

WEIGHING THE SCALES: THE INTERNET'S EFFECT ON STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS

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March 2005

Political science provides two very different takes on how the information revolution affects the relationship between governments and global civil society. The more popular and prominent argument is that the Internet¹ dramatically lowers the costs of networked communication; therefore, civil society groups are better able to mobilize action to influence governments. Countless numbers of articles have been written about how the Internet has facilitated social movements to block the Multilateral Agreement on Investment and other proposed interstate agreements.² Decentralized forms of civil society are particularly likely to thrive in the Internet age. The coordination of world wide protests that took place in the run-up to the Second Gulf War would be one example of this phenomenon.³ The growth of the blogosphere as a force in American politics is only the latest manifestation of this trend.

The counter-argument is that states are becoming increasingly savvy in their regulation of the information revolution. For example, the code that forms the backbone of the Internet's architecture leaves several critical nodes vulnerable to regulation.⁴ Discriminating governments have the capacity to decide which elements of digital information they choose to let in and which elements they can screen out.⁵ Beyond information, authoritarian governments have been willing to make life uncomfortable for the citizens who try to generate or exploit information that threatened the regime in power. Governments ranging from China to Iran have demonstrated a willingness to crack down on civil society activists and bloggers who defy the state.

These contradictory trends raise a fascinating question – does the Internet empower the coercive control of governments at the expense of citizen activists, or vice versa? As someone who has at different times advanced both sides of this argument, I fully

¹ Throughout this essay, I use “Internet” and “information revolution” interchangeably, even though the latter incorporates additional means of communication, such as cellular phones. However, the predominant feature of the information society is the spread of the Internet, and in the interests of style the terms will be alternated in use.

² Ronald Deibert, “International Plug ‘n Play? Citizen Activism, the Internet, and Global Public Policy.” *International Studies Perspectives* 1 (July 2000); Craig Warkentin and Karen Mingst, “International Institutions, The State, and Global Civil Society in the Age of the World Wide Web,” *Global Governance* 6 (June 2000).

³ George Packer, “Smart-Mobbing the War,” *The New York Times Magazine*, 9 March 2003.

⁴ Lawrence Lessig, *Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). See also Rajiv Shah and Kay Kesan, “Manipulating the Governance Characteristics of Code,” *Info* 4 (September/October 2003): 3-9

⁵ Jack Goldsmith, “Regulation of the Internet: Three Persistent Fallacies.” *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 73 (December 1998).

recognize and appreciate the complexities of this question.⁶ In this paper I offer a *very* preliminary answer – that while the Internet has probably empowered non-state actors more than states, the effect of this empowerment will be constrained by regime type and negotiation format. In open societies, there is no question that the Internet has enhanced the power of civil society vis-à-vis the state. In dealing with totalitarian governments or international governmental negotiations, the information revolution does not fundamentally affect the state’s ability to advance its interests. However, the Internet’s ability to redirect “information cascades” will also force authoritarian governments into a more stark choice than they would otherwise prefer. These governments must crack down on the Internet even further if they wish to insure against the threat of “people power,” but in the process they deny themselves the opportunity to exploit the vast economic potential of the information society.

THE STATE OF THE DEBATE

Scholars have generated prodigious amounts of theoretical and empirical arguments to support the contention that the Internet empowers global civil society (GCS). Part of the logic is the compatibility of their organizational structures. Most theorists argue that the many components of global civil society are organized as a network, “characterized by voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of communication and exchange.”⁷ Different nodes of a network must be able to exchange information for this type of organization to be effective. The denser the network, the more effective non-state actors can be. One trigger for the emergence of GCS has been the persistent decline in costs of transportation and communication. The development of the Internet, e-mail, cellular phones, combined with the deregulation of air travel, enhances the networking power of global civil society.⁸

Researchers argue that global civil society played a crucial role in the failure of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), an OECD initiative launched in 1995 that would have standardized how governments could regulate foreign direct investment. A broad array of activist groups opposed the MAI, and took active steps to sabotage the negotiations. Drafts of the treaty were posted on web sites. Activists, representing 600 organizations from approximately 70 countries, dogged the negotiators at the OECD headquarters in Paris. In 1998, they also protested the agreement at meetings of the WTO and UNCTAD. Stephen Kobrin concludes: “The story of the MAI is a cautionary tale about the impact of an electronically networked global civil society.”⁹ Other GCS scholars share this assessment.¹⁰

⁶ Daniel W. Drezner, “The Global Governance of the Internet: Bringing the State Back In.” *Political Science Quarterly* 119 (Fall 2004): 477-498; Daniel W. Drezner and Henry Farrell, “Web of Influence,” *Foreign Policy* 145 (November/December 2004): 32-40.

