POST-SOVIET COLOURED REVOLUTIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF KYRGYZSTAN'S TULIP REVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

POST-SOVIET COLOURED REVOLUTIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF KYRGYZSTAN'S TULIP REVOLUTION

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The study seeks to analyze the "Tulip Revolution", its reasons and outcomes. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, newly independent Central Asian countries; Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan emerged in the world politics as independent sates. However, used to be parts of big complex system of former Soviet Union and being lack of government experience in politic and economic area made them to dependent on external actors. One of the main external actors has become United States with its promotion of democracy and liberalization, while the Russia was challenging not to lose its political and economical influence in these states. As a result of these external powers' policy, within the time the leaders of these states found themselves in the complex choices, pro-Western or pro-Russian. Therefore political and economic developments of these states have become vulnerable. For these reasons the 'coloured revolutions' in post-Soviet states, which was the struggle between the pro-Western and pro-Russian elites, were not a coincidence. The study argues that although "Tulip Revolution" had similarities in its occurrence with previous 'colourful revolutions' the main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution" were the internal reasons, external reasons were only the accelerator factors. Analyzing of these reasons is the main goal of thesis.

Keywords: Central Asia, Colourful Revolutions, Tulip Revolution, Kyrgyzstan, Post-Independence Economy.

ÖZ

SOVYET SONRASI RENKLİ DEVRİMLER:
KIRGIZİSTAN'DAKİ LALE DEVRİM İNCELEMESİ

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Bu çalışma Kırgızistan'da meydana gelen "Lale Devrimini" incelemektedir. Sovyetler Birliğinin dağılmasıyla dünya Kırgızistan, Kazakistan, Özbekistan, Tacikistan ve Türkmenistan'ın bağımsız bir ülke olarak oluşmalarına şahit oldu. Ancak, bu ülkelerin daha önceden bağımsız bir ülke olma deneyimleri olmadığından, bağımsızlık sonrası geçiş döneminde dış aktörlerin yönlendirmelerine açık durumda kalmışlardır. Bu dış aktörlerden biri de kuşkusuz demokratik sistemin oluşmasını teşvik eden ABD idi. Diğer yandan Rusya bölgedeki egemenliğini kaybetmemek için çaba sarf ediyordu. Bu gibi dış güçlerin bölgeye yönelik izledikleri siyasetlerinin sonucunda yeni bağımsız olan ülkeler biranda Batı ile Rusya arasında tercih yapma gerekliliğini hissetmeye başladılar. Dolayısıyla geçiş dönemindeki bu ülkelerin siyasi ve ekonomik alandaki yapılanma süreci kırılgan bir hale gelmişti. Bu yüzden, Batı yanlısı zihniyet ile Rusya yanlısı zihniyetin çatışması sonucu meydana gelen 'renkli devrimler' bir tesadüf değil. Bu çalışmanın amacı "Lale Devrimini" ve onun nedenlerini incelemektir. Bu nedenleri incelerken bağımsızlık sonrası Kırgızistan'daki yolsuzluk, işsizlik, ekonomideki tıkanıklık gibi iç nedenlerin "Lale Devrimin" meydana gelmesindeki ana nedenler olduğu savunulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Orta Asya, Renkli Devrimler, Lale Devrimi, Kırgızisyan, Bağımsızlık Sonrası Ekonomi

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To my daughters Gulnisa and Alima

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, newly independent Central Asian countries; Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan emerged in the world politics as independent sates. Until the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia was a sole actor in Central Asian region. Following the collapse of the USSR, newly independent Central Asian states, because of their vast energy resources, grip world's extra-regional actors' attention. Primarily Turkey, India, Pakistan, China, Japan, Europe and USA started to give attention to Central Asia. Among these actors China and the USA became more effective in this region. Although Chinese and United States' influence in the region has increased over the past decade, politically and economically, Russia is still the most influential power in Central Asia. Consequently Central Asia became a competition arena between Russia, USA and China.

The collapse of Soviet Union opened new perspectives for old Soviet Union states and gave them chance to follow national policies independently. However, used to be parts of big complex system of former Soviet Union, and being lack of government experience in politic and economic area made them to dependent on external actors. One of the main external actors has become United States with its promotion of democracy and liberalization, while the Russia was challenging not to lose its political and economical influence in these states. As a result of these external powers' policy, within the time the leaders of these states found themselves in the complex choices, pro-Western or pro-Russian. Therefore political and economic developments of these states have become vulnerable. For these reasons the 'coloured revolutions' in post-Soviet states, which was the struggle between the pro-Western and pro-Russian elites, were not a coincidence.

In general all of these 'colourful revolutions' had similarities in their occurrence. The breaking point in the occurrence of these 'colourful revolutions' were fraudulent elections. In Georgia it was 2003 parliamentary elections which

were held on November 2, in Ukraine it was 2004 presidential elections which was held on November 21, and in Kyrgyzstan it was parliamentary elections of February 27 and of March 13, 2005. In addition to the fraudulent elections, these 'colourful revolutions' had other similar reasons such as corruption, authoritarianism, economic stagnation, intervention of external actors, growing opposition groups. All of these 'colourful revolutions' shared the common feature of being centered around a fraudulent election. "In each case, an election was held and results were widely viewed to have been seriously manipulated by the current regime."[1] As a result, mass protests broke out in all three countries, although the size of these protests varied across the cases. "After some period of uncertainty, the incumbent president either resigned from office and/or the election results were overturned, resulting in a member of the opposition becoming the new president of the country."[2]

In 2003 Georgian President "Eduard Shevardnadze tried to legitimize electoral fraud in order to prolong his power, a United opposition movement headed by the young lawyer Mikhail Saakashvili initiated public protests against the corrupt regime."[3] Following the November 2, 2003, Georgian parliamentary elections, small-scale protests began in Tbilisi as various reports of fraud began to accumulate.

> However, after the release of a set of particularly suspect results from the region of Ajaria, the size of the crowds began to increase substantially. By the time the Georgian Central Election Commission proclaimed the "official" results, handing victory to the pro-President Eduard Shevardnaze "For a New Georgia" bloc, the crowds had swelled to over 100,000 people. On November 22, these protests came to a head as Shevardnaze tried to address the inaugural session of the newly "elected" parliament. Led by opposition leader Mikhail Saakashvili – holding a rose to show he was unarmed –protestors stormed the parliament demanding Shevardnadze's resignation; Shevardnaze was ushered out of the building by his bodyguards without a shot being fired. After originally claiming

[1] Tucker, Joshua A. "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist coloured Revolutions" *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3), (September 2007): 537-553, 537

[2] Ibid.,

[3] Samokhvalov, Vsevolod. "Colored Revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia: Repercussions for the System of International Relations in the Black Sea Region" Perceptions, (Autumn 2005): 99-111, 99

> that he would not step down, Shevardnaze resigned the following day. Shortly thereafter, Georgia's Supreme Court annulled most of the results from the parliamentary election, and new presidential elections were set for January 4, 2004, which Saakashvili would go on to win with 96.2% of the vote in what was essentially an uncontested election.[4]

Following the Georgian "Rose Revolution", due to 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections, many observers believed thet Ukraine was at key period in its transition that could shape its geopolitical orientation for years to come.

> In their view, the elections could move Ukraine closer to either integration in Euro-Atlantic institutions, real democracy and the rule of law, and a genuine free market economy; or they could move Ukraine toward a Russian sphere of influence, with "managed democracy" and an oligarchic economy. For the past decade, Ukraine's political scene had been dominated by President Leonid Kuchma and the oligarchic "clans" (regionally based groups of powerful politicians and businessmen) that supported him. The oligarchs chose Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych as their candidate to succeed Kuchma as President. The chief opposition candidate, former Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, was a pro-reform, pro-Western figure.[5]

On October 31, 2004, Viktor Yanukovich and opposirion leader Viktor Yushchenko received 39.3 percent and 39.9 percent of the vote, respectively, in the first round of the Ukrainian presidential election.[6] "As neither surpassed the 50% threshold necessary for a first round victory, the two advanced to a November 21st run-off."[7] Following the second round, "it became clear that President Leonid Kuchma's incumbent regime had crudely rigged the elections to the advantage of its candidate, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych."[8]

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[4] Tucker, Joshua A. "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist coloured Revolutions" *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3), (September 2007): 537-553, 537-538

[5] Woehrel, Steven. "Ukraine's Orange Revolution and U.S. Policy" CRS Report for Congress, April 1, 2005, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/45452.pdf (accessed on 1 January 2008), 1

[6] Tucker, Joshua A. "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist coloured Revolutions" *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3), (September 2007): 537-553, 538

[7] Ibid.,

[8] Aslund, Anders and McFaul, Michael. "Introduction: Perspectives on the Orange Revolution" in *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough* ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (2006): 1-8, 1

> the Central Election Commission declared Yanukovich the winner by a 49.5% to 46.6% margin. Armed with nonpartisan exit polls suggesting that Yushchenko actually had won by a 52% - 43% margin, supporters of the challenger took to the streets of Kyiv in protest, now famously adorned in orange clothing representing the color of Yushchenko's "Our Ukraine" parliamentary bloc. The extremely well organized opposition settled in for the long haul, complete with tents for housing, stages for bands and speeches, bans on the use of alcohol and even regularly scheduled garbage removal. Over the following weeks, the protests continued in Kyiv despite frigid conditions as the crisis was resolved peacefully through the use of existing institutions. Following a parliamentary resolution declaring the results invalid (November 27) and a vote of no confidence in the government (December 1), Ukraine's Supreme Court on December 3rd somewhat stunningly … declared the second round election results to be invalid and ordered that the round be run again on December 26. This "second" second round went more smoothly with over 12,000 international observers present, and Yushchenko won by a 52.0% to 44.2% margin.[9]

After the Ukrainian "Orange Revolution", Kyrgyzstan was the next post-Soviet state where occurred 'colourful revolution'. As was mentioned above, the breaking point in the occurrence of these 'colourful revolutions' were fraudulent elections. But "Tulip Revolution" differ from "Rose and Orange Revolutions" in some cases. First of all, the "engines of revolutionary change in Georgia and Ukraine-large urban populations, strong civil society, and student movements at the national level-were weak in Kyrgyzstan".[10] Georgian youth group Kmara! and Ukrainian youth group Pora! were very strong and active in the process of 'revolution'. Whereas Kyrgyzstan's youth organization Kel Kel was newly founded and was not active and decisive in the evolution of the "Tulip revolution". Furthermore various opposition forces, in Ukraine and Georgia, formed unified opposition blocs long before challenging the incumbent authorities in the elections. "These opposition blocs had massive financial and political support from opposition parties, business circles, and ordinary citizens."[11]On the

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[9] Tucker, Joshua A. "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist coloured Revolutions" *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3), (September 2007): 537-553, 538

[10] Khamidov, Alisher. "Kyrgyzstan's Revolutionary Youth: Between State and Opposition", *SAIS Review*, XXVI (2), (Summer-Fall 2006): 85–93, 92

[11] Ibid., 91

contrary, Kyrgyzstan's one of the most important opposition blocs, People's Movement of Kyrgyzstan (PMK), was very young and did not have strong financial and political backing like a Georgian and Ukrainian opposition blocs. Also Kyrgyzstan's opposition unity was in some sense conditional or showpiece. Everyone fought for their own political survival. In common they had only general statements and appeals. "Beyond their anti-Akayev stance and demands for redistributing political and economic power, the opposition parties mostly lack well-developed policies and strategic plans for the future of Kyrgyzstan."[12] In other words Kyrgyz opposition was not well organized and actually Kyrgyz opposition did not anticipate the "Tulip Revolution". To some extent the occurrence of the "Tulip Revolution" was spontaneously. For these reasons "Tulip Revolution" differ from "Rose and Orange Revolutions"

On the other hand these 'colourful revolutions' had distinct impact on the foreign relations of the related countries. At the same time Russian foreign policy was affected from these 'colourful revolutions'. One of the arguments following these 'revolutions' was that these Western backed 'revolutions' are constraining Russia's dominance in the post-Soviet space by toppling the pro-Russian elites. The other point of view argues that, these 'revolutions' serving as a steps in terms of developing the democracy and human rights in post-Soviet countries. In any case there is one reality, these 'revolutions' damaged Russia's image. In other words United States was getting more influential in post-Soviet space by establishing pro-Western governments. However with the "Tulip Revolution" it back fired and "Tulip Revolution" facilitated to Russia's dominance in Central Asia.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the "Tulip Revolution", its reasons and outcomes. In my opinion, economic stagnation, poverty, corruption, regionalism, 'family rule' and Aksy events were the main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution". In addition, the external factors such as, "Colourful Revolutions" in

[12] Nichol, Jim. "Coup in Kyrgyzstan: Developments and Implications", *CRS Report for Congress*, 14 April 2005, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl32864.pdf (accessed on 1 March 2008), 4

Georgia and Ukraine, international NGOs, United State's interests in Central Asia, can be shown as an external reasons. But, I think that, these external factors were only the 'reasons' which accelerated the occurrence of "Tulip Revolution".

Until the "Tulip Revolution" United States steadily increased its influence in Central Asia. On the other hand Russia and China started to strengthen their cooperation in order to decrease the U.S. influence in Central Asian region. Following the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asian leaders started to perceive the political reforms which promoted by west as a source of destabilization, not the precondition for long-term stability. Consequently, they started to rethink the plausibility of the relations with the United States. In other words the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan suited to Russia's and China's purpose, but not to the United States'.

The basic argument of this thesis can be presented as follows: the main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution" were the internal reasons, external reasons were only the accelerator factors. I will discuss the contribution, of the power struggle between the legislature and president, to the occurrence of the "Tulip Revolution". Also I will assert the importance of the socio-economic factors as main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution". In addition to these, the main idea is that, "Tulip Revolution" reshaped the external powers' influence in Central Asia. It had a positive impact on Russia's influence in Central Asia. The outcomes of the "Tulip Revolution" eased Russia's task in terms of rebuilding its influence in Central Asian region.

The thesis is organized in three parts. Following the Introduction, Chapter Two emphasizes political process in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. Here post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan's political developments are evaluated and also the reasons which led to the authoritarian tendency. Chapter three deals, with the "Tulip Revolution" and its reasons. It focuses on the internal reasons and 2005 Kyrgyz parliamentary elections. Chapter Four examines the external reasons of the "Tulip Revolution". And it concludes with the evaluation outcomes of the "Tulip Revolution".

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL PROCESS IN POST-SOVIET KYRGYZSTAN: 1991-2004

Kyrgyzstan was the first Central Asian state to declare its independence after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. With the leadership of the President Askar Akaev, the Kyrgyzstan has developed an international reputation by attempting to implement systematic changes toward a democratic republic. It can be said that the framework for the establishment of a democratic state based on the rule of law was began to shape. Young Kyrgyzstan had a lot of tasks in terms of integrating into the world society, developing the state building process, transition to market economy. At the beginning there was a real success in implementing these reforms. A lot of political parties, civil society, non-governmental organizations and independent media appeared during that period. For these reasons Kyrgyzstan began to be called as a "Central Asia's Island of Democracy"[13]. However, this period did not last long, and it turned to the authoritarian regime. In other words the first president of independent Kyrgyzstan Askar Akaev changed his policy from democracy to autocracy.

In this chapter I would like to analyze the political process of independent Kyrgyzstan from the collapse of USSR until the Tulip Revolution. Following the demise of the USSR, newly independent Central Asian state's new politics were determined by the character of the leader in power at the time independence as gained. Askar Akaev was the leader of newly independent Kyrgyzstan,[14] because of this I would like to analyze the political process of post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan by discussing the Askar Akaev's policy, his reforms in terms of democratization and then turn to autocracy. I will try to examine, the process of democratization and the turn to autocracy in Kyrgyzstan, by dividing it into three periods. The first period is the most democratic period and it was between 1991-1994. After 1994

[13] John Anderson. *Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy?,* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers , 1999**)**

[14] Ibid., 23.

there was a tendency from democratic reforms towards authoritarianism, which is the second period (1994-2000) The third period can be called as a period of strengthening "family" power and downfall of the regime (2000-2004).

