

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE PARTY SYSTEM IN KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Part I

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The democratic changes underway in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation are focused on the development of parties and the party system, which explains the immense interest in the process demonstrated by their own and foreign communities of political scientists. They concentrate on the emergence and stages of the parties' development, their legal institutionalization, the "party of power" phenomenon, conduct of parties in

election campaigns, the way a definite type of party system took shape, etc.

Kazakhstani political scientist D. Satpaev has offered a highly imaginative formula: "some trends of their political development make Russia and Kazakhstan look like identical twins."¹ This is par-

¹ Quoted from: Yu. Susloparov, "Reanimator-2. Nur-Otan na vykhode iz politicheskogo komatoza. 16 sentiabria 2008," available at [<http://www.ia-centr.ru/expert/2307>].

ticularly true of the process that resulted in a multi-party system, the similarity of which in both countries has been confirmed by Russian authors as well.²

² See: Yu. Solozobov, "Kazakhstan kak politicheskaya machina vremeni. Blizka li Rossii izbrannaia im model modernizatsii. 28 iulia 2008," available at [http://www.ia-centr.ru/archive/public_details9218.html?id=736]; Kazakhstan: zhdet li uragana nad ostrovom stabilnosti. Partii strany nakanune vyborov glavy gosudarstva. 18 avgusta 2005, available at [<http://www.analitika.org/article.php?story=20050818030149947>].

This article can be described as an attempt to present a comparative analysis of the emergence and development of parties as political institutions in both countries in the context of their histories. This approach suggests parallels, formulates common criteria, identifies common trends, and reveals the specifics of institutionalization of the party arena in Russia and Kazakhstan.

The Russian Empire: Party Development Experience

Between the 18th and the late 19th centuries Russia and Kazakhstan formed a single state marked by "catching up modernization," which explains the synthesis (intertwining) and simultaneous existence of pre-capitalist, early capitalist, and developed capitalist relations. This explains the highly unstable social structure and social exclusion of some of the population groups.

The fairly wide gap between the development levels of the empire's center (Russia) and its ethnic fringes made the situation even worse. While since the 17th century Russian society has been developing under the direct impact of the modernizing West and consistently responded to the pressure to reform, the Kazakh Steppe remained an intricate combination of the cultures of nomadic civilization and settled farming as well as trade and urban culture along the Great Silk Road. The specifics of the Kazakhs' settlement, the geopolitical location of their territory, its natural conditions, climate, economic type, social life, and the need to administer vast territories created, at an early historical stage, steppe democracy as a highly specific type of state power based on the ruling elite's traditions, customs, and authority. When Kazakhstan became part of the Russian Empire this inevitably made Kazakh society subordinate to a more developed social environment: the centuries-old backwardness had to be overcome while society had to catch up with socioeconomic and cultural progress. The strivings of Kazakh society were molded into the culture of enlightenment that developed in Kazakhstan in the latter half of the 19th century.

A country of the second echelon of capitalist development, Russia awakened to political activities fairly late, at the turn of the 20th century; political parties appeared there much later than in the West. The monarchy that dominated the empire for a long time tolerated no parties—either loyal or opposition—on its territory.

The parties emerged and developed under tangible Western influence, however their national Russian specifics were obvious. In fact, revolutionary parties pre-dated conservative and liberal ones, the year 1905 being the starting point.

Party development was a direct outcome of the rising liberation movement that in the early 20th century entered a new and highly important stage. Several factors were of special importance: the level of the state's socioeconomic development as a whole and its parts; the nationalities issue, which had acquired more urgency; the earlier traditions of struggle against autocracy; and the scope of the social movements (of the industrial proletariat in particular, on which the Russian Marxists placed their stakes).³

³ See: *Politicheskie partii Rossii: istoria i sovremennost*, ed by Prof. A.I. Zevelev, Prof. Yu.P. Sviridenko and Prof. V.V. Shelokhaev, ROSSPEN Publishers, Moscow, 2000, p. 75.

In 1905-1907 the Russian Empire experienced an outburst of party development. Slackened censorship, the appearance of hundreds of new newspapers and journals, the State Duma convocation in the spring of 1906, and public discussions of the hottest political issues all made the population aware of the burning political developments; the soil for mushrooming political parties was ready. According to the *Politicheskie partii Rossii: entsiklopedia* (Encyclopedia of the Political Parties of Russia) there were no less than 100 conservative, liberal, and socialist parties and 25 alliances, organizations, and trends (many more than in any other state) during the first Russian revolution.⁴

