some post-mobilization governments fall quickly while others stay in power longer. My dissertation focused on this very theme. Specifically, the main task of this dissertation was to study the causes of the post-Color Revolution leadership change and continuity in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia in order to expand scholarly knowledge about post-mobilization leadership durability. My extensive field research in those three countries included over 130 interviews with local politicians, academics, intellectuals, civil society leaders, and businessmen in English, Georgian, and Russian. I have also acquired vast data from multiple print and internet sources in those languages.

Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia were chosen because though they had largely similar pre-Color Revolution socioeconomic and political conditions and historical backgrounds, their post-Color Revolution governments ended up with two very different outcomes. The Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments fell roughly within five years after taking power. The Georgian leadership endured longer. The main findings of this dissertation explain these two diverse outcomes: their examples help us understand the causes of post-mobilization leadership fall and survival in general. I demonstrate how the independent variable coalition size and cohesion, affects emergence of the three intervening variables: active or inactive opposition, politicized

\[758\] See chapter one for comparison.
issue of executive power, and failure or ability to reform. Then I illustrate the influence of these three intervening variables on leadership change and continuity. Overall, the dissertation’s findings demonstrate that it is short-term structural factors (such as for instance, coalition size and cohesion or ability to reform), rather than long-term structural or institutional factors (such as, for instance, a pattern of historical development, education level, or differences among social and state institutions) which influence post-uprising leadership durability.

After presenting the main findings of the dissertation I outline this work’s contribution to political science literature. In the third section of this chapter I discuss the dissertation’s theoretical applicability to other cases in regions beyond the former Soviet Union. In the last section, I suggest the direction for future research on post-mobilization leadership change and continuity.

7.1.1 Coalition Size and Cohesion

There is a widely held common belief that all-inclusive, large ruling coalitions are good for democracy. While large and all inclusive coalitions might be good for democracy, they may not be so helpful for the post-uprising leadership survival and political stability. In fact, as this dissertation illustrates, large ruling coalitions can facilitate ferocious political conflicts and lead to a speedy downfall of post-mobilization governments.

A large coalition is usually internally diverse because it brings together a number of political parties with disparate ideological beliefs and political goals. That wide array of differences among its members increases the likelihood that a large, fragmented coalition will disintegrate. Nevertheless, so long as a large coalition is in opposition to an incumbent government, that coalition finds it relatively easy to maintain at least a nominal unity because its
members share the same goal of ousting the serving ruler.\textsuperscript{759} The real problems start once a coalition achieves that goal and comes to power: a ruling coalition’s goals are different from an opposition coalition. At that point, political disagreements become more intense and a coalition disintegrates. This is what happened to post-Color Revolution Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions, as illustrated in chapters four and five respectively. The Ukrainian Orange coalition, which united about twenty diverse political parties and groups, began to disintegrate rapidly over various political disagreements eight months after it ousted president Kuchma and the coalition leader Viktor Yushchenko became president. Similarly, the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition fell apart over key policy differences less than a year after it deposed president Akayev and captured power. Neither Ukrainian president Yushchenko, nor Kyrgyz president Bakiyev managed to hold together their broad, heterogeneous coalitions.

Small, cohesive coalitions are more resilient, resisting fragmentation even after they achieve their goal and come to power. This is due to the fact that in small coalitions the number of coalition member parties is lower than in large coalitions and hence, small coalitions are ideologically less diverse. Moreover, even if differences occur within the small coalition, its small size and lesser range of ideological diversity help coalition partners to solve their differences within their narrow circle easily and rapidly. Chapter six demonstrated how the small, cohesive Georgian coalition remained united. President Saakashvili, for example, found it easy to manage his small alliance: he simply threatened to dismiss two feuding cabinet ministers, quickly solving a potential conflict. The larger view shows that the small and ideologically homogenous Georgian coalition not only did not disintegrate, but even managed to strengthen its

\textsuperscript{759} Although, an opposition coalition, before it becomes a ruling coalition, still can experience severe disagreements within its ranks, as I also argue below in this section.
cohesion by merging its two major ideologically similar parties, NM and BD, into one political party, UNM. 

7.1.2 Active vs. Inactive Opposition

Coalition size and cohesion and its disintegration or unity alone make no direct impact on the post-uprising leadership durability. It’s the processes that they set in motion which then affect government change or continuity. In particular, ruling coalition disintegration involves mass defection of its members to the opposition. This whole process of coalition disintegration and defection facilitates the emergence of the active opposition both because the opposition’s ranks swell by the former coalition members and, the disgruntled former coalition members are now willing and ready to take on the ruling coalition. The key feature of an active opposition is that it stays dynamic, constantly challenging and undermining the leadership, and eventually ousting it by whatever means it can, whether elections or popular uprising. If there is no active opposition, there is simply no force that can attack, destabilize, and finally oust the government; therefore, the leadership enjoys stability and manages to stay in power.