2.1 "Central Asia's Island of Democracy": 1991-1994

Askar Akaev, Kyrgyzstan's first president was elected by the Kyrgyz Supreme Soviet in 1990. When the end of the glorious USSR has started, the Kyrgyz Supreme Soviet voted for Kyrgyzstan's independence on 31 August 1991. On October 1991, the Kyrgyz citizens elected Aksar Akaev as the President of the newly independent Kyrgyzstan. Askar Akaev entered to the political life in 1981 when he joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. After five years as he entered to Party, in 1986 Akaev became head of the Central Committee Department of Science and Higher Educational Institutions. In 1987 he was elected Vice-President of the Kyrgyz Academy of Science and in 1989 he became a President of the Kyrgyz Academy of Science.[15]

When we talk about the political development of the Kyrgyzstan we should know that the period of *perestroika* and *glasnost* have had a significant impact in Kyrgyzstan's political development. In 1985, soon after Gorbachev came to power, some political reforms began in Soviet Union under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. These reforms resulted in real change in the political life of Kyrgyzstan.[16] One of these reforms in 1988, by shifting power to non-party institutions, altered the Soviet institutional structure. The Communist Party leadership was no longer the basic political institution of administration. In 1988 there was created a new body, the Congress of People's

[15] Spector, Regine A., *"The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan"* Berkley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies: Working Paper Series. University of California, Berkeley, Spring 2004. 5.

[16] Ouran Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, (Ankara: METU, 2004), 90.

Deputies.[17] The first elections were hold on in March 1989, Askar Akaev entered to the Congress of People's Deputies in this elections.

The 1990 was the turning point in Akaev's political career. In October 1990, at a regular session of the Kyrgyz Supreme Soviet, the issue of electing the President was raised. Everyone was sure that Absamat Masaliev, The First Secretary of the KCP, would win the elections. However, because of the ethnic conflict in the Osh region that occurred in 1990, Masaliev was discredited. As a result Masaliev failed to collect required amount of votes, and eliminated as candidate, new candidates had to be identified. At this moment Askar Akaev emerged as a candidate, and after a balloting process he was elected as a President. After the independence, by the end of 1991 Askar Akaev was elected as the first President of independent Kyrgyzstan at a nation-wide election.

As soon as he became the president of Kyrgyzstan, Akaev showed to the world that he was really determined in terms of transforming Kyrgyzstan to democracy through a reform process. Newly independent Kyrgyzstan began to be called as the "Central Asia's Island of Democracy". It was not an overestimating, even if Kyrgyzstan was not fulfilling the real democracy, when you compare it with its post-Soviet neighbors you see that Kyrgyzstan really was a "democracy island of Central Asia".

Askar Akaev in his first period as the President of newly independent Kyrgyzstan put much emphasis on the need of developing a liberal democracy, based on civil society.[18] In this period emerged civil societies and free press which was the most critical in the region. The law on social organizations, which allowed the political parties and movements to operate, was signed by Aksar Akaev in 1991. After the signing of this law, having a legal framework, political parties began to emerge. By February 1993, 15 political parties and movements were registered by the Justice Ministry.[19]

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[17] Regine A., *"The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan"*, 5.

[18] Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy*, 24.

[19] Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, 92.

Also, the leader of the young Kyrgyzstan was determined in establishing a market-based economy and integrating into the world economy, it was one of Askar Akaev's foremost goals. By transforming the nature of the post-socialist state, among the former communist countries, Kyrgyzstan became a leader in the movement of the post-Soviet Central Asian states toward an open market economy. But, Kyrgyzstan's trade dependence to the neighboring countries and limited resource constrained its real progress.[20] During the period of the USSR, Kyrgyzstan provided primary commodities for industries located in the European parts of the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kyrgyzstan lost its Soviet era suppliers and customers. As a result, in Kyrgyzstan most of the industrial enterprises quickly became insolvent and closed entirely.[21] This situation made really difficult to Kyrgyzstan in terms of transition to an open market economy.

Actually I think that, the limited resource of Kyrgyzstan and Kyrgyzstan's weak economic situation did not constrain its progress in terms of transformation to an open market economy. On the contrary, it was the limited resource, trade dependence and weak economic situation which pushed Kyrgyzstan to establishing a market based economy, in order to gain international financial supports. Esanov, Raiser and Buiter argue that;

> …the presence of natural resource wealth allowed incumbent elites to remain in power and shut out reformers. This was the case in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan..... In the resource –poor countries, the absence of resource rents meant that incumbent elites had less largesse with which to bolster their position. The associated insecurity, exacerbated by greater GDP compression, initially made the countries more receptive to economic reform, reinforced by IFI (international financial institutions) conditionality.[22]

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[20] Gleason, Gregory. *Markets and Politics in Central Asia: Structural reform and political change,* Rourledge, New York, 2003. 69–70

[21] Ibid., 65-66.

[22] Raiser, Martin and Buiter, Willem. "Nature's blessing or nature's curse?" in *Energy, Wealth and Governance in the Caucasus and Central Asia: Lessons not learned* ed. Richard M. Auty and Indra De Soysa. New York: Routledge, (2006): 39-56, 40

Of course it was not the only reason or factor in terms of explaining Kyrgyzstan's determination in transformation to liberal democracy and market based economy. Nevertheless, it is the reality that, Kyrgyzstan got support from international financial institutions, because of its intention of transformation to market based economy and democracy. Kyrgyzstan was one of the poorest states of the Soviet Union. With the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union small Kyrgyzstan was left helpless. The government quickly realized that in order to solve this problem, Kyrgyzstan needs to attract significant economic assistance and international support, primarily from the West. By going in the direction of openness, economic restructuring and liberal democracy aimed to get financial aid from Western donor states. Such policies satisfied the expectations of major Western donor states.

> In so doing, Kyrgyzstan quickly became a "favorite child" of the international donor community, managing to get strong support from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. At the same time, Kyrgyzstan received substantial political and economic support from the United States, Germany, Switzerland, Japan and Turkey. As a result, Kyrgyzstan became one of the leading states for liberal political and economic reforms not just in Central Asia, but also in the entire CIS.[23]

On the other hand, in the way of building the new democratic political order, Askar Akaev had to work with a constitution and a parliament which was created and elected under the old Soviet rule. Many of these deputies opted for Askar Akaev in October 1990, but it did not mean that they represent a clear body of support for the marketisation and democratization, which was increasingly advocated by Askar Akaev. Many parliamentarians were fearful that such reforms would threaten their political influence and economic well being.[24] Such factors slowed down the transformation process to democratic political order. As a result the president analyzed the need for a new constitution, which would create a

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[23] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 28

[24] Anderson, Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy?, 24-25

smaller, bur more operative Parliament, which would be able to elaborate quickly legislative base for reforms during transition period.[25]

Various draft constitutions started to circulate in the spring of 1992. In mid-1992, there were three drafts of the new constitution. One of these drafts was prepared by president and other two by social organizations.[26] A lot of issues, like the status of the Russian language, the question of economic rights, the position of women, were discussed during the process of preparation of the draft constitution. Of course most controversial issue was the regulation of political power and in particular the balance between the president and the parliament. From late 1992 until April 1993 the constitution was subject to discussion in the media and in the parliament. [27]

Eventually, the independent Kyrgyzstan's new constitution, which replaced the Soviet-era constitution that had been in effect since 1978, was passed by the Parliament in May 1993. Kyrgyzstan's 1993 constitution established legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. According to the new constitution the Kyrgyz Republic defined as a sovereign, unitary, and democratic republic founded on the principle of law, and secular government.[28] Also it recognized numerous civil and political rights and freedoms for its citizens. New constitution provided a legislative framework for further democratic transition. But I would like to shortly mention the power balance between president and parliament in the new constitution.

With the new constitution as the head of the state president gained powers such as to appoint prime minister with the approval by the parliament[29], determine the structure of the government, appoint various key figures, initiate legislation

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[25] Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, 94.

[26] Anderson, John.,"Constitutional Development in Central Asia"; *Central Asian Survey* (1997), 16

(3), 303

[27] Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy?*, 25-26.

[28] Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic (Bishkek, 1996), Articles 3, 4

[29] Ibid., Article 71.

and dissolve parliament. On the contrary Parliament was to be unicameral with 105 members and could remove president if the president breached the laws or constitution. Also parliament had rights to appoint certain key officials, approve the budget, and initiate legislation and constitutional changes, with the two-third majority override presidents veto of laws passed by the parliament.[30]

As a result we can say that independent Kyrgyzstan's new constitution was more liberal and provided better conditions for the formation of a democratic society than did its Central Asian neighbors. Introduction of the Kyrgyz currency in May 1993 was also proof of the progressive nature of the Askar Akaev[31]. In addition as we mentioned above Askar Akaev did his best in terms of establishing a market-based economy and developing a liberal democracy based on civil society. All of these were indicators that Kyrgyzstan, with the leadership of Askar Akaev, was determined in transforming to liberal democracy. Kyrgyzstan was the "democracy island of Central Asia".

2.2 Turn to Authoritarianism: 1994-2000

Since the achievement of independence, a major concern of president Akaev has been transforming young Kyrgyzstan to a liberal democracy. However with the beginning of 1994 Kyrgyzstan had witnessed the gradual stagnation of political reforms, there was a tendency from democratic reforms towards authoritarianism. In other words "democracy island of Central Asia" was getting more authoritarian. According to Gregory Gleason the meeting between the heads of states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan that took place in Almaty in July 1994 was the beginning of the Akaev's turn toward authoritarianism. At this meeting leaders of neighboring states persuaded Akaev to agree upon an "Asian

[30] Anderson, "Constitutional Development in Central Asia", 306-307.

[31] Regine A., *"The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan"* , 17.

development path", in other words to abandon his efforts to reach national consensus democratically.[32]

Actually the tendency to autocracy began at the end of the 1993. After the adoption of the constitution tensions between executive and parliament remained. A lot of issues can be shown as reasons of the tensions between executive and parliament. But, the ongoing economic decline and allegations of corruption against Akayev's closest political associates were most important issues. There was a constant attack directed at the government of Prime Minister Tursunbek Chyngyshev and, implicitly, at Akaev. The legislative accused the government of being unable to stop the ongoing economic decline and corruption. As a result in mid-December 1993 the Kyrgyz Parliament initiated a vote of no-confidence that led to the dismissal of the government.[33]

The confrontation between the Parliament and executive remained, because of this Askar Akaev decided to prop his own legitimacy through a referendum. The referendum was arranged by Akaev for 30 January 1994. At this referendum electors were asked 'whether they supported the policies of the president and wanted him to remain in office until the scheduled end of term in October 1996'. As a result of the referendum with the 95% support of the voters Akaev gained a mandate to continue with current policies. With this support Akaev started to call for parliament to act more speedily to pass laws supportive of the economic reform process. But deputies were more concerned to profit from their positions than to pass laws. In order to get rid of these deputies, Askar Akaev started to initiate "a campaign for the early self-dissolution of parliament, taking advantage of divisions within that body"[34]

By the end of the summer 1994, 105 of the 323 deputies, many of them regional and local leaders appointed by the president Askar Akaev

> …signed a letter accusing parliamentary leaders of sabotaging reform and called for a referendum on the creation of a new two chamber parliament.

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[32] Gleason, Gregory. The *Central Asian States: Discovering Independenc*e, Westview Press, Colorado, 1997, 99

[33] Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy?,* 27

[34] Ibid., 28

> …By September 168 deputies had joined the boycott of parliament and in effect made it unworkable.[35]

After these developments Askar Akaev dissolved parliament arguing that the communists had caused a political crisis by preventing the legislature from fulfilling its role and, in order to make amendments to the constitution, proposed a referendum to be held on 22 October. With this referendum two amendments were made to the constitution of Kyrgyz Republic. According to the first amendment, the future constitutional changes would be made by referendum rather than parliament. The second amendment was about transforming unicameral Parliament to the bicameral Parliament with 105 members totally. The amendment created a bicameral parliament called the Jogorku Kenesh (Supreme Council), consisting of a Legislative Assembly with 35 members which represent the population as a whole and served continuously, and an Assembly of People's Representatives with 70 members which represent regional interests and met in regular sessions.

The general elections for the two legislative chambers were held in February 1995. These elections were the first multi-party parliamentary elections in independent Kyrgyzstan. All political parties participated in the elections, several of them won seats in the parliament. However none of them could form the majority in parliament. These elections did not resulted in the emergence of active political parties. Most of the political parties were newly organized and could not form a powerful bloc or unify their activities. The result of the elections showed that people gave their votes for independent candidates which were well-known figures and supported as fellow countrymen, not as representative of political parties.[36] As a result it can be said that personalities prevailed over ideologies, because independent candidates won most of the seats.

On the other hand the impact of the 22 October 1994 referendum, to the transformation of the independent Kyrgyzstan towards the liberal democracy, is very big. First of all, hereafter, the constitutional changes would be made by

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[35] Ibid., 28

[36] Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, 99-100.

referendum rather than parliament, which means that parliament lost one of its privileges. On the other hand at the new bicameral parliament, which was elected at February 1995, the power of the two houses was not separated. This problem really weakened the parliament, in order to stand up to the executive the two houses first had to come to agreement. Unfortunately the newly elected parliament, which convened its initial session in March 1995, spent its one year on disputing the relative powers and jurisdiction of each chamber. It shows to us that by the two amendments to the constitution Akaev started to strengthen his power and weakening legislative simultaneously.

In addition to the 22 October 1994 referendum, a presidential election of 1995 was Akaev's another step in order to consolidate executive power and remain in office. Actually presidential elections should be hold on only in August 1996, as confirmed by a 30 January 1994 referendum Askar Akaev's term of office expired in October 1996. In summer of 1995 Akaev with his supporters started to initiate a campaign for a referendum to extent his term until 2001, as had occurred in neighboring Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. But extending the presidential term by referendum was rejected by Legislative Assembly and, a presidential election was scheduled for 24 December 1995.[37] Even if Akaev could not get the chance to extend his term by referendum, predating the date of the presidential election gave the big opportunity to Akaev. Obviously, by calling early elections, Akaev wanted to demoralize the opposition which had little time to prepare. There were two rival candidates except Askar Akaev, the first one was Absamat Masaliev (leader of the Kyrgyz Communist Party) and the other one was former speaker of parliament Medetkan Sherimkulov. Doubtlessly the winner of this elections was Askar Akaev, which gained 71,65 percent of the votes.

Following the Akaev's election as the head of state for the second term, Askar Akaev proposed another referendum for a further extension of presidential powers. Again Akaev argued that deputies failing to get on with the task of creating a legislative basis for the creation of a market economy. In addition he claimed that the present presidential power is not strong enough to speed up the

[37] Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy?*, 53.

transformation policies in newly independent country. On the basis of these arguments with the beginning of 1996 he started to publish a series of proposals for constitutional change. On 10 February 1996 amended constitution was presented to the populations voting. As a result of this referendum the proposed constitutional changes were supported by the 94,5% of the voters.

Of course these new constitutional amendments brought some new powers to president. Hereafter, president obtained the power to appoint and retire members of the government without parliamentary approval, instead he will do it only by the consultation with the prime minister. With new amendments, in terms of choosing the prime minister the parliamentary approval was still required, but if president's choice would be rejected three times by parliament president could dissolve the legislature. In addition, only the head of state could call for referendum to make amendments to the Constitution and appoint heads of local administrations. The other most important point is that, the parliament lost the right to call to account the government, on the other hand the president obtained the power to dismiss the government at any moment.

On 17 October 1998 Akaev initiated another referendum. As we mentioned above, with the 1994 constitutional amendment the structure of parliament was changed, there was created a bicameral parliament called the Jogorku Kenesh (Supreme Council), consisting of a Legislative Assembly with 35 members which represent the population as a whole and served continuously, and an Assembly of People's Representatives with 70 members which represent regional interests and met in regular sessions. With the referendum held on 17 October 1998 the structure of Parliament was changed again.

> According to the 1998 referendum, the Legislative Assembly consisted of 60 deputies, 15 of whom would be elected from the party lists in the unified republican constituency district proportionate to the number of votes, while 45 of the deputies would be elected from single-person constituencies. The Assembly of People's Representatives consisted of 45 deputies elected from single-person constituencies.[38]

In addition to the structural change of parliament, by this referendum Akaev reduced parliament's power once again. With this new constitutional

[38] Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, 107

amendments was stated that, parliament could only pass laws cutting revenues or increasing spending with the government's approval. In spite of not being the head of government, president gained enormous powers to control the government's formation and activities. As a result it can be said that the model of governance in Kyrgyzstan started to return to presidential republic[39]

To sum up, with the beginning of 1994 the "Central Asia's island of democracy" had witnessed the gradual stagnation of political reforms, there was a tendency from democratic reforms towards authoritarianism. By referendum Akaev could make any changes to the constitution. Referendum was the most important tool, when he was blocked or when he wished to increase the presidential power Akaev benefited the referendum. With the referendums on constitutional amendments the scope of presidential powers increased, on the other hand parliament's powers were limited. All of these developments were the indicators of the Kyrgyzstan's tendency towards authoritarianism.

