

ANTI-REVOLUTION STRATEGY AND METHODS OF THE POST-SOVIET REGIMES

By
Mikheil Kechaqmadze

Submitted to
Central European University
Department of Political Science

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Political Science

Supervisor: Anton Pelinka

Budapest, Hungary

2007

ABSTRACT

In this thesis I explore how the post-Soviet regimes have responded to the new type of challenge to their authority - electoral revolution. The point of departure is my argument that electoral revolutions acted as “wake-up call” for the post-Soviet regimes prompting them to design and implement specific anti-revolutionary strategy and measures. I analyze anti-revolutionary strategy and methods designed and implemented by the regimes of five post-Soviet countries- Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Uzbekistan in the time framework of 2003-2006. The nature, forms and characteristics of ‘Soft’ and ‘hard’ power anti-revolutionary tools are explored and categorized. Their use during the elections in Azerbaijan and Belarus are examined. The conclusion is adopted that anti-revolutionary measures played a significant part in preventing electoral revolutions in the post-Soviet region for the last years- 2005-2007. These measures will be used in the future as well. The main message conveyed is- the democracy promotion forces should become aware of the existence of these measures, if they want to see the expansion of democratic values further into the post-Soviet region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis would have been impossible without the support of several people. First, I want to thank my family for standing by me and offering their support and encouragement. I would like to thank my supervisor for thoughtfully guiding me throughout the challenging process of writing the thesis. I also owe much gratitude to Vitali Silitski, Lincoln Mitchell and Thomas Rooney for their valuable comments and advice.

I also extend my gratitude to my friends and colleagues at CEU for giving me support and sharing their time, turning the process of writing the thesis into a memorable and enjoyable experience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
 CHAPTER 1	 6
1. 1. Types of Political Regimes	6
1.2. The Typology of the Regimes in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia	15
 CHAPTER 2	 20
2.1. Electoral Revolution	20
2.2. Causes of Electoral Revolution	25
2.3. Mechanisms of Electoral Revolution	31
 CHAPTER 3	 38
3. 1. Post-Soviet Regimes' Response to Electoral Revolutions- Anti-Revolutionary Measures	38
3.2. Uzbekistan.....	45
3.3. Kazakhstan.....	46
3.4. Russia.....	49
3.5. Azerbaijan 2005	52
3.5.1. <i>Political Opposition</i>	54
3.5.2. <i>Youth Organizations</i>	56
3.5.3. <i>Independent Election Monitoring Organizations</i>	59
3.5.4. <i>The Post-Election Developments</i>	60
3.6. Belarus Elections 2006	61
3.6.1. <i>The Political Opposition</i>	63
3.6.2. <i>Civil Society</i>	65
3.6.3. <i>The Post-Election Developments</i>	69
 CONCLUSION.....	 71
 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	 75

INTRODUCTION

Though it post-Soviet authoritarians time to recognize the threat posed by electoral revolutions, they finally have and are fully prepared to pre-empt the next one
(Vitali Silitski)¹

Growing number of scholars ² observe that the post-Soviet regimes are in the process of forming a specific strategy and implementing measures directed against a new political phenomenon- electoral revolution. Such measures have been referred as ” preemptive authoritarianism” ³ and “ authoritarian learning“ ⁴ and represent a combination of “ hard” and “soft” power tools ⁵ with a sharp focus on preventing an occurrence of electoral revolution. Existence of anti-revolutionary measures has been observed in most of the post-Soviet countries- among them Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan representing the leaders in terms of developing and implementing innovative and diverse anti-revolutionary measures. ⁶

Emergence of the regimes’ anti-revolutionary strategy can conceived as a protective response of the post-Soviet regimes to the sweeping wave of electoral revolutions which in less than five

¹ Vitali Silitski, “Is the Age of Post-Soviet Electoral Revolutions Over?,” *Democracy at Large* 1 (2005), 8–10.

² Thomas Carothers, “The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 2 (2006): 55–68; Vitali Silitski, “Preempting Democracy: The Case of Belarus,” *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 4 (2005): 83–97; Michael Allen and Carl Gershman, “The Assault on Democracy Assistance,” *Journal of Democracy* 17, no. 2 (2006): 36–50; Ivan Krastev, “Democracy’s “Doubles,” *Journal of Democracy* 17, No. 2 (2006): 36–50; Andrew Wilson, “After the Orange Revolution: The Nature of Post-Soviet Democracy in Ukraine and Russia,” 5th Annual Stasiuk Lecture in Contemporary Ukrainian Studies University of Cambridge, UK, (23 February 2007), <http://ukraineanalysis.wordpress.com/2007/03/09/after-the-orange-revolution-an-article-by-andrew-wilson/> ; Yuri Chavusaw, “Revolution and anti-revolution in the post-Soviet space,” *Eurozine* (2006), <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2005-11-25-chavusaw-en.html>.

³ Silitski, “Is the Age of Post-Soviet Electoral Revolutions Over?,”; Vitali Silitski, “Contagion Deterred: Preemptive Authoritarianism in the Former Soviet Union (the Case of Belarus),” CDDRL Working Papers (2006), http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/21152/Silitski_No_66.pdf.

⁴ Larry Diamond, “Authoritarian learning: lessons From the Colored Revolutions,” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 12, no.1 (2005).

⁵ Andrew Wilson, *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World* (Yale University Press, 2005).

⁶ Silitski, “Preempting Democracy: The Case of Belarus,”; Silitski, “Is the Age of Post-Soviet Electoral Revolutions Over?,”; Chavusaw, “Revolution and anti-revolution in the post-Soviet space,”; Wilson, *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World*.

years brought down a number of the post-Communist leaders- Milosevic, Shevardnadze, Kuchma, Akaev- and has been referred as “the fourth wave of democratization”⁷

The regimes perceived electoral revolutions as a mortal threat to their authority, the most ferocious enemy, which should be combated and defeated at any means. In 2004-2006, with upcoming elections in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Belarus, a probability of next ‘color revolution’ looked realistic. There seemed to be all preconditions for this: enthusiastic and determined opposition, groups of population discontented with the regimes’ performance and international backing for change. Sergei Markov, a leading Russian political analyst, even calculated which post-Soviet country had a higher chance of ‘hosting’ electoral revolution,” I think the ‘Orange Revolution’ in Moldova is about 80 percent ready; in Kyrgyzstan it is 40 percent ready, and in Kazakhstan it is 30 percent ready”.⁸

Even immunity of the most powerful post-Soviet country- Russia- against “orange virus”⁹ seemed absent which provoked the Member of Russia’s Parliament Mikhail Delyagin (Motherland Party) to state that “there are many signs suggesting that revolution in Russia is inevitable, and nearly everyone already understands that”.¹⁰ Yet, despite all these calculations and expectations, in the period of three years since the last post-Soviet electoral revolution- (Kyrgyzstan March 2005) - no electoral revolution has taken place. With this regard, the most evident question, which can be posed, is “why not?”

⁷ Michael McFaul, “The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship- Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World,” *World Politics* 54, no. 2 (2002): 212–244.

⁸ Sergei Markov quoted in Charu Singh, “A Quiet Cold War,” *Frontline* 22, no. 03 (2005).

⁹ Andrei Vladimirov, “Revoliutsiia na eksport (Revolution for Export)” *Itogi*, December 7, 2004, quoted in Graeme Herd, “Colorful Revolutions and the CIS: ‘Manufactured’ Versus ‘Managed’ Democracy?,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 52, no. 2 (2005): 3-18.

¹⁰ RFE/RL Newline, “Party’s Chief Ideology Warns of “Inevitable” Russian Revolution,” June 14, 2005, <http://www.rferl.org>.

My research is an attempt to answer this question by analyzing the post-Soviet regimes' response to emerging political phenomenon- electoral revolution. I develop an argument that *electoral revolutions acted as 'wake-up call' for the post-Soviet regimes, prompting them to design a specific strategy and implement anti-revolutionary measures*. I maintain that the leaders of post-Soviet regimes studied, and analyzed the experience of their 'unfortunate' Serbian, Georgian, Ukrainian and Kyrgyz colleagues. They employed the 'brightest minds' they had at their disposal, used the resources of think tanks and the intelligence services to study the causes and mechanisms of electoral revolutions and finally came up with the product of their labor- anti-revolutionary 'antidote'- a combination of 'soft' and 'hard' power mechanisms. The use of these methods can be observed during the presidential elections in Belarus 2006 and parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan 2005. In these countries these measures proved effective in sealing the regimes' electoral 'victory' and suppressing the opposition's attempts of protesting against the fraudulent elections. Anti-revolutionary measures are actively being used for "tightening screws" for upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in Russia 2007-2008 in which the Russian regime hopes to insure smooth transition of power to the 'hand-picked' successor.

In this research in order to prove my argument I answer three major questions- *what are the anti-revolutionary measures of the post-Soviet regimes? What are their nature and forms? How and when they have been used?* I consider that answering these questions thoroughly provides essential proof on the correctness of my hypothesis regarding the existence of anti-revolutionary measures of the post-Soviet regimes.

I use the empirical data from five post-Soviet countries- Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Uzbekistan- of the period of 2003-2006. I specifically focus on the parliamentary elections in

Azerbaijan 2005 and presidential elections in Belarus in 2006 as these elections clearly portray the fact of existence of the anti-revolutionary measures.

I delimit the research with elaborating on five post-Soviet countries-Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Uzbekistan- for three reasons: 1) Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan held in the period of 2003-2006 elections in which the anti-revolutionary measures were actively used; 2) the Russia's regime is gearing up for the crucial parliamentary and presidential elections in 2007-2006 and actively resorts to anti-revolutionary measures; 3) Uzbekistan is a typical Central Asian authoritarian regime and its anti-revolutionary strategy provides a good picture of the anti-revolutionary measures of the region's countries.

In this descriptive/explanatory type of research I resort to qualitative research methods. For gathering information and data I mainly use the secondary sources- legislative acts, academic literature and official documentation. The main source of data and information is Internet. This is mostly because of the fact of recentness of the processes that I am covering in the thesis and lack of published works on the topic.

The research is divided into introduction, three chapters and conclusion. Introduction sets main argument and research questions. Chapter one elaborates on the typology of political regimes in the post- Soviet region under study and views them either as 'competitive authoritarian' or 'closed authoritarian' political systems. Chapter two defines the causes of electoral revolution. It also studies the mechanisms and methods used by revolutionary forces during electoral revolutions in Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2003, and Kyrgyzstan 2005. It distinguishes between the causes and mechanisms of electoral revolution which though sometimes used interchangeably are different phenomena. Chapter three elaborates on the post-Soviet regimes' response to the post-Soviet electoral revolutions. It analyzes the anti-revolutionary measures of Uzbekistan,

Kazakhstan and Russia. It conducts thorough analyses on the use of anti-revolutionary measures during the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan in 2005 and the presidential elections in Belarus in 2006. Conclusion elaborates on the research findings.

In this research I strive to fill the considerable gap on academic knowledge which currently exists on anti-revolutionary strategy and measures in the post-Soviet region. I consider that study of these measures is the demand of a day as they already have had a considerable impact on the political process unfolding in the region and will be an important factor shaping the developments in post-Soviet region in the future.

CHAPTER 1

Every piece of rational instruction upon any matter ought to begin with a definition, so that everyone understands what the subject of discussion is (Cicero)¹¹

1. 1. Types of Political Regimes

In this chapter I review the definition of political regimes used in academic literature and describe the characteristics of democratic and authoritarian regimes. I elaborate on the hybrid regimes and offer the typology of the regimes of those post-Soviet countries which I discuss in the thesis- Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Russia.

Already for a decade a number of political scientists have been laboring on the formidable task- elaborating an exact definition of post-Soviet regimes.¹² The major problem that scholars faced has been an inability to determine exactly whether these regimes should be located in the category of democratic regimes or they should be considered as authoritarian regimes. Observations showed that the post-Soviet regimes combine elements of both authoritarian and democratic regimes. This fact has led scholars to develop diverse, sometimes vague definitions - “the gray zone”¹³ ; “disguised dictatorship”¹⁴ ; “electoral authoritarianism”¹⁵ ; “virtual democracy”¹⁶ ; “competitive authoritarianism”¹⁷ ; “semi-authoritarianism”¹⁸ ; “delegative

¹¹ Cicero, *On Duties* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 4.

¹² Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy. Toward Consolidation*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999); Larry Diamond, “Elections Without Democracy: Thinking about Hybrid Regimes,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002):21-35; Andreas Schedler, “Elections Without Democracy: The Menu of Manipulation,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 36-50; Olle Törnquist, *Repoliticisation of Democracy in Developing Countries: Reflections on an Emerging Trend*, in *Supporting Political Party Systems – Experiences and Challenges* (Stockholm: SIDA, Division for Democratic Governance, 2005); David Collier and Steven Levitsky, “Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research”, *World Politics* 49, no.3 (1997): 430-451; Michael, McFaul “The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship- Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World”; Michael McFaul, “Transitions from Postcommunism,” *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (2005):5–19; Lucan A. Way, “Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave: The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine”, *World Politics* 57, no.2(2005):231–261.

¹³ Thomas Carothers, “The End of Transition Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5-21.

¹⁴ Paul Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government, and Politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2002).

¹⁵ Andreas Schedler, “The Nested Game of Democratization by Elections,” *International Political Science Review*, no. 23 (2000):103-122.

¹⁶ Wilson, *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World*.

democracy”¹⁹ ; “semi-democracy”²⁰; “illiberal democracy”²¹ ; “authoritarian democracy”²²; “electocratic rule”²³ ; “hybrid regimes”²⁴ - which attempt to merge the characteristics of both democratic and authoritarian types of regimes.

The most optimal way to define the post-Soviet regimes can be viewing them as a political system, in which political actors, not institutions, represent the major decision making and implementing bodies. In such systems, which are characteristic for the semi-authoritarian and authoritarian regimes, strategies, decisions and measures are developed and implemented by actors. Unlike democratic regimes, institutions are not the fundamental decision-making/performing mechanisms of a state and are subjugated to the actors’ interests and decisions. Decision making process takes place in non-transparent, ‘behind-the-stage’ environment. Actors set the rules of the game and the political processes function within the limits set by these rules.

By following actor oriented definition of political regimes, it is possible to avoid danger of falling into the pitfall of ‘masking’ the true nature of the regime by wrongly providing a façade of democracy. It is the established truth that mere existence of a parliament, regular elections and media cannot be considered as proof of democracy. Such an approach will be naïve recognition of an existence of democracy in such countries where they do not exist. An actor-based definition of post-Soviet political regimes enables to avoid the above-mentioned trap and cast an insightful

¹⁷ Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 51-65.

¹⁸ Marina Ottaway, *Democracy Challenged. The Rise of Semi- Authoritarianism* (Washington D.C Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003).

¹⁹ Guillermo O'Donnell, “Delegative Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy* 5, no.1 (1994): 55-69.

²⁰ William Case, “Semi-Democracy in Malaysia: Withstanding the Pressures for Regime Change,” *Pacific Affairs* 66, no. 2 (1999): 183–205.

²¹ Fareed Zakaria, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no 6 (1997): 22-43.

²² Richard Sakwa, *Russian Political Evolution: a Structural Approach*, in M. Cox (Ed.) *Rethinking the Soviet Collapse. Sovietology, the Death of Communism and the New Russia* (London, New York: Pinter, 1998), 181-201.

view into the real state of affairs. Hence, I refer to political regimes as “an alliance of dominant ideological, economic, and military power actors, coordinated by the rulers of the state”²⁵. Also the general pattern of uninterrupted sequence of transition of political power within the same power group in the post-Soviet region, that is achieved through the manipulated elections and ‘pick-up successor’ methods, makes me to incorporate into the definition of the post-Soviet regimes Calvert’s definition of a regime “the name usually given to a government or sequence of governments in which power remains essentially in the hands of the same social group.”²⁶

Calvert’s definition underlines significance of viewing the regimes as possessors of specific characteristics, which stay resilient over time and in format. In this regard, O’ Donnell’s and Schmitter’s statement that “regime is characterized by the well-defined rules of the political game”²⁷ allows to consider the regimes as systems of autonomous institutional arrangements. An additional important aspect of the political regime deals with the crucial role of elections in forming the nature of the regimes and shaping the political processes unfolding within the regimes. This fact links the characteristics of political regime to the election system and electoral procedure. In this regard, Dahl states that” political regimes are the rules and procedures that determine how national, executive leaders are chosen. Thus, the concept of political regimes is an umbrella term that includes both democratic and authoritarian systems, in which the two types differ crucially on the degree to which the rules allow for contestation and participation in

²³ Terry Lynn Karl, *Electoralism: Why Elections Are Not Democracy*, In Richard Rose, ed., *The International Encyclopedia of Elections* (Congressional Quarterly Books, 2000).