⁷ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 8.

⁸ Deibert, “International Plug ‘n Play?”

⁹ Stephen Kobrin, “The MAI and the Clash of Globalizations,” *Foreign Policy* 112 (Fall 1998), p. 98.

¹⁰ Warkentin and Mingst, “International Institutions, the State, and Global Civil Society in the Age of the World Wide Web.” For a contrary take on the GCS effect on the MAI, see Edward M. Graham, *Fighting the Wrong Enemy* (Washington: Institute for International Economics, 2000).

Internet enthusiasts have long dismissed the ability of states to block specific kinds of Internet content. In 1993 John Gilmore, a co-founder of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, famously concluded: “The Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it.” More recently, civil society activists and bloggers have played a prominent role in agitating for greater openness in repressive societies. Weblogs provided crucial information for protestors during Ukraine’s “Orange Revolution.”¹¹ They also provided Western media an accessible window through which reporters could interpret and report on breaking news. For the protestors themselves, some blogs functioned as “focal points” for coordinating street actions.¹²

The Ukraine experience demonstrates that, under certain circumstances, online activists can affect politics in regimes where there is no thriving independent media sector. For starters, activist websites can become an alternative source of news and commentary in countries where traditional media are under state control. Blogs are more difficult to control than television or newspapers, especially under regimes that are tolerant of some degree of free expression. Faced with various domestic obstacles, bloggers inside these countries (or expatriates) can try to influence foreign media, with knock-on effects at home. Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink note that activists who are unable to change conditions in their own countries can leverage their power by taking their case to transnational networks of advocates, who in turn publicize abuses and lobby their governments.¹³ Keck and Sikkink call this a “boomerang effect,” since repression at home can lead to international pressure against the regime from abroad. Blogs can potentially facilitate the formation of such transnational networks.

Iran is a good example. The Iranian blogosphere has exploded— according to the NITLE Weblog Census, Farsi is the fourth-most widely used language among blogs worldwide. One service provider alone (persianblog.com) hosts some 60,000 active blogs. The Weblogs allow young Iranians, secular or religious, to interact, partially taking the place of reformist newspapers that have been censored or shut down. Government efforts to impose filters on the Internet have been sporadic and only partially successful. Some reformist politicians have embraced blogs, including the President who has celebrated the number of Iranian bloggers at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and Vice-President Ali Mohammed Abtahi who is himself a blogger.

Despite the apparent symbiosis between the growth of the information society and global civil society, other scholars have pointed out that repressive states have been able to control the Internet more effectively than previously thought. Technological measures include the creation of firewalls and proxy servers, routers, and software filters to block content labeled as undesirable. Non-technological measures include the imprisonment of relevant individuals, active policing, high taxation and pressuring Internet service

¹¹ For examples, see <http://www.postmodernlog.com/> or <http://www.orangeukraine.squarespace.com/>.

¹² On the importance of blogs as focal points, see Daniel W. Drezner and Henry Farrell, “The Power and Politics of Blogs,” presented at the American Political Science annual meeting, Chicago, IL September 2004.

¹³ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*.

providers (ISPs).¹⁴ Even if these measures are not 100% effective, their enactment affects the cost/benefit analysis of individuals seeking to use the Internet as a means of acquiring officially frowned-upon content. As Jack Goldsmith observes: “If governments can raise the cost of Net transactions, they can regulate Net transactions.”¹⁵ Combined, these steps can block undesired content, as well as retard Internet use.

