

**THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN KYRGYZSTAN AND
WESTERN EUROPE. PATRONAGE NETWORK AS A BASIS FOR
PARTY FORMATION.**

By

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Abstract

Often labelled as the most liberal country in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan has witnessed regime change twice. In March 2005 incumbent Askar Akaev was toppled after the severely criticized parliamentary elections results which led to emergence of numerous anti-Akaev protests that later was entitled as “Tulip Revolution”. April 2010 saw another wave of mass revolts against the President Kurmanbek Bakiev who was supposed to end the extent of informal mechanisms in politics among others, a trademark of Akaev’s regime, saw him being ousted from power. Interim Government that was formed afterwards of “April Events” initiated legislative reforms that resulted in creation of the first parliamentary republic in Central Asia. Reforms led to strengthening the role of political parties, their critical role in forming the executive branch as well as changes in electoral process to the parliament. The major result of Constitutional changes was the partial transfer of presidential responsibilities to the parliament thus limiting president’s power.

However, the political party system in Kyrgyzstan is yet far from being considered sustainable and healthy. The role of party elites act as a basis for the identity of their parties, MPs detach their personal political identities from their parties, or even shift from one party to another, quickly establish or dissolve them. This thesis examines the formation of political parties, provides comparative analysis of party developments in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal. The central claim of the paper is that despite establishment of modern politics patronage continues to play essential role not only in Kyrgyzstan but also in Western European societies as one of main driving forces of political parties. The paper seeks to answer the extent of the concept of patronage in the Kyrgyzstani and Portuguese political landscapes.

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Introduction

This thesis investigates the connection between informal networking and its impact on party formation not only in Kyrgyzstan but also in European countries. Particularly, case of the formation of political parties in Portugal will be used to illustrate that the features of “invisible” politics is not distinctive in Kyrgyzstani politics only but could be traced in European [Portuguese] politics as well.

The following methodology is proposed to answer the research question. The thesis employs comparative analysis to explore major literature on informal networking and their links in political party formation in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal.

The theoretical framework of this paper looks at two theories: first, it is patronage that has the power to wield influence and second, it is as Starr points out “invisible” or informal politics that shapes the electoral processes and composition of the legislature.¹

The paper is divided into three parts each analyzing political party formation in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal. The first chapter deals with political party definitions and their functions. The second chapter discusses party development in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal. The last chapter draws attention to the role of informal networking comparing the formation of political parties in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal.

¹ Frederick Starr, “Clans, Authoritarian Rulers, and Parliaments in Central Asia,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program* (2006): 7; <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/Silkroadpapers/0605Starr_Clans.pdf> (February 28, 2014).

Chapter I: Definitions of Political Party

The term “party” (from the Latin – pars, partis – part of something else) intended for designate a group of individuals who were determined to protect the interests of the part of the population and were known in ancient Greece in the V-IV B.C.² Typically, this association was in support of a certain political figure and such groups focused their efforts to achieve their goals in the name of a particular individual and his supporters.³

Political parties are one of the fundamental features of democratization studies. Literature on political parties in the post-communist period has argued that the emergence and subsequent progress of the political parties is a time-consuming process. Proponents of this view believe that the lack of multiparty socialization during communist domination has been a barrier to party system development and civic movements as such.⁴ However, there are evidences illuminating opposite political party trend development in the post-Soviet era. The evidences seem to prove rapid rise in the proportion of post-Soviet citizens who identify with a political party and who vote for the party with which they identify.⁵ Also there are notable developments of party factions within the parliaments that indicate the rise of the political culture of the citizens of the newly independent states.⁶

Depending on political, economic, cultural and institutional environment the emergence and evolution of the political parties may vary in terms of their content

² Kudaybergen Bazarbaev and Bakytbek Jumagulov, *Political Parties of Kyrgyzstan: Theory and Practice* (Bishkek: Friedrich Ebert Fund, 2012), 8.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Peter Reddaway, “Instability and Fragmentation,” *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 2 (1994); Peter Rutland, “Has Democracy Failed in Russia?” *The National Interest* 38 (1994).

⁵ Matthew Wyman, Stephen White, Bill Miller and Paul Heywood, “Public Opinion, Parties and Voters in the December 1993 Russian Elections,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 47 (1995).

⁶ Steven M. Fish, “Democracy Begins to Emerge,” *Current History* 94, no. 594 (1995).

and scale of functionality. In this regard, it is worth noting that the definition of the political party in academic cohort is quite divergent. Yet, most of the definitions suggest that political party is a unit/organization/group/institution aiming to supersede its rivals in a race for political authority and exert certain degree of influence in decision-making process that may alter socio-political setting of a certain society.

For example, The Electoral Knowledge Network, an online database of elections worldwide defines the political parties as organized groups of people with at least roughly similar political aims and opinions that seek to influence public policy by getting its candidates elected to public offices.⁷ Burnell explains that “political parties are central to the process of democratization as they recruit political leaders, disseminate political information, socialize citizens into democratic politics, manage conflicts of interest and can offer a forum for social and political integration, a tool for nation-building”.⁸ Put it differently, for Burnell political parties are group of elected politicians in office who represent certain stratum of citizens. Thus, political party according to Burnell’s definition is the institutional framework within which party activities can flourish.⁹ Lipset and Rokkan suggest similar definition of the political party arguing that political parties are reflections of concerns of citizens and social cleavages.¹⁰ Thus, political parties should be seen as representatives of groups of people that share common views and interests.

⁷ The Electoral Knowledge Network <<http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/pc/pca/pca01/pca01a>> (February 16, 2014).

⁸ Peter Burnell, “Building Better Democracies. Why Political Parties Matter,” in *Achieving Sustainable Political Change in Emerging Democracies: The Political Party Challenge* (London: Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2004), 5.

⁹ Burnell, “Building Better Democracies,” 3.

¹⁰ Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 7.

Italian Panebianco puts forward the idea that “whatever else parties are, and to whatever other socialization they respond, they are above all organizations”¹¹ where there is a competition for power among members. For him, the best explanation of a party is given when studying the interaction between party’s genesis, its institutional phase, and the environmental pressures.¹² In the explicit study of the party formation Panebianco claims that at its initial stage parties follow the rational model, in accordance with which they are primarily the tools for the implementation of specific goals.¹³ Panebianco points out that during the formation phase of parties, three main factors help us define the party’s evolution, among which he differentiates the following: 1) The organization’s construction and development; 2) The presence or absence of an “external” sponsor institution; and 3) The role of charisma in the party’s formation.¹⁴

The same idea, i.e. political parties as an organization is supported by Ostrogorski, Michels, and Duverger.¹⁵ The latter is considered as one of the founding fathers of the political party theories. Duverger distinguishes two types of political parties: elite and mass-based parties. He argues that:

Elite-based parties seek for quality of their members rather than quantity as members of the parties can yield influence on local or nation-wide scale. Such parties have flexible yet disorganized structures and in general are weakly disciplined allowing of their members greater autonomy of action. Their funding is usually provided by sponsors. On the contrary, mass-based parties have strong discipline and their members identify themselves with the party’s values and programs rather than its leaders. These parties are funded by party members and considered more inclusive to aliens than elite-based parties.¹⁶

¹¹ Angelo Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization & Power* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 6.

¹² Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 163.

¹³ Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 6-7.

¹⁴ Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 51-52.

¹⁵ For more read – Moisei Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902); Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (New York: Hearst’s International Library Co, 1915); Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State* (London: Methuen, 1959).

¹⁶ Duverger, *Political Parties*, 15-16.

