The Social Sources of Counterrevolution:  
State-Sponsored Contention during Revolutionary Episodes

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In normal times of relative quiescence and state dominance, mass demonstrations organized by autocratic regimes serve multiple purposes. They can be used by regimes as a way of controlling local state agents or obtaining information about local circumstances that might otherwise be inaccessible (O'Brien and Li 2006). They can become ritualized and serve as a way of reinforcing domination to the population (Scott 1990). They can be used to signal support for state policies to either foreign or domestic audiences (Weiss 2013). And they can be used as a prophylactic against the emergence of organized opposition or as a way of marginalizing existing opposition movements (Atwal and Bacon 2012).

By contrast, in the unusual times of direct revolutionary challenge to autocratic regimes, the purposes of state-sponsored mobilization narrow considerably. They have at times been used by one portion of the elite to attack another, as a way of overthrowing or altering the circle of those holding power (Radnitz 2010). But more often, state-sponsored mass mobilization in the context of revolutionary challenge has been used as a means of defending an incumbent regime against waves of opposition-led popular mobilization--what I refer to in this paper as “counterrevolution.” In a recent article, Slater and Smith (2016, 1472) defined counterrevolution as “collective and reactive efforts to defend the status quo and its varied range of dominant elites against a credible threat to overturn them from below.” In this paper I take a revolutionary threat to be the materialization of a mass siege aimed at displacing the incumbent regime and substantially altering the political or social
order,¹ and counterrevolutionary mobilization to be civilian mobilization aimed at countering credible revolutionary threats. The obvious paradox of counterrevolutionary mobilization is that, while it is ostensibly civilian in composition, it usually enjoys encouragement from, close affiliation or connection with, or direction from the regime that it is seeking to defend. This of course raises deeper questions of why some regimes resort to counterrevolutionary mobilization to carry out repressive functions normally assumed by the military or the police. Moreover, the degree to which counterrevolutionary mobilization functions autonomously of the state varies. In some cases counterrevolutionary mobilizations have emerged more through encouragement than through direct orchestration, and counterrevolutionaries may mobilize less in support of that regime than in opposition to the social forces represented by revolutionary movements. All of this creates ambiguities and tensions within counterrevolutionary mobilizations.

Slater and Smith (2016) observe that sequence is a central element of counterrevolutionary mobilizations, in that they emerge in response to the presence of a credible revolutionary threat. However, some regimes may institutionalize counterrevolutionary mobilization as a means of preventing revolutionary mobilizations from materializing in the first place—so that the divide between mobilization within and

¹This definition bears similarity to Goodwin’s (2001, 9) definition of revolution: “any and all instances in which a state or political regime is overthrown and thereby transformed by a popular movement in an irregular, extraconstitutional, and/or violent fashion.” In this paper I treat revolution as a distinct mode of regime-change that differs in fundamental respects from other modes of regime-change such as military coups, electoral turnovers in mixed authoritarian regimes, government-initiated political reform from above, or foreign invasions aimed at regime-change. Revolutions differ from military coups and foreign invasions aimed at regime-change in the large number of civilian (i.e., non-military or police) actors involve. They differ as well as from electoral turnovers in mixed authoritarian regimes and political reform from above as modes of regime-change in the specifically extra-institutional siege of government that they entail.
outside of revolutionary episodes may be less clear-cut than I have implied. Moreover, the line between “revolutionary” and “counterrevolutionary” becomes further blurred when one considers the origins of administered mass organizations like the Basij in contemporary Iran, created as a mass movement by a revolutionary regime to defend the revolution against internal and external enemies, but eventually coming to function as an arm of the state and as a counterrevolutionary instrument for attacking new revolutionary opposition movements (Golkar 2015).

Slater and Smith focus their attentions on what they call “counterrevolutionary political orders” in postcolonial states (durable political formations founded on the basis of countering revolutionary challenges) and on governance by political parties that emerge for this purpose. In this paper, I focus instead on what happens more narrowly within revolutionary situations, on the ways in which autocratic regimes utilize mass mobilization to counter revolutionary challengers, and specifically on the types of individuals who are mobilized toward these ends. We know considerably more about the networks, identities, and organizational structures that sustain revolutionary mobilization than about the political and social sources of counterrevolutionary mobilization, which has been treated only sporadically in the literature. Why do autocratic regimes often foster counterrevolutionary mobilizations as a tactic of undermining revolutionary challenges rather than deal directly with revolutionary challengers through their own bureaucratic or police agencies? The tendency in much of the literature on revolution has been to treat individual participation in counterrevolutionary mobilization as motivated primarily by material concerns (either as a result of cash payments or threats to jobs) and subject to strong selective incentives from bureaucratic agencies and the police. But is this always true, and to what extent does
counterrevolutionary mobilization depend upon autonomous social divisions within society? Moreover, what makes for effective counterrevolutionary mobilization (i.e., counterrevolutionary mobilization that successfully defends the incumbent regime)? While we have a great deal of anecdotal information about counterrevolutionary movements, in general we have lacked the kind of systematic data on who participates in counterrevolutionary mobilizations to be able to know the types of individuals who are mobilized in defense of autocratic rule and how they compare with others in society. This paper is an attempt to address this lacuna using two unusual surveys from the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine.