²⁴ Diamond, *Developing Democracy. Toward Consolidation*

²⁵ Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. II, *The Rise of Classes and Nation States. 1760-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 18

²⁶ Peter, Calvert ed., *The Process of Political Succession* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 18.

²⁷ Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 4.

selection of a government”.²⁸ The history of elections held under the post-Soviet regimes, that continuously have fell short of the requirements for the competitive and fair elections, proves the validity of connecting the regime’s type with the pattern of elections’ organization.

However, by focusing on a single, though important, element of the political arrangements- elections- there is high risk of narrowing the space of observations and failing to notice some other important aspects of the political systems. In this regard, it is crucial to avoid falling into “fallacy of electoralism”²⁹ by “focusing on the significance of elections at the expense of other important attributes of democracy”.³⁰ Nevertheless, there is a need to keep a fine balance in avoiding overestimating or underestimating the factor of elections in evaluating a state of democracy. As Howard and Roessler argue “at the same time, democracy cannot be less than free and fair elections. Until a country’s selection of national leaders occurs consistently through a public, competitive, and free and fair process, the deepening of democracy will remain elusive”.³¹

Existing nature of post-Soviet regimes calls for avoiding considering the post-Soviet region as politically homogenous entity. The post- Soviet region comprises several types of regimes- authoritarian, semi-authoritarian, democratic which makes it necessary to draw a distinct line between them. The existing literature offers a clear definition of each type of political regimes.

Linz defines authoritarian regimes as

political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones.³²

²⁸ Robert Dahl, *Poliarchy. Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), in Marc Morje’ Howard and Philip G. Roessler, “Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes”, *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 2 (2006).

²⁹ Karl, *Electoralism: Why Elections Are Not Democracy*.

³⁰ Howard and Roessler, “Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes”, 2-3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

³² Juan J. Linz, *An Authoritarian Regime: The Case of Spain*, in Erik Allard and Yrjo Littunen, ed., *Cleavages, Ideologies and Party Systems* (Helsinki: Westermarck Society, 1964), 255.

It is noteworthy that according to this definition none of the post-Soviet regimes could be considered as totalitarian- mostly because of a lack of dominant ideology and non-existent extensive/intensive political mobilization. However, the concerns can be raised whether which post-Soviet regimes could be considered democratic, as they do not meet the requirements for a democracy state. According to Schmitter and Karl democratic regimes can be referred

as a modern political democracy.. a system of governance in which rules are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives .³³

Schumpeter adds a new requirement when he considers democracy to be “an instrument used for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote”.³⁴ These two definitions of democracy, plus the formulation of democracy viewed in the works of Przeworski³⁵ , Huntington³⁶, and Dahl³⁷, in which democracy is referred to as electoral system, “democracy is a system in which parties lose elections”³⁸ are among the principal definitions of democracy used in the literature.

As it has already been noted, most post-Soviet regimes fall within the category of hybrid regimes, in which the elements of democratic and authoritarian regimes are represented (degrees of representation differ in each country). The task of exactly defining a type of political regime existing in a country under study calls for viewing it based on the above-mentioned ambiguous nature of such regimes. Hybrid regimes can be represented as political systems which merge the elements of electoral democratic and liberal democratic regimes with different aspects of

³³ Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry L. Karl, “What Democracy is ... and is not,” *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 3 (1991), 76.

³⁴ Joseph, Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism und Democracy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), 269.

³⁵ Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

³⁶ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late 20th Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

³⁷ Dahl, *Poliarchy. Participation and Opposition*.

³⁸ Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, 10.

authoritarianism- limited chances for the electoral victory of the opposition candidates, restricted opportunities for exercising the right for free expression and opposition to the government's views, fraudulent and manipulated electoral processes, and weak democratic institutions.³⁹

Though both electoral and liberal democracy fall into the category of democratic regimes, still there is an important distinction between them. Electoral democracy represents 'abridged' version of democracy, in which the elections represent the major democratic factor. Diamond refers to electoral democracy as "...a civilian, constitutional system in which the legislative and chief executive offices are filled through regular, competitive, multiparty elections with universal suffrage"⁴⁰

On the other hand, liberal democracy is characterized with a full set of institutional arrangements and values/beliefs, which usually marks a full democracy. It is characterized as

extensive provisions for political and civic pluralism as well as for individual and group freedoms, so that contending interests and values may be expressed and compete through ongoing processes of articulation and representation, beyond periodic elections. Freedom and pluralism, in turn, can be secured only through a "rule of law" in which legal rules are applied fairly, consistently, and predictably across equivalent cases, irrespective of the class, status, or power of those subject to the rules.⁴¹

The term hybrid regime itself is broad and ambiguous and fails to depict a true nature of the post-Soviet regimes. Scholars usually offer a more focused specific definition, which takes into account the particular systemic arrangements of existing political regimes. The post-Soviet regimes under study possess such characteristics of democratic regimes as regularly held elections, but which fall short of democratic standards, as the government party and leaders use coercive and unfair means to secure their electoral victory and deprive the opposition a chance to

³⁹ Diamond, "Elections Without Democracy: Thinking about Hybrid Regime," 25.

⁴⁰ Diamond. *Developing Democracy. Toward Consolidation*, 8.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 10-11.

succeed. Such political regimes are referred to as competitive authoritarian- the term coined because of its particularity- as they unlike the entirely authoritarian regimes

generally allow for a minimal level of genuine competition, meaning that, although the odds are long, the opposition does have a chance at an electoral upset that could result in the defeat of those in power. In other words, while certainly not “free and fair,” the electoral process is not completely rigged and fraudulent either.⁴²

An important dimension which characterizes competitive authoritarianism is the unprivileged position of the opposition in political competition. Their access to media is regularly hindered, supporters get harassed and votes are stolen. In some cases, opposition parties are banned and leaders arrested. Though in the competitive authoritarian countries the institutions which usually are characterized for democratic countries are present, they are nothing more than tools that the authorities use for promoting their political interests. As Levitski and Way argue,

competitive authoritarian regimes are civilian regimes in which formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which fraud, civil liberties violations, and abuse of state and media resources so skew the playing field that the regime cannot be labeled democratic. Such regimes are competitive, in that democratic institutions are not merely a façade: opposition parties use them to seriously contest for power; but they are authoritarian in that opposition forces are handicapped by a highly uneven-and sometimes dangerous-playing field. Competition is thus real but unfair.⁴³

However, even the semi-authoritarian nature of the post-Soviet regimes does not prove to be a fixed solution to the major problem of the leaders- which is to secure their grasp on the power. Such regimes tend to be vulnerable to the domestic tensions, which builds over time and culminates in the overthrow of the regime. Even functioning within the limited opportunities for political competition, opposition succeeds in capitalizing on the population’s dissatisfaction with the regime’s performance and through the supporters’ mobilization manages to pose a serious challenge to the authorities. The response of the authorities to the challenge has been a rapid

⁴² Howard and Roessler, “Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes,” 3.

⁴³ Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way. (2002) *Competitive Authoritarianism: The Emergence and Dynamics of Hybrid Regimes in the PostCold War Era*. Unpublished book manuscript, 5.

‘authoritarization’ of the post-Soviet region; several regimes either are closed authoritarian or are steadily moving down the path of becoming closed authoritarian, and portray an” existence of dominant state and government, which is not accountable through elections to citizens, lack of competitive elections, severe restrictions on individual civil and political rights, and absence of autonomous associations and organizations critical to the state”.⁴⁴

Though competitive authoritarian and closed authoritarian regimes share some similar characteristics, they are regimes of different political nature with distinct political processes and developments. In closed authoritarian regimes the opposition is either in exile or underground, the elections serve as stamping tools expending a life-span of the government, free media does not exist and any criticism towards the regime gets a harsh response. Closed authoritarian regimes are more capable and inclined to suppress the populations’ discontent and eradicating their opponents. If such regimes collapse, this is mostly resulted by a bloody uprising, coup or external interventions.

The nature of the post-Soviet semi-authoritarian and authoritarian regimes display another particular characteristic: their resistance against democratization. Fifteen years after the collapse of the Soviet Union these regimes do not show signs that they have moved or are moving towards democracy. This is why some scholars argue against considering the post-Soviet regimes as transitional regimes and call for regarding them as independent, autonomous regimes. Carothers states that “many countries that policy makers and aid practitioners persist in calling ‘transitional’ are not in transition to democracy”.⁴⁵ But the facts and the dynamics of political developments show that these countries "are neither dictatorial nor clearly headed toward democracy. They

⁴⁴ Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 22.

⁴⁵ Thomas Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002) 9.

have entered a political gray zone".⁴⁶ Ottaway also support this position and argues that "they are carefully constructed and maintained alternative systems... determined to maintain the appearance of democracy without exposing themselves to the political risks that free competition entails".⁴⁷

The above-mentioned complexity shows that studies on the nature of post- Soviet regimes have to be conducted with the use of an approach which succeeds in penetrating into an entangled web of complex systems and events typical for the region. In terms of evaluating a typology of the political regime a graded approach can be considered the most optimal one. It provides an insightful understanding into a state of democracy and autocracy in the post-Soviet realm; leading scholars like Bollen and Jackman, Dahl, Coppedge and Reinicke⁴⁸ have claimed that "democracy is always a matter of degree"⁴⁹ and it is not a issue of which can be conveniently approached with rounded, ready-made numbers. Consequently, a dichotomous approach to understanding democracy and autocracy- supported by Sartori, Linz, Huntington, Geddes⁵⁰, cannot be considered the most optimal tool for working with the post-Soviet regimes- the region is too complex for this- and this fact remains evident despite the fact that proponents of a dichotomous approach argue that, "what is completely missed by this degreeism, or continuism, is that political systems are systems, that is, bounded wholes characterized by constitutive mechanisms and principles that are either present (albeit imperfectly) or absent (albeit

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁷ Ottaway. *Democracy Challenged. The Rise of Semi- Authoritarianism*, 7.

⁴⁸ Kenneth Bollen and Robert Jackman, "Democracy, Stability, and Dichotomies," *American Sociological Review* 54 (1989) 612-621; Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*; Michael Coppedge and Wolfgang Reinicke, "A Scale of Polyarchy", *Studies in Comparative and International Development* 25, no.1 (1990):51-72.

⁴⁹ Bollen and Jackman, "Democracy, Stability, and Dichotomies", 618.

⁵⁰ Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House. 1987); Juan J. Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.2000); Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late 20th Century*. Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999):115-44.

imperfectly).⁵¹ A graded approach grasps a true complexity of nature of post-Soviet regimes, when on the other hand, a dichotomous approach does not allow for differentiating post-Soviet hybrid regimes and studying them using dichotomous approach can be a “flawed” practice.⁵²

Based on the above-mentioned definition of political regimes in the next sub-chapter I provide the typology of those post-Soviet political regimes I cover in the thesis- Azerbaijan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Russia. Also considering the actor-based definition of political regimes which associates political regimes with the major political actors I also give the list of the presidents of these countries.

1.2. The Typology of the Regimes in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia

Freedom House data on the post-Soviet countries can be an effective tool to identify the type of political regimes in the region. The Freedom House analyzes of the level of democracy in the countries by evaluating the progress of democratic change in seven categories: electoral process; civil society; independent media; national democratic governance; local democratic governance; judicial framework and independence; and corruption, the table provides a linking between democracy scores and regime types- hybrid regimes fall within 4 and 5 on a typical seven-point Freedom House scale, where 1 represents most and 7 least democratic regimes. Democratic regimes are clustered between 1 and 4. The regimes located between 3 and 4 generally represent electoral democracies. Autocratic regimes are located above 5 points. From 5 to 6 points regimes fall into the category of semi-consolidated authoritarian regimes. From 6 to 7 points regimes are identified as consolidated authoritarian regimes.

⁵¹ Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*, 184.

According to the above-mentioned typology of the regimes Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia fall into the category of authoritarian regimes. The Freedom House evaluates that Azerbaijan and Russia belong to the group of semi-consolidated authoritarian regimes; Belarus, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to the category of consolidated authoritarian regimes.⁵³

Table A: Democracy Score Index of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia

Country	Democracy Score Rankings 2004	Democracy Score Rankings 2005	Democracy Score Rankings 2006	“Authoritarization” Trend
Azerbaijan	5,63	5,86	5,93	Present
Belarus	6,54	6,64	6,71	Present
Kazakhstan	6,25	6,29	6,39	Present
Uzbekistan	N/A	6.43	6.82	Present
Russia	5,25	5,61	5,75	Present

Source: Data compiled from Freedom House publication- *Nations in Transit 2003-2006*. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/>

What can be inferred from the Table A is that these countries share the typical characteristics for authoritarian regimes: manipulated elections, which merely serve to expand a life-span of the ruling regime; weak or non-existent civil society; suppressed and controlled media; omnipotent executive government and its leader; weak and controlled legislature and judiciary. The Table A also shows that all of these countries have been undergoing trend of ‘authoritarization’ in 2004-

⁵² Bollen and Jackman, “Democracy, Stability, and Dichotomies”, 612.

⁵³ Freedom House. *Nations in Transit 2006 Methodology*.

<http://www.freedomhouse.hu/nitransit/2006/methodology.pdf>; Katya Kalandadze and Mitchell A. Orenstein, Electoral Protests and Democratization: Beyond the Color Revolutions, “research workshop paper, Sawyer law and Politics Program, Campbell Public Affairs Institute, Maxwell School of Syracuse University,

2006. While as an explanation of a this factor a general tendency of ‘authoritarization’ of the post-Soviet region can be noted, I maintain that there is a connection between anti-revolutionary measures the regimes of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia implemented during the crucial elections which took place (or will take) in these countries in this period – presidential elections in Kazakhstan 2005, parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan 2005, parliamentary elections in Belarus 2006 and in case of Russia the upcoming parliamentary elections 2007 and presidential elections 2008. These countries have had (or in case of Russia have) to undertake authoritarian measures to ensure the authorities’ victory at the crucial elections and suppress attempts of protesting against the fraudulent elections. While In my study I do not seek to identify the direct connection between the anti-revolutionary measures and deterioration of the state of democracy, I contend that the nature of these measures- harassing the opposition, suppressing the media, controlling NGOs- directly affects the situation with democracy and strengthens the authoritarian nature of the regime. I argue that these measures have contributed to authoritarization of the regimes, however to what degree, still has to be identified.

These countries belong to the category of “super-presidential” countries, in which the leaders possess the enormous power and stay in their office for a long period of time. The presidents represent the principal actors who define the decision making process and the path of political processes. The Table B lists the presidents of those post-Soviet countries that I elaborate on in the thesis.

Table 2: Presidents of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia

Country	President	Political Party	Time in Office (since)
Azerbaijan	Ilham Aliyev	New Azerbaijan Party	October 2003
Belarus	Alexander Lukashenko	No formal party affiliation	July 1994
Kazakhstan	Nursultan Nazarbayev	Nur-Otan	December 1991
Uzbekistan	Islom Karimov	No formal party affiliation	December 1991
Russia	Vladimir Putin	No formal party affiliation	December 1999

Source: Data compiled from the Central Intelligence Agency *World Fact Book*. www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/

The Table 2 shows that only two Presidents- Aliyev and Nazarbayev- are officially affiliated with the political parties. However, in reality, all of these Presidents run and control the pro-governmental parties and groups- in case of Karimov these parties are Uzbekistan Liberal Democratic Party; Uzbekistan People's Democratic Party; Self-Sacrifice National Democratic Party; Uzbekistan National Revival Democratic Party; Justice Social Democratic Party and in case of Putin there parties are United Russia and Fair Russia. Lukashenko actively resorts to human resource of the trade unions.

The Table 2 also gives a clear picture on longevity of these presidents' rule. Three of them- Lukashenko, Nazarbaev and Karimov- have been in the office for 13-16-16 years respectively. This has been achieved by suppressing the political opposition and conducting the election fraud. Putin and Aliyev have been in the office for 8-4 years respectively (not necessarily a long period for the post-Soviet region's standards), however they both came to power as the 'hand-picked' successors of the previous presidents. With regard to Putin it can also be noted that currently he himself is focusing on insuring a smooth transition of power to his 'hand-picked' successor'.

The above-mentioned longevity of the post-Soviet regimes in the last years has come under an increasing attack from the revolutionary forces which use the techniques and measures of the new political phenomenon- electoral revolution- to topple the regimes. In case of Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005 the revolutionary forces succeeded in reaching the victory. In the next chapter I elaborate on electoral revolutions and revolutionary mechanisms used during the post-Soviet electoral revolutions.

CHAPTER 2

2.1. Electoral Revolution

In this chapter I focus on two tasks- defining concept of electoral revolution and describing its causes. Also using the empirical data from the revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan I explain the revolutionary mechanisms which contributed to the success of the post-Soviet electoral revolutions.

