

## MECHANISMS OF MAIDAN: THE STRUCTURE OF CONTINGENCY IN THE MAKING OF THE ORANGE REVOLUTION\*

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*This study evaluates the validity and causal weight of competing causal mechanisms that purport to explain a single set of choices (and critical turning point) within a contentious episode: the decision to participate in the Orange Revolution protests in Ukraine in November 2004. These protests were characterized by extraordinarily high levels of participation, despite freezing temperatures and the threat of violence. Using evidence from public-opinion surveys and eyewitness accounts, the study shows how causal processes unfolded and accumulated and at several levels (structural, conjunctural, endogenous). Overall, participation represented more a short-term fluctuation than a general shift in societal values and behaviors, was fueled more by a long train of abuses than by suddenly imposed grievances, and was aided by a robust form of electoral campaigning. Events functioned as occasions for crafting together a diverse coalition of participants motivated by a variety of concerns—national, economic, and civic.*

On Sunday November 21, 2004 (election day in Ukraine), as the expected reports of massive electoral fraud began to trickle in, the campaign of Viktor Yushchenko issued a call for supporters to begin a protest campaign the following day on Kyiv's Independence Square (known simply as "the Square," or in Ukrainian—Maidan). The organizers expected that no more than 60,000 to 70,000 people would turn out, sowing doubts among them as to whether their strategy would succeed. After all, the Yushchenko campaign had never managed to gather more than 70,000 at any previous rally, and the winter temperatures, the fact that Monday was a working day, the government's control of the media, and the risks involved in openly defying a government that had not shied away from using violence against protestors in the past, were hardly conducive to optimism. Taras Stetskiiv—one of the coordinators of Yushchenko's campaign—later recalled the scene at Maidan in the morning hours of November 22:

When my colleagues and I came to Maidan, there were only about 500 people. At 10 AM, there were about three or four thousand. We even had a bit of rain. We thought people would not come out to the streets. At 11 AM . . . people from headquarters were calling us up and asking [how many had arrived], and I said "It's about 30,000 people." And they said: "It's a catastrophe. With this amount, we won't be able to achieve anything." (quoted in *Orange Revolution* 2007)

To the relief of the Yushchenko campaign, around noon people began pouring into the square. The size of the crowd increased to 80,000 and then swelled to 200,000. To the surprise of the organizers themselves (and the Kuchma regime), Kyivans had turned out in unexpectedly large numbers, skipping work to register their protest. Over the ensuing days, as people from all over Ukraine converged on the square, the number of protestors in the center of Kyiv climbed to

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almost a million people, and the demonstrations at Maidan evolved into one of the most spectacular displays of protest Europe has seen: a seventeen-day round-the-clock protest/rock concert bedecked with orange banners, balloons, and scarves that shut down government operations and eventually forced the authorities to schedule a new vote. As Dominique Arel observed:

[W]hat everybody expected was for a relatively small following to disrupt business as usual in the center, much like the small demonstrations of “Ukraine Without Kuchma” four years earlier.... What happened instead was a mass outpouring on the streets and swelling numbers, instead of diminishing ones.... It wasn’t supposed to happen in Ukraine. All the seminars in Ukrainian studies I had attended in the past few years, including one I hosted a month before the second round, had concurred on one thing: civil society in Ukraine is too weak to stand up to the rise of a post-Soviet authoritarian regime.... And yet it happened. (Arel 2007: 38-39)

Andrew Wilson has remarked, “This was the moment when ‘revolution’ became an appropriate word, in that everybody’s expectations were now confounded. The authorities had miscalculated; the masses surprised everyone with their entrance stage-left, the opposition’s pessimism was abruptly challenged, and the world began to sit up and take notice” (Wilson 2005: 122-125).<sup>1</sup>

There were several turning points in the making of what has come to be called the Orange Revolution: the defection of pro-Kuchma legislators who expressed their lack of confidence in the Electoral Commission on November 27 (and later voted to dismiss Yanukovych as Prime Minister on December 1); the abandoned effort on November 28 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; and the remarkable display of independence by members of the Ukrainian Supreme Court on December 3 to invalidate the elections. Like most revolutions, the Orange Revolution was woven from interrelated contingencies—a linked chain of events in which the outcome of one link became an important initial condition for another. But the “Miracle on the Maidan”—the decision by an unusually large number of people to show up at Maidan on November 22 and subsequent days (despite subzero temperatures), as well as similar protests that occurred in dozens of Ukrainian cities at the same time—was arguably the most important of these contingencies, in that it moved contention beyond an initial threshold necessary for other processes to materialize. In the months immediately following the Orange Revolution, its leaders squabbled with one another over the distribution of power and property, undermining the coalition that made the revolution. They squandered their political capital and ultimately paved the way for the corrupt leaders they had defeated to return to power. But that, sadly, is another story.

In this report, I examine the causal mechanisms and processes underlying this one critical episode in the Orange Revolution: the surprisingly large turnout at Maidan and at other Orange Revolution protests. Pamela Oliver (2003: 121) has noted that one can take one of two strategies in studying causal mechanisms empirically. One approach is to focus on a single mechanism or process and explore how it functions across numerous contexts, thereby improving our understanding of the general working of the particular causal process.<sup>2</sup> Alternatively, one can focus on a single episode to sort out the relative importance of alternative causal mechanisms in the differential ways in which people behave. This is the strategy I have adopted here. Like most complex mobilizational phenomena, the “Miracle on the Maidan” defies explanation by any single variable or theory. Nevertheless, part of the explanation of any historical episode is to judge the weight of the competing and complementary causal processes within it and to elicit how these connect with one another through the conjuncture of the events themselves. Like any single case study, such an exercise is plagued by issues of generalizability. But the unpredictability of revolutionary phenomena is well known (even given prior knowledge of local affairs), so that unpacking the processes

that operate at critical turning points is likely to be a more promising direction in explaining revolutionary outcomes than generalizations based on large-N cross-national research.

Causation within any concrete historical episode is messy. Not only do actors with varied motivations converge and diverge into causal space, but as Jon Elster (1998: 46) notes, individuals are confronted with multiple reasonings that might incline their choices in a particular or in opposite directions. Causal mechanisms cumulate, contradict one another, aggregate, and link together, unfolding simultaneously on multiple levels. One level is structural, understood here as those established, pre-existing conditions that confront individuals and constrain, facilitate, or define their choices. As we will see, participation in the Orange Revolution was partially a structured set of choices conditioned to one extent or another by certain “facts on the ground”: by the low legitimacy of the Kuchma government due to the pervasive misgovernment that had gripped Ukrainian society; by the deep regional divisions that dominate Ukrainian politics and the competing visions of national identity associated with them; by the economic transition that had impoverished Ukraine over the previous fifteen years; by a person’s age and education; and by their interpersonal connections and associations with civil society organizations. At a second level, the Maidan events materialized out of a specific conjuncture—in the context of an electoral campaign and in reaction to a stolen election. Conjunctural influences derive from specific features of the temporal context in which events unfold: through the emotional reactions that these incite, the shifting opportunities they afford, or the heightened uncertainties they involve. In the case of the Orange Revolution, the election functioned simultaneously as a site of grievance, as a focal point for action, and as a moment for highly unusual and penetrative organization. Finally, like most protest episodes, Maidan was a reflection of the interconnections across various acts of mobilization—what I refer to here as endogenous causation. One of the defining features of mobilization—and its greatest challenge for causal explanation—is the high degree of interdependence of the actions and reactions involved, both within and across episodes of mobilization. While not a feature characteristic of mobilization alone, it figures so centrally in contentious politics that it is difficult to explain any protest episode without fundamentally addressing this issue. The turnout at Maidan was not just a reflection of pre-existing structural conditions or instigated by a particular electoral conjuncture, but was also connected in multiple ways to previous and subsequent acts of mobilization: by the prior failed campaigns undertaken to remove Kuchma from power; by the prior examples of successful challenge to electoral authoritarianism in Slovakia, Serbia, and Georgia; and by the influence that the initial mobilization of a core of Yushchenko supporters exerted on the beliefs and actions of the less committed.