Specially, I make several arguments. First, I argue that counterrevolutionary mobilization has always been an integral part of revolutionary processes going back to the origins of modern revolution in the 17th and 18th centuries, though its role in revolutionary processes has not been adequately theorized or understood. Second, I argue that counterrevolutionary mobilization tends to be composite in character. I use the word composite (rather than coalitional) to indicate that, rather than constituting an alliance of autonomous actors (as occurs, for instance, within revolutionary coalitions), counterrevolutionary mobilization instead consists of parts that are pulled together, usually by agents of the state or by those affiliated with the state. Usually some element of counterrevolutionary mobilization relies on selective incentives and patronage networks deployed by the regime (sometimes payment, sometimes hierarchical authority). But there is often an additional element that is not merely a product of material incentives but is rooted in significant societal divisions or tensions within society. This more autonomously based counterrevolutionary mobilization may emerge from a number of sources.
Incumbent regimes often enjoy a social base that transcends patronage relationships due to cultural or ideological divisions within society. Moreover, autonomous counterrevolutionary participation can be motivated less by enthusiasm for the incumbent regime than by dislike of the social forces represented within revolutionary movements. These disparate elements are often pieced together (i.e., “composed”) by incumbent regimes in the context of revolutionary challenges. Finally, I argue that the ability (or inability) of regimes to command autonomous counterrevolutionary mobilization that relies on more than just patronage ties and selective incentives can be an important part of an explanation for how incumbent regimes survive or fail to survive revolutionary challenges. Thus, as a political process, revolutions are much more complex phenomena than simplistic stories about elites versus masses would make them out to be, and counterrevolutionary mobilization deserves more attention in our theorizing about revolution than it has thus far received.

The Origins and Purposes of Civilian Counterrevolutionary Mobilization

Historically, civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization closely paralleled the emergence of modern revolution itself. As Charles Tilly (1964) detailed, in the French Revolution an anti-revolutionary majority in the countryside confronted a pro-revolutionary minority based primarily in cities—a gap that widened in particular as the new revolutionary regime began to move against the power of the clergy and local aristocracy and imposed mass conscription on the population. The result was a civil war in the countryside, leading to mass repressions by republican armies (see also Tilly 1989). As Tilly (1989, 86) noted, “Contrary to the old image of a unitary people welcoming the arrival of long-awaited reform, local histories of the revolution make clear that France’s revolutionaries established
their power through struggle, and frequently over stubborn popular resistance . . .
Counterrevolution occurred not where everyone opposed the revolution, but where irreconcilable differences divided well-defined blocs of supporters and opponents.”

In many ways, French counterrevolution set the mold for most civilian counter-mobilization in revolutionary episodes up through the early twentieth century. It was largely reactive, occurring in the wake of the revolutionary seizure of power, and often autonomously based in rural resistance to revolutionary power. Indeed, Arno Mayer (2000, 7) distinguished between what he called the “composite and organized counter-revolution from the top and the spontaneous and irregular anti-revolution from the ground up.” As he noted, anti-revolution traditionally took the form of peasant revolts that materialized against the measures introduced by new revolutionary regimes--and often remained unconnected with the elite-driven counter-revolution directed from above. Mayer (2000, 57) argued that counter-revolution could only be effective if it connected with this anti-revolution from below (i.e., with genuinely-driven mass mobilization).

Over the course of the nineteenth century counterrevolution developed new practices. The Revolution of 1848 in Paris saw the beginnings of the use of paramilitary force as a way of countering revolutionary threats. The new Provisional Government brought to power through the revolutionary overthrow of Louis Phillippe in February 1848 was threatened by a second insurrection in June, led by the National Workshops and fueled in large part by the new regime’s tax and social policies. The most effective force in putting down the June Uprising was a new Mobile Guard--a paid, 20-thousand-person, full-time militia only recently organized by the new Provisional Government. Marx (2003, 49)
claimed that this new militia consisted primarily of hired “lumpenproletariat” (“thieves and criminals of all kinds, living on the crumbs of society, people without definite trade, vagabonds, people without hearth or home”). It was indeed Marx who first gave voice to what we might call the thuggish theory of counterrevolutionary mobilization: the idea that civilians participating in counterrevolutionary mobilization are paid criminals hired by the regime to beat heads. In some circumstances this may be true. However, detailed research by Traugott (1980, 2002) has uncovered the fact that those recruited into the Mobile Guard differed little in terms of occupational background from the insurgents that they were charged with suppressing (both were recruited primarily from among the artisanal classes). Mobile Guard members were considerably younger than their revolutionary counterparts, suggesting to some their greater economic vulnerability. But Traugott argues that it was the organizational recruitment and socialization of the Mobile Guard (and in particular, their thorough isolation in barracks) that made them such a loyal and effective weapon against revolutionary mobilization. Traugott’s findings are indeed a warning against simplistic characterizations of those who mobilize against revolution. Others, such as Gould (1995), have pointed to a spatial dimension differentiating those who mobilized as revolutionaries in 1848 and those who did not, noting another important dimension of counterrevolutionary mobilization: the key role of locality and networks in shaping counterrevolutionary recruitment.

