

COLORED REVOLUTIONS AS A MEAN TO CAUSE CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract: Colored revolutions are a complex political and security phenomenon, which in the last two decades reflected different geopolitical nuances in the kaleidoscope of contemporary international relations. Today's theorists believe that the first colored revolution took place on October 5, 2000, in Belgrade, after which the series continued in the post-Soviet space, North Africa and the Middle East, where such a form of revolution was romantically called the "Arab Spring", and essentially were extremely unfavorable and destructive, above all for the people and states in that area. The scientific goal of the work is primarily determined in the direction of the theoretical clarification of all important aspects of this complex political-security phenomenon, bearing in mind that it also penetrates deeply into other vital spheres of modern society, which are of economic, sociological, cultural, religious and other important importance. The social goal of the work is, for example, focused on the analysis of the scope and effects that resulted from the realization or attempts to carry out such forms of political coups, as well as on the research ambition to shed light on the perspectives of the further development of colored revolutions.

Keywords: Colored revolution, coup, political power, opposition action, foreign factor, conspiracy.

Introduction

Colored revolutions are a form of unconstitutional and illegal change of government, where in the initial stage of manifestation they have a non-violent character, while at the end of their manifestation they take on a violent character, where violence and pressure play a very important role in their embodiment. Experience shows that a relatively small number of people (usually a few tens of thousands) overthrow the government in front of millions of passive and anesthetized citizens. Colored revolutions are a relatively "young" political phenomenon and have existed in modern social history for about twenty years. In the beginning, they were most often

associated with the post-Soviet space, while there are theorists who believe that the first coup according to the colored revolution model took place on October 5, 2000, in Belgrade. Interpretations are certainly different and subject not only to theoretical but also to public debate, where the general consensus is that the mentioned complex political and security events certainly had to a significant extent the peculiarities of the mentioned political phenomenon (Parezanović, 2022, p. 35).

Colored revolutions are, in essence, special operations of a hybrid war with the aim of implementing a political coup, they are carried out with the use of political, informational, communication, sabotage-terrorist and moral-psychological methods of influence in gross violation of international law. The goals of such illegal actions can be the complete or partial disintegration of the state, a qualitative change in its internal or foreign policy, the replacement of the state leadership with loyal regimes, the establishment of external control over the state, its criminalization and submission to the dictates of other states or transnational corporations (Panarin, 2019, p. 325).

In contemporary international relations, rarely has any political process been so intense and powerful, and one can say effective in political changes, as a colored revolution. In one period, the impression was made that the era of colored revolutions would pass quickly, however, the events in Ukraine in 2014, Venezuela in 2019, Belarus in 2020, and in Kazakhstan in 2022 deny that (Sungorkin *et. al*, 2023). What took place and is taking place in the mentioned countries regarding the implementation or attempts to implement various forms of political coups, as well as the effects, scope and consequences of those coup movements, certainly represent a complex research field.

Basic characteristics of colored revolutions

The basic characteristics of colored revolutions are contained in the fact that they are non-violent, more precisely that violence is used restrictively and to the extent that it is necessary for execution of the goal. They usually manifest themselves after long-term political crises, and the culmination most often occurs during or immediately after the end of the electoral process.

The opposition forces declare victory in advance, the election result of the ruling structures is characterized as falsified and mass demonstrations are organized with the aim of paralyzing the system. The main political force of the opposition is not represented by politicians and parties, but non-governmental organizations (Gapich and Lushnikov, 2010, pp. 12-13).

