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COLOR REVOLUTIONS AS A THREAT TO SECURITY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION. AN ANALYSIS OF RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE

ABSTRACT

The authors formulated the main research problem as the following question: What are the social movements, known as color revolutions, for the Russian Federation?; and formulates the following hypothesis: Color revolutions are recognized by the Russian authorities as social engineering inspired by the West, the aim of which is to overthrow the constitutional order of Russia and the states of the post-Soviet space to draw them into the sphere of influence of Euro-Atlantic structures. Color revolutions are considered a serious threat to national security by the Russian ruling elites. The first reason is the fear that the Russians, following the successful revolutions within the post-Soviet area, will themselves want to change the political system. The second is the loss of Russian influence in the countries of the former USSR. Color revolutions in the post-Soviet area have usually resulted in the emergence of pro-Western governments reluctant to Moscow. This, in turn, prevents the Russian ruling elites from rebuilding the empire.

Keywords: color revolutions, national security, post-Soviet states, Russia

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to some Russian and Western political scientists, the current relations between Russia and the West can be called a new cold war, due to the high degree of hostile gestures and real deeds. It seems that the crisis in Ukraine has become one of the last factors determining the current nature of these relations. In Russia, images of this crisis have been perceived through the prism of various conflicts and the so-called color revolutions that occurred in the post-Soviet space and in the Middle East and North Africa. The occupation of Crimea has thus become another field of confrontation between Russia and the West, which has gradually escalated over the last twenty years. The source of the conflict in Ukraine was the desire to get closer to the West, which Russian authorities recognized as a threat not only to its political but also economic influence. In addition, Ukraine is particularly important for Russia from the perspective of identity (empire, nation state, Russian world, sovereignty), place, role and capabilities of Russia in the conditions of contemporary international order dominated by the US and integration – the dilemma of a great, united Europe or integrated Eurasia. Without Ukraine, the restoration of the Russian Empire will not be possible (Trenin, 2016, p. 3, ee Brzeziński, 1997). The Ukrainian choice for a pro-Western way of development could have not been tolerated by the Kremlin, which came to the conclusion that the West began the implementation of the social engineering scenario, referred to as a color revolution (Filimov et al., 2016, p. 336).

According to Russian researchers and politicians, such revolutions serve the basic goal of changing the political power inconvenient for the authors of this “social technology”. In the descriptions of this kind of threat in Russian literature, it is stressed that the removal of governments from power is accompanied by chaos and destabilization of the political situation. In this way, color revolutions are the means to introduce the Anglo-Saxon model of a democratic society (Ponomareva, 2012, p. 46). Actually, color revolutions are believed not to be soft power, but a masking and deception to accomplish US foreign policy goals (Filimov et al., 2016, p. 338; Binding, 2019, p. 55). According to the Kremlin, the only motive for Western states is the destruction of the Russian political system through one large operation of special services, the most obvious manifestation of which is the so-called color revolutions. The Russian authorities accused the aid institution of influencing Russian politicians and election results. The same accusation was made against other international, governmental and non-governmental organizations. However, it must be stressed that at the same time the Russian authorities support various anti-system, anti-European, nationalist parties and social movements in the West and their compatriots in the former Soviet republics. Russia has also been opposing in various ways the aspirations of the post-Soviet states for cooperation or future membership in the European Union (EU), offering them and basically enforcing membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (Novyj integratsionnyj proekt, 2011).

Russian perspective on color revolutions as a threat to national security follows a long tradition of Soviet strategic thinking. Interestingly, Russian researchers see the Cold War itself as a period in history that was created not by the Soviet, but by American imperialism. Some of Russian researchers argue that as the Americans realized that they could not defeat the USSR, they decided to seek nonmilitary methods for overthrowing power in other countries. As Russian rulers have invariably realized that their rules were relatively archaic in form as well as fragile and artificial in its psychological foundation, they have always feared foreign penetration (National Security Archive, 1947).

2. METHODOLOGICAL REMARKS AND RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The concept of color revolutions is ambiguous, although commonly used in Western literature. It is transferred not only to social protests in the post-Soviet space, but also to events in the former Yugoslavia or during the so-called Arab Spring. The very concept of color (“colored”) does not always match the actual name of the phenomenon (See Ananchenko, 2017). Color revolutions can be viewed from several theoretical perspectives: 1) the transformation of an undemocratic system into a democratic one, 2) the defeat of the authoritarian system – a structural approach, 3) the overthrow of the president (Hale, 2013, pp. 331–353). Some authors, such as David Lane, are opposed to the use of this concept in relation to these events. Lane compares social protests aimed at changing power to other collective acts of this type: a coup understood as a sudden, violent, and unlawful overthrow of the ruling elite by another competing elite; a coup d'état, meaning, often forceful replacement or exchange of governing officials for others; when one political party or party faction replaces another; and a revolution consisting in the overthrow of a socio-political system or state by a movement or a political party whose ideology justifies revolutionary changes (Lane, 2009, p. 118).