The Ukrainian, Kyrgyz, and Georgian cases (described in chapters four, five, and six respectively) clearly illustrate how important the factor of coalition size and cohesion is in the emergence of the active opposition and then how essential the factor of active opposition is in the post-uprising leadership change or continuity. In Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, where large, fragmented coalitions disintegrated and its members defected to the opposition en mass, active oppositions have emerged. These active oppositions then managed to fundamentally destabilize the leaderships during their entire terms in office and eventually deposed them, albeit by

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As I have argued in chapter six, three small parties broke away from the coalition and moved into opposition. Their defection, however, did not have any negative impact on the coalition unity, since the Georgian coalition never experienced such mass defections as Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions witnessed.
different means.\textsuperscript{761} But Georgian leadership, on the other hand, was helped by the fact that a small, cohesive ruling coalition maintained unity. Since no former coalition members defected, the opposition remained inactive.\textsuperscript{762} Hence, the government, largely unchallenged by the opposition, enjoyed much-needed stability and managed to retain power.\textsuperscript{763}

7.1.3 The Politicized Issue of Executive Power

The effect of coalition size and cohesion goes much further than just facilitating the emergence of active (or inactive) opposition. It may also contribute to the emergence of the politicized issue of executive power. Specifically, a large, fragmented coalition may sometimes experience disagreements not only after it comes to power, but even before it comes to power. In fact, a large, fragmented coalition may even go against the political will of its own leader and presidential candidate. This is especially true when the self-interest of powerful members of the coalition know that their presidential candidate will become the next president (through election or popular uprising). If they can act before the coalition leader becomes a president, these members try to impose significant limitations on the executive powers of the next president and expand the powers of parliament (or cabinet, or both of the parliament and the cabinet), where they think that they will have more influence. This way, coalition members will attempt to weaken the next president in order to secure or even strengthen their own positions in a new, post-mobilization power configuration. Certainly, they themselves do not necessarily come up with the idea of limiting president’s executive power, but they can capitalize on an already

\textsuperscript{761} Ukrainian opposition ousted president Yushchenko via elections, while Kyrgyz opposition deposed president Bakiyev through violent popular uprising. See chapters four and five for Ukrainian and Kyrgyz cases, respectively.

\textsuperscript{762} As I have stated in chapter six, as well as in the footnote above, three small parties left the Georgian coalition and joined the opposition. Nevertheless, their defection did not re激活 the opposition as no other coalition members defected. In fact, those three parties ended up on the margins of the Georgian politics for several years.

\textsuperscript{763} As I have argued in chapter six, the Georgian ruling coalition also experienced some high profile defections to the opposition. Nevertheless, these defections took place three years after the coalition’s ascent to power. By that time, the government was in strong position to defeat the opposition repeatedly and keep power for nine years.
existing debate about this question. Thus, they politicize the issue of president’s executive power and use it to their own advantage.

As chapter four showed, this is what occurred in Ukraine during the Orange Revolution. The Orange coalition leader Viktor Yushchenko was strongly against limiting the next president’s (therefore his own) powers. Nevertheless, powerful political and business actors within Ukraine’s Orange coalition opposed the Orange coalition leader on this issue, siding instead with the incumbent (thus, the pre-Orange Revolution) regime that was also pushing hard to curtail the next president’s powers. Lacking support from his coalition, Yushchenko finally compromised and made a deal with the outgoing government that significantly limited the next president’s authority and increasing that of parliament and the cabinet. As a result, the president effectively lost control over the appointment of the prime minister and most cabinet ministers as well as over the cabinet’s policy making process. All these became the prerogative of the parliament and the prime minister.

As this dissertation showed, limited presidential authority can be a particularly powerful impediment to the post-mobilization leadership’s maintaining power. A post-uprising president desperately needs strong executive powers, primarily to tackle the wide array of pressing socioeconomic and political problems that led to the popular revolt against the previous government in the first place. If the president does not have sufficient executive powers, opposition forces can halt the president’s reformist policies, destabilize his rule, and ultimately oust the weakened president.

This is precisely what took place in Ukraine, discussed in chapter four. The opposition, controlling both cabinet and the parliament,764 stalled nearly every policy initiative and entire

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764 As I demonstrated in chapter four, president Yushchenko’s party repeatedly lost parliamentary elections during his term in office, while the opposition parties won majority of seats in the legislature. Thus, the president lost
reform agenda of the president. Moreover, the opposition engaged the president in ferocious political conflicts in order to grab more powers from him and in the process caused constant political stalemate. Such conflicts and stalemates, in turn, undermined the president, facilitating his eventual downfall. In other words, the opposition politicized the issue of executive power, destabilized the president, and eventually deposed him.

Furthermore, a large, fragmented coalition can contribute to the politicization of the issue of executive power—and hence, to the fall of the post-uprising leadership— even if it fails to limit the president’s powers. Kyrgyzstan’s case, discussed in chapter five, is a clear example of this point. As I have argued, Kyrgyzstan’s post-mobilization government inherited an intense political debate about limiting the president’s authority from the previous government. Once the large, fragmented Kyrgyz coalition came to power, it never agreed on how much power the new president should have. This was mainly due to the new president Kurmanbek Bakiyev’s fierce opposition to curtailment of his authority. Hence, the president maintained strong powers, albeit with heavy cost. When the large, fragmented coalition disintegrated and moved into opposition, it politicized the issue of executive power, making that its single biggest rallying point against the government. Opposition-led near constant mass anti-government street protests and accompanying bitter rivalry between the opposition and the government destabilized the country’s leadership, leading it to its downfall.