The fact of the highly dynamic and productive process of party-building is easily explained by the empire's complicated social and ethnic composition (a large number of the newly formed parties and alliances were obviously ethnic structures—Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Finnish, Estonian, Jewish, etc.) and the intelligentsia's hypertrophied involvement in the country's sociopolitical life. Its members dominated all the political parties even though the social group itself was divided by its social, political, spiritual, and religious affiliations. It should be borne in mind that the new parties were not required to officially register: they were formed haphazardly to satisfy a particular individual's personal ambitions and manifested the striving of social and ethnic groups for self-identification and self-expression. The situation that "had taken shape in Russia by 1905-1907 could be described as a dramatic move away from a total lack of political freedom to something that can be described as half-freedom" and explains the desire that gripped many to move to the fore on the country's political scene. This was even more understandable since a process that had previously taken years to be accomplished contracted during the revolution to months or even weeks.⁵

It should be said that the membership of the numerous parties that sprang into existence in the early 20th century was very modest: in 1906-1907 the share of members in all the political parties was no more than 0.5 percent of the total population (in 1917 it was slightly larger, 1.5 percent). The parties operated in large cities while the countryside and Russia's heartland remained outside their scope.⁶ The parties' social and political role was much less important than today: they were not involved, in any constructive way, in political developments since the State Duma was based on social estate rather than on party representation. The parties used this mechanism to get their members elected, however the Duma had no levers for putting pressure on the Cabinet and the czar: a "constitutional" monarch, he still had vast rights and privileges. Criticism of the Cabinet (that had no party members in its ranks) was the only occupation of Russia's numerous political parties.

Between 1907 and 1917 party and political activities slowed down, all parties and movements were losing members and funding; the revolutionary parties teemed with agent-provocateurs while party members found it hard to agree on political and ideological issues. The 1917 revolution instilled new life into the parties; more parties ran for the Constituent Assembly (elections by party lists were planned for the fall of 1917). All the parties and movements concentrated on agitation, propaganda, and organizational efforts.

On the whole, between 1882 and 1925 there were 60 all-Russia and 228-231 national parties and movements on the country's political scene.⁷ The list of the latter included the parties formed in the Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan, and within the Federation of National Parties (groups):

⁴ See: L.M. Spirin, *Politicheskie partii Rossii: entsiklopedia*, Moscow, 1996, p. 7.

⁵ See: *Politicheskie partii Rossii: istoria i sovremennost*, p. 79.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁷ See: V.V. Krivenky, "Novye dannye sravnitelno-kolichestvennogo analiza politicheskikh partiy Rossii," in: *Istoria natsionalnykh politicheskikh partiy Rossii*, Moscow, 1997, pp. 123-130; *Krasnaya kniga VCheKa*, ed. by M.I. Latsis, Vols. 1-2, Moscow, 1922 (2nd edition, 1989).

English, Czechoslovakian, German, Rumanian, etc. The Alliance of the Russian People, the Russian Monarchist Party, and the Archangel Michael Russian People's Union were the most influential among the all-Russia conservative parties; the Union of 17 October, the Constitutional-Democratic Party of People's Freedom, and the Progressive Party were the most prominent liberal parties on a nationwide scale while the All-Russia Peasant Union, the National-Socialist Party of Labor, and the Socialist Revolutionaries Party led the Democratic Socialists; the Social Democrats were united into the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party, which split into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

In the early 20th century, social stratification in Kazakhstan led to the formation of several organizations that had a certain influence on the political process. Two political rivals—the Alash National Kazakh Party and Ush-zhuz Kazakh Socialist Party—occupied a very special place on the local political stage. The former was a political organization of the liberal-democratic Kazakh intelligentsia, the latter, a party of petty bourgeois and revolutionary democrats. The Alash set itself the aim of stage-by-stage modernization of Kazakhstan's state order within Russia by gradually introducing democratic and humanitarian principles with due account of the Kazakh mentality and traditions. The party supported the principles of a constitutional monarchy and liberal reforms and wanted to preserve the Kazakhs' national originality, restore the memory of their past, and nurture national feelings to arrive, some time in future, at a sovereign independent state.

The Ush-zhuz was much vaguer about its program: it hoped to unite the Turks and Tatars of the Russian Empire into a Federal Republic of Russia. As the number of political forces in Kazakhstan increased the party moved toward the Bolsheviks, opposed the Alash, and fought the petty bourgeois trends among its own ranks.

The Bolsheviks' advent to power in 1917 changed the entire spectrum of Russia's political parties; a year later, in the second half of 1918, the one-party system gradually came to the fore to establish, for many years to come, rigorous ideological control. This killed political pluralism in the country.

The above suggests that at the turn of the 20th century Russia and Kazakhstan took the road leading to a multi-party system and acquired their first, albeit short, experience of political pluralism. Several decades later it proved inadequate for the task of restoring, within a very short time, a civilized and effective institution of political parties. It proved, however, to be an invaluable lesson for both countries: its detailed studies help to avoid the blunders and failures of the past when moving toward a modern party system. Each of the parties operating on the political scene today should assess the past and offer a clear picture of the future. "Without the philosophy of self-orientation and orientation of its supporters none of the political parties can count on a good political future."⁸

Periodization of Party-Building in Kazakhstan and Russia: Late 20th-Early 21st Centuries

In the last twenty-five years Kazakhstan and Russia as two independent countries have accumulated a wealth of party-building experience that is constantly assessed and discussed. The political dynamics have been high enough to divide this historically short period into several stages according to the fairly radical changes on both countries' party arena.