In Russian researches, less space is devoted to the holistic analysis of the color revolutions' phenomenon. Some Russian scientists and journalists believe that social protests are inspired by the West, which is – generally speaking – unable to change the political system in the post-Soviet countries, nor can it completely enter those markets and gain access to their natural resources. The only way to achieve this goal is to change power through social protests. There is a consensus that the theoretical basis is the anatomy and methodology of overthrowing dictatorships with peaceful instruments, presented in the study *From Dictatorship to Democracy. Roads to Freedom* by Gene Sharp (2013), the American theorist of nonviolent revolution.

In this article, the authors try to show that the so-called color revolutions trigger a neurotic reaction from Moscow, which fears the proliferation of revolutionary ideas and the incorporation of their democratic values and slogans into the Russian political system. Such a sense of threat results in their in-depth analysis conducted by scientific and expert centers as well as state services, including intelligence and internal security institutions. Without penetrating the ideological bias of these analyses, it should be stated that they were carried out correctly, not to say a model, in terms of methodology. The Russians identified their essence, stages, organizers, participants, and instruments. At the same time, they applied the perception of this dangerous social phenomenon as an operation of Western secret services (See Manoylo, 2015, pp. 1–19). The fear of color revolutions also results from the belief that these are noninformation operations of intelligence (covert action, Russian: *aktivnyye meropriatia*), which is clearly unspoken, but palpable contextually. The Russian services have conducted such actions themselves in all parts of the world and are aware of their destabilizing nature (See Mitrokhin, 2002).

The authors formulated the main research problem contained in the following general question: What are the social movements, known as color revolutions, for the Russian Federation? Based on the main problem, specific problems were formulated, which include the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the color revolutions, how are they are proceeding?
2. What instruments and methods are used during the color revolutions?
3. Why are color revolutions treated by the Russian authorities as one of the greatest threats?

From the adopted research questions, a supposition arises aimed at formulating the following hypothesis: Color revolutions are recognized by the Russian authorities as social engineering inspired by the West, the aim of which is to overthrow the constitutional order of Russia and the states of the post-Soviet space to draw them into the sphere of influence of Euro-Atlantic structures.

3. THE ESSENCE AND STAGES OF COLOR REVOLUTIONS

As Russian elites view color revolutions as hostile deliberate actions, they believe they are based on firm conceptual foundations, are well planned, organized, and conducted, based on specific technology and methodologies. They are to be implemented according to the methodology and scenario described by an American political scientist and theorist of revolution without violence – Gene Sharp. The guiding idea of his work is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of dictatorship power, find its “Achilles’ heel” and plan the action (Sharp, 2013, pp. 38–39). According to some Russian researchers, by analyzing and interpreting Sharp’s research, several characteristic features of color revolutions may be distinguished. The first of these is the observation that, unlike Sharp’s theory, color revolutions in the post-Soviet space do not exclude the use of force. At the time of protest, the law and public order are not respected. When, as a result of the protests, it is possible to lead to elections, a victory is announced, and in the case of unfavorable results, the allegation of falsification is advanced. The basic method of action is mass demonstrations in the center of the capital or other large cities, blocking and occupying government facilities. The main force of a coup is not a political party but a broad coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). An important role is played by external forces that provide financial support for protests many years preceding the revolution. These forces situate themselves in the role of an independent arbitrator who aspires to legitimize the protests. In any case, the actions of the opposition are considered legal, and the actions of the authority that defends the order are illegal. At the right moment, external entities present an ultimatum to the ruling elites. It often happens that power representatives have their financial and real estate assets in foreign banks (Belskiy & Klimenko, 2014, p. 7).

Russian experts have identified six common stages of color revolutions inspired by the West, which encompass preparation activities, escalation, and postrevolution activities. According to them the first stage of color revolutions aims at destabilization of the situation in a target state (Filimov, 2016, pp. 98–104). Destabilization in a previously stable country in which a color revolution is planned, is achieved through organization of a political protest movement. During the first stage, it is important to determine the distribution of forces and to identify the social base and division into allies and opponents. The main criterion for such a diagnosis is to determine the degree of identifying with the goals, values, and usefulness of an external entity planning the implementation of the revolution. According to Russian analysts, this is a stage of extremely accurate modeling, lasting from four to five years, depending on the type of goals, social activity, and conditions of the regional and global situation. The modeling takes into account not only the political, economic, and social situation of the region and the country, but also the characteristics of the leaders, the strength of political parties and social movements, business, and media. Achieving the goals of the first phase requires constant monitoring of the situation. This monitoring is supported by a wide information campaign;