Thus, my approach can be understood as a modification to the mechanism and process approach championed by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly in *Dynamics of Contention* (2001). They sought to reorient the social movement field toward a middle range of theorizing, disaggregating mobilization into a series of constituent processes and examining how these relate to one another in the production of macro-political events through particular causal mechanisms. My objectives are similar with respect to explaining the enormous mobilizations of the Orange Revolution. But my approach differs in several ways. First, in contrast to McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, who reconceptualize causal mechanisms as agents of change in social relationships,<sup>3</sup> the understanding of causation that underpins this essay is thoroughly conventional: causal mechanisms are not about the changes that they introduce but about the connections they establish. They play a very specific role in causal explanation, providing the reasonings that link the conditions that actors face with the choices that they make. By eschewing this linking function of causal mechanisms and the micro-foundational reasonings that underpin action, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly made it considerably more difficult to test and sort competing theoretical propositions within their framework, since their mechanisms generated few expectations about how they might leave an imprint on individual and collective behavior. Second, unlike McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, I focus my attention on paired

or related mechanisms that might alternatively explain the same set of choices. As Elster notes, for most causal mechanisms there are others that serve as potential counterpoints. Therefore, in any empirical analysis it is important to engage these alternatives. Finally, contrary to McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, I do not attempt to explain the entirety of macro-historical episodes, but focus instead on one specific set of critical choices (that is, why so many chose to participate) within an episode, seeking to sort out the effects of the competing and overlapping mechanisms involved.

In what follows, I use evidence from public opinion surveys, as well as participant and eyewitness accounts, to examine the variety of explanations for the surprisingly large turnout in the Orange Revolution: the rise of civil society; a general transformation in generational values; suddenly imposed grievances; competing visions of national identity; focal-point arguments; the impact of campaign organizing strategies borrowed from abroad; and critical-mass and threshold explanations. I have organized these around alternative and competing processes. The goal is to sort out the validity and weight of particular explanations, relying on the causal mechanisms that they imply. Most of these explanations account for some degree of the enormous participation in the Orange protests—a reflection of how multiple causal processes converge in the production of any historical outcome. But contrary to many explanatory narratives of the Orange Revolution, I provide evidence for the following points:

- Participation in the Orange Revolution represented more a short-term fluctuation in activism, influenced by a particular electoral conjuncture, than a long-term developmental shift in societal values and behaviors due to generational change or the emergence of civil society.
- While the stolen election constituted a grievance that heightened mobilization, high rates of participation were fueled less by a logic of “suddenly imposed grievances” than by a logic of accumulated grievances (“the last straw” of a long train of abuses that had sapped the legitimacy of the government).
- The most important societal division structuring participation was not generation or civil society, but competing visions of national identity. Nevertheless, much of the mobilizational success of the revolution lay in the way in which events functioned as an occasion for crafting together a diverse coalition of participants motivated by a variety of concerns—national, economic, and civic.
- The unusually high rates of participation were less a spontaneous reaction by individuals to the stolen election than the product of the heightened organization that emerged during the electoral campaign that spilled over into protest.
- An indeterminate, though not insignificant, portion of the participation was the product of critical mass, preference falsification, and bandwagon processes—that is, endogenous processes that gained momentum in the wake of the initial mobilization by a sizeable group of core supporters.

### **EXPLANANDUM: THE SCOPE OF MOBILIZATIONS**

Numerous public opinion polls attest to the extraordinary explosion of protest activism in Ukraine in November 2004, with anywhere from 18 to 22 percent of the Ukrainian public participating. In a population of 48 million in which 83 percent are over the age of fifteen, this would amount to somewhere between 7.3 to 8.8 million people. The 2004 round of the European Social Survey (ESS), conducted in Ukraine in February/March 2005, shortly after the Orange Revolution, asked respondents whether or not they had participated in a legal demonstration during the previous twelve months. While not a precise proxy for whether an individual participated in the Orange Revolution,<sup>4</sup> the survey does generally reflect the heightened protest participation associated with the Orange Revolution, since the Orange

Revolution mobilizations constituted the overwhelming portion of the protest action occurring in Ukraine in 2004. The survey's finding that 22 percent of those surveyed ( $n = 2,031$ ) claimed to have participated in a demonstration in the previous twelve months parallels almost exactly the results of several other surveys.<sup>5</sup> This rate of 22 percent contrasts with the six percent of Ukrainians who claimed to have participated in a demonstration in 2002 (at the time of the previous elections in Ukraine) and the seven percent who claimed to have participated in a demonstration in 2006 (during the subsequent elections in Ukraine),<sup>6</sup> as well as the seven percent average who claimed to have participated in a demonstration in 2004 across the 24 other European countries surveyed by the ESS. In sum, the events of the Orange Revolution mobilized approximately three times the proportion of the Ukrainian public that typically engages in protest demonstrations in any one year, as well as three times the proportion of the European public that were typically engaged in protest demonstrations at the time.

Other surveys show that five percent of the adult population of Ukraine took part in the protests on Maidan itself, while another 13 percent took part in protest action in another locality, and five percent aided the participants in some way (by providing food, money, etc.) (Stepanenko 2005).<sup>7</sup> In some microcosms, participation rates were astoundingly high. Among those surveyed in metropolitan Kyiv by the ESS, the proportion claiming to have participated in a demonstration in 2004 was 43 percent,<sup>8</sup> while in the western oblasts of Lviv and Ivano-Frankiv the proportion participating was as high as 61 and 54 percent, respectively. Thus, in particularly active localities, about half of the local adult population participated in the Orange Revolution protests. In this respect, the Orange Revolution was one of the most spectacular displays of protest seen on the European continent since the end of the Cold War. So what explains why 7 to 9 million people would turn out on the streets of Kyiv and elsewhere in Ukraine in temperatures as cold as minus 12 degrees centigrade, far exceeding the expectations of both the authorities and the opposition, and becoming a critical tipping point out of which an Orange Revolution developed?

