Political Space in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes: Activating Pro Forma Platforms[*]

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Competitive authoritarian regimes are those in which electoral competition is allowed, but elections are not free and fair. Dozens such regimes exist around the world, but their political space is unexplored. We hypothesize that voters in these regimes define political space in two dimensions, where these dimensions are different from those in developing democracies. Using World Values Survey data from Kyrgyzstan in two time periods, we show the development of voter preferences along two dimensions: fondness for tradition and trust of political institutions. We explore why parties faced with this political space do not run on these issues even though their party platforms nominally try to appeal to them. Finally, we argue that these findings extend to regimes of a similar type by mapping political space in Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Hungary. Providing incentives for parties to run on their stated platforms may help institutionalize political competition in competitive authoritarian regimes.

Keywords: spacial models, competitive authoritarianism, factor analysis, political parties, party manifestos

Spatial models of voting have attracted increasing attention as an effective way of mapping voter preferences in multiple dimensions. This modeling technique was first used in Western democracies and has subsequently expanded to democratic regimes more generally.[1] In addition, Schofield et al. (2012) explored the Azerbaijan case, where political discourse was so limited that only one salient dimension, preference for democratic rule, was present.[2] This paper uses elections in Kyrgyzstan to show that spatial models of voting can provide useful and interesting insights about political space in competitive authoritarian regimes, those where some electoral competition is allowed, but only slow democratic progress is being made.

Until recently, political parties and elections in what Levitsky and Way (2010) call competitive authoritarian regimes were dismissed as providing little information about the preferences of the public because parties in these countries are often seen as extensions of state control and elections are sometimes blatantly rigged or at least highly biased toward government parties. Competitive authoritarian regimes are those with multi-party elections, but that simultaneously do not respect democratic norms. Ishiyama and Kennedy (2001), Ishiyama (2008), and others have shown that scholars should consider elections in competitive authoritarian regimes as providing some information about the true preferences of voters, regardless of the fact that party competition may be inhibited.

If this is the case, what issues are important for voters deciding how to vote in a competitive authoritarian regime? Do voter positions on salient issues change over time? Do voters actually cast ballots for the party most proximate to their views? Elections in competitive authoritarian regimes may be burdened by the lack of party competition or there may instead be a disconnect between parties preferences and those of voters. In the latter case, election quality can be improved simply by increasing voter and party information, a substantially more straightforward public policy fix compared to the challenge of improving electoral institutions.

Kyrgyzstan provides a rare opportunity to study these questions in a meaningful way.

Once hailed as a beacon of Central Asian democracy, the country has undergone two revolutions promising more democratic rule, but has subsequently slipped back into authoritarianism. The Polity IV scale has perhaps always scored the country optimistically, with a -2 in 2003, a 1 in 2011, and a 7 in 2013. However, Freedom House has consistently rated Kyrgyzstan as having limited freedom.[3] Thus, Kyrgyzstan was selected for this study because it represents a country teetering in between a developing democracy and a consolidated authoritarian regime. As such, political parties have emerged, but they have weak identities and some are government mouthpieces. Party competition is allowed, but political knowledge is low (Benoit, 2007; Strom, 1990; Tsebelis, 1990).

Myriad countries fit into the label of competitive authoritarianism, though these states do span a broad range from almost no political competition in Kazakhstan to a more promising situation in Tanzania. What Kyrgyzstan has that all other competitive authoritarian regimes lack is decent survey data. The World Values Survey (WVS) completed two relatively closely spaced rounds of questioning in Kyrgyzstan in 2003 and 2011. No other competitive authoritarian regime has similar WVS coverage, and other existing survey research is either of poor quality or suffers from sporadic coverage and inconsistent batteries of questions.[4]