By the early twentieth century a number of autocratic regimes began experimenting with yet another model for using civilian mobilization for countering revolutionary challenges: the organization of counterrevolutionary mass movements and parties. In the midst of the Revolution of 1905 in Russia, for instance, a series of counterrevolutionary
mass movements such as the Union of Russian People (and its affiliated Black Hundred) burst onto the political scene—organizing demonstrations, street fights, pogroms, assassinations, and vigilante actions aimed at defending the monarchy, defeating revolutionary threats, and preserving aristocratic privilege and Russian ethnic dominance throughout the Russian empire (Lang 2007). While the leadership of the movement consisted of members of the upper and middle classes with close connections to the police, the rank-and-file were recruited largely from workers, peasants, shopkeepers, priests, and professionals, as well as criminals and the unemployed. Police actively abetted the development of the movement, even printing pogromist leaflets in some instances. As Lang (2007, 77-79) describes the attractions for joining, the motives were mixed:

Many undeniably believed in the organization’s stated goals of fighting the revolutionaries and protecting the autocracy . . . But there was more to URP recruitment than pure political conviction . . . Some people clearly joined the organization thanks to the prospect of jobs, money-making opportunities, and power associated with membership in a movement that had the tsar’s blessing . . . Some rank-and-file members viewed the organization as a means to drum up customers for their businesses, even using their speeches during URP meetings as opportunities to hawk their wares . . . [And some] members of the URP’s various paramilitary groups exploited their positions to earn money through robberies and extortion schemes, particularly aimed at Jews . . . The prospect of engaging in organized violence represented a final incentive for joining the URP.

At its height the Union of Russian People encompassed over 400 thousand members, but after 1907, when the threat of revolution receded, it went into steep decline, in part due to the corrupt habit of its leadership for largescale skimming off of state subsidies. Nevertheless, it played some role in reconsolidation of the Tsarist power over the Duma and over Russian society and the rollback of political reform in the wake of the 1905 Revolution.
Since the early twentieth century, civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization has become a standard tool by which autocratic regimes seek to undermine revolutionary threats. There are a number of reasons why this has been the case, and why, in addition to using police or military repression or engaging in concessions, autocratic regimes turn to civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization as a means for undermining revolutions.

For one thing, even when counter-revolutionary mobilization is entirely involuntary and relies solely upon hierarchical authority or selective incentives, it demonstrates to elites and to the population the continuing power of the regime and its ability to control institutions and command popular resources, thereby raising the costs of defection. As Graeme Robertson (2009, 530) has noted, “Maintaining the incumbent advantage . . . depends to a significant extent on maintaining an air of invincibility or permanence, and convincing other potential leaders and elites that their best hopes for advancement lie in continuing to work together with the ruling group rather than organizing against it.” If the success of revolutionary challenges depends on the ability of oppositions to stimulate defections from within the ruling coalition, then demonstrating the continuing coherence of the regime’s institutional control is one way to render defection less attractive.

Second, autocratic regimes facing revolutionary threats may prefer the use of civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization as a tool of violent repression over the police or the military for several reasons: it may help to preserve the morale and institutional coherence of the military and police; it may make it more difficult for oppositions to organize backlash effective mobilizations in response to repression; and it may help to justify the imposition of states of emergency. Repression is never cost-free to governments. Not only does it take a
toll on a regime’s legitimacy within society, but it also requires institutional resources, and those resources are not inexhaustible. As the scholarly literature on revolutions has come to emphasize, in generating and applying resources for repression, the cohesion of state institutions (and particularly, of those institutions called upon to carry out repression—the army and the police) is critical for explaining the effects of repression (Skocpol 1979). Defections from the military or police are much more likely when the military or police are in direct contact with oppositional forces or repeatedly suffer significant casualties as a result of being deployed against crowds for purposes of repression. Indeed, as I have shown elsewhere (Beissinger 2002), declining morale within the military and police from their constant deployment to put down unrest throughout the country was a key element in explaining the refusal of many military and KGB officers to defend the Soviet regime at the time of its collapse in 1991. And revolutionaries have long advocated the role of fraternization as a means for undermining the coherence of a regime’s forces of order (see Ketchley 2014). For all these reasons, using civilians to carry out repression rather than the military and police can help a regime avoid some of the circumstances that lead to elite defections.