#### *General Shift or Conjunctural Fluctuation?*

One set of explanations particularly common in the wake of the Orange Revolution argued that the surprising turnout was a reflection of a deeper, general shift in the character of Ukrainian society, a silent transformation in values and attitudes. Taras Kuzio (2006: 47), for instance, has remarked that "both sides miscalculated the popular mood," as the authorities' assumption that the people were "passive subjects proved to be as wrong as the opposition's underestimation of the deep changes that had taken place in Ukrainian society since 1991." One version of this "silent revolution" argument links broadened protest activism to the emergence of civil society in Ukraine in the decade-and-a-half following independence, associating the rise of self-organizing society with increased social capital, social networks, interpersonal trust, and political activism. The number of registered NGOs in Ukraine mushroomed from 14,000 in 1996 to over 40,000 by 2003 (Nanivska 2001: 8; Stepanenko 2006: 581), though many of these existed on paper only. Part of democracy-promotion aid to Ukraine was aimed precisely at developing a vibrant NGO sector; the United States government spent \$65 million promoting democracy in Ukraine in the years preceding the Orange Revolution. On the eve of the 2004 election, politically-oriented civil-society organizations such as Chysta Ukraina (Clean Ukraine), Znayu (I Know), Pora (It's Time), and the Committee of Ukrainian Voters grew at a rapid rate and proved critical to mobilizing voters to the polls and to organizing the Maidan protests.

As an account of the growth of a formidable activist base, there is considerable merit to civil society explanations. Nevertheless, once we look more carefully at the causal mechanisms involved, we see that participation in civil society associations cannot account for why such extraordinary numbers turned out at Maidan. For one thing, repeated surveys have shown that the vast majority of Ukrainians (84 to 87 percent) do not belong to any social

or political organizations. Moreover, the proportion of Ukrainians belonging to at least one organization hardly changed from 1996 (13 percent) to 2004 (16 percent). In 2004, 55 percent of Ukrainians were unaware of the existence of an NGO operating in their area, while 19 percent did not even know what an NGO was (Bunce and Wolchik n.d.: 5-23). Levels of interpersonal trust also remained roughly the same across the early 2000s as in the late 1990s—relatively low (Stepanenko 2006: 578; Panina 2005: 40-41). Thus, it would be hard to argue that the social capital of the vast majority of Ukrainians changed in any significant way in the years leading up to the Orange Revolution. Moreover, as the ESS survey shows (table 1), only a small portion of the variation in rates of individual participation in demonstrations in 2004 is associated with civil-society-related variables. To be sure, as one would expect, if someone participated in political and civil society organizations or had thicker interpersonal networks, they were more likely to protest in Ukraine in 2004 (though this was not true for a person's degree of interpersonal trust). The role of interpersonal networks was supplemented by a spectacular growth in cell phone usage on the eve of the revolution, with the number of mobile phone users jumping from 6.5 million in December 2003 to 11.7 million by November 2004 (Nikolayenko 2007: 183). Cell phone text messaging was one of the primary methods by which protest organizers communicated with those who turned out at the Maidan protests. However, as other studies have shown, Ukrainians continue to exhibit a widespread mistrust of non-governmental civil society organizations, even as they cling to the kinds of informal interpersonal relationships rooted in the Soviet past. Only 18 percent of those participating in protests in 2004 worked for a political party or action group or in another civil society group. As one study has concluded, the Orange Revolution was primarily a revolution of people, not a revolution of associations (Stepanenko 2006). Rather, as we will see, the important role played by civil society in the Orange Revolution was in contacting and influencing those with no association with (and even a skepticism toward) civil society.

A second version of the structural transformation argument sees a transformation of values associated with the rise of a new generation in Ukrainian politics, particularly among students educated in Western values, exposed to American and western European media, and well-traveled abroad—what some have referred to as “Generation Orange.” The role of youth activism in the Orange Revolution was conspicuous. According to the ESS survey, about a quarter of Ukrainians who protested in 2004 were younger than 25, and in all about 35 percent of those younger than 25 participated in a demonstration in 2004, compared to only about 24 percent of those between ages 26 and 45, 17 percent of those between 45 and 55, and only 11 percent of those over 55. The rate of activism was extraordinarily high among young people from Western Ukraine, 72 percent of whom participated in a demonstration in 2004 (accounting for 18 percent of those who protested in 2004).<sup>9</sup> But while age was an important component in the rise of an activist base, a generational explanation cannot account for the bulk of people who turned out at the demonstrations, since three-fourths of those who participated were older than 25 (60 percent of these being older than 35).

Moreover, once we start examining the causal mechanisms of the generational explanation, the simple story of a generational shift in values becomes problematic. The basic mechanism revolves around socialization to a new set of European values, particularly among students in higher educational institutions. During the six years prior to the Orange Revolution, the proportion of Ukrainian young people enrolled in institutions of tertiary education increased from 42 percent to 60 percent, marking an enormous expansion in Ukrainian higher education.<sup>10</sup> It was this generation of students that became the source for the youth activists who played such a prominent role in the “Miracle on the Maidan.” Universities became a key recruiting ground for participants, especially through the strike committees established in the month leading up to the protests (Nikolayenko 2007: 171-172).

But contrary to what a values explanation might predict, most youth activism in Ukraine appears to have materialized quite suddenly and to have disappeared almost as quickly. A comparative study of Ukrainian, Russian, and Azerbaijani youth conducted in 2002 indicated

no major shifts apparent in the political attitudes of Ukrainian youth only two years prior to the Orange Revolution. The study found that, like Russian and Azerbaijani youth, Ukrainian youth overwhelmingly preferred a paternalistic welfare state over either a laissez-faire or a regulatory state. Young Ukrainians were less interested in politics than young Azerbaijanis and preferred equality over personal freedoms in greater numbers than young Russians. The one area in which Ukrainian youth stood out from Russian or Azerbaijani youth (and a harbinger of the revolution to come) was in the degree to which they considered all state-related institutions illegitimate; young Ukrainians rated their president, presidential administration, parliament, state institutions, judges, and political parties markedly lower in 2002 than young Russians or Azerbaijanis—a reflection of the scandals that had, by that time, sapped the legitimacy of the Kuchma regime (Diuk 2003).<sup>11</sup> As Nadia Diuk (2006: 69), one of the principal investigators of the study, concluded, public opinion research two years before the revolution revealed “no particular information that would indicate that Ukrainian youth would be the vanguard of activists who would launch the Orange Revolution and bring down the government.”

The heightened youth mobilization associated with the Orange Revolution thus represented a relatively rapid materialization of an opposition youth culture in the months leading up to the electoral campaign, in the conjuncture of the electoral campaign itself, and (for some) at the very moment of the protests. Many young people were drawn into the electoral campaign by youth NGOs such as *Pora*. Over the course of the 2004 campaign, for instance, *Pora* established a network of 30,000 youth activists in 72 regional centers across Ukraine (Kaskiv, Chupryna, Bezverkha, Zolotariov, 2005). The typical *Pora* activist was quite young: 18 to 20 years of age and in their first or second year of college (Bunce and Wolchik n.d.: 5-28). Indeed, for most of the young people involved, this was their first significant political experience. The *Pora* campaign in particular employed a form of branding meant to appeal to youth, such as the use of t-shirts, stickers, logos, rock concerts, and a ubiquitous humor. There were some students who turned up at Maidan because it was the place to be—because their friends were there, or because Maidan was the site of some of Ukraine’s best rock music. While few see this as a major cause of the Orange Revolution, as table 1 shows, those who valued fun and pleasure and those who valued loyalty to friends were more likely to participate in protests in Ukraine in 2004 than those who did not (an association that holds even when controlling for other factors), with the effects for each on the odds of an individual participating in protest being about as strong as the effects of education on the likelihood of an individual participating.