Fortunately, because many of the characteristics of Kyrgyzstan's political system, including frequently changing electoral rules, parties with brief lifespans, largely personality centered campaigns, and infringement of voter and candidate rights, are inherent in most competitive authoritarian regimes, the Kyrgyzstan case can generalize to apply to similar regimes. The next section introduces party competition in Kyrgyzstan. We then move to defining the political space. We find that there are two salient political dimensions in Kyrgyzstan: trust of (inter-)national government institutions and preference for rural traditions. However, voters fail to select parties based on their positions on these dimensions because parties do not run on the platforms in their political manifestos. Next, we verify that the Kyrgyzstan case is more broadly applicable to competitive authoritarian regimes with data from Kazakhstan, and we also show that these dimensions are not salient in a developing

democracy like Georgia or a consolidated democracy like Hungary. We find that party competition is not the result of intentionally personalistic parties like are present in democratic regimes like Hungary; rather there is a disconnect between party platforms and campaigns brought on by parties' lack of knowledge about the political space. The paper ends with suggestions for improving party competition in competitive authoritarian regimes.

Parties and Elections in Kyrgyzstan

Amid the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kyrgyzstan held competitive elections for the Supreme Soviet in 1990 (Huskey, 1995). Kyrgyz leaders constructed a 350 seat parliament with single-member districts, though other systems, including allocation based on ethnic groups, were considered. Because these elections covered both the national Supreme Soviet and regional and local elected bodies, the Communist Party emerged as the only group able to effectively organize candidates and run a campaign. Former Communist leadership ran for their seats in uncontested districts. Even so, a small group of minority party candidates were elected. Asar Akaev was elected President in an uncontested race, and much of the electoral and party history until his ousting in 2005 centered around opposition parties trying to organize against him (Koldys, 1997, 354). Akaev never became part of a political party, but he received support from many pro-government political parties including the parties receiving the most support in the 2003 World Values Survey: the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan and the Democratic Party of Women of Kyrgyzstan. Most other parties did not gain seats in Parliament until a party-list proportional representation system was introduced in 2007.

Since the results of the 2005 election were annulled after Akaev's ouster in the Tulip Revolution, the last elections under his rule occurred in 2000 with the Communist Party taking six seats and the Democratic Party of Women taking one seat. The two other parties listed as most popular in the 2003 survey, Ar-Namys and the Party of Action, did not win any seats. While the Communist Party received the most votes, the Union of Democratic Forces,

a pro-government coalition that included the Social Democratic Party (SDPK), received the most seats. Still, seventy-three of the 105 members of the parliament were independents (Nohlen, Grotz and Hartmann, 2001).

The Tulip Revolution in 2005 was led by opposition political parties, businesses, and patronage and clan networks against the Akayev government (Radnitz, 2006). Protests began during the lead up to scheduled parliamentary elections. Protesters demanded that Akayev reform his government to root out corruption and nepotism. The protests started in Jalal-Abad and eventually reached Bishkek where, upon protesters entering the government administration building en-masse, Akaev fled the country. In the resulting power vacuum, Felix Kulov and Kurmanbek Bakiyev formed a coalition appealing to voters in both the North and the South. With Bakiyev as President, the government reformed the electoral system and attempted to reduce rampant corruption. However, Bakiyev was widely seen as a replacement for Akaev, not an improvement (Marat, 2008). Kulov quickly became an opposition leader against the Bakiev government, and parliament devolved into a puppet for Bakiev to use to exert power. Kulov and other opposition leaders attempted to organize an opposition coalition ahead of the 2007 elections, but the effort was mostly unsuccessful.

The 2007 parliamentary elections introduced closed list proportional representation voting, which eliminated competition from independent candidates. Ata-Meken and Ar-Namys competed but did not win any seats; the SDPK won five seats and the Communist Party won eight seats, but Ak Jol won seventy-one of the ninety seats. Ak Jol was founded in 2007 by then President Bakiyev specifically to contest the 2007 elections. Thus, the opposition was fragmented again and Bakiyev filled the Ak Jol list with "dead souls" or guaranteed political supporters who would follow his leadership (Marat, 2008, 232).

As 2010 began, there were increasing echos from the Tulip Revolution. Energy prices began increasing, and Kyrgyz people viewed their strained economic situation along with widespread corruption in the central government as a reason to begin protesting. Demonstrations in April led to a crisis as Bakiyev announced a state of emergency and subsequently

fled the country. Both the Parliament and the Constitutional Court were dismissed and new parliamentary elections were scheduled. These elections were the first under a new Constitution and were based on the electoral code adopted in 2007 (Huskey and Hill, 2011, 877). Parties were very competitive, with Ata-Zhurt, the SDPK, Ar-Namys, and Respublika each gaining more than twenty seats.[5] Ata-Meken won eighteen seats.