The very technique of organizing and carrying out colored revolutions in the initial phase creates the environment for the economy of a certain country (which is the target of aggression) with different economic pressures to make it dependent on external factors as much as possible. This is most often performed various financial interventions and pressures from multinational companies, even the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and where these are not present institutions, acts through commercial banks, investment funds, oligarchs, corrupt managers and similar entities. It is not a rare occurrence that they are individual economic sanctions imposed on states by the international community. Anyway, the goal is to induce a strong and intense in the shortest possible time destabilization of the entire economic system, in order to cause economic collapse, and therefore a drop in the standard of living. With the decline in living standards on the scene social tensions and contradictions, which were less noticeable and visible until then, set in. Psychological-propaganda action creates an environment that political state leadership most is responsible for the difficult economic and social situation in the country, which plunges the country into an even deeper political and security crisis. That subversive action from abroad, with the help of domestic factors, including the marketing of various disinformation is carried out in many ways, and the list of modalities is almost endless, and it is conditioned by imagination and creativity. The most common modality is use of media, primarily social networks, given that nowadays the Internet has become a major communication field with incredible possibilities. Therefore, in the media play a particularly important role in the architecture of colored revolutions. When it comes to media, we underline once again that here we mean the negative role, which is primarily refers to non-objective and biased information, which in certain cases causes serious political and security complications. Especially destructive role played by certain subversive phenomena on social networks, which are present today and have become a part of everyday life and are almost accessible to a greater or lesser extent to all of humanity. When it comes to the mentioned negative phenomena, first we think of the Institute of Spreading the so-called fake news, which were designed and marketed in advance causing certain negative consequences. That fake news is not just about domain of political struggle, they can already spill over into the terrain of discrediting the individual, in the direction of spreading of panic among the population and alike. Destruction and subversion are almost always in the background of fake news. In addition, there are other ways of spreading disinformation, which certainly represents one of the domains of work of special services, which

challenges them with very harmful, one might even say devastating consequences (Parezanović, 2013b, str. 88).

In this sense, tendentious marketing of carefully conceived products is almost always carried out by fake news aimed at creating the impression that the government that needs to be overthrown is powerless, unable, incompetent and ineffective to deal with the problems that plague the country and its citizens. Usually, on those occasions, situations are chosen that should show that the competent institutions are not able to protect or enable some fundamental civilization values and indispensable needs of people, such as security, elementary and other conditions in the domain of living standards, dignity and the like. If they are like that constructions are hardly sustainable, because the people fundamentally do not feel the shortcomings in the target areas, other means and topics are chosen (Parezanović and Željki, 2019, p. 416).

Due to accumulated political and economic tensions, they are organizing in the country strikes, which eventually turn into well-organized protests. Those protests often they get the epithet of disorder and unrest on a wider scale, which causes the intervention of security forces. Then, almost automatically, the opposition structures and those media sympathetic to them proclaims the excessive use of force against protesters, thus creating favorable conditions for the internationalization of those internal conflicts. Most often the threat of human rights and freedoms is emphasized, which initially implies verbal condemnations from certain foreign officials and international organizations, while in the next phase they vote certain resolutions, which condemn “violence” towards the opposition circles. Soon after that, alliances of several states are formed, which are part of the international community and is entrusted with a mandate to supposedly find a political solution for overcoming the crisis, which actually their subversive and covert activity gradually introduces it into, conditionally speaking, legal and legitimate frameworks (Parezanović, 2013b, str. 89).

Actors from abroad

It is no secret or unknown that actors from abroad have a very important role in the realization of colored revolutions, which is primarily reflected in a wide spectrum of various subversive activities, which include illegal ones, among others financing of opposition parties, non-governmental organizations and others anti-regime movements, which in certain cases can last several years (Gapich and Lushnikov, 2010, pp. 12-13). Because of this,

it is very important that the security authorities perform a multi-layered and thorough analysis of operational data of the real financier's institution, because then things will be much clearer.

After unambiguous identification of the mentioned subjects and adequate documentation of those transactions, which can be very diverse, starting from offshore company, through cryptocurrencies, and up to the so-called hawala system, there are several ways it can be documented and legally disabled, which is part of the work domain of special services and state bodies in the field of financial control (Parezanović, 2022, str. 54).

Otherwise, the mentioned subjects constantly face the challenge of finding different source of collection of material resources. Sometimes the support is completely domestic, and in other cases, they manage to obtain a significant amount of international aid. Home support mainly comes from local associations of citizens and non-governmental organizations, business communities, religious institutions, trade unions and professional associations.

Youth and student organizations profit from their age – reliable source of financing are their families. According to one approach, there are four levels of possible sources of material support: 1) membership and supporters, their families and friends; 2) potential allies, non-governmental organizations, opposition parties; 3) local business community; 4) international organizations (Popović, Milivojević, Đinović, 2007, str. 94).