Kitschelt proposed classification of political parties from different angle that appears helpful when addressing specifically the issue of young party systems. He distinguishes three ideal-types of the political parties: programmatic, charismatic, and clientelistic parties.¹⁷ The analysis of Kitschelt's classification shows that programmatic parties base their work on specific party programs. They mobilize voters along social cleavages and issues that find explicit articulation in their platforms. The aims and policy proposals outlined in those platforms draw their substantive content from a certain set of ideological values (e.g. conservative, liberal, socialist, communist, or religious values) on which the party nourishes and develops.¹⁸ Consequently, programmatic parties offer real choices between competing programs to the voter so that they represent a credible alternative.

Charismatic parties are defined by the leadership skills of a charismatic person. Everything else in party apparatus is reduced to the personal dimension, and programmatic choice is downgraded to a mere acclamation of the charismatic leader. Voters can neither foresee nor influence the political outcomes of their decision. One related problem with charismatic authority is its inherent instability, stemming from the fact that the regime's persistence hinges on the (political) survival of one single individual, the charismatic leader.¹⁹

Clientelistic parties act as if they abided by and had respect for the rules of the free and fair competition. During electoral campaigns, for instance, they purport to champion the production of collective goods, however, in fact, they provide personal favors, partisan benefits and services for their loyal clientele, hence their

¹⁷ Herbert Kitschelt, "Formation of Party Cleavages in Post-Communist Democracies," *Party Politics* 1, no. 4 (1995): 449.

¹⁸ Aurel Croissant and Wolfgang Merkel, "Political Party Formation in Presidential and Parliamentary System," *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Philippine Office* (2004): 2-3; <<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/philippinen/50072.pdf>> (February 26, 2014).

¹⁹ Croissant and Merkel, "Political Party Formation," 3.

behavior gives rise to cynicism and undermines the citizens' trust in democratic institutions.²⁰

However, in reality, it seems nearly impossible to find pure political party which would resemble to any type of Kitschelt's party classification as modern political parties are the combination of one, two or all types of parties assembled together.

In Schumpeter's definition political party is "a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for power".²¹ This view represents significance of elections for parties. Generally, legislation of many countries foresee that, political parties are voluntary union of citizens with common political goals and ideological stances that motivate them to implement the political will of particular stratum of the population based on principles of legality, openness, freedom of action, voluntary membership, and equality of members. Therefore, practically all political parties tussle to earn the right to govern the state policy, be it at local, regional or national levels.

Functions of Political Party

Textbooks and studies of political parties usually present an inventory of "the functions of party" as though these were as regularly part of the political process as stages in the passage of a bill or what the judicial system does. At the present time, political scientists cannot state with any degree of confidence the conditions under which any political structure will function in a particular way, and yet we continue to talk about [party] functions as though the whole issue was settled.²² The most general functions of the political parties according to King are: (1) the structuring of the vote;

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Joseph Schumpeter, ed., *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1942), 283.

²² Theodore J. Lowi, "Toward Functionalism in Political Science: The Case of Innovations in Party Systems," *American Political Science Review* LVII, (1963): 571.

(2) the integration and mobilization of the mass public; (3) the recruitment of political leaders; (4) the organization of government; (5) the formation of public policy; and (6) the aggregation of interests.²³

Function 1: Structuring of the Vote

“Structuring the vote”, in Epstein's words, “is the minimum function of a political party in a modern democracy”.²⁴ Efforts to structure the vote can range from the simple allocation of party labels to candidates to the conduct of large-scale educational and propaganda campaigns. Indeed, vote-structuring is often bound up with the educational, persuasive, and representational functions to which many writers refer.²⁵

Function 2: Mobilization of the Mass Public

There are several studies dealing with the impact of party activity on the mass public. Their findings are broadly similar, and it is probably fair to take Eldersveld's study of Wayne County as representative.²⁶ An analysis of the relationship between exposure to party activity and indices of political optimism and pessimism led Eldersveld to conclude: “Party contact appears to fortify and accentuate public confidence by making the citizen feel that he has some importance in our complex political system”.²⁷ Moreover, when Eldersveld tried to assess the relative roles of television and party in fostering support for the political system, television seemed at least as powerful an agency as party.²⁸ It should be noted that there are many other agencies to influence minds of mass: family, friends, co-workers, formal institutions, mass media, contact with government officials etc.

²³ Anthony King, “Political Parties in Western Democracies: Some Sceptical Reflections,” *Polity* 2, no. 2 (1969): 120.

²⁴ Leon D. Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (New York: Praeger, 1968), 77.

²⁵ King, “Political Parties,” 120.

²⁶ Samuel J. Eldersveld, *Political Parties: A Behavioural Analysis* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1961).

²⁷ Eldersveld, *Political Parties*, 500.

²⁸ Eldersveld, *Political Parties*, 519-522.

Function 3: Recruitment of Political Leaders

The recruitment function can be dealt with somewhat more straightforwardly, partly because the concept of recruitment is itself tolerably precise, and partly because the role of party in recruitment is relatively – though only relatively – easy to delimit.²⁹ However, what is interesting to observe is the extent political parties play in the recruitment process. Seligman, while not sharing this view fully himself, notes that, “for some, the functions of nominating and electing candidates for political elective office are attributed exclusively to political parties”.³⁰ He observes at another point that “in selection of leadership, political parties play a special and sometimes exclusive function”.³¹

Function 4: Organization of Government

The organization function is referred to in almost all writings on parties but, like the recruitment function, is seldom defined precisely. In some contexts words like “control” and “integration” are as appropriate as “organization”. What is meant is the arrangements under which, or the processes whereby, persons in government or the various elements of government come to act in concert. Unlike the recruitment function, the organization function is one that need be performed not at all, or at least only to a limited degree. Men in government and the various elements of government may not act in concert; on the contrary, governments are at least as likely to be at the mercy of centrifugal as of centripetal forces, with colleague divided from colleague, department from department, judiciary from executive, executive from legislature.³²

Function 5: Formation of Public Policy

The policy-making role of party can be discussed from two different points of view: in terms of the relationship between party and electorate and in terms of the relationship between party and government.³³ Parties in government may implement party policy for electoral reasons; they may implement it for all sorts of other reasons ranging from conscientious ideological belief to pressure from (say) the party

²⁹ King, “Political Parties,” 129.

³⁰ Lester G. Seligman, “Political Parties and the Recruitment of Political Leadership,” 295, quoted in Anthony King, “Political Parties in Western Democracies: Some Sceptical Reflections,” *Polity* 2, no. 2 (1969): 129.

³¹ *Ibid*

³² King, “Political Parties,” 132.

³³ King, “Political Parties,” 135.

militants; or they may not implement it at all.³⁴ It is worth saying a word here about the governmental aspect. Of course, if a particular government is organized by party, there is a wholly trivial sense in which it can always be said that the government's policies are *ipso facto* party policies.³⁵ But there are probably only three strict ways in which political parties can influence public policy apart from the role they play in the selection of political leaders: by influencing the content of political thought and discussion; by adopting specific policies or programs which the party's leaders, once elected, feel constrained (for whatever reason) to implement; or by successfully bringing pressure to bear on government, as when a governing party's followers in the legislature or in the country use the processes of the party to force the government to adopt particular policies.³⁶

Function 6: Aggregation of Interests

In political analysis, the concept of “aggregation” has not been defined precisely. Almond in one of the original formulations wrote: “Every political system has some way of aggregating the interests, claims, and demands which have been articulated by the interest groups of the polity. Aggregation may be accomplished by means of the formulation of general policies in which interests are combined, accommodated, or otherwise taken account of, or by means of the recruitment of political personnel, more or less committed to a particular pattern of policy”.³⁷ Almond and Powell say simply that, “The function of converting demands into general policy alternatives is called interest aggregation”.³⁸

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Howard A. Scarrow, “The Function of Political Parties: A Critique of the Literature and the Approach,” *Journal of Politics* 29, (1967): 783-785.