2.3 Pathway Towards the Downfall: 2000-2004

The 2000 was a year of new parliamentary and presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan. Also it can be said that, it was the gateway towards the starting point of the process of downfall Akaev's regime. As mentioned earlier, the post-Soviet Central Asian states' new politics was determined by the character of the leader in power. In case of Kyrgyzstan this name was Askar Akaev, which means that the post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan's route was determined by Askar Akaev's personal preference. In other words, Kyrgyzstan's determination in establishing market based economy and liberal democracy or emergence of Kyrgyzstan as a "Central Asia's island of democracy" was based on Akaev's personal image, it was based on Akaev's personality. Consequently, because of the change of Akaev's latter

[39] Kynev, Aleksandr V. *Kirgizstan Do i Posle "Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii"/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the "Tulip Revolution"* Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

opinions and preferences, Kyrgyzstan was drawn from democratization process towards the authoritarian regime.

Step by step Askar Akaev increased presidential power and strengthened his position by referendums and suppression of opposition groups. This was obvious at the 1995 parliamentary election.

> Although a number of opposition parties and blocs were allowed to run, under the election law, a candidate was automatically elected if the other candidate refused to run for the election in the first round or he was denied registration for the second round. As a result, many opposition candidates who led in the first round lost in the second round amid gross violations of the election law or were simply barred from the race…. Several electoral blocs were barred from the race under various pretexts.[40]

Which means that, despite the relatively democratic laws, in reality Akaev suppressed the opposition by administrative methods. These methods were used by Akaev at the 2000 parliamentary elections too. For example, the preparation period for the elections was used as the period of eliminating candidates who might challenge Akaev.

> A number of leading politicians were prevented from standing as candidates through deliberate abstraction of the leveling of criminal charges against them; others were dissuaded from seeking election by the offer of other positions within the administration.[41]

Parliamentary elections in 2000 were held on 20 February (first round) and March 12 (second round). "On both occasions the turnout was extremely low, at 57.8% in the first round and 61.86% in the second round."[42] Elected two chambers - the Legislative Assembly (45 deputies in single member constituencies) and the Assembly of People's Representatives (45 deputies in single member constituencies and 15 by proportional system with 5% barrier) Jogorku Kenesh. Also in 2000 there was introduced a new Election Code, which

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[40] *"The Republic of Kyrgyzstan"* Central Asia. Report on Transformation, http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/Asia_Kyrgyzstan.pdf (accessed on 5 March 2008), 123.

[41] Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, 107

[42] Abazov, Rafis. *The Political Culture Of Central Asia: A Case Of Kyrgyzstan* Political Culture Case Studies Conflict Studies Research Centre March 2003, www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/special/m27/M27.ch5 (accessed on 10 March 2008), 48

has brought a lot of new electoral practices in the republic. For the first time elections were held in a mixed electoral system for one of the chambers.[43]

According to the requirements of Ministry of Justice, in order to participate in elections, parties and organizations must be registered at least one year before the elections. Because of this several political parties were excluded since they were newly organized or did not properly meet the requirements of Ministry of Justice. After all eliminations, voting bulletins for party lists included only nine political parties and two election blocs.[44] On the other hand, 601 candidates for deputies were nominated in single member constituencies. After all eliminations, on February 20 on ballot papers 414 candidates for deputies were included.[45] As a result of the 2000 election, in both houses of the new Kyrgyz parliament, Akaev's supporters acquired a firm majority.

As we mentioned above, the 2000 was a year of new parliamentary and presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan. In other words, the parliamentary elections were followed by the presidential elections. Presidential elections in 2000 were held on 29 October. Akaev ran for a third term in 2000 presidential elections. According to the Article 43 of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic president may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Askar Akaev manipulated the constitutional court to allow him to stand for a third term. Akaev's argument was that the first election did not count because it was held prior to the establishment of constitution in 1993 because of this his election in 1995 actually became his first term and he claimed that he is not violating constitution by running again in 2000 presidential elections.

Proceeding from the requirements of the Constitution that presidential candidate must possess the state language and Article 61 of the Election Code, stating that the possession of the state language is "the ability to read, write, to

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[43] Kynev, Aleksandr V. *Kirgizstan Do i Posle "Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii"/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the "Tulip Revolution"* Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

[44] Niazaliev. *Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000*, 108

[45] Kynev, Aleksandr V. *Kirgizstan Do i Posle "Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii"/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the "Tulip Revolution"* Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

express their thoughts and speak publicly in the national language", the Central Election Commission created the Central linguistic commission, which was responsible to evaluate the state language knowledge of candidates for the presidential office.[46] As we mentioned above, despite the relatively democratic laws, in reality Akaev suppressed the opposition by administrative methods. In 2000 presidential elections a Central Linguistic Commission was one of the weapons of Akaev which was used in order to eliminate candidates who might challenge him. In addition, by the criminal prosecution he suppressed most prominent opposition leaders before and after the 2000 presidential elections.

For example in September 2000 Topchubek Turgunaliev, the former leader of the nationalist party Erkin Kyrgyzstan (Free Kyrgyzstan), was imprisoned with the accusation based on calumniation that he was intended to plot in order to assassinate Askar Akaev. At the beginnings of 2001 an other opposition leader Feliks Kulov, who was the leader of the political party Ar-Namys (Dignity), was arrested on charges of abuse of power and forgery as a Minister of National Security in 1997–1998. In addition Azimbek Beknazarov was one of the prominent opposition leaders who were suppressed by Akaev. Azimbek Beknazarov was a member of parliament who strongly criticized the Chinese-Kyrgyz agreements, signed in 1996 and 1999, that put Kyrgyzstan under an obligation to transfer its disputed territory to China.[47] In response, in 2002 he was arrested on charges of abuse of power, when he was investigating the murder case as a district prosecutor in the Toktogul region in 1995.

It is obvious that all of these arrests were politically arranged by government in order to suppress the opposition figures who could challenge the Akaev's regime. In other words Akaev was successful in terms of suppressing the opposition figures in any case. However, at the same time Akaev by omitting people's power and patience, unconsciously was paving the way towards the

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[46] Iskakova, G. Vybory i Demokratija v Kyrgyztsane: Konstitutsionnij Dizajn Prezidentsko-Parlamentskih otboshenii(Elections and Demecracy in Kyrgyzstan: Constitutional Design of a Presidential-Rarliamentary Relations), Bijiktik, Bishkek, 2003, 366-367

[47] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 33-34

downfall of his regime. In my opinion the Beknazarov case was Akaev's really big mistake. After one day of arresting the Beknazarov, about 20 deputies of a Legislative Assembly urgently gathered on January 6, and adopted an appeal to the president demanding the immediate release of the arrested Beknazarov.

Beknazarov began a hunger strike protest. Pickets began in his support, some even began a hunger strike, and the number of people participating in the hunger strikes had reached more than 300 people. Despite the protests Beknazarov was put on trial in January 2002. Beknazarov's supporters barricaded the area in Aksy and closed several roads connecting the village of Kerben, Zhangy-Zhol, Kara-Suu and Sary Chelek. Day after day the demonstrations and demonstrators started to increase. On March 17, 2002 there was a confrontation between the demonstrators and police. Local policy used force to break up the demonstrators. According to the official figures during the riots 6 people were killed.[48]

> Their deaths quickly became the cause of nation-wide protests leading to calls for President Akayev's resignation.
> The deaths in Aksy, and the government's response to them, unified Akayev's political opposition for the first time.[49]

After these developments on March 19 the government released Beknazorov hoping to avoid further violence. At the same day Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiev came to Aksy and told to the demonstrators that all their demands are met, Beknazarov released, in addition he added that the government will provide the material assistance to the families of the victims. The demonstrators welcomed Bakiev's message and also demanded punishing those who responsable in the death of innocent people, as well as the leadership of public television who was responsible for circulating false news about Beknazarov and Aksy events. After all of these developments the government gradually

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[48] Radnitz, Scott. "Networks, localism and mobilization in Aksy, Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asian Survey*, 24(4), (December 2005): 405–424, 413

[49] Olcott, Martha Brill. *Lessons of "The Tulip Revolution"* Testimony prepared for the Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe, April 7, 2005, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=16758 (accessed on 5 March 2008), 2

> …backed away from its original position and began looking for scapegoats with a State Investigating Commission. Several people at the top levels of government, including the head of the Presidential Administration, Amanbek Karypkulov, were then accused of negligence and dismissed from office to placate the opposition.[50]

Also on May 22, 2002 Bakiev's government resigned and on May 30, 2002 Nikolai Tanaev became the first Russian Prime Minister of independent Kyrgyzstan.

In addition to these developments in order to defuse the tensions and the opposition campaigns the government announced public debates on constitutional changes. In September 2002 there was established the Constitutional Council, which included both opposition and pro-government political figures. The Constitutional Council originally had 40 members, which was later expanded to 45, and it was chaired by Askar Akaev. The Constitutional Council's task was to consider changes to the Constitution, including to key issues such as limiting the presidential power and sharing it with Parliament and Cabinet of Ministers. In other words the Constitutional Council had to produce a final set of proposals for changes to the Constitution, which would be subject to public debate prior to a referendum. The first meeting of the Constitutional Council was on 4th of September 2002, and after the several occasions it published final report on 2 October 2002.

> On 17 October the President issued a decree 'On the Nationwide Discussion of Amendments to the Constitution'…..On 2 January 2003, the President issued a further decree 'On Completion of the Nationwide Discussion on Amendments to the Constitution'.[51]

Akaev argued that, there are some different view points between the proposals prepared by Constitutional Council and suggestions made by the public during the consultation process. Because of this an Experts Group was established

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[50] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 9

[51] *"Kyrgyz Republic: Constitutional Referendum-2 February 2003"* OSCE/ODIHR Political Assessment Report, Warsaw, 20 March 2003, 3

to prepare a new package of draft amendments which would take full account of the original proposals of the Constitutional Council and the public suggestions.

However, in the end, the final proposals of the Experts Group were fully different from the original proposals of the Constitutional Council and the public suggestions. In addition, it was presented as a completed document that was not open to discussion. The amendments proposed by Experts Group were adverse to the spirit of the Constitutional Council's proposals. Some of the main amendments proposed by Constitutional Council were about the power balance between the President and Parliament. The amendments proposed by Constitutional Council suggested a shift of powers from the President to the Parliament.

But referendum, which was hold on 2 February 2003, was based on the proposals presented by Experts Group. On the contrary to the amendments proposed by Constitutional Council, with the new constitutional amendments the Presidential powers were strengthened further. Under the new Constitution, Jogorku Kenesh became a unicameral, and it consists of 75 deputies elected in single member constituencies, the elections on party lists had been cancelled "due to the weakness of the party system".[52] On the other hand, the president retained his privilege to call a referendum, dismiss the government, issue decrees having the force of law, dissolve parliament, etc.[53] In addition the immunity of the president and his family members from prosecution upon his retirement was furnished, which made it almost impossible for the president to be impeached. And the referendum confirmed that Akaev should remain be President of the Kyrgyz Republic until December 2005.

As a result it was clear that, "…having begun almost as parliamentary republic according to the norms of the 1993 Constitution, Kyrgyzstan is becoming

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[52] Kynev, Aleksandr V. *Kirgizstan Do i Posle "Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii"/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the "Tulip Revolution"* Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

[53] Ibid.,

a presidential republic…”[54] Actually all of these developments, step by step, were preparing serious challenges to the existing leadership, which resulted with the “Tulip Revolution”.

[54] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 32

CHAPTER 3

“TULIP REVOLUTION”

In this chapter I will try to analyze the “Tulip Revolution” and the reasons which paved the way towards the “Tulip Revolution”. First of all I would like to analyze the 2005 Kyrgyz Parliamentary Elections, because it was the detonator of the Tulip Revolution. In other words, the explosive substances which prepared the suitable ground for the downfall of the Akaev’s regime were combined. And these explosive substances were missing only the spark in order to come into action. Being a turning point for the countries future political process and developments, the 2005 Parliamentary elections also had served as anticipated spark. That’s why 2005 Parliamentary elections are important in case of “Tulip Revolution”.

3.1. Kyrgyz Parliamentary Elections 2005

Before the analyzing the Kyrgyz ‘Tulip Revolution’ we have to mention to the 2005 Parliamentary Elections. The 2005 Parliamentary Elections, which were the third parliamentary elections in the independent Kyrgyz Republic’s history, were very important because of several reasons. First of all 2005 elections were the first parliamentary elections held since the amendment of the Constitution in 2003. Furthermore, the main factor which redoubled the importance of 2005 Parliamentary Elections was the next presidential election which was scheduled for October 2005.

In addition to these factors, the continued deterioration of the internal socio-economic environment, the psychological expectations of the elite and politically active part of the population after the "colourful revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine strengthened the importance of the 2005 Parliamentary Elections. All of these factors showed that, having a control over the majority of the new parliament will be crucial for ruling elite in order to retain the power.

Even though Askar Akaev stated that he will not run again for president, the opposition groups were suspicious that Akaev would use the 2005 Parliamentary elections in order to push as many supporters as possible into parliament. The opposition groups had righteous cause in terms of being suspicious about Akaev's intentions. The parliamentary and presidential elections in 2000 had shown that Akaev's team was able to manipulate the electoral process and the results easily. That's why the 2005 Parliamentary elections had distinct importance both for ruling elite and opposition groups consequently for Kyrgyzstan's political process.

The 2005 Kyrgyz Parliamentary Elections consisted of two rounds, the first round of elections held on 27 February 2005 and the second round held on 13 March 2005. As it was mentioned above, the 2005 elections were the first parliamentary elections held since the amendment of the Constitution in 2003. After the new amendments to the Constitution, Jogorku Kenesh became a unicameral, and it consists of 75 deputies elected in single member constituencies for five year terms. The candidate who polled more than 50% of the votes of the voters who participated in the votes will be elected. If none of the candidates can not succeed to poll more then 50% of the votes, the two leading candidates contest in a second round. The second round should be hold on within two weeks and the candidate who poll majority of the votes will be elected to the parliament.

Even though, most of the scholars agreed that these elections were more democratic and competitive than previous elections, the 2005 Parliamentary elections fell short of OSCE commitments and also other international standards for democratic elections. 473 candidates have submitted their documents for registration and only 427 of them were registered. But the first round of the elections was contested by 389 candidates. In other words somehow 84 candidates were eliminated, by denying registration of opposition candidates and exclusion them from elections. For example;

> The former diplomats were denied registration on the grounds that they did not meet the permanent, in-country residency requirement of five years prior to candidate nomination. This requirement is based on Article 56.1 of the Constitution and stipulated in the Election Code under Article 69.1.
> While the legal procedures appear to have been formally respected, the fact remains that these cases involved former diplomats, whose

> fundamental role is to be posted abroad by the respective government to serve its interests internationally. [55]

One of these diplomats was Roza Otunbaeva, who was perceived as one of the most obvious candidate from the opposition to October 2005 presidential election. In other words the denial of registration was politically motivated in order to suppress the opposition groups, and as was mentioned above the suppressing the opposition by administrative methods is one of the most favorable methods which was used by ruling elite.

> Although the Election Code was amended with the intent to introduce a complete and all-inclusive list of reasons for de-registration, the respective provisions of the Election Code remain open for abuse. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM observed four cases in which candidates were de-registered for minor technical violations. For example, one candidate was de-registered on the grounds that an alleged proxy had started campaigning three hours prior to the start of the official campaign period. In another case, a candidate was de-registered for missing information on campaign materials. In contrast, in numerous other cases candidates received only a warning for having committed similar or more serious violations, including vote-buying and intimidation of voters.[56]

These were the conspicuous characteristics of the first round. As a result of the first round 33 candidates won their seats in the parliament in other words 42 seats left to be decided in the second round, held on 13 March.[57] After the end of the first round there began serious demonstrations across the several parts of the country. The reasons of these demonstrations were the allegations of electoral violations in the first round. The supporters of the candidates, which were deregistered or loosed the election because of the unfair election, started to protest the elections demanding the annulment of the parliamentary election results and the dismissal of the President.