A small, cohesive coalition, on the other hand, helps prevent politicizing the issue of executive power. Absence of this issue, on its turn, contributes to the continuity of the post-control over the parliament and subsequently, over the successive cabinets, because according to the 2004 constitutional amendments the opposition political forces in the legislature now formed and hence, controlled the cabinet (see chapter four). So, most of the time during Yushchenko’s rule, the opposition was in control of the parliament and the cabinet.

765 As I have argued in chapter five, the Kyrgyz opposition’s key demand during its entire anti-government campaign was curtailment of the president’s authority.
uprising leadership. As I have showed in chapter six, post-uprising Georgian president Mikhail Saakashvili found it quick and easy to sway couple of key members of his small coalition to support the increase of his powers. Had the Georgian coalition been as large and fragmented as the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions were, the Georgian president would have found it much more difficult, if not impossible, to solve this issue so quickly and to achieve his desired outcome. He simply would have had to deal with more and more diverse political actors, which definitely would have complicated his task.\textsuperscript{766}

Resolution of the issue of executive power, in its part, had a far-reaching influence on the continuity of the post-uprising Georgian government. As this issue faded from the political agenda, the opposition no longer could politicize it and use it to destabilize the government, as were the cases in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. This, in its turn, provided the Georgian government with much greater stability than Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments had, helping it to maintain power.

7.1.4 Ability to Reform

The factor of coalition size and cohesion influences one more factor in post-uprising leadership durability—the government’s ability to reform. Large, fragmented ruling coalitions are more likely to fail to carry out essential reforms: it is harder for them to agree on reform agenda and implementation than it is for small, cohesive coalitions. As chapters four and five illustrated, the large, fragmented Ukrainian and Kyrgyz coalitions’ inability to agree on a reform program led to their failure to implement much needed reforms. In contrast, the small, cohesive Georgian coalition, as discussed in chapter six, stood united on a reform agenda and its implementation, allowing the government to successfully carry out painful but essential reforms.

\textsuperscript{766} In solving this issue small, cohesive Georgian coalition also was partially helped by the facts that it never compromised with the outgoing government to limit the next president’s power as it happened in Ukraine and did not inherit the debate about the curtailment of the president’s authority, as was the case in Kyrgyzstan.
The success of reforms is highly important. Survival of any government, whether democratic, authoritarian, or semi-authoritarian, depends on its performance. My research revealed that this is especially true for new governments, especially those which come to power as a result of mass mobilizations which ousted previous leaderships precisely for their inability to build effective state institutions and public services and to solve a country’s other profound socioeconomic and political problems. New, post-mobilization governments face huge public expectations of fundamental, positive changes. The governments need to reform failing state institutions and public services and effectively address other prevailing problems. In other words, they need to improve state capacity. If they do not, the new leaderships can face popular disappointment and potential ouster from office—peacefully via elections, or violently via popular revolt. In order to maintain power, they must deliver.

Post-Color Revolution Ukrainian and Kyrgyz leaderships learned this the hard way. As I showed in chapters four and five, both leaderships fell partially due to a drastic fall of popular support. The loss of popular support was directly facilitated by their failure to implement essential reforms and the subsequent decline of state capacity. Georgian leadership, on the other hand, was helped by solid popular support built as a result of the government’s successful reforms. These reforms significantly increased state capacity and solved some of the country’s most pressing problems.  

767 Overall, some may argue that loss of popular support (and popular disappointment in general) cannot explain a leadership change or continuity, since people do not support their governments in many authoritarian regimes. Yet, people do not have necessary means to overcome those regimes’ powerful coercive apparatus and overthrow the leaderships. Hence, one may conclude that what matters is the strength of the coercive apparatus (thus a state institution) in leadership durability. My argument against such a claim is that post-Rose Revolution Georgian leadership created quite strong coercive apparatus (and regularly used it too against the opposition and other challengers). Nevertheless, in the October 2012 elections it still fell as a result of the loss of popular support. Hence, loss of popular support is important. It may not be as important in authoritarian regimes, where the leaderships more rely on their coercive apparatus rather than on public support and routinely use force to suppress almost any type of popular revolt, but it certainly is important in non-authoritarian regimes where governments cannot rely only on repression (at least to the same extent as the authoritarian regimes do).
7.2 The Dissertation’s Contribution to Political Science Literature

As I have argued in chapter two, my dissertation builds on previous scholarly works that were to some degree related to the theme of leadership change and continuity and provided clues about the causes of leadership durability overall. This dissertation’s findings challenged and expanded that literature. As I have stated in chapter two, my goal has been to enter into theoretical discussion with the literature on the causes of the Color Revolutions, as well as with the literature on the post-Color Revolution political developments. First, I particularly wondered whether the factors that contributed to the fall of the postcommunist governments during the Color Revolutions also contributed to the fall of the post-Color Revolution governments, specifically in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. As I discovered, none of the pre-Color Revolution factors played any role in the change of the post-Color Revolution leaderships. This finding indicates that pre and post-mobilization leadership survival is dependent on two different sets of factors. Consequently, political science discipline should make note of the fact that it cannot use a single cookie cutter explanation for leadership change and continuity before and after mass mobilizations.