The result has been effective government regulation of Internet content across countries. For totalitarian states, the modes of regulation have been crude but effective. Cuba simply outlaws the sale of personal computers to individuals; until 2002, Myanmar outlawed the personal ownership of modems.¹⁶ Middle Eastern countries have been especially vigilant in blocking undesirable content. Iranian President Mohammad Khatami said in December 2003 that, “We are exerting control over pornographic and immoral websites that are not compatible with Islam.” In the fall of 2004 the government went further, blocking hundreds of pro-democracy Web sites and arresting scores of bloggers that criticize the regime. The Syrian government has arrested numerous citizens for using the Internet to send information about government demonstrations.¹⁷ Saudi Arabia censors the Internet by requiring all Web access to be routed through a proxy server that the government edits for content, blocking access to pornographic, religious, and politically sensitive material.¹⁸ An assessment of the Saudi filtering system concluded that substantial amounts of Web content are “effectively inaccessible” from Saudi Arabia.¹⁹

Authoritarian states with a greater interest in maximizing economic growth have – to date – succeeded in restricting political content on the Internet without sacrificing its commercial possibilities. The model for this sort of regulatory effort is Singapore. The government has been eager to attract investment in information technologies. At the same time, a 1996 law required all political parties, religious organizations, and any individuals with Web pages discussing either religion or politics to register with the Singapore Broadcasting authority. Gerry Rodan, reviewing the government’s efforts to control Internet content, concludes, “When the political will to obstruct certain information and views is coupled with such variables as an efficient and technically competent bureaucracy, an established regime of political intimidation and surveillance, and

¹⁴ Jesse Scanlon, “7 Ways to Squelch the Net,” *Wired*, August 2003. Accessed at <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/11.08/start.html?pg=5>, 12 July 2004.

¹⁵ Goldsmith, “Regulation of the Internet:.”

¹⁶ Robert Lebowitz, “Cuba Prohibits Computer Sales,” Digital Freedom Network.

(<http://dfn.org/news/somalia/sparse-internet.htm>), 26 March 2002. Accessed 28 May 2002. Associated Press, “Internet Remains Prohibited in Myanmar,”

(http://www.nua.com/surveys/?f=VS&art_id=905355752&rel=true), 3 May 2000. Accessed 28 May 2002.

Myanmar’s expansion of Internet access was strictly regulated to screen out any politically sensitive material. See Amy Kazmin, “Burmese get Glimpse of Superhighway,” *Financial Times*, 25 April 2002.

¹⁷ *BBC News*, “Iran’s President Defends Web Control,” 12 December 2003; Nazila Fathi, “Iran Jails More Journalists and Blocks Web Sites,” *New York Times*, 8 November 2004; *BBC News*, “Syrian Jailed for Internet Usage,” 21 June 2004.

¹⁸ Khalid Al-Tawil, “The Internet in Saudi Arabia.” *Telecommunications Policy* 25 (September 2001): 625-632.

¹⁹ Jonathan Zittrain and Benjamin Edelman, “Documentation of Internet Filtering in Saudi Arabia.” Berkmen Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University,

(<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/filtering/saudi Arabia/>), July 2002. Accessed 4 September 2002.

embedded corporatist structures facilitating cooperation between state officials and administrators across the public and private sectors, you have a formidable mix.”²⁰

Singapore’s approach has been the model for many East Asian governments, including China.²¹ Starting in 2000, China passed a series of laws criminalizing the production or consumption of “unauthorized” political content.²² In July 2002, China was able to persuade more than 300 Internet service providers and web portals, including Yahoo!, to sign a voluntary pledge refraining from “producing, posting, or disseminating pernicious information that may jeopardize state security and disrupt social stability.”²³ The central government also re-routed attempts to access search engines like Google to search engines owned or regulated by the government.²⁴

As the Iranian case demonstrates, state efforts at censorship have also succeeded in disrupting nascent blogospheres in authoritarian countries. Authoritarian states that seek to censor the Internet can easily censor blogs. Unfortunately, blogs are nearly as easy to block as to create. Governments can stymie their citizens’ access to a large fraction of the blogosphere by filtering out standardized blog URLs such as Blogger or Typepad. China has occasionally blocked all websites based at blogger.com, blogs.com, and typepad.com. And, if there isn’t a reliable technological infrastructure, individuals will be shut out from the blogosphere. For instance, chronic power shortages and telecommunications problems make it difficult for many in the developing world to write or read blogs