³⁶ King, “Political Parties,” 135.

³⁷ Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, ed., *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960), 39.

³⁸ Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell Jr., *Comparative Politics: A Development Approach* (Boston: Little Brown, 1966), 98.

Patronage and Political Party

Presently, a number of theoretical works and a myriad of empirical analyses of patronage and clientalism in modern societies exist. These studies explicitly voiced a number of important observations. First, patron-client arrangements are not destined to disappear or even to remain on the margins of the society with the establishment of modern regimes. Rather than dying out, the patron-client relationship has been found to crystallize in a great variety of forms.³⁹ Second, patronage and clientalism assume certain logic of social exchange; that is, clientalistic arrangements are built around asymmetric but mutually beneficial and open ended transactions.⁴⁰ Third, patron-client relations either have long permeated the central core of the society or have become an 'addendum' to the central institutional modes of organization, interaction and exchange.⁴¹

What does “patronage” mean? Lately, the terms appear with increased frequency in political science. In its broad explanation, patronage means reciprocal relations between patrons and clients. Usually patron is a person who uses his influence to assist and protect some other person, who then becomes his “client”, and in return, the client provides certain services for his patron. Patronage is thus the complex of relations between those who use their influence, social position or some other attribute to assist and protect others, and those whom they so help and protect.⁴² The structure of the system of patronage, which is based on social relationships between clients seeking for a man with the ability and friendship connections to protect them and a patron who accepts these duties in return for political allegiance, grows upwards and through lawyers, other persons of influence,

³⁹ Nizar A. Hamzeh, “Clientalism, Lebanon: Roots and Trends,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 3 (2001): 167.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Jeremy Boissevain, “Patronage in Sicily,” *Man* 1, no.1 (1966): 18.

and Members of Parliament, is linked to the legislative assembly.⁴³ Thus the organization of government and the structure of patronage are parallel hierarchies.⁴⁴

In such scheme, patron has the power to give some benefit which the client desires. It could be anything, from minimum to maximum, ranging from local to national constituencies. Thus, patron-client relations are treated within political realm. That is, patronage refers to the ways in which party politicians distribute public jobs or special favours in exchange for electoral support. In this regard, the political party is the major unit where patron-client inter-relationships occur. For example, Key writes that patronage may be considered “as the response of government to the demands of an interest group - the party machinery - that desires a particular policy in the distribution of public jobs”.⁴⁵ Sorauf continues that “patronage is best thought of as an incentive system – a political currency with which to purchase political activity and political responses. The chief functions of patronage are: maintaining an active party organization, promoting intra-party cohesion, attracting voters and supporters, financing the party and its candidates, procuring favourable government action, creating party discipline in policy making”.⁴⁶ In political science the key terms associated with patronage are “resources, bosses, alignment and political machine”. Patronage from this perspective is therefore largely the study of how political party leaders seek to turn public institutions and public resources to their own ends, and how favours of various kinds are exchanged for votes.⁴⁷

⁴³ Alex Weingrod, “Patrons, Patronage, and Political Parties,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 10, no. 4 (1968): 377.

⁴⁴ J. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 260.

⁴⁵ V. O. Key, *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1964), 348.

⁴⁶ F. Sorauf, “The Silent Revolution in Patronage,” quoted in Alex Weingrod, “Patrons, Patronage, and Political Parties,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 10, no. 4 (1968): 379.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Why are patron-client ties prevalent in certain types of societies? Responding to this question leads in two closely related directions: first, to a consideration of the political organization of the state, and second, to an analysis of the relationships between the different segments that compose the state.⁴⁸ To put it simply, patron-client ties can be seen to arise within a state structure in which authority is disoriented and state actions limited in scale, and in which considerable gap exists between the rural and urban living standards. Party-directed patronage, on the other hand, is associated with the expanding scope and general proliferation of state activities, and also with the growing integration of village, city and state.⁴⁹

The scholarship on political parties defines them differently. However, most agree that political parties are central to democratization studies and all of them struggle to get elected to public offices and earn the right to participate in governing the state. Also the literature on political parties suggests that parties could be programmatic, charisma-based and clientalistic. Yet, it should be noted that there is barely parties which are hundred percent programmatic or clientalistic. Rather parties are combination of one, two or all of three types of parties. Kyrgyz and Portuguese parties are not exceptions.

Chapter II: Political Party Development in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal

Political Parties in Kyrgyzstan

Since its independence from the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics (USSR) in 1991, Kyrgyzstan has been struggling to build a viable democratic society. Considered as an “island of democracy” of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan’s political environment is indeed the most liberal than in any other Central Asian countries. According to the Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan, there are 190

⁴⁸ Weingrod, “Patrons and Patronage,” 381.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

registered political parties.⁵⁰ For a country with approximately six million population the number of parties is very high. In spite of being a champion of sowing seeds of democracy in Central Asia, the political party growth in this country has barely been serious. Political parties rarely took central stage in the key political events throughout the country's independence period. They did not even play decisive role in toppling Akaev's and Bakiev's regimes in March 2005 and April 2010 respectively. As most analyses of the political processes of Kyrgyzstan illustrate, the parties have been much behind other types of actors (individual politicians, clientelist networks, ad hoc political movements and so on) in terms of their ability to organize the popular mobilization, accumulate and reflect the concerns of particular groups of the society and articulate particular sets of policy-related priorities and values.⁵¹

In June 2010, a new Constitution of Kyrgyzstan was adopted after the removal of Kurmanbek Bakiev which set up a parliamentary form of governance, the first of its type not only in Kyrgyzstan but in the post-Soviet space (excluding the Baltic nations). The new Constitution foresees a step forward in strengthening the role of the political parties in forming the parliament, parliament's role in forming the executive branch, limiting the president's authority and preventing the emergence of a dominant political party in the parliament.⁵² While most of those "rules" were indeed present in the previous Constitution, the vital difference in 2010 elections to the parliament was the absence of the single powerful incumbent who could fully

⁵⁰ Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan, "The List of Political Parties," Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan; <http://minjust.gov.kg/?page_id=6551> (February 15, 2014).

⁵¹ Shairbek Juraev, "Political Parties in Kyrgyzstan: 2010-2013 Update" (unpublished paper presented to international conference organized by Central Asia Program and Uppsala Centre for Russian Studies, Bishkek, 2012).

⁵² Articles 4, 63, 67, 70-85 of the Constitution of Kyrgyzstan foresee reaffirmation of the role of political parties, Jogorku Kenesh's role in forming the executive power, decrease of president's authority and increase of parliament's influence. Article 70 prevents a political party taking more than 65 deputy mandates in Jogorku Kenesh. For more visit – World Intellectual Property Organization, "Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic," World Intellectual Property Organization; <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=254747> (February 27, 2014).

control the election campaign and vote calculation and thus, cancel the beauty of the constitutional clauses.⁵³

Despite the abundance of political parties, party contrast in Kyrgyzstan is quite similar. It is hard to find distinct contrast between political parties officially registered by the Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan. “A party should follow an ideological orientation, but this is not what Kyrgyzstan has at the moment” says Nogoibaeva.⁵⁴

Analyses of the speeches of the former and recent contenders to presidency of Kyrgyzstan show that the rhetoric of the candidates, there is not much difference. They all chant for the interests of the people, i.e., assurance that they will not allow a repetition of the past (meaning usurpation of power); that they will fight against nepotism, corruption; and they have the capacity to bring the country to prosperous future. “If there is any difference between the current parties, then it relates to the closeness of their leaders to the levers of real power in Kyrgyzstan. And the greater the distance from these instruments, the greater willingness of party leaders to risk everything in the struggle for power, precisely because they may have no other choice”.⁵⁵

“We have no classical parties of international standard” recognized the former Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament, Zainidin Kurmanov.⁵⁶

A characteristic feature of existing political parties in Kyrgyzstan is that their structure resembles a pyramid. At the heart of it are ordinary members, who usually are members of the kin, countrymen, distant and close relatives of the leader (or

⁵³ Juraev, “Political Parties in Kyrgyzstan”.