analyzing information and statistical data. This campaign is carried out through the publication of articles about the region and country, analytical materials, results of the opinion poll, and statistical data. These are one of the most effective instruments for influencing the society. For the Russian Federation, a serious threat related directly to this specific stage of color revolutions is that the government uses conclusions from analyses and statistical data, developed not by the Russian analytical institutions subordinate to the state, but also entities that are branches of Western structures pursuing their own interests (Łysek, 2013, p. 105). Russian researchers argue that the first stage of the color revolution, in addition to the development of open expertise, is largely carried out by Western intelligence institutions. Diagnosis of the situation is the result of the implementation of a full information intelligence cycle, the stages of which are: formulating information needs, processing, analysis, and dissemination. The results of information analysis and intelligence assessments are presented to entities making decisions and implementing a specific policy (Minkina 2014, p. 3, 9, 206).

According to Russian sources, the second stage focuses on diagnosis of the situation and the preparation of further actions. After diagnosing the situation, the aim of the second stage is an appropriate distribution of power and division of roles to those who will take power in the future and those who will become victims of the revolution and will leave the political scene. Individuals play an important role in the process of distribution or division of force. It is connected with the presentation and departure from the public space and social awareness of new leaders and new political groups. The distribution of power and the division of roles occurs by introducing into the media space information, justifying American activities, and displaying selected events and processes taking place in the country where the revolution is to be carried out (Belskiy & Klimienko, 2014, p. 7).

According to Russian experts, the third stage aims at destabilization of the situation by inducing an event that helps bring large groups to the streets of large cities expressing fear or dissatisfaction. It can be any event, a fact that can be used in the media and trigger a social resonance. In this way, a confrontation of opposite parties, transforms into an irreversible conflict, and political, diplomatic, and legal methods of solving it become ineffective. Chaos begins with the dissatisfaction of one or several social groups, for example, workers or students. Russians point out that dissatisfaction, most often on economic or social grounds, is usually created during the first and second stages (Filimov et al., 2016, p. 339). For example, they argue that in Ukraine, during the Orange Revolution, such an inflammatory spark became the lack of scholarships paid to university students. The main group of dissatisfied in November 2013 in Kiev included also young people and students, who were disappointed with the refusal to sign an association agreement with the EU (Koshkin & Lipatova, 2014, pp. 28–30). Russian literature contains estimations that as much as 8% of the population can become a critical mass for initiating social destabilization in a targeted state (Filimov et al., 2016, p. 101). The next step of such revolutions is to push the unsatisfied social group to manifestations to legitimize the protest and cause social resonance. After receiving wide publicity, new actors are entering the game – prepared to formulate political demands and introduce a tense situation at a new political level. This is one of the most important moments of the revolution. At the same time, financial and material support – remuneration, products, food, clothing and – often – alcohol is directed to the protesters. According to G. Filimov (2016, p. 101), at this stage an important role is played by NGOs, funds, and companies. They support protests materially and logistically, as well as prepare documents and drafts of new legal acts.

During the fourth stage, according to Russian researchers, the transformation of protests into the revolutionary phase occurs, as a result of involving more and more people in the events. Protests acquire a mass character, civil disobedience starts on a large scale, elements of the use of force appear. During the revolutionary stage, the direct demands and goals of overthrowing the old authorities (regimes) and establishing a new democratic one are made public. Actions are underway to create conditions for changing political situation in the country (region). In this case – as in all stages – the Internet and social networks play a particularly important role, quickly disseminating information and enabling communication (Iglin, 2016, p. 138). At the same time, the information is disseminated in such a way as to present the most sensitive moments, while not presenting the entire background and possible consequences. This stage takes a relatively short time, from one to several days and depends on the number of protesters on the streets and the activity of the leaders (Filimov et al., 2016, pp. 339–340).

Next, the fifth stage is recognized by Russian researchers as a time for the presentation of the demands of the protesting crowd towards the legal authorities. The demands of the protesters are characterized by the fact that they will not be able to be met or their fulfillment will result in the overthrow of a legal government. Initially, the development of events does not take the form of a force confrontation, because the protesters are aware of the consequences of confrontation with internal security forces and – perhaps – armed forces. However, mastering the emotions of the crowd is difficult. There are acts of violence against the forces that defend power, which also responds with violence.. From that moment, chaos begins, which at the same time becomes the subject of further manipulation of the organizers of the revolution (Filimov et al., 2016, pp. 339–340). The protesters are in a state of emotional shock. Then comes the paralysis of the state authorities, which loses the ability to manage. Finally, the protesters declare the establishment of new and legitimate structures of government. After that, if successful, the new elites are trying to return to the legal order. It recreates vertical structures for managing the state according to its standards.