Here, I do not mean to trivialize the seriousness of youth protest in the Orange Revolution. The Orange Revolution activated large numbers of young people in ways that could hardly have been imagined previously, and the commitments and emotions involved were real. However, by 2006, only two years after the revolution (also an election year, and a year in which the next round of the ESS was conducted), Ukrainian youth activism had declined considerably. Whereas in 2004 there was a weak negative relationship (statistically significant at the .05 level) between age and whether someone worked for a political party or organization, by 2006 there was a weak positive (yet statistically insignificant) relationship. Similarly, in 2004 there was a weak negative relationship (statistically significant at the .01 level) between age and whether someone worked for a civil society association, while in 2006 the relationship with age was positive (statistically significant at the .05 level).<sup>12</sup> The association between protest and age also dropped precipitously by 2006 (from 35 percent in 2004 to 12 percent in 2006 among those 25 years old or younger). As much as generational attributes strongly affected the odds of whether a person would participate in the Orange Revolution events—and a large proportion of the activists in the Orange Revolution were recruited among youth—the Orange Revolution represented more of a short term fluctuation in generational activism (influenced by a particular conjuncture) than a long term shift in generational values and behaviors.

Table 1. Logistic Regression of Probability to Participate in a Protest Demonstration, Ukraine 2004

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Equation 1</i>	<i>Equation 2</i>	<i>Equation 3</i>	<i>Equation 4</i>	<i>Equation 5</i>	<i>Equation 6</i>	<i>Equation 7</i>
Worked for political party or action group in last 12 mos.	4.695 <sup>****</sup> (5.36)	--	--	--	--	--	7.324 <sup>****</sup> (6.09)
Worked for another organization/assoc. in last 12 mos.	6.471 <sup>****</sup> (2.37)	--	--	--	--	--	3.678 <sup>****</sup> (3.21)
Most people can be trusted (1-10)	1.003 (0.91)	--	--	--	--	--	--
How often meets friends, relatives, work colleagues socially (1-7)	1.100 <sup>***</sup> (2.76)	--	--	--	--	--	1.065 (1.43)
Age category (1-6)	--	.781 <sup>****</sup> (-7.23)	--	--	--	--	.810 <sup>****</sup> (-4.79)
Educational category (0-6)	--	1.149 <sup>****</sup> (3.27)	--	--	--	--	1.152 <sup>***</sup> (2.69)
Values fun and pleasure (1-6)	--	--	1.174 <sup>****</sup> (4.35)	--	--	--	1.146 <sup>***</sup> (2.92)
Values loyalty to friends (1-6)	--	--	1.108 <sup>**</sup> (1.98)	--	--	--	1.219 <sup>****</sup> (3.22)
From Kyiv city	--	--	--	5.453 <sup>***</sup> (2.85)	--	--	5.578 <sup>**</sup> (2.50)
From Western Ukraine	--	--	--	6.092 <sup>****</sup> (12.45)	--	--	7.645 <sup>****</sup> (11.99)
From Eastern Ukraine	--	--	--	.862 (-0.76)	--	--	.796 (-1.04)
From Southern Ukraine	--	--	--	.511 <sup>***</sup> (-2.57)	--	--	.493 <sup>**</sup> (-2.51)
Speaks Ukrainian at home	--	--	--	--	1.834 <sup>***</sup> (3.83)	--	--
Supports further EU expansion in Eastern Europe	--	--	--	--	1.100 <sup>****</sup> (3.88)	--	--
Catholic	--	--	--	--	4.666 <sup>****</sup> (9.53)	--	--
Degree of experience with official bribes/favors (1-5)	--	--	--	--	--	1.118 <sup>*</sup> (1.89)	--
Degree of concern over being treated unfairly in everyday life (1-4)	--	--	--	--	--	.920 (-1.09)	--
Constant	-1.860255	-.9326903	-2.228857	-1.971966	-2.411386	-.171901	-3.611517
No. of observations	1,967	2,012	1,875	2,019	1,505	1,218	1,834
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.046	.039	.014	.1467	.0925	.0030	0.2417
Log likelihood	-	-	-	-	-	-657.17477	-731.76549
Likelihood ratio $\chi^2$	93.91 <sup>****</sup>	81.68 <sup>****</sup>	27.65 <sup>****</sup>	309.94 <sup>****</sup>	159.35 <sup>****</sup>	3.99	466.41 <sup>****</sup>

Note: Coefficients are the exponentiated log-odds (the odds ratio) of an individual participating in a legal protest demonstration in the previous 12 months (with z-scores provided in parentheses). The survey was conducted in February/March 2005. The regressions were weighted by the sample design. Significance levels are as follows: \* .10 level; \*\* .05 level; \*\*\* .01 level; \*\*\*\* .001 level. Source: European Social Survey 2004

*Suddenly Imposed or Accumulated Grievances?*

If the turnout at Maidan was more a temporal upsurge in mobilization than a long-term general transformation of society, then what explains this sudden proliferation of protest participation? One set of conjunctural explanations revolves around the act of stealing an election and the emotional reactions that this unleashes—a set of mechanisms sometimes vaguely referred to in the literature as “suddenly imposed grievances,” the precipitous onset of a widely shared sense of injustice produced by a singular event (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001: 201-4). There are, of course, different logics that might fall under this rubric. In one version of the argument, Mark Thompson and Phillip Kuntz (2004) contend that stolen elections foster a sudden, widely shared sense of grievance in two ways: first, by increasing expectations that the opposition will win (in particular because of the knowledge that the opposition candidate would win were the vote conducted fairly); and second, by causing outrage when those expectations are violated and power is usurped by means of unfair and shady electoral practices. There is evidence for the presence of both of these processes in producing the enormous turnout at Maidan. Taras Kuzio (2005) observed how the mood among opposition supporters shifted in the months prior to the 2004 election from despondency to a belief in the possibility of a Yushchenko victory as evidence began to mount of Yushchenko’s popularity in public opinion surveys. Most Yushchenko supporters still believed that the authorities would rig the results. But after Yushchenko emerged with the largest number of votes in the first round, optimism about Yushchenko’s chances surged among his supporters. At the same time, the announcement of the falsified election results in the second round of voting elicited a deeply emotional response among many Yushchenko supporters. Anthropologist Anna Fournier (2010: 113), who conducted semistructured interviews with Yushchenko supporters at Maidan during the Orange Revolution, observed that “many expressed the feeling that the rigged elections had been the ‘last drop’ [*ostannia kraplia*] for them, and that they had felt compelled to take action against an unfair [*nespravedlyvyi*] government.” There is evidence of similar mechanisms at work in other colored revolutions. Nino Burjanadze, one of the main Georgian opposition leaders, described the role of electoral fraud in triggering the onset of the Rose Revolution:

When I saw exit polls [on November 2, the day of the parliamentary elections]...it was absolutely unbelievable.... Of course, I had a strong emotional response. I knew I had won in Kutaisi, but it didn’t matter.... I spent three hours thinking about the situation, still hoping something might change. But when I came into my office, I told everyone there, “I am not going to tolerate this.” Because I knew quite well that the elections were totally fraudulent.... So the next day we asked the people who were angry about the reality of what had happened to come to the State Philharmonic Hall in Tbilisi. We were expecting that 1,000 or 1,500 people would show up.... When we arrived at Philharmonic Hall at 5 PM and we saw 5,000 people, it was absolutely unbelievable for us. (Quoted in Karumidze and Wertsch 2005: 45-46)

But to what extent were the grievances that motivated millions to participate in the Orange Revolution “suddenly imposed?” Table 2 reports the results of a survey conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in the immediate aftermath of the Orange Revolution in which respondents were asked to identify what they believed to be the main causes of the Orange Revolution (with each person allowed to identify up to three causes). As table 2 shows, 31 percent of those who participated in the Orange protests (and 35 percent of those who participated in the events on Maidan) believed that one of its top three causes was an “emotional protest against injustice.” This was actually the fifth or sixth most frequent explanation given by those who participated, following “protest against the authorities” (cited by 54 percent), “awakening of national consciousness” (38 percent), “hope for improved living standards” (38 percent), “rejection of one of the candidates at the presidential elections” (32 percent, though 45 percent for those who participated in Kyiv), and “concern about the future of one’s children” (31 percent).

**Table 2.** In your opinion, what were the main causes of the political activity of citizens during the period of the Orange Revolution? (percent)

<i>Cause identified</i>	<i>Participated in the Orange Revolution</i>	<i>... of which participated in Orange Revolution protests on the Maidan</i>	<i>Did not participate in Orange Revolution protests at all</i>
Protest against the authorities	54.3	54.0	38.8
Hope for better living standards	38.3	39.1	28.6
Awakening of national consciousness	37.8	40.2	14.0
Rejection of one of the candidates	31.8	44.8	23.0
Emotional protest against injustice	31.0	34.5	17.4
Concerns about children's future	31.0	36.8	19.4
Choice between good and evil	20.9	21.8	11.3
Desire to participate in a colorful and spectacular event	3.5	2.3	11.5
Choice of geopolitical orientations between West and Russia	3.5	1.1	5.7
Difficult to answer	2.4	1.1	19.2
Other	1.6	2.3	2.0
No answer	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total (n)	368	87	1,422

*Note:* The survey was conducted in February/March 2005 by the Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (n=1,800). Each respondent could identify up to three causes. The author expresses his gratitude to Victor Stepanenko of the Institute of Sociology for providing access to the cross-tabulated results.

Obviously, emotional mechanisms are just as implicated in an awakening of national consciousness or the repudiation of a candidate as they are in a reaction against the injustice of a stolen election (though the specific emotions involved are different). What, if not passion, sustains the mobilization of hundreds of thousands in sub-zero temperatures for seventeen days? But these findings raise questions about whether the source for those passions for the vast majority of participants was “suddenly imposed” or was rooted in a deeper alienation from the Kuchma regime (a festering or accumulated set of grievances rather than a “suddenly imposed” one). On the eve of the 2004 elections, only 10 percent of Ukrainian society rated Kuchma positively—a situation that had persisted for several years.<sup>13</sup> While the election fraud may have functioned as a “suddenly imposed” grievance for up to a third of those participating, as the survey results suggest, for most participants the grievances fueling protest ran much deeper. Indeed, for most Ukrainians the electoral fraud came as no surprise whatsoever, but was entirely expected from the past behavior of the Kuchma regime. Rather, the stolen election was, as those on the square told Fournier, “the last drop” (that is, the last straw)—not suddenly imposed, but entirely expected, and merely the proximate link in a long accumulating set of grievances. As Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2004: 27) observe, “One

‘last straw’ may be necessary to break a camel’s back, but it does not contribute as much to the outcome as the bales of straw that preceded it.”

*National Awakening or Yearning for “Normalcy?”*

As Jon Elster (1999: 249-50) has noted, emotions are not triggered by events. They are triggered by beliefs about events. Indeed, despite clear proof of vote fraud (including tapes of conversations from the Electoral Commission directly capturing the fraud that were made public), public opinion polls taken in the midst of the Orange Revolution showed a public sharply divided: only half of the Ukrainian public refused to consider Viktor Yanukovych the winner of the second round of voting, only 45 percent of the public supported the protests on the Maidan, and 40 percent of the public condemned the Maidan protests (Razumkov Center 2004: 8, 14). The most important factor structuring the ways in which people reacted to the stolen election were the regional divisions that have long defined Ukrainian politics. Ukraine is a highly divided state, with patterns of partisanship highly correlated with region.<sup>14</sup> Table 1 shows that region was a powerful factor structuring whether a person participated in protest acts in 2004, accounting for 15 percent of the variation in individual decisions to participate. The odds that an individual living in western Ukraine participated in a protest demonstration in 2004 were six times greater than those for an individual living in central Ukraine, while the odds that a person living in Kyiv city participated were more than five times greater than for a person living in central Ukraine. Those living in western Ukraine or Kyiv city accounted for more than half of all those participating in protests in 2004, even though they make up only a quarter of the Ukrainian population. By contrast, those living in the South participated in demonstrations in 2004 at half the rate of Ukrainians in central Ukraine, while there was no consistent relationship between region of residence and protest participation for inhabitants of eastern Ukraine.

Of course, region itself is not the source of cleavage in Ukrainian politics, but simply a proxy for other differences. Region is partially associated with language use (Ukrainian versus Russian), with religious differences (Uniate Catholics in the West versus Orthodox elsewhere), and very often with different visions for how Ukraine should relate to the rest of the world (toward Russia, or toward Western Europe and the United States). A number of scholars have argued that one of the reasons why the Orange protests were able to secure such large turnouts was precisely the way in which they pulled upon nationalist tropes (Arel 2007). Indeed, table 1 shows that the very identity variables closely bound up with regional differences (language use, religion, and geopolitical orientation) were also independently associated with participation in protest in 2004. Those who participated in the protests in 2004 had decidedly more pro-European views than those who did not, with 66 percent of those who protested expressing a preference for continued European Union expansion in Eastern Europe, compared to only 39 percent of those who did not participate in protests. Catholics were more than four times more likely to protest in 2004 than non-Catholics.<sup>15</sup> And those who spoke Ukrainian at home were almost twice as likely to participate in protests in 2004 as those who did not (language use was a major issue within the electoral campaign, as Yanukovych did not speak Ukrainian and ran on a platform of introducing language rights for Russian speakers).