For a long time, a conventional, well-established definition of revolution associated it with violence. Gurr states that” [revolution is] fundamental sociopolitical change accomplished through along with other manifestations of violence and such as resistance movements, seizures of power, uprising, and riots”.⁵⁴ The revolutions in France 1789, Russia 1917, China 1949, and Cuba 1959 were case-book examples of violent revolutions, in which numerous people perished. However, the last decades saw the emergence of new political phenomenon- peaceful revolutions. The major characteristic of these post-Communists peaceful revolutions has been the huge pressure exerted on the regimes by the revolutionary forces through a combination of peaceful mass-demonstrations and the round-table negotiations-(Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Germany 1989) which finally succeeded in bringing down these regimes. The significant factor has been the Soviet Union’s President Gorbachev’s refusal to follow ‘Brezhnev’s Doctrine’ and decision not to support the communists’ regimes to suppress the opposition movements. This decision deprived the communist regimes the crucial support they enjoyed from the Soviet Union for decades. These revolutions together with the collapse of Gorbachev’s attempts to reform the

⁵⁴ Tud Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1970), 4.

Soviet Union marked the final days of the communist regime which for decades dominated in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe.

The successful walk of peaceful revolutions continued in the 21st century as well, when as a result of massive protests organized by the opposition four post-communist leaders found themselves stripped of power- Milosevic (2000), Shevardnadze (2003), Kuchma/ Yanukovich (2004) and Akaev (2005). These revolutions are commonly referred to as electoral revolutions, the term marking their major characteristic- people's protests against fraudulent and manipulated elections.

However, despite the experience of four successful electoral revolutions, based on which a recently number of scholars have been working on developing its exact definition, the work is still far from being done and the concept of this new political phenomenon is still vague.⁵⁵ The major problem with developing an exact definition of electoral revolution is two-fold: a) identifying those factors and characteristics (besides the fraudulent elections) among these revolutions, which make this political phenomenon unique from others; and b) conceptualizing the definition of electoral revolution based on those factors and characteristics. This task has proved to be extremely difficult. Michael McFaul, a leading scholar on the post-Soviet region, admitted that "in seeking to learn lessons from these democratic breakthroughs, it is important to

⁵⁵ David Reichardt, "Democracy Promotion in Slovakia: An Import or an Export Business," *Perspectives: Central European Review of International Affairs* 18(2002): 5-20; Ognjen Pribicevic, "Serbia After Milosevic," *Southeast Europe and Black Sea Studies* 4, no. 1 (2004): 107-118; Bieber Florian, "The Serbian Opposition and Civil Society: Roots of the Delayed Transition in Serbia," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 17 (2003):73-90; Vitali Silitski, "Preempting Democracy: The Case of Belarus," *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 4 (2005); Silitskiy, "Is the Age of Post-Soviet Electoral Revolutions Over?"; Vitali Silitski, *The Long Road from Tyranny: Post-Communist Authoritarianism and Struggle for Democracy in Serbia and Belarus*. Unpublished book manuscript (2005); Wheatley Jonathan, *Georgia from national awakening to Rose Revolution; delayed transition in the former Soviet Union* (Ashgate Publishing Co, 2005).

realize that the list of necessary conditions is long”.⁵⁶ The same trend of developing a long list of the causes of electoral revolution is observed in the works of other scholars as well. For example, Valerie Bunce and Sharon Volchik list four characteristics and five tools of electoral revolutions.⁵⁷ Kuzio lists ten factors which resulted in revolutions in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine”.⁵⁸ However, there exists a danger of erroneously thinking that electoral revolutions are unique events (because of combination of so many factors explaining one political phenomenon) which take place only under extremely favorable conditions. The real situation is different and as the analyses of the electoral revolutions demonstrate electoral revolutions can take place in politically/economically/mentally very different countries in geographically different regions. The path of revolutionary developments of various electoral revolutions does not represent each others’ exact replicas and different factors have been more dominant in some revolutions than in others.

So what are electoral revolutions? By now, most scholars define them by an essentialist approach: identifying the core elements and characteristics which are unique to an electoral revolution and marking its different properties from other types of revolutions. Use of this approach enables scholars to distinguish electoral revolution as a ‘stand-by-itself’ political phenomenon and outline its exclusive distinctiveness. This approach also allows distinguishing the essential elements of electoral revolution (which marks its individuality) from ‘side’ factors, which vary from case to case, and represent ‘confounding factors’ adding complexity to the process of defining a concept of electoral revolution.

⁵⁶ McFaul, “Transitions from Postcommunism”, 17.

⁵⁷ Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik “Favorable Conditions and Electoral Revolutions”, *Journal of Democracy* 17, no.4 (2006).

⁵⁸ Taras Kuzio, “Democratic Breakthroughs and Revolutions in Five Post-Communist Countries: Comparative Perspectives on the Fourth Wave”, www.utoronto.ca/jacyk/Kuzio_ComparativeRevolutions.pdf.

For delimiting the scope of my research, when elaborating on the concept of electoral revolution I exclude the cases of electoral victory of the opposition over the government (parliamentary elections in Slovakia 1998 and Croatia, presidential election in Mexico 2000) which, because they share the elements of electoral revolution – organizing civic mobilization through conducting get-out-the-vote campaigns and process of unification of the political opposition – occasionally are considered as electoral revolutions.⁵⁹ However, they lack one major feature – use of mechanisms of mass protests after the elections. This has to be explained by the government’s acceptance of its defeat as a result of elections, which excludes the need to organize the post-election protests against the government. I particularly refrain from using the above-mentioned examples of electoral victory because of two reasons: a) the semi-authoritarian nature of the political regimes existing in the countries under study do not show a possibility of the opposition’s victory over the government via elections; b) the elections I cover in the thesis (parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan 2005 and presidential elections in Belarus 2006) were not conducted in a free and competitive manner which in fact excluded a possibility of the opposition to gain electoral victory. Overall, it can be stated with much certainty that the prospect of changing the government through fair, free and competitive elections in the most post-Soviet countries, in the foreseeable future is small, if not impossible.

Hence I define electoral revolutions using the examples of the presidential elections in Serbia 2000 and Ukraine 2004, as well as the parliamentary elections in Georgia 2003 and Kyrgyzstan 2005, which are characterized by two fundamental elements: fraudulent and manipulated elections and the people’s protest against the government organized by the opposition, followed by the government’s downfall. Fraudulent elections, in which the government through various

⁵⁹ Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon Wolchik “Bringing Down Dictators: American Democracy Promotion and Electoral Revolutions in Post-Communist Eurasia”,

manipulations (in most cases, vote rigging), steals the victory from the opposition or ‘reduces’ the number of votes received by the opposition, act as watersheds dividing the political processes into two phases: the pre-election and the post-election period. The process of social mobilization, which started and gradually accelerated before the elections, turns into powerful mechanisms of protests after the elections. In this regard, Thompson and Kuntz observe that “because they have an enormous potential for triggering mass protest, stolen elections are critical junctures for the government and the opposition alike: A social movement emerging in the wake of a stolen election may be powerful enough to enforce the outcome denied to the people through the ballot box”.⁶⁰

However, the level of electoral fraud and peoples’ protests vary from country to country; in some countries election fraud reaches an extensive scale and in some countries it is not that widespread. Though there is always considerable election fraud and feeling of ‘stolen elections’ among the opposition and population. Also, in some countries peoples’ protests against election fraud are widespread, bringing together hundreds of thousand of people, and in some countries, the protests are of smaller scale. The general tendency has been that the more populous the countries the more people participate in the opposition’s demonstrations. However, there has not been observed a relationship between the level of election fraud and the number of people participating in the protests. The high number of participants in the demonstrations can be explained by other factors: population’s dissatisfaction with the governments, opposition’s popularity, traditions of organizing mass-protests, and level of pre-election mobilization of the population by the opposition. Nevertheless of the nature of reasons which can explain the large number of the demonstrators, it is evident that the people are the engine, which starts the revolution and drives it

http://sitemaker.umich.edu/comparative.speaker.series/files/bunce_american_democracy_promotion.pdf.

⁶⁰ Mark Thompson and Philipp Kuntz, “Stolen Elections: The Case of the Serbian October,” *Journal of Democracy* 15, no.4 (2004), 16.

till the successful end. This is the reason I emphasize the peoples' role in the definition of electoral revolution.

The definition I am using in this research is based on these two elements: fraudulent elections and the peoples' protest against the government. The definition I offer is *fall of the government as a result of the peoples' non-violent protests organized by the opposition against fraudulent elections*. I deliberately do not expand the definition to cover the political developments after the fall of the government, as it is not the focus of my study. I delimit myself with the pre-election and post-election mobilization of the population, which eventually results in the change of the government. The major focus is also placed on the opposition, which is the channel through which the people's anger towards government for orchestrating the 'stolen elections' is directed. The opposition's definition is broad and represents a political party, group and individual which seek to change the existing regime. I delimit the definition of the opposition to those political groups which do not resort to using the physical violence in an effort to dismantle the regime, but uses peaceful methods to achieve its objective by using to its advantage the pre-revolutionary situation created by the various causes. In the next sub-chapter I elaborate on the causes of electoral revolution in the post-Soviet region.

2.2. Causes of Electoral Revolution

The general tendency among scholars working on identifying the causes of electoral revolutions in the post-Soviet region has been to focus more on defining specific causes which contributed to the success of electoral revolutions⁶¹, than to examine the causes of creating a revolutionary

⁶¹ Michael, McFaul, "The Second Wave of Democratic Breakthroughs in the Post-Communist World: Comparing Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005", Danyliw/Jacyk Working Papers, Center for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies. University of Toronto (2005): 3-4; Cory Welt, *Georgia: Causes of the*

situation within the context of existing social-economical environment in those countries.⁶² The tense social-economical factors have been considered to be an important cause for reducing the popularity of the government, but not the major reason for electoral revolutions.

Analyses of the post-Soviet electoral revolution show that there is not a single major cause of electoral revolution. It comprises several causes, each of which has been present in each case of electoral revolution; however, some of them have been more important contributors than others. It would be impossible to identify exactly the significance of a single cause or a role it played in making the revolution to happen. Nevertheless, it would also be an exaggeration to think that a combination of similar several causes of electoral revolutions are crucially important for an occurrence of a revolution. Each scholar studying electoral revolutions develops his list of the causes, which though are not diametrically different, still vary to some extent. McFaul defines several conditions, which are necessary parts of electoral revolutions: “(1) a semi-autocratic regime; (2) an unpopular incumbent; (3) a united and organized opposition; (4) an ability to create the perception quickly that the elections results were falsified, (5) enough independent media to inform citizens about the falsified vote, (6) apolitical opposition capable of mobilizing tens of thousands of demonstrators to protest electoral fraud, and (7) divisions among the intelligence forces, military, and police.”⁶³ Welt also defines several elements, which led to the Rose Revolutions (these factors can be generalized to other post-Soviet electoral revolutions): “a) the peculiar nature of the regime - unpopular with authoritarian leanings, but weak and tolerant of

Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance (Washington, DC. Management System International, 2005), 4.

⁶² There were few studies to link causes of color revolutions to economic reasons- i.e. *FBK Consulting* compiled a report “the Long Transition to the Market” which argues that “color revolutions on post-Soviet territory have objective social and economic grounds. The experts believe the protracted transition from the administrative and command economy to the market leads to heightened social tension with all the ensuing consequences”. <http://en.rian.ru/world/20050421/39717750.html>

⁶³ McFaul, “The Second Wave of Democratic Breakthroughs in the Post-Communist World: Comparing Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005”, 3-4

democratic procedure; b) the peculiar electoral scenario of democratic checks-and-balances matched by egregious examples of fraud; c) the opposition's ability to persuade followers that political change was possible; d) external democracy promotion efforts, particularly those of the United States via its assistance programs and diplomatic efforts, and other international pressures; and e) the passivity of the security forces. “⁶⁴

Elaboration of the above-mentioned assessments shows that they list several similar characteristics- semi-authoritarian nature of the regime; unpopular government; strong opposition. Among these three causes, semi-authoritarian nature of regime is the most unique feature of electoral revolutions. Every post-Soviet electoral revolution took place in the countries with semi-authoritarian regimes: Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Scholars maintain that it is not a mere coincidence and there is a firm link between the nature of political regimes and causes of electoral revolution. In this regard, Kalandadze and Orenstein explain that “electoral protests are more likely to succeed in hybrid than in more closed authoritarian regimes due to a favorable combination of factors in the former such as a better organized opposition, a more independent media, and the security forces reluctant to use violence against the demonstrators”.⁶⁵ Because of particularity of their political nature, hybrid regimes are compelled to create the façade of democracy and control the political processes through ‘soft power’ (occasionally ‘hard power’) tools. However, such regimes do not succeed in shutting down completely the operational space for opposition, which uses the limited opportunities it possesses to expand its support base and create favorable conditions for its success.

⁶⁴ Welt, *Georgia: Causes of the Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance*, 4

⁶⁵ Kalandadze and Orenstein, “Electoral Protests and Democratization: Beyond the Color Revolutions”, 8-9.

Hybrid regimes allow for an emerging civil society and media- which together with the opposition are three major contributing factors to a success of electoral revolution. After these major actors are formed and strengthened, the further developments take the similar trend: unlike closed authoritarian regimes, which depend on other mechanisms for having ‘legitimacy’, semi-authoritarian regimes need to hold elections on a regular basis for (re)-gaining legitimacy. But as they cannot hope to win fair and free elections conducted in a competitive manner (due to various reasons discussed below) they have to resort to orchestrating election fraud. The fraudulent elections get a sharp reaction from the opposition, which mobilizes the masses of people and through the use of various non-violent pressure mechanisms succeeds in the dismantling the regime. Such scenarios have unfolded in all post-Communist countries which have experienced electoral revolutions.

The causes of electoral revolution in structural terms are not very different from the causes of a revolution in general. In the case of electoral revolution there is also a need for existing of a critical mass of people unsatisfied with the governments’ performance. McFaul refers to it the factor of “an unpopular incumbent”.⁶⁶ He uses empirical data to prove his argument “In Serbia, polls put Milosevic’s popularity at less than 30 percent by the summer of 2000. In Georgia, 82 percent of respondents were saying as early as 2001 that the country was going in the wrong direction, up from 51 percent the year before. Kuchma’s approval ratings plummeted during his last year in office”.⁶⁷ Understanding that most people do not support the government gives the opposition an additional valuable tool to conduct the mobilization and unite the people around the cause of dismantling the regime. The high number of unsatisfied people with the government’s performance means that fewer votes go to the governmental parties at the elections, which

⁶⁶ McFaul, “Transitions from Postcommunism”, 8.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 8.

compels the government to resort to the wider election fraud. This acts as a catalyst raising the peoples' anger and bringing more people to the street demonstrations, giving the opposition the vital tool of 'people's power' to seek the regimes' demise.

High number of discontented citizens is the significant factor for the successful revolution, especially at its final stages, when the regimes faced with the widespread demonstrations and other mechanisms of civil disobedience starts fall apart. But it should be noted that mere existence of unsatisfied people is not prerequisite to the revolutions. Dissatisfaction should be transformed into the dynamic protest movement in which citizens become active agents of change. This is achieved through use of other factors. Welt combines the factor of unpopularity of the regime with "[its] unusual tolerance for the 'motions of democracy' and a visible lack of regime strength".⁶⁸ Indeed, if the regime's tolerance for 'motions of democracy' can be explained with its semi-authoritarian nature, 'visible lack of regime strength' can be conveniently explained with the division among the actors of power- McFaul refers to it as "splits among the guys with guns".⁶⁹

The experience of the post-Soviet electoral revolutions proves the significance of this factor. The rule of Shevardnadze, Kuchma and Akaev were vulnerable to defections and internal frictions, which were clearly seen at the final stages of revolutions- a typical situation for electoral revolutions. With the evident progress of revolutionary developments, more and more defectors' from the government sided with the opposition. The defection took on both individual and group level. The regimes leaders could rely on the law-enforcement bodies as their loyalty to them was doubtful or non-existent. Base of their political support gradually diminished until the

⁶⁸ Welt, *Georgia: Causes of the Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance*, 2.

⁶⁹ McFaul, "The Second Wave of Democratic Breakthroughs in the Post-Communist World: Comparing Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005", 16.

incumbents were left only with a small group of die-hard supporters, which could not effectively oppose the mass demonstrations. In this regard, according to McFaul, the crucial tool of exerting influence on the regime is the high number of demonstrators “the size of the crowds, not the goodwill of the guys with guns, was the key factor removing violent suppression as an option for the ancien regime. Smaller, less organized crowds would have tempted state officials to act more aggressively. A protest of ten thousand can be dispersed with tear gas and armored cars. A crowd of one million cannot”.⁷⁰ This assumption directly links the success of a revolution with the number of demonstrators and underlines the fact that the regimes’ were incapable to suppress such wide-ranging opposition movement. His assumption comes in contrast with the claim that “modern nonviolent revolutions took place not so much because the people adopted nonviolent methods, as because the ruling regimes showed restraint and did not use force to crush the people”.⁷¹ However, based on existing empirical data it can be stated that that the latter claim cannot be correct, as the semi-authoritarian regimes would not hesitate to resort to suppressing the opposition movement, if only they would possess means to do so.