This final (sixth) stage of the color revolution, according to G. Filimov (2016, pp. 340–341) starts a new political reality in a targeted country and in some cases influences the geostrategic situation in the region. Russian researchers argue that such stages occurred in almost every color revolution. They point at color revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa and in Ukraine. The events in Ukraine prompted Russian analysts to formulate the conclusion that the US scenario aimed at implementing a geostrategic, political, economic, and military goal, which was to eliminate Russia as a strong and independent entity of the new world order (Filimov et al., 2016, pp. 340–341).

Russian researchers stress the severity of the threat caused by color revolutions in the post-Soviet area to the national security of Russia. They assume that they have become such a serious threat to the political system that fighting them has become one of the important tasks of the armed forces (Cordeman, 2014, p. 10). Russians consider the disintegration of the Soviet Union occurred due to a color revolution. Accordingly, the events that occurred in the USSR's sphere of influence not only changed the political scene of these countries, but were also a catalyst for its disintegration. It was noticed that in the face of such events there is an almost immediate reaction of the West, which supports revolutionary movements in the protests against existing power. The West calls for talks, which warns against applying forceful solutions against the protesters. The wave of color revolutions that crossed the post-Soviet space was aimed at causing a split between

the countries of the area and the creation of a ring around Russia consisting of hostile states. This means that the main goal of it has been to isolate the Russian Federation (Belskiy & Klimienko, 2014, p. 4).

4. POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR COLOR REVOLUTIONS

In addition to the stages, Russian researchers have also identified several scenarios of color revolutions. The first scenario is an orange, classic strategy (*oranzhevaya, klasicheskaya strategiya tsvetnoy revolyutsii*). It involves preparation of an unexpected upheaval of current authorities during elections. In an electoral struggle, where the opponent elites are seeking to overturn the ruling elites, the crisis of legitimization of power is pointed out. Russian researchers argue that the experience of Ukraine shows that such a scenario is possible in a society where there is a fight between various elite clans, which for tactical purposes form temporary coalitions. Until the color revolution, the authorities are forced to balance between those clans and create mechanisms of relations and cooperation between them. Such a mechanism is very fragile and collapses during the election campaign. The disintegration of such a system in the post-Soviet space, particularly in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, was facilitated by the lack of legal mechanisms for the transfer of political power, while an insignificant "democratic" narrative was present.

Russian literature also identifies an elite coup (*elitnyy perevorot*) as a possible scenario for a color revolution. In this scenario, a conspiracy of the ruling elite is formed against the formal leader and/or another group of the ruling elite, another clan (Kazakov, 2015, p. 7). Russian researchers give as an example of such a scenario the coup that was attempted in Azerbaijan by the representatives of the old guard of the state apparatus against the power of President Ilham Aliyev, which was handed over to him by his father in 2003. Despite the favorable conditions, such a scenario could have not been implemented thanks to the decisiveness and political agility of the young president. The weakness of such a scenario, as Russian experts point, is the difficulty in maintaining the secret character of the conspiracy. In such a conspiracy, there is a need to communicate between its participants, which may cause leakage of information. The conspiracy scenario of a narrow group of people has little chance of being implemented.

Third scenario discussed in the Russian literature is the march on Rome (*pokhod na Rim*). It is a sort of export of revolution from the provinces to the capital, organized by joint forces of the capital and regional elites (Kara-Murza, 2006, p. 199). Russian researchers argue that Mikhail Saakashvili chose this way of action, organizing the relocation of his followers from Gori to Tbilisi (Naumov, 2014, p. 160). A similar course of events occurred in Kyrgyzstan (2005) and Uzbekistan (2005). Elements of this scenario also occurred in Belgrade in 2000, when revolutionary youth from the province were directed to the capital; in Ukraine, when in three months from December 2013 to February 2014, groups of radically turned youth from western Ukraine appeared in Kiev's Maidan. According to Russian analysts specializing in the problems of color revolutions, these militias were prepared by special services of Western countries, mainly Germany, the United States, and Great Britain. Such technology, according to these specialists, can be used in all scenarios.

Another possible scenario, widely discussed by Russian researchers is the revolution continuation (*revolyutsiya vdogonku*). Representatives of the elite take advantage of the chaos and lack of public order, which swept the state as a result of the revolution. This lack of order, the disruption

of mechanisms existing before the revolution, may cause difficulties in proper functioning of the head of state and government. There is, therefore, a further escalation of demands under the slogans of the need for democratization, transforming reality into a state of permanent tension, encouraging the return of subsequent tensions (Belskiy & Klimienko, 2014, p. 4).

