

V.Yu. Slavetsky, K.O. Bekeshev, A.K. Satpayev*

A. Myrzakhmetov Kokshetau University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan

**Corresponding author: placidodomingo123@gmail.com*

Some aspects of «Color revolutions» and soft power

Abstract. The article is devoted to such a phenomenon of the modern political space as the «color revolution», one of the effective and frequently used methods of realizing their foreign policy and economic interests by certain elite groups on the world stage. The purpose of the article is to determine the functional role of soft power, in the directions from its participation in the formation of protest potential, to the main trends of further development. As a result, the article makes certain predictions about the directions of possible modernization and the conditions that cause this kind of development of events. During the analysis, the authors came to the conclusion that the main participants in the political confrontation on the world stage in the near future will actively improve the technology of color revolutions and methods of counteraction, strengthening their constant application in practice. Thus, they are involved in a kind of «arms race» in the format of non-armed pressure on a foreign policy opponent.

Keywords: «color revolution», «soft power», «protests», «escalation of tension», «information field».

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32523/2616-6887/2022-139-2-93-100>

Received: 25.03.2022 / Accepted: 26.04.2022

Introduction

Nowadays, it is no secret to anyone that the «color revolutions» have become one of the main problems of the political development of the post-Soviet states. Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, this is not a complete list of countries where these revolutionary events took place. The problematic nature of the «color revolutions», rejecting any form of ideological approaches, stems not only from their implementation, but also from the consequences that they bring with them and leave behind. Despite the certain prescription of such events in the countries we have listed, the echoes are still traced in many moments and have their impact.

Of course, the political elites of many countries of the world, with the expert and scientific community, are working on the development of means to prevent and counteract «color revolutions» in their countries. Currently, the work of this plan is at an initial stage and serious progress in this direction has not been achieved. At the same time, the unfolding events in the world political arena are increasingly pushing for the acceleration of work.

The article presents the results of the analysis of some aspects of the «color revolutions» as a process within the framework of prevention and counteraction. The goal is to determine the involvement, provision, and participation of Soft power elements in the processes of the «color revolutions». The article is one of the attempts in the Republic of Kazakhstan to analyze and form certain elements of a theoretical model to prevent destructive phenomena in the republic, which determines the novelty of the study.

Methods

The paper uses such theoretical methods as comparative, structural-functional analysis, and inductive-deductive analysis. Structural and functional analysis was used in determining the

necessary elements of «color revolutions» as a process in which soft power is present and ensures the course of the «revolutionary» events themselves and their impact on the surrounding reality.

Discussion

The modern conditions of our social development have significantly changed the political reality, where political elements take on dominant roles, even in the recent past at the beginning of the XXI century, which were not taken seriously not only by political elites but also by expert and scientific communities. One of these elements is the «color revolutions» with all the accompanying factors and manifestations. The complexity and ambiguity of the political phenomenon, we are considering, have formed an ambiguous attitude towards it in the world community. Putting aside any ideological, social, and cultural bias, we can highly confidently determine several basic attitudes around the issue we are considering. Firstly, the «color revolutions» are the reality of modern politics. Secondly, the «color revolutions» are an effective tool for the implementation of foreign and domestic political goals. Thirdly, the «color revolutions» are a force to be reckoned with.

In the XX century, there was a significant revolution in the principles of such a political phenomenon as revolution. These changes went in the direction of forceful influence on the authorities to non-forceful. Early forceful influence on the existing government automatically determined the form of counteraction to it, that is, armed suppression. Relying on the classic revolutionary achievements of V. I. Lenin, we can say that the revolutionaries formed armed detachments to seize strategic points and arrest the current government. At the same time, it should be noted that revolutionary detachments are rarely inferior to government forces in terms of armament, and in the case of the English bourgeois revolution of the XVII century, Cromwell's cavalry, the so-called «Ironsides», surpassed the cavalry of Charles I in certain parameters of equipment and armament [1].

Modern revolutionary actions do not imply the use of detachments of armed men and open forceful influence on the authorities. This, in turn, also deprives state structures of the possibility of forceful suppression of ongoing processes.

Unarmed opposition to the authorities seems to deprive government forces of superior equipment, nullifying their potential. And given the initial numerical superiority of the protesters, the chances of the government confronting them are not great from the outset.