Moreover, repression often leads to unpredictable consequences, at times leading to mobilization, while at other times leading to backlash effects (Lichbach 1987). The success of government repression against protestors has been shown to depend upon a long list of factors, including the severity of the repression, the consistency of the repression relative to concessions, the size of the opposition, the thickness of opposition networks, the degree of openness of the media, the tactical flexibility of opposition, public expectations emerging from external events, regime-type, and the coherence and will of the government. The
ability to attribute blame is a critical part of framing processes within collective action, and the inability to attribute blame decreases significantly the likelihood of mobilization (Benford and Snow 2000; Javeline 2003). Autocratic regimes may be attracted to masking their responsibility for repression by using civilians to repress revolutionary threats because repression carried out by civilians rather than directly by the police can blur the ability of the populations to assign blame for repression, lowering the likelihood of backlash effects.

Violent clashes between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary civilians can also provide opportunities for the regime to justify a declaration of emergency and imposition of political order, thereby justifying harsher and more systematic government repression of revolutionary challengers. In its attempts to halt the Baltic drives to independence in 1991, for example, Moscow attempted to precipitate a crisis in the Baltic republics in order to pave the way for declaring emergency rule. In Lithuania this was done by mobilizing demonstrations by local Russians and Poles who demanded the resignation of the Lithuanian government over recent prices increases and tried to storm the parliament. In Latvia, after a series of mysterious bombings carried by the Soviet army to make it appear that the situation had gotten out of control, local Russian-speakers were directed to organize demonstrations and attempted (unsuccessfully) to seize control over the parliament. Kremlin-controlled media portrayed the region as having slipped into chaos, and in both republics civilian National Salvation Committees were formed demanding that emergency rule be introduced (See Senn 1995; Jundzis 2009).

Of course, violence against protestors carried out by civilian counterrevolutionaries can also fail in the face of largescale mobilization, playing instead into revolutionary
narratives. Such was the case in the infamous Battle of the Camel in Tahrir Square on February 2, 2011. Neil Ketchley (2016) has documented the steady growth of pro-Mubarak demonstrations in Egypt beginning on January 28th, the “Friday of Anger.” Most pro-regime protests coincided with anti-regime demonstrations and were used as opportunities for Mubarak’s supporters to harass and repress the opposition. On February 2nd hired thugs armed with swords and cudgels riding camels and horses attacked protestors, while others threw Molotov cocktails and police snipers shot from higher locations, killing and injuring hundreds of protestors. Organized by businessmen close to the regime and members of Mubarak’s government (including his son Gamal), we know from subsequent testimonies that these thuggish elements had a variety of motives for participation: some were recruited by stable owners in the district of El-Haram (where the Great Pyramids are located), believing that the protests were taking toll on their livelihood of tourism; others were simply paid to participate; but even here there were some who attacked protesters out of their personal beliefs, formed largely through the state-run media at the time, that the protestors represented “enemies of the nation” (Tarek 2011). Broadcast on Al-Jazeera and other media, the barbaric scenes of thugs attacking protestors with swords helped seal the fate of the Mubarak regime, forming, in Ketchley’s (2014, 174) words, "the last serious attempt by the Mubarak regime to displace the occupation of Tahrir." Thus, while there may strong reasons for autocratic regimes to engage in civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization, there have been many instances in which such strategies fail.

Third, counterrevolutionary mobilization, if sufficiently large, can visibly demonstrate the limits of support for revolutionary opposition within society, thereby undermining revolutionary claims to popular legitimacy. Particularly in an age in which visual images of
crowds displayed on television or supplied by social media, crowd size can signal critical information to potential participants whose decision to participate may rely on the levels of participation by others. In Kuran’s (1997) terms, the larger the size of pro-government crowds, the higher the thresholds for individuals to reveal their true preferences over regime-change and the less likely band-wagoning with the opposition becomes. Moreover, the more divided society appears to be over the issue of regime-change, and the more those members of society who favor the status quo are willing to mobilize in defense of the regime, the more hollow opposition claims to represent the preferences of “the people” would appear to be. Thus, one strategy of regimes facing credible revolutionary threats is to mobilize large crowds in support of the status quo. In the so-called Pearl Revolution in Bahrain in 2011, after a week of opposition demonstrations and strikes by tens of thousands of predominantly Shiite protestors aimed at securing the introduction of parliamentary rule, the monarchy mobilized its own large-scale Sunni counter-demonstration of up 120 thousand (billed by the government as the largest demonstration in Bahraini history) on February 21, 2011.² The event in turn sparked even larger protests by the Shiite majority. While some of the participants in pro-government demonstrations were foreign workers who were coerced into participating, most participants were Sunni citizens who were frightened by the implications of parliamentary rule in a country where they constituted only 30 percent of the population.