Some Russian specialists believe that color revolutions are most often a combination of a classic revolution with a revolution of a specific group, derived from the ruling elite, during which no significant changes are made to the economic, political and social system. The only goal, however, is to change the ruling group (Veshnyakov ne schitaet, 2005). They argue that this was the case in all revolutions in the post-Soviet space. A feature that differentiates color revolutions from classical ones is that they occur to overthrow of the existing political system is the declared goal of observing the law and the existing constitutional order. The opposition is not in the role of a group seeking to change or repair the system, but in the role of advocates of existing rights and liberties broken by authoritarian power. Russian researchers observe that the so-called velvet revolutions in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, at the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s more resembled the classical revolution than those that occurred in the post-Soviet space. According to Russian researchers, they are simply a new type of political technology, revolutions of the twenty-first century, revolutions of NGOs, and revolutions of the times of globalization (Rusakova et al., 2014, pp. 44–46).

5. ORGANIZERS AND PARTICIPANTS OF COLOR REVOLUTIONS

There is a consensus among Russian researchers that color revolutions are a well-planned technological sequence of actions involving a broad spectrum of actors. Because they have been recognized as a social engineering process, Russian experts attempted identifying their key elements. They argue that when applied at the right time and under the right circumstances, the elements of revolutions make the achievement of predetermined goals quite probable. The planning stage is important. The electoral campaign is the most frequently chosen term for the implementation of the revolution. At that time, the interests and political activity of the society are revealed. Then, objective circumstances favorable to the assessment of the ruling team arise, and the ability to objectively analyze the situation is reduced because of social emotions. The ending of the counting of votes becomes the moment to start the protest. At that time, in the presence of media favorable to changes, the events concerning the abnormalities of the voting process are reported and the charge against the authorities is made. In the face of irregularities, various types of social committees gathering cheated voters begin to emerge. They play the role of institutions that control power, and often replacing them with the support of foreign entities and independent observers.

Russian researchers argue that color revolutions would have never occurred if the opposition and foreign forces had not been in charge of organizing them. Professionals always stand behind the scenes of these events. These include employees of diplomatic missions, foreign advisors, consultants, and youth leaders. Many of them work in Western institutions and non-governmental organizations. They communicate with each other using special communication channels and encrypted Internet messengers. They are to take the form of a fight against dictatorships, preparing a coup (Mitchell, 2012, pp. 105–107). In addition to planning, organizational, financial, and logistical support, external forces act as international pressure organizations by presenting the conflict in the international media as a fight against the dictatorship. External forces, as Russian

experts argue, support participants in formulating an ultimatum for legal state authorities and try to act as an intermediary between the opposition and the authorities. External support is also responsible for intensifying the use of the soft power mechanism, which the key slogan is the European integration, as a step before joining NATO (Belskiy & Klimienko, 2014, p. 55).

The key role, in the opinion of the Russian experts in the organization and conduct of color revolutions is played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The main goal of NGOs is to transform social attitudes into mass protests (Finkel & Brudny, 2012, p. 6). Without its networks color revolutions would never occur because there would be no power capable of attracting public attention. In Russia, they are referred to as *specnaz*, or special forces of the USA. Therefore, some of Russian researchers, as for example Khorolenko, hold the argument that there is a full justification to consider them as Western agents (Khrolenko, 2015).

Russian researchers stress that such organizations perform important functions. They support the opposition election campaign, monitor the elections and vote counting, provide social support for the revolution mobilizing young people. They also train leaders of the opposition and provide them with financial support. The Russian counterintelligence and police services closely monitor color revolutions' financing. In 2005, the director of the FSB, Nikolai Patrushev noted that "Russian FSB had data on the preparation, together with foreign non-governmental organizations, and new color revolutions in the post-Soviet space (...), especially in the CIS space." (Filimov et al., 2016, pp. 126–127). As an example of such actions, Russian literature provides the U.S. Department of State's report for 2004. According to its data, about 53 financial grants were awarded to NGOs in Kyrgyzstan and more than USD 27 million to the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. The West also provided resources for the preparation of a color revolutions in the Crimea, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. They were in the amount of several hundred thousand dollars, led by the Support for East European Democracy (Russian Federation Ministry of Justice, 2020). Russian researchers state that the epicenter of the 21st century color revolutions is to be the East European Democratic Centre (EEDC), registered in 2001 with headquarters in Warsaw. The main interests and activities of this center focus on Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. The formal tasks of the Centre are to promote the idea of democracy, support for civil initiatives, education in human rights, and civil liberties. However, Russian specialists state that it gathers and analyzes information about the political situation and develops the implementation of the technology of political engineering, taking over functions belonging to foreign intelligence. Activists of this institution were to actively participate in all color revolutions, beginning with Yugoslavia. Their specialty is to develop slogans, such as "Wake up Youth" or to use the force "Bij". The main ideologue of EEDC was to be Zbigniew Brzezinski (Filimov et al., 2016, pp. 130–131).