⁵⁴ Elmira Nogoibaeva, “The Most Difficult Part of the Political Struggle is after the Elections and Formation of the Government,” Akipress, <<http://analitika.akipress.org/new:1041>.> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 52-53.

⁵⁵ Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 53.

⁵⁶ Zainidin Kurmanov, “We Do Not Have Parties of International Patterns,” Akipress, <<http://vybory.akipress.org/news:4281/>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 53.

leaders) of the party. They are followed by lower and middle echelon managers and party activists. All of them usually perform their duties for a determined fee or a promise to obtain a desired “lucrative” position. It is mid-level activists that enrol “party members” for another “party event,” prepare party lists, and give out rewards to the most active participants. Party members upholding an ideological course constitute a minority.⁵⁷

“Election results in our country depend on money, meals, vodka” says Madumarov. As a rule, votes of electors are bought in a direct or indirect manner. “On the polling day,” he continues, a short “happy life” begins: good food, vodka, concerts and national games”.⁵⁸

The number of political parties in Kyrgyzstan is impressive but it does not speak in favor of political pluralism. “Mushrooming” of the parties could be the result of easiness of establishing and registering them. As the most literature on political developments and party formation in Kyrgyzstan demonstrate party system remains tolerant to concepts clan, kin, and tribe. Moreover, the complex nature of north vs. south is an unavoidable issue in Kyrgyzstan. “It is no secret that all our parties are based on friends and relatives” said the former MFA Ednan Karabaev in 2011.⁵⁹ The incumbent president at the time, Roza Otunbaeva, testified to this when she expressed hope that in the course of time “real parties will remain in Kyrgyzstan, parties united by the community of ideas, not by pre-election alliances based on capital or geographical (local) belonging”.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Bugazov, “Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” 53.

⁵⁸ Adakhan Madumarov, “Otunbaeva Will Be Remembered in History As the Self-Elected President,” *Jany Ordo* 1, Bishkek, 2011 quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 53.

⁵⁸ Bugazov, “Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” 54.

⁵⁹ Ednan Karabaev, “Morals of Double Standards of Our Politicians Were Washed by Blood of Southern Kyrgyzstan,” 24.kg <<http://www.24kg.org/politic/90648.html>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 54.

⁶⁰ “Delivering a Speech at the Diplomatic Academy of France Roza Otunbaeva Noted that Many Experts Evaluating Situation in Kyrgyz Republic Use Outdated Stereotypes,” 24.kg <<http://kg.akipress.org/news:339741>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 55.

“We have forty clans, and on the flag there are forty golden rays. And all these forty clans should wield the scepter for some time” said Aleksander Katsev of the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University.⁶¹ According to law, at least ten people should constitute to form a political party in Kyrgyzstan.⁶² Because of easy process and liberal rules to form the political party it is hard to estimate the exact number of the parties as many of those officially registered may not even exist in reality. As a result, the country has a great number of parties, but no real political force.

The relationship between various political parties and their leaders is not determined by any common strategic interests and political views but rather hatred and sense of strong disenfranchisement from the political arena. Yet, there may be formed alliances between parties or typically, between party leaders against particular target at certain points. For example, alliance between Ata-Jurt and Butun Kyrgyzstan to earn votes in the south during parliamentary elections of 2010 was based more on geographic identification than political orientation of leaders of the parties or parties themselves. These are the so-called “roving” politicians, and their number considerably increases before scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections.⁶³

As Kurmanov put it “Kyrgyzstan has become a country of nomadic leaders, moving from party to party”.⁶⁴

Associations of this kind are not of a long-term nature; rather, they are situational. Such alliances are rather surprising and unpredictable: for example, the alliance of Felix Kulov with Tursunbek Bakir uulu and Akyzbek Japarov of the Ar-Namys Party made little sense. The party of current President Almazbek Atambaev, the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, has at various times become a haven and fulcrum for such different politicians as Bakyt Beshimov, Roza Otunbayeva, Temir Sariev,

⁶¹ Bugazov, “Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” 55.

⁶² СоюзПравоИнформ, “Law on Political Parties in Kyrgyzstan,” СоюзПравоИнформ; <http://base.spinform.ru/show_doc.fwx?rgn=170> (2 March 2014).

⁶³ Bugazov, “Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” 56.

⁶⁴ Zainidin Kurmanov, “We Do Not Have Parties of International Patterns,” Akipress, <<http://vybory.akipress.org/news:4281/>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 56.

Omurbek Babanov, Edil Baisalov, and others. Later, almost all of them created their “own” parties and specific niches. The best known union of this kind in the history of sovereign Kyrgyzstan was the tandem of Kurmanbek Bakiev and Felix Kulov in 2005, after the overthrow of Askar Akaev.⁶⁵

It appears that such short-term alliances are possible because none of the political actors represented in Kyrgyzstani politics today wish to lose their place in the political arena as it brings certain dividends in the form of influence, immunity, access to lucrative resources capable of generating profit, protection and alike benefits no one seems ready to sacrifice. Also such pacts or coalitions seem feasible because the local political establishment is uninterested in political programs and the implementation of such programs. Thus, such parties, alliances, peoples’ movements are easily mobilized or dispersed likewise.

The role of the leader is of great significance in any community, whether a small group of people or a mass of people constituting the population of the region or country. The leader plays a special role in the social composition and further development of his/her people. It is no wonder that political entities in Kyrgyzstan are the parties of a leadership type. Their leaders, not their programs, are the basis of their authority. This assertion has its historic substantiation. For example, from the viewpoint of Radlov, in the life of nomadic people it is extremely important to understand that “it is only through the influence of certain persons (tribal leaders) that powerful tribal complexes are formed from very small ones in the shortest possible time,” and how “these personalities usurp the Khan’s power.” He further emphasized that “only the strong hand of a Khan is in a position to keep the state of nomads in peace and on the alert; and the Khan will be able to unite non-connected tribal elements into a strong formation, only if he is able to immediately suppress any

⁶⁵ Bugazov, “Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” 56.

uprising against his power, because the nomadic state quickly disintegrates when the strong hand of the Khan weakens and becomes powerless”.⁶⁶

Today, this notion is as popular among Kyrgyz politicians as ever. For example, Madumarov is convinced that it is not critical how a government institution is organized; rather, it is of greater importance what kind of person possesses power. Madumarov confirmed his statement by comparing Russia in the period of Yeltsin and Putin: “The country was as different in these two periods as heaven and earth. Hence, the reason is in the personality, the human being. It all depends on who exactly governs the country”.⁶⁷ Today as in the past, personification of power is a characteristic feature of Kyrgyzstani politics. “In order to lead all the deputies in the same direction, the leader of the faction must have high credibility,” says the well-known leader of the Ata-Meken party Tekebayev.⁶⁸

The leader of the Ata-Jurt party, Tashiev offered the following explanation of why the provisional government could not prevent the June (2010) events in the south of Kyrgyzstan: Massacres became possible, he claimed, because no official in power at that time – Atambaev, Sariev, or Otunbaeva – could have stopped even ten Kyrgyz, because these politicians did not enjoy credibility, and the people did not listen to them.⁶⁹ When a coalition bloc in the Jogorku Kenesh and the government are created, personal relations between the party leaders are a predominant factor,

⁶⁶ Vasily V. Radlov, *Die Altürkischen Inschriften der Mongolei – Dritte Lieferung* (St Petersburg: 1895), 310 quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 57.