The 2011 World Values Survey was conducted just after the October presidential election where SDPK candidate Almazbek Atambayev won the Kyrgyz Presidency with forty percent more of the vote than his nearest challenger. Atambayev was previously Prime Minister following the 2010 parliamentary elections. He took over from Roza Otunbayeva, who was appointed by the parliament after Bakiyev left the post. The next section describes the main parties throughout this time period in more detail.

Parties and Platforms

In general, political parties in Kyrgyzstan are underdeveloped. Former President Akaev prevented parties from organizing in a significant way and created parties only to serve his own interests. The Communist Party led a quasi-opposition movement for several years before losing significance. Since then, parties have been formed specifically to contest a single election or to support a prominent politician (Fumagalli, 2016). While parties differ on their stated policy goals, voters often select parties based on geography (Ryabkov, 2008). See Table 1 for an overview of the main political parties between 2003 and 2011.

Ata-Meken was founded in 1992, and it is one of the oldest parties in Kyrgyzstan. Generally considered to be liberal and socialist and supported by young people and northern constituencies, the party has remained relevant, winning seats as early as 1994 and joining the governing coalition after the 2010 elections (Hofmann, 1995, 18). The party supports a parliamentary republic (Huskey and Hill, 2011). While the other parties support closer ties to Russia, Ata-Meken is explicitly pro-Western (Malashenko, 2013, 138).

The SDPK, like Ata-Meken, is an ideologically liberal party, and it advocated in several

elections for a parliamentary republic instead of presidentialism. However, after winning the presidential election under the SDPK party label, Atambayev has sought to consolidate power (Marat, 2012). Since taking control of the presidency and parliament, the SDPK has governed from a strong position, with support from voters who rarely vote together in both the north and the south of the country (Malashenko, 2013, 129).

Ar-Namys was founded in 1999 by opposition leader Felix Kulov. The party supported the Tulip Revolution and formed a coalition with former Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiyev to take the Prime Minister role in 2006. After being denied re-nomination to the Prime Minister spot in 2007, the party joined the opposition before forming a governing coalition with the SDPK, Ata-Meken, Ar-Namys, and Respublika. The Ar-Namys platform has advocated for highly centralized rule and a tighter relationship with Russia (Huskey and Hill, 2011, 878). Their appeals to voters focus on people with Russian and Uzbek heritage (Huskey and Hill, 2011).

Ata-Zhurt formed out of former President Bakiyev's Ak Jol party. The party has a strong presence in the south and supports ethnic nationalism for the Kyrgyz people. The party also supports highly centralized rule. While Ar-Namys and Ata-Meken have governed with the SDPK, Ata-Zhurt is seen as the major opposition party (Malashenko, 2013, 147). President Atambayev attempted to bridge regional and religious divides to govern the country, but Ata-Zhurt and Bakiyev want a return to nationalism with even more power given back to the single-party president.

Hypotheses

In a way, this work is exploratory because studies of spatial models of voting have not been done in competitive authoritarian regimes. However, as alluded to in the introduction, we expect that competitive authoritarian regimes will fit somewhere between authoritarian regimes, where party competition is prohibited, and developing democracies, where parties

have competed freely for several electoral cycles. This means that there will be a two-dimensional political space, but that the dimensions may not be economic and social as they traditionally are in developed democracies. This conception of competitive authoritarian regimes as fitting between authoritarian regimes and developing democracies is common in democratization literature (for example Levitsky and Way (2010)), and it is logically extended to form this hypothesis.