Second, this dissertation has extended the boundaries of the scholarly literature on post-Color Revolution political developments. In particular, D’Anieri and Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise argued that the curtailment of the powers of the post-Orange Revolution Ukrainian president would lead to conflict between the different branches of the government,

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768 Such factors include the absence of politicized military, experience with elections, high levels of education, international donor support, regional diffusion effect (Bunce and Wolchik, “Favorable Conditions”), opposition tactics (Bunce and Wolchik, “Defeating Dictators”), opposition unity, split within the coercive apparatus (McFaul, “Transitions from Postcommunism;” McFaul, “Conclusion”), and elite defection (Hale, “Regime Cycles”).

which in turn would facilitate political crisis. Arel, Riabchuk, Hale, and Kubicek actually pointed out that such a conflict was already ongoing under the new government. In chapter four, I have advanced these arguments and observations. I studied not only the impact of the president’s weakened executive powers on the political conflict and stalemate in the Ukrainian government, but also examined the role of the issue of the president’s executive power in the downfall of the post-Orange Revolution leadership. Furthermore, I have applied the same argument to the post-Color Revolution Kyrgyzstan and Georgia and studied how the issue of president’s executive power affected leadership change and continuity in these two countries.

Kubicek noted that Ukraine’s Orange coalition began to experience internal rifts and ultimately split. I used Kubicek’s observation to examine further how the breakup of the large, fragmented Ukrainian coalition altered the balance of power among the country’s key political actors. Particularly, I examined how the coalition disintegration affected opposition and then the government change. I studied the same question in Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, I observed how coalition cohesion affected local opposition and hence, the government continuity in Georgia. As I already argued above, the coalition fragmentation and subsequent defection of its key members turned out to be an important factor in the emergence of the active opposition. In turn, the active opposition played a significant role in destabilizing and eventually unseating the post-Orange Revolution leadership. The same was the case in Kyrgyzstan. On the other hand, coalition cohesion in Georgia helped prevent the emergence of active opposition there, which then contributed to the continuity of the Georgian leadership.

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770 Riabchuk, 43.
771 Hale, 86.
772 Kubicek, 327.
Furthermore, I built on the literature beyond the Color Revolutions. Specifically, as I have laid out in chapter two, Beissinger stated that national fronts (coalitions) that led nationalist mobilizations in the former Soviet Union lost their cohesive purpose once they achieved their goal of national independence and saw the downfall of the communist regimes.\textsuperscript{773} Subsequently, they began to disintegrate over different contentious issues.\textsuperscript{774} The author, however, does not elaborate on what influence the disintegrated national fronts had on future political developments. Waldner, however, does study the impact of broad and narrow coalitions on intricate political processes. Nevertheless, he considers the impact of coalitions on the formation of non-developmental and developmental states in the Middle East and East Asia. He does not delve into the theme of leadership durability. I have built on these works and expanded them. In chapters four, five, and six I laid out a systematic and elaborate explanation how coalition disintegration specifically, and coalition size and cohesion generally, influenced post-uprising leadership durability.

I have also built on the literature on political transitions, which, as already stated in chapter two, I provisionally divided into the bodies of works on democratic transitions, authoritarian durability, and regime cycles. From democratic transitions literature I have expanded the works of O’Donnell and Schmitter and Huntington.\textsuperscript{775} O’Donnell and Schmitter described the pacted transitions struck by the ruling regime and the opposition if neither side is powerful enough to force its will on the opponent. The pacts are negotiated by a small group of participants representing oligarchic groups. The pacts enable both sides to reach agreements on the host of socioeconomic and political issues which set in motion new political developments. O’Donnell’s

\textsuperscript{773} Beissinger, “Nationalist Mobilization,” 444.

\textsuperscript{774} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{775} Huntington, “The Third Wave.”
and Schmitter’s description of pacts very closely resembles the pacted power transition from the incumbent government to the opposition in Ukraine during the 2004 Orange Revolution (see chapter four). According to O’Donnell and Schmitter, transition can also take place without a pact. This is likely if the outgoing regime is in turmoil and abandons power without striking a deal with the opposition. As a result, the final outcome is decided by subsequent political contestation. O’Donnell’s and Schmitter’s explanation of the transition without a pact resonates with the rapid collapse of the Georgian and Kyrgyz governments during the Color Revolutions, when none of the leaderships had the capacity to negotiate transition with the challengers.

In this dissertation I examined whether having a pacted or unpacted power transition affected the post-Color Revolution leadership change and continuity. In other words, I wanted to know if pacts matter in post-mobilization leadership durability. My research suggests that they do not matter. Georgia and Kyrgyzstan both had unpacted power transitions. Yet, Georgian leadership survived while Kyrgyz leadership fell. Also, Ukraine had a pacted transition and Kyrgyzstan did not. Nevertheless, both countries’ post-Color Revolution leaderships fell.