⁶⁷ Adahan Madumarov, “Otunbaeva Will Be Remembered in History As the Self-Elected President,” *Jany Ordo* 1, Bishkek, 2011 quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 58.

⁶⁸ Omurbek Tekebaev, “To Cancel the Constitution and Decrees, Return Everything to Bakiev’s Kin?” *ferghana.ru* <<http://www.ferghana.ru/article.php?id=6735>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 62.

⁶⁹ Kamchibek Tashiev, “If Russians, Uzbeks or Turks Claim – They are Equal to Kyrgyz or Above Them – State Will Collapse,” *ferghana.ru* <<http://www.ferghana.ru/article.php?id=6728>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 60.

superseding public, ideological and even clan relations. Indeed, such personal relationships may eventually destroy not only coalitions and alliances in the parliament, but also parliamentary parties.⁷⁰

Subsequently, informal mode of interaction between MPs and other elected officials and electorate led to regime changes twice in the past which motivates people to plan and attempt the next coercive seizure of power, leading to a vicious cycle of recurrent overthrows of government. Leaders of clans, tribes will just accept this way of coming to the power. “This principle of approach to power,” says Sariev, “will finally put a cross on our evolutionary path, will split and separate the nation, while regional thinking will gain the upper hand over the sense of belonging to a single nation. Every clan will start to demand that the supreme power be immediately given to their leader. And the worst of it will be an endless redistribution of property mainly carried out in compliance with the regional “apprehensions” of what tribe and clan one belongs to”.⁷¹

This raises the question why power cannot be transferred legitimately, through general parliamentary or presidential elections, as is regular in democratic societies? Here several circumstances require attention. First, one must recall that elections in Kyrgyzstan normally favour the ruling elite; consequently, the leaders of other interest-groups do not rely upon this method [legitimate] of achieving power. Hence, the legal grounds for political struggle are actually not considered by politicians, but are only needed up to a certain time to serve as a decorative cover for the incumbent authorities.

⁷⁰ Daniyar Karimov, “Parliament Kg: Will You Be the Third?” *CentrAsia* <<http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1289722740>> quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 62.

⁷¹ Temir Sariev, *Shah of Kyrgyz Democracy* (Bishkek: 2008), 12 quoted in Anvar Bugazov, “Socio Cultural Characteristics of Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2013): 62.

Second, the mindset of local political establishment is driven to defy the rules of the legal elevation to the power. If one wants to get the power, one should wait or simply unseat the incumbent and eventually the power will in his/her hands. Furthermore, if one group is in charge and is not willing to share the power, why should another group not simply grab it? Thus, the leaders of the local interest-groups are faced with great temptation to seize power instead of pursuing legitimate means of rising into the Olympus.

In most authoritarianism countries undemocratic governance provokes the creation of a personality cult. Its various forms are easily seen in all of the Central Asian states. For example, celebration of Tajik language day in Tajikistan is either coincidence or intentional decision by the authorities with the birthday of Emomali Rakhmon.⁷² The Day of Turkmenistan's Flag was ordered to be celebrated simultaneously with the birthday of Saparmurat Turkmenbashi.⁷³ The birthday of the Kazakh President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was called "The Day of Kazakhstan's Capital City".⁷⁴ The birthday of the Uzbek President Islam Karimov is not formally publicized but state media heavily demonstrates county's achievements during its independence on his birthday January 30. It is interesting to observe such "love" and "loyalty" to the leader as it brings doubts about peoples' sincerity. It is more interesting to watch when such "leaders" come to end the feelings of the people immediately change to precisely the opposite, i.e., hatred and anger.

Thus, we can observe a certain succession in the development of power structures in Kyrgyzstan, and in Central Asia as a whole: first, a significant role of

⁷² Mehrangez Tursunzoda, "State Language Day Coincides with the 60th Birthday of Emomali Rakhmon," <<http://news.tj/en/news/state-language-day-coincides-60th-birthday-emomali-rahmon>> ASIA Plus; (March 5, 2014).

⁷³ Flag Day in Turkmenistan, <<http://everydaysaholiday.org/flag-day-in-turkmenistan/>> (March 7, 2014).

⁷⁴ Zbigniew Rokita, "All the President's Birthday," New Eastern Europe; <<http://neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/814-all-the-president-s-birthdays>> (March 9, 2014).

personality in the organization of the power system, then its personification and, ultimately, authoritarianism and the promotion of a personality cult.⁷⁵ Bugazov notes that Askar Akayev was elected as president at the most difficult historical time. As a highly intelligent and credible person with a well-deserved reputation as an intellectual, he was seen as the perfect political leader. However, corruption and mismanagement led to his overthrow in 2005.⁷⁶

Notwithstanding, it is perhaps encouraging that in modern Kyrgyzstan the function of the leader is changing to play more the role of inter-party moderator. Not every leader has enough self-control, wisdom and flexibility to check and organize his ambitious colleagues. This role includes the functions of a manager and conflict mediator. In transition periods, it is this type of leader that is most effective in managing the most “ambitious” people in the country.⁷⁷

Thus, it should be stressed that the “problem” of Central Asian politics is not simply one of presidential might vs. feckless parliaments—a relationship which Starr calls “Politics A”. Indeed, that relationship is something of a sideshow to what is occurring on the main political stage, which is dominated by great power brokers and the networks they control. On that main stage, presidents and parties, as well as parliaments, are engaged in a constant struggle with these power brokers and networks. Presence of these informal politics Starr calls “Politics B.” Because the key factors in “Politics B” are virtually invisible to outsiders, they have proven frustratingly elusive.⁷⁸

Political Parties in Portugal

Portugal is a country located in south-west of the European continent. Today with a population of a little more than 10 million, Portugal had been one of the mightiest countries prior up until the beginning of 19th century. However, it lost much of its wealth and status when Brazil, its crown jewel became independent in

⁷⁵ Bugazov, “Civil Society Formation in Kyrgyzstan,” 63.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Starr, “Clans in Central Asia,” 6-7.

early 19th century. The year of 1910 saw abolishment of monarchy in Portugal. From 1926-1974 Portugal was governed by militaristic group headed by Antonio Salazar. This period is widely considered as dictatorial age in Portuguese history. April 25, 1974 witnessed “Carnation Revolution” which overthrew Salazar’s almost half-century dictatorship. Constitution of 1976 brought an end to presidential republic and started parliamentary republic form of governance.

In a widely quoted work, Huntington has described the Portuguese introduction to democracy in the mid-1970s as the beginning of the third wave of democratization.⁷⁹ A stable party system quickly emerged, and by 1976 four parties represented almost 90 percent of the electorate.⁸⁰ They are: **a)** Social Democratic Party (PSD – Partido Social Democrato); **b)** Portuguese Communist Party (PCP – Partido Comunista Portugues); **c)** Party of Democratic and Social Centre (CDS – Centro Democratico Social) and; **d)** Socialist Party (PS – Partido Socialista). Apart from Portuguese Communist Party, all three parties were established after the “Carnation Revolution” of 1974.

Freire writes that in spite of the existence of some civic and political liberties – namely freedom of association and of press – there were severe limitations to their functioning as democratic political regimes. Elections were, at best, only semi-competitive, and did not operate as a mechanism for government alternation. Moreover, relations between the political parties and civil society were based mainly on the patronage networks that existed between the electors and their

⁷⁹ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991) quoted in Cristina Lestoon-Bandeira, “The Portuguese Parliament during the First Two Decades of Democracy,” *West European Politics* 24, no. 1 (2001): 137.