Secondly, we hypothesize that voters do not select parties based very strongly on the two dimensions in political space. From the literature on party institutionalization and the overview presented above, we know that voters do not know party platforms well and that they do not associate themselves with parties and keep track of party activities because their choices are often based on the personality of the party leader (Bochsler, 2010; Moser, 1995, 1999). In the Kyrgyz case, World Values Survey data indicates that a full ninety percent of survey respondents stated that they do not belong to a political party. When asked why, respondents commonly stated that they did not see the benefit of membership or that they did not have time. Without party allegiance, it is difficult to see how voters would select parties based on their positions. One way to do so would be to vote for parties that offer private benefits to individuals or groups in return for political support. This is a quintessential personalistic form of party competition. However, it could also be the case that voters and parties both prioritize policy alignment, but that parties wrongly assume personalistic benefits are a priority. We will show that the latter is actually occurring in Kyrgyzstan.

Lastly, we expect that voters will increasingly select parties based on their proximity in political space. While early elections will result in many voters placed all over the underlying political space, voters will move to a proximity based voting model over time. This occurs as a result of the gradual institutionalization of political issues. In the period right after the fall of Communism or more generally at the beginning of non-authoritarian reign, voters will almost randomly place themselves into political space. Preferences may be incoherent because

voters are unfamiliar with the political system and parties are unfamiliar with traditional norms of party competition. However, even when parties remain weak, voters will become politically socialized in order to develop a more consistent set of preferences. We derive this hypothesis by positioning competitive authoritarian regimes between authoritarian regimes, where voters have no ability to place themselves in political space, and developing democracies, where placement is free and open. If we consider that the influence of authoritarianism will decrease as a competitive authoritarian regime holds additional elections, it is natural to conclude that voters will slowly move to act more like voters in developing democracies by developing coherent preferences that result in proximity voting.

To ensure that these results are not specific to Kyrgyzstan, we look at political space in Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Hungary. We expect Kazakhstan to have the same two salient political dimensions, but to have less proximity voting. This conclusion follows from the fact that Kazakhstan is more authoritarian than Kyrgyzstan, so party competition is more limited. Georgia should have different dimensions in political space because the country is a developing democracy and does not share the same challenges with fair elections and party competition inherent in competitive authoritarian regimes. Finally, Hungary should have at least one economic or social dimension of competition since it is a semi-consolidated democracy.

Spatial Modeling in Kyrgyzstan

The method of analysis that follows is based on Schofield (2008) and other works on spatial voting and valence. Instead of assuming that voters select candidates based on a single dimension that describes their level of "liberal" or "conservative" values, we are open to voters selecting candidates based on any number of salient dimensions. Additionally, we use voter surveys to determine the salient dimensions instead of assuming that one dimension is the left-right or liberal-conservative one described above. While Western democracies

traditionally have a social and an economic dimension, we do not make such assumptions here. We also make no assumptions about the role valence has, or non-programmatic factors that influence voter preference, in party selection, though we do evaluate the survey results to determine if valence factors impact vote choice.

We innovate by introducing party manifesto analysis to determine whether parties establish platforms that they then fail to articulate or whether parties make pro forma platforms and run their campaigns based on the personality of their party leader. Note that this can be different from a personalistic electoral campaign, as parties could believe that voters lack programmatic preferences and therefore are forced to compete based on personality instead of choosing to do so and ignoring known programmatic preferences in the electorate.

To summarize, we find that voters in Kyrgyzstan do establish two salient political dimensions, but that they fail to select parties based on these dimensions. Ata-Meken and Ar-Namys, the two opposition parties at this time, have programmatic platforms that appear to be designed to appeal to voters in the extremes of political space. If voters selected parties based on these platforms, the political space would divide based on proximity voting, with voters close to these platforms choosing one of the smaller parties and the majority of voters splitting between the two major parties. However, Ata-Meken and Ar-Namys chose to de-emphasize their party platforms in favor of the personalities of their leaders, thus leading to limited party selection based on voter positioning in political space. We show that, although personalistic competition is the goal, valence is not a significant predictor of voters' party choice.

Factor Analysis

We use survey data from the World Values Survey (WVS) for Kyrgyzstan in 2003 and 2011. The 2003 survey was fielded to a nationally representative sample of 1043 respondents during a three month period. The survey was stratified by region with the number of respondents per region being proportional to the size of the population. The 2011 survey uses the same

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methodology, but with 1500 respondents. Additionally, the same university professor oversaw the implementation of both surveys.