Counter-demonstrations involving large numbers require more than just selective incentives to fuel participation, and societal divisions (such as ethnicity, religion, region, or clan) are likely to be a more reliable source for counterrevolutionary mobilization than material incentives, as those who support depends primarily on material incentives are more likely to defect when faced with persistent, largescale resistance. But while counterrevolutionary mobilization that relies upon societal divisions may be more loyal, it is also likely to be less controllable by incumbent regimes. As the literature on revolutions tells us (Goodwin 2001), autocratic regimes that rely primarily on patronage as a mode of rule are the most vulnerable to being overthrown by revolutions, precisely because of the problems of defection that patronage involves. Accordingly, one might hypothesize that, in countering a revolutionary threat of equal magnitude, counterrevolutionary mobilizations that rely more on societal divisions are likely to be more effective in marginalizing revolutionary oppositions than those that rely more on material incentives.

Counterrevolutionary Mobilization during the 2004 Orange Revolution: Evidence from Two Surveys

As argued above, most civilian counterrevolutionary mobilizations are composite in character, involving a mix of participation based on material incentives and participation based on societal divisions. The later can be motivated more by dislike against the social forces represented by the revolutionary opposition rather than by loyalty to the incumbent regime, but ironically is less likely to defect than those whose participation in civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization is based solely on patronage or on selective incentives.
I examine this argument in more detail through two highly unusual nationally-representative public opinion surveys taken at the time of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004 that allow us to identify who mobilized in counterrevolutionary protests during the revolution and how they compare not only with Orange Revolution participants and with the rest of Ukrainian society, but also with those who opposed the revolution but did not mobilize as counterrevolutionaries.

The Orange Revolution from November 21, 2004 through January 10, 2005 is widely considered one of the most spectacular displays of revolutionary protest on the European continent since the end of the Cold War. Up to a million citizens turned out on Maidan, the main square of Kyiv, in temperatures as cold as minus 12 degrees centigrade to call for the annulment of falsified elections and an end to the incumbent regime of Leonid Kuchma and his chosen successor, Viktor Yanukovych. Orange candidate Viktor Yushchenko was actually sworn in as president on Maidan in front of a large crowd of onlookers, even before the fraudulent electoral results declaring pro-incumbent candidate Viktor Yanukovych as winner were announced. There were several turning points in the making of the Orange Revolution: the defection of pro-Kuchma legislators in voting no-confidence in the Electoral Commission on November 27th (and later their dismissal of Yanukovych as Prime Minister on December 1st); the abandoned effort on November 28th by the regime to use force to gain back control over the situation, due in large part to defections from within the secret police and the armed forces; the remarkable display of independence by members of the Ukrainian Supreme Court on December 3rd to invalidate the elections, leading eventually to new elections that resolved the situation of dual power in favor of Yushchenko. But the Orange Revolution did not simply consist of protests aimed at overturning the Kuchma
regime and its attempts to falsify elections. There were also much smaller pro-incumbent
demonstrations organized by the Yanukovych campaign, the largest of which gathered
around 70 thousand participants. Most of these were concentrated in the East and South
of the country.

Two public opinion surveys taken during and after the Orange Revolution allow us to
gain some purchase on the prevalence of civilian counterrevolutionary mobilization during
the revolution, as well as on who mobilized in counterrevolutionary protests. A nationally
representative survey of 2,044 adults (18 or older) was conducted by the Kyiv International
Institute of Sociology (KIIS) from December 10-14, 2004--in the immediate wake of the
protests but prior to the third and final round of the presidential vote. The survey asked
respondents not only whether they had participated in demonstrations after the second
round of voting, but also for whom they intended to vote in the upcoming third round of the
election, which was to take place on December 26, 2004.3 But assuming that those who
voted for Yanukovych did not demonstrate for Yushchenko (and vice versa), in essence
these questions allow one to identify five distinct groups with respect to the revolution (as
depicted in Figure 1): 1) revolutionaries (those who intended to vote for Yushchenko in the
third round of voting and who also participated in protests during the Orange Revolution:
13.6 percent of respondents); 2) revolution supporters (those who intended to vote for
Yushchenko in the third round but did not participate in any demonstrations: 26.9 percent
of respondents); 3) revolution opponents (those who intended to vote for pro-incumbent