At the same time, as the protests begin, many other processes begin to take place which forms a kind of aura around the speech itself. Today in the world there are very few examples of successful opposition of the authorities to «color revolutions». This is primarily the case in Venezuela [2], and Belarus. These successes have been achieved through external efforts and support, but there are political costs that should always be avoided. That makes the creation of technologies for the prevention and counteraction of «color revolutions» very topical.

Analyzing the events in Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine in 2014, as well as in Moldova, we have concluded that one of the main elements of the power of the «color revolution» process is soft power. It is the «soft power» that is the main basis of the formation of a completely new principle of influence and struggles against the existing authority. Many can answer what can be done without weapons against tanks and machine guns and dictatorial will, and in return, we can turn everyone's attention to Libya.

Initially, the concept of «soft power» in political science and politics was introduced as a definition of new principles for the implementation of political actions based on the non-force principle. The founder of the theory of «soft power» Joseph Nai in his work has made it quite clear that the power of «soft power» lies in its comprehensiveness and not in concentration [3]. No concentration of the source, which means no pre-emptive or retaliatory strike is possible. It will

simply sink into the rarity of its substance at best, and in the event of an undesirable development of events may lead to negative consequences. Despite all the controversy about the actions of snipers on the maidan, it is they that demonstrate the destructive effect of the force in a non-force system.

«Soft power», even though the skepticism of many politicians in protest and revolutionary events manifests itself in several key moments, prepared in advance or arising spontaneously during events themselves. One of the main manifestations of «soft power» in protest and revolutionary events is the information background. First, in practical terms, it manifests itself in the mass distrust of the population by official sources of information. Public distrust of information from the authorities makes it much more difficult to resist protest actions and sentiments.

In such a situation, rumors, unconfirmed information, and conjectures have fertile ground for spreading, which only increases the disorganization of society and its moods. First, social danger comes from panic moods and actions due to the total distrust of information and actions emanating from power structures. Of course, the formation of the parameter of society's distrust of the government and its information is a very long and complex process. It arises long before the events themselves and has at least three stages of its development in the information field.

According to several parameters, this is a certain political and information technology and a controlled action, which initially reflects that this process is an act of some interesting country. In the first stage, in the information field of society and the state, alternative sources of information appear, as it were, that present and interpret current events and news from a completely different angle and point of view. At the same time, depending on the characteristics of society, two types of alternative sources can be distinguished: foreign and domestic. With a strict system of state regulation of the information field, foreign alternative sources initially appear (for example, «radio freedom» for the Soviet Union).

In the future, as part of the process of democratization and reform of society, some of the existing sources become alternative or for this, domestic sources of information are created with a different display of it. The second stage consists in the transition of alternative sources of information to the category of opposition ones. Initially, this process in the information space is directly related to the struggle for political power. The problematic nature of this process for the government is manifested in the fact that early alternative sources of information have a significant audience of listeners and readers, and, moving into the opposite field, they secretly transfer a significant part of the respondents to the opposition camp. This process is significantly accelerated with the involvement of financial and industrial capital in the political struggle for power in the country, lobbying interests, and distributing financial flows. Significant financial resources make it possible to organize very effective PR campaigns, even for newly created news agencies, television, and radio companies, which gather large audiences in a short time. Significant and quite inevitable miscalculations and mistakes of the state bureaucracy and their desire to hide all this always create an excellent informational occasion for strengthening the population's distrust of information from the governing structures.

In fact, state structures in the legislative and information field cannot influence or slow down this process in any way. The rapid development of this process can serve as a clear indicator of future critical events. From that perspective that the actions of the leadership of many European Union countries toward RT to close its broadcasting as an alternative source of information look quite understandable [4]. They created this technology and understood soon all this will transform into a pronounced oppositional point of view.

Another factor that deserves attention in this matter is the phenomenon of bloggers. They have emerged quite recently in the space of the Internet and social networks and today represent a serious information force to be reckoned with. Working for the most part in a non-political space, they accumulate around themselves significant masses of subscribers who largely trust the information

coming from them. A certain feature of their work is the fact that having formed significant groups of people around them, they also begin to speak out on political issues. With the continuation of this kind of trend, they easily turn into portals for broadcasting the necessary information.