While nondemocratic regimes have taken pains to regulate Internet content, have they been successful? One obvious way to measure this is the extent to which Internet access is limited in these countries. Cross-national studies provide strong support for the argument that authoritarian and totalitarian regimes have been successful in blunting the spread of the Internet. One 2001 study found that the combined Internet bandwidth used by eight Arab countries was roughly equal to 500 cable modem subscribers in the United States.²⁵ Richard Beilock and Daniela Dimitrova found that countries with lower Freedom House scores for civil liberties had significantly lower Internet usage – even after controlling for economic development.²⁶ Helen Milner’s research into Internet diffusion yields similar results. Time series cross-sectional regressions using multiple measures of regime type demonstrate that, *ceteris paribus*, democracies permit much

²⁰ Quoted in Garry Rodan, “The Internet and Political Control in Singapore.” *Political Science Quarterly* 113 (Spring 1998), p. 88.

²¹ Ibid; Georgette Wang, “Regulating Network Communication in Asia,” *Telecommunications Policy* 23 (April 1999): 277-287; Shanthi Kalathil, “China’s Dot-Communism,” *Foreign Policy* 122 (January/February 2001): 74-5.

²² Ethan Gutmann, “Who Lost China’s Internet?” *The Weekly Standard*, 25 February 2002.

²³ Christopher Bodeen, “Web Portals Sign China Content Pact,” Associated Press, 15 July 2002;

²⁴ Joseph Kahn, “China Toughens Obstacles to Internet Searches,” *New York Times*, 12 September 2002.

²⁵ ClickZ Stats, “Arab World Suffering from Bandwidth Drought,” 6 September 2001. Accessed at http://www.clickz.com/stats/big_picture/geographics/print.php/879641, 12 July 2004.

²⁶ Richard Beilock and Daniela Dimitrova, “An Exploratory Model of Inter-country Internet Diffusion,” *Telecommunications Policy* 27 (April/May 2003): 237-252

greater online access, both in terms of Internet users per capital and Internet hosts per capita.²⁷

A TRANSACTION COSTS METAPHOR

As the previous section suggests, parsing out which direction the Internet affects governance is exceedingly difficult. Metaphorically, the problem is akin to the one economists face when predicting how the communications revolution affects transaction cost economics.²⁸ The first is the transaction costs explanation of why economic organizations (i.e., firms) exist. Beginning with Ronald Coase, economists have argued that individuals face transaction costs when they use the market, and that these costs determine the optimal size of firms.²⁹ Transaction costs can range from the time spent searching for more information about prices, costs, and the reputations of other buyers and sellers. If these costs of market exchange exceed those of more hierarchical governance structures – i.e., firms – then hierarchy would be the optimal choice.

As communication costs have fallen over the past years and decades, the obvious prediction from transaction costs economics would have been a concomitant decline in the optimal size of the firm.³⁰ Empirically, however, there has been minimal change. Corporate size remains relatively unchanged in the aggregate, except for a increased willingness of firms to engage in various forms outsourcing as a form of experimentation in management.³¹

Part of the reason for this lack of change has been that the Internet has lowered the organization costs of hierarchy as well. While individuals encounter fewer costs in contracting with the market, firms experience fewer costs in managing their internal hierarchies. Indeed, for some sectors the information revolution has increased the

²⁷ Helen Milner, “The Digital Divide: The Role of Political Institutions in Technology Diffusion,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, August 2003. See also Shanthi Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas, *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: the Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003).

²⁸ See Terry Moe, “Politics and the Theory of Organization.” *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization* 7: 106-129, for objections to applying transaction cost economics to political organizations.

²⁹ Ronald Coase, “The Nature of the Firm.” *Economica* 4 (November 1937): 386-405; Armen Alchian and Harold Demsetz, “Production, Information Costs, and the Economic Organization.” *American Economic Review* 62 (December 1972): 777-795; Benjamin Klein, Robert Crawford, and A. Alchian, “Vertical Integration, Appropriable Rents, and the Competitive Contracting Process.” *Journal of Law and Economics* 21 (October 1978): 297-326.

³⁰ A quote from the *Economist*, “Knowledge is Power,” 21 September 2000: “Most previous technological breakthroughs have increased the optimal size of firms either by reducing production costs and increasing economies of scale, as with electricity and steam, or by reducing transport costs, as with railways, thus favouring concentration. By contrast, outside the digitisable sectors such as software the Internet reduces economies of scale in most of the economy by increasing the opportunities for outsourcing and by lowering fixed costs.”