3I use the third round of voting as the clearest expression of whether an individual
supported or did not support the Yushchenko candidacy. The first round included
numerous other candidates, and the second round occurred prior to the onset of the
revolutionary events.
candidate Viktor Yanukovych or against all candidates in the third round but did not participate in protests: 35.7 percent of respondents); 4) counter-revolutionaries (those who participated in protest demonstrations but intended to vote for Yanukovych, against all candidates, or intended not to vote: 4.0 percent of respondents); and 5) the inactive or apathetic (those who, in the midst of the most hotly contested election in Ukrainian history and revolutionary events that swept up millions, did not participate in any protests and were undecided about their electoral preference: 18.6 percent of respondents). Of course, given that the survey was taken prior to the election, it may be a more accurate expression of who participated in the protests than of actual voting behavior (12.2 percent of the sample did not know at the time for whom they would vote or did not indicate any electoral preference).

[FIGURE 1 HERE]

The KIIS survey was a bare-bones survey focusing on voting and protest behavior during the revolution; it provides us with some basics demographics on both voters and protestors. Its main advantage is that it occurred in the midst of the revolution and therefore is unlikely to suffer from problems of preference falsification. A second survey taken in March 2005, only two months after the conclusion of the revolution, however, provides a more detailed picture of Ukrainian society during the Orange Revolution. The 2005 Monitoring survey was not designed specifically as a study of Orange Revolution

4A small portion (1.4 percent of the sample) refused to indicate whether they had voted in the presidential election or whether they had participated in any demonstrations. These respondents were dropped from the subsequent analysis. Another 1.7 percent was disqualified from voting and was also dropped from the subsequent analysis (Only 2 of these respondents indicated that they had participated in the Orange Revolution protests).
participation. Monitoring surveys had been conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences every year since 1994 as a means for analyzing trends within Ukrainian society (Panina, 2005). The survey consisted of two parts: a battery of questions repeated annually, and one-time questions designed to probe particular issues. In the 2005 Monitoring survey, a series of one-time questions was added concerning the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election and the events of the Orange Revolution. Respondents were asked to identify the candidate for whom they voted in each of the three rounds of the 2004 presidential election and whether they had participated in any demonstrations during the Orange Revolution and in what manner. Again assuming that those who voted for Yanukovych did not demonstrate for Yushchenko (and vice versa), the questions allow one to identify five distinct groups with respect to the revolution (as depicted in Figure 2): 1) revolutionaries (those who reported voting for Yushchenko in the third round of voting and reported participating in protests during the Orange Revolution: 18.6 percent of respondents); 2) revolution supporters (those who voted for Yushchenko in the third round but did not participate in any demonstrations: 36.3 percent of respondents); 3) revolution opponents (those who voted for pro-incumbent candidate Viktor Yanukovych or voted against all candidates in the third round but did not participate in protests: 31.5 percent of respondents); 4) counter-revolutionaries (those who participated in protest demonstrations but voted for Yanukovych, voted against all candidates, or willingly chose not vote: 2.0 percent of respondents); and 5) the inactive or apathetic (those who, in the midst of the most hotly contested election in Ukrainian history and revolutionary events that swept up

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5The March 2005 Monitoring survey was based on a representative sample of 1,801 adult Ukrainians (18 years or older) using a combination of stratified, random, and quota sampling and was conducted from March 2-30, 2005 in all provinces of Ukraine. For details on sampling procedures, see Panina, 2005: 17-18.
millions, neither voted nor participated in any protests: 8.6 percent of respondents).\(^6\)


[FIGURE 2 HERE]

The key advantage of the Monitoring survey over the KIIS survey is level of detail about respondents that it provides. In all, the survey asked a total of 357 questions covering a wide variety of topics. In addition to questions about the respondent’s age, gender, marital and family status, level of education, place of residence, religion, nationality, language use, and economic and material situation, the survey asked respondents about their attitudes toward privatization, Ukraine’s geo-political orientation, citizenship and language policy, and political institutions. It asked about respondents’ political self-identification, participation in civil society associations, trust in other people and in institutions, evaluations of political leaders, interactions with the state over the previous twelve months, attitudes toward various nationalities, their biggest fears and what they desired more in their lives, health and drinking habits, height and weight, the size of their living space and how well it was heated, how they spent their free time and what consumer goods they owned, thoughts of migration within Ukraine or abroad, access to the internet and cell-phone ownership, and numerous other questions.