The prominence of “an awakening of national consciousness” among the causes cited in table 2 also confirms that a significant portion of the protestors understood the Orange Revolution in national terms. Yet, the Yushchenko campaign was careful to frame its message in the language of civic rather than ethnic nationalism, in a way that would unite citizens with varied motivations rather than divide them over identity differences. Moreover, as table 2 shows, no single motivation other than opposition to the Kuchma regime seems to have predominated among those who participated. Indeed, for many who participated, national consciousness had little to do with the reasons they went to the square. For most of those on Maidan who spoke with anthropologist Anna Fournier (2010), concern for economic well-

being topped their list of issues. Narratives from the square make frequent reference to the desire for Ukraine to become a “normal” country (meaning having a reasonable standard of living and characterized by the rule of law). National, economic, and civic motivations frequently overlapped. As a computer programmer from Kyiv who camped out on Maidan put it: “This is the sort of chance that comes along once in every hundred years. We can change the country and turn towards Europe, live like people do in the West” (“The People Speak” 2004). But as Fournier notes, many on the square simply wanted “to live like a person.” For the less fortunate, “living like a person” meant being able to afford a loaf of bread; for those better off, it meant the amenities of a middle class existence: “to have job security, an apartment, a car, a cell phone, and vacation on the seashore every year” (Fournier 2010: 120). It is true that those who protested in 2004 were slightly better off economically than the population as a whole: 24 percent reported that they were coping or living comfortably on their current income, as opposed to only 20 percent of the Ukrainian population as a whole. Nevertheless, 76 percent of those who protested in 2004 indicated that they found it difficult or very difficult to survive on their current income, and as many Orange Revolution participants (38 percent) cited “hope for improved living standards” among the top causes of the revolution as cited “an awakening of national consciousness.” In short, while nationalism played an important role in structuring participation, the Orange Revolution events pulled together a coalition of participants with varied (and sometimes overlapping) motivations—national, economic, and civic—with opposition to the regime as the primary factor uniting them.

#### *Mobilizational Focal Point or Modular Organization?*

Another explanation focuses on electoral fraud as an occasion rather than a driver of mobilization, due not to the emotional effects of a stolen election, but to its signaling functions. Starting from a collective action paradigm, Joshua Tucker (2007) argues that overt electoral fraud acts as a focal point for individuals with already-existing grievances over regime corruption to overcome collective action problems. A focal point is a temporal context that generates action across numerous individuals in the absence of direct communication because it seems natural in the given circumstances (Schelling, 1960: 57). Tucker argues that most attempts by individuals to address corruption entail high costs and low chances of success, given the dispersed and disaggregated nature of the acts and the likelihood that individuals who engage in dissent will be punished. By contrast, electoral fraud provides a focal point for collective action among those with significant grievances about corruption because it subjects the entire country simultaneously to the same act of abuse, thereby lowering the certainty that any one individual will be punished for protesting. Here, the key causal condition revolves around the lowered costs of action emanating from the coordination expected due to the focal point of a stolen election.

Ukraine is among the most corrupt societies in the world, and the criminal character of the Kuchma regime was the central substantive issue raised in the protests. But corruption was so pervasive in Ukraine under Kuchma that neither personal experience with it nor concern over it differentiated those who participated in the Orange Revolution protests from those who did not. In the 2004 ESS survey, 47 percent of Ukrainians said that they were very worried or fairly worried about being treated unfairly in everyday life, compared to only 19 percent on average for the other 24 European countries surveyed by the ESS. But as table 1 shows, the association between participation in protests in 2004 and whether respondents had more frequent personal experience with government corruption was weak, and there was no relationship between protest participation and concern with corruption in everyday life. In short, if a focal-point mechanism operated, it did so only for a fraction of those concerned with corruption in everyday life or of those who had considerable experience with government corruption—a fact that the focal-point argument does not adequately address.

To be fair, Tucker notes that his argument is aimed more at predicting when people might protest over corruption rather than who will protest. More important is whether the focal-point mechanism—spontaneous mobilization due to lower costs of protest under conditions of a stolen election—explains the turnouts. Of course, like most protest events, the Orange Revolution was both spontaneous and organized. In the Institute of Sociology survey conducted after the revolution, people were asked whether they thought that the protests were spontaneous or organized (table 3).<sup>16</sup> Most believed there was some element of spontaneity present. Not surprisingly, those who participated were more likely to see spontaneity than those who did not. Nevertheless, only 13 percent of those who participated in the Orange Revolution believed the protests were entirely spontaneous (what we might call a thick focal-point argument), and only 25 percent of those who participated believed the protests were more spontaneous than organized (a thin focal-point argument). By contrast, 42 percent of those who participated believed that the protests were more organized than spontaneous (including a fifth who believed there was no spontaneity whatsoever). Again, this does not undermine the element of spontaneity that was present. But it does raise questions about the weight of such processes in producing the large turnout if more of those who participated believed that organization played a larger role in the protests than spontaneity. There are also reasons to suspect that a stolen election in itself does not unambiguously lower the costs associated with protest, and that protest against electoral fraud often contains elements of high-risk activism, particularly prior to the emergence of large crowds. Prior to the materialization of large crowds, no one participating in the Maidan events could preclude the possibility of a violent response from a regime that had not shied away from force previously, and many expected such a response. At best, electoral fraud triggered what Elster (1998: 46) calls “type-B mechanisms”—that is, separate causal chains that influence a process in opposite directions, leaving the net effect indeterminate.

But if focal-point arguments only take us so far, arguments revolving around a particularly assiduous level of campaign organization provide a useful counterpoint. Students of mobilization are well aware of how electoral competition often serves as an opportunity for heightened protest mobilization, irrespective of whether an election is stolen (McAdam and Tarrow 2010). Two dimensions of elections have tended to make them conjunctures for increased protest participation: (1) the vulnerability of incumbents at moments of election,

**Table 3.** In your opinion, was the Orange Revolution spontaneous or organized? (percent)

<i>Cause identified</i>	<i>Participated in the Orange Revolution</i>	<i>... of which participated in Orange Revolution protests on the Maidan</i>	<i>Did not participate in Orange Revolution protests at all</i>
Absolutely spontaneous	13.1	13.8	6.9
More spontaneous than organized	12.3	11.5	7.6
Partially spontaneous, partially organized	31.6	29.9	23.8
More organized than spontaneous	22.0	23.0	24.5
Absolutely organized action	20.1	21.8	37.2
No answer	0.0	0.0	0.6
Total (n)	373	87	1,413

*Note:* The survey was conducted in February/March 2005 by the Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (n=1,800). The author expresses his gratitude to Victor Stepanenko of the Institute of Sociology for providing access to the cross-tabulated results.