³¹ On this issue, see Daniel W. Drezner, “The Outsourcing Bogeyman,” *Foreign Affairs* 83 (May/June 2004): 22-34; Drezner, “Outsourcing as an Economic Experiment,” 16 March 2005 (accessed at <http://www.danieldrezner.com/archives/001942.html>).

optimal size of the firm. In retail sectors, for example, the spread of networked computers has allowed for rationalization in the management of inventory.³²

The implications of this discussion for the Internet's effect on states and civil society should be apparent. The tendency among scholars and pundits has been to pay attention to how the Internet lowers the costs of organization among citizen activists. However, what must be acknowledged is that the Internet also lowers the costs of government monitoring as well. Even if a government chooses not to censor online political activity, the enhanced monitoring capabilities make it easier for the state to anticipate and regulate civic protests.

WHO DOES THE INTERNET EMPOWER?

Although the Internet facilitates the coordination capabilities of both states and civil society groups, political scientists recognize that power is a zero-sum commodity. The more power that one actor acquires, the less relative power there is for others. This begs two questions. First, does the Internet empower states or civil society groups more? Second, does the change in the distribution of power fundamentally affect politics at the domestic and global levels?

The answer to the first question is relatively clear – civil society groups benefit more from the information revolution. This is mostly due to the paucity of pre-Internet tools these groups had at their disposal. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that form the backbone of global civil society lack significant amounts of the hard power resources that governments possess. NGOs are characterized by limited budgets, small staffs, and have no ability to compel state action. Long before the information revolution, governments were already able to rely on a welter of coercive instruments. The proliferation of the Internet has allowed NGOs to better utilize their political tools. It has allowed previously non-existent actors, such as bloggers, to make their political presence felt. The Internet has undoubtedly facilitated the government's ability to coerce. However, the size of pre-existing coercive resources means that the marginal benefit from the Internet is lower for governments than for non-governmental actors. .

More significantly, is this shift in the distribution of power an important one? The answer to this question has less to do with the power of the Internet and more to do with the power of norms. Even if the Internet empowers global civil society, the question is whether governments are willing to tolerate more vocal citizen activists or not. In democratic governments, the stable rule of law automatically stacks the normative deck in favor of non-state actors. Unless governments feel free to deploy their coercive capabilities, then obviously civil society elements will gain from the Internet.

³² See Carl Shapiro and Hal Varian, *Information Rules* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999); Eric Brynjolfsson and Loren Hitt, "Beyond Computation: Information Technology, Organizational Performance, and Business Performance," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14 (Fall 2000): 23-49; William W. Lewis, *The Power of Productivity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), chapter four.

However, there are arenas where existing norms – or a lack thereof – permit the regulation or control of civil society groups. In international negotiations, for example, global civil society advocates deride the “green room” process, in which key decisions are made by powerful states behind closed doors. However, because it would dilute their influence, great powers are decidedly willing to open up the green room. Analysis of the various UN conferences reveal that over time, states have become more adept at excluding various NGOs from key bargaining sessions and preparatory committee meetings.³³ Even in the case of content regulation of the Internet itself, global civil society and human rights activists have been thwarted in their efforts to establish a norm of online press freedom. The recent World Summit for the Information Society, in which the official Plan of Action encourages governments to “combat illegal and harmful content in media content,” is a stark reminder of the limits of civil society influence upon multilateral negotiations.³⁴ Because the power of liberal norms remains constrained at the global stage, it is unlikely that this state of affairs will change anytime soon.

Similarly, governments that aspire to totalitarianism will also be willing to flout norms of open expression. These governments will be able to blunt the ability of civil society groups to exploit the Internet. Earlier this year a spokesman for Amnesty International told BBC that the organization, “has recorded a growing number of cases of people detained or imprisoned for disseminating their beliefs or information through the internet, in countries such as China, Syria, Vietnam, the Maldives, Cuba, Iran and Zimbabwe.... It is also shocking to realize that in the communications age just expressing support for an internet activist is enough to land people in jail.”³⁵

It would seem, therefore, that the Internet merely reinforces the pre-existing dynamics between states and non-state actors. In societies that value liberal norms – democracies – the Internet clearly empowers non-state actors to influence the government. In arenas where liberal norms are not widely accepted – interstate negotiations and totalitarian governments – the Internet has no appreciable effect.