⁸ *Politicheskie partii Rossii: istoria i sovremennost*, p. 543.

There are different periodization schemes which change from one author to another, however we should keep in mind the general periodization of the democratization processes unfolding in both countries and identify the qualitative shifts in the countries' institutionalization.

In this context the process can be presented in the following way (with due account of the history of Russian multipartyism offered by Russian academic writings that was partly generalized for the purpose of periodization).⁹

- (1) 1985-1990—genesis of political parties and sociopolitical movements, including:
 - (a) 1986-1987—ripening prerequisites for the emergence of political parties within the one-party system;
 - (b) 1987-1990—popular fronts come to the fore, proto-party systems emerge;
- (2) 1990-1993—atomized party pluralism, including:
 - (a) 1990-1991—creation of the legal basis of a multiparty system;
 - (b) 1991-1993—the stage of the so-called August Republic;
- (3) 1993-2001—polarized party pluralism, including:
 - (a) 1993-1995—the growing role of political parties;
 - (b) 1996-2001—emergence of leading parties in a multiparty system;
- (4) 2001-2007—emergence of the contemporary party system, including:
 - (a) 2001—improvement of the legal basis of a multiparty system;
 - (b) 2001-2003—institutionalization of the “party of power;”
 - (c) 2003-2007—genesis of a party system with a dominant party;
- (5) since 2007—institutionalization of the party system dominated by one party.

For the Republic of Kazakhstan similar processes can be differentiated on the basis of the already existing periodization:¹⁰

- (1) 1985-1990—genesis of political parties and sociopolitical alliances, including:
 - (a) 1986-1987—emergence of prerequisites for political parties within a one-party system;
 - (b) 1987-1990—activity of the popular fronts and creation of proto-party structures;
- (2) 1990-1995—atomized party pluralism, including:
 - (a) 1990-1993—creation of the legal basis of multipartyism;
 - (b) 1993-1995—the party system of a parliamentary-presidential republic;
- (3) 1995-2002—polarized party pluralism, including:
 - (a) 1995-1998—creation of a specialized legal basis of multipartyism;
 - (b) 1998-2002—political parties acquired more important roles to play;

⁹ See, for example: M.V. Barabanov, *Politicheskie partii sovremennoy Rossii: stanovlenie, osobennosti, perspektivy*, Author's synopsis of candidate thesis, Moscow, 2001, pp. 13-14; *Osnovy teorii politicheskikh partiy: Uchebnoe posobie*, ed. by S.E. Zaslavskiy, Evropa Publishers, Moscow, 2007, pp. 241-258; O.Z. Mushtuk, *Politologia: Uchebnoe posobie*, Market DS, Moscow, 2006, pp. 400-407; *Politologia: Uchebnik*, ed. by Prof. A.G. Griaznova, 3rd revised and enlarged edition, INFRA-M, Moscow, 2007, pp. 206-208 and others.

¹⁰ See, for example: S.A. Diachenko, *Partogenez v Kazakhstane: sostoyanie, problemy i perspektivy*, Almaty, 1997, pp. 52-53; S.A. Diachenko, L.I. Karmazina, *Respublika Kazakhstan: osobennosti politicheskoy modernizatsii*, Almaty, 1999, pp. 71-72.

- (4) 2002-2007—emergence of the contemporary party system, including:
- (a) 2002—improvement of the legal basis of multipartyism;
 - (b) 2002-2004—institutionalization of the “party of power;”
 - (c) 2004-2007—genesis of a party system with one party playing the dominant role;
- (5) since 2007—institutionalization of the party system with a dominant party.
- The above can be tabulated (see Table 1).

Table 1

**Periodization of the Development of Multipartyism and
Party Systems of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan**

Phases	Periods	Stages	Russia	Kazakhstan
I. Creation of organizational, ideological and other prerequisites of parties and party system	(1) genesis of sociopolitical alliances and political parties 1985-1990	(a) emergence of prerequisites for political parties within the one-party system	1986-1987	1986-1987
		(b) popular fronts and creation of proto-party structures	1987-1990	1987-1990
	(2) atomized party pluralism R—1991-1993 K—1991-1995	(a) emergence of legal basis of a multiparty system	1990-1991	1990-1993
		(b-1) the “August Republic” party system	1991-1993	—
		(b-2) party system of a parliamentary-presidential republic	—	1993-1995
	II. Formation of a certain type of party system	(3) polarized party pluralism R—1993-2001 K—1995-2002	(a) growing role of political parties	1993-1995
(b-1) creation of specialized legal basis of a multiparty system			—	1995-1998
(b-2) emergence of leader-parties			1995-2001	—
(4) emergence of the contemporary party system R—since 2001 K—since 2002		(a) improvement of the legal basis of a multiparty system	2001	2002, 2007
		(b) institutionalization of the party of power	2001-2003	2002-2004
	(c) genesis of a party system with a dominant party	2003-2007	2004-2007	
(5) institutionalization of a party system with a dominant party since 2007		since 2007	since 2007	

Development of Pluralism in Kazakhstan and Russia on the Crest of the Perestroika Wave

A comparative analysis revealed that the revival of political pluralism and multipartyism proved possible thanks to the policy of openness and social reforms initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev and those C.P.S.U. leaders who sided with him.