⁸⁰ Andre Freire, “The Party System of Portugal,” in *Die Parteien-systeme Westeuropas* (Wiesbaden: GWV Fachverlage GmbH, 2006), 373.

representatives.⁸¹ As Jalali states: “The patronage networks that had been established by local notables, and upon which the New State (Antonio Salazar proclaimed the period starting from 1933 till he was ousted from office 1968 – New State symbolising his reign over domestic affairs) relied for support, were incorporated into the right-wing parties, and the Partido Popular Democrático (PPD that changed its name to Social Democratic Party PSD in February 1976) in particular.⁸²

With the exception of the Communist Party of Portugal, none of the parties had any kind of interaction with the electorate. As Freire noted, in order to compensate for this, the parties have relied on patronage networks and state support in forging relations with civil society, and have ill-defined ideological profiles. The leaders of these parties play a determining role in the political direction their party may take (this is particularly true of the CDS and its successor, the PP).⁸³

Increasing concern about corruption in particular and informal way of interaction since the 1980s in many Western European democracies should be seen with reference to the activity of political parties. Party financing, in particular, has opened many opportunities for corruption. Some features of party life have helped illegality to expand such as clientelism, patronage and gerrymandering while some other developments have mitigated against it, notably the decline in electoral fraud and coercive tactics of voting, which are now associated with only a few local party bosses in rural and suburban areas.⁸⁴ Contrary to developments in other European democracies, the Portuguese political class and the citizens have remained largely unmoved by the growing illegality surrounding party and electoral financing. In spite

⁸¹ Freire, “The Party System of Portugal,” 375.

⁸² Carlos V. Jalali, “The Evolution of the Portuguese Party System in Comparative European Perspective Since 1974” (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2002).

⁸³ Freire, “The Party System of Portugal,” 376.

⁸⁴ Luis De Sousa, “Political Parties and Corruption in Portugal,” *West European Politics* 24, no. 1 (2001): 157.

of this, the extension of illicit party financing in Portugal is not substantially different from that revealed elsewhere in Europe.

With the exception of the Communists, who have traditionally recruited their cadres from dedicated activists, party leaderships are not representative of their electoral bases. Parties remain “different arrangements of personalities”, attracting a multitude of interests and clienteles important to electoral success.⁸⁵ This has been a traditional pattern of recruitment of party elites has been central to party corruption in Portugal. Given the increasingly technical nature of legislative and regulatory processes, parties have increasingly felt the need to recruit personnel known for their professional expertise and first-hand experience.⁸⁶ The proliferation of new party technocrats, appointed to senior positions and ministerial cabinets under a weak regime of incompatibilities inflicted considerable damage on an administration facing a difficult road to modernization by reducing its capacity to check upon executive rule. Moreover, the newly appointed personnel have also become important inside mediators between party and client interests and important fund raisers – public office being no less than *la place* ideal des affaires.⁸⁷ In an environment where conflicts of interest were largely ignored, the opportunities for personal and party enrichment grew apace.⁸⁸

Another feature common to all parties, with the exception of the Communists, is the continuous association of party leaderships with senior officials from the corporatist regime, who have been able to preserve and further their political careers in different parties. These 'backbenchers' were central to the re-emergence of the clientelistic networks that proliferated during Caetano's technocrat interlude. But they were equally significant in accommodating the new arrivistes to an attitude of laxity towards conflicts of interest, which predominates in the Portuguese political and administrative culture. In short, political parties acquired the reputation of being

⁸⁵ F. Lopes, “Partisanship and Political Clientelism in Portugal (1983-1993),” *South European Society & Politics* 2, no. 3 (1997): 30.

⁸⁶ See P. Portas and P. Valente, “O primeiro-ministro: estudo sobre o poder executivo em Portugal,” *Análise Social* 25, no. 107 (1990).

⁸⁷ Sousa, “Political Parties in Portugal,” 158.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

mechanisms allowing rapacious politicians to accede to office and subsequent wealth.⁸⁹

As Rogow and Lasswell put it, “if the membership of an institution does not collectively enforce rectitude standards, the tendency toward individual corruption is increased”.⁹⁰ To varying degrees, local clientelistic networks became a financial safety source for all parties. The Portuguese political system rests upon a fusion between national and local tiers of government that explains the relationship between patronage and clientelism and the illicit mechanisms of party financing.⁹¹ Party patronage and clientelism at the centre secured public investment and other decisions favorable to sympathetic local authorities and their clientles.⁹²

Elected officials or parties that obtained most votes systematically refused to work with an administration led by members of another often defeated party, as the latter could hardly be trusted to pursue the incumbents' interests and financial needs. These practices proved counterproductive to democracy building in Portugal and formed a major opportunity for illegal party financing, through the abuse and misappropriation of public money and resources.⁹³

The anti-corruption initiatives of 1983 changed little in regard to party patronage and the clientelistic manipulation inside the State apparatus.⁹⁴ He further says that parties continued to get closer and closer to State structures and resources despite growing discontent over party life. This process, recently termed the

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ A. Rogow and H. Lasswell, *Power, Corruption and Rectitude* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), 58-59.

⁹¹ Sousa, “Political Parties in Portugal,” 159.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Sousa, “Political Parties in Portugal,” 161.

⁹⁴ Sousa, “Political Parties in Portugal,” 163.

“cartelisation of European party systems”, helped to create a climate of connivance amongst major political parties in relation to the abuse of public office and money.⁹⁵

Unlike elsewhere in Europe, where organized interest groups remained exterior to the State apparatus, in Portugal there was a clear tendency to institutionalize these outside interests. This was made possible, for example, through the creation of consultation and concentration mechanisms (for example, Conselho Nacional do Plano, later Conselho Economico e Social); by directly assisting or organizing those interests (for example, Associacao Nacional de Municipios); or even by recruiting members of interest groups into party electoral lists. Instead of substituting the centrality of parties in the state apparatus, interest groups helped to strengthen party clientelism and patronage at different tiers of government.⁹⁶

Party patronage in the public sector persisted in a climate of consensus between the two major political forces at the center (PS and PSD). The appointment of top managers and directors to public companies and public spending bodies – termed by the media as “the managers' dance” – continued to be based on political purges and a selective redistribution of positions proportional to the number of votes won. This system of *lottizzazione*, as it is called, would later constitute “an important source of conflict between and within the PSD and the PS”.⁹⁷

This helped informal politics to expand and take new forms. “Where alternations in government cannot or do not occur or do not bring the opposition effectively to power”, writes LaPalombara, “We will encounter the most pernicious instances of market corruption”.⁹⁸ By the mid-1990s, a large number of senior administrative and public management positions had been allocated to Social Democratic Party (PSD) members or its adherents, despite attempts to renew and reshuffle public sector. The “revolving door” system had also been subject to criticism: the executive directors of the ten largest companies were PSD ex-ministers

⁹⁵ See R. Katz and P. Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party,” *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995).

⁹⁶ Sousa, “Political Parties in Portugal,” 164.

⁹⁷ Lopes, “Partisanship, Clientelism in Portugal,” 34-35.