We selected only survey questions that overlapped between the 2003 and 2011 surveys. This limited the scope of possible questions somewhat. Sixteen questions were selected for determining preferences of voters. These questions are summarized in Table 2. In general, respondents were asked to discuss their preferences for democratic governance, involvement of religion in politics, foreign relations, and income distribution.

Using these questions, we implement exploratory factor analysis to determine if voter preferences align on any coherent dimensions. Exploratory factor analysis determines "the extent to which measurement[s] overlap among a set of variables" (Mertler and Vannatta, 2002, 247). The result is a specified number of factors that each contain loadings, or weights (between -1 and +1), that specify the influence of a certain survey question in a particular factor. The exploratory part of the analysis recognizes the fact that we do not have prior beliefs about the number of factors that may be present among the survey questions. The goal is to reduce the survey questions to a number of factors where the loadings from survey questions on each factor can be combined into a single, coherent dimension on which we can classify voters.

By way of an example, traditional Western approaches to spatial models of electoral competition typically propose that any salient politically related questions can be collapsed to a single factor often called the left-right scale. Schofield and others have proposed that there are two dimensions to political party choice in many Western democracies: economic and social.

In this analysis, we seek to uncover the fewest possible factors that can adequately describe the political survey questions. We concentrate on determining factors from the 2003 survey in order to track whether and how voter responses to these factors change over time. We include the four largest parties for each time period since each survey had myriad minor parties with too few respondents to calculate party position adequately. A single factor in

the 2003 data accounts for only eight percent of variation in survey question responses, so we conclude that a single factor is inadequate.

The two factors in a two factor model describe coherent dimensions on which voters could make voting decisions (see Table 2). We call the first factor "Distrust of Institutions." This factor includes questions asking about the respondent's trust of the central government, the United Nations, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Interestingly, this factor is not expressly nationalist as we might surmise because it does not include a question about pride respondent's have in their country and it does include the question on central government trust. Respondents scoring high on this factor are wary of the role of any institutions in their lives. This may be because they believe these institutions are leading the country in the wrong direction or because they believe government should be decentralized.

The second factor, "Distrust of Rural Tradition," captures the idea that some respondents lament the loss of a rural society where they were not involved in politics, where religion and custom were important, and where neither money nor education was necessary to succeed. Since Kyrgyzstan and much of Central Asia is and has been clan based, it makes sense that this factor would be influential. An increase in this factor means that the respondent prefers having a strong leader while forgoing elections, the respondent is heavily influenced by religion, and the respondent has low education and income.

Now we proceed to use the factors to create a spatial model of the Kyrgyz political space in 2003 and 2011.

Party Preference Based on Factors

In the spatial model of party preferences, voters are positioned in an $X - Y$ plane using these two factors. Figure 1 displays the voters who stated that they would vote for one of the top four parties in 2003. Color indicates the party choice of an individual respondent. The larger points represent the median position on each of the factors for voters selecting a given party (Schofield, 2005).

It should be clear that voters with similar preferences on either or both of the factors do not necessarily select the same political party. This implies that political parties were ineffectively campaigning based on the two dimensions, as we would expect that voters closest to a party's median position would vote for that party.

Figure 2 displays the same factors with respect to the 2011 survey respondents.[6] Note that, due largely to the Tulip Revolution, the party names and platforms are different in 2011 than they were in 2003. The filled squares will be referenced later. Compared to the 2003 plots, voters in 2011 dispersed widely in their preferences on the two dimensions. More precisely, the core group of voters that scored between a 5 and 10 on both factors in 2003 remains in 2011, but two new groups have emerged. One group believes in rural tradition, but distrusts institutions; we will term this group the traditionalist group because of their longing for the past both in rural traditions and in some other governmental structure. The second group, the liberals, wants to eschew tradition and put confidence in government to solve problems. It is interesting that neither of these groups existed in 2003, and it is indeed revealing that the Kyrgyz political space expanded so much over a relatively short period. One reason for this could be the change from majoritarian to proportional representation. The other could be an increasingly robust system of party competition as voters and parties become more familiar with the workings of a democratic electoral system. Most probably the expansion is a combination of these two factors. However, notice the position of the median voter for each party. These positions have spread out a bit from 2003, but there seems to be little relationship between party choice and voter's position in political space. The next section models these results to determine if a relationship actually exists.