The wave of perestroika slogans and declarations brought to the fore a powerful “informal movement” as an alternative to the C.P.S.U. Numerous politically active groups, clubs, public alliances, etc., independent of the C.P.S.U., were springing into existence across the country. Their membership was relatively small, their ideologies differed widely, but they agreed on the major issues of state-building, ethnic relations, economic mechanisms for boosting production efficiency, social policies, etc. They were united by their anti-bureaucracy stand as well. For some time they remained within the ruling regime’s political course by limiting themselves to ecological, cultural, and historical issues. Informal movements that were openly opposed to the government appeared in 1987 when the January Plenum of the C.C. C.P.S.U. announced a new course toward social democratization. It was then that Pamiat appeared in Russia and Forum and Zheltoksan in Kazakhstan.¹¹ The Russian Federation found itself caught in a whirlpool of “popular fronts”—informal associations that insisted, among other things, on the right of sovereignty for the republics. In the summer of 1988 the Moscow Popular Front was set up, an umbrella for more than 25 smaller groups; it followed the pattern of the earlier popular fronts in the Soviet Baltic Republics.¹² By the spring of 1989 similar fronts had been in operation in some of the Russian cities (Leningrad, Yaroslavl, and others). In Kazakhstan there were no mass separatist sentiments. By 1 March, 1990 there were over 100 registered and non-registered public organizations, which could be more aptly described as clubs.¹³

Stirred-up society, however, continued living in the one-party system: the new structures were too small, little known to the wide public and organizationally inadequate. The still conservative-minded nation did little to support them. At the same time, the friendly atmosphere inside them that still had no hierarchical structures created a large group of charismatic leaders.¹⁴ Many of them later moved to the fore in political parties. Oljas Suleymenov, a prominent Kazakh poet, who headed the International Anti-Nuclear Movement Nevada-Semipalatinsk that operated in Kazakhstan, and later became the leader of the People’s Congress of Kazakhstan Party (1991-2002), is one of the most pertinent examples.

By the late 1989 society was quickly moving toward protests against the C.P.S.U. monopoly envisaged in the Constitution. The ruling party itself had developed all sorts of trends: the Stalinists (orthodox Communists), the Social-Democrats (democratic trend), and the reformists, who closed ranks to form their own structures.

In 1988 the Democratic Alliance, a political party alternative to the C.P.S.U., appeared. It was the first among the new structures that preferred to call themselves alliances (to stand apart from the

¹¹ See: Group of authors: A.S. Avtonomov, A.B. Ziabrev, A.G. Mekhanik, M.Yu. Mizulin, V.V. Smirnov, “Politicheskie partii. Zachem oni nuzhny,” ed. by V.N. Pligin and V.A. Fadeev, *Strategia Rossii*, No. 9-10, 2005, available at [http://sr.fondedin.ru/new/fullnews.php?subaction=showfull&id=1130135934&archive=1130138106&start_from=&ucat=14&]; S.A. Diachenko, L.I. Karmazina, op. cit.

¹² See: *Osnovy teorii politicheskikh partiy: Uchebnoe posobie*, p. 244.

¹³ See: S. Diachenko, L. Karmazina, S. Seydumanov, *Politicheskie partii Kazakhstana, 2000 god (spravochnik)*, Almaty, 2000, p. 289.

¹⁴ See: Yu.G. Korguniuk, S.E. Zaslavsky, “Rossiiskaia mnogopartiinost: stanovlenie, funktsionirovanie, razvitie,” *Fond INDEM*, Moscow, 1996, available at [http://www.partinform.ru/ros_mn.htm].

Communist Party of the Soviet Union): the Social-Democratic Alliance (1988), the Christian-Democratic Alliance of Russia (1989), and the Alliance of Constitutional Democrats (1989).¹⁵ A year later, however, the Party of Constitutional Democrats, the Socialist Party, the Democratic Party of Russia, the Conservative Party of Russia, and the Liberal-Democratic Party appeared. Many of them while claiming to be national in scope concentrated on the places where they formed or on large cities by becoming involved in the elections of the people's deputies of the U.S.S.R., the 1st Congress of People's Deputies of the U.S.S.R., and local elections. They had no influence in the union republics and no branches.