Huntington observed that when new (democratic) regimes fail to address pressing socioeconomic and political problems (inherited from the previous regime), popular euphoria caused by the collapse of the authoritarian regime is transformed into popular disillusionment. That disillusionment in turn leads to anti-incumbent and antiestablishment responses and the rejection of the incumbent parties by voters. Capitalizing on Huntington’s argument, I examined the impact of government performance (inability or ability to implement reforms) and popular disappointment on leadership durability. As illustrated in chapters four, five, and six, and then have outlined in the previous subsection of this chapter, the government’s ability or inability

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776 Huntington, “The Third wave,” 253-270.
to carry out reforms and resulting popular support make a difference in whether post-
mobilization leadership survives or not.

In addition, I have challenged the literature on authoritarian durability, examining whether factors that contribute to authoritarian regime durability in general\textsuperscript{777} are similar to the factors that influenced post-Color Revolution leadership change and continuity in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. I found that the factors impacting the post-Color Revolution government durability were entirely different from the factors that played important role in the strength and survival of authoritarian regimes.\textsuperscript{778} This finding suggests that authoritarian and non-authoritarian leadership durability is influenced by different factors and knowing the former’s causes does not automatically mean knowing the causes of the latter.

I have also challenged the literature on regime cycles, particularly Hale’s work on cyclical changes of leaderships in patronal presidential systems, the term Hale used to describe the political systems of Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia during the Color Revolutions.\textsuperscript{779} As I laid out in chapter two, Hale argued that the crucial time for the system of patronal presidentialism\textsuperscript{780} was during the power transition from a lame duck president to a new president. Specifically, if a lame duck president has not chosen a popular enough presidential candidate to defeat the opposition, then the elites are prone to defect to more promising candidate, thus causing one more cycle of leadership change. As Hale hypothesized, such cycles would re-occur in the future

\textsuperscript{777} These factors are: state strength (Way, “The Real Causes;” Slater and Fenner), strong coercive apparatus (Bellin; Way, “Autocratic Coercion;” Way, “The Real Causes;” Way, “Resistance to Contagion”), institutional type (Stacher), strong ruling parties (Brownlee; Way, “The Real Causes;” Way, “Resistance to Contagion”), regime support base (Geddes), and natural resources (Kendall-Taylor).

\textsuperscript{778} Only state strength (Way, “The Real Causes;” Slater and Fenner) and regime support base (Geddes) come close to the factors of state capacity and popular support, which this dissertation identifies. Nevertheless, there are essential differences in what those authors mean by state strength and regime support base (see chapter two) and what I mean by state capacity and popular support (see chapters one, four, five, and six).

\textsuperscript{779} Hale, “Regime Cycles.”

\textsuperscript{780} See chapter two for the definition of patronal presidentialism.
so long as the elite contestation continued.\textsuperscript{781} And indeed, leadership changes took place again in the post-Color Revolution Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan just five years after their new presidents took office. Hence, I conjectured whether elite defection played a key role in the fall of those leaderships and moreover, what was the role of elites in general in the survival of the Georgian leadership. Furthermore, I wanted to learn if the system of patronal presidentialism had any impact on the fall of the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz presidents.

As chapters four, five, and six showed, the factor of elite defection certainly was an important factor in the change and continuity of the post-Color Revolution leaderships. As I have illustrated in those chapters, a large part of the political elites defected from the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz ruling coalitions, while the Georgian coalition remained cohesive. Nevertheless, it was not the elite defection per se that facilitated the fall of the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz leaderships, but the fragmentation of large coalitions in general, coupled with other factors such as the emergence of the active opposition, politicization of the issue of executive power, and the failure to implement reforms which all led to the downfall of the new governments.

Moreover, patronal presidentialism does not appear to be an essential prerequisite for the cyclical changes of leaderships. Specifically, the post-Orange Revolution Ukraine no longer could qualify as a patronal presidential system as the new president lost most of his formal (as well as informal) powers due to the 2004 constitutional changes.\textsuperscript{782} The post-Tulip Revolution Kyrgyzstan, however, still qualified as a patronal presidential system because the president kept

\textsuperscript{781} Hale, “Regime Cycles.”

\textsuperscript{782} Hale, “Divided Power.” Hale in this work, himself acknowledges that the post-Orange Revolution president’s formal and informal powers were significantly weakened in comparison to that of the pre-Orange Revolution president (Hale, “Divided Power”).
large formal and informal powers, which Hale says are the key features of patronal presidentialism. Regardless of this difference between the post-Color Revolution Ukrainian and Kyrgyz political systems, both countries’ leaderships still fell from power roughly within five years.

Hale’s claim that the time of power transition from a lame duck president to a new president is a critical point in a patronal presidentialism because it may facilitate elite defection and lead to leadership change, is not applicable in my cases. When the post-Color Revolution Ukrainian and Kyrgyz leaderships fell neither was a lame duck president, nevertheless, both fell. Moreover, regardless of the fact that neither Ukrainian nor Kyrgyz presidents were lame duck presidents, large parts of the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz political elites still defected to the opposition. This shows that the existence of a lame duck president is not a necessary precondition for elite defections to occur. Overall, as my cases demonstrated, Hale’s criteria for cyclical changes of leaderships prior to the Color Revolutions do not stand to explain leadership change and continuity after the Color Revolutions.