lowering their ability to defend themselves forcefully without incurring some loss of votes or international support; and (2) the activated mobilization of voters that occurs during an electoral campaign, creating networks, frames, organizational structures, and strategies that can easily spill over into effective mobilization on the streets. The Ukrainian opposition sought to take advantage of both of these circumstances in order to turn the 2004 elections into a decisive showdown with the Kuchma government. Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik (n.d.) ascribe the unusual turnout at Maidan to what they call the “electoral model,” a package of mobilizational strategies and campaign techniques (targeting voter turnout, uniting the opposition, conducting a snappy and energetic campaign, voter canvassing, appealing to youth, using extensive domestic and foreign election monitoring, and creating parallel vote counts) that has been shared across borders and that constitutes a particularly potent way of challenging electoral authoritarian regimes. In their opinion, the Yushchenko campaign’s use of the “electoral model” set the stage for the very large numbers that turned out at Maidan through the groundwork conducted prior to the protests: the activation of a core of committed civil-society activists, the unusual penetration and style of the electoral campaign itself, and extensive preparation for a decisive showdown in the wake of the expected fraud. The Yushchenko campaign did not invent electoral revolution anew on November 22. The Orange Revolution protests were part of a larger interrelated wave of protests over electoral fraud that swept through the post-communist region from 1998 through 2005, as exemplified by the thick transnational ties that connected activists across these cases and their extensive sharing of frames, strategies, and techniques. The diffusion of the electoral revolution to Ukraine was driven by mechanisms of emulation in which prior successful examples demonstrated that the seemingly impossible (the removal of a corrupt authoritarian leader) was possible, provided models for action that had worked in other contexts, and created a sense of the flow and momentum of events that shaped expectations and had an empowering effect (Beissinger 2007).

The electoral campaign of 2004 was extraordinarily well organized and penetrative, in contrast to those that came before it and after it. The civil-society organization Pora (It’s Time) estimates that its activities reached approximately 25 million citizens during the electoral campaign. Voters were targeted on public transport, and numerous public rock concerts were organized as ways of attracting younger voters into the campaign, leading up to the climax that took place during the Maidan demonstrations themselves. But Pora’s activities were only one part of the opposition electoral campaign, as both “Our Ukraine” and numerous other NGOs engaged in parallel attempts to get out the vote. The effect of this thoroughly enhanced level of organization on the ability to mobilize individuals in the Orange Revolution protests is difficult to know. We simply lack the kind of evidence we would need to identify the differential effects of broad-scale canvassing and contacting during the electoral campaign on the decisions of individuals to turn out at Maidan. But it is clear that the high level of organization of the electoral campaign flowed over into the organization of the Maidan protests. Active preparations for Maidan began at least a six weeks before the events, and the level of organization was nothing less than astounding for an event of this magnitude and for a country not known for its efficiency. As one foreign correspondent noted, “walking through the encampment . . . it was hard to ignore evidence of meticulous preparation—the soup kitchens and tents for the demonstrators, the slickness of the concert, the professionalism of the TV coverage, the proliferation of the sickly orange logo wherever you looked” (Wolf 2005: 6). Tents, portable kitchens, sleeping bags, and toilets were procured ahead of time, agreements were reached with wholesale food companies to supply food (with thousands of tons of sausage, bread, and porridge delivered to the square daily), and tons of garbage and waste had to be removed from the square each day. This same attention to detail also went into the opposition’s preparations for mobilizing protestors to the square. As Roman Bessmertny, Yushchenko’s campaign manager, explained the calculations that underlay the effort to fill the square with sufficient supporters on the first day:

We knew from our events that, if we distributed half a million invitations around Kiev, 8,000 people would come. We knew that if FM stations transmitted 100 announcements every day for a week, saying that a meeting would take place, then 200,000 people would come. So if we brought 35,000 people from the regions, and added the people from Kiev, we believed we would have a minimum of 100,000 people in the square. The figures weren't random, they were taken from our experience. (quoted in Wolf 2005: 6)

In reality, the turnout on the first day reached twice (and eventually climbed to ten times) this level. Even the “science” of campaign organization seriously underpredicted the popular response. Bunce and Wolchik (n.d.) claim that the primary cause of the success of the Orange Revolution lay in the assiduousness with which the electoral model was applied. But we are still left with the question of why this model worked so spectacularly in Ukraine in 2004 but failed so miserably in many of the other contexts in which it was tried (for example, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia). The success of the “electoral model” relied on particular facilitating conditions in Ukraine that were not present in these other cases: the presence of a large core of activists; the extremely low legitimacy of the Kuchma regime; its relatively less repressive form of authoritarianism, allowing greater space for application of the model; and the presence of multiple social bases that could be crafted together into a temporary coalition.

#### *Critical Mass, Preference Falsification, and Bandwagoning Processes*

In endogenous forms of causation, individual participation is fundamentally dependent on how others behave, so that action itself alters the conditions faced by subsequent decision makers. One form of endogenous process—threshold models—assumes that the key to large turnouts is to attain a sufficient number of core participants to attract those less committed or willing to take risks for the cause (Granovetter 1978). The primary empirical implication of this form of interdependence revolves around the ordered timing of participation according to commitment. The occupation of Maidan was an action originally undertaken by campaign activists. *Pora*, for instance, initially supplied several thousand activists whose job was “to create an initial ‘nucleus’ for the demonstrations” (Wilson 2005: 129). But to the activists’ surprise, by the end of the first day they had been joined by an unexpectedly large number of Kyivans (mainly office workers and students) with weak ties to the campaign, linked to it primarily through communication channels and social networks. Many businesses, for example, allowed their workers to take part in the protests during business hours without disciplinary action or loss of wages, usually because the owners or managers sympathized with the opposition (Strasser 2006: 104-105). As the numbers on the square climbed, “the social profile of protest got broader and broader—the sons and daughters, even the grandparents, of the militia were now on the streets” (Wilson 2005: 127). Ordinary citizens began to emulate the behavior and demeanor of the activists; *Pora*’s symbols, for instance, suddenly became popular among non-members, many of whom sported yellow or black bandanas in imitation of the movement (Wilson 2005: 129).

A steady stream of revelations of pro-Yushchenko sentiment within official institutions unfolded on the square. On November 23, for example, 350 Ukrainian diplomats came out in support of Yushchenko in a collective declaration. Television journalists denounced their bosses for forcing them to read the fraudulent electoral results on the air. Cadets from the interior ministry academy marched into the square wearing orange to show their support for Yushchenko, and members of the army and the security services began to make their neutrality public, with reports of troops declaring their loyalty to the Yushchenko camp. Even Kuchma’s son-in-law, Viktor Pinchuk, spent an evening in Maidan, reportedly saying that were he still a student he would have camped out with the protesters. On the eve of the 2004 election, about half of the Ukrainian population believed that Ukraine was a country in which one could declare one’s political views openly (Panina 2005: 24). Thus, preference falsification could have been an issue for some living under the Kuchma regime, especially those

working within official institutions or the press (whose activities were guided and censored by the government). But the large size of the protests also generated incentives for opportunistic bandwagoning. As the mayor of Kyiv, Aleksandr Omel'chenko, is said to have told a Yushchenko campaign aide prior to the demonstrations when asked to throw his support to the protests, "If you bring out 100,000 I'm with you.... If it'll be 99,000 I won't be" (quoted in Wilson 2005: 125). Omel'chenko initially played both sides of the fence, but by the time crowds had risen into the upper hundreds of thousands, he appeared on Maidan and announced the city council's support for the protests. He eventually aided the opposition by turning a floor of the city hall into a huge buffet to feed protestors. The fragility of Kuchma's authoritarian coalition, weakened by persistent conflicts between factions over the distribution of property and corruption, easily fed into this kind of bandwagoning behavior once a particular threshold of protest was achieved (Way 2005).