⁹⁸ J. LaPalombara, “Structural and Institutional Aspects of Corruption”, *Social Research* 61, no. 2 (1994): 340.

or Secretaries of State, or had held temporary appointed office.⁹⁹ By the end of its second term in office, the extent of PSD patronage and clientelism was such that it could not be kept hidden from a disillusioned public.¹⁰⁰

Elections of 1995 demonstrated the government's disunity and clashes of interests of major political party leaders. Factions reappeared disputing the leadership, despite the party's desperate attempt to maintain a cohesive image to its electorate. Sousa notes that in the aftermath of the PSD Congress in April 1995, old party figures made transparent their dislike for the way the Social Democrat governments had been closely associated with an image of clientelism, patronage and sleaze. The last sign of desperation came just before the elections, when PSD members and sympathizers started their final run for public sinecures and favors before the party's expected collapse.¹⁰¹

In short, the tendency to tolerate corruption, and party corruption in particular, is closely related to the appraisal of individual or affinity group success (that is, the family, the party) in society.¹⁰² The existence of corruption in party politics in Portugal, over the last twenty years, can't be detached from the belief that legal and moral requirements of public life are to be ignored, once certain individual or group interests are more relevant. All in all, most of the community has accepted

⁹⁹ Sousa, "Political Parties in Portugal," 165.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ "An opinion poll published by the newspaper Expresso September 2, 1995 Issue," quoted in Luis De Sousa, "Political Parties and Corruption in Portugal," *West European Politics* 24, no. 1 (2001): 167.

¹⁰² "A recent survey by the Catholic University in collaboration with O Publico/Antena Um/RTP showed that a mere eight per cent of the interviewed believed corruption was a major problem in Portugal (Cf. O Publico, 9 May 2000, p.4). The figure is more illustrative of the degree of tolerance towards the phenomenon when viewed together with the levels of demand for public works, employment and welfare provisions and the levels of interest in politics. Most citizens are prepared to exchange ethical standards underlining democracy and the State of Law for the realisation of more materialistic and individualist goals in society. Cumulatively, the low interest in politics (78.4 per cent are little or not at all interested) shows a great degree of immobilism: citizens are unwilling to participate and act politically, even when they perceive fundamental flaws in the system," quoted in Luis De Sousa, "Political Parties and Corruption in Portugal," *West European Politics* 24, no. 1 (2001): 168.

such activities, which inevitably allowed them to increase and thus threatening democracy itself.

Chapter III: Political Parties in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal: Comparative Overview

Political parties proved to be central in democracy building throughout the history of state-building in every corner of the world. In Kyrgyzstan, political party development was necessitated to position the country as democracy-tolerant by the authorities primarily to eschew external pressure, whereas, in Portugal, party development was dictated from bottom-up, i.e., to reflect and act to electorate's concerns. From organizational, technical, bureaucratic stand points, party developments in both countries are similar because both countries simply copied existing party structures from countries where political parties were already deeply rooted and well established. However, from representation point of view, parties in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal differ. If in Kyrgyzstan parties represent group of influential people Portuguese parties represent wider stratum of concrete people such as farmers, businessmen, social workers or defend and promote their interests in relevant state apparatus including parliament. Yet, it must be stressed that such propensity Portuguese parties started practicing relatively not long ago.

Formation of parties in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal are also quite similar. In both countries Constitution, law on political parties and law on elections to parliament are the legal foundation for party creation and its activities. Both countries are parliamentary republics where MPs are elected according to their party affiliation. Parties in both countries are mainly leader-oriented parties but Portugal since the beginning of 20th century is demonstrating de-attachment from leader-based parties. Such phenomenon could be explained of its membership to European Union

and its various institutions as membership to EU requires substantial reforms in political governance as well as stable economic progress.

Both in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal people are interested in joining the parties as membership to parties is prestigious, allows accessing to certain benefits, higher income and finally the opportunity for being promoted to higher state positions which seems the principal reason to join parties, especially in Kyrgyzstan.

The role and elements of informal politics in Portugal are visible. This, in turn, impacts to parties' activities and their representation of certain powerful individuals' interests in parliament and government agencies. Corruption in parties and extended patronage links continue to play essential role between parties and electorate though the influence of informal politics is declining. Contrary to Portugal, informal politics is essential to politics in Kyrgyzstan in general and its influence to party formation and further development in particular.

Starr argues that clans are based on kinship systems, regional networks do not necessarily entail kinship but tie up its members by common economic and political goals, whereas financial magnates are those people who derive the power from the resource control.¹⁰³ In general, these are all "power-brokers" whom Starr sets against political institutions and who occupy the central place in Central Asian states. Starr assumes that the pressure to remove the authoritarian leaders is likely to lead to the indefinite prolongation of their rule or to a descent into crises. As he continues "the most likely outcome of such scenario is either the reaffirmation of the former inter-clan pacts or the creation of new ones, leading to the repression of all those regions clans, families, and financial magnates".¹⁰⁴ In this regard, the state of affairs in

¹⁰³ Starr, "Clans in Central Asia," 7-8.

¹⁰⁴ Starr, "Clans in Central Asia," 5.

Kyrgyzstan after the formation of new parliament in October 2010 is either the reaffirmation of the inter-clan pacts or momentum to break the previous rule of “power-broker” in the power void at times of the absence of strong authoritarian leader seems to be seen in near future.

Informal methods of interaction between parties and electorate engender ineffective party programs. This also prevents parties from developing long-term perspectives and plans for implementing their short-term promises given to their voters. Thus, political party system in Kyrgyzstan seems to be weak because parties play a role of a machine for party elites’ that allows them to obtain seats in the parliament. Once elections are over, political parties, regardless of their results after elections disappear from the public attention with very rare follow-ups on their programs and promises. This demonstrates their degree of responsiveness to their electorates as an indicator of connection between groups of people and parties that theoretically represent them.

Election period allows observing another tendency that affects party system’s weakness: changes in the party lists. Before elections, parties start developing strategies about its members and elites. They develop the list for election by inviting particular individuals, who are expected to gain votes and help the party to win elections. In pre-election period, parties bargain spots in their lists in the electoral market.¹⁰⁵ Such backstage negotiations and strategies reveals their another weakness. Consequently, party system in Kyrgyzstan is poorly institutionalized; parties are

¹⁰⁵ Timur Toktonaliev and Yevgenia Kim, “Kyrgyz Parties Pulling Points before Elections,” Institute for War and Peace Reporting; <<http://iwpr.net/ru/report-news/%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B8-%D0%BA%D1%8B%D1%80%D0%B3%D1%8B%D0%B7%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%B1%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%8E%D1%82-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%82%D1%8B-%D0%BF%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4-%D0%B2%D1%8B%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B8>> (March 10, 2014).

easily established and dissolved. Party members, especially those who are on the top of the list often change, and use the party to get to the public office.

Party system in Kyrgyzstan can be unstable and weak, but the same cannot be said about party leaders. Party leaders' spheres of influence are not limited with their party activities. At the same time, they are strong regional leaders, mostly, clan leaders. They have wide informal networks and numerous clients, bound to them due to their various goals, needs and interests. These individuals have not only political and legal, but also social and informal power. Most importantly, they have the legitimacy of their power among many people, who recognize and accept them. It would be wrong to state that regime change also leads to changes among party elites.

After the regime change in 2005 and 2010 in Kyrgyzstan, new leaders try not to threaten party elites' positions as they acknowledge the magnitude of elites' social power, ability to either maintain or threaten stability in the country. Parliamentary elections of 2010 illustrated that many former MPs and members of pro-Bakiev party Ak-Jol were re-elected to the new parliament. The then President Otunbaeva explaining this situation said: "People say: "We defeated a dragon, but spawned many little dragons." [However,] displacing [parliamentarians, who served under both previous regimes] from a legitimate field of political competition, we would have sent them into hiding to sharpen knives for revenge".¹⁰⁶

Kyrgyz political parties are rather elite-based parties and can be defined as organizations "whose principal organizational structures are minimal and based upon established elites and related interpersonal networks within a specific geographic

¹⁰⁶ Permanent Mission of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations Office in Geneva, "President's Address to the Parliament and the People of the Kyrgyz Republic (speech by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Roza Otunbayeva at Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic," <<http://www.kyrgyzmission.net/news/Roza%20Otunbayeva%20address%20Parliament%2030%20Nov%202011.pdf>> (March 12, 2014).

area”.¹⁰⁷ The role of Akaev’s and Bakiev’s supporting parties are demonstrating evidence of elite-based organizational structure too. The main political figures, members of these parties were coming mostly from their respective regions. Moreover, “at the lowest level within the party the principal electoral commitment involved the distribution of particularistic benefits,”¹⁰⁸ such as profitable political and administrative positions in the state institutions, different types of properties, and financial and political support were mainly distributed.