The second round of the elections was the competition between the top two candidates from the first round who could not succeed to poll more then 50%

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[55] "Kyrgyz Republic: Parliamentary Elections 27 February and 13 March" *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report,* Warsaw, 20 May 2005, 10

[56] Ibid.,

[57] Abazov, Rafis. "The Parliamentary Election in Kyrgyzstan, February/March 2005", Notes on Recent Elections/Electoral Studies 26, (2007): 529-533, 532

of the votes. On the other hand the public protests were escalating day by day, especially in the south of Kyrgyzstan. However Askar Akaev and his team did not take it serious and the second round of the elections was full of unfairness too. As a result of the two rounds only six seats were taken by the opposition candidates. The remaining seats were divided between pro-presidential candidates, who were the representatives of the governing clan, above all Askar Akaev's daughter and son.[58] After the announcement of the results, on 22 March the Central Election Commission issued a decision to register the newly elected deputies to the Parliament.[59]

3.2. "Tulip Revolution"

As we mentioned above the 2005 Parliamentary elections were very important in terms of Kyrgyzstan's political life. For these reasons, before the elections Kyrgyzstan witnessed to the formation of some opposition blocs. One of the most important opposition blocs which emerged at this period was People's Movement of Kyrgyzstan (PMK). PMK was formed by nine small parties in September 2004. This coalition group was formed in order to conduct fair elections and to secure Akayev's resignation by October 2005 presidential elections.[60]

Following this process of the formation of opposition blocs, by the end of the December 2004, five opposition blocs signed a memorandum of cooperation for joint counter administrative resources. This opposition alliance composed of PMK which is led by Kurmanbek Bakiyev, socio-political movement Ata-Jurt (Fatherland) headed by Roza Otunbaeva, socio-political movement Jany-Bagyt

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[58] Seleymanov, Muzaffar.*"Bringing Down the 'Family': Implications for Central Asia"*,http://www.google.com.tr/interstitial?url=http://www.monitor.upeace.org/pdf/Central_Asia.pdf (accessed on 14 February 2008), 5

[59] "Kyrgyz Republic: Parliamentary Elections 27 February and 13 March" *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report,* Warsaw, 20 May 2005, 24

[60] Radnitz, Scott. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyztsan?" *Journal of Democracy,* 17(2), (April 2006): 132-146, 134

(New Course), Civic Union for Fair Elections, People's Congress of Kyrgyzstan which included Felix Kulov's party Ar Namys (Dignity). However this opposition unity was in some sense conditional or showpiece. Everyone fought for their own political survival. In common they had only general statements and appeals. Also it worth to mention that, at these parliamentary elections the opposition was already without Felix Kulov, he was serving his jail sentence. However, among the opposition leaders have appeared Roza Otunbaeva and Kurmanbek Bakiev. And both of them were perceived as the most obvious candidate from the opposition to 2005 autumn presidential elections.[61]

However, financial resources of opposition essentially got weak when compared to that of the ruling elite. Most of the economic resources and media were under control of the Akaev's team. The main voices of opposition became the newspaper "Moja Stolitsa Novosti" (MSN) and Kyrgyz branch of radio "Radio Liberty" (Azattyk). As the mechanism of propaganda the opposition actively used speeches, brochures and internet. On the other hand, ruling elite had a control over all remaining media in order to run a media campaign against the opposition. Akaev's team, by the central television and official newspapers run a massive blackmailing campaign, claiming that the opposition leaders are the extremists working on money of the West and they are connected with the international terrorism.

As was mentioned above, besides blackmailing campaigns, ruling elite actively applied pressure by administrative methods too. In other words, the preparation period for the elections was used as the period of eliminating candidates who might challenge Askar Akaev, as it was at the 2000 parliamentary elections. A number of leading opposition politicians were prevented from standing as candidates by refusal in registration and exclusion from the elections. 473 candidates have submitted their documents for registration and only 427 of them were registered. But the first round of the elections was contested by 389 candidates. In other words a lot of candidates, including Roza Otunbaeva, were

[61] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

discharged from elections by the decisions of courts and the district commissions. On 6th of January 2005, Roza Otunbaeva, by submitting her documents on the constituency No: 1, received a registration certificate. But, at the same day, district election commission was convened at the emergency meeting, after which Rosa Otunbaeva was discharged from elections.[62]

One of the realities of Kyrgyzstan is that the family ties are very strong in Kyrgyzstan. Injustice against the person means not only his indignation, but also his numerous relatives and fellow countrymen. That's why the supporters of the candidates, which were excluded from the elections unfairly, started protests, spontaneous meetings, overlapping of roads, captures of buildings of administrations. As a result, to some districts on polling day even international observers could not reach.

As was mentioned above, the main voices of opposition were the newspaper "Moja Stolitsa Novosti" (MSN) and Kyrgyz branch of radio "Radio Liberty" (Azattyk). The newspaper MSN was publishing in the printing house Freedom House Press. This newspaper, at the beginning of February, published an article "The House Which Has Constructed Akaev", with the detailed listing of illegitimate business dealings of Akaev and his family.[63] Following these days as MSN was printed at Freedom House Support, on 22 February the electricity of the Freedom House Support was cut-off. "Two days later, the state controlled Kyrgyz Telecom stopped broadcasting nationwide Azattyk radio"[64] which was oppositions one of the most important voices. There were only three days until the elections, which meant that, it was the last days of the election campaign, in addition there were significant public protests in rural areas of the country.

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[62] Ibid.,

[63] Adami, Fabian. "The Double-Headed Tulip: Kyrgyzstan's Revolution" *Perspective*, XVI(2), (March 2006), http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol16/Adami.html (accessed on 8 March 2008)

[64] Kartawich, Linda, "Kyrgyzstan: Parliamentary Elections February 2005", *NORDEM Report*, September 2005, 12

Because of this stopping broadcasting of Azattyk, "restricted voter access to an independent information source at a critical time of the campaign".[65]

Within these developments and atmosphere was held on the first round of the elections on 27 of February. By the end of the first round of the elections it was announced that 33 candidates won their seats in the parliament and 42 seats left to be decided in the second round, held on 13 March.[66] The most important thing was that, as a result of the first round in the parliament have been elected only two candidates from the opposition. These results led to the serious demonstrations across the several parts of the country. The reasons of these demonstrations were the allegations of electoral violations in the first round. The supporters of the candidates, which were deregistered or loosed the election because of the unfair election, started to protest the elections demanding the annulment of the parliamentary election results and the dismissal of the President.

On 3rd of March at a village in the southern province of Jalal-Abad have begun a large scale demonstration. The demonstrators were close associates of the candidates, who were eliminated in the first round of voting.

> Rebuffed locally, the protesters moved on March 4 to the regional-administration headquarters building on Jalalabad city's central square, where they demanded to speak to the governor. They were joined there by several hundred other people pressing similar grievances on behalf of losing Jalalabad-area candidates…
> At some point on March 4, the protestors managed to take over—whether by design or spontaneously is unclear—the regional-administration headquarters. Aside from a scuffle with police, no one used force. For the next two weeks, protestors would stay in control of the building, drawing media attention and support from previously unassociated oppositionists from around the region who began demanding not only new elections but also Akayev's resignation. By March 7, there were as many as two thousand protestors in downtown Jalalabad[67].

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[65] "Kyrgyz Republic: Parliamentary Elections 27 February and 13 March" *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report,* Warsaw, 20 May 2005, 15

[66] Abazov, Rafis. "The Parliamentary Election in Kyrgyzstan, February/March 2005", Notes on Recent Elections/Electoral Studies 26, (2007): 529-533, 532

[67] Radnitz, Scott. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyztsan?" *Journal of Democracy*, 17(2), (April 2006): 132-146, 135

At the same day, one of the opposition leaders Kurmanbek Bakiev offered urgently, within the nearest several days, to hold an extraordinary session of the Jogorku Kenesh's 3rd convocation to address the issue of early election of President of Kyrgyzstan. Thus, despite being successful in the first round of the parliamentary elections, it was clear that president and his team gradually loses the control over the situation. Under these conditions, many previously neutral local clans have become increasingly cautious and think about the expediency of supporting the president.[68] The displeasure of opposition and its supporters was growing continuously and dramatically because of the injustice led by Akaev.

But Akaev did not reduce his attacks towards the opposition, moreover at the second round of the elections "more efforts was put into defeating opposition candidates than previously".[69] The second round of the elections passed with even greater violations than the first round. Prior to the second round of the election, two candidates in Chui and Naryn were discharged from elections by the decisions of court.[70] And also, other electoral irregularities such as electoral fraud and pressure from government were not lacked in the second round too. With the announcement of elections results the protests really escalated especially in southern part of the country. As a result of the two rounds, only six seats were taken by the opposition candidates. The remaining opposition candidates, including Kurmanbek Bakiev, were defeated somehow. Especially Kurmanbek Bakiev's defeat in his own district was really a big scandal. Kurmanbek Bakiev, who had strong support from South, his home region, expected to be easily elected.

Immediately after the announcement of the results, at the centre of Jalal-Abad began a mass meeting with the participation thousands of protestors. At this

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[68] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

[69] Olcott, Martha Brill. *Lessons of "The Tulip Revolution"* Testimony prepared for the Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe, April 7, 2005, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=16758 (accessed on 5 March 2008), 4

[70] Kartawich, Linda, "Kyrgyzstan: Parliamentary Elections February 2005", *NORDEM Report*, September 2005, 19

mass meeting, on the 15th of March, Kurmanbek Bakiev had addressed to the demonstrators. Opposition groups "blamed Akayev's government for manipulating the election, and decided to take matters into their own hands."[71] After the speech of Bakiev, it was decided to establish a Coordinating Council of People's Unity of Kyrgyzstan. Zhusupbek Zheenbekov, who was the ex-candidate for deputies, was elected as a chairman of this Council. As was mentioned above, with the escalation of the protests, the protestors have managed to take over the regional administration buildings. By occupying building of regional administration, actually the opposition has declared capture of authority in Jalal-Abad province.[72]

Despite the fact that, government on 20th of March made an attempt to take control over the situation, the opposition reoccupied the administration building. The opposition leaders in Jalal-Abad after this developments "began sending out emissaries to 'export the revolution' to other towns".[73] Obviously the next town was Osh, which is close to Jalal-Abad and the second largest city in Kyrgyzstan. On March 21 the opposition, facing weak official resistance, captured the authority in Osh province easily. In other words, hereafter, the entire South of Kyrgyzstan was under the control of opposition.

After the capture of Osh, a heap of demonstrators moved to Bishkek. Only after the taking control over the South of Kyrgyzstan leaders of PMK, other opposition groups and NGO activists started organize the joint protests in Bishkek. The first demonstration organized by these diverse elements took place on March 23. Despite the fact that, police broke up this gathering, the opposition has prepared the massive demonstration for the following day.[74] By the beginning of the demonstrations on March 24, the situation in the country was clearly out of

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[71] Abazov, Rafis. "The Parliamentary Election in Kyrgyzstan, February/March 2005", Notes on Recent Elections/Electoral Studies 26, (2007): 529-533, 533

[72] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

[73] Radnitz, Scott. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyztsan?" *Journal of Democracy*, 17(2), (April 2006): 132-146, 136

[74] Ibid.,

the government's control. After the small strife with police, demonstrators stormed the President's Office. In the mean time Askar Akaev fled the country. In other words the Kyrgyz "Tulip Revolution" have been over.

3.3. Reasons of the "Tulip Revolution": Internal Reasons

Actually a lot of factors can be shown as reasons of the "Tulip Revolution". The factors such as, poverty, failed democratization process, authoritarianism, corruption, economic stagnation, manipulating elections, regionalism can be shown as reasons of the Kyrgyz "Tulip Revolution". But, most of these factors are occurring in other Central Asian states too. In that case, why "Tulip Revolution" occurred in Kyrgyzstan, not in Tajikistan or Uzbekistan? What were the features that drew Kyrgyzstan to the revolution? In order to answer to this question, Yasar Sari and Sureyya Yigit in their article, which was published on open Democracy News Analysis, listed three main features. These scholars argue that, Akaev's support came only from his region.[75] In contrast to his neighboring colleagues Akaev was not part of the communist nomenklatura during the Soviet period, because of this he did not possess solid institutional powerbase. As a second feature scholars show, the international governmental and non-governmental organizations which were allowed to work in Kyrgyzstan. The third feature is that, under the Akaev's regime, despite some deficiencies, there was a space of freedom for opposition political parties. And this "freedom" created "the sense that a transfer of power was possible."[76]

Herd, points out that "revolutions occur in states with weak leaders and strong oppositions."[77] If we analyze the situation from this point of view, Kyrgyzstan had a most 'suitable base' to make a revolution in. As was mentioned

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[75] Sari, Yasar and Yigit, Sureyya. *"Kyrgyzstan: Revolution or Not?"*, http://www.opendemocracy.net/node/2404/pdf (accessed on 13 February 2008)

[76] Ibid.,

[77] Herd, Graeme P. "The 'Orange Revolution': Implications for Stability in the CIS", *Conflict Studies Research Centre, Central & Eastern Europe Series*, January 2005, 3

above, Askar Akaev's power was most vulnerable in the region. In addition to this, Kyrgyzstan's political system was relatively more open as compared to the rest of the Central Asian states.[78] As a result, Kyrgyzstan had a stronger opposition as compared to the rest of the region.

In my opinion, economic stagnation, poverty, corruption, regionalism, 'family rule' (the main state and government positions, including control over the key economic sectors, were distributed between representatives of pro-regime clans)[79] and of course Aksy events were the main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution". In addition, the external factors such as, "Colourful Revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine, international NGOs, United State's interests in Central Asia, can be shown as an external reasons. But, I think that, these external factors were only the 'reasons' which accelerated the occurrence of "Tulip Revolution". In other words, in my opinion, it will be wrong to accept these external factors as main reasons of Kyrgyz "Tulip Revolution". Even if we accept that, some of the opposition politicians and NGOs were supported by external actors, I don not think that NGOs have played a serious role in terms of evolution of the "Tulip Revolution". Radnitz underlined the passiveness of NGOs in the process of "Tulip Revolution":

> Yet my own fieldwork indicated that NGOs played a smaller role in the March events than might at first appear to be the case. While most of the remarks criticizing Akayev in the international press came from NGO leaders and rights defenders, these in fact played no part in mobilizing people in Jalalabad or Osh, and only a minor one in Bishkek.[80]

In order to support his argument, Radnitz quoted one of the NGO's roles as an example:

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[78] Afzal, Amina. "*Security in the CIS: Implications of the 'Colour Revolutions'*", http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2005_files/no_3%5Carticle%5Ca5.html (accessed on 10 March 2008)

[79]"The Republic of Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asia*. Report on Transformation, http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/Asia_Kyrgyzstan.pdf (accessed on 5 March 2008), 125

[80] Radnitz, Scott. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyztsan?" *Journal of Democracy*, 17(2), (April 2006): 132-146, 138

> One example is the student movement Kel-kel, which received significant press in the leadup to the elections (in part because its members gave numerous interviews), yet had small impact in reality. According to interviews with its leaders, it was only active in Bishkek and was responsible for bringing only 50 to 200 students to the protests on March 24…[81]

Furthermore Roza Otunbaeva, who is one of the opposition leaders and perceived as a pro-western politician, stated that it was revolution made by ordinary people. In her interview with *Demokratizatsiya*, she stated:

> I can state categorically that it was a popular revolution. …history will show that it was, at its core, a popular protest and uprising. Those of us in the opposition tried to lead this uprising, but we were often left in its wake. We didn't appreciate the degree of anger of the population, and the people passed us by. They decided to act, and we only appeared on the scene later…That was done by the people out of a feeling of frustration over the injustice, the lies, and the hypocrisy of the authorities. The population decided that it was no longer going to serve the persons who sat in local government buildings—officials whom we'd elected but who were misrepresenting the interests of the people and deciding our fate so unjustly. We [the opposition leaders] only arrived at the buildings later, after the fact.[82]

So, we can not ignore that, rural citizens who were smashed in the throes of poverty composed the dynamics of the "Tulip Revolution". That's why, the external factors can not be shown as main reasons of "Tulip Revolution". In my opinion, sooner or later, world would witness the downfall of Akaev's regime. Maybe it would be right, to accept the external factors only as accelerators of the process. In my opinion, the explosive substances, which shattered Akaev's regime, composed of fully internal reasons. Economic stagnation, poverty, corruption, regionalism, 'family rule' and Aksy events were internal and the main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution". This means that, in order to understand the milestones of the "Tulip Revolution" we need to analyze these internal reasons.