The mobilization of a high number of demonstrators is possible only through the coordinated efforts of a united opposition. McFaul maintains that “a united opposition – or the perception of a united front – is a third factor that appears crucial for democratic breakthrough”.⁷² United opposition in case of the post-Soviet electoral revolutions was better positioned to conduct pre-election social mobilization, expose the election fraud, manage the demonstrations, and conduct negotiations with the government. People were more inclined to support the opposition when it acted in unison than when it was divided and fragmented. The lack of visible friction among the opposition leaders showed to the public that the leaders “could stand above narrow personal

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, 17-18.

⁷¹ Akbar Ganji, “The Struggle Against Sultanism”, *Journal of Democracy* 16, no.4 (2005), 48.

interests and unite around an election platform”.⁷² Existence of united opposition helped the international community to identify the major actors from the opposition they can communicate with. Nevertheless, the level of opposition’s unity varied from country to country- for example, it was high in Georgia and Ukraine and lower in Kyrgyzstan. But in every crucial moment the opposition leaders spoke in one voice.

The above mentioned causes have contributed to the success of electoral revolutions in the post-Soviet region. However, only the causes do not make revolutions. They built the foundation upon which the revolutionary situation develops. In the revolutionary process of the vital importance are mechanisms used by the revolutionary forces. The next sub-chapter elaborates on the revolutionary mechanisms, which have been used during electoral revolutions in the post-Soviet region.

2.3. Mechanisms of Electoral Revolution

The revolutionary mechanisms, which played an active role in bringing down the regimes during electoral revolutions in the post-Soviet region, can be conveniently divided into two categories- external and internal. However, the difficulty lies in defining the exact level and format of their contribution to the success of electoral revolution. The only thing that can be definitely stated is that it is this combination of external and internal factors which make electoral revolutions such a distinctive political phenomenon. At first sight unrelated factors such as international non-profit organizations, youth organizations, independent election monitoring organizations, united and

⁷² McFaul, “The Second Wave of Democratic Breakthroughs in the Post-Communist World: Comparing Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005”, 8.

⁷³ Kuzio. “Democratic Breakthroughs and Revolutions in Five Post-Communist Countries: Comparative Perspectives on the Fourth Wave”, 15.

succeeded in bringing down the semi-authoritarian regimes. This phenomenon is not easy to explain.

The complexity of explaining the impact of revolutionary mechanisms is clearly seen by different opinions existing on the exact influence of external mechanisms on electoral revolutions. The claims of overestimating as well as of underestimating the significance of external factors for occurrence of a revolution regularly appear. In order to avoid engaging in this debate, I will merely state that despite the evident fact that external factors matter it is still far from clear to what extent the external factors contributed the success of an electoral revolution. The additional empirical data will be necessary to provide a complete answer to this issue.

In general, external factors which influenced the revolutionary outcomes in the post-Soviet region fall into two categories: foreign countries' governments /international inter-governmental organizations and international non-profit organizations. Understandably, the level and format of their involvement in the revolutionary processes were different. The foreign governments – the United States and the European Union (the latter in most cases acting as the single actorness) were most active among them- in many cases avoided being directly associated with the revolutionary processes and preferred to act through the international non-profit organizations. The typical pattern of their activities included: providing funding for local and international non-governmental organizations; exerting pressure on the regimes to hold fair and free elections; denouncing the results of the fraudulent elections; and acting as mediators between the government and opposition. The empirical data could be used to portray the pattern of the foreign government's involvement. For example, the United States, driven by its agenda of expanding democracy worldwide, was instrumental in increasing the capacity of independent election monitoring organizations. According to Welt, in the case of the Rose Revolution in Georgia “U.S.

election assistance was substantial and included funding for voter list reform, PVT [parallel voting tabulation] training and implementation, and the cultivation of local election monitoring NGOs”⁷⁴ The existence of such organizations and their findings proved to be a crucial factor during the Rose Revolution.

The foreign governments’ firm position on refusing to recognize the fraudulent elections in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan was an important supporting tool for the opposition, adding significant weight to the accusations of election fraud. The news on the position of the international community would immediately become known to the general public, giving them additional assurance of the rightness of their cause and lack of support of the regime on international level. International community acted on individual basis as well. Foreign dignitaries visited the Georgia and Ukraine before the elections and brought to the regimes the message of an importance of conducting free and fair elections. The dignitaries also acted as mediators between the regime and the opposition- example of Ukraine 2004.

The international non profit organizations, which were doing the actual work in the field, also came into two categories- funded through the governments or through individual benefactors. The area of their expertise was wide: providing much needed financial-technical assistance to the local non-governmental organizations, training the representatives of media, equipping the opposition groups with the social mobilization tools, training the opposition activists and often acting as mediators between the different opposition groups, establishing and supporting the independent-election monitoring organizations. As they worked directly in the field, these organizations were in better position in responding to changing realities of the revolutionary process and offered valuable assistance whenever it was most needed. National-Democratic

⁷⁴ Welt, *Georgia: Causes of the Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance*, 7.

Institute of International Affairs, International Republican Institute and Open Society Institute were among the most active international organizations acting during the post-Soviet revolutions. The strength of such organizations was that they were more flexible in working with the local actors, than the official structures of the foreign governments and could be engaged in activities with them on a regular basis. They served as the important communication channels through which the opposition gets its message to the wider international community.

Pora is a representative of another important mechanism of electoral revolutions- youth organizations. The members of *Otpor* (Serbia), *Kmara* (Georgia), *Pora* (Ukraine), *KelKel* (Kyrgyzstan) were among the most active participants of the revolutions. These organizations, representing young people from all walks of life, managed to pursue the people that a change of the regime was possible. The youth organizations were the most vocal critics of the regimes. As Kandelaki, *Kmara* leader says “*Kmara (Enough)* played an important role in combating widespread political apathy among the Georgian public and youth in particular”. This was particularly important factor in the post-Soviet regimes, where although population is generally interested in politics, the idea of engaging personally in the demonstration aimed at dismantling the regimes, could be a scary factor for many people.

The youth organizations were arranged according to horizontal organizational structure. In many cases, it represented flexibly connected network of regional and central organizations which allowed for reaching a much wider audience. The revolutionary measures that these organizations carried out were mostly aimed at mobilizing youth around the cause of dismantling the regime and inspiring elders to express openly their discontent against the regime. The mechanisms used by the youth organizations included: printing and distributing informational materials, organizing

protest rallies and demonstrations and recruiting young people to become involved in the revolutionary processes.

Funding for the youth organizations came through the international non-profit organizations which provided necessary funds for setting up and running the organization - for example, *Kmara* was funded by the Open-Society Institute. The youth organizations established regular contact with each other and shared their knowledge and expertise. The youth activists from Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine traveled to each others' countries to offer trainings on the tools of civil disobedience. The youth organizations have been in regular contact with local non-governmental organizations and together exposed the election fraud orchestrated by the regime.

In this regard, in the process of exposing the election fraud, particularly significant work was done by independent election monitoring organizations. They played a crucial part in the post-Soviet electoral revolutions. They were the independent sources of the documented data on the cases and scale of election fraud. The information they provided was invaluable in terms of showing to the public how the regimes stole the elections. Backed with these figures the opposition was able to intensify his demands for the resignation of the presidents.

The election monitoring organizations which worked in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan fall into two categories: a) international and local organizations. International organizations represented non-profit organizations- for example, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, International Foundation for Electoral Systems- and inter-governmental organizations- Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe/ Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; b) local election monitoring organizations- for example, International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (Georgia), the Committee of Ukrainian Votes (Ukraine). These

organizations were actively engaged in every phase of election monitoring through combining various mechanism- short and long term election observation missions, exit polls, compiling voter's lists. The organizations' observers represented the experts on election issues, foreign dignitaries, representatives of international and local non-profit organizations. The area of the organization's activities either could be one geographical region or the whole country. The organizations' funding came either through the inter-governmental sources, foreign governments or non-profit donor organizations.

Because they possessed trustworthy, documented information on election fraud independent election monitoring organizations enjoyed a unique position to influence the revolutionary developments. The opposition could not hope to influence a high number of people to join the protests against the election fraud orchestrated by the regime unless they had the documented information on the election manipulations produced by independent and impartial election monitoring organizations.

The above-mentioned revolutionary mechanisms were most effective as they acted in unison, gradually contributing to the success of electoral revolution. The post-Soviet electoral revolutions showed that external mechanisms, youth organizations and election monitoring organizations possess formidable power which matched with the revolutionary situation resulted by specific causes, has a great potential to bring down almost any (semi)-authoritarian regime.

The post-Soviet regimes gradually realized the scale of threat to their rules posed by the electoral revolutions. They comprehended the need to preempt this threat and develop specific anti-revolutionary strategy and implement the measures. They have particularly launched pre-emptive strikes against the revolutionary mechanisms- such as youth organization, political opposition and independent election monitoring organizations. The next chapter analyses these anti-

revolutionary measures designed and implemented in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia in the time framework of 2003-2006.

CHAPTER 3

3. 1. Post-Soviet Regimes' Response to Electoral Revolutions- Anti-Revolutionary Measures

In this chapter I elaborate on the anti-revolutionary measures implemented by the regimes of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia in the period of 2003-2006. I specially focus on the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan 2005 and the presidential elections in Belarus 2006 to portray the general characteristics of the post-Soviet anti-revolutionary measures.

The first electoral revolution in the post-Soviet region took place in Georgia in November 2003. The Rose Revolution (as it is commonly referred to) unfolded on the background of parliamentary elections, which were marred by the widespread election fraud. Responding to the election manipulations the opposition started to organize widespread protests in Tbilisi and several other Georgian cities, calling for President Shevardnadze's resignation.

The developments in Georgia immediately attracted the attention of the post-Soviet regimes. The first attempt of electoral revolution in the post-Soviet region would be crucial in terms of testing a possibility of repeating it other post-Soviet countries. In this regard, Russia's response to the political turmoil in Georgia is an interesting phenomenon to explore. Though in general Russia did not favor Shevardnadze, the prospect of the victory of the opposition led by Saakashvili, with his clear pro-Western agenda, represented the worst case scenario for Russia- Georgia's finally leaving Russia's sphere of influence. Russia relied on pro- Russian leader of Georgia's Adjara's region. Blank even claims that "Moscow entertained the hope of having Abashidze succeed

Shevardnadze in mid-term or when he would have left office in 2005 or even of engineering such a succession as a condition of its support for Shevardnadze”.⁷⁵

However, with the signs of the opposition gaining grounds in mobilizing the Georgians around the cause of “Georgia without Shevardnadze” the Russian government felt a need for more active involvement in the political processes. On November 15 Deputy Foreign Minister Valery Loshchinin announced that “Moscow may try to mediate between the opposing factions in Georgia, telling reporters that Russia “cannot be indifferent” to what happens there”.⁷⁶

On November 22, the same day when the opposition stormed the building of the Parliament of Georgia, Russian foreign minister, Igor Ivanov arrived in Tbilisi “in an attempt to broker a compromise that would leave Shevardnadze in power. When the opposition leaders rejected this proposal, Ivanov prevailed on Shevardnadze to step down, so as to avoid civil warfare”⁷⁷ However, despite his role in negotiating Shevardnadze’s resignation, Ivanov never hid his negative attitude towards the Rose Revolution and electoral revolutions in general. He stated that “we [Russia] regard all decisions taken outside the law or on the street, through influence or pressure, as not being in accordance with democratic principles, and I do not think this is in Georgia’s interests either.”⁷⁸ It is interesting that for his role in mediating resignation of the leaders as a result of electoral revolutions (Milosevic, Shevardnadze, Abashidze) Igor Ivanov was

⁷⁵ Stephen Blank, “Georgia’s Revolution: Russia’s Sour Grapes”, *Central Asia- Caucasus Analyst*, http://www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=1947.

⁷⁶ Newswire, VOA News Report, November 15, 2003, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2003/11/mil-031115-28e6c27b.htm>.

⁷⁷ Barry Grey and Vladimir Volkov, “Oil intrigue and US Realpolitik heighten tensions in the Caucasus Georgia’s “Rose Revolution”: a made-in-America cop. *Puritan News Weekly*. May 7, 2004. <http://www.puritans.net/news/caucasus050704.htm>.

⁷⁸ *Eurasia Insight* “Daunting Challenges Await Georgia’s New leaders”. November 24, 2003. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav112403.shtml>.

dubbed as “The Angel of Political Death”⁷⁹. Almond once even joked that, “any post-communist leader seeing Igor Ivanov across the threshold of his presidential palace knows his time is up”.⁸⁰

The Rose Revolution in Georgia immediately triggered a response from the post-Soviet regimes. Just three days after the Rose Revolution, the post-Soviet leaders organized a special meeting in Kiev, Ukraine, to discuss the developments in Georgia. The meeting was called by the Ukrainian President, Leonid Kuchma and was attended by the senior representatives of CIS countries, including Igor Ivanov. At the meeting, the participants adopted a document which “criticized the unconstitutional manner in which the Georgian leadership was deposed, and emphasized that the events “could have destabilized not only Georgia but the region as a whole.”⁸¹ Leonid Kuchma, whose regime in less than year as would be next to collapse a result of electoral revolution, acting as the chairman of the CIS Council of Heads of State issued a statement denouncing the methods of the Georgian Opposition as “categorically unacceptable to all democratic states.”⁸²

However, as it became known at the press-conference organized after the meeting, the text of the document was not the issue discussed at this meeting. The participants had a lengthy discussion on

How the “velvet revolution,” as the victors in the Georgian civil unrest have described their ouster of Mr. Shevardnadze, took place so quickly and so decidedly. That discussion addressed the methods needed to be developed to make sure that another Georgian scenario does not develop and is not repeated in other CIS member-states. “This was one of the questions we addressed,” explained Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov. “Not only the matter of Georgia's situation, but how not to let this happen again on the territory of the CIS. I think we addressed the issue successfully”. Mr. Ivanov did not explain what specific actions had been agreed upon.⁸³

⁷⁹ Mark Almond, “Igor Ivanov and the Russian Retreat to Moscow”, *Johnson's Russia's List*, May 12, 2004. <http://www.cdi.org/russia/Johnson/8205-10.cfm>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Roman Woronowycz, “CIS diplomats meet in Kyiv to discuss crisis in Georgia”, *Ukraine Weekly*, November 30, 2003, <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/480309.shtml>.

⁸² Vladimir Radyuhin. *U.S. eyes Russian turf*. Available at <http://www.hindu.com/2003/12/31/stories/2003123101161000.htm>.

⁸³ Almond. *Igor Ivanov and the Russian Retreat to Moscow*.

This meeting can be considered to be the first attempt by the post-Soviet regimes to shape a collective response to the threat of electoral revolution. The fact of organizing the special meeting and its agenda showed that the post-Soviet leaders started to comprehend the significance of electoral revolutions and outlined the response to them. This union of the post-Soviet regimes directed against electoral revolutions received the name “Holly Alliance”.⁸⁴ The major goal has been to coordinate their anti-revolutionary activities, offer technical-informational assistance, exchange intelligence information, and conduct joint propaganda campaigns. Russia plays a dominant role in this process as it perceives that the electoral revolutions are directed against it and aimed at limiting Russia sphere of influence in the post-soviet region. Russia also considered that by combating the revolutionary forces in other post-Soviet countries it protects itself from an occurrence of elector revolution in Russia. In this regard Ambrosio argues that “according to this reasoning, by perpetuating authoritarianism in Belarus, Putin makes it less likely that a color revolution would spread to Russia itself”.⁸⁵ However, not always Russia’s support proved to be successful in combating the revolutionary forces. The developments in Ukraine in 2004 showed the power of the opposition movement could beat the joint effort of Ukraine’s and Russia’s regimes.