The third stage comes, in fact, already during the protest or revolutionary events themselves. Usually, at this moment, some of the sources of information assume the role of «mouthpieces of the revolution» and begin to broadcast «reliable and truthful» information about the events taking place. The third stage usually occurs only when the information field is literally cleared of the ability of state structures to express their own point of view and interpretation of the events taking place.

The modern development of communication technologies only repeatedly complicates the work of state structures in the information field. Scientific and technological progress in this area has led to the fact that not only organizations and collectives, but also individuals can act as active participants in the information space, gathering significant audiences of subscribers around them. All of them, without exception, are translators of «soft power» in a certain direction. In this space, state regulation is almost impossible, and any desire for regulation will cause in modern conditions only a stormy hope for the infringement of «freedom of speech».

The second manifestation of «soft power» in protest and revolutionary events is the desire for everything progressive and against everything retarding and regressive. According to Gene Sharp, described in the work: «From dictatorship to democracy», such a manifestation essentially disarms the opposing side in a non-force field [5]. To speak out against not supporting automatically means and is perceived as an antisocial position. And the forceful pressure on the protests only in this situation only strengthens the perception of the correctness of the actions of the protesters in the mass of undecided.

From a theoretical point of view, any protest and revolutionary action is based on two main directions. Firstly, it is putting pressure on the authorities to make the necessary decision, or even overthrow the existing power structures. Second, it is a struggle of the minds and preferences of the bulk of the population not ever actively participating in the events. It is these preferences and visions that play an important role in the final stage of events, as they either allow or consolidate the results obtained. A prime example is a situation on the Maidan of Ukraine, where the protesters in power won the fight for the bulk of the population not participating in the events [6].

In other words, based on the support of the main mass of the population begin to carry out actions to counteract the protesters. An example of this situation, of course, are the events at Bolotnaya Square in Russia. With the maximum support of the maximally predominant part of the population, state authorities can with good reason even go for a harsh impact on the events, but only when their opponents lose the battle for the minds of the majority. An example of such a situation is undoubtedly the development of events in the Republic of Belarus in the summer of 2020 [7].

From the point of view of historical justice, it should be noted that the principle «for the best against the worst» has been used for a long time. The innovation of our time is that the pumping of public consciousness about what is good and what is bad begins in advance, rather than occurring spontaneously. At the same time in modern conditions with available technical-technological level pumping of consciousness has the maximum seizure and prohibitive speed of effectiveness even in comparison with the 20th century.

This reveals another interesting property of «soft power» in modern political space and social reality. It is a much higher degree of adaptability of the elements of «soft power» to the development of information and communication systems. Even with a little consideration, one can determine the tendency that progress in the development of sources and means of information transmission is constantly increasing the power of «soft power» to influence the population. This property of the component in question is very important for some further study.

Results

Soon, the use of soft power elements in the technology of color revolutions will only increase. This build-up will occur in the context of contemporary events along the following lines:

1. The technology of the color revolution will soon undergo serious modernization, to increase its effectiveness after several unsuccessful attempts in recent times.

2. The color revolution 2.0 technology will see a significant increase in the soft power component. This will occur because, to date, in the previously used set of components, soft power has the greatest potential for modernization and increased application.

3. Certain elements of soft power will also undergo certain modernization as part of their incorporation into the technology of the "color revolution 2.0. First, we assume that the system of soft power carriers will be upgraded to increase the component of hidden carriers in society.

4. Due to the further development of scientific and technological progress and information and communication technologies, we should expect an increase in the transmission of soft power and an increase in coverage of significant masses of the population.

5. Increased global confrontation between the major players will lead to an increase in the struggle for world hegemony and further redistribution of the world. This struggle will be conducted on all lines of contact with a tacit agreement to use non-force methods of influence on the enemy. In this parameter, soft power, despite all the skepticism of the current development of the situation, has the most effective parameters and the natural process of increase.

It is quite natural to expect that soon we will witness the rapid development of elements of soft power. The means of struggle always develop at an accelerated pace at moments of confrontation between the opposing sides. Opponents on opposite sides of the barricades are probably already carrying out painstaking work in the direction we are describing. To date, it is not yet clear in which direction the work is going to improve the system of soft power: either in the direction of improving the characteristics of existing elements or in the direction of creating new components of soft power. It is authentically known that countries located in the zone of the possible use of soft power are developing to counter this element as an instrument of foreign policy struggle.