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[81] Ibid., 145

[82] Huskey, Eugene. "Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution: Interview with Roza Otunbaeva", Demokratizatsiya: The Juornal of Post-Soviet Democratization, 13(4), (2005): 483–489 , 485

3.3.1 Economic Stagnation and Poverty

In order to understand the reasons of economic stagnation and poverty in Kyrgyzstan, we should take into the consideration the legacy of the Soviet planned economy. At the Soviet period, the economy of the Central Asia "has been overwhelmingly dominated by the extraction of raw materials and the production of agricultural goods".[83] As a result of the Soviet planned economy, Kyrgyzstan became an agricultural country. The main agricultural products were tobacco, cotton, various fruits and vegetables, wool and sheep.[84] Accelerated economic development of Soviet Kyrgyzstan, which concentrated on agricultural production has led to the environmental devastation of the land.[85] Furthermore, "In the Soviet division of labor, traditionally Kyrgyzstan was one of bigger producers of animal husbandry products."[86]Total number of sheep was more than 10 million in 1985.[87] Consequently, the dramatic decline in the number of sheep after the collapse of the Soviet Union raised other economic problems.[88]

On the other hand, as in all Soviet Central Asian states, Kyrgyzstan's most of the industrially skilled workforce was composed of Slavs.[89] In Soviet Kyrgyzstan, "Russians and other Slavs dominated the technical and engineering

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[83] Glenn, John. *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Palgrave, New York, 1999, 137

[84] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. "Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan" *DEMSTAR Research Report*, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 13

[85] Glenn, John. *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Palgrave, New York, 1999, 137

[86] Niazaliev, Ouran. "Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000", (Ankara: METU, 2004), 59

[87] Ploskih, V.M. Istoriya Kirgizov i Kirgizstana/ History of Kyrgyzs and Kyrgyzstan, Ilim, Bishkek, 2000, 262

[88] Huskey, Eugene, "An Economy of Authoritarianism?: Askar Akaev and Presidential Leadership in Kyrgyzstan" in *Power and Change in Central Asia*, Sally N.Cummings, ed., Routledge, London and New York, 2002, 75

[89] Glenn, John. *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Palgrave, New York, 1999, 137

professions".[90]Following the collapse of the USSR, there was a massive emigration of Russian's from Kyrgyzstan. Especially the ethnic conflict in the Osh region that occurred in 1990 increased the emigration of the Russians'. In general, from 1989 to 1994, the proportion of Russians in Kyrgyzstan has dropped from 21,5% to 17%.[91] Consequences of mass emigration of Russians were not slow to affect the Kyrgyzstan's economy. There was a catastrophic insufficiency to fill the workplaces which were released with their departure.

It is obvious that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, newly independent Kyrgyzstan faced with a host of economic difficulties. As, Kyrgyzstan's role in Soviet economy was to provide primary commodities for industries located in the European parts of the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the USSR, Kyrgyzstan immediately lost its Soviet era suppliers and customers.[92] For these reasons, "Kyrgyzstan's small and uncompetitive industrial enterprises quickly became insolvent and many closed entirely."[93]As a result, unemployment has increased dramatically. In addition to these economic problems, most of the productive machineries of insolvent or closed industries were sold as a scrap metal to China.

All of these negative developments led to the economic stagnation, unemployment, impoverishment and corruption. "The deepening crisis of unemployment in the countryside fed large-scale migration to the cities, which strained urban social services and threatened political stability."[94] Obviously, newly independent Kyrgyzstan's one of the foremost goals was to solve the

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[90] Huskey, Eugene, "An Economy of Authoritarianism?: Askar Akaev and Presidential Leadership in Kyrgyzstan" in *Power and Change in Central Asia*, Sally N.Cummings, ed., Routledge, London and New York, 2002, 76

[91] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

[92] Gleason, Gregory. Markets and Politics in Central Asia: Structural reform and political change, Rourledge, New York, 2003, 65

[93] Ibid., 65-66

[94] Huskey, Eugene, "An Economy of Authoritarianism?: Askar Akaev and Presidential Leadership in Kyrgyzstan" in *Power and Change in Central Asia*, Sally N.Cummings, ed., Routledge, London and New York, 2002, 74

economic stagnation. In order to achieve this, Kyrgyzstan defined new economic reforms.[95]

> First of all, new agrarian policy should be implemented in order to establish social infrastructure and develop small industrial entrepreneurship in local areas. Secondly, it was necessary to review legislative and normative laws and documents, and create economic, judicial and organizational arrangements for attracting direct foreign investments, credits and new technologies. Third aspect aimed to privatize small and medium enterprises in trade and public food services, consumer services, local industry, transport and construction.[96]

By starting to implement these polices, Kyrgyzstan became the leader of the region in terms of transformation to open market economy. New laws were adopted and new decrees were issued, such as legislation on investment, customs regulations, massive privatization and land reforms.[97] In 1992 Kyrgyzstan became a member of World Bank and in 1993 started to adopt IMF's stabilization program.[98] By May 1993, Kyrgyzstan introduced its own currency and it was the first Central Asian state which got out from ruble zone.[99] Also it was the first to join the World Trade Organization in 1998.[100] By going in the direction of openness, economic restructuring and liberal democracy, Kyrgyzstan aimed to get financial aid from Western donor states. It was foreign aid which has played a key role in its economic recovery in 1996-1997.

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[95] Saray, Mehmet. "Modern Kırgızistan'ın Doğuşu/ Birth of Modern Kyrgyzstan", TİKA, Ankara, 2004

[96] Niazaliev, Ouran. "Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000", (Ankara: METU, 2004), 67

[97] Botoiarova, Nuska. "Islamic Fundamentalism in Post-Soviet Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan: Real or Imagined Threat", (Ankara: METU, 2005), 166

[98] Spector, Regine A., "The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan" *Berkley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies: Working Paper Series.* University of California, Berkeley, Spring 2004, 16

[99] Pomfret, Richard, *Central Asia Turns South?: Trade Relations in Transition* (Central Asian and Caucasian Prospects), The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatam House, London, 1999, 17

[100] Spector, Regine A., "The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan" *Berkley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies: Working Paper Series.* University of California, Berkeley, Spring 2004, 3

However, the 1998 financial crises in Asia and Russia slowed the pace of economic growth and followed by a new recession.[101] By 2003 "the level of unemployment increased by 6.2 percent with the number of unemployed persons making up 9.0 percent of the population, reaching the highest level since independence."[102] Furthermore, in 2004 Kyrgyzstan's total external debts reached 2 billion USD which account for 70 percent of GDP and 50 percent of its population was living below the poverty line.[103] Also corruption was one of the hindering factors of economic transformation. In response, the government did not adopt sufficient anti-corruption campaigns in order to prevent it. The anti-corruption campaigns "were often used to remove or threaten undesirable politicians."[104]

In short, post-Soviet economic stagnation led to the unemployment, corruption and impoverishment. Poverty led to the emigration and also internal migration from rural areas to cities. Internal migration led to the formation of 'poverty belts'[105]around the big cities, mainly in Bishkek. These 'poverty belts' consist of mainly young people which have no jobs and stable sources of income. This means that, 'poverty belts' composed a critical mass that could be mobilized into action.[106] Consequently, economic stagnation and poverty surely can be shown as a main reason of the "Tulip Revolution".

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[101] Niazaliev, Ouran. "Failed Democratic Experience in Kyrgyzstan: 1990-2000", (Ankara: METU, 2004), 76

[102] Botoiarova, Nuska. "Islamic Fundamentalism in Post-Soviet Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan: Real or Imagined Threat", (Ankara: METU, 2005), 168

[103] "The Republic of Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asia*. Report on Transformation, http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/Asia_Kyrgyzstan.pdf (accessed on 5 March 2008), 134

[104] Koichumanov, Talaibek, Otorbayev, Joomart and S. Frederick. "Kyrgyzstan: The Path Forward", *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center*, Silk Road Paper, Washington, November 2005, 18

[105] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

[106] "The Republic of Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asia*. Report on Transformation, http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/Asia_Kyrgyzstan.pdf (accessed on 5 March 2008), 126-127

3.3.2 'Family Rule' and Regionalism

Economic stagnation, corruption, growing unemployment and sharp decrease of living standards led to the increase in the opposition side. In order to battle with the growing opposition Akaev started to strengthen his power. He made it by strengthening presidential legitimate power and by gathering around him loyal supporters. By distributing political power and economic resources among his clan and loyal supporters, he intended to secure himself. This intention step by step led to the formation of a 'family rule'. By the time, directly or indirectly, almost all levels of political and economic resources were controlling by Akaev's family and close supporters. All of these realities were known by Kyrgyz public in general. And the detailed listing of these realities was published by the newspaper MSN at the beginning of the February 2005.[107]

According to this article under the control of the President's wife Mayram Akaeva were fund "Merim", Shopping Centre "Bereket Grand", the advertising company "Continent". It is known that, politicians, local and also foreign investors donated really big money to the fund "Merim" in order to solve own problems. President's daughter Bermet Akaeva headed American University in Central Asia as well as the party "Alga Kyrgyzstan!" ("Forward Kyrgyzstan!"). Her husband Adil Toygonbaev supervised cement-slate factory in Kant, mercury plant in Kadamzhaj, sugar factory in Karabalta, "Manas Airport", network of gasoline stations "Shnos", "Kyrgyz Telecom". Also whole media-empire such as TV channel "KOORT", the Newspaper "Vechernij Bishkek", Radio station "Love Radio", advertising agency "Airek" and News agency "Kyrgyz Info", were under the control of Adil Toygonbaev. Furthermore Askar Akaev's son Aidar Akaev, when he was 29, became the adviser of Minister of Finance and the president of Olympic committee of the country. And also under his control were network of gasoline stations "NK Alians", "Kyrgyzneftgaz", GSM operators "BITEL" and "FONEX", TV channel "NBT" and TV channel "Piramida".

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[107] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

Actually so many other economic resources can be included to this list. Which means that step by step Kyrgyzstan's economy was getting dependent on Akaev's family. Moreover, any official can simultaneously receive requests and instructions from the president himself, and his wife and children, and all should be executed. "Family's" increasing influence in all spheres of life caused explosion of discontent even among those who all last years were loyal to the president.[108] As a result "Askar Akaev's support base was shrinking more and more."[109]This can be shown as one of the reasons of "Tulip Revolution".

The other reality of Kyrgyzstan is the importance of regionalism. There is a historical division between the North and South of Kyrgyzstan.[110]This division is the reason of the rivalry between the regional clans. Kynev in his study mentioned that, in the Soviet years all the top post in the republic distributed among major groups (northern Kyrgyz - the southern Kyrgyz - Russian - Uzbeks) in order to keep the certain balance. So, there was a tradition to appoint to the post of first secretary of the Kyrgyz Central Committee by turns natives from the North and from the South of the Kyrgyzstan. [111]

However with the achievement of independence there was not any supervisor to keep balance as within Soviet period. By the time this balance was disturbed, Akaev distributed the key positions among the elites from Northern region. As a result, by the end of the Askar Akaev's period the core of the ruling elite was dominated by northerners. As a representative from South there were only first vice-primer Kubanychbek Zhumaliev and chairman of the Legislative Assembly of the Jogorku Kenesh Abdygany Erkebaev. "Even though more than

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[108] Ibid.,

[109] "The Republic of Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asia*. Report on Transformation, http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/Asia_Kyrgyzstan.pdf (accessed on 5 March 2008), 125

[110] Akiner, Shirin. "Social and Political Reorganization in Central Asia: Transition from Pre-Colonial to Post- Colonial Society" in *Post Soviet Central Asia* ed. Touraj Atabaki and John O'Kane. London& New York: Tauris Academic Studies, (1998): 1-34, 18

[111] Kynev, Aleksandr V. "Kirgizstan Do i Posle 'Tjulpanovoj Revoljutsii'/ Kyrgyzstan Before and After the 'Tulip Revolution'", *Institute for Humanities and Political Studies*, http://www.igpi.ru/info/people/kynev/1128082583.html (accessed on 5 March 2008)

50% of the population lived in the south"[112] ruling elite was dominated by northerners. This led to the dissatisfaction among the southerners. It is not a coincidence that the "Tulip Revolution" has begun from the south of the country. As a result, regionalism became another reason of the "Tulip Revolution".

3.3.3 Aksy Events

In the political history of the countries, there are some important turning points. As other countries in the world, independent young Kyrgyzstan has experienced some distinct events in its new political history. An Aksy event is one of them, which was a turning point in Kyrgyzstan's political history. Aksy events occurred, between January and November 2002, in Aksy district of Jalal-Abad province. The reason of this event was the politically motivated arrest of Azimbek Beknazarov, who was the Member of Parliament from Aksy district. As a deputy of the Jogorku Kenesh, Beknazarov became one of the strong critics of Akaev's policy.

Especially he strongly criticized the Chinese-Kyrgyz agreements, signed in 1996 and 1999, which put Kyrgyzstan under an obligation to transfer its disputed territory to China.[113] These agreements were signed by Askar Akaev without advance knowledge of parliament.[114] "Beknazarov claimed that these lands contained valuable water resources, as well as the graves of people who died fleeing to China to avoid arrest by Russian troops in the 1916 uprising."[115]

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[112] Spector, Regine A., "The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan" *Berkley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies: Working Paper Series.* University of California, Berkeley, Spring 2004, 27

[113] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 33-34

[114] Radnitz, Scott. "Networks, localism and mobilization in Aksy, Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asian Survey*, 24(4), (December 2005): 405–424, 410

[115] Olcott, Martha Brill. "Lessons of 'The Tulip Revolution'", *Testimony prepared for the Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe*, April 7, 2005, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=16758 (accessed on 5 March 2008), 2

Azimbek Beknazarov increasingly criticized the government and called for Akaev's impeachment. This criticism of the government and Askar Akaev, led to the Beknazarov's arrest. On 5th of January 2002, he was arrested on charges of abuse of power, when he was investigating the murder case as a district prosecutor in the Toktogul region in 1995.[116]

Undoubtedly this arrest was politically arranged by government in order to suppress the opposition figures who could challenge the Akaev's regime. Akaev's team was intended to neutralize Beknazarov by fabricating charges, as they had done earlier with another rival, Felix Kulov.[117] "However, with the arrest of Beknazarov, the government significantly overplayed its hand. Immediately there were protest demonstrations organized by Beknazarov's regional allies and fellow clan members."[118]The authorities did not accept the series of public protests as a serious threat as long as they were peaceful and not very visible.[119]But the demonstrations and demonstrates started to increase gradually. On 17th of March 2002, protestors started to march towards the Kerben, which is county town of Aksy district. The police was ordered to prevent the protestors from entering the Kerben. This led to the clashes between the police and the protestors. Scared by the size of the demonstrators, "the police and security forces opened fire, killing six citizens and injuring more than 60 people."[120]This led to the nation-wide public discontent and protests demanding Beknazarov release and President Askar Akaev's resignation.