6. INSTRUMENTS OF COLOR REVOLUTIONS

Russian perception of color revolutions as a threat to national security includes a comprehensive assessment of possible instruments for such revolutions. Information instruments are considered the primary for initiating and sustaining such revolutions (Kozłowski, 2016, pp. 135–151). The campaign of discrediting is a part of the coup during the election. Before and during the elections, an information campaign blaming the current authority begins. By disparaging power, scandals with participation of the head of the state and his staff are revealed. The scandalous situations may have occurred in real life, but they may also be slander,

provocations and staged situations. Negative information reaches the society and the international community through sympathizing media and informal channels. In the voters' heads arises an image of a criminal and corrupt authority. A simple narrative, good-for-all fight against evil, is produced. The evil is the legitimate state authority, and good is the progressive power seeking to change the evil one. According to Russians, this method was used in every color revolution. Eduard Shevardnadze, president of Georgia, embodied corruption as the main obstacle to the country's development. During the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, Viktor Yanukovich was depicted as a representative of the Donetsk bandits. Referring to his criminal past from young years, his name was paraphrased as "Bandukovich". In contrast, Viktor Yushchenko was presented as a fighter against the rise of criminals (Ananchenko, 2017, pp. 71–72). In the campaign of discrediting, one begins to talk about the necessity of exchanging existing power or blocking its candidate in the election. At the same time, the opposition leader is being presented.

Russian experts argue that the key instrument of color revolutions is the establishment of dominance over cities' spaces such as squares and streets during mass demonstrations. Gathering people in one place gives the impression of broad support. Occupation of the territory creates an enclave inside the country, on which the law of the state does not exist. Such peaceful occupation of a given territory requires strengthening, which is achieved by building tent camps near governmental buildings. The towns form their own organizational structures, hierarchy, and rules of everyday functioning. Functional persons responsible for particular elements of such an organization are established – those responsible for order, security, agitators, and logisticians. According to V. Solovey, during such gatherings, four basic mechanisms are created to influence emotions: reformatting the image of reality, the mechanism of the justifiable victim, metaphorization and symbolization of political space. The reformatting of the image of socio-political reality is most often based on polarization of two contrasting entities. During the Kiev Maidan the polarization took the form of slogans such as "live like in Europe", "we live worse than in Europe", "give back our votes". There are also slogans pointing to moral motives. In this way, the construction of "ours – enemies" or "good and evil" is created, which completely destroys the possibility of compromise, because any attempt at any constructive cooperation becomes a betrayal. The second mechanism that initiates and then drives the protests is the narrative of a just, sometimes sacred victim. The purpose is not only to maintain revolutionary moods, but to personalize the responsibility and legitimate mission of the new leader. In all color protests, theatricalization is expressed through metaphorisation and symbolization of political space. To build a community of protesters and a common revolutionary identity, symbols are used. In the history of mankind, the use of visual communication is much older than verbal. Therefore, visual stimuli in connection with music and other sounds are more appealing to the audience. For example, a red carnation, a symbol of the Georgian revolution of 2003, was to emphasize its peaceful nature, the orange color of the revolution in Ukraine in 2004 was meant to symbolize fire, and the desire for change (See Solovey, 2017). On the Ukrainian Maidan, in 2004, concerts of rock music groups were held, and during the 2006 Jeans Revolution in Belarus, the protestors' morale was raised and sustained by the song "Pieriemien!" (Change!) of the deceased Russian rock artist Witor Coja.

The fourth mechanism is the crisis of national and state identity. Russian literature concludes numerous claims that countries where a color revolution occurred were really divided internally. The active and latent divisions within societies were quite deep and varied. In Georgia, it ran according to the ethnic criteria, in Ukraine socio-cultural, in Syria, ethno-religious, in Kyrgyzstan

clan-territorial. In divided and heterogeneous societies, the implementation of a revolutionary scenario means not only a change in the existing balance of power. It entails more far-reaching consequences. These include the collapse of state institutions and the loss of parts of the territory (Georgia, Ukraine) or in the worst scenario the collapse of the state (Libya, Yemen). The most susceptible to the instrumentation are countries where the internal division is so deep that it is difficult to identify any force capable of assuming a leadership role. (Ananchenko, 2017, p. 114). Taking that into account, Russian experts fear long-term negative consequences of color revolutions on societal solidarity and unity within multiethnic states that become targets of such revolutions. One may argue that they think also about threats to integrity of the Russian Federation itself (Gorenburg, 2014, pp. 2–3).