After 2010 parliamentary elections, where there was no single dominant individual, elite-based nature of parties became even more visible. The threshold of 5% of votes in every region, in Bishkek and Osh cities, newly adopted amendments into the electoral procedure was not reachable for more than 5 parties of 29 competing in total. The rest of the parties were not able to gain 5% of votes in every region, thus, demonstrating the tendency of parties finding support in one region, but failing in other regions.

All parties in Kyrgyzstan were formed on the ruins of the ex-Communist party. This past long gravitated over their political reality. Same could be said about Portugal. The Communist party of Portugal was created in 1921, the oldest party in Portugal but after the “Carnation Revolution” in 1974 three other parties emerged which continue to play dominant role in Portuguese politics since then.

Identifying the causes, mechanisms of formation as well as exploring reasons for the popularity of parties, especially ruling ones in Kyrgyzstan show that parties are needed to ensure that the parliament approves the reforms originating from executive office and the parties role are rather secondary. The study of the outcome

¹⁰⁷ Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties: A New Typology,” *SAGE*, (2003): 175.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

of the electoral process as a result of the activities of parties showed that there is a problem with the parties programs, which is why parties are built around the leaders, not ideology. Also, the reason lies in the electorate's fatigue from the ideological legacy, for the electorate it is easier to perceive the political leader with whom the party associated with rather than to understand the ideology and program settings of the parties.

The following general trend is identified in both countries: the political struggle is for public office, for example, parliament, but not the electorate, proof of this is the creation of ruling parties in Kyrgyzstan and the intensification of the parties only before elections in Portugal. If we talk about the functions of political parties such as the identification of the interests of the electorate as well as their further protection, in Kyrgyzstan this function is performed by various NGOs, movements and civil society, in Portugal the state apparatus solves these issues.

Political party development in Portugal was a step-by-step process as well as in most countries of the West, in Kyrgyzstan sudden expansion of the scope of participation contrasts with step-by-step expansion of the parties in Portugal. The lack of clear party programs in Kyrgyzstan has resulted in the simultaneous admission of all strata and economic groups into election campaigns has led to establish catch-all parties that appeal to many constituencies whereas Portugal demonstrates steady party system development oriented towards concrete stratum among the electorate.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to analyze the political party development in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal. Particularly the thesis was designed to answer the question

if patronage networking or as Starr pointed invisible politics is the real driving force of party formation and development in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal. The research has revealed the following:

First, the theories on political parties have more common and more applicable to Western and industrialized countries than to under-developed countries such as former Soviet Union countries. Thus, it appears that classical theories on political parties such as theory of political party and others are impotent to explain the inconsistencies and shortcomings of party systems in developing nations.

Second, depending on countries' political, economic and social settings as well as geographic location democratization processes can vary in terms of content and scale. Kyrgyzstan's achievements in building free and democratic society are notably impressive with regard to its neighbors in Central Asia. However, due to its weak economy, inherited ideology of single-party dominance over political landscape and strong authoritarian-led neighbors has been constraining factor to its relatively fair political system in general and party system in particular. Contrary to Kyrgyzstan, Portugal since the fall of Salazar's dictatorship has been demonstrating steady evolution of democratic resurrection and sustainable party development. It looks that membership to European Communities significantly enhanced Portugal to being pioneer of Huntington's global democratization wave.

Third, the scholarship on political parties defines them differently. However, many scholars agree that political parties are central to democratization studies and all of them struggle to get elected to public offices and earn the right to participate in governing the state. Also the literature on political parties suggests that parties could be programmatic, charisma-based and clientalistic. Yet, it should be noted that there is barely parties which are hundred percent programmatic or clientalistic. Rather

parties are combination of one, two or all of three types of parties. Kyrgyz and Portuguese parties are not exceptions.

Fourth, in both countries establishment of political parties are regulated by the similar laws. They are Constitution, Law on Political Parties and Law on Elections to respective legislative branches. However, if in Kyrgyzstan parties are more elite-based parties, i.e. parties built around concrete individuals, in Portugal they are more mass-based parties. Furthermore, most parties in Kyrgyzstan are designated to catch-all, whereas, Portuguese parties demonstrate to attract certain representatives of stratum in society.

Fifth, in Kyrgyzstan and Portugal, party hierarchy, organizational structure, acceptance procedure, registration, regional affiliations are very similar. It is because both countries basically copied party organizational standards from other countries where party system has been historically advanced.

Fifth, emergence of political parties in both countries suggests that the elements of informal politics are present and they do matter. This is particularly true in the case of Kyrgyzstan that it is interest-groups which shape politics and determine political dynamics. North-South cleavage is the proof of this and the latest elections to parliament demonstrated electorate's voting preferences. Portugal experienced the same in the 20th century but with the beginning of the 21st century the country is showing steady de-attachment from informal politics. But the degree of patronage in party system is still permissive.

Sixth, political parties in Kyrgyzstan are weak and poorly institutionalized. However, it does not necessarily mean that party members are similarly weak, on the contrary, the party members, especially party elites and leaders are very strong,

having both formal and informal powers. The combination of weak party system and strong party elites led to the situation where elites exploited parties to accomplish their own interests. In this sense, the political parties in Kyrgyzstan are defined as elite-based parties. This explains why despite of two regime changes there are still the same politicians in government and why so many political parties failed to overcome the regional thresholds. When it comes to elites and party members themselves, they receive different kind of benefits from being party affiliated including various social economic and security benefits.

Seventh, features of informal politics be they patronage networking, clientalism, clan pacts etc. do exist in every country, be it developed or underdeveloped. In fact, there have been a number of works and a myriad of empirical analyses of patronage and clientalism in modern societies. These studies explicitly voiced a number of important observations. First, informal arrangements are not destined to disappear or even to remain on the margins of the society with the establishment of modern regimes. Rather than dying out, the patron-client relationship has been found to crystallize in a great variety of forms. Second, patronage assumes certain logic of social exchange; that is, patronage arrangements are built around asymmetric but mutually beneficial and open ended transactions.¹⁰⁹

Eighth, in Kyrgyzstan parties are usually “born” within authority’s subsoil and it is authority who determine the policy underlying once again the extent of informality in party system, whereas, in Portugal the process is other way around. Yet, Portuguese parties are still influenced by the omnipresent informal ties of networking.

¹⁰⁹ See: S. N. Eisenstadt and L. Roniger, “Patron-client Relations as a Model of Structuring Social Exchange,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 22, no.1 (1980); L. Graziano, “Issue on Political Clientalism,” *International Political Science Review*, 4, no.4 (1983).

Lastly, features of informal politics are not only distinctive in Kyrgyzstani politics and its party system but also applicable to politics in the West. Specifically, corruption and personal networking in Portuguese politics proves that elements of informality are visible and have been one of the dominating forces during elections to public offices. However, distinctive feature of party formation and further development in Portugal for the past two decades or so demonstrate that Portuguese electorate is trying to eliminate such propensity among its representatives in public offices. This in turn, significantly pushed democracy building in Portugal. Same cannot be extrapolated to Kyrgyzstan because the level of informality in politics is still considerable. Yet, such seemingly negative tendency in Kyrgyzstani politics today bears positive sense as well. That is the parties are in a state of learning and adapting the current conditions, and will likely come to the next round of elections with more experience.

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