The union republics acquired political parties of their own. In May 1990, for example, a constituent assembly set up the Social-Democratic Party of the Russian Federation. The process of party formation was accelerated by the annulment, in January 1990, of Art. 6 of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. which described the C.P.S.U. as "the leading and guiding force of Soviet society" and by what was envisioned as a sovereignties parade of union and autonomous republics. The one-party system was gradually developing into multipartyism.

It was then that the first political parties appeared in Kazakhstan; concentrating on the nationalities issue, they chose suitable names and worded their programs accordingly: the Alash Party of National Freedom, the Social-Democratic Party of Kazakhstan, the Zheltoksan National-Democratic Party, and the Azat Civil Movement of Kazakhstan.

It should be said that Kazakhstan was trailing behind Russia at the genesis stage of political parties; later the gap widened because Kazakhstan, willing to reform its economy, paid less attention to political readjustments.

On the whole, the political parties of the first period of party formation in Russia and Kazakhstan were not political parties in the classical sense and were correctly described in the academic writings as proto-party structures.¹⁶ Without clear ideological landmarks, ramified structures, or social bases they operated on a local scale and were united around charismatic political figures in an atmosphere of indifference or even suspicion on the part of the government and society.

The Atomized Party Arena in Kazakhstan and Russia in 1991-1995

According to the widely known classification of the party system devised by G. Sartori,¹⁷ the party systems of Russia and Kazakhstan in 1991-1995 can be described as atomized, that is, ideologically heterogeneous, ineffective, and incapable. Political parties remained proto-party structures while public life acquired a variety of colors and "contradictions." This was only natural because "after more that seventy years of ... a one-party system the eruption of varied political positions could produce nothing but an 'eruption of multipartyism.'"¹⁸ According to the official data, in 1992 there were 19 registered parties and movements in Russia; in 1995 there were

¹⁵ See: *Politicheskie partii, dvizhenia i organizatsii sovremennoy Rossii na rubezhe vekov. 1999 g. Analiticheskiy spravochnik*, ed. by I.N. Barygin, V.A. Mikhaylov Publishing House, St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 32, 34.

¹⁶ See, for example: M.V. Barabanov, op. cit.; Ia.A. Pliais, "Partiynoe stroitelstvo v Rossii. Analiz dissertatsionnykh issledovaniy rossiiskikh politologov," *Polis*, No. 5, 2007, p. 156.

¹⁷ See: G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Vol. 1, New York, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 122-179.

¹⁸ *Politicheskie partii, dvizhenia i organizatsii sovremennoy Rossii na rubezhe vekov. 1999 g. Analiticheskiy spravochnik*, p. 7.

over 60 of them.¹⁹ Similar figures for Kazakhstan looked much more modest: 4 in 1992 and 10 in 1995.²⁰ For a smaller country with a smaller population and different mentality the figures are impressive enough. Unregistered organizations operating in Russia and in Kazakhstan were even more numerous, at least by a certain degree. This was very much in line with similar developments in other states at the early democratization stages.²¹

This was when multipartyism was put on a legal basis. The declarations of state sovereignty of both union republics that announced ideological and political diversity and annulled the constitutional provision regarding the C.P.S.U.'s guiding role were the first steps. On 1 January, 1991 when the Law of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on Public Associations was enacted the political parties acquired the legal right to exist and be registered with the Ministry of Justice. Kazakhstan passed a similar law. Upon acquiring their independence Kazakhstan and Russia envisaged the postulate of ideological and political diversity in their constitutions; the former confirmed it by the law on independence.²² In this way the two countries laid the regulatory-legal foundation for the activity of public associations; political parties were not legally set apart.

The events of August 1991 destroyed the C.P.S.U.; soon after that the Soviet Union, now without its backbone party, was disbanded. A mass democratic movement rapidly unfolded in Russia of the August Republic (1991-1993); the government was regarded as a mere instrument, albeit important, of change. It could not generate change: the new Russian elite could not act as an independent entity of policy.²³ The great number and variety of proto-parties forced them to seek allies and form political blocs. This resulted in coalitions that reflected essentially the whole of Russia's political spectrum: democrats-reformers, centrists, and patriots.

Kazakhstan lingered at the stage of atomized party pluralism longer than Russia—until 1995. Russia completed the constitutional and election reforms by 1993, thus removing political parties from the group of public associations. In Kazakhstan the status of political parties remained vague mainly because of the specifics of the republic's development, which between 1993 and 1995 survived two political crises, as well as sharp contradictions among the power branches and inside the elites. The Constitution of 1995 was the product of these developments: it legalized the transfer from a parliamentary-presidential republic to an extended form of presidential rule.

At the stage of the atomized party system the political parties of Kazakhstan and Russia identified their ideological and political preferences. This created several ideological trends in the party sector (see Table 2).

The Russian party system was represented by the liberal-democratic, social-democratic, socialist, communist, and national-patriotic parties. It should be said that despite the fairly dynamic development of Russia's party sector political scientists identified the same ideological trends at later stages. The old spectrum merely acquired centrist, conservative, ecological, exotic, reformist, and separatist parties.²⁴ Kazakhstan's party arena also included socialist, liberal-demo-

¹⁹ See: O.Z. Mushtuk, op. cit., p. 401.