Russian literature contains the discussion of promoting such revolutions. It argues that an important element is its brand and its symbolism. The brand may be elements of clothing, music, film, and music compilations. The set of these accessories is usually varied. Typically, they include plastic accessories: slogans, graffiti, stickers, posters; audiovisual accessories, trumpets, computer games, clothing accessories, headgear, sashes, scarves, ribbons, etc. (Berzina, 2014, pp. 8–9).

The role of power structures is also important. The loss of a monopoly on the legal use of force and to defend against the internal enemy, even to a small extent, may mean the first condition of the collapse of statehood. One of the characteristics of color revolutions is their peaceful nature. However, in the Russian perception, it is only an illusory state declared by the opposition. It is to lull the authorities in the conviction about the peaceful nature. The purpose is to neutralize power structures: counterintelligence, police, and military. Proclamation of the peaceful nature serves to dull the vigilance of the state and obscure the sense of threat. However, the lack of state reaction, even for peaceful manifestations, paralyzes the state. G. Filimov (2016, pp. 165–168) argues that the events in Moldova in 2009 clearly showed that when the crowd blocked governmental buildings, the government itself came to the conclusion that no force should be taken against the protesters because it was not in line with democratic standards. In this way, the state voluntarily renounces the fulfillment of its internal functions to ensure order and security. As a consequence, there is a loss of control over the situation, and the actions of the opposition refraining from the use of force not only discredits the state apparatus, but also breaks down the morale of society. At the same time, when the authorities react with force, the majority of the population begins to sympathize with the opposition. This is an extremely difficult and dangerous moment of revolution for the state because it is difficult to predict what solution will be the most effective for stabilizing the situation.

Russian experts claim that one of the features characterizing the situation before the beginning of the crisis is the building of negative attitudes towards the power structures, and especially against the armed forces. The pressure on the armed forces is caused by the fact that they are the last institution of real power, capable of organized activities. Therefore, one of the most important goals of the organizers of color revolutions is to encourage the soldiers, impact on the morale of the army, emphasizing their low social status and reducing their willingness and motivation to follow the orders of their superiors.

It is worth taking a look at the role of force structures during the color revolutions. In all cases, except for Uzbekistan, they behaved neutrally, or – even after attempting to use them – relatively quickly turned to the side of color revolutions. This is due to several reasons. First of all, because of the social status of soldiers and officers, who, after all, come from society. Second, for fear of responsibility for the victims, as a result of using force solutions.

Third, from the recognition of the morale of the power structures, their readiness to follow orders, and then the psychological and informational impact on the armed and police forces. Russian experts argue that as the protests grow, but still have a peaceful character, the organizers of the revolution decide to provoke the security forces. The most effective moment for the decision on the intervention are the first hours of demonstration. The conclusions from the revolutions are sometimes drawn by the authorities that arose as a result of very revolutions. Mikhail Saakashvili in November 2007, in his speech strongly condemned the street manifestations of the opposition, and immediately supported this condemnation by the intervention of police forces with the use of water cannons, rubber bullets, smoothbore and tear gas. As a result, the protests have been pacified. At the same time, it is very risky to use armed forces. Such considerations lead to a violation of the command and control system. This situation has a negative impact on society and the armed forces themselves. Cases of soldiers joining the opposition occurred in Russia in 1991, and later on also in Ukraine and in Georgia (Filimov et al., 2016, pp. 107–108).

7. RUSSIAN APPROACH TO THE PREVENTION OF COLOR REVOLUTIONS

According to Russian experts, the prevention of color revolutions is possible, if the implementation of mutually coherent undertakings at the strategic and tactical level occurs. Counteracting should be based on specialized structures of the armed forces and other security institutions that are capable of effectively preventing and forecasting such threats (Fitzgerald & Brantly, 2017, pp. 224–230). It seems that this was the main motive for the establishment of the Federal Service for the National Guard Troops (FSGN) in April 2016. This decision also means the priority of the Kremlin is to guarantee the stability of the political system against perceived internal threats, which include the social consequences of a possible economic crisis and Western diversion. The society also received a clear signal that in a situation of internal destabilization, the authorities would not hesitate to use force. This assumption was confirmed by FSGN commander Viktor Zolotov, who believes that counteracting internal destabilization is one of the main tasks of his formation. He also noted that influencing the social attitudes of citizens was becoming more sophisticated and insidious, mainly via the Internet. Protest actions, according to Zolotov, are systemic, organized and have similar scenarios as color revolutions in other countries (Żochowski, 2016).