The Orange Revolution in Ukraine in November- December 2004 marked the second peaceful revolution in the post-Soviet region. The revolution took place on the background of the demonstrations against the massive corruption, voter intimidation and electoral fraud which marred the 1st and the 2nd rounds of presidential election of Ukraine. The main competitors in the elections were the former Prime-Minister Viktor Yushchenko and then Prime-Minister Viktor

⁸⁴ Thomas Ambrosio, “Political Success of Russia-Belarus Relations: Insulating Minsk from a Color Revolution”, *Demokratizatsiya* (June 2006), 17, www6.miami.edu/maia/ISAS05/papers/Russia-Belarus_Thomas_Ambrosio.pdf.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

Yanukovych. The latter enjoyed the support of the incumbent president Leonid Kuchma. The 1st round held on October 31 did not determine the winner (Yanukovych received 39.32% and Yushchenko received 39.87% of the vote).⁸⁶ The 2nd round of the elections was held on November 22. The results announced by the Central Election Commission showed that Yanukovych was ahead⁸⁷ However, Yushchenko backed by the widespread accusations by Ukrainian and foreign monitors of massive fraud demanded an annulment of the results. Yulia Tymoshenko, the former Prime Minister, supported Yushchenko's demand. Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Kiev. The widespread protests forced the government to start negotiating with the oppositions and they reached a deal on organizing the runoff of the 2nd round of the elections on December 26, at which Yushchenko won with a clear margin.

It is understandable that the developments in such an important post-Soviet country as Ukraine could not have been left without other post-Soviet state's attention. Russia's involvement in the processes unfolding in Ukraine was particularly significant. Russia considered that Yushchenko's victory would mean a total loss of Russia's influence on Ukraine and subsequent weakening of Russia's position in post-Soviet realm, when on the other hand Yanukovych's victory would propel Ukraine back into Russia's area of influence. The loyalty of Yanukovych towards Russia was evident, as he constantly reiterated it. For example, at "personal meeting with Russian president Vladimir Putin, just before the elections, Yanukovych promised 'that he would end Ukraine's policy of seeking membership in NATO' ".⁸⁸ Understatedly, Putin strongly supported Yanukovych's bid for presidency - during the pre-election campaign, Putin visited Ukraine twice

⁸⁶ *Moscow News*, "Opposition Candidate Wins First Round of Ukraine Presidential Election — Official Result", November 11, 2004, <http://www.mosnews.com/news/2004/11/10/ukraine.shtml>.

⁸⁷ Paul Quinn-Judge and Yuri Zarakhovich, "The Orange Revolution", *Time*. November 28, 2004. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1101041206-832225-1,00.html>.

and actively campaigned for Yanukovych; Putin was the first (and only) state leader, who congratulated Yanukovych with his ‘election’ as the President of Ukraine. Russia was also the biggest financial contributor to Yanukovych - it allegedly spent 300 million US Dollars on Yanukovych’s campaign.⁸⁹ A delegation of the leading Russian political technologists visited Ukraine several times and designed Yanukovych’s election campaign. The elections in Ukraine were considerably influenced by the factor of Russian political technologists (spin doctors) and propaganda campaigns designed by them. The group of the Russia technologists led by Gleb Pavlovski and Sergei Markov were actively assisting Yanukovych’s election campaign. They were instrumental in designing the information campaigns for Yanukovych which underlined his achievements and positive qualities, as well as designing propaganda campaigns against the orange opposition in which they were portrayed as the “puppets” of the West.

Nevertheless, all this support proved futile in bringing victory to Yanukovych and he lost his bid for the presidency. This loss echoed all over the post-Soviet region and it would not be an exaggeration to state that the Orange Revolution marked the turning point for later developments in the region. It proved that a model of electoral revolution was not confined to one particular country and could be repeated elsewhere, even in the authoritarian Central Asia region. The developments in Kyrgyzstan in 2005 were the third consecutive electoral revolution in the post-Soviet region.

On February 27 and March 13 2005 Kyrgyzstan held the first and the second rounds of parliamentary elections. Most candidates were not officially affiliated with any political party; however they were clearly divided into the pro-governmental and the opposition groups. Though

⁸⁸ Sreeram Chaulia. “Democratisation, NGOs and “colour revolutions”. *OpenDemocracy*.
<http://www.opendemocracy.net/xml/xhtml/articles/3196.html>.

⁸⁹ *Global Security. Org*, “Russia & the 2004 Presidential Election”,
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/ukraine/election-2004-r.htm>.

the final results of the elections were never announced, based on partial results media announced that the pro-governmental candidates received most sits.

The opposition backed by the OSCE election monitoring mission findings of a numerous shortcomings in election administration, refused to accept the election results and started to stage the demonstrations all over the country which culminated with the takeover of the central government's buildings in Bishkek on March 24 and the President Askar Akayev's flight from the country. On April 2 Akaev resigned from his position and in the presidential elections held on July 2005 the opposition leader Kurmanbek Bakiev enjoyed the landslide victory.

The Tulip Revolution (as the events in Kyrgyzstan are commonly called) was the first electoral revolution in the post-Soviet Central Asia. In general, it bore the same characteristics as the previous post-Soviet electoral revolutions. However, it was to some extent different- it involved more violence and there were the cases of the casualties. The opposition was not strongly united and remained fragmented during the whole period of the revolution. The wave of revolutionary protests first started in the regions and at later stages moved to the capital city. Akayev's government resorted to more violence than Shevardnadze and Kuchma.

The Tulip Revolution was particularly warning for the Central Asian regimes which felt that the revolution in the neighboring Kyrgyzstan would inspire the domestic opposition to attempt to repeat it. The regimes felt that the immediate measures had to be taken in order to neutralize this new threat to their existence. In this regard, the experience of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are case-book examples of anti-revolutionary measures. The major focus has been taken on reducing the revolutionary mechanisms which played an active role in the post-Soviet electoral revolutions. The major anti-revolutionary measures were carried out against non-governmental organizations and political opposition.

3.2. *Uzbekistan*

Uzbekistan has focused on suppressing the international non-governmental organizations' activities. The regime unleashed a wave of direct attacks on them which resulted considerable limitation of their activities or closure of their offices. According to USAID Report "Uzbekistan implemented new registration and monitoring requirements for international technical assistance organizations in an effort to control their activities and prevent a similar scenario in Uzbekistan. In particular, organizations working to develop democratic principles and rule of law have been affected. Bureaucratic obstacles and the Government's subsequent refusal to reregister the Open Society Institute"⁹⁰ There is a long list of international organizations which experienced the power of the regime's suppression campaign: the operations of Freedom House were suspended; the United Nations Refugee Agency was ordered out; the offices of the International Research and Exchange Board were closed; the Institute for War and Peace Reporting forced to withdraw; the activities of the Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development banned. The Uzbekistan's government in fact reduced to zero the impact of international non-profit organizations on the domestic processes.

The regime also took measures against finally eradicating the domestic political opposition. It was not the hard task to achieve taken into account the decade of ongoing repressions orchestrated by the regimes against the alternative political groups. The particular focus was paid on arresting the opposition leaders who might become potential leaders of the revolutionary movement. For example, on October 23, 2005, Sanjar Umarov, head of the moderate opposition Sunshine Coalition in Uzbekistan, was arrested on financial charges. According the opposition sources "the move appears to be a pre-emptive strike by the government to try and defeat a

⁹⁰ *USAID Budget- Uzbekistan*, 2006, <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2006/ee/uz.html>.

growing U.S.-backed opposition movement before it can rise to challenge the regime”⁹¹. Afterward he was sentenced for 13 years in prison.

The culmination of the regime’s anti-revolutionary campaign came on May 13, 2005, when the Uzbek Government forces shot to death hundreds of un-armed protestors in the city of Andijan who were protesting against mainly social problems. This brutal use of force was to show that the regime was ready to go to extreme to discourage any attempts of the revolution. The regime deliberately sent the clear message to the domestic opposition and international community that there would be no peaceful electoral revolution in Uzbekistan.

3.3. *Kazakhstan*

Before the presidential elections in 2005, the Kazakh regime paid much attention on conducting the information campaigns aiming at persuading the people that any attempts to change the regime through electoral revolution were doomed for a failure. The officials constantly repudiated the possibility of electoral revolution in Kazakhstan claiming that these revolutions took place in totally different situations. Among the various reasons given to prove that impossibility of the revolution in Kazakhstan most popular is an economic prosperity of the country. The president Nazarbayev emphasized this argument while stating “that people in his ex-Soviet state were too rich to stage a revolution like those that swept Ukraine and Georgia”⁹²

The regime also carried out the step against the international non-profit organizations “ a range of international NGOs in Almaty, including the Red Cross, were visited by tax inspectors, who poured through their books and hampered their activities, and a controversial bill to limit the

⁹¹ STRATFOR- Uzbekistan: Quashing Signs of a Revolution?” October 26, 2005, <http://www.sunshineuzbekistan.org/wordpress/archives/135>.

⁹² *Moscow News*, “Kazakhstan too Rich for a Revolution- President”, October 25, 2005. <http://www.mosnews.com/news/2005/08/25/kazakhpresident.shtml>.

operations of foreign NGOs in Kazakhstan was put before the parliament in spring and summer 2005.”⁹³ The regime’s message was clear- that they would not tolerate the international community’s involvement in the domestic political processes.

The regime also prepared for countering the opposition rallies. The focus was taken on conducting preparations for dispelling the demonstrations. There were reports of police ordering the crowd control weapons and machine guns, as well receiving training in putting down rallies.⁹⁴ In April 2005, the Parliament of Kazakhstan adopted a law which banned rallies for one month prior to and after the elections.⁹⁵ Besides the plans to suppress the opposition demonstrations, the regime carried out the steps for mobilizing its supporters. In this regard, it is significant that in this process ideological elements were introduced. At the final rally held a week before the presidential election “more than 4,000 people in identical yellow baseball caps and shirts gathered at a shiny new sports hall in the capital Astana to hear a concert by top Kazakh pop groups”.⁹⁶ It is noteworthy that these tactics closely resembles ones used by the revolutionary forces in the electoral revolutions and shows that the regimes analyzed the revolutionary mechanisms used during the electoral revolutions and introduced them for securing their goals.

Several conclusions can be made with regard to the above-mentioned information. It shows that the Uzbek and Kazakh regimes actively used both- ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ power anti-revolutionary measures. The regimes were taking preemptive strikes to neutralize the potential revolutionary forces and reduce the revolutionary mechanisms. Ban on activities of international non profit

⁹³ Fiona Hill, “Wither Kazakhstan?“, *National Interest*. October 31, 2005.
http://www.brookings.edu/views/papers/hillf/20051031_kazakhstan.pdf.

⁹⁴ “*The election trail gets a bit blood*”, <http://kazakhstan.blogsome.com/2005/11/25/the-election-trail-gets-a-bit-bloody/#more-18>.

⁹⁵ Freedom House. *Nations in Transition 2006, Kazakhstan*,
http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/press_release/kazakhstan_NIT_2006.pdf.

organizations; arrest and harassment of the members of the opposition; information campaigns- were few among many specific anti-revolutionary measures. The goal was to undertake preemptive strikes well before the actual day of elections, so by that time the potential revolutionary forces were so weakened that they could not mount any serious challenge to the regime. The opposition leaders were either arrested or harassed; the people were indoctrinated with the ideas of the opposition's viciousness and weakness and the regimes' strength; the domestic and international non governmental organizations were suppressed and banned; the rallies were either banned or cruelly disbanded. In fact, under such circumstances the revolutionary forces stood no chance to organize massive protest against the regimes.

A special comment should be made with regard to the role of Russian political technologists in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. According to political analysts the tactics of mimicking the tactics of the electoral revolutions used by the regimes were developed by these technologists who "have been working since Ukraine's 'orange revolution' to stymie any popular revolt in Russia itself, as well as in other ex-Soviet republics"⁹⁷. These tactics afterwards were disseminated among the regimes which resorted to them during the elections- Azerbaijan 2005, Kazakhstan 2006. The Russian political technologists also visited Uzbekistan several months after the Andijan massacre. On the meeting with the President Karimov the goal of the visit became evident "noting that Uzbekistan is currently under an "information attack," the Uzbek strongman told his Russian guests, 'I am confident in your unbiased and objective evaluation of the issues'".⁹⁸ This comment made by the ruler who never been particular generous in giving a praise underlines the importance of the factor of Russian political technologists in developing information strategies for the post-Soviet regimes.

⁹⁶ *Gulf Times*, "People power bandwagon grinds to halt in Kazakhstan", Monday 5, 2006.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

3.4. Russia

Understandably, the Russian political technologists were actively engaged in the developing and carrying out the anti-revolutionary measures in Russia itself. However, the use of these technologists is just one part (though important) of the Russia's regime's anti-revolutionary measures. The major focus has been taken on establishing pro-governmental youth organizations, controlling international and domestic non profit organizations and developing anti-revolutionary ideology.

The Russia's regime paid much attention on recruiting and mobilizing the pro-governmental youth. For these purpose several youth organizations were established- *Idushie Vmeste* (Walking Together); *Nashi* (Ours); *Mestnye* (Locals). The idea behind establishing these youth organizations has been to assemble the well-organized groups of youth people who would be instrumental in organizing the pro-governmental organizations and dispersing the opposition rallies.

The regime also aimed at weakening the opposition's capacity to recruit youth. In this regard when explaining the Russia's Youth Policy, the political analyst Stanislav Belkovskii stated that "the goal of this program is understandable to me, and it consists of keeping youth from joining radical opposition groups."⁹⁹ The same comment was made by the leader of Nashi Yakemenko according to whom "he wants the 'West to see that the Ukrainian variant will not happen here.'"

¹⁰⁰ These organizations held numerous rallies in which the tens of thousands of activists participated and where the main message conveyed was to express their support for Russia's

⁹⁸ Daniel Kimmage, "Russia/Uzbekistan: Bringing Political Systems 'Closer Together". *EurasiaNet Partner Post from RFE/RL*. November 26, 2006, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp112606.shtml>.

⁹⁹ Julia A. Corvin, "Taking Youth Policy to the Next level", *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*. November 11, 2005, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/11/58BA252F-9639-421C-8E91-4A4C5FC0EB05.html>.

regime and contempt against the democratic opposition. According to Sergei Fateev, leader of the Mestnye, the members of his organization “are against political charlatans who want to divide our society before the elections. They are preparing to sell Russia out to the West”.¹⁰¹ Though the government at first tried to distance itself from these organizations the further developments showed that they were not only established by the Kremlin, but they were a part of a bigger anti-revolutionary plan which among other targets was also aimed against non-governmental organizations.

The regime’s steps unleashed against NGOs can be divided into two groups- against the domestic NGOs and international NGOs. In January 2006, the President Putin signed a law which imposed the restrictions on registration, financing and activities of NGOs. The new law requires that foreign organizations and groups which receive funding from outside Russia register with the government. With regard to this law Putin stated that “Whether these organizations want it or not, they become an instrument in the hands of foreign states that use them to achieve their own political objectives. This situation is unacceptable. This law is designed to prevent interference in Russia’s internal political life by foreign countries and create transparent conditions for the financing of nongovernmental organizations.”¹⁰² According to the Member of Russian Alexei Ostrovsky who was one of the bill's sponsors, “legislation should help the government clamp down on NGOs that might use foreign funding to promote an upheaval like Ukraine's Orange revolution.”¹⁰³ This bill received much criticism from the international community which with enough reasons considered it violation of democratic standards. Another major tool to combat NGOs was the use of propaganda campaign which portrayed NGOs as spies and puppets working

¹⁰⁰ Anna Arutunyan, “Pro-Kremlin Youth Group: Orange Revolution, Go Home!”, *Moscow News*, May 16, 2005, <http://www.mosnews.com/commentary/2005/05/16/nashirally.shtml>.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Sara Flounders, “450,000 NGOs in Russia. U.S Finances opposition,” *Workers World*, February 6, 2006. <http://www.workers.org/2006/world/ngos-0216>.

against Russia's and Russia's allies national interests. For example, a typical case of such propaganda was statement made by Russian Federal Security Service head Nikolai Patrushev "foreign intelligence services were plotting a so-called "velvet revolution" in Belarus to topple the government by financing the opposition through non-governmental organizations".¹⁰⁴

The regime also attempted to develop the anti-revolutionary ideology in order to offer an alternative ideological basis to Russia's population. In this regard the concept of 'Sovereign Democracy' which was devolved in February 2006 by Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Vladislav Surkov represents a case book example. This doctrine which outlines Russia's way of democracy (according to the Kremlin's understanding of democracy) immediately was considered as "Moscow's response to the dangerous combination of populist pressure from below and international pressure from above that destroyed the Leonid Kuchma regime"¹⁰⁵ Surkov himself did not conceal that the focus of the doctrine was combating "a soft take" in Russia (his reference to electoral revolutions). As he stated "I can't say that this issue is off the agenda, since if they managed to pull it off in four countries" -- the reference includes Serbia in the list of "orange" victims -- "why not do it in a fifth? I think that these attempts will not be limited to 2007-08 [when Russia holds parliamentary and presidential elections]. Our foreign friends can and will try to repeat them".¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *China View*, "Moscow accuses foreign spies of funding 'revolution' in Belarus", May 12, 2005, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-05/13/content_2954292.htm.