²⁰ See: S. Diachenko, L. Karmazina, S. Seydumanov, op. cit., pp. 295, 308.

²¹ See: M.S. Fish, "The Advent of Multipartyism in Russia: 1993-1995," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1995.

²² See: *Declaration of State Sovereignty of Russia; Declaration of State Sovereignty of Kazakhstan*; "Zakon SSSR ot 9 oktiabria 1990 g. 'Ob obshchestvennykh obiedineniakh,'" in: *Vedomosti Siezda narodnykh deputatov SSSR i Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR*, No. 42, 1990; "Zakon Kazakhskoy SSSR 'Ob obshchestvennykh obiedineniakh v Kazakhskoy SSR'", Almaty, 1991; "Zakon respubliki Kazakhstan 'O gosudarstvennoy nezavisimosti Respubliki Kazakhstan'", Almaty, 1991; *The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, The Constitution of the Russian Federation*, Art 13.

²³ See: A. Riabov, "'Partia vlasti' v politicheskoy sisteme sovremennoy Rossii," *Moskovskiy Tsentr Carnegie. Nauchnye doklady*, Issue 22, 1998, available at [<http://www.yavlinsky.ru/news/index.phtml?id=2416>].

²⁴ See: *Rossia: partii, vybory, vlast*, Obozrevatel, Moscow, 1996, pp. 179-181; *Russkaia mysl*, No. 41-45, 17-23, October, 1996; V.D. Vinogradov, N.A. Golovin, *Politicheskaiia sotsiologia*, St. Petersburg University Press, St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 87-120; S.I. Stepanov, *Problema tipologii rossiiskikh politicheskikh partiy*, Author's synopsis of candidate the-

Table 2

The Ideological-Political Party Spectrum
in Kazakhstan and Russia in 1991-1995

Ideological trend	Kazakhstan	Russia
Liberal-Democratic	People's Congress of Kazakhstan; Party of People's Unity of Kazakhstan; Popular-Cooperative Party of Kazakhstan	Democratic Choice of Russia; Russian United Democratic Party YABLOKO (Yabloko); Party of Russian Unity and Harmony; Federal Party "Democratic Russia;" Russian Christian-Democratic Union, etc.
Social-Democratic		Social-Democratic Party of Russia; Russian Social-Democratic People's Party; Democratic Party of Russia; People's Party of Free Russia, etc.
Socialist	Socialist Party of Kazakhstan	Socialist Party of the Working People; Party of Working People's Self-Government
Communist	Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CPK)	Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF); Agrarian Party of Russia; Russian Communist Worker's Party; Russian Party of Communists; Union of Communists Party, etc.
National-Patriotic	Republican Party of Kazakhstan; Revival of Kazakhstan Party; Alash Party of National Freedom; Zheltoksan National-Democratic Party	Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia; National-Republican Party of Russia; Russian National Sobor; People's National Party; Russian National Unity, etc.

cratic, national-patriotic, and communist parties.²⁵ Social-democratic parties appeared in Kazakhstan in 1996.

It follows from the above that the liberal-democratic and national-patriotic trends dominated in both countries. In Russia the parties of communist orientation were banned from August 1991 to

sis, Rostov-on-Don, 1988; *Politicheskie partii, dvizhenia i organizatsii sovremennoy Rossii na rubezhe vekov. 1999 g. Analiticheskii spravochnik*, p. 15; O.Z. Mushtuk, op. cit., pp. 401-404 ff.

²⁵ See: S.A. Diachenko, op. cit., pp. 57, 62.

November 1992—this was a typical feature of the Russian party system of that period. Nothing of the sort happened in Kazakhstan, however the Communist Party of Kazakhstan set up de facto in 1991 remained unregistered under different pretexts until 1994.

In addition to their political division along the left-right line and ideological division along the communists-socialists-social-democrats-liberals-conservatives-fascists line, the parties in both countries parted ways in their relation to the state. Opposition parties dominated in Russian and Kazakhstani societies.

On the whole, the Russian and Kazakhstani parties of that time remained proto-party structures with no direct legal support and practically no impact on political processes. They were barely structuralized, had no wide social and electoral basis, and depended for their popularity on their leaders' personal activities. The parties could hardly compete with one another; they remained active in the center and had no more or less ramified regional networks.

Polarized Multipartyism in Kazakhstan and Russia: in Quest of an Adequate Party System

Further development of the party system in Kazakhstan in 1993-2001 and Russia in 1995-2002 continued under conditions of extreme and highly polarized party pluralism. In the context of G. Sartori's classification, this was a level of party development marked by the presence of anti-system parties, a bilateral and irresponsible opposition, the central position of one party or group of parties, and domination of centrifugal over centripetal trends.²⁶

The parties developed, first, in the context of authoritarian democracy and, second, political parties were formed in great numbers because of the multi-level structure and heterogeneity of the political organizations, which resulted in never ending division and fragmentation. In 2002 Kazakhstan had 19 registered parties. In 1993 there were 80 registered all-Russia parties in Russia,²⁷ in 2001 there were 199 of them.²⁸ In other respects the process of party-building in both countries was marked by national-state specifics.