When it comes to the types of material resources, well organized opposition-oriented movements always make a detailed assessment of material needs means. These needs have the following basic functions: i. survival and maintenance of morale (food, clothing, medical aid, funds for people who lost their jobs, and the like); ii. transport and communication (computers, mobile phones, transmitters, office supplies, vehicles, fuel, plane tickets and more); iii. fixed operating costs (office space, overhead and clerical expenses, etc.); iv. immediate actions and campaigns – flyers, brochures, access cards, materials for recruitment, rental of event space, press releases, rental media space, expenses for the arrival of guests from the country or abroad, awards and incentives for activists, costs of political action projects, thematic campaigns and similarly (Popović et. al, 2007, str. 93).

All the above is not final and fixed in the context of the preparation and organization of the colored revolution, and it is conditioned by concrete circumstances, climate and overall situation in which an opposition organization that has such ambitions operates (Parezanović, 2022, str. 41).

In addition to the above, actors from abroad often assume the role of supreme arbitrators, determining the legitimacy of the electoral process, that is, they support the possibly illegal action of opposition forces. They also send various foreign policy ultimatums governing structures, creating conditions for the engagement of international negotiators and other mediators, who would act in the interests of the opposition forces. Also, an important role political subjects who once were play a role in the realization of color revolutions part of the ruling structures, and then, due to professional or personal conflicts, moved to the opposition. They know the regime best from the inside and foreign actors turn to them special attention (Gapich and Lushnikov, 2010, pp. 12-13).

The foreign factor pays special attention to contacts and active use certain provocateurs, mercenaries, terrorists, extremists, etc. They are used as the mechanism of the organizational system of interference in the internal affairs of the target country aggression. They receive maximum support from abroad to carry out their actions legitimately and for this purpose they use help from interested foreign centers of power.

In parallel with all the above, active work is also being done on the so-called early creation of “leaders”, who are designed to take overpower after the coup is over (Panarin, 2019, p. 327).

In addition to the above, it is crucial to fight for the undecided and win their sympathy in all ways. Violent protesting is exactly what it does – it leads to inwardness undermining the regime. In parallel, the recruitment of members of the elite is carried out, and above all members of the security services to go to the other side. Undermining the morale of the army and of the police is among the priorities (Đurković, 2021, p. 125).

Opposing colored revolutions

The question arises as to how in the era of today’s technical and technological process and high-speed communications to combat this phenomenon. The answer is very difficult and complex. It used to be simpler, and today, in the era of hybrid actions, it represents a huge challenge (Parezanović, 2022, p. 42).

It is especially important to identify the external factors that contribute to the cause of colored revolution, and internal causes that create the conditions for such events (Way, 2008). There where the government enjoys authority, and citizens have confidence in state institutions, there is none external actors who will be able to promote “colored” technologies of change

authorities. And vice versa, if citizens feel that the existing state institutions do not support them and do not allow them to express their position, they resort to unconstitutional forms of expression of political will, which is actively used by those who are interested in promoting their interests. Due to all the above, it is very important to establish and maintain trust in state institutions, as well as during maintenance of all electoral processes. Any internal instability and disunity of society can open the door not only to a colored revolution but also to military intervention. Almost in every state the opposition is made of the same citizens, who supported the government, and therefore the opposition should not be seen as an enemy of the state (Parezanović, 2022, p. 332).

It is precisely these relations of distinct political differences in one society, which over time turn into open hostilities between the government and the opposition, they can cause harmful consequences for the state and its order. The first phase is political confrontations, and after that political hostilities and finally we enter the phase of personal conflicts between representatives of the government and the opposition. That's when the most dangerous, one might even say terminal, occurs the phase, when all options for the further development of the crisis are possible, including those of a violent nature.

The responsibility for this state of affairs in society is most often borne by the government, which, unlike opposition has concrete institutional and all other management mechanisms, crisis and its containment. However, it can also happen that opposition forces in an organized and targeted manner, act destructively in the direction of causing a crisis and consciously introduce political relations in the field of violence, less often independently, but almost always with the support of certain actors from abroad. Due to all the above, social stability is to the greatest extent possible and achieved by the rule of law, functionality of institutions, respect for democratic forms of organization of political relations, as well as progressive shifts in development of the most important social areas (Parezanović, 2022, str. 43).