Conclusion

It has become very clear to the modern political establishment and the scientific and expert community that the struggle for the redistribution of the world and geopolitical domination has entered a new hot phase. Old and new opponents understand the implementation of this struggle is not conducted by the usual means and according to new rules. The new confrontation objectively rules out the possibility of a head-on collision by force between the main players. The tools created by political technologists in the XX century is being used, based on non-coercive foreign policy pressure in the international arena. This type of pressure will only increase in the short term.

As the development of events in the international arena over the past two years shows, the warring parties were, to a certain extent, ready for such a development of events. The countermeasures implemented by them to counter non-forceful foreign policy pressure have yielded some results. At the same time, I would like to note that the countermeasures used by the opponents are aimed at and counteract already outdated elements and technological approaches, in fact leaving out of their field of action the innovations already available in this direction. In fact, we are entering a period of a kind of arms race with the principle of opposing the «color revolution and soft power with countermeasures», as well as «shells and armor» once.

It is also quite natural to expect that some interesting structures will gradually join this kind of arms race with full force. Their resource potential will automatically increase the speed of changes in this area of the modern international political struggle and is quite capable of forming a new parameter in the confrontation.

References

1. Ковард Б. Оливер Кромвель / Б. Ковард. – Ростов на Дону: Феникс, 1997. – 320 с.
2. Манойло А.В. Цветная революция в Венесуэле // Мировая политика. – 2015. – № 1. – С. 176–179. [Электрон. ресурс]. – 2022. – URL: https://nbpublish.com/library_read_article.php?id=12666 (дата обращения: 2.03.2022).
3. Nye. Joseph S. Soft power: the means to success in world politics / Joseph S. – New York: Public Affairs, 2004. – 100 p.
4. Россия прекращает работу Deutsche Welle в ответ на блокировку канала RT в Германии. [Электрон. ресурс]. – 2022. – URL: <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-60242909> (дата обращения 30.03.2022).
5. Шарп Джин. От диктатуры к демократии. Стратегия и тактика освобождения / Джин Шарп. – Москва: Новое издательство, 2012. – 81 с.
6. Потапов Д.В.. Феномен Майдана и «Оранжевой революции» в Украине. [Электрон. ресурс]. – 2022. – URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/fenomen-maydana-i-oranzhevoy-revolyuitsii-v-ukraine> (дата обращения 12.03.2022).
7. Циткилов П.Я.. Общественная дестабилизация в Беларуси конца лета – осени 2020 г., ее внешнеполитические факторы. [Электрон. ресурс]. – 2022. – URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/obschestvennaya-destabilizatsiya-v-belarusi-kontsa-leta-oseni-2020-g-eyo-vneshnepoliticheskie-factory> (дата обращения 31.03.2022).

В.Ю. Славецкий, А.К. Сатпаев, К.О. Бекешев

А. Мырзахметов атындағы Көкшетау университеті, Көкшетау, Қазақстан

«Түрлі-түсті төңкерістер» және Soft power: кейбір аспектілер

Аңдатпа. Мақала қазіргі заманғы саяси кеңістіктің «түрлі-түсті революция» сияқты құбылысына, бүгінде белгілі бір элиталық топтардың сыртқы саяси және экономикалық мүдделерін әлемдік аренада жүзеге асырудың тиімді және жиі қолданылатын әдістерінің біріне арналған. Мақаланың мақсаты жұмсақ күштің функционалдық рөлін оның наразылық әлеуетін қалыптастыруға қатысуынан бастап одан әрі дамудың негізгі тенденцияларына дейін анықтау болып табылады. Нәтижесінде, мақалада ықтимал модернизацияның бағыттары мен оқиғалардың осы түрін анықтайтын жағдайлар туралы белгілі бір болжамдар жасалады. Талдау барысында авторлар әлемдік аренадағы саяси қарама-қайшылықтың негізгі қатысушылары жақын болашақта түрлі-түсті революциялар технологиясын және қарсы тұру әдістерін белсенді түрде жетілдіріп, олардың практикада үнемі қолданылуын күшейтеді деген қорытындыға келді. Осылайша, олар сыртқы саяси қарсыласқа Қарулы емес қысым форматында «қару-жарақ жарысына» қатысады.

Түйін сөздер: «түрлі-түсті революция», «жұмсақ күш», «наразылықтар», «шиеленістің ушығуы», «ақпараттық өріс».