Russian experts assess that the effectiveness of actions aimed at preventing color revolutions in the Russian Federation cannot be achieved without strict control over civil society organizations that receive financial and other material goods from foreign states, international and foreign organizations, citizens of other countries, or people who do not have citizenship, and who are involved in political activities in Russia, receive the status of foreign agent (Federalnyj Zakon o nekommercheskikh, 2017). The legislator obliges such organizations to promptly request the Ministry of Justice, to include them in an appropriate register and, at the same time, to indicate their status – granted by the Ministry of Justice – in every publication of materials in mass media and on the Internet. For the lack of such information, non-profit organizations may be fined up to one million rubles, and systematic violations of this obligation can be punished by up to three years of imprisonment. All these amendments were adopted by the Duma majority (Kommersant.ru., 2012).

A certain solution proposed by Russian experts to reduce the threat to national security posed by color revolutions could be purposeful programs subordinated to the state. These programs could in theory strengthen the military sciences and incorporate their achievements to the military doctrine. Although the issue is discussed on the forum of the Russian force structures and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the existing legal solutions that allow the use of armed forces to combat and counteract color revolutions are insufficient. At the tactical level, Russian experts recommend denying operations or strictly controlling the financing of nongovernmental and civil organizations, which can be used as an instrument to disrupt public order and protests against the constitutional and political order. They argue that the state should impose much closer supervision of the preparation of specialists in foreign centers. This postulate concerns in particular soldiers and officers of state security institutions, journalists, political scientists, and public relations specialists. An important element would be the preparation of own specialists in the field of media use, information fight in the cyberspace (Manoylo, 2014, pp. 61–67).

8. CONCLUSIONS

The above analysis made it possible to formulate the answer to the adopted research problems. Color revolutions are large operations inspired by the West, and especially by secret services, aimed at overthrowing the constitutional order in Russia and the countries of the post-Soviet space. After the old power is overthrown and taken over by the new elites, emerging during the colorful revolution, the West will carry out the next stage of the operation consisting in taking over the political, social, and economic spheres. During research, the assumption contained in the hypothesis was positively verified. Color revolutions may occur according to various scenarios depending on the specifics of the state, the level of repressive nature of the authoritarian government, the nature of social contradictions, the intensity and duration of the influence of the West on society. During these social protests, a wide range of instruments of influencing the authorities was used, with attention being paid to their diversity, the creative inventiveness of the organizers, in fact, of Western inspirers. There is also a sharp contrast between the lexis used by the current authorities and the organizers and participants of the color revolutions. Moreover, slogans and postulates do not create any room for compromise, which convinces the rulers in Moscow that the aim of the revolution itself is to overthrow the current system, and not to improve the conditions for the functioning of society in terms of rights and freedoms, and in the economic sphere.

Russian political elites and researchers are convinced, based on the analysis of previous color revolutions, that they have a solid scientific and theoretical foundation to deal with such a phenomenon. The philosophical, sociological, psychological, and political knowledge about color revolutions is widely used by the power structures of the Russian Federation. The perception of such revolutions by Russian elites tends to downplay the social dimension of color revolutions and the possible long-term transition. Russian narrative about color revolutions repeats the claims that they do not offer any constructive social program that proposes improved living standards, the elimination of religious and ethnic tensions, or the improvement of security and crime reduction. Russian perspectives are predominantly centered on the idea that color revolutions do not seek to change the social structure, including improving the fate of the poorest. The strategic goal of such revolutions is to change the current power.

This distinguishes color revolutions from the “typical” revolutions as a socio-political phenomenon. Russians believe that color revolutions aim to create a new, postrevolutionary balance of power and division of elites, both old and new. The consequences of such actions are so dangerous that they transfer, instead of stabilization, to deep social divisions. Russian elites are convinced that a new stage of the fight for influence in Eurasia opens, where the main expansive players appear to be three entities: USA, EU and China. Their goal is to get to the natural and energy resources of this region. As all instruments, such as political, diplomatic, financial, economic, informational, and special are used in this fight, Russians fear color revolutions and take actions to deny their occurrence in the Russian Federation. And because of that fear deliberate actions have been taken by the Russian Federation to limit the chances for any new color revolutions in the post-Soviet area and to defend Russian society against any external influence that might spark political unrest and challenge the authorities which have been ruling the country now.

The subject of the analysis did not cover the issue of the effectiveness of color revolutions and the determinants of this effectiveness. The issue of counteracting color revolutions has also not been addressed as it is a separate research area. In the context of the recent protests in Belarus, changes to the Russian constitution, and the repression against Alexei Navalny, one can get the impression that the vast majority of repressive actions by Russia and Belarus are aimed at preventing and pacifying color revolutions. Finally, the question remains whether the perception of color revolutions by Russian analysts is propaganda or scientific analysis. It seems that in the Russian view we will find a rational analysis and the description of the facts, while in terms of their interpretation we are dealing with the official interpretation imposed by the Russian authorities.

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