Determining Differences in Party Positions

To determine if there is any significant relationship between party selection and voter preferences in both the 2003 and 2011 surveys, we run a nested multinomial logit (NMNL) model. We first use a multinomial logit model and a Hausman test to determine that the indepen-

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dence of irrelevant alternatives assumption (IIA) is violated. The IIA states that if one of the four parties were removed from the choice set, the winning party would be the same as if the party was included; the IIA rarely holds for voting models (Greene, 2008, 847). The NMNL provides the benefits of the multinomial logit while relaxing the IIA assumption (Greene, 2008, 848). Both models allow the dependent variable to be selected from a choice set like a list of parties the voter could select. The NMNL groups the parties in a way the researcher specifies such that the IIA assumption holds within each group even though it does not hold for all choices. For example, perhaps the voter first decides to vote for either a major party likely to win election or a minor party unlikely to win election. In both 2003 and 2011, there were two major and two minor parties. Thus, we create a nest of the major parties and a nest of the minor parties. The model is set-up such that voters choose their preferred party first from one nest and then from the other nest (hence the term nested). We are confident that the IIA assumption is not violated because there are only two parties in each nest. Alternatively, we could create nests for parties that were ideologically similar.

The NMNL is part of a class of generalized extreme value (GEV) models that allow correlations between alternatives in the dependent variable (Train, 2009, 76). When these correlations go to zero, the NMNL reduces to a regular multinomial logit. We know already that the main principle of a NMNL model is that the IIA assumption holds within nests even though it may not hold for alternatives from different nests. Train (2009) discusses the foundations of the model from this assumption. Consider a set of alternatives j, in our case parties, partitioned into K subsets $B_1, ... B_n$ where these subsets are called nests. The utility that a voter n obtains from party j in nest B_k is defined as $U_{nj} = V_{nj} + \epsilon_{nj}$ where V_{nj} is the observed utility and ϵ_{nj} is an unobserved random variable. The NMNL assumes that $\epsilon_n = < \epsilon_{n1}, ... \epsilon_{nj} >$ has a the cumulative distribution

$$\exp(-\sum_{k=1}^{K}(\sum_{j \in B_k} e^{-\epsilon_{nj}/\lambda_k})^{\lambda_k})$$

where if j and m are in nest B_k ϵ_{nj} is correlated with ϵ_{nm}, but if $j \in B_k$ and $m \in B_l$ with $k \neq l$ then $Cov(\epsilon_{nj}, \epsilon_{nm}) = 0$. This means that alternatives outside of a nest must not be related to each other. The parameter λ_k measures the correlation of alternatives within a nest k. If $\lambda_k = 1$ then there is no correlation within the nest, and if this holds for all nests, the NMNL model reduces to a multinomial logit.

We now wish to show that the IIA holds within each nest, but not across nests. Consider writing $U_{nj} = V_{nj} + \epsilon_{nj} = W_{nk} + Y_{nj} + \epsilon_{nj}$ where $j \in B_k$, W_{nk} depends on variables describing nest k but not alternatives within the nest, and Y_{nj} depends on variables describing party j.

Thus, the probability of choosing party $i \in B_k$ is a product of the probability of choosing any party in B_k, P_{nB_k}, and the probability of choosing i from within B_k, $P_{ni|B_k}$. Each of these probabilities takes the form of a logit model which can be estimated using maximum likelihood techniques.[7]

Table 3 shows the NMNL analysis for the 2003 survey data. Controls for gender and age of the respondent are included. Regional controls are excluded due to lack of observations in all regions.[8] Even though the sample size is sufficiently large, many respondents did not select any political party that they support. Since political parties were not developed to the point in 2003 where they could be easily aligned on an ideological scale, we nest based on their status as major or minor parties. The table shows that none of the factors or the controls are significant predictors of party choice. This confirms our hypothesis from Figure 1.

