

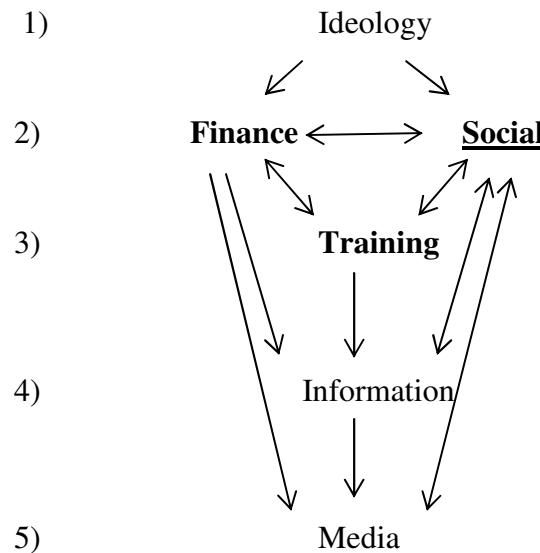
Color Revolutions: A Briefing of the Core Theoretical Mechanics

I Model

Color Revolutions are formed through a complex interaction of many factors, however, they can be subdivided into several primary infrastructural categories:

- Ideology
- Finance
- Social
- Training
- Information
- Media

These factors interact with one another in a specific way in a five-tiered hierarchy:



The interplay of these factors creates a Movement (m) that combines with two other variables to produce a Color Revolution:

- ‘The Event’ (e)
- Physical Infrastructure (p)
 - e.g. ‘occupy’ movements and protests

The resultant formula for a Color Revolution (R) is as follows:

$$m + e + p = R$$

II Description of Variables

1. Ideology

The ideology motivating all Color Revolutions is Liberal Democracy, which seeks to ‘free’ targeted states from perceived anti-Liberal Democratic (non-Western) governments. Besides waging direct war against its enemies (i.e. Serbia, Libya), the West has learned to pursue

other methods of defeating them, namely, Color Revolutions. The state must combat a part of itself that is ‘rising up’ against the status quo, leading to a social civil war.

2. Finance

Financial infrastructure lubricates ideological permeation, and it is usually received from abroad. It transforms the ideas of the social Movement into tangible action and seeks to build a domestic fundraising apparatus. Finance institutionalizes the Color Revolution.

3. Social

These are the people associated with institutions/organizations that are involved in the Color Revolution, i.e. the Revolution’s direct engine of engagement. Prior to ‘The Event’, they can be divided into three levels:

- 1) Core (Vanguard)
- 2) Cohorts (Workers)
- 3) Civilians (Sympathizers)

Core individuals are the vanguard of the Color Revolution, and they control the institutions/organizations. They are highly trained and maintain direct contact with the external patron, and their rabid dedication marks them as ‘ideological extremists’. Cohorts are positioned below the Core, and they conduct most of the Revolution’s activities. They are the ‘face’ of the organization and are easily disposable and replaced by the organization if need be (i.e. they are ordered into provocative publicized actions and subsequently arrested). The Civilians are the regular citizens who the Cohorts come into contact with. They enter into the Social Infrastructure only when they become sympathizers to the cause (e.g. participate in protests). A single Cohort or Civilian is a pawn, but large amounts of them are a ‘weapon’.

In terms of influence, the pattern is thus:

Core > Cohorts > Civilians

As for numbers, the pattern is reversed.

‘The Event’ leads to all three of these levels coalescing into a singular unit, thereby giving the Color Revolution the impression of being a unified grassroots initiative.

4. Training

Training enhances the capabilities of its counterparts:

Finance: Cohorts learn fundraising techniques

Social: Cohorts learn how to successfully conduct on-the-ground activities

Information: Cohorts learn how to create propaganda and social networks

Training can take place within the country or outside, and may be in-person or virtual.

5. Information

This deals with ideological dissemination, and it is extremely important in assisting with recruitment (Cohorts and Civilians). It has two primary elements:

- Social Media
- Propaganda Materials

Social Media is exploited to spread the Ideology and create a Social Network, which in turn recruits Cohorts and Civilian sympathizers. Civilians use Social Media to receive pro-Movement developments, thereby creating an unofficial information medium. Propaganda Materials make the Movement appear larger than it is. Graffiti, leaflets strewn about and posted on buildings, and catchy slogans, logos, and colors can spread the Movement throughout the public psyche on a non-stop basis and make non-sympathetic Civilians believe that its success is inevitable. Propaganda simplifies the Movement's message and creates easy-to-digest images for foreign and domestic audiences.

Information Infrastructure is also responsible for the following:

- Creating software/strategies to map/plan upcoming protests
- Connecting the Institution/Organization with other likeminded ones within the country or abroad
- Choosing the most symbolic national symbols/songs/monuments/squares/parks to associate with the Movement

6. Media

The Media can either be New (blogs, alternative news sites) or Traditional (TV, newspapers). Both media types serve to recruit more Civilians, but bloggers and 'new journalists' are typically at the forefront of the New Media, and their reporting is instrumental in expanding the influence of pro-Movement New Media. They will be able to capitalize off of any official pro-government statements or actions in order to build the narrative that the establishment is 'suppressing' the political opposition, thereby ushering in a flood of anti-government criticism from the West.

III Explanation of m Factor Interactions

Tier 1

Ideology → Finance: justification for the Revolution

Ideology → Social: motivation for individuals to join the Movement

Tier 2

Finance → Social: provides funding for more institutions/organizations

Social → Finance: more Cohorts become fundraisers

Finance → Training: pays for more training

Social → Training: more individuals to be trained, makes training a regular occurrence

Tier 3

Training → Finance: teaches Cohorts fundraising

Training → Social: improves personnel quality and outreach activities

Tier 4

Finance → Information: pays for better information resources

Social → Information: provides more Cohorts for information campaigns

Training → Information: improves the efficiency of information campaigns

Information → Social: aids recruitment

Tier 5

Finance → Media: pays for media coverage

Social → Media: institutions/organizations/Core/Cohorts/Civilians are subjects of reporting

Information → Media: media outlets use the institutions'/organizations' materials

IV ‘The Event’

A Color Revolution is initiated only after a controversial (or framed to be so) ‘Event’. It is the ‘coming out’ moment for the Movement, and Events are selectively exploited or manufactured/provoked. It all depends on the situation and the decision of the Movement and its sponsors.

Examples of Events are the following:

- A rigged election
- The jailing of an opposition leader
- The signing of (or failure to sign) a controversial piece of legislation
- A government crackdown against the opposition or the imposition of martial law
- Declaring or being involved in an unpopular war

The above are but a few examples. What is pivotal is how they are perceived, framed, and narrated to the public, and allegations, not proof, are most important.

The briefing note is prepared by Andrew Korybko (USA).