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[116] Ibid.,

[117] Radnitz, Scott. "Networks, localism and mobilization in Aksy, Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asian Survey*, 24(4), (December 2005): 405–424, 411

[118] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 9

[119] Juraev, Emil. "Aksy: A Turning Point, or a Dot on a Strait Line Down?", issue of the CACI Analyst, 24 April 2002, http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/132 (accessed on 18 January 2007)

[120] Abazov, Rafis. "The Political Culture Of Central Asia: A Case Of Kyrgyzstan" *Political Culture Case Studies Conflict Studies Research Centre*, March 2003, www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/special/m27/M27.ch5 (accessed on 10 March 2008), 49

After these developments, on March 19, the government released Beknazorov hoping to avoid further violence. Protestors also, demanded punishing those who responsible in the death of innocent people. In order to placate the opposition, several people "at the top levels of government, including the head of the Presidential Administration, Amanbek Karypkulov, were then accused of negligence and dismissed from Office".[121]Also on May 2002 the government resigned and new one was established led by Nikolai Tanayev. The Aksy events and its results was a turning point for Kyrgyzstan. In other words as a result of Aksy events Akaev's authority has been shaken by ordinary people. Also with Aksy events, people discovered that they were not powerless and that they can achieve their demands by pressuring the government. In the course of time, opposition politicians,

> …honed their mobilizational skills in Aksy and maintained the possibility of creating a new mass mobilization if the regime would not allow systemic political change. The rigged elections of February 2005 gave them the opportunity. Finally, ordinary people, fed up with corruption and the slow course of change, were aware of Aksy's success in winning concessions from the government and were emboldened to use those means again.[122]

Furthermore, Askar Akaev failed to learn the lesson of Aksy events, which showed clearly that the government was lack of well trained riot control formations.[123]On the other hand Akaev did learn one thing from the Aksy events, "that firing on an unarmed crowd could lead to civil war, and for all his unwillingness to resign, he choose to draw the line at that."[124]Also police did not

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[121] Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen,William W. *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan* DEMSTAR Research Report, No 16, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, October 2003, 9

[122] Radnitz, Scott. "Networks, localism and mobilization in Aksy, Kyrgyzstan" *Central Asian Survey*, 24(4), (December 2005): 405–424, 422-423

[123] Plater-Zyberk, Henry. "Kyrgyzstan after Akayev", Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Conflict Studies Research Centre, 2005, 1

[124] Olcott, Martha Brill. "Lessons of 'The Tulip Revolution'", *Testimony prepared for the Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe*, April 7, 2005, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=16758 (accessed on 5 March 2008), 4

want to take a responsibility for firing on unarmed crowd in March 2005. All of these factors confirm that Aksy events were one of the main reasons which led to the “Tulip Revolution”.

CHAPTER 4

EXTERNAL REASONS OF THE "TULIP REVOLUTION"

The collapse of Soviet Union opened new perspectives for old Soviet Union states and gave them chance to follow national policies independently. However, used to be parts of big complex system of former Soviet Union and being lack of government experience in politic and economic area made them to dependent on external actors. One of the main external actors has become United States with its promotion of democracy and liberalization, while the Russia was challenging not to lose its political and economical influence in these states. As a result of these external powers' policy, within the time the leaders of these states found themselves in the complex choices, pro-Western or pro-Russian. Therefore political and economic developments of these states have become vulnerable. For these reasons the 'coloured revolutions' in post-Soviet states, which was the struggle between the pro-Western and pro-Russian elites, were not a coincidence.

4.1 The Central Asia Policies of Russia, China and the USA

Being different from Georgia's 'Rose revolution' and Ukraine's 'Orange revolution', in Kyrgyzstan's 'Tulip Revolution' internal factors has become more important as we mentioned above. However we can not ignore external factors as well. Since the Russia, United States and China had been living clash of politic and economic interests in Central Asia. While Russia and China were in one side, supporting existing regimes in Central Asia, the U.S. was in other side, aiming to secure pro-Western elites in Central Asian states. Around this aim United States had tendency to support continuation of 'colourful revolutions' in Central Asia. Founding suitable base in Kyrgyzstan, where weak government and strong

opposition, United States intended to transfer 'colourful revolutions' to Central Asian region, which was against the interests of Russia and China in the region. For these reasons it worth to evaluate USA's, Russia's and China's interests in Central Asia in order to analyze the external factors of the "Tulip Revolution".

4.1.1 Russia

Central Asia was always important for Russia. However at the beginning of the 1990s, relatively, Central Asia was not a top agenda in post-Soviet Russian Foreign policy. At that period Russia had serious economic problems because of this it could not pay serious attention to this region. Actually Russia tried to maintain its influence by different security and economic institutions which were formed with the post-Soviet states. But these institutions were not effectively functioning.

On 8 December 1991, three Slav republics (Russia, Ukraine and Belarus) of former USSR, formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Following the formation of the CIS, Central Asian states expressed their willingness to become a member of the CIS. With the exception of Georgia and the Baltic states, other former Soviet republics joined to CIS in Almaty on 21 December.[125] After its formation in the course of time, a lot of agreements were adopted. The main intention of the members was to coordinate their policies regarding their economies, foreign relations, defense, immigration policies, environmental protection, and law enforcement.[126] Whole progress has been largely determined by bilateral relations between Russia and the separate states.

Following the dissolution of the USSR, new authorities of Russia were

> not interested in reviving Gorbachev's plan of a Soviet confederacy. All republics other than Russia were considered a burden, and Central Asia's five, the greatest onus of all. Central Asian states were invited to join the

[125] Vassiliev, Alexei M. "Russia and Central Asia" in *Central Asia* ed Alexei Vassiliev. London: Saqi Books, (2001): 7–28, 9

[126] Ibid., 10

> CIS only as afterthought. The end of the ruble zone in 1993 was the final act of Russia's liberation from its borderlands.[127]

However, a civil war in Tajikistan threatened to spill over into the rest of Central Asia.

> Dangerous developments in Central Asia made Russia pay more attention to the region… Realizing that the demise of the USSR left it with totally unprotected borders, Russia sought to keep control of the Tajik and Kyrgyz land borders and to revive the former Soviet air defense system.[128]

On 14 September 1995 Boris Yeltsin declared that the Commonwealth of Independent States is important for Russia as a space of vital interests.[129] However, Russia was still weak because of its economic problems.

> Russia looked on passively as Western companies began to develop Caspian oil reserves. Moscow also suffered a major political defeat when the United States backed plans to build pipelines from the Caspian to the world market that did not go through Russia, thereby undercutting Russia's monopoly on Caspian oil transit.[130]

But it does not mean that Russia was not influential in Central Asia region or it lost its dominance in region. Russia still was most influential among the competing external actors in the region. In 2000 the new phase started in Russia's Central Asia policy. New president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, started his attempts to strengthen Russia's position in Central Asian region. Putin developed close and active dialogue with leaders of the region. Especially Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan "showed that they positively welcomed the signs of revival emanating

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[127] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 119

[128] Ibid.,

[129] Laruelle, Marlène. "Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center,* Silk Road Paper, Washington, April 2008, 9

[130] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 119

from Kremlin."[131] Russia became more concerned about developments in Central Asia than any other external actor. Russia's main interests in the region were: maintaining its southern border security and cutting of terrorist infiltration; rebuilding its influence in the region; securing its firms participation in the developing the region's natural resources; protecting its dominance over oil and gas transit routes in the region.[132]

Since the early 1990s the security of its southern borders was Russia's main concern. A civil war in Tajikistan threatened to spill over into the rest of Central Asia. "Terrorist activities, internal armed conflicts and interstate tensions over borders and water resources within Central Asia have undermined opportunities for regional stability, development and integration."[133] On 15 May 1992 Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan signed a Collective Security Treaty (CST).[134] Also, Azerbaijan signed the treaty on September 24, 1993, Georgia on December 9, 1993 and Belarus on December 31, 1993. The CST was set to last for a five-year period unless extended. On April 2, 1999, the Presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, signed a protocol renewing the treaty for another five year period. [135] But Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan refused to sign and withdrew from the treaty. Uzbekistan quit the CST because of inability of the organization to assist Uzbekistan against the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).[136]

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[131] Laruelle, Marlène. "Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center,* Silk Road Paper, Washington, April 2008, 10

[132] Dongfeng, Ren. "The Central Asia Policies of China, Russia and the USA, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Process: a view from China" *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,* October-December 2003, 8

[133] Ibid.,

[134] Vassiliev, Alexei M. "Russia and Central Asia" in *Central Asia* ed Alexei Vassiliev. London: Saqi Books, (2001): 7–28, 10

[135] Weinstein, Adam. "Russian Phoenix: The Collective Security Treaty Organization" *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations,* (Winter/Spring 2007): 167–180, 171

[136]Laruelle, Marlène. "Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center,* Silk Road Paper, Washington, April 2008, 17

Putin realized the ineffectiveness and inability of CST to master the geopolitical developments. In April 2003, Putin transformed the CST into Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).[137]The member states (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan) of the CSTO declared that the CSTO will combat terrorism and drug trafficking in Central Asia. On the other hand Russia's aim, in forming CSTO, was to prevent members of the CIS from aligning with NATO.[138] In addition to this Russia's purpose was "to create legal-political grounds for permanently stationing Russian forces and bases in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and possibly Uzbekistan".[139] In October 2003 Russia established its military base in Kyrgyzstan, it was Russia's first new regional military base since collapse of the USSR.[140] This base is only 30 kilometers to the U.S. base at Manas Airport in Kyrgyzstan. Also, in 2004 Russia's 201st Motorized Infantry Division acquired a permanent base near Dushanbe, Tajikistan.[141] In addition to these developments, Russia expanded its security cooperation with Uzbekistan. In June 2004, Uzbekistan and Russia signed a Treaty on Strategic Cooperation stating that "sides, based on the separate agreements, will offer each other the right to use the military facilities that are located on their territories".[142]

Also, Russia is interested to strengthen its influence in Central Asia on the economic level. In particular, Russia seeks to use energy polices to strengthen its influence. Because of this, Russia's main interest was securing its firms participation in the developing the region's natural resources; protecting its

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[137] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 99

[138] Blank, Stephen. "The Strategic Importance of Central Asia: An American View" *Parameters*, (Spring 2008): 73–87, 79

[139] Ibid.,

[140] Weitz, Richard. "Averting a new Great Game in Central Asia" The Washington Quarterly, 29(3), (Summer 2006): 155–167, 157

[141] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 102

[142] Weitz, Richard. "Averting a new Great Game in Central Asia" The Washington Quarterly, 29(3), (Summer 2006): 155–167, 158

dominance over oil and gas transit routes in the region.[143] With the beginning of the 2000, Russian energy companies started to deepen their cooperation with Central Asian partners in oil, gas and hydroelectric energy. Russia wants to increase Russian companies' share of Kazakhstan's oil production.

> At present, the Russian company LUKoil has a 15-persent share in the Karachaganak and 50 percent in the Kumkol oilfields… Russia and Kazakhstan agreed on the joint exploration of the northern Caspian shelf. In addition to the private company LUKoil, the state owned Rosneft is also involved in the project. Under a 2005 production-sharing agreement, 50 percent of Kazakhstan's Kurmangazy oilfield (with reserve of 1 billion tons) will be owned by Rosneft and Zarubezhneft, and the other half by KazMunaiGaz. The Kazakh company is involved in another joint venture with LUKoil in the Dostyk oilfield.
>
> Russia has sought,..., to control Kazakhstan's oil exports. Since 2001, the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), with 24 percent owned by Russia, has been pumping oil from Tengiz, Karachaganak, and Kashagan to Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiisk. These shipments are expected to rise from 28 million tons per year to 67 million tons. Russia also hoped to modernize the Atyrau-Samara pipeline to attract even more Kazakh oil shipments.[144]

Russian companies became more active in the other Central Asian states too. For example, in 2002, Russian company Gazprom signed an agreement with Uzbekneftgaz, in which Uzbekistan committed to sell Uzbek gas to Russia until 2012.[145] In 2006, Gazprom and Uzbekistan signed a 25-year production sharing agreement (PSA) for the Urga, Kuanysh and Akchalak deposits.[146] Also, Russia is interested to maintain its influence over the Turkmenistan's gas exports. "In 2003, Gazprom signed a contract with Turkmenistan, which guarantees it a quasi-monopoly over the purchase of Turkmen gas (around 80 bcm in 2008) and over its

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[143] Dongfeng, Ren. "The Central Asia Policies of China, Russia and the USA, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Process: a view from China" *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,* October-December 2003, 8

[144] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 107

[145] Laruelle, Marlène. "Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center,* Silk Road Paper, Washington, April 2008, 23

[146] Ibid.,

exportation to Europe."[147] A major consumer of Turkmen gas is Ukraine (up to 40 billion cubic meters in 2006), and it wholly dependent on Russia for energy supplies.[148] Consequently, Russia uses Turkmen gas as a tool in its policy toward Ukraine in order to make pressure on the Ukraine, as well as on Western Europe.

As we mentioned above, Russia's main interests in the Central Asian region included: maintaining its southern border security, securing its firms participation in the developing the region's natural resources and protecting its dominance over oil and gas transit routes in the region. The analyzes above shows that with the beginning of 2000, Russia became successful in terms of rebuilding its influence in the Central Asian region.

4.1.2 China

China's interests in Central Asia are composed of border security, combating the East Turkestan Independence Movement, energy and economic interests. Following the independence of Central Asian states, China's major concern related with this region was border security and stability. Until the 1997, other strategic interests related with this region were not so important for China. After the collapse of the USSR, the most important issue for China was to solve the border disputes between former USSR and China. "The Soviet-Chinese border, consisting of a 4300-kilometer eastern section… and a 3200-kilometer western section..., was delineated mainly by the Russian empire and the Qing dynasty in the late 19th century."[149] The border between the Soviet Union and the China had long been an issue of contention. In the late 1980s, China and Soviet

[147] Ibid., 23-24

[148] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 108

[149] Iwashita, Akihiro. "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Its Implications for Eurasian Security: A New Dimension of 'Partnership' after the Post-Cold War Period," *21st Century COE Program Slavic Eurasian Studies* 2 (2004): 259–281, 261

Union agreed to build measures to resolve border issues. An issue regarding the eastern section of their common border was resolved by May 16, 1991.[150]

However, they did not manage to reach agreement on the western section of the border, before the collapse of the USSR. After the disintegration of the USSR, the western part of Chinese-Soviet border was divided into four sections: the 45-kilometer Russian-Chinese border, 450-kilometer Tajik-Chinese border, the 1000-kilometer Kyrgyz-Chinese border, and the 1700-kilometer Kazakh-Chinese border.[151] Newly independent Central Asian states, through the mediation of Russia, agreed to hold further negotiations with China. After long lasting negotiations in September 1994, involved five countries reached an agreement on the western section of Sino-Russian border.[152]Also, these long lasting negotiations led to the improvement in bilateral relations between these countries. Furthermore, in order to guarantee border security, these five countries signed the Agreement on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions, at the summit talks in Shanghai, April 26, 1996.

After one year, leaders of these five countries met in Moscow and signed the Agreement on the Mutual Reduction of Armed Forces in the Border Area. "The name "Shanghai Five" became popular just after this second summit."[153] These two agreements served as a significant base for Chinese border security and also Russia and Central Asian states. After the resolution of border issue and border security, China's next priority was combating terrorism.

> The security situation in Xinjiang deteriorated in the 1990s. One contributing factor was the independence of the Central Asian countries, which inspired aspirations for an independent 'East Turkestan' in China. Moreover, the new Central Asian countries had limited capacity with respect to politics economy, security, and ideology; that had the effect of

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[150] Ibid., 261-262

[151] Zhao, Huasheng. "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 137-213, 139

[152] Ibid.,

[153] Iwashita, Akihiro. "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Its Implications for Eurasian Security: A New Dimension of 'Partnership' after the Post-Cold War Period," *21st Century COE Program Slavic Eurasian Studies* 2 (2004): 259–281, 263

> turning Central Asia into a huge vacuum. International terrorists and religious extremists poured into the region… All this enabled international terrorist and extremist forces to advance toward the Chinese frontier of Xinjiang and to erode its security[154]

For these reasons, China followed antiterrorist policy in Central Asia in order to combat the East Turkestan Independence Movement (EMIT). At the third Summit of 'Shanghai Five' which took place on July 3, 1998 in Almaty, the member states signed "Almaty Joint Statement". According to this statement, member states proclaimed that they will combat terrorism together and will not allow its own territory to be used for activities that harm the sovereignty, security, and social order of another member state.[155] "Almaty Joint Statement" was very important in terms of China's antiterrorist interest in Central Asia. It served as a tool preventing the region becoming a linkage between ETIM and external extremist forces. In general, until the end of the 1990s, China's main interests in Central Asia were border security and stability and also combating terrorism.

With the beginning of the new century, two factors urged China to rethink its Central Asian policy. The first factor is the China's economic growth which led to the growth in China's domestic energy demand. The second factor is the 11 September 2001 attacks which led to the change in the international situation. Until 1997, China's annual volume of oil imports was less then 15 million tons, which consisted less than 10 percent of China's annual oil demand.[156] From 1997, China's annual volume of oil import started to increase gradually. But at that period international oil market was stable and oil price was cheap. "In 2000, China's oil imports increased sharply, rising to 70 million tons annually… That has caused China to reconsider the energy issue and, by 2001, to develop a new strategy."[157] In addition, 9/11 attacks urged China to develop its energy strategy.