But there are obvious issues with using any retrospective survey of participation in a

\(^6\)A small portion (1.4 percent of the sample) refused to indicate whether they had voted in the presidential election or whether they had participated in any demonstrations. These respondents were dropped from the subsequent analysis. Another 1.7 percent was disqualified from voting and was also dropped from the subsequent analysis (Only 2 of these respondents indicated that they had participated in the Orange Revolution protests).
revolution. Attitudes and beliefs may themselves be affected by the experience of revolution, and bandwagoning and preference falsification are inherent parts of the revolutionary process. The KIIS survey, however, avoids these problems, given that it was taken in the middle of the revolution. Moreover, the KIIS sample, conducted during the revolution, identifies a larger number of self-identified counterrevolutionaries (4.0 percent of the sample, or 82 individuals) compared with the Monitoring sample (only 2.0 percent of the sample, or 38 individuals). Clearly, one should feel more comfortable about findings about counterrevolutionaries based on the KIIS sample than the Monitoring sample, and generalizations based on a sample of only 38 individuals may be suspect. Given these trade-offs (between the scope of questions versus the size of the samples), my strategy is to compare the results of the two samples to see if they demonstrate similar patterns and findings in those areas in which they overlap, and only then to look to the broader range of questions represented in the Monitoring.

The Composite Character of Counterrevolutionary Mobilization in the Orange Revolution

If one were to project the results of both surveys on Ukraine’s adult population of 36 million, they would indicate that somewhere between 4.9 and 6.7 million people participated in revolutionary protests in support of Yushchenko, while between 700 thousand and 1.4 million participated in counterrevolutionary protests in support of Yanukovych and the incumbent regime across various parts of Ukraine. That represents a significant level of counterrevolutionary mobilization, even though it was significantly smaller than revolutionary mobilization. Both surveys show, however, that while more Ukrainians supported the revolution than opposed it, Ukrainian society was much more
closely divided over regime-change than the differences in turnout between revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries would suggest. The official electoral results of the third round of voting indicated that Yushchenko supporters outnumbered Yushchenko opponents on the order of about 6 to 5; the Monitoring survey records a margin of 8 to 5, while the KIIS survey showed a very narrow margin of 11 to 10 among likely voters. Nevertheless, protest mobilization among revolution supporters far outnumbered mobilization by revolution opponents (by a factor of almost 9 to 1 in the Monitoring survey, and in the KIIS survey by a factor of almost 4 to 1). According to the KIIS survey, only 51 percent of Yushchenko voters who did not participate in protests knew of someone (a friend, relative, or acquaintance) who participated in a protest during the revolution; by contrast, only 18 percent of Yanukovych voters did. Thus, even in successful revolutions like the Orange Revolution, in which the opposition is able to come to power in the wake of mobilization, preferences toward the incumbent regime are often much more closely divided than visible patterns of collective action suggest. Moreover, the outcomes of successful revolutions may be due as much to the passivity of potential regime supporters as to the effective mobilization of regime opponents.

What do the two samples tell us about the nature of counterrevolutionary and how it compared with Yanukovych supporters, Orange revolutionaries, and Ukrainian society as a whole? Table 1 shows the results for a number of demographic features of counterrevolutionary participants across the two samples, placing them into comparative perspective. A number of interesting similarities and differences between the two samples stand out. For one thing, in terms of gender, both samples demonstrate that counterrevolutionaries were more male than the Ukrainian population or than Yanukovych
voters as a whole, though the differences are more stark in the Monitoring sample than in the KIIS sample (where the differences are not statistically significant). Moreover, whereas almost two-thirds of counterrevolutionaries in the Monitoring sample were male, counterrevolutionaries in the KIIS sample were somewhat more female than male. This difference could be due to different sampling frames for the two surveys, or to a possible gender pattern in preference falsification (with more females who identified as counterrevolutionaries during the revolution preferring not to self-identify three months afterward than males). In terms of age, both surveys show that counter-revolutionaries tended to be older and more middle-aged than revolutionaries, but younger than either the Ukrainian population or Yanukovych voters as a whole (The differences are statistically significant in the large KIIS sample). Moreover, according to the KIIS survey, 31 percent of counterrevolutionaries had a higher education (considerably more than Yanukovych voters as a whole--14 percent--and at about the same level as those who participated in the pro-Yushchenko protests in Orange Revolution participants--33 percent). Similar patterns show up in the smaller and less reliable Monitoring survey. Thus, the notion that counterrevolutionaries consisted of “thugs” or the uneducated are contradicted by these surveys. Rather, both revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries consisted disproportionately of those with higher education.

[Table 1 here]

At the same time, it is also clear that there was a programmatic, a cultural, and a patronage basis to the recruitment of counterrevolutionaries in the Orange Revolution. For example, in the KIIS survey 42 percent of counterrevolutionaries fully agreed with the statement that it was necessary to protest in order to defend their vote for president.
Indeed, counterrevolutionaries were much more committed to Yanukovych as a candidate than Yanukovych voters as a whole. When asked in the KIIS survey for whom they would vote if Yanukovych dropped out of the race, 77 percent of counterrevolutionaries indicated that they would vote against all the other candidates or not vote at all, as opposed to only 58 percent of Yanukovych voters as a whole (statistically significant at the .05 level). Moreover, most part counterrevolutionaries were not one-time activists; 51 percent indicated that they had participated in earlier political meetings or demonstrations during the past 12 months (as opposed to only 2 percent of Yanukovych voters as a whole). Counterrevolutionaries were just as politically active in the prior year as revolutionaries participating in pro-Yushchenko protests, 68 percent of whom had participated in early political meetings or demonstrations during the previous year.