Its specialized base of multipartyism set Kazakhstan apart during the period of polarized party pluralism. Until 1996 party activities were regulated by the Law of the Kazakh S.S.R. on Public Associations in the Kazakh S.S.R. of 1991; and after 1996, by the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Political Parties.²⁹ At the same time the legal basis of the party system was of a limiting nature in relation to its object; it ignored the constructive nature of foreign experience, which did nothing to promote democratization: it was geared toward the authoritarian nature of Kazakhstani society in full accordance with the new Constitution. Practically all the authors interested in multipartyism in Kazakhstan spoke of this.³⁰

²⁶ See: G. Sartori, op. cit.

²⁷ See: M.V. Barabanov, op. cit.

²⁸ See: *Osnovy teorii politicheskikh partiy: Uchebnoe posobie*, p. 257.

²⁹ See: "Zakon Respubliki Kazakhstan 'O politicheskikh partiiakh,'" available at [<http://www.pavlodar.com/zakon/?dok=02113&ogl=all>].

³⁰ See, for example: M.S. Mashanov, "Priniataia v Kazakhstane majoritarnaia sistema vyborov bez instituta partiinykh spiskov ne sposobstvuet formirovaniu silnykh politicheskikh partiy," *PANORAMA*, No. 40, October, 1995; S.A. Diachenko, op. cit., p. 74; A.E. Chebotarev, "Pravovye problemy politicheskikh partiy Kazakhstana v perekhodny period," *Pravovoe razvitie: informatsionno-analiticheskiy biulleten obshchestvennogo obedineniia "Pravovoe razvitie Kazakhstana,"* No. 1 (7), January, 1997, pp. 9-16.

At the same time, the law can be described as an advantage of the Kazakhstani legal system compared with the Russian.

In 1995 the Russian Federation acquired the Federal Law on Public Associations which, until the amendments of 1998, had no provisions relating to political public associations or political parties. The amendments, however, were limited to political associations without envisaging a legal definition of political party. It was not until 2001 that a Federal Law on Political Parties which regulated all spheres of their activities was adopted.³¹ The interval was filled, to a certain extent, by the regulations of other laws of the Russian Federation.³²

In 1993 in Russia and in 1994 in Kazakhstan parties got their first taste of “constituent” elections to the national legislatures later supported by the elections that took place in both republics in 1995. The mixed electoral system that Russia introduced in 1993 under which half (225) of the State Duma deputies were elected in the majority constituencies while the other half were elected by party lists³³ accelerated the process of party development and increased the parties’ role in the political system. The Duma elections created full-fledged party factions. On the other hand, according to Russian academic D. Chizhov, the elections confirmed “the parliament’s subordinate role and the practically unlimited power of the RF President. This can be described as the central system-forming element of Russia’s institutional design.”³⁴ The 1995 elections demonstrated that Russia’s multiparty scene acquired leader-parties³⁵ with no mean impact on political developments. They were the Communist Party of the RF, the Liberal-Democratic Party, Yabloko, and the All-Russia Sociopolitical “Russia is Our Home” Movement. They formed party factions in the State Duma; three of them (the Communists, Liberal-Democrats, and Yabloko) repeated their success four years later, in 1999.

In the Republic of Kazakhstan the one-chamber Supreme Soviet of the 13th convocation in 1994 and the Majilis of the Parliament of the RK in 1995 were elected according to the majority system; candidates were nominated by parties and other public associations³⁶—Kazakhstan was still trailing behind Russia where political reforms were concerned. As distinct from Russia, parties did not directly compete for seats, which deprived them of direct electoral support. It was only after the first constitutional reform changed the electoral system in 1998 that the 1999 election to Majilis involved political parties under the mixed electoral system: deputies were elected in one-member districts and by party lists (the number of Majilis seats was increased from 67 to 77).³⁷ The following parties sent their deputies to the Majilis: the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CPK), the Popular-Cooperative Party of Kazakhstan, the Revival of Kazakhstan Party, the People’s Congress of Kazakhstan, the Otan Republican Political Party (Otan, 1999), the Civil Party of Kazakhstan (CivPK, 1998), the Agrarian Party of Kazakhstan (APK, 1999), the Republican People’s Party of Kazakhstan (1988), and the Republican Political Party of Labor (RPPL, 1995). Otan, CivPK, APK, and CPK acquired the largest number of seats.