It is very interesting the way in which the political changes of the rulers took place from structures that came on the wave of colored revolutions. Those changes followed on legitimate way, which bypassed the famous "they came by force, they will leave by force".

So, those changes were followed by the victories of the opposition political forces in the election process, which is the opposite of the way changes were made after colored revolution (Parezanović, 2013b, p. 74; Parezanović, 2013a).

It is also interesting that the colored revolutions gave birth to another mechanism pressure, which is to introduce to certain state officials or individuals sanctions due to alleged non-respect of human rights (Lincoln, 2012). Those sanctions can be of a financial and economic character, or those that imply transit bans and stay in certain countries. They are almost always introduced by those countries that covertly or openly stand behind the organization of colored revolutions. That's how they make additional pressure and additional internationalization of the political crisis, and in general the most significant political problems in the country that is the target of aggression. This is in practice most often realized through the so-called blacklists, which are also published publicly (Parezanović, 2013b, p. 89).

In this sense, it is necessary to dispel the misconception that in international relations there are sanctions that are strictly aimed at individuals. Sanctioning party will never admit that they are directed against collectivity in the sense of one nation or the state, because it would not be expedient, first politically, and then not even legally (under appropriate conditions, there would be a risk of being treated as an element of genocidal intent).

Instead, it is emphasized that sanctions are being introduced against an "undemocratic regime", and that's all more frequent targeting of key individuals, under the explanation of their alleged corrupt activities (it is about the abuse of the institute of criminal law in subversive political purposes). Therefore, any introduction of sanctions to the legally elected state to the officials, it is actually intended to paralyze the targeted political system, and it is inevitably directed against the entire state order. The impossibility of a single carrier of state functions to regularly perform their duties as a result of the imposed sanctions undermines its political legitimacy, artificially creates social tensions, suspends regular internal political life and has a negative psychological effect on citizens and overflows into the domain of the economy, which initiates a spiral of general destabilization. Also, this sight pressure can in certain cases destabilize state officials exposed to sanctions on a psychological level, and in their professional and personal environment. For example, it is enough that a high-ranking government official is unable to fulfill its international obligations through official visits abroad or receptions foreign statesmen to provoke public opinion in the manner of "psychological warfare". It is a sense of anxiety and isolation, thus providing the impetus for the colored revolution.

An additional danger lies in the circumstances that due to the lack of developed state-building awareness, some political actors see foreign sanctions

as an opportunity for easy and effective elimination of political competition, but from the objective population, this is actually practice of complicity in undermining the constitutional order (Parezanović, 2022, str. 44).

Activities related to the legalization of subversive activities that resulted from the colored revolutions

When it comes to the legalization of subversive activities at the national level on the part of the organizers of the colored revolutions, it is important to note that this process implies the introduction or attempt to introduce those groups and individuals who until yesterday operated from different intelligence centers, primarily in the form of “independent observers”. These verifiers have already prepared reports on violations of human rights and freedoms, suppression of democratic processes and the overall political situation, which is the predetermined result of their eventual revision. Since most of the states affected by the wave of colored revolution did not allow this form of external interference in the internal issues, it was a reason to declare them undemocratic and authoritarian states. And if we add to that the unwritten rule that almost all forms of political struggle against authoritarian regimes, they “tolerate”, especially the illegal ones, in a covert way are action moves towards open destabilization of circumstances and additional deepening crises (Parezanović, 2013b, str. 89).

In such a state of strained and complex overall social relations environment for certain forms of political violence is created. So, for example, it is not a rare occurrence that assassinations or attempted terrorist activities, diversions, sabotage and the like were carried out in countries where color revolutions were realized. Also, there were cases of attempted or executed “suicides” with a political background, which is contributed to the impression that it was a state of powerlessness, but also strong apparatus struggles and fractures within the ruling political systems (Parezanović, 2013b, str. 90).

In such an extremely crisis environment, with public support from abroad, the opposition forces insist on calling for extraordinary elections at all levels of government.