At the same time, both the KIIS and the Monitoring surveys provide some highly suggestive evidence of a patronage basis (and even some thuggish element) among the counterrevolutionaries. According to the KIIS survey, 59 percent of counterrevolutionaries came from a single province: Donetsk province--Yanukovych’s home base, where he was born, where he built his political career, and where he received the second-highest level of electoral support (after Lugansk province). By contrast, only 21 percent of Yanukovych voters as a whole came from Donetsk province (a difference that is statistically significant at the .001 level). As can be seen in Figure 3, this regional difference holds up even when one controls for the gender, age, nationality, and education of respondents. The odds of a counterrevolutionary coming from Donetsk province was four times greater than the odds of a Yanukovych voter coming from Donetsk province, and eleven times greater than a Ukrainian citizen coming from Donetsk province.
The Monitoring data provides some further insights into who the counterrevolutionaries were. As can be seen in Figure 4, on average the odds that a counterrevolutionary was dissatisfied with the condition of his or her home were considerably higher than for other groupings: 130 percent greater than for Yanukovych voters, 654 percent greater than pro-Yushchenko Orange Revolution participants, and 258 percent greater than a random member of the Ukrainian population. Moreover, the odds that a counterrevolutionary engaged in physical exercise sometime in the last seven days was also considerably greater than for other groups: 173 percent greater than for a Yanukovych supporters in general, 158 percent greater than pro-Yushchenko Orange Revolution participants, and 181 percent greater than a random member of the Ukrainian population. All these differences are statistically significant at the .05 level or lower. In other words, compared to other groupings with respect to the revolution within the Ukrainian population, counter-revolutionaries tended to be a relatively more dissatisfied and a relatively more burly lot. This is precisely what might expect from the “thuggish” theory of counterrevolution.

[Figure 4 here]

Finally, there were also large cultural differences between counter-revolutionaries and the rest of the Ukrainian population. For example, 35 percent were ethnic Russian (compared to 31 percent of Yanukovych supporters more generally, but only 17 percent of the rest of the Ukrainian population and 5 percent of pro-Yushchenko Orange Revolution participants). Moreover, only 7 percent considered Ukrainian their native language (as opposed to 23 percent of Yanukovych supporters as a whole, 65 percent of the rest of the population, and 83 percent of pro-Yushchenko Orange Revolution participants). They were
also much less likely to consider Ukraine their motherland (statistically significant at the .001 level).

**Conclusion**

In short, counterrevolutionaries during the Orange Revolution point to the composite character of counterrevolutionary mobilization. One can find evidence suggestive that patronage relationships played an important role (and even the recruitment of muscle). But there was also a programmatic and cultural element to counterrevolutionary recruitment, as counterrevolutionaries differed in significant respects with regards to beliefs, attachment to party, and cultural attributes and background.
References


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Skocpol, Theda. 1979. States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


Table 1. The Demography of Counter-Revolution in Ukraine, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sample as a whole</th>
<th>Counter-revolutionaries</th>
<th>Yanukovych supporters</th>
<th>Orange revolutionaries</th>
<th>Sample as a whole</th>
<th>Counter-revolutionaries</th>
<th>Yanukovych supporters</th>
<th>Orange revolutionaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,044</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>335</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ages 35 or younger</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 36-55</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ages 56 or older</td>
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<td>23.2%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Higher education</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
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<td>16.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russian nationality</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claims Russian as native language</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaks only Russian at home</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
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<td>Donetsk province</td>
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<td>10.4%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<td>Other Eastern provinces</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern provinces</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>39.9%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
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</table>
Figure 1: Political Groupings in the Orange Revolution (KIIS Survey)
Figure 2: Political Groupings in the Orange Revolution (Monitoring Survey)

- Revolutionaries: 18.6%
- Revolution supporters: 36.3%
- Apathetic/inactive: 8.6%
- Revolution opponents: 31.5%
- Counter-revolutionaries: 2.0%
Figure 3. Factors Affecting Counterrevolutionary Participation (Logistic Regression)

- Male
- Age
- Russian nationality
- Higher education
- Donetsk obl.

vs. Yanukovych supporters vs. Ukrainian population
Figure 4. Factors Associated With Counterrevolutionary Participation (Logistic Regression)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>vs. Yanukovych supporters</th>
<th>vs. Ukrainian population</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied with home</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercised in last 7 days</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in political parties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian nationality</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine as motherland</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>