7.3 The Dissertation’s Theoretical Applicability to Other Cases

This dissertation’s findings, outlined above, can have wide applicability to real world political events beyond the former Soviet Union. One of the most recent relevant cases is post-Arab Spring Egypt, specifically the causes of the quick downfall of President Mohamed Morsi’s post-uprising administration. Certainly the cases of the post-uprising Egypt and the post-Color

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783 Hale clearly underlines the distinction between the post-Orange Revolution Ukrainian president’s weakened formal and informal powers and the post-Tulip Revolution Kyrgyz president’s strong formal and informal powers (Hale, “Divided Power”).

784 In fact, Ukrainian president Yushchenko was voted out as he ran for his second term and Kyrgyz president Bakiyev was overthrown mere six months after he was reelected for his second term.

785 Hale, “Regime Cycles.”
Revolution Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia are not identical.\textsuperscript{786} Nevertheless, my dissertation provides useful framework that helps to make clear why post-uprising Egyptian leadership (of President Morsi) fell so soon.

First, the 2011 Egyptian uprising (or the January 25 revolution, as it is widely referred to in Egypt) was supported by the wide array of ideologically diverse political forces: Islamists (including the Islamist organization Muslim Brotherhood), secularists, liberals, nationalists, and leftists. It would be incorrect to call this wide array of political groups a formal coalition. Nevertheless, those political forces were united in their goal to oust Egypt’s authoritarian ruler of almost 30 years Hosni Mubarak. In this sense, they were a coalition, albeit a loose, fragmented, and ideologically diverse one, as well as large.

The fact that the coalition was so large and fragmented represented one of the major challenges to the new post-uprising leadership of President Morsi. Specifically, the coalition disintegrated soon after an 18 day long bloody popular uprising deposed President Mubarak. The Muslim Brotherhood (in particular, its Freedom and Justice Party) became a party of power, as its candidate Mohamed Morsi won May-June 2012 presidential elections, though with a small majority of 51.73 percent. Other political forces, however, became a President Morsi’s stern, active opponents. They staged protracted, mass anti-government street protests, leading to frequent bloody clashes between the opposition on one side, and the government and its supporters on the other. These conflicts fundamentally destabilized Morsi’s administration.

One of the key issues around which anti-Morsi opposition rallied was the question of the president’s executive power. This issue had its roots in the previous political developments

\textsuperscript{786} One key difference is that in Egypt’s case coalition size and cohesion did not have direct impact on the emergence of intervening variables: active or inactive opposition, the issue of executive power, and failed or successful reforms (that then lead to decrease or increase of state capacity and loss or attainment of solid popular support).
before Morsi became a president. In June 2012, Egypt’s military, in particular the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF, which governed since Mubarak’s ouster), passed the amendments to the Constitutional Declaration which curtailed the president’s powers and expanded its own authority, even granting itself the power to legislate. This took place barely two weeks before Morsi assumed his duties as a president on June 30, 2012. This move by the military was deliberately targeted at weakening the next president.

Since taking office President Morsi continuously tried to increase his authority. As a result, he repeatedly clashed with the opposition on the streets and fought ferocious political battles with the country’s military and Mubarak-era judiciary, all of which opposed Morsi’s attempts to expand his powers. These political clashes and accompanying near constant instability fundamentally undermined Morsi’s administration, facilitating his eventual downfall.

Furthermore, besieged by permanent political crisis and weakened by the curtailment of his presidential power, during his stint in office Morsi failed to address the country’s most pressing socioeconomic and political problems. In fact, he turned out to be a failed president. Consequently, the Egyptian Army found it easy to remove the unsuccessful president from office through the military coup in June-July 2013, barely one year after he first took office.

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788 Especially, the Supreme Constitutional Court and the Supreme Judicial Council. The country’s judiciary, particularly the Supreme Constitutional Court was stocked by the Mubarak era judges.

789 In fact, the military coup was popularly supported.

790 Overall, one may argue that the first post-uprising leadership was SCAF, not Morsi’s administration, as it was SCAF which took over power right after the 2011 uprising and governed the country for almost 17 months. Nevertheless, one must take into consideration that SCAF and the entire Egyptian military, in fact, were part and parcel of the Mubarak regime (although the military in Egypt is largely autonomous institution). In reality, Morsi’s
Another case from outside of the former Soviet Union—although from more distant past—to which the findings of this dissertation can be applied to is the case of post-Communist Poland; in particular, the case of the downfall of President Lech Walesa’s administration in 1990s.

Again, the cases of post-Communist Poland and post-Color Revolution Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia are not completely alike. Yet, this dissertation offers an overall framework which can help understand the causes of the fall of Poland’s post-mobilization administration.

In Poland’s case too, similarly to Ukraine’s, Kyrgyzstan’s, Georgia’s, and Egypt’s cases, the factor of large, fragmented coalition stands as a main cause in the downfall of the post-mobilization leadership. Specifically, the Polish Solidarity movement, which since 1980 led popular struggle against the country’s Communist regime and eventually deposed it in 1989, was a large, eclectic coalition.\(^1\) It included many politically diverse groups that were united only by their dislike of Communism.\(^2\)

The real problems, however, began to emerge once Solidarity movement formed the first post-Communist government in 1989 and hence, became a ruling coalition. In 1989-1990, administration was the first post-uprising leadership which came out of the 2011 popular uprising and came to power through popular election on the wave of that uprising.