¹⁰⁵ Ivan Krastev, "'Sovereign democracy', Russian-style". *OpenDemocracy*, November 26, 2006. http://www.cls-sofia.org/uploaded/1163753090__od161106.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ Daniel Kimmage, "Kazakhstan: 'Sovereign Democracy' In Almaty and Moscow," *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*. July 10, 2006. <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/7/6129BE69-8044-4EAD-A401-3AC4D549A134.html>.

Surkov's reference to the elections 2007-2008 proves their vital importance to the Kremlin and explains the enormous amount of work carried out by the regime in order to avoid electoral revolution and insure a smooth transition of power from Putin to his successor. In general, the dominant position now is that there is only slimmest chance of electoral revolution in Russia (the fact that can be partially explained by the success of anti-revolutionary measures). The Russia's regime also benefits from using the experience of two post-Soviet elections- parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan 2006 and the presidential elections in Belarus 2006- in which the regimes succeeded in stamping their victory over the opposition forces. In this sub-chapter I elaborate on the anti-revolutionary measures of Azerbaijan and Belarus regimes.

3.5. Azerbaijan 2005

Parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan were held on November 6, 2005. The main contenders were the ruling New Azerbaijan Party and the opposition bloc Azadliq (Freedom) consisting of the Azerbaijan Popular Front Party, the Equality Party and Azerbaijan Democratic Party. It took place two years after the fraudulent and violent presidential elections in 2003, in which according to the official results Ilham Aliiev received 76.8 percent of votes.¹⁰⁷ These results and the post-election massive crackdown received harsh criticisms by the international community. According to Rachel Denber, acting executive director of the Europe and Central Asia Division of Human Rights Watch, "the post-election Azerbaijan is experiencing its gravest human rights crisis of the past ten years".¹⁰⁸

Understandably, based on the experience of 2003 elections, the international community was demanding that Azerbaijan hold free and fair elections. The Council of Europe Parliamentary

¹⁰⁷ Heidi Sobergren, "Azerbaijan: Presidential Elections October 2003," *NORDEM Report 06/2004*, <http://www.humanrights.uio.no/forskning/publ/nr/2004/06.pdf>.

Ensemble adopted a resolution in which it described the upcoming elections as “crucial opportunity for the Azerbaijani authorities to show that they have the political will and ability to organize democratic elections”.¹⁰⁹ Turkey, its closest ally, also called on the Azerbaijan government to adhere to the principles of competitive elections “Azerbaijan will be much stronger if the elections are conducted in an orderly and transparent manner. Azerbaijan’s position on the international stage would be strengthened [if transparent and orderly elections are held].”¹¹⁰

However, despite all these demands for organizing the fair elections issued by the international community, the pre-election developments showed that the only goal the government was really interested in to achieve was holding to power by any means. The elections campaign was characterized with widespread arrests and intimidation of opposition party members and supporters which did not allow for organizing the competitive campaigning.¹¹¹ Also according to OSCE/ODIHR report “the continuing failure of election commissions and the prosecuting authorities to address or redress serious violations by executive authorities and candidates has had a marked and negative effect on the election process”.¹¹²

Under such circumstances, when the impossibility of changing the government through the elections was becoming evident, the opposition started to spread the message about the possibility of organizing an electoral revolution. According to Ali Kerimli, one of Azadliq’s leaders “If there are massive falsifications, we will call on the people to fight, within the bounds

¹⁰⁸ *Human Rights Watch*, “Azerbaijan: Government Launches post-Election Crackdown,” Human Right News, January 23, 2004, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/01/23/azerba6992.htm>.

¹⁰⁹ *PACE*, “Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan Offer an Opportunity that Should Not Be Missed”, Strasbourg, 13 October 2005.

¹¹⁰ Mevlut Katik, “*Turkey Encourages a Free-and-Fair Vote in Azerbaijan*”. *EurasiaNet*, April 11, 2005, http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/turkey_20051104.html

¹¹¹ *International Crisis Group*, “Azerbaijan’s 2005 Elections: Lost Opportunity,” Policy Briefing, Europe Briefing N°40 Baku/Brussels, 21 November 2005.

¹¹² *OSCE/ODIHR Interim Report No. 3*, op. cit., 3, quoted in *Azerbaijan's 2005 Elections: Lost Opportunity*.

of the constitution,”¹¹³ The Azeri opposition was inspired by the success of the previous post-Soviet electoral revolutions. Ali Kerimli, one of the opposition leaders, stated, that “this election is taking place after the revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia, which showed people that if you fight to the end, you can win. The psychological impact of these events should not be underestimated”.¹¹⁴ However, the government was ready to take on a challenge of suppressing any attempts of organizing electoral revolutions. Its anti-revolutionary measures were directed at eliminating three factors which played the crucial role in the previous post-Soviet revolutions: opposition parties; youth organizations; and independent election monitoring organizations.

3.5.1. Political Opposition

For the first time three main opposition parties- the Azerbaijan Popular Front Party, the Equality Party and Azerbaijan Democratic Party- managed to form the electoral bloc Azadliq (Freedom). The alliance's leaders were PFFPA Chairman Ali Kerimli, Musavat Chairman Isa Gambar and DPA Chairman Rasul Guliyev (the latter in exile). As its major tactical tool the bloc decided to pursue the active campaigning all over the country and do not hide their intentions to change the government.¹¹⁵ The government also had its own plans towards the opposition. Its major goals with regard to the opposition parties were to suppress the opposition's capacity of organizing the rallies and demonstrate to the opposition's supporters that any attempt to organize electoral revolution was doomed for failure. These goals were secured through the use of 'hard' and 'soft' power mechanisms.

¹¹³ Jeremy Page, “West balks at backing revolution as elections loom in oil-rich state”, *Times*, November 4, 2005. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article586365.ece>.

¹¹⁴ Yigal Schleifer, “In Azerbaijan ‘a Neck-Tie Revolt’”, *CSMonitor*, November 3, 2005, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1103/p06s01-wosc.html>.

¹¹⁵ *EurasiaNet*. Azerbaijan Elections 2005, Party Profiles. <http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/parties/index.html>.

Major “hard” power mechanisms were the use of physical force to dispel the opposition rallies and arrest the opposition activists. The common practice was to deny the opposition authorization to organize the demonstrations in the central locations. This was observed in four separate occasions when Azadlig was denied authorization to hold rallies in the downtown Baku. By depriving the opposition an opportunity to organize the demonstrations either by denying authorization or dispelling the rallies, the regime was eradicating one of the fundamental revolutionary mechanism- people’s power. The opposition could not hope to organize long and large demonstrations- prerequisite for a successful electoral revolution. The demonstrators could not be sure of their safety. Hundreds of people were arrested, often for short period, occasionally for several days.¹¹⁶ According to Ali Kerimli, a leader of the opposition Azadlig bloc, “At every rally attempt, we had about 200 of our supporters arrested [and] hundreds beaten. Candidates were threatened, and made to withdraw [from the race]”.¹¹⁷ PACE had to respond to these developments in Azerbaijan by stating that “the disproportionate violence and brutality, bordering on outright cruelty, displayed by police forces while breaking up public rallies...is unacceptable in a democratic society”.¹¹⁸

The regime also carried out measures against the leadership of the opposition movement. On October 17, Rasul Guliyev, the leader of DPA, sought by the Azeri police on corruption charges, was not allowed to come to Azerbaijan, as according to the Azerbaijan government’s request he was arrested in Ukraine. On the same day, the officers of Azerbaijan National Security Ministry arrested 26 people, mostly members of Guliyev’s party on charges of a coup attempt. The official

¹¹⁶ Azerbaijan's 2005 Elections: Lost Opportunity, 13.

¹¹⁷ Rovshan Ismayilov, “Azerbaijan’s Campaign Ends, Attention Now Focusing on Post-Election Period,” *Eurasia Insight*, October 4, 2005, http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/campaignend_20051104.html.

¹¹⁸ PACE, “Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan Offer an Opportunity that should not be missed,” Strasbourg, 13 October, 2005, quoted in Azerbaijan's 2005 Elections: Lost Opportunity. International Crisis Group.

sources started to circulate the news that the opposition was planning to disrupt the election process and the authorities prevented such a provocation.¹¹⁹

Such actions were typical cases of ‘soft’ power mechanisms aimed at discrediting the opposition, “demonizing” the concept of electoral revolution and indoctrinating people with the idea of the regimes’ omnipotence. The government controlled TVs channels, radio and Internet were conducting PR campaigns portraying the opposition as “traitors” and “provocateurs” who would plunge the country into an anarchy”.¹²⁰

The government party representatives and supporters constantly reiterated that a revolution was not possible in Azerbaijan, as the government enjoyed the widespread support, when on the other hand the opposition’s support base was not significant. The President Aliyev stated that “The era of street protests similar to those in Ukraine has come to an end in Azerbaijan long ago,”¹²¹ The goal of such announcements was to shatter people’s trust in the opposition and discourage people from participating in the demonstrations.

3.5.2. Youth Organizations

Before the elections several youth organizations were formed: *Megam* (It Is Time), *Dalga* (Waves), *Yeni Fikir* (New Thinking), *Yox!* (No!). *Yeni Fikir* was associated with the opposition Popular Front Party of Azerbaijan. According to *Yeni Fikir* activists, the number of the organization’s members varied from 1500 to 2500 people.¹²² *Yeni Fikir* received much publicity after organizing a hunger strike that secured the return of one of its members, Namiq Ferziyev, to

¹¹⁹ Rovshan Ismayilov, “Opposition-Government Battle over Response to Guliyev,” *Eurasia Insight*, October 17, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav101705b.shtml>.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Katik, “Turkey Encourages a Free-and-Fair Vote in Azerbaijan”.

Azerbaijan Pedagogical University, who had earlier been expelled from there, reportedly because of his affiliation with *Yeni Fikir*. Inspired with this success these youth organizations planned to become actively engaged in every aspect of the upcoming elections – campaigning, monitoring, and distributing pamphlets and brochures. The youth organizations could have been instrumental in organizing the mass protest rallies as well.

The regime comprehended the danger that the youth organizations posed to its rule and attacked first. In this regard, Fuad Mustafayev, deputy chief of the Popular Front Party, and one of the leaders in the Azadlig opposition bloc said that "Authorities were aware of the power of the youth movement, and therefore decided to strike a preemptive blow".¹²³ On August 3, 2005 Ruslan Bashirli, a leader of *Yeni Fikir*, was arrested on charges of plotting a coup attempt in Azerbaijan with financial backing from Armenian special services. The Azerbaijani Prosecutor-General's office disseminated video that depicted Bashirli signing a receipt for \$2,000 and drinking cognac with two men identified as Armenian agents.¹²⁴ On September 12, *Yeni Fikir* Deputy Chairperson Nuri was detained for 48 hours on charges of conspiring to organize a coup against the Azerbaijani government. According to the official sources, while attending a training session in Poland sponsored by the National Democratic Institute, Nuri allegedly received instructions on organizing anti-government protests with the aim of overthrowing the government. The same day, Ramin Tagiyev, *Yeni Fikir* another deputy chairperson, was sentenced to a three-month prison term for his role in a supposed coup plot.¹²⁵ Commenting on these arrests, leader of the Popular Front Party Chairman Ali Kerimli stated that the arrests were carried out because of the

¹²² Mina Muradova and Rufat Abbasov, "Youth Groups in Azerbaijan Encounter Difficulties during Run-up to Parliamentary Elections", *Eurasianet, Azerbaijan Elections 2005*. November 3, 2005. http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/youth_20051103.html.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Khadija Ismayilova, "Youth Activists in Azerbaijan Say they are Being Targeted by Government," *EurasiaNet*, September 20, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092005.shtml>.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

authorities' fear of *Yeni Fikir*'s increasing popularity and their desire to reduce youth activism in Azerbaijan. "They [authorities] think that the only way to make these young people stop the struggle is to isolate them". Human Rights Watch condemned the regime's oppressive policy against the youth organizations "the authorities' persecution of these groups has increased throughout 2005. The effect of the government's recent actions has been to significantly hamper youth groups' activism, forcing them to focus mainly on their own survival."¹²⁶

The regime also launched the attacks aimed at disrupting the cooperation between the local youth organizations and the Ukrainian youth organization- *Pora*. On September 15, 2005, Sergei Yevtushenko, a leader of *Pora*, was arrested at Baku airport. Two days after he was deported to Ukraine.¹²⁷ Azerbaijan also deported *Pora* activists who traveled to Azerbaijan as election observers- among them were a senior leader of *Pora*, Yevhen Zolotariov, and Serhii Taran, head of the Kyiv-based Institute for Mass Media, Ukraine's representation for the international watchdog Reporters Without Borders.¹²⁸

Understandably, the wave of arrests of the leaders and the members of the youth organizations as well as thwarting the attempts of establishing cooperation with more experienced foreign counterparts significantly undermined the youth organizations' capacities to influence the pre-election and post-elections developments. The youth organizations in Azerbaijan never managed to become such a significant force as *Otpor*, *Kmara* and *Pora*.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Taras Kuzio, "Azerbaijani-Ukrainian relations deteriorate after stolen elections," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, November 9, 2005. <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2005/470505.shtml>.

¹²⁸ *Ukrayinska Pravda*, November 8, 2005. obkom.net.ua, quoted in Kuzio. *Azerbaijani-Ukrainian relations deteriorate after stolen elections*.

3.5.3. Independent Election Monitoring Organizations

As the experience of the previous electoral revolutions showed, the findings of the independent election monitoring organizations which exposed the election fraud played an extremely significant role. Consequently, the anti-revolutionary methods of the Azeri regime were also directed against these organizations. The efforts were aimed against hindering the activities of both- domestic and foreign election monitoring organizations.

With regard to foreign organizations the Azeri government resorted to refusing accreditation to observe the elections or depriving the observers an opportunity to visit Azerbaijan. For example, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs was not granted a mandate to observe the elections.¹²⁹ Irina Lasota, head of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe, was refused a visa- reportedly for her criticizing the government's conduct of the 2003 presidential election.¹³⁰ However, the major brunt of attack on independent election monitoring was unleashed against domestic organizations.

The Election Monitoring Center, For the Sake of Civil Society, and Law and Development- were among the most active domestic election monitoring organizations. The major problem these organizations faced was that, according to the Election Code, the domestic organizations which received more than 30 percent of their funding from international sources were not allowed to monitor the elections. This limitation imposed by the regime was in fact banning any domestic organization to conduct the monitoring, as the major sources of funding for them were the international donors. Only on 25th of October 2005, after the continuous demand from PACE, the

¹²⁹ *Azerbaijan Today*, "National Democratic Institute probably will be again deprived of observing elections", October 26, 2005, <http://www.today.az/news/politics/20974.html>.

¹³⁰ Ismayilov, "Azerbaijan's Campaign Ends, Attention Now Focusing on Post-Election Period".

Venice Commission and OSCE/ODHIR, did the President Aliyev sign the decree which lifted this limitation.¹³¹ But with just two weeks before the elections the organizations did not have enough time to prepare adequately for the election monitoring.

The election was marked by the fact of establishing of various “pseudo- Independent” election monitoring organizations. As Maharramov argues “The existence of such groups- which claim the same status as nonpartisan CSOs [civil society organization]- makes it difficult for CSOs to mount election observation efforts that citizens can trust and tarnishes their accomplishments in doing so”.¹³² The high number of election monitoring organizations was confusing, often purposefully orchestrated by the regime. The different findings issued by these organizations were aimed at confusing the public with the real situation. The same goal was attempted through use of various exit polls. The opposition claimed that the sponsors of the two companies- Mitofsky International and Saar Poll- were the representatives of the Azeri regime and the aim was to produce the results which would compete with those of USAID funded independent exit poll.¹³³

3.5.4. The Post-Election Developments

With all these preemptive strikes carried out by the regime, it is not accidental that the oppositions’ protests against the elections results which granted the absolute majority to the governmental party was not strong.¹³⁴ The opposition was disorganized and lacked the capacity

¹³¹ International Crisis Group, “Azerbaijan’s 2005 Elections: Lost Opportunity”.

¹³² Sarvat Maharramo, “Azerbaijan Ready for Election”, September 27, 2005, <http://www.postchronicle.net/newsboard/index.cgi?frames=n;read=6232>.

¹³³ Khadija Ismaylova, “Azerbaijan: Debate Over exit Polls Threatens Confidence in Election Results,” *Eurasia Insight*, October 5, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav100505.shtml>.