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[154] Zhao, Huasheng. "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 137-213, 142

[155] Ibid., 141

[156] Ibid., 144

[157] Ibid.,

As a result China needed to find new energy suppliers in order to meet its increasing demand and also to diversify its energy sources. With its vast energy resources, Central Asia is one of the regions that can help China in terms of diversifying its energy suppliers. Actually by the mid 1990s China was interested in investing in Central Asian energy resources. In 1997 China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) decided to invest in the regions oilfields.[158] But this interest was only economical, not strategic. Only after 2001, China started to "assign utmost importance to its energy interests in Central Asia. Resumption of construction on the China-Kazakhstan oil pipeline in 2003 was a direct result of this change."[159] It is expected that, when the construction of this pipeline will be completed,

> China will import at least 10 million tons of oil per year from Central Asia and hopes to increase such imports to 20 million tons and more. Thus Central Asia will account for more than 8 percent of China's oil imports. That is a very substantial share and shows the importance of Central Asia for China… In addition, the China-Kazakhstan pipeline can also deliver oil from Russia's Siberian oil fields; that will raise the utilization ratio and economic efficiency of the pipeline and also enhance Sino-Russian energy cooperation.[160]

All of these factors show that, in last years Central Asia became very important in China's energy interests too. So China is not involved in only Kazakhstan's energy field, it also increasingly participating in energy exploration in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

China's the other interest in Central Asia is its economic relations with this region. Although China's export to this region has very small share in China's total trade volume, it has special important for China. Trade with Central Asia makes contribution to the development of the China's Xinjiang region. China's Xinjiang region is very far from China's developed eastern region, because of this

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[158] Peyrouse, Sèbastien. "Economic Aspects of the Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program, Silk Road Paper,* (September 2007): 1–72, 50

[159] Zhao, Huasheng. "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 137-213, 146

[160] Ibid.,

can not compete economically and integrate into eastern China's economy. On the other hand, Xianjiang is close to Central Asia and has a common border with the region. Consequently economic cooperation with Central Asia is important as a tool which can be benefited in the development of Xiangian region.

It is obvious that China's cooperation with Central Asian states developing gradually in all spheres. The most important turning point was the resolution of the border issues. The resolution of the border issues eased the China's involvement to this region. Also resolution of the border issues resulted with the birth of the 'Shanghai Five', which created fundament for the evolution of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). SCO provides a general platform for cooperation between China and Central Asia. "SCO have created an important instrument for China to establish its presence and influence in the region."[161] Also it enables to associate China's and Russia's interests regarding the Central Asian region, which makes these two partners influential in the region.

4.1.3 United States

Since the collapse of the USSR and till today, United State's policy toward Central Asia has passed through several phases. Following the disintegration of Soviet Union, within a short period, the United States recognized all of the Central Asian states as independent post-Soviet states. By the first quarter of 1992, United States had consulates in all of the Central Asian republics, which soon became Embassies.[162] United States' first concern in post-Soviet Central Asia was the remaining nuclear arsenal and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) components which were the legacy of Soviet era. Within the Soviet era nuclear arsenals of the USSR have been located in Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus.

Although other Central Asian countries had various WMD components and related technical and scientific facilities, Kazakhstan was

[161] Ibid., 164

[162] Gleason, Gregory. *The Central Asian States: Discoveries of Independence*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997, 151

> the only Central Asian country, and one of four (along with the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus) post-Soviet states, to possess a substantial nuclear arsenal within its borders. The Soviet WMD patrimony in Kazakhstan included 104 SS–18 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) with some 1,400 warheads. In addition to this ICBM arsenal(which at least on paper, made Kazakhstan a nuclear superpower), Kazakhstan inherited a collection of heavy bombers, ICBM launchers, launch control centers, and test silos, all of which had to be secured, destroyed, or removed.[163]

For these reasons, following the collapse of the USSR, Kazakhstan occupied a first position in U.S. policy toward the Central Asia. United States' first goal was securing or removing Kazakhstan's nuclear inheritance which was poorly guarded and maintained. It was not an easy task, it required

> significant diplomatic effort to secure this Arsenal and extract commitment from Kazakhstani authorities to join the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear state. Kazakhstan signed the NPT as a non-nuclear state in 1994, with all nuclear weapons begin withdrawn from its territory by May 1995.[164]

After solving this problem concerning security, the U.S. concentrated on its secondary interests, which were implementing in parallel with the nonproliferation agenda. These interests were fostering stability and democratization, to help Central Asian states implement political and economic reforms in terms of establishing free market economies.[165] By providing support for the development of NGOs, independent media, political parties and free elections United States prompted political reforms in post-Soviet Central Asian states.[166]

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[163] Rumer, Eugene. "The United States and Central Asia: In Search of a Strategy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 18-74, 24-25

[164] Ibid., 25

[165] Peterson, Michael A. "China's Great Game in Central Asia: Implications to U.S. Policy in the Region", (California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), 39

[166] Rumer, Eugene. "The United States and Central Asia: In Search of a Strategy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 18-74, 26

The presence of oil and gas in Central Asia is not a new discovery. There is an enormous concentration of gas and oil reserves, as well as other valuable minerals in this region. "The Central Asian region and the Caspian Sea basin are said to contain natural gas and oil reserves that exceed the reserves of Kuwait, the Gulf of Mexico, or the North Sea."[167] In other words, beyond its promotion political reforms in the region, the U.S. was also interested in "facilitating the exploration and exportation of the natural resource energy reserves in Central Asia".[168] In order to develop alternative sources of energy, United States was interested in securing U.S. companies' access to Central Asia's oil fields. Also the U.S. wants to prevent Russia from holding a monopoly over Central Asian energy supplies. Due to the shortage of pipelines in the region, Central Asia's large energy holdings are monopolized by Russia. Consequently, "U.S. energy policy has been focused on fostering the development of multiple pipelines and links to foreign consumers and producers of energy."[169]

Also, in order to decrease regions dependency on Russia, the U.S. seeking to expand economic links between Central Asia and South Asia. It aimed to set the stage for the emergence of democratic governance in the region by promoting economic growth and regional stability.[170] However, because of growing authoritarianism, corruption and lack of progress on economic reform, the image of Central Asia had become tarnished in Western media and perceived as a next wave of failing states. This led to the lose of American policymakers interest in this region as an area of significant opportunities.[171] "Corruption, undemocratic governance, and sputtering economies were widely seen as prevalent throughout

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[167] Samanchina, Jarkyn. "U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Central Asia:1991-2003", (Ankara: METU, 2004), 23

[168] Peterson, Michael A. "China's Great Game in Central Asia: Implications to U.S. Policy in the Region", (California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), 48

[169] Blank, Stephen. "The Strategic Importance of Central Asia: An American View" *Parameters*, (Spring 2008): 73–87, 76

[170] Boyer, Alan L. "Recreating the Silk Road: The Challenge of Overcoming Transaction Costs" *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4 (4), (2006): 71-96, 71-72

[171] Rumer, Eugene. "The United States and Central Asia: In Search of a Strategy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 18-74, 36

the region, and Central Asia came to be viewed as fraught with the risk of destabilization."[172]

However, after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, Central Asian states became among the most important states in United State's foreign policy. Central Asia's proximity to Afghanistan made Central Asia significant for the U.S. as a stepping stone to the remote Afghanistan. Following the 11 September, United States opened military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Also the U.S. substantially increased its security and economic assistance for Central Asian states, especially Uzbekistan. United States and Uzbekistan "signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership in March 2002, and they have consulted closely on regional security problems." [173]

It was significant success on behalf of United States. Uzbekistan is Central Asia's most populous country. The population of Uzbekistan, estimated in 2008 at about 28,3 million, comprising nearly half the Central Asia's total population.[174] In addition to this, Uzbekistan was the only Central Asian state that could perform bravery not obeying Russia's some requests. Furthermore it is the country which has potential to be a leader among the Central Asian states. For these reasons, the U.S. got a chance to increase its influence in the region. Until the "Tulip Revolution" the U.S. continuously increased its influence in Central Asia. It is possible that United States intended to firm its influence in the region by prompting 'colourful revolutions' like "Tulip Revolution" in order to secure pro-Western elites.

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[172] Ibid.,

[173] Dongfeng, Ren. "The Central Asia Policies of China, Russia and the USA, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Process: a view from China" *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, October-December 2003, 13

[174] "Uzbekistan" in *CIA World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uz.html#People (accessed on 19 October 2007)

4.2 The Role of External Factors in "Tulip Revolution"

Following the "Tulip Revolution" a lot of factors were discussed as reasons of "Tulip Revolution". Most of the analysis about "Tulip Revolution" overestimated the external reasons claiming that it was handwork of western actors, primarily Americans. They argued that Kyrgyz opposition politicians are western-oriented and NGOs which are operating in Kyrgyzstan are sponsored by western donors. In other words, their argument was based on these factors. Some of them not only overestimated the external reasons but also underestimated internal reasons. For example, *The Guardian's* journalist John Laughland underestimated the ordinary people's power, and described it as 'the mythology of people power'[175]. He claimed that it was not a public rebellion but a street scene orchestrated by powerful external forces.[176]

However, in my opinion, it will be wrong to accept these external factors as main reasons of Kyrgyz "Tulip Revolution". I am not underestimating external reasons. But I think that, we should evaluate external factors as 'reasons' which accelerated the occurrence of "Tulip Revolution", not as main reasons. There was western intervention in terms of evolution of "Tulip Revolution". I am not ignoring it. Some of the Kyrgyz opposition and NGOs were supporting by western funds. On the basis of this argument, it can be said that, western actors indirectly affected the evolution of "Tulip Revolution".

One of the opposition leaders Roza Otunbaeva, former Kyrgyz Minister of Foreign Affairs, was known as a pro-western politician. As she has served as the first Kyrgyz ambassador to the US and Canada, she has personal and political ties with the West.[177] In 2002 Roza Otunbaeva became deputy special

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[175] Laughland, John. "The Mithology of People Power", *The Guardian*, 1 April 2005, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/apr/01/usa.russia (accessed on 07 August 2008)

[176] Plavsic, Dragan. "Manufactured Revolution?" *International Socialism*, Issue:107, 27 June 2005, http://www.isj.org.uk/index.php4?id=122&issue=107 (accessed on 7 August 2008)

[177] Bingol, Yilmaz. "The 'Colorful' Revolution of Kyrgyzstan: Democratic Transition or Global Competition?" Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations, 5(1&2), (Spring&Summer 2006): 73–81, 79

representative of the UN secretary general in Georgia.[178]During her appointment in Georgia, she witnessed the "Rose Revolution" of Georgia. When she came back to Kyrgyzstan she routinely described "events in that country as a model for change in Kyrgyzstan."[179] On the other hand, the opposition newspaper MSN was publishing in the printing house Freedom House Press. This printing house is owned by the US State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.[180] Just prior to the first round of parliamentary elections 2005, the electricity of Freedom House Press was cut-off by the state-controlled energy company, in order to hinder the release of opposition newspaper MSN. But "the US Embassy in Bishkek had two generators delivered to the facility."[181]

Also USA was supporting some of the NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. "At least 170 non-governmental organizations charged with development or promotion of democracy have been created or sponsored by the Americans"[182] Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society (CDCS) is one of these NGOs which are sponsored by western funds. The CDCS is sponsored by National Democratic Institute in Washington, which is financed by the US government.[183] The head of CDCS, Edil Baisalov had served as an election observer in the Ukrainian presidential election 2004, which led to "Orange Revolution". After this election, Edil Baisalov in his statement to *The Wall Street Journal* described his time in Ukraine as 'a very formative experience' and added 'I saw what the results of

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[178] Plater-Zyberk, Henry. "Kyrgyzstan after Akayev", Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Conflict Studies Research Centre, 2005, 2

[179] Bingol, Yilmaz. "The 'Colorful' Revolution of Kyrgyzstan: Democratic Transition or Global Competition?" Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations, 5(1&2), (Spring&Summer 2006): 73–81, 79

[180] Peters, Andrea. *"US Money and Personnel Behind Kyrgyzstan's 'Tulip Revolution'"*, World Socialist Web Site, 28 Mart 2005. http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/mar2005/tulp-m28.shtml (accessed on 15 February 2008)

[181] Ibid.,

[182] Ibid.,

[183] Ibid.,

our work could be'.[184] By supporting NGOs like CDCS, western actors indirectly affected the evolution of "Tulip Revolution". But we shouldn't overestimate the activities of NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. Because there is the perception among some scholars "that NGOs in Kyrgyzstan and other post-Communist countries are merely fronts for receiving income from naïve international donors."[185] That's why "the majority of local NGOs are inactive or have been set up as a means to acquire Western grant money".[186] In other words NGOs were not active in evolution of "Tulip Revolution". Actually NGOs didn't do anything in mobilizing people in Jalal-Abad and Osh, where the "Tulip Revolution" has began. In Jalal-Abad and Osh,

> most protestors were from rural areas and had no contact with NGOs. Only after these protestors from the countryside began their urban sit-ins did NGO activists arrive from Bishkek, instructing leaders on how to conduct demonstrations in accordance with the law.[187]

For these reasons, I think that, it would be right to perceive the external actors and external factors as reasons which only accelerated the evolution of "Tulip Revolution".

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[184] Bingol, Yilmaz. "The 'Colorful' Revolution of Kyrgyzstan: Democratic Transition or Global Competition?" Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations, 5(1&2), (Spring&Summer 2006): 73–81, 79

[185] Mcmann, Kelly M. "The Civic Realm in Kyrgyzstan: Soviet Economic Legacies and Activists' Expectations" in The Transformation of Central Asia: States and Societies From Soviet Rule to Independence ed. Pauline Jones Luong. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004, 218–219

[186] Ibid., 219

[187] Radnitz, Scott. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyztsan?" *Journal of Democracy*, 17(2), (April 2006): 132–146, 138

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

On March 2005 Central Asian leaders were shocked because of the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan. "Tulip Revolution" ended with the downfall of the Akaev's regime in Kyrgyzstan. The main reasons of it were the economic stagnation, poverty, corruption, regionalism, 'family rule' and Aksy events, which are the internal factors. Also there are the external factors which accelerated the occurrence of "Tulip Revolution". "Colourful Revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine, international NGOs, United State's interests in Central Asia, can be shown as external factors.

In order to evaluate the outcomes of the "Tulip Revolution", we should consider its aim and the composition of the opposition politicians. In case of composition of the opposition politicians, major important thing is that, there was not one but several leaders in the pre-revolutionary Kyrgyz opposition. The most important leaders of pre-revolutionary Kyrgyz opposition are; former MP Azimbek Beknazarov, former Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiev, former National Security Advisor Feliks Kulov, and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Roza Otunbayeva.

Each of them was leader of one of the opposition party or group. Before the parliamentary elections they formed an opposition unity. The aim of the formation of this unity was to "conduct fair elections and to secure Akaev's resignation by October 2005, when his term was due to end." [188] However this opposition unity was in some sense conditional or showpiece. Everyone fought for their own political survival. Only after the announcement of the disputed parliamentary elections, they really started to tighten cooperation with each other. They started to demand, the annulment of the parliamentary election results and

[188] Ibid., 134

the dismissal of the President. These demands were the aim of the "Tulip Revolution".

With the ouster of Akaev's regime demonstrators reached one of their demands. But everyone, including the opposition leaders, was surprised. They wanted the ouster of Akaev, but they were not expecting it. Opposition's, composed of various groups, common interest was getting rid of Akaev's regime but in all other their interests essentially differed. That's why they did not know what to do further. Furthermore they had not a sole leader. But opposition was determined to complete the revolution. At the same day, the demonstrators released Felix Kulov from prison. "Indicative of the chaotic legal situation, the Kyrgyz Supreme Court on March 24 recognized the former legislature as still duly empowered."[189]

In order to deal with the immediate problems of uncertainty and instability, deputies from the former legislature met that night in an emergency session to appoint an interim leadership. After several hours of deliberation they appointed Felix Kulov to lead the country's security apparatus and Kurmanbek Bakiev was appointed as the interim Prime Minister.[190] The next morning Kurmanbek Bakiev was appointed as the interim President too. Bakiyev immediately proposed a provisional government composed of opposition politicians. As a result, Roza Otunbaeva became an acting minister of foreign affairs, Adakhan Madumarov was appointed as acting deputy prime minister and Azimbek Beknazarov was appointed as acting prosecutor-general.