Moreover, the case of post-Arab Spring Tunisia somewhat resembles that of Egypt. Specifically, Tunisia’s Ennahda Party-led post-uprising coalition governments also faced active opposition that destabilized those governments. Furthermore, Ennahda-led coalition governments resigned twice, first in 2013 and second in 2014 (in fact, in January 2014, the Ennahda Party finally gave up power as a ruling party when the Ennahda-led government resigned) largely under the pressure of a disappointed public which demanded that the government give up powers mainly for its failure to address the country’s multiple socioeconomic and political problems. Nevertheless, one key difference between the two cases is that in Tunisia there was no coalition of various political forces which fought together against the incumbent regime, ousted it, and then split. In other words, the independent variable, coalition size and cohesion, is missing. Another key difference is that the issue of executive power does not figure in Tunisian case, even though drafting a new constitution (which alongside other things would divide powers among different branches of the government) caused prolonged political instability and undermined post-uprising governments, led by Ennahda Party.


Solidarity underwent intense infighting due to ideological differences and power struggle and disintegrated into leftists and rightist political parties and factions (sometimes referred as post-Solidarity Left and Right\textsuperscript{793}). When Lech Walesa, an iconic leader of Solidarity movement, won the November-December 1990 presidential elections, Solidarity no longer was a united coalition. By that time, Walesa was already facing active opposition from the movement’s leftist faction. In fact, leftist faction (specifically, its main party Democratic Union) fielded its own presidential candidate,\textsuperscript{794} against Walesa in the 1990 elections.\textsuperscript{795} Moreover, once a President, Walesa distanced himself from Solidarity’s rightist faction. The rightist faction, along with the leftist faction, became Walesa’s active opposition and launched ferocious political attacks against the president.\textsuperscript{796}

Disintegration of the Solidarity coalition and its move into opposition also reactivated another part of the opposition-former Communists. Post-Communist parties--Democratic Left Alliance (Polish acronym SLD) and United Peasant Party (Polish acronym PSL)--benefited from intense power struggle between Walesa and his opposition and ensuing popular disillusionment with the new leadership. SLD and PSL landed a crashing blow to Walesa as those two parties garnered 35 percent of votes in the 1993 legislative elections and came to control two thirds of the parliamentary seats.\textsuperscript{797} Walesa’s Nonpartisan Bloc for Support of Reforms (Polish acronym

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{793} See Zubek.
\item \textsuperscript{794} This candidate was acting Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1989-1990). In fact, Mazowiecki resigned from his post right on the Election Day, on November 25, 1990.
\item \textsuperscript{795} It has to be mentioned, however, that Mazowiecki and his supported backed Walesa in the second round of the 1990 elections (Lussier, 709).
\item \textsuperscript{796} On the disintegration of Solidarity see Zubek (109-112) and Lussier.
\item \textsuperscript{797} Zubek, 113. Earlier, in the 1991 parliamentary election (which in fact was the first fully free, multiparty parliamentary election in Poland in decades since Communist takeover) no party gained more than 13 percent of votes. Although, Solidarity parties and factions dominated the parliament, they did not represent a united coalition.
\end{itemize}

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BBWR) received mere 5.4 percent of votes. Overall, the active opposition deeply undermined Walesa’s administration throughout its term in office. Fierce power struggle between the opposition and the president was accompanied by near constant standoffs and stalemates in the government, formation of temporary alliances between Walesa and other political groups, and frequent changes of prime ministers and cabinets of ministers. Ultimately, the active opposition, specifically, post-Communist SLD’s presidential candidate Aleksander Kwasniewski, defeated Walesa in the November-December 1995 presidential elections.

Another factor that contributed to the fall of President Walesa was the issue of executive power. Specifically, on the one hand, Walesa’s powers were severely constrained. First of all, he did not have authority to appoint and dismiss prime ministers and members of a cabinet. As a result, Walesa often found himself bogged down in prolonged and intense conflicts with (for him) undesirable prime ministers and cabinets as he tried to force them out of office by any political means available. Overall, during his rule, Walesa forced the resignation of two of six prime ministers and facilitated the ouster of the third one by the end of his presidential term.

In 1993, Walesa dismissed this parliament in order to assure the election of more favorable legislature. Nevertheless, the 1993 elections produced devastating results for him.

798 Walesa made alliances inside, as well as outside of the former Solidarity coalition.

799 In fact, during Walesa’s five year rule six prime ministers and cabinets of ministers changed in the country.

800 Overall, see Zubek on Walesa’s rule, ongoing power struggle during his term in office, and his ultimate downfall.

801 At first, a president’s authority was not constitutionally defined. A president was supposed to be a largely symbolic figure, as was agreed during the 1989 round table negotiations between Solidarity movement and the Communist regime. After Poland adopted so called “small constitution” in November 1992, a president’s powers became formally defined. According to “small constitution” the president could introduce a legislative bill or veto it from parliament, nominate prime minister, appoint judges, nominate the president of the National Bank, call for a national election, and dissolve parliament if a governing coalition disintegrated or failed to adopt a budget within a set time frame (Simpson, 320-321).