³¹ See: “Federalny zakon ot 19 maya 1995 g. No. 82-FZ ‘Ob obshchestvennykh obedineniakh,’” *SZ RF*, No. 21, 1995; “Federalny zakon ot 19 iulia 1998 g. No. 112-FZ ‘O vnesenii izmeneniy i dopolneniy v Federalny zakon ‘Ob obshchestvennykh obedineniakh’ ot 19 maya 1995 g.,” *SZ RF*, No. 28, 1998; “Zakon Rossiiskoy Federatsii ‘O politicheskikh partiakh,’” available at [<http://www.base.spinform.ru/show.fwx?Regnom=1437>].

³² See: *Osnovy teorii politicheskikh partiy: Uchebnoe posobie*, p. 158.

³³ See: “Opisanie izbiratelnoy sistemy i rezultatov vyborov 1995 goda,” in: *Vybory deputatov Gosudarstvennoy Dumy 1995 goda. Elektoralnaia statistika*, Moscow, 1996.

³⁴ D.V. Chizhov, *Rossiiskie politicheskie partii kak institut grazhdanskogo obshchestva i politicheskoy sistemy*, Author’s synopsis of candidate thesis, Moscow, 2006, p. 15.

³⁵ See: M.V. Barabanov, op. cit.

³⁶ See: “Ukaz Prezidenta RK, imeiushchi silu Konstitutsionnogo zakona ‘O vyborakh v Respublike Kazakhstan,’” *Kazakhstanskaia Pravda*, 30 September, 1995.

³⁷ See: *Konstitutsionny zakon respubliky Kazakhstan ‘O vyborakh v Respublike Kazakhstan’ (s izmeneniami i dopolneniami)*, TOO Baspa, Almaty, 1998.

To sum up, it can be said that in Kazakhstan and Russia multipartyism became an attribute of everyday life. Political parties are developing into independent democratic institutions; they present their opinions and use their influence more and more frequently to shape, at least to a certain extent, the political processes. Ethnic issues have receded into the background together with populism and radicalism. The parties are actively developing, they are expanding their territorial networks and improving their programs. Cooperation and consensus are more frequently sought; the mechanism of public consultations is being ramified; and a dialog between the entities of civil society and state power, which early preferred to keep away from political alliances, is going on. People have changed their attitudes—they no longer ignore the parties but specify their political preferences; the parties are acquiring real social bases.

The Legal Basis of Party Development in Kazakhstan and Russia as the Dominant Factor of the Republics' Modern Political Systems

Russia entered the fourth period of multipartyism in 2001; Kazakhstan reached this stage a year later, in 2002. In the former case, the special Federal Law on Political Parties adopted in June 2001 serves as a reckoning point; in the latter, the new Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Political Parties (July 2002).

Both laws were more stringent about the parties' size, regional structures, and registration opportunities.³⁸ Both countries needed more order on the fairly disorderly party scene. The new laws were expected to favor the parties with real popular support, to help them unfold their activities in the regions, and to make them more competitive. The parties were expected to respond with more substantiated party programs. The developments justified the hopes. Under the new laws the parties had to re-register: a demand that resulted in the appearance of larger parties with much greater political weight. Opposition organizations became stronger while public political movements lost some of their former political influence. Unregistered party structures left the political scene altogether. In Kazakhstan, for example, only 7 of the 19 parties that had been functioning in the republic before the new law came into effect could re-register according to the new demands (today there are 10 parties in the Republic of Kazakhstan). In Russia the party arena shrank from 199 to 15.³⁹

The new rules, on the other hand, altered the legal position of political parties: their number was cut down while the state acquired levers of real control over their activities. In future this will interfere with the party systems' natural evolution and the emergence of new parties and will fossilize the status quo.⁴⁰ The people in power are aware of this: President of Kazakhstan Nazarbaev

³⁸ See: "Zakon Rossiiskoy Federatsii 'O politicheskikh partiiakh,'" available at [<http://www.base.spinform.ru/show.fwx?Regnom=1437>]; "Zakon Respubliki Kazakhstan 'O politicheskikh partiiakh,'" available at [<http://www.pavlodar.com/zakon/?dok=02113&ogl=all>].

³⁹ See: "Spisok zaregistrirrovannykh politicheskikh partii Rossiiskoy Federatsii," available at [<http://www.rosregistr.ru/index.php?menu=3010000000>]; "Politicheskije partii Kazakhstana," available at [http://www.akorda.kz/www/www_akorda_kz.nsf/sections?OpenForm&id_doc=E8DA86C639C47E954625723E0011ADA6&lang=ru&L1=L1&L2=L1-4].

⁴⁰ See: M.V. Barabanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

recently pointed out that the country needed “more favorable conditions for the registration of political parties.”⁴¹

(To be continued)

⁴¹ “Vystuplenie prezidenta RK na otkrytii II sessii Parlamenta RK,” available at [http://www.akorda.kz/www/www_akorda_kz.nsf/sections?OpenForm&id_doc=98F2D256CA617479062574B8007238F0&lang=ru&L1=L2&L2=L2-15].