On the other hand, over the weekend, the Constitutional Court, Bakiyev, Kulov, and a newly appointed head of the Central Election Commission proclaimed that the new legislature was constitutionally legitimate and should be empowered. The new legislature met on March 28 and elected Omurbek Tekebayev as speaker and reaffirmed Bakiev as prime minister and acting

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[189] Nichol, Jim. "Coup in Kyrgyzstan: Developments and Implications", *CRS Report for Congress*, 14 April 2005, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl32864.pdf (accessed on 1 March 2008), 3

[190] Adami, Fabian. "The Double-Headed Tulip: Kyrgyzstan's Revolution" *Perspective*, XVI(2), (March 2006), http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol16/Adami.html (accessed on 8 March 2008)

president. Actually, the aim of the pre-revolutionary opposition was the dismissal of the new legislature. But after the revolution Bakiev and Kulov decided to proclaim the new legislature constitutionally legitimate. It was a clever act in order to secure the stability. In structure of new parliament there were too many influential people, and the new authority was not ready to quarrel with them.

Another turning point and clever act of new authority was the deal between Bakiev and Kulov, they agreed not to compete against each other in presidential elections. The interim government has announced that a presidential election will hold on July 10, 2005. There were two favorite candidates, Kurmanbek Bakiev, who is southerner and Felix Kulov, who is northerner. Because of this, the deal between Bakiev and Kulov was very crucial in order to maintain the stability by balancing regional interests. With Kulov's support Bakiev won the July 10 presidential elections. After that Kulov was appointed as a Prime Minister.

On the other hand outcomes of the "Tulip Revolution" reshaped the external powers' influence in Central Asia. As was mentioned above, until the "Tulip Revolution" the U.S. continuously increased its influence in Central Asia. However it did not last long. From the very beginning, Western policymakers believed that, only political and economic reforms leading to liberalization would ensure long-term stability and security in Central Asia. Following the 11 September attacks, United States started to perceive the political and economic reforms "as an essential national security tool designed to prevent weak and failed states from becoming security threats."[191] As a result of this perception, United States started aggressively promoting western style democracies in Central Asia. But, after the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan and Andijan events in Uzbekistan, Central Asian leaders started to perceive the political reforms which promoted by west as a source of destabilization, not the precondition for long-

[191] Rumer, Eugene. "The U.S. Interests and Role in Central Asia after K2" The Washington Quarterly, 29(3), (Summer 2006): 141-154 , 145

term stability. The lessons of the Tulip Revolution "for Central Asian leaders was the need for more control, not liberalization and tolerance of opposition."[192]

Furthermore the United States positive statements about the 'colourful revolutions', made Central Asian leaders suspicious that the United States was behind 'colourful revolutions'. The most important thing, which had a negative impact on U.S.-Uzbekistan partnership, was the U.S. criticism of Uzbekistan following the Andijan events. "In retaliation, the U.S. was asked to vacate its base in Uzbekistan."[193] United State's base in Uzbekistan's Karshi-Kanabad was closed on November 2005.[194] Consequently, it became very important for U.S. to retain the presence of its base at Manas Airport, in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan's new government agreed to extend the lease with a multifold increase in the demanded rent.[195] As a result, it seems that colourful revolutions led to the suffer of the United State's attractiveness for Central Asian leaders.

Following the "Tulip Revolution" the most popular thesis was that, "Tulip Revolution" is indicator of Russia's failure in Central Asia and this will strengthen United States' position in Central Asia. However it seems that "Tulip Revolution's" impact shows the exact opposite of that thesis. Actually the exact competition among the great powers over the Central Asia began following the 11 September 2001 attacks. Central Asia's proximity to Afghanistan, made Central Asia significant for the U.S. as a stepping stone to the remote Afghanistan. Following the 11 September, United States opened military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Also the U.S. substantially increased its security and economic assistance for Central Asian states. On the other hand, Russian economy was in growth which means that it acquired an opportunity to rebuild its influence in

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[192] Rumer, Eugene. "The United States and Central Asia: In Search of a Strategy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 18-74, 51

[193] Anand, Vinod. "Politico-military Development in Central Asia and Emerging Strategic Equations" China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, 4(4), (2006): 161–173, 163

[194] Rumer, Eugene B. "China, Russia and the Balance of Power in Central Asia" Strategic Forum, No: 223, (November 2006):1-8, 2

[195] Anand, Vinod. "Politico-military Development in Central Asia and Emerging Strategic Equations" China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, 4(4), (2006): 161–173, 164

Central Asian region. In other words the new phase started in Russia's Central Asian policy and it started to strengthen Russia's position in Central Asian region. The other main actor of the competition in Central Asian region is China. China's economic growth which led to the growth in China's domestic energy demand urged China to rethink its Central Asian policy. Initially China's main interests in Central Asia were border security and combat religious extremism. However its growth in energy demands urged China to reconsider the energy issue and to develop a new strategy. As a result China determined to diversify its energy suppliers, and it perceived Central Asia as a potential energy supplier.

Until the "Tulip Revolution" United States steadily increased its influence in Central Asia. The U.S. opened two military bases in Central Asia, the most important is that the U.S. established very good relations with Uzbekistan which is the most populated country in Central Asia. On the other hand Russia and China started to strengthen their cooperation in order to decrease the U.S. influence in Central Asian region. Russia and China integrated their interests in the region within the SCO, they do not perceive each other as a competitors.

The "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan suited to Russia's and China's purpose. The "Tulip Revolution" "did not end in the deterioration of Sino-Kyrgyz relations as initially feared by Beijing."[196]Also it did not end in the deterioration of Russian-Kyrgyz relations as initially forecasted by experts and strategists. Furthermore, following the "Tulip Revolution", Kyrgyzstan's new leader Kurmanbek Bakiev visited Russia, it was his first abroad visit as a President of Kyrgyzstan. In his visit Kurmanbek Bakiev said that Russia was and will be Kyrgyzstan's "main strategic partner in politics, military technology, economics, culture, and humanitarian shape."[197]Also Bakiev and Roza Otunbaeva stressed that Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy would not change. Following the "Tulip Revolution", Roza Otunbaeva in her interview said that "after the March 24

[196] Chargynov, Zamir. "Revolution, Repression and Re-election in 2005: China's Response to Political Developments in Central Asia" *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4(1), (2006): 31–36, 35

[197] Zhao, Huasheng. "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 137-213, 195

revolution, we did not reorient ourselves toward some other part of the world."[198]The other pre-revolutionary Kyrgyz opposition leader Felix Kulov stated that "up to one million Kyrgyz (20% of the population) may be working in Russia, that their repatriated earnings constitute a major portion of the Kyrgyz budget, and that Russia provides oil, so 'we cannot quarrel with Moscow'."[199]

It is obvious that "Tulip Revolution" have had a negative impact on United State's influence in the Central Asian region and diminished what U.S. achieved in the wake of 11 September 2001.[200] From the very beginning, Western policymakers believed that, only political and economic reforms leading to liberalization would ensure long-term stability and security in Central Asia. Following the 11 September attacks, United States started aggressively promoting western style democracies in Central Asia. After the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan Central Asian leaders started to perceive the political reforms which promoted by West as a source of destabilization, not the precondition for long-term stability. Furthermore the United States positive statements about the 'colourful revolutions', made Central Asian leaders suspicious that the United States was behind 'colourful revolutions'. Consequently, Central Asian "authoritarian leaders have made clear that they would further curtail cooperation with the United States and other countries that pursued policies that threatened their overthrow."[201]

Under these circumstances, Russia and China soften their economic requests with promises of political protection, which, since the 'colourful

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[198] Huskey, Eugene. "Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution: Interview with Roza Otunbaeva", *Demokratizatsiya: The Juornal of Post-Soviet Democratization*, 13(4), (2005): 483–489, 487

[199]Nichol, Jim. "Coup in Kyrgyzstan: Developments and Implications", *CRS Report for Congress*, 14 April 2005, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl32864.pdf (accessed on 1 March 2008), 11

[200] Zhao, Huasheng. "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 137-213, 194

[201] Weitz, Richard. "Averting a new Great Game in Central Asia" The Washington Quarterly, 29(3), (Summer 2006): 155–167, 161

revolutions' "seem more attractive to several Central Asian leaders than US and EU pressure to democratize."[202] Furthermore,

> Based on improving bilateral relationships with Moscow and Beijing, plus the expanding forum provided by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Central Asian states view Russia's and China's engagement in the region as less hegemonic than those of a decade earlier. In fact, with time, given its "democratization" agenda, Washington is coming to be viewed as the greater threat to the region's nondemocratic ruling elites.[203]

Another event which strengthened Central Asian leaders' suspicion about United States' was Andijan events. On May 13, 2005 in the eastern town of Andijan, Uzbek troops fired on demonstrators who had gathered to demand the end of a trial of local businessmen charged with belonging to a religious extremist group.[204] This event resulted with death of hundreds of civilians. After this event Central Asian leaders, especially Uzbekistan's president convinced that the United States somehow had supported the 'colourful revolutions' and also insurgents of Andijan events. Following the Andijan event, the "U.S. government charged that Uzbek authorities had used excessive force, calling for an independent investigation with international involvement."[205]United States' this approach "had the effect of driving Uzbekistan into the arms of Russia."[206]

Uzbekistan's shift from U.S. towards the Russian orbit is very big victory for Russia. In my opinion the external actor, who can manage good relations with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, can be more influential in Central Asian region. These two countries occupy most important geo-strategic and geo-political

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[202] Olcott, Martha Brill. "Eyes on Central Asia: How to Understand the Winners and Losers" *Slavic Research Center*, No:16, (2007): 3–21, 5

[203] Ibid., 11

[204] Nichol, Jim. "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests" *CRS Issue Brief for Congress*, 12 May 2006, http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/ib93108.pdf (accessed on 1 January 2008), 7

[205] Rumer, Eugene. "The U.S. Interests and Role in Central Asia after K2" The Washington Quarterly, 29(3), (Summer 2006): 141-154, 141

[206] Trenin, Dmitri. "Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies, and Prospects" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 75-136, 122

position in Central Asian region. For example, Uzbekistan is the only country which has borders with the other four Central Asian states. The population of Uzbekistan, estimated in 2008 at about 28,3 million, comprising nearly half the Central Asia's total population.[207] In addition to these, Uzbekistan "has sizeable Diasporas in neighboring countries which can be used as leverage."[208]On the other hand, Kazakhstan's importance derives from its large land area, which is ranked as the ninth largest country in the world, and rich natural resources. Also, Kazakhstan has the second largest population, of more then 15 million, in Central Asia.

That's why Uzbekistan's shift from U.S. towards the Russian orbit is very big victory for Russia. Kazakhstan never got out from the Russian orbit, furthermore it is most loyal partner of Russia in Central Asian region. By the Uzbekistan's ally with Russia, Russia has strengthened its wrist in Central Asian region in full acceptation of the word. On July 5, 2005, the members of SCO signed a declaration which stated that

> as large-scale military operations against terrorism have come to an end in Afghanistan, the SCO member states maintain that the relevant parties to the anti-terrorist coalition should set a deadline for the temporary use of ... infrastructure facilities of the SCO member states and for their military presence in these countries." Despite this declaration, none of the Central Asian leaders immediately called for closing the coalition bases. However, after the United States and others interceded so that refugees who fled from Andijon to Kyrgyzstan could fly to Romania, Uzbekistan on July 29 demanded that the United States vacate K2 within six months. On November 21, 2005, the United States officially ceased operations to support Afghanistan at K2.[209]

In addition to this "Kyrgyzstan has increased the U.S. rent at the Manas air base from annual US$2,7 million to US$150–200 million, while the Russian base,

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[207] "Uzbekistan" in *CIA World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uz.html#People (accessed on 19 October 2007)

[208] Anand, Vinod. "Politico-military Development in Central Asia and Emerging Strategic Equations" *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4(4), (2006): 161–173, 163

[209] Nichol, Jim. "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests" *CRS Issue Brief for Congress*, 12 May 2006, http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/ib93108.pdf (accessed on 1 January 2008), 11

located nearby is rent-free."[210]In my opinion Russia can force Kyrgyzstan to close the U.S. base in Kyrgyzstan too. Russia will do it when it will be sure that it can maintain the border security of the Central Asian borders with Afghanistan. For now United States' control the security in Afghanistan is to the advantage of Russia and China, yet they can focus on other issues in Central Asian region. Actually Russia and China attained their object in terms of reducing United States' influence in Central Asia, by closure of the U.S. military base in Uzbekistan.

Furthermore Russia managed to fix its partnership with Uzbekistan by institutional organizations. In November 2005, Russia and Uzbekistan signed a treaty that established allied relations and even provided for military assistance "if an act of aggression is committed against one of the sides by any state or group of states."[211]Also at the same year Russian and Uzbek forces held the first joint military exercises since the dissolution of the USSR.[212]In addition to these, Russia assured Uzbekistan to rejoin to the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Actually Uzbekistan was one of the founding members of the treaty, but in 1999, Uzbekistan had decided quit the CST because of inability of the organization to assist Uzbekistan against the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).[213] However, in June 2006 Uzbekistan rejoined to the CSTO. This was another victory of Russia, because this rejoining "completed the total reversal of Tashkent's alliance after the events in Andijan, confirming the depth of the break with West, and reinforcing the strategic partnership with Russia."[214]Furthermore,

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[210] Cohen, Ariel. "After the G–8 Summit: China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization" *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly,* 4 (3), (2006): 51–64, 55

[211] Kimmage, Daniel. "Uzbekistan: Is Tashkent's Foreign Policy Going Multivector?" *RFE/RL*, March 10, 2007, http://rfe.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/03/FAC176FD-850F-488F-A29A-DAC131FE0E14.html (accessed on 10 December 2007)

[212] Weitz, Richard. "Averting a new Great Game in Central Asia" The Washington Quarterly, 29(3), (Summer 2006): 155–167, 158

[213]Laruelle, Marlène. "Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center,* Silk Road Paper, Washington, April 2008, 17

[214] Ibid.,

at the same year, Russian government "announced that the 300 troops based in Kant would have their numbers strengthened to around 750, and that it would invest considerable sums in military equipment".[215]

On the other hand, in order to secure its influence in Central Asia on the economic level, Russia prompted the join of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) with the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC). Uzbekistan was a member of the CACO but not of the EurAsEC, with the merge of these two institutions in October 2005, and confirmation of Uzbekistan's membership in January 2006, Uzbekistan included into the process of the Eurasian Economic Community.[216] Furthermore, Russia sought to reinforce its control over the resources of Central Asia. In February 2007, Uzbekneftgaz and Russian company Soyuzneftegaz confirmed the birth of a joint venture whose mission for the next 35 years will be exploit the gas "fields located in Ustyurt and in the Hissar region"[217] in the Uzbekistan's Southeast. In May 2007, Russia won another diplomatic victory:

> Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan signed an agreement for the construction of a new gas pipeline running alongside the coast of the Caspian Sea. This would enable Moscow to maintain its control of the export of Central Asian gas and to reduce the profitability of the Transcaspian project backed by the European Union and the United States.[218]

To sum up, main reasons of the "Tulip Revolution" were the internal reasons and external factors were the accelerators of the process. On the other hand the outcomes of the "Tulip Revolution" reshaped the external powers' influence in Central Asia. Even though external actors, such as the United States, did not organize the "Tulip Revolution", they supported its process. Because of

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[215] Ibid., 15

[216] Zhao, Huasheng. "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy" in *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing* ed. Rajan Menon. New York: M.E. Sharpe, (2007): 137-213, 193-194

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[218] Ibid., 24

this Central Asian authoritarian leaders started to rethink the plausibility of the relations with the United States. Consequently this led to the decline of the United States' influence in the Central Asian region. On the contrary it led to the increase of the Russia's and China's influence in the region. After the "Tulip Revolution", Russia obtained a chance to reinforce its dominance in Central Asian region on the all levels. Russia reinforced its military presence in the region by strengthening CSTO with Uzbekistan's reintegration. Russia had reinforced its influence on the economic level by merging CACO and EurAsEC. Also Russia, had reinforced its control over the resources of Central Asia. In a word "Tulip Revolution" had a positive impact on Russia's influence in Central Asia. "Tulip Revolution" effected the embodiment of the Andijan events. And the accumulation of the outcomes of "Tulip Revolution" and Andijan events resulted in favor of Russia and adversely for United States.

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