¹³⁴ According to the official results, the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan party (YAP) received 58 seats out of the 121. The tripartite bloc Azadlig (Freedom) received only eight seats. The opposition Yeni Sisayet (YeS – New Policy) alliance, Civil Solidarity and Ana Vatan Parties each won two seats; the opposition Liberal Party, Democratic Reforms Party, Umid Party, United Popular Front Party, Great Creation Party, Social Prosperity Party, and Civil

to mount widespread protest movement.¹³⁵ It became engaged in the negotiations with government which did not bring any results for them. The attempt to organize a rally in downtown Baku on November 26 was brutally suppressed by the police and the authorization for future rallies was denied by the Baku city government.¹³⁶ The international community did not react that strongly to the developments in Azerbaijan as in Georgia or Ukraine. Apparently, the USA and the EU were not interested in ‘spoiling’ relations with the movement of a strategically important country rich in oil. Russia was also prompt in offering support for the Azeri regime. The Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Lavrov stated that “They [violations] were not so serious as to prompt us to call into question the outcome of the elections”.¹³⁷ The Russian President Putin congratulated the Azerbaijan President Aliyev with “the successful completion of parliament elections.”¹³⁸ Without the strong capacity to organize the mass protest and the considerable international backing, the Azeri opposition did not attempt to keep organizing the rallies. This marked the end of attempt to change the regime in Azerbaijan.

3.6. Belarus Elections 2006

On March 19, 2006 Belarus, ruled by the president Aleksandra Lukashenko since 1994, held presidential elections. In these elections, Lukashenko, who was permitted to run for the third term for presidency as a result of 2004 referendum considered by the international community as fraudulent, was running against three candidates: Alexander Milinkievic (United Democratic Forces of Belarus); Sergei Gaidukevich (Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus); and Alaksandar

Unity Party each secured one seat in parliament. Independents without formal party affiliation (but in fact the government party supporters) comprise the remainder of the 121 final results.

¹³⁵ Rovshan Ismayilov, “Azerbaijani Opposition Faces Important Tactical Choices,” *EurasiaNet*, http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/opposition_20051116.html.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Sergei Blagov, “Russia Backs Azerbaijani Leadership in Poll Controversy,” *EurasiaNet*, November 17, 2005, http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/leadership_20051117.html.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

Kazulin (Belarusian Social Democratic Party). Among the opposition candidates, Milinkievic was considered to be the major contender against the incumbent Lukashenko. His style of campaigning resembled the experience of the leaders of the previous electoral revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine. He was traveling extensively in the regions of the country and exposing the negative sides of the regime. He also visited several European countries and met with national leaders as well as EU officials. His active campaigning coupled with that of Kazulin, also a vocal critic of the regime, was a considerable irritating factor for the regime, especially taking into account that the opposition never concealed their desire to see a repetition of the electoral revolution in Belarus.¹³⁹ Lukashenko, who after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine was particularly suspicious of any mentioning of the revolution, threatened that

Any attempt to destabilize the situation will be met with drastic action. We will wring the necks of those who are actually doing it and those who are instigating these acts. Embassies of certain states should be aware of this. They should know that we know what they are up to. They will be thrown out of here within 24 hours.¹⁴⁰

The developments after the elections showed that Lukashenko was not exaggerating in threatening to use the force against the opposition. However, the major measures in combating the potential revolutionary forces had been taken before the elections. As Silitski, mentions under Lukashenko Belarus “brought the policy of preemption to perfection.”¹⁴¹ Indeed, the anti-revolutionary measures of the Belarusian regime aiming at preventing the electoral revolution as a response to the elections manipulations during the presidential elections have been carried at the wide front. They were aimed against the political opposition and civil society. Both of these measures represent interesting phenomena to explore.

¹³⁹ Mercuri News, “The Elections in Belarus,”

http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/breaking_news/12801069.htm.

¹⁴⁰ Steven Lee Myers, “Bringing down Europe’s last Ex-Soviet Dictator,” *New York Times Magazine*. February 26, 2006.

¹⁴¹ Silitski, *Preempting Democracy: The Case of Belarus*, 84.

3.6.1. *The Political Opposition*

The whole period of Lukashenko's rule has been marred by his suppression of the opposition movement. Often his methods were more than unscrupulous- for example, the mysterious disappearance of the regime's opponents (the former Minister of Interior Yury Zacharanka and the former Chairman of the Central Election Committee Viktor Hanchar), believed to be orchestrated by the regime.¹⁴² With the upcoming presidential election in 2006 Lukashenko's regime carried out additional preemptive measures against the opposition- Mikalaj Statkievich, Chairman of the Social Democratic Party, and Paval Seviarynec, the leader of the Young Front Movement, were imprisoned for two years.¹⁴³ The harassment of the opposition activists became the norm of action for the Belarusian law-enforcement bodies. The police's 'flexibility' to suppress the demonstration was enhanced with the amendments to the Police Law, which granted the president a right "to make arbitrary decisions on the use of firearms by police in peacetime".¹⁴⁴ The loyalty of the law-enforcement bodies was achieved by conducting purges among the high ranking officials; for example, KGB chief Leanid Eryn was fired for meeting with the opposition demonstrations. The Prosecutor-General Viktor Sheiman was appointed as the Head of the Presidential Administration with a clear mandate "to consolidate the power systems, unity the command structure, and avoid situations such as those that had occurred south of the border".¹⁴⁵ The opposition was attacked from another front as well; in early 2005 the new Housing Code which required that the party offices to be located only in the office buildings

¹⁴² Ibid., 88.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 94.

¹⁴⁴ *Charter-97 News Service*, "Interior troops Will Fulfill Any Tyrant's Order," February 1, 2005, quoted in Silitski. "Learning from Defeat", 193.

¹⁴⁵ David Marples, "Belarus: The Return of Sheiman," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 1- 8 December 2004, quoted in Silitski, "Pre-emptive Democracy- Learning from Defeat", 95.

resulted in the closure of three hundred party offices,¹⁴⁶ considerably impeding the opposition's organizational capacity.

The opposition capacity to organize a successful campaign for the presidential elections was assaulted by moving the date of the elections from June to March 2006. Silitski lists several factors explaining this move: it would create problems to opposition with collecting signatures for the nomination process of the presidential candidates; it would coincide with the Ukraine's parliamentary elections which would mean that the representatives would not be able to travel to Belarus; it would not coincide with the G8 Summit in Russia taking the Belarus issue out of the Summit's agenda; and it would shorten the main opposition candidate's Milinkevich's campaign period.¹⁴⁷ What is most remarkable in these factors is one concerning the weather. The cold weather in March would hinder organization of lengthy protest demonstrations, a major prerequisite of successful electoral revolution.¹⁴⁸ Another innovative anti-revolutionary measure was intensification of the propaganda and information dissemination. Silitski states:

Orange propaganda intensified in the state media, who shared countless reports, documentaries, propaganda broadcasts, and newspaper articles to explain the population the official take on the revolutions. Security forces began publishing special analytical reports and even manuals unmasking the efforts to organize the regime change in Belarus and giving the officials advance instructions on how to combat the efforts of the opposition.¹⁴⁹

These were innovative anti-revolutionary measures which aimed at combating the cornerstone mechanism of the electoral revolution- opposition's demonstrations. Their innovative and complex nature shows how seriously and profoundly the regime prepared for these elections.

¹⁴⁶ Silitski, "Belarus: Learning from Defeat", 140.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 142.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 142.

¹⁴⁹ Silitski, "Contagion Deterred: Preemptive Authoritarianism in the Former Soviet Union (the Case of Belarus)", 23.

3.6.2. Civil Society

The government attacked another major opponent and potential revolutionary force: civil society. Lukashenko's regime resorted to an elaborate scheme of suppressing this vital revolutionary resource which involved both 'soft' and 'hard' power mechanisms. Among 'soft' power measures the significant role was assigned to conduct propaganda campaigns against the international and domestic NGOs which portrayed them in the most negative way. A regular pattern was to portray these NGOs as closely linked with foreign security services. Viktor Veger, deputy chief of Belarus' security service, argued that "certain forces want to implement a so-called velvet revolution through NGOs for 50 million dollars".¹⁵⁰ The usual reference was made to "meddling in internal affairs"¹⁵¹ of Belarus by the international community in order to conduct "acts of banditry" (Lukashenko's definition of electoral revolutions).¹⁵² With the date of elections approaching the official statements were becoming harsher. On March 16 at a joint press conference, the head of the KGB, the Chief Prosecutor and the Interior Minister that stated that "under the guise of elections the opposition was preparing a violent overthrow of the government on election day and warned that all individuals who joined election day protests would be 'considered as terrorists under Article 289 of the penal code' ".¹⁵³

A particularly strong attack was launched against the domestic non-governmental organizations. From 2003 through 2005 more than a hundred of the most active NGOs critical of the authorities were liquidated or forced to close down. In November 2005, the government adopted amendments to the Criminal Code according to which participation in activities of de-registered

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ *Freedom House*, "Report on Belarus 2006", <http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/WoW/2006/Belarus2006.pdf>.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 5.

¹⁵³ *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report on Presidential Elections in Belarus 2006*, http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2006/06/19393_en.pdf.

NGOs by up to three years in prison.¹⁵⁴ Further elaboration on these amendments shows that the regime took no chance in neutralizing NGOs:

Article 293 was amended so that teaching or other training of persons for organization of mass disorders may be punished by up to three years in jail. Calls to international community to take actions in detriment to ‘the external security of Belarus’ became punishable by up to five years. And the new article ‘Discreditation of the Republic of Belarus’ establishes punishment of up to two years in prison for ‘provision of foreign state, foreign or international organization with deliberately false data on political, economic, social, military, or international situation in the republic of Belarus or its power bodies.’¹⁵⁵

The Belarus regime also neutralized the crucial revolutionary force- independent election observation organizations. In this regard, the attack was two-fold -against domestic and international observers. Four key leaders of the largest election monitoring ‘Partnership’ were arrested in February 2006 on charges of “organizing fraudulent exit polls and planning a violent uprising after the election”.¹⁵⁶ Independent Institute for Socio-Economic and Political Studies, the independent polling agency in the past critical against the official election and referenda result, was banned by the court in April 2005; conducting of public opinion surveys without a license were considered to be a crime.¹⁵⁷ Lukashenko’s regime carried out measures against international election monitoring organizations as well. These activities included conducting propaganda campaigns against them or obstructing the foreign observers’ work. One typical case of was the regime’s accusation towards the permanent mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Belarus of representing the headquarters of the opposition forces attempting a Yugoslavia-style coup and portraying the Western election monitors as part

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 5.

¹⁵⁵ Silitski, “Contagion Deterred: Preemptive Authoritarianism in the Former Soviet Union (the Case of Belarus)”, 24.

¹⁵⁶ Amnesty International, “*Belarus: Election Monitors Imprisoned*”, November 2006, <http://web.amnesty.org/appeals/index/blr-011106-wwa-eng>.

¹⁵⁷ Silitski, “Contagion Deterred: Preemptive Authoritarianism in the Former Soviet Union (the Case of Belarus)”, 25.

of an international campaign of ‘spreading dirt over the elections’¹⁵⁸. The electoral observers were refused entrance to Belarus or expelled from the country; for example, on March 15, eight members of a Scandinavian unofficial election observers group *Silba* were expelled, eight Members of Georgian Parliament who arrived in Belarus to observe the elections under the aegis of OSCE election monitoring mission were refused an entry and deported from Minsk’s airport.¹⁵⁹

On the other hand another election monitoring organization- the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Election Monitoring Organization- was not only spared of any criticism from Lukashenko, but on the contrary praised for “an unbiased approach and the point of view that was expressed during the election monitoring process”¹⁶⁰. This fact should not be considered surprising if the stance of this organization towards these elections taken into account. The only violations that CIS observers of the Belarusian presidential election of 2006 found were in the process of nomination of candidates and all of these allegations, pertained to opponents of incumbent Aleksander Lukashenko.¹⁶¹ This fact was propagandized by the regime to show there was no election fraud during the elections- the Belarusian Foreign Affairs Ministry issued the statement “in the opinion of the overwhelming majority of observers, including the CIS election observation mission, the election campaign and the ballot complied with the election code and Belarus’ international commitments of democratic elections despite the unprecedented external pressure”¹⁶².

¹⁵⁸ “*Belarus Elections: Dictating Democracy?*”, <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/ssh/pdf/Belarus%20Elections.pdf>.

¹⁵⁹ *Civil Georgia*, “*Georgia Slams ‘Dictatorial’ Regime in Belarus*,” March 17, 2006, <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=12095>.

¹⁶⁰ Official web-page of the President of Belarus, “Alexander Lukashenko Meets with the Head of the Mission of the CIS Observers Vladimir Rushailo”, March 20, 2006. <http://www.president.gov.by/en/press20681.html#doc>.

¹⁶¹ Rick Fawn, “Battle over the box: international election observation missions, political competition and retrenchment in the post-Soviet space,” *International Affairs* 82, no. 6 (2006), 12.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Election Monitoring Organization has been a constant defender of the post-Soviet regimes during the elections (examples of Kyrgyzstan 2005; Belarus 2005, Uzbekistan 2005) reiterating that there no the election fraud. This organization was established by the Convention on the Standards of Democratic Elections, Electoral Rights, and Freedoms in the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States, adopted at a CIS heads of states meeting in October 2002.¹⁶³ It has been headed by former Russian Interior Minister and National Security Council Head Vladimir Rushailo. This organization should be considered to be a protective shield set up by the post-Soviet regimes against the criticisms of independent international and domestic election monitoring organizations. The findings produced by CIS Election Monitors serve as alternative information proving the ‘fairness’ of the elections. Its role should be viewed in the same line as the practice of recruiting international observers from authoritarian countries – China, Iran- who regularly monitor the post-Soviet elections and whose findings always favor the regimes.¹⁶⁴ These mechanisms hold anti-revolutionary nature which is directly aimed against the revolutionary mechanism- exposing the election fraud.

Special mention should be made with regard to the regime’s suppression of youth organizations. The regime was particularly brutal against the youth organization *Zubr* (Bison). The mass arrests of *Zubr* activists took place on a regular basis.¹⁶⁵ The regime also tried to obstruct establishing contacts between Belarusian youth and the international community. Foreign youth activists visiting Belarus were arrested and deported out of the country.¹⁶⁶ On the other hand,

¹⁶² Ibid., 13

¹⁶³ Roman Kupchinsky, “CIS- Monitoring the Election Monitors,” *Eurasia Insight*. April 2, 2005.
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp040205.shtml>.

¹⁶⁴ Fawn, “Battle over the box: international election observation missions, political competition and retrenchment in the post-Soviet space”, 12.

¹⁶⁵ *Charter 97*, “Regime Fears Youth Resistance”, February 14, 2006.
<http://www.charter97.org/eng/news/2006/02/14/vlast>

¹⁶⁶ “Two Georgians Arrested in Belarus”, August 20, 2005,
<http://www.data.minsk.by/belarusnews/082005/120.html>

Lukashenko's regime was lending a considerable support to the pro-governmental organizations- Belarusian Republican Youth Union, the Belarusian Republican Pioneer Organization and the Belarusian Committee of Youth Organizations. As Lukashenko stated "other sphere of Belarusian society has received such huge state support as youth sphere, youth organizations activities"¹⁶⁷ Understandably, these youth organizations "appreciated" Lukashenko's support and were engaging in pro-governmental activities- for example, at the elections, the Belarusian Committee of Youth Organizations conducted exit poll which granted 84.2% of votes to Lukashenko.¹⁶⁸

3.6.3. The Post-Election Developments

According to the official elections results Lukashenko received 83% of votes.¹⁶⁹ The opposition backed with the findings of international election monitoring organizations declared the elections fraudulent and started to organize the demonstrations. However, the opposition's rallies never reached the high numbers, as a result of the conducted anti-revolutionary measures the revolutionary forces' capacity to mobilize large number of people was weakened. On the other hand, the regime was determined to continue using every means to suppress the opposition's demonstrations. On March 24- 25 the police forcefully dispersed the opposition rallies arresting hundreds of people, including the opposition leaders who afterwards were jailed.¹⁷⁰ Lukashenko's regime against demonstrated its brutality and determination to stay in power by any means. However, the opposition's struggle was not futile, as it learned the useful lesson

¹⁶⁷ Charter 97, "Only Trusted People to Work with Youth", October 20, 2006, <http://charter97.org/eng/news/2006/10/20/praca>

¹⁶⁸ Charter 97, "Gallup/Baltic Surveys announces impossibility of independent and reliable exit polls under present conditions in Belarus", March 20, 2003, <http://www.charter97.org/eng/news/2006/03/20/gallup>

¹⁶⁹ Belarus TV, Presidential Elections- 2006: Information Materials. March 23, 2006, <http://www.tvr.by/eng/vybor2006.asp?id=9&date=23.03.2006%2013:00:00#9>

¹⁷⁰ *Belarusian Review*, March.2005, <http://www.belreview.cz/articles/3002.html>

which many hope will prove crucial in securing success in the next struggles with the current Belarusian regime.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of my research has been to prove that the electoral revolutions in the post-Soviet region acted a “wake-up call” for the post-Soviet regimes prompting them to develop the specific anti-revolutionary strategy and carry out the respective measures. In search of existence of such measures I analyzed five post-Soviet countries- Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Uzbekistan- in the period of 2003-2006, paying a specific focus on two elections- the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan 2005 and the presidential elections in Belarus 2006. Particularly I sought to locate the regimes’ anti-revolutionary measures directed against the major revolutionary forces and mechanisms used during the post-Soviet electoral revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. My findings show that:

1. Electoral revolutions do not represent unique political phenomena which take place only under the most favorable conditions. Experience of the post-Soviet electoral revolutions proves that electoral revolution can take geographically, politically and mentally different regions and environments. This means that none of the undemocratic post-Soviet political regime is immune against them.
2. Immediately after the first post-Soviet revolution in Georgia 2003, the post-Soviet regimes started to take the measures in order to comprehend the concept of the electoral revolution and develop anti-revolutionary strategy. The focus was two-fold: develop specific anti-revolutionary measures corresponding to the situation in individual country and coordinate their anti-revolutionary measures.
3. Though anti-revolutionary measures of each regime to some extent is different, they all share some major characteristics and can be conveniently divided into two groups: ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ power measures. ‘Hard’ power measures include - training, mobilizing and using police; army,

intelligence services against the revolutionary forces; surpassing the demonstrators; jailing the political opponents; crashing public protests; killing the protestors; ‘soft’ power measures include: use of discourse/rhetoric of political and public figures aimed at corrupting a notion of electoral revolution; use of political technologists for developing anti-revolutionary measures; establishing pro-governmental youth organizations; forming pro-governmental civil organizations; establishing ‘pseudo-independent’ election-monitoring organizations; adopting new election and criminal codes and amending the existing ones aimed at reducing a probability of electoral revolution’ curbing the activities of international non-governmental organizations, banning local non-governmental organizations.