In the pre-election period, the opposition carries out strong political activity in the direction of voting by animating as many citizens as possible, whereby the money for the political campaign is provided from abroad. Election day is crucial for the realization of colored revolutions, because these revolutions are carried out according to an exact scenario, and when

it comes to this day, improvisations are minimal. The key feature is that shortly after closing of polling stations, the opposition forces declare victory, before declaring any preliminary voting results. Then they invite citizens to gather at the central town square or some other similar place, in order to “celebrate the victory”. When the masses of the people gather, in the event that the opposition forces did not win the elections, they are informed that the electoral process was irregular, that the government stole the elections, and that published preliminary results are not credible. Citizens are invited to stay on protest until the fulfillment of their demands, and for this purpose the setting up of tents is organized, delivery of food, water, medicines, hygiene products and clothes, as well as other necessities, all in order to enable the conditions for the masses to stay as long as possible. In order to maintain the political tension and psychological tension of each individual, oppositionists hold incendiary they speak, but they also organize an entertainment-artistic program so that as many people as possible encouraged them to stay at the protest (Parezanović, 2022, str. 46).

Considering that in the colored revolutions, the importance of the mass as one of dominant actors, they essentially come down to the measure of social dominance. However, their success does not depend on whether the majority of the population in the state or city actively supports the idea of a colored revolution, it is enough that the inspirers and organizers of mass protests gather a large number of people who with their messages and activities pose a security challenge to the government. The exact number depends on each country individually, from the characteristics of its leadership, the economic and political strength of the government and capabilities of its security apparatus (special services, police, army, judicial structures) to counter these types of security risk.

Social dominance is achieved in the moment when that critical mass, which has risen in order to change the current regime, provokes an inappropriate and chaotic reaction of the authorities (Korybko, 2015, p. 30, according to: Milenković i Mitrović, 2019).

All the above is combined with a pre-planned tactical performance of the attempt of gaining part of the ruling structures, especially from the department that controls the apparatus coercion and force. Meetings with officials from ranks of the special services, the army and the police, and they are promised not only the alleged “amnesty” for previous work, but also new promotions. In this way, skillfully playing on the map of human greed and treachery, cracks are being created within the ruling system, and alongside protests in support of the opposition forces are also being

organized in the interior of the country. The goal is that the crisis acquires a comprehensive character, and that the action of the security authorities is dispersed on the whole country, which reduces their effectiveness. Work stoppages – strikes are also a very effective modality in paralyzing the government. All colored revolutions were preceded by mass strikes, which grew into riots and riots on a wider scale. However, it is very important to emphasize that the organizers of colored revolutions are the masters of timing, because they activate the foreseen activities and actions at the exact time. For example, if it is decided to provoke a police reaction to use force against protesters, it always seems synchronized, and simultaneous in several different locations. Use of means of coercion and engagement of the police unit represents one, conditionally speaking, bureaucratic procedure, where it is necessary to follow the sequence of procedures when commanding. That's why the protestors are always faster and in advantage, while the creators of colored revolutions play and, on that map, when there is a conflict with the security authorities (Parezanović, 2013b, str. 90).

In connection with the above, there is a growing need for a systemic approach to potential modeling efficient and effective state system and its subsystems through the application of science, prognostic scientific methods and experiences from practice in accordance with modern security challenges, risks and threats (Gordić, 2011, str. 30-53).

Both in the phase of preparation and in the phase of immediate execution of the colored revolution, the external factor behind this form of political upheaval will intensify the pressure thereby, which will be through various international organizations, the non-governmental sector and various others "experts" present alleged analyzes and legal interpretations of election irregularities process and thereby additionally introduce instability into a society gripped by a political crisis.

Thus, those short-term legitimate forms of political struggle, such as elections and the post-election process, various protests, demonstrations, strikes etc., disappear from the scene and once again enters the domain of illegal forms of political struggle. These illegal forms such as assassinations, suicides with a political background, diversion, sabotage, etc., even terrorism spill over into the field of political upheavals. When does it even happen?