However, there is one category where the Internet could prove to have a pivotal effect on state-society relations – the large group of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian states that wish to exploit the economic possibilities of the information society. There is increasing evidence that greater access to global information flows increases growth opportunities for states.³⁶ However, any state that permits Internet or cellular phone use for commercial possibilities will face difficulties in perfectly censoring undesirable communication or halting all attempts at political coordination.

³³ Ann Marie Clark, Elizabeth Friedman, and Kathryn Hochstetler, “The Sovereign Limits of Global Society,” *World Politics* 51, No. 1 (1998): 1-35.

³⁴ Quoted in David Souter, “The View from the Summit: A Report on the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,” *Info* 6 (January/February 2004): 6-11.

³⁵ Quoted in Jo Twist, “Global Blogger Action Day Called,” 22 February 2005. Accessed at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/technology/4278241.stm>.

³⁶ Leonard Waverman, Meloria Meschi and Melvyn Fuss, “The Impact of Telecoms on Economic Growth in Developing Countries.” Centre for Economic Policy Research, March 2005; the *Economist*, “Calling Across the Divide,” 12 March 2005.

Given the other coercive tools of government, imperfect censoring would appear at first glance to be a minor inconvenience. However, the recent wave of democratic revolutions in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, and Lebanon suggest one area where the information revolution can have a dramatic effect – correcting information cascades. An informational cascade takes place when individuals acting in conditions of uncertainty strongly condition their choices on what others have done previously. More formally, an information cascade is a situation in which every actor, based on the observations of others, makes the same choice independent of his/her private information signal.³⁷

In repressive societies, information cascades often lead citizens to acquiesce to government coercion, even if a broad swath of the public would prefer coordinated action. Citizen coordination and mobilization is highly unlikely among risk-averse actors unless there is some assurance that others will behave similarly. At the same time, however, an exogenous shock that triggers spontaneous acts of protest can also trigger a reverse in the cascade. This explains why repressive societies often appear stable and yet without warning can face a massive scaling up of protests and civic action.³⁸ A little bit of public information can reverse a long-standing informational cascade that contributed to citizen quiescence. Even if people may have previously chosen one action, seemingly little information can induce the same people to choose the exact opposite action in response to a slight increase in information.³⁹

The spread information technology increases the fragility of information cascades that sustain the appearance of authoritarian control. This effect creates windows of opportunity for civil society groups. While governments may be able to censor Internet content and repress activists during normal times, that ability may not remain constant over time. Traditional media helps to sustain displays of “people power” in repressive societies.⁴⁰ The role of the new media – be it weblogs or other Internet sites – has the potential to be even more significant.

If repressive governments were previously unaware of the information revolution’s effect on political coordination, the events of the past six months have undoubtedly made them aware. And yet, while these governments can choose to crack down even harder on civil society groups that exploit the Internet, the opportunity costs of such a crackdown are also on the increase. Over time, authoritarian governments will be faced with a difficult choice – accept a greater risk of popular revolt, or engage in costly repressive action.⁴¹

³⁷ Sushil Bikhchandani, David Hirshleifer, and Ivo Welch, “Informational Cascades and Rational Herding: An Annotated Bibliography.” Working paper, *UCLA/Anderson and Ohio State University and Yale/SOM*. Accessed at <http://welch.econ.brown.edu/cascades/>.

³⁸ See, for example, Susanne Lohmann, “The Dynamics of Informational Cascades: The Monday Demonstrations in Leipzig East Germany, 1989-91.” *World Politics* 47 (October 1994): 42-101.

³⁹ Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, and Welch, “Informational Cascades and Rational Herding.”

⁴⁰ See, for example, Roman Olearchyk, “Regime’s Control over TV Media Crumbling,” *Kyiv Post*, 25 November 2004; Sebastian Usher, “Ukraine State TV in Revolt,” *BBC News*, 26 November 2004.

⁴¹ This does **not** mean that if repressive societies become more open, they automatically become more liberal. Religious fundamentalists have embraced the information society just as fervently as classical liberals. Revolution in Iran and genocide in Rwanda show that information technologies are conduits for any kind of information transmission – not just “desirable” forms.