Table 4 shows the NMNL analysis for the 2011 survey data. We classify SDPK and Ata-Meken as liberal parties and Ata-Zhurt and Ar-Namys as conservative parties and nest based on these branches. We also place the SDPK and Ata-Zhurt into a branch based on being the two major parties and Ar-Namys and Ata-Meken being opposition parties. One way to evaluate which nesting strategy is better is to examine the log sum coefficients of both models. If this coefficient is negative, there is a tendency to choose parties between branches instead of within a branch, meaning that the nesting strategy is ineffective. The

ideological nesting strategy produces such a negative coefficient, so we conclude that the latter model is best. These results are displayed in Table 4 with regional controls as well as gender and age controls. The R^2 of 0.20177 shows that some of the variation in party choice is being captured by the two political factors. Additionally, a number of individual coefficients are significant. Distrust of Institutions is significantly lower for those respondents choosing Ar-Namys relative to SDPK. Distrust of Rural Tradition is significantly lower for respondents choosing either Ata-Zhurt or Ar-Namys relative to SDPK. Female respondents are more likely to vote for Ata-Zhurt or Ata-Meken compared to SDPK; older respondents are more likely to vote for Ata-Zhurt and less likely to vote for Ata-Meken compared to SDPK.

The IV parameters are measures of the independence among the alternatives in each nest. The high value for the major party branch indicates that the parties within that branch are less correlated compared to the parties in the opposition party branch, where the parties are more correlated. Finally, the intercepts measure valence or characteristics about the party not measured by political space. Voters did not select parties based significantly on their levels of valence. Thus, voters did not select parties based on personalistic appeals, even though we show below that parties campaigned based on the personalities of their leaders.

The main conclusions we can draw from the NMNL analysis are that voters in 2003 selected parties based on factors other than the two dimensions of political space and that voters in 2011 did select parties based somewhat on their position in political space. We measure party median positions based on the aggregate position of voters selecting a particular party. Traditional models of spatial voting have assumed that parties wish to locate at the electoral median along with all other parties because this position maximizes vote share. However, Schofield (2008) suggests that parties often locate apart from each other and then use valence to appeal to voters who would naturally vote for another party based on position alone. We find no evidence for this here, as valence is not significant in either model. The next section will show that parties' platforms are programmatic, but this finding leads us to

question whether voters learn about parties' platforms during the course of the campaign.

Manifesto Analysis

To determine whether parties attempted to position themselves in policy space in Kyrgyzstan or if they ran intentionally personalistic campaigns, we collected and translated party manifestos from the four largest parties in 2011 used in the above analysis. We then coded the likely response of the party to the survey questions used in the factor analysis. Party preferences on questions were derived from the manifestos and ancillary information when necessary. Questions that applied only to individuals such as their income or religious attendance were set at the median level for respondents in each party. We then calculated the position of each party based on their party platform; these are the squares in Figure 2. It should be clear that parties do set their positions strategically in order to try to maximize vote share (Schofield, 2004). However, Ar-Namys and Ata-Meken struggled to communicate this message to voters because their party platform position is very far from the position of their median voter. Thus, voters are choosing to vote for these two parties for reasons other than their party platform. Conversely, voters who are closer to the platform position of one of these two parties are frequently choosing to vote for either SDPK or Ata-Zhurt.

Neither Ata-Meken nor Ar-Namys currently have a chance at winning a plurality of the seats in parliament. Thus, it makes sense for these parties to try to appeal to emerging extreme factions in the electorate. However, voters have extremely low political knowledge and over ninety percent state that they do not belong to any political party. This means that either party platforms of these two minor parties need to be publicized to inform voters or otherwise the party platforms have very little bearing on why voters decide to vote for them. The next section will explore whether parties are selecting the position of their party platforms in an early attempt to begin constructing a stable and comprehensive system of party competition in Kyrgyzstan or if the party manifestos and platforms are pro forma documents that are designed to be ignored by the voting public in favor of personalistic

messages.

What Does Kyrgyzstan Tell Us?

This section focuses on two questions: first, what are the reasons for the large divergence between party platforms and median voter points, and second, how does the Kyrgyzstan case fit into existing beliefs about party institutionalization in more or less democratic countries?