It is difficult to identify the weight of endogenous factors such as these in explaining the oversized mobilizations in Ukraine. Most individuals are unlikely to admit to being motivated by what others do or by fear of isolation or personal disadvantage, to showing up to protests because their friends were there or because it was the place to be, or to waiting to reveal one's true preferences until the moment is safe. The effect of endogenous processes like these are hidden within other relationships, so that structural and conjunctural explanations likely contain elements of endogenous processes within them. We also know that a large portion of the variation in individual decision making about whether to join in the protests or not to join is unexplained by structural factors alone. In the 2004 ESS study, only about a quarter of the variation in individual decision making to protest could be explained through the various structural factors that were available to test. Hidden in this unexplained variation are several things: factors that were not included in the survey or were omitted from the analysis; factors that vary temporally and are not measurable in a single-point survey; and obviously, measurement error. But endogenous processes could also account for a substantial part of this variation. We see that such processes were at work from the evidence at hand, but how much participation in the Orange Revolution they account for is impossible to tell.

## CONCLUSION

In *Dynamics of Contention*, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly invite us to abandon invariant general models of social movements, to engage in more middle range theorizing, disaggregating mobilizational acts into their constituent processes and focusing on how causal processes interact and link with one another in the production of macro political outcomes. We have seen that even in explaining one particular set of decisions within the Orange Revolution episode (the decision to participate), no single explanation or causal process could possibly have proven adequate to the task. Multiple causal processes unfolded at several levels (structural, conjunctural, and endogenous), each accounting for some portion of the oversized participation, and each dependent to some extent on processes occurring at other levels. Rather, the Orange Revolution became a venue through which people with varied motivations—national, civic, and economic—linked up and interacted with one another in a single causal space, forging a diverse coalition united in opposition to the Kuchma regime. Indeed, part of the spectacular success of large scale mobilizations like the Orange Revolution can be accounted for precisely by their coalitional character—by their ability to attract multiple categories of actors and to unite them against a particular target rather than for a particular program of change.

Participation in the Orange Revolution was more a short-term fluctuation in activism than a long-term general shift in societal values and behaviors. It was fueled primarily by identity divisions, economic frustrations, and by the illegitimacy of the Kuchma government (the "last straw" of a long train of abuses rather than a suddenly imposed grievance from a stolen

election). It was a temporary coalition united primarily in opposition to the Kuchma regime and aided in particular by the robust form of electoral campaigning that preceded it. All this has implications for understanding why one of the most spectacular mobilizations of the post-Cold War era could have proved so fleeting in its impact. To be sure, Ukraine in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution was considerably more democratic than was the case under Kuchma. But the Orange coalition could hardly survive beyond what it was united against and in the face of its own power hungry factions. Civil society activism and the transformation of generational values were much more fleeting phenomena than was assumed by many of the excessively optimistic assessments that arose in the immediate aftermath of the Orange events. Indeed, it is remarkable how, many years after the Orange Revolution, the very same social divisions and grievances that fueled the revolution continue to dominate Ukrainian politics. Even the same leaders who brought about the revolution on both sides of the barricades continue to circulate in and out of power. Such divisions and grievances can, at a particular conjuncture and with the aid of intensified organization, generate the passions necessary to mobilize millions for days in the freezing cold. But they do not miraculously disappear in the aftermath of democratic revolution, and continue to define the parameters of politics in post-revolutionary society.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Some analysts do not believe the Orange Revolution qualifies as a revolution, in that it never overthrew the sitting government but only annulled an election and established a new vote. It did, however, undermine the growing authoritarian basis of the Kuchma regime (in this respect, constituting a form of regime change), involved large scale unconventional mobilization and a mass siege of the government, and included the precipitation of dual competing centers of sovereignty, each claiming to be the legitimate government (the latter, one of the key elements identified by Tilly in his definition of revolutionary situations). See Tilly 1993: 8-9.

<sup>2</sup>My work on the modular spread of contention in the Soviet collapse and in the colored revolutions has by and large followed that approach. See Beissinger 2002 and 2007.

<sup>3</sup>The original definition of causal mechanisms in *Dynamics of Contention* identified them as “delimited sorts of events that change relations among specified sets of elements” (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly 2001: 25). In a recent follow-up exchange, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly altered the definition to “delimited changes that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly 2008: 308-9). Either way, the primary purpose of causal mechanisms in McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly’s schema is to alter social relationships, not to connect initial conditions with the actors’ choices and behaviors. Of course, one obvious problem with defining a causal mechanism as “delimited changes” is that some mechanisms reproduce rather than alter relations among actors.

<sup>4</sup>Obviously, there were protests at other times during the year in which individuals who did not participate in the November 2004 demonstrations might have participated, and there were also much smaller demonstrations organized by the Yanukovich campaign in November 2004 (the largest of these gathered 70,000 participants).

<sup>5</sup>These and other data from the European Social Survey can be found at its website: [www.europeansocialsurvey.org/](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/). The figure of 22 percent participating in the Orange Revolution protests was also found in a December 2004 poll conducted by the Razumkov Center. See Razumkov Center 2004: 3.

<sup>6</sup>These figures come from the 2006 round of the ESS and Yakimenko 2002: 32.

<sup>7</sup>Respondents had the option of naming more than one way in which they had participated in the Orange Revolution events. The survey found in total that 21 percent of the public participated in the demonstrations in at least one of these three capacities.

<sup>8</sup>This figure is similar to the findings of a subsequent poll conducted by the firm “InMind” in November 2005 and reported in Stepanenko (n.d.).

<sup>9</sup>Young people from Western Ukraine were bussed into Maidan as a conscious part of the protest strategy and were prominent among those inhabiting the tent encampments.

<sup>10</sup>Data source: UNESCO.

<sup>11</sup>Youth is defined in the study as those 34 years old or younger.

<sup>12</sup>Even for youth from Western Ukraine, activism dropped precipitously, so that by 2006 there was no relationship between age and work for a political party among Western Ukrainians and a positive relationship between age and work for a civil society association among Western Ukrainians.

<sup>13</sup>On the sharp drop in the public ratings of Kuchma in the wake of the Gongadze scandal, see Panina 2005: 25.

<sup>14</sup>For a sampling of the voluminous literature on regional divisions in Ukraine, see Kubicek 2000; Barrington and Herron 2004; Clem and Craumer 2005.

<sup>15</sup>Those who protested from Catholic Western Ukraine described themselves as considerably more religious than

those who protested from other regions of Ukraine, although there was no relationship between whether a Catholic attended mass regularly and whether that person participated in protests, leading one to believe that the recruitment of Catholics in Western Ukraine was not parish-based, but simply a matter of Ukrainian Catholics more strongly identifying with Ukrainian nationalism.

<sup>16</sup>The survey did not ask whether the respondent was recruited spontaneously or through organizational contacts, but rather whether respondents believed the revolution was a spontaneous or organized action. Thus, there is some ambiguity about whether respondents were talking about themselves or about their beliefs concerning how others were recruited.

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