4. Use of the anti-revolutionary measures has had effect on reducing probability of occurrence of electoral revolutions in two countries- Azerbaijan 2005 and Belarus 2006. The regimes’ weakened the revolutionary forces through the pre-emptive, anti-revolutionary measures and successfully sealed their ‘electoral victory. The revolutionary forces’ attempts to confront the regimes through use of ‘people’s power’ were suppressed- mostly through use of the pre-arranged and designed anti-revolutionary tactics.

5. The anti-revolutionary measures are actively used for securing the regime’s smooth transition of power at upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in Russia in 2007/2008. The preemptive strikes against the revolutionary mechanisms have already been carried out and the anti-revolutionary forces which will become actively engaged in the anti-revolutionary campaign have been established and trained.

The research findings show that the post-Soviet regimes focused on studying practical aspects of electoral revolutions- such as revolutionary mechanisms (non-profit organizations, election monitoring organizations and youth organizations) and carried out specific, pin-pointed pre-emptive strikes against them. The analyses of three post-Soviet regimes- Azerbaijan, Belarus, and

Russia) measures directed against these revolutionary measures prove that in general these measures share similar characteristics. These findings can be generalized and used to identify the pattern of anti-revolutionary measures which would be conducted by other post-Soviet regimes. This, on other hand, might give the revolutionary forces the significant advantage of possessing knowledge on the regimes' planned steps against them, while designing their own strategy of action.

The research shows that the regimes are gradually closing the 'operation space' for the opposition and civil society. However, their pattern of suppression does not have nature of indiscriminate and random purging, but it carefully analyzed, reveals the well-planned and devised plot of anti-revolutionary measures. The regimes directly and purposefully attack those tools and mechanisms which might be used by the opposition and civil society if an attempt of electoral revolution is made.

The particularly significant findings concern the need of existence of several factors which precondition the success of electoral revolutions. The experience of the post-Soviet electoral revolutions (Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan) shows that at least three such factor- strong domestic opposition, significant external influence, election monitoring capacity – were present. Presently it is impossible to define exactly a combination of which factors determine the success of electoral revolution, but at least with considerable certainty it can be stated that in order for electoral revolution to happen strong presence of several revolutionary factors is necessary.

The research also showed that there is a considerable gap in academic knowledge on the post-Soviet anti-revolutionary measures. To large extent this can be explained with the recentness of these political phenomena which leaves a hope that they would receive an adequate attention from scholars in the future. This is indeed an important task taking into account that almost

certainly the post-Soviet region is going to experience these anti-revolutionary processes for years to come.

The message can be conveyed to the forces striving to promote democracy in the post-Soviet region -the anti-revolutionary measures of the post-Soviet regimes is a matter of reality; they exist; they have been tried, and as they proved to be successful in suppressing the revolutionary forces and prolonging the regimes' existence, they will be used again in the future. Now it time for the democratic forces to take upon a challenge on responding to these anti-revolutionary measures. The future developments in the post-Soviet regimes will show how successfully the democratic forces will be in doing so.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, Michael and Carl Gershman. "The Assault on Democracy Assistance." *Journal of Democracy* 17, no. 2 (2006): 36–50.

Almond, Mark. "Igor Ivanov and the Russian Retreat to Moscow". *Johnson's Russia's List*. May 12, 2004. <http://www.cdi.org/russia/Johnson/8205-10.cfm>.

Ambrosio, Thomas, "Political Success of Russia-Belarus Relations: Insulating Minsk from a Color Revolution", *Demokratizatsiya* (June 2006).

www6.miami.edu/maia/ISAS05/papers/Russia-Belarus_Thomas_Ambrosio.pdf

Arutunyan, Anna. "Pro-Kremlin Youth Group: Orange Revolution, Go Home!". *Moscow News*. May 16, 2005, <http://www.mosnews.com/commentary/2005/05/16/nashirally.shtml>.

Bieber, Florian. "The Serbian Opposition and Civil Society: Roots of the Delayed Transition in Serbia." *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 17 (2003):73-90.

Blagov, Sergei. "Russia Backs Azerbaijani Leadership in Poll Controversy." *EurasiaNet*. November 17, 2005, http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/leadership_20051117.html.

Blank, Stephen. "Georgia's Revolution: Russia's Sour Grapes", *Central Asia- Caucasus Analyst*. http://www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=1947.

Brooker, Paul. *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government, and Politics*. New York: St. Martin's Press. 2002.

Bollen, Kenneth and Robert Jackman. "Democracy, Stability, and Dichotomies." *American Sociological Review* 54 (1989): 612-621.

Bunce, Valerie J. and Sharon L. Wolchik. "Favorable Conditions and Electoral Revolutions." *Journal of Democracy* 17, no.4 (2006): 5-18.

Carothers, Thomas. "The End of the Transition Paradigm." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 1-17.

Carothers, Thomas. "The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion." *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 2 (2006): 55–68.

Calvert, Peter. ed. *The Process of Political Succession*. London: Macmillan. 1987.

Case, William. "Semi-Democracy in Malaysia: Withstanding the Pressures for Regime Change." *Pacific Affairs* 66, no. 2 (1999): 183–205.

Chaulia, Sreeram. "Democratisation, NGOs and "colour revolutions". *OpenDemocracy*. <http://www.opendemocracy.net/xml/xhtml/articles/3196.html>

Chavusaw, Yuri. "Revolution and anti-revolution in the post-Soviet space". Eurozine. 2005.

Cicero. *On Duties*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.1991.

Collier, David and Steven Levitsky. "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research." *World Politics* 49, no.3 (1997): 430-451

Coppedge, Michael and Wolfgang Reinicke. "A Scale of Polyarchy. " *Studies in Comparative and International Development* 25, no.1 (1990):51-72.

Corvin, Julia A. "Taking Youth Policy to the Next level". *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*. November 11, 2005, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/11/58BA252F-9639-421C-8E91-4A4C5FC0EB05.htm>

Dahl, Robert. *Poliarchy. Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1971.

Dahl, Robert. *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1989.

Diamond, Larry. *Developing Democracy. Toward Consolidation*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.1999.

Diamond, Larry. "Elections Without Democracy: Thinking about Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002):21-35

Diamond, Larry. "Authoritarian learning: lessons From the Colored Revolutions." *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 12, no.1 (2005).

Fawn, Rick. "Battle over the box: international election observation missions, political competition and retrenchment in the post-Soviet space." *International Affairs* 82, no. 6 (2006): 1-21.

Flounders, Sara. "450,000 NGOs in Russia. U.S Finances opposition." *Workers World*. February 6, 2006. <http://www.workers.org/2006/world/ngos-0216>

Ganji, Akbar. "The Struggle Against Sultanism. " *Journal of Democracy* 16, no.4 (2005): 38-51.

Geddes, Barbara. "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999):115-44.

Grey, Barry and Vladimir Volkov. "Oil intrigue and US Realpolitik heighten tensions in the Caucasus Georgia's "Rose Revolution": a made-in-America cop. *Puritan News Weekly*. May 7, 2004. <http://www.puritans.net/news/caucasus050704.htm>

Herd, Graeme. "Colorful Revolutions and the CIS: 'Manufactured' Versus 'Managed' Democracy?" *Problems of Post-Communism* 52, no. 2 (2005): 3-18

Hill, Fiona." Wither Kazakhstan?" *National Interest*. October 31, 2005.

Huntington, Samuel. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late 20th Century*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press. 1991.

Howard, Marc Morje´ and Philip G. Roessler. “Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 2 (2006)1-47.

Ismayilova, Khadija. “Youth Activists in Azerbaijan Say they are Being Targeted by Government.” *EurasiaNet*. September 20, 2005,
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092005.shtml>

Ismayilov, Rovshan. “Opposition-Government Battle over Response to Guliyev.” *Eurasia Insight*. October 17, 2005. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav101705b.shtml>.

Ismayilov, Rovshan. “Azerbaijan’s Campaign Ends, Attention Now Focusing on Post-Election Period.” *Eurasia Insight*. October 4, 2005,
http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/campaignend_20051104.html

Kalandadze, Katya and Mitchell A. Orenstein.” Electoral Protests and Democratization: Beyond the Color Revolutions, “research workshop paper, Sawyer law and Politics Program, Campbell Public Affairs Institute, Maxwell School of Syracuse University.2006.

Karl, Terry Lynn. *Electoralism: Why Elections Are Not Democracy*. In Richard Rose. ed. *The International Encyclopedia of Elections*. Congressional Quarterly Books. 2000

Kimmage, Daniel. “Russia/Uzbekistan: Bringing Political Systems ‘Closer Together’.” *EurasiaNet Partner Post from RFE/RL*. November 26, 2006,
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp112606.shtm>

Krastev, Ivan. “Democracy’s “Doubles.” *Journal of Democracy* 17, No. 2 (2006): 36–50.

Krastev, Ivan. ““Sovereign democracy’, Russian-style”. *OpenDemocracy*. November 26, 2006.
http://www.cls-sofia.org/uploaded/1163753090__od161106.pdf.

Kupchinsky, Roman. “CIS- Monitoring the Election Monitors.” *Eurasia Insight*. April 2, 2005.
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp040205.shtml>

Kuzio, Taras. “Democratic Breakthroughs and Revolutions in Five Post-Communist Countries: Comparative Perspectives on the Fourth Wave”,
www.utoronto.ca/jacyk/Kuzio_ComparativeRevolutions.pdf.

Kuzio, Taras. “Azerbaijani-Ukrainian relations deteriorate after stolen elections.” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*. November 9, 2005. <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2005/470505.shtml>.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way. “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism.” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 51-65.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way. *Competitive Authoritarianism: The Emergence and Dynamics of Hybrid Regimes in the PostCold War Era*. Unpublished book manuscript.

Linz, Juan J. *An Authoritarian Regime: The Case of Spain*. In Erik Allard and Yrjo Littunen. Ed. *Cleavages, Ideologies and Party Systems*. Helsinki: Westermarck Society. 1964.

Linz, Juan J. *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. 2000.

Mann, Michael. *The Sources of Social Power*. Vol. II. *The Rise of Classes and Nation States. 1760-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1993.

McFaul, Michael. "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship- Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World." *World Politics* 54, no. 2 (2002): 212–244.

McFaul, Michael. "Transitions from Postcommunism." *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (2005): 5–19.

McFaul, Michael. "The Second Wave of Democratic Breakthroughs in the Post-Communist World: Comparing Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005." *Danyliw/Jacyk Working Papers*. Center for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies. University of Toronto. 2005.

Muradova, Mina and Rufat Abbasov. "Youth Groups in Azerbaijan Encounter Difficulties during Run-up to Parliamentary Elections". *Eurasianet, Azerbaijan Elections 2005*. November 3, 2005. http://www.eurasianet.org/azerbaijan/news/youth_20051103.html.

Myers, Steven Lee. "Bringing down Europe's last Ex-Soviet Dictator." *New York Times Magazine*. February 26, 2006.

O'Donnell, Guillermo and Philippe C. Schmitter. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1986.

O'Donnell, Guillermo. "Delegative Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 5, no.1 (1994): 55-69.

Ottaway, Marina. *Democracy Challenged. The Rise of Semi- Authoritarianism*. Washington D.C. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2003.

Pribicevic, Ognjen. "Serbia After Milosevic." *Southeast Europe and Black Sea Studies* 4, no. 1 (2004): 107-118.

Page, Jeremy. "West balks at backing revolution as elections loom in oil-rich state". *Times*, November 4, 2005. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article586365.ece>.

Przeworski, Adam. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1991.

- Quinn-Judge, Paul and Yuri Zarakhovich. "The Orange Revolution". *Time*. November 28, 2004. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1101041206-832225-1,00.html>.
- Reichardt, David. "Democracy Promotion in Slovakia: An Import or an Export Business." *Perspectives: Central European Review of International Affairs* 18(2002): 5-20.
- Sakwa, Richard. *Russian Political Evolution: a Structural Approach*, in M. Cox (Ed.) *Rethinking the Soviet Collapse. Sovietology, the Death of Communism and the New Russia*. London, New York: Pinter.1998.
- Sartori, Giovanni. *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House. 1987.
- Schedler, Andreas. "Elections Without Democracy: The Menu of Manipulation." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 36-50.
- Schedler, Andreas. "The Nested Game of Democratization by Elections." *International Political Science Review*, no. 23 (2000):103-122.
- Schleifer, Yigal. "In Azerbaijan 'a Neck-Tie Revolt.'" *CSMonitor*. November 3, 2005. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1103/p06s01-wosc.html>
- Schmitte, Philippe C. and Terry L. Karl. "What Democracy is ... and is not." *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 3. (1991).
- Schumpeter, Joseph. *Capitalism, Socialism und Democracy*. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1947
- Silitski, Vitali. "Preempting Democracy: The Case of Belarus." *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 4 (2005): 83-97.
- Silitski, Vitali. "Is the Age of Post-Soviet Electoral Revolutions Over?" *Democracy at Large* 1 (2005).
- Silitski, Vitali. "Contagion Deterred: Preemptive Authoritarianism in the Former Soviet Union (the Case of Belarus)." *CDDRL Working Papers*. FSI Stanford Publications. 2006.
- Singh, Charu. "A Quiet Cold War," *Frontline* 22, no. 03 (2005).
- Sobergren, Heidi. "Azerbaijan: Presidential Elections October 2003." *NORDEM Report* 06/2004. <http://www.humanrights.uio.no/forskning/publ/nr/2004/06.pdf>.
- Thompson, Mark and Philipp Kuntz." Stolen Elections: The Case of the Serbian October." *Journal of Democracy* 15, no.4 (2004): 159-172.
- Törnquist, Olle. *Repoliticisation of Democracy in Developing Countries: Reflections on an Emerging Trend, in Supporting Political Party Systems – Experiences and Challenges*. Stockholm: SIDA, Division for Democratic Governance. 2005.

Way, Lucan A. "Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave: The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine." *World Politics* 57, no.2. (2005):231–261.

Welt, Cory. *Georgia: Causes of the Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance*. Washington, DC. Management System International. 2005.

Wheatley, Jonathan. *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution; Delayed Transition in the Former Soviet Union*. Ashgate Publishing Co. 2005.

Wilson, Andrew. *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World*. Yale University Press. 2005.

Wilson, Andrew. "After the Orange Revolution: The Nature of Post-Soviet Democracy in Ukraine and Russia." 5th Annual Stasiuk Lecture in Contemporary Ukrainian Studies University of Cambridge, UK, 23 February 2007.

Woronowycz, Roman. "CIS diplomats meet in Kyiv to discuss crisis in Georgia". *Ukraine Weekly*. November 30, 2003, <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/480309.shtml>.

Zakaria, Fareed. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 76, no 6 (1997): 22-43.