The answer to this question is not at all simple, with the example of the previous colored revolutions differentiated several key parameters, of which we highlight: that the intensity of political intolerance has been long since surpassed democratic forms of political struggles, as well as that both the ruling and opposition forces are ready for a total conflict, without fear of

possible consequences; that opposition structures enjoy strong support from abroad, from where they receive a signal for their realignment on a new track of violent political struggle, accepting various forms of political violence as the only possible instrument conquest of power; that the political, social and economic crisis has reached such a level that the commitment of the opposition structures to radical methods is perceived by them as the only possibility for overcoming internal problems.

Certainly, the listed factors that condition illegal forms of political struggle towards the execution of a political coup are not final, but represent only research framework, where they can be elaborated in one multidisciplinary approach some new conditions, which are determined by forms in each individual case social arrangements, ideology, religion, tradition and similar (Parezanović, 2013b, str. 91).

Regardless of everything that has been said, this is only one, conditionally speaking, short theoretical overview of the phenomenon of colored revolutions, which was carefully supplemented by certain experiences from operational practices. In any case, colored revolutions have the properties of a living organism, and are subject to change, so that they manifest their articulation depending on current and contemporary parameters affecting them. Therefore, the authorities in charge for the protection of the constitutional order and opposition to this form of illegal politics actions must actively follow all changes and current trends around this complex political and security phenomenon. Only in this way can the preconditions be created and send appropriate recommendations to the state leadership, because, as we have already emphasized, colored revolutions cannot be prevented only by the action of the security authorities, but only in their cooperation with the political leadership and other state institutions (Parezanović, 2022, str. 49).

Conclusion

Colored revolutions are a hybrid of classic revolutionary action, to be more precise democratic revolutions with certain modifications adapted to the periods in where the coups took place. This means that the effectiveness of this type of political coup was significantly higher in the beginning, in the first years of the “export” of the colored revolutions, while their effectiveness declined in the years to come. The colored revolutions were just the beginning.

In the 2000s, the regimes in the countries that were exposed to this were destroying everything in front of them in the form of a political

phenomenon, they fell mowed down one after the other, which was specially characteristic for many countries of the post-Soviet space that were washed over and submerged to the “colored wave”. In a wide range of methods and means that were used on the occasion of the realization of this form of political coup, institutions in charge of protection of the constitutional order did not have a timely and effective response, because all previous mechanisms for defending order were not effective. However, after a certain period, numerous states that could fall under this “export political hybrid” got antibodies by studying these phenomena, but also by exchanging experiences with other countries that were affected by colored revolutions. A vivid example are the unsuccessful attempts to carry out color revolutions in Belarus (2020) and Kazakhstan (2022).

For the above reasons, an essential dilemma arises, what is the perspective of people of colored revolution, that is, whether this complex political and security phenomenon will survive on the world political stage as a mechanism for unconstitutional government change across the board of the world or it will develop in another direction. Basically, that direction can go in two directions. The first implies that the color revolutions in their current political form will die out, and the other direction indicates that there is a high degree of certainty that colored revolutions will modify and develop into a new, relatively different form of politics coup, which will enable the effectiveness of a modified form of colored revolutions and its maintenance on the pedestal of global unconstitutional action.

Colored revolutions did not bring with them social progress in the countries where they were taking place. They only further increased the accumulated numbers of social contradictions within the countries they invaded. Citizens who took part in the colored revolutions with emotions and enthusiasm, mostly after several months or years realized that they were manipulated and abused by the centers of power, who were the creators of unconstitutional changes in their states. In certain countries, the colored revolutions were the lobby of wars, extremism and everything bad.

Picturesque examples are Egypt and Ukraine. In Egypt, in 2011, colored revolution was performed with the romantic name “Arab Spring”, which brought to power in Cairo terrorist organization “Muslim Brotherhood”. In Ukraine in 2014 colored revolution that was conducted, indirectly, led that country into war.

In any case, colored revolutions will remain a controversial political phenomenon, which will occupy the attention of the world public for many

years to come, but above all of experts, scientific and professional circles, of course for each of the listed from his own point of view and.

Therefore, any attempt to fully understand them will be impossible, because the colored revolutions will always be observed differently, with the angle of observation, always imbued with different, mutually opposed interests, which are self-contained and at the basis of the initiation or suppression of this complex political phenomenon.

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