802 On the topic of how Walesa fought to oust undesirable prime ministers see for instance Zubek, 112-113; Simpson, 333-336.

803 Simpson, 321.
However, all these took place at the cost of political instability in the government and the country in general. The potential for the conflict and stalemate was further exacerbated by the fact that Walesa was also severely constrained by the country’s legislature (specifically Sejm, the lower chamber) which had the authority to override the president’s vetoes and block his policy initiatives. 804

On the other hand, Walesa constantly fought to expand his authority. For example, in SLD-led government (after the 1993 legislative elections) he named his candidates for the ministers of Internal Security, Defense, and Foreign Affairs and ensured their appointment, although, the constitution did not give him such authority. 805 Such power struggles often created political impasses which made difficult for the government to function effectively. For instance, on one occasion President Walesa blocked the Prime Minister’s pick for the Finance Minister and objected to other candidates, thus leaving the country without a Finance Minister for three months. 806 Overall, the issue of a president’s executive power produced a source of constant instability within the government, which ultimately undermined Walesa’s hold on power and hence, created favorable conditions for his eventual demise.

Third factor which contributed to Walesa’s downfall was the failure of the country’s post-mobilization leadership to quickly alleviate persisting socioeconomic problems that public faced since the last decade of Communism. Certainly, Walesa backed some highly important reforms that helped Poland’s move from centrally planned socialist economy to free market capitalist economy. Although these reforms benefited the country in the long term, the disintegrated

804 Lussier, 710.
805 Simpson, 333.
Solidarity coalition never came together to implement reforms that would address public’s socioeconomic hardships in the short term. Such a failure contributed to the dramatic fall of Walesa’s popularity. In the June 1994 poll, conducted by the Institute for Opinion and Market Research, only five percent of Poles expressed their readiness to vote for Walesa. Although Walesa fared better than five percent, he still lost the November 1995 presidential elections after two rounds of voting. President Walesa left office, serving only one five year term.

The findings of this dissertation can assist scholars and policy practitioners in understanding the causes of the change and continuity of the post-mobilization leaderships that may well emerge in the future, mainly in the former Soviet Union. Specifically, current authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes in Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan may eventually fall as a result of the opposition coalition-led mass mobilizations. Once a hypothetical coalition takes power, observers will need to look at that coalition’s size and cohesion and subsequently, carefully observe the political processes that the ascent to power of a coalition (large and fragmented or small and cohesive) will set in motion. Similarly, this dissertation can be applicable in other parts of the world; for instance, in authoritarian Burma, Zimbabwe, or Venezuela, should the opposition coalition-led popular mobilizations manage to depose incumbent leaderships and then themselves capture power.

Overall, knowing in advance the causes of the post-uprising leadership change and continuity will be particularly beneficial to the post-uprising governments. It will aid them to quickly identify their own problems and weaknesses, outline their policy priorities, and plan and

807 The poll quoted in Perlez.

808 Walesa garnered 48.3 percent of total votes against former Communist Kwasniewski’s 51.7 percent in the second round (Zubek, 121).
execute their agendas accordingly, in order to avoid early downfall. Likewise, the findings of this dissertation will help foreign governments that deal with the post-mobilization leaderships to swiftly recognize shortcomings of those new leaderships and estimate their approximate longevity. This, in turn, will assist foreign governments to set foreign policy goals in line with the results of their analysis.

7.4 Future Research

The explanations that I provided in this dissertation are just the first building blocks which can contribute to future theory building on post-mobilization leadership durability. There is still a lot to study about this topic. Future research should examine whether coalition size and cohesion is the only essential independent variable for post-uprising leadership change and continuity or there is another variable (or variables) that can contribute to the same outcome. Similarly, future studies should also examine if active or inactive opposition, politicized issue of executive power, successful reforms, state capacity, and popular support are always necessary factors for the post-mobilization leadership change and continuity or entirely different factors (or only one factor) can be just as important, producing an alternative causal path to the same dependent variable.

Furthermore, future scholarly studies, capitalizing on this dissertation, may want to compare how exactly the causal path leading to the change and continuity of the post-uprising leaderships differs from the causal path leading to the change and continuity of the new leaderships which came to power not after popular uprisings, but after democratic, routine elections. Such a comparative study would shed light on important differences between the factors that contribute to the change and continuity of post-uprising governments, on the one hand, and of regular post-election governments, on the other. Also, such a study would illustrate what exactly contributes to the emergence of those different factors.
Overall, there can be no shortage of research questions for the future studies on this theme. Answering those unstudied questions will expand scarce academic knowledge about the causes of the change and continuity of post-mobilization governments. Furthermore, more scholarly debate and research on this topic will result in the accumulation of a new body of works, which then may lead to exploring and reaching new intellectual horizons by a new generation of scholars. My one of the main goals in this dissertation has been to contribute to the emergence of that very debate and research in the near future.
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