В.Ю. Славецкий, А.К. Сатпаев, К.О. Бекешев

Кокшетауский университет имени А. Мырзахметова, Кокшетау, Казахстан

«Цветные революции» и Soft power: некоторые аспекты

Аннотация. Статья посвящена такому явлению современного политического пространства как «цветная революция», одному из эффективных и часто используемых сегодня методов реализации своих внешнеполитических и экономических интересов определенными элитными группами на мировой арене. Целью статьи является определение функциональной роли мягкой силы, в направлениях от ее участия в формировании протестного потенциала, до основных тенденций дальнейшего развития. В результате в статье делаются определенные прогнозы о направленностях возможных модернизаций и условий обуславливающих подобного рода развития событий. В ходе анализа авторы пришли к выводу, что основные участники политического противостояния на мировой арене в ближайшей перспективе будут активно совершенствовать саму технологию цветных революций и методов по противодействию, усиливая их постоянное применение на практике. Тем самым они вовлекаются в своеобразную «гонку вооружений» в формате не вооруженного давления на внешнеполитического оппонента.

Ключевые слова: «цветная революция», «мягкая сила», «протесты», «эскалация напряженности», «информационное поле».

References

1. Kovard B. Oliver Cromwell. (Phoenix, Rostov na Donu, 1997, 320 p.), [in Russian].
2. Manoilo A.V. Cvetnaja revoljucija v Venesujele. Mirovaja politika [The color revolution in Venezuela. World Politics.] 2015. No. 1. P. 176 - 179. Available at: https://nbpublish.com/library_read_article.php?id=12666, [in Russian]. (accessed 02.01.2022).
3. Nye. Joseph S. Soft power: the means to success in world politics (Public Affairs, New York, 2004, 100 p.).
4. Rossiya prekrashhaet rabotu Deutsche Shhelle v otvet na blokirovku kanala RT v Germanii [Russia stops Deutsche Welle in response to the blocking of the RT channel in Germany]. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-60242909>, [in Russian]. (accessed 30.03.2022).
5. Sharp Gin. Ot diktatury k demokratii. Strategija i taktika osvobozhdenija [From dictatorship to democracy. Strategy and Tactics of Liberation]. (New Publishing House, Moscow, 2012, 81 p.), [in Russian].
6. Potapov D.V. Fenomen Majdana i «Oranzhevoj revoljucii» v Ukraine [The phenomenon of the Maidan and the "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine]. Available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/fenomen-majdana-i-oranzhevoy-revoljutsii-v-ukraine>, [in Russian]. (accessed 12.01.2022).
7. Tsitkilov P.Ya. Obshhestvennaja destabilizacija v Belarusi konca leta – oseni 2020 g., ee vneshnepoliticheskie faktory [Social destabilization in Belarus in late summer – autumn

2020, its foreign policy factors]. Available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/obschestvennaya-destabilizatsiya-v-belarusi-kontsa-leta-oseni-2020-g-eyo-vneshnepoliticheskie-factory>, [in Russian]. (accessed 31.01.2022).

Information about the authors:

Slavetsky Victor Yurievich – Ph.D., Senior Lecturer of the Department of International Relations, History and Social Work, A. Myrzakhmetov Kokshetau University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan.

Satpayev Almas Kayratovich – Master of Pedagogical Sciences, Lecturer of the Department of International Relations, History and Social Work, A. Myrzakhmetov Kokshetau University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan.

Bekeshev Kuandyk Omarovich – Senior Lecturer of the Department of International Relations, History and Social Work, A. Myrzakhmetov Kokshetau University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan.

Славецкий Виктор Юрьевич – Ph.D., халықаралық қатынастар, тарих және әлеуметтік жұмыс кафедрасының аға оқытушысы, А. Мырзахметов Көкшетау университеті, Көкшетау, Қазақстан.

Сатпаев Алмас Қайратович – педагогика ғылымдарының магистрі, халықаралық қатынастар, тарих және әлеуметтік жұмыс кафедрасының оқытушысы, А. Мырзахметов Көкшетау университеті, Көкшетау, Қазақстан.

Бекешев Қуандық Омарович – халықаралық қатынастар, тарих және әлеуметтік жұмыс кафедрасының аға оқытушысы, А. Мырзахметов Көкшетау университеті, Көкшетау, Қазақстан.