Party Platform Divergence

To determine whether Ar-Namys and Ata-Meken are campaigning on party platforms that voters do not respond to or whether they simply do not campaign on their platforms, we conducted a simple newspaper search in 2010, the year of the parliamentary election closest to the 2011 WVS poll. Since there are no Kyrgyz newspapers that provide English archives, we rely on BBC Central Asian news reports on LexisNexis. There are eighty-eight such reports for the search "Ar-Namys" and 116 for "Ata-Meken." Admittedly, this is an imprecise measure of the use of a party platform in campaigning, but it can at least give us a general idea of what strategy these two parties are using.

During this period, articles mentioning Ar-Namys focused on interviews with its leader, Felix Kulov, and the drawn out post-election process of forming a coalition government. Kulov was almost exclusively associated with the party. Articles would mention the party by stating "Felix Kulov's Ar-Namys" even when the article had nothing to do with Kulov. Kulov also acted as the sole spokesperson for the party. On only eight occasions in the eighty-eight articles was someone other than Kulov in the party mentioned. This implies that the campaign was all about Kulov's positions and not about a party platform.

Reinforcing this point, there are only three cases of any illusion to a party platform or any policy position in these articles. Two articles discuss the party's commitment to appeal to voters in Southern Kyrgyzstan. One article explicitly discusses how the Ar-Namys platform

is superior to others because of its detail, commitment to reducing corruption, and emphasis on law and order.

Ata-Meken, on the other hand, did publicize a platform, but it was a platform based on their attempt to seize a local government building to protest government power in April 2010. Party leaders turned this protest into a rallying cry for Kyrgyz citizens to vote for Ata-Meken in order to restore citizen power to the government. Though articles often had undertones of a pro-Western party stance, the main message was that of returning power to the people without further specifics. Ata-Meken's party platform calls for more ties with the West and broad democratization, so it may seem strange why the protests were never re-directed to support the written party platform. Since Ar-Namys failed to run on their written platform and the SDPK did not really espouse many beliefs in their platform, it appears that the Ata-Meken strategy was to avoid a pro versus anti-Western debate and just to rally people around government behavior during one specific protest event. Whereas the three other parties appear to have campaigned on their name and the reputation of their party leader, Ata-Meken chose to campaign on a controversial event, hoping to galvanize voters into selecting them. The event appealed to anyone who wanted a credible opposition party in power, regardless of their political position. This explains why Ata-Meken voters are positioned all over political space.

Thus, voters are not to blame for ignoring party platforms. Rather, the parties ignored their own platforms and campaigned to appeal to voters all over the political space. In fact, parties with totally different ideological beliefs combined to form larger opposition groups that ran a single candidate in the 2009 presidential election. This further shows that parties believed the only way to appeal to voters is through their status as an opposition party, ignoring policies that party leaders believe in. In the discussion, we propose that parties adopt this strategy because they do not understand that voters have salient positions in political space. We reach this conclusion by referencing the fact that voters do not vote based on valence in Kyrgyzstan, but they do in Hungary, a personalistic and democratic

country.

Kyrgyzstan in the Continuum of Democracy

It is important to determine whether Kyrgyzstan's political space is unique or if we are able to draw conclusions about competitive authoritarian regimes more generally. We draw on WVS data from Kazakhstan in 2011, Georgia in 2014, and Hungary in 2009. These countries are all post-Soviet, meaning they share many characteristics. Importantly, party competition is personalistic in all cases. Thus, if we find differences between political space in these regimes it will be due to differences in the level of democratic consolidation not in the way parties conduct campaigns.

There should be a clear distinction between the Kazakh and Kyrgyz cases and Georgia because Georgia is a developing democracy where parties have successfully competed and elections have been relatively free and fair since 2004. On the other hand, Kazakhstan should have similar dimensions to Kyrgyzstan, and we expect that the political space is also similar. Finally, Hungary is a consolidated democracy where we expect an economic or social dimension to be salient, following previous literature about democracies.

Table 5 shows the factor loadings for Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Hungary along with the 2011 factor loadings for Kyrgyzstan. Loadings for Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are quite similar. The exception is that religion is not important in Kazakhstan. This is because religion is suppressed in Kazakhstan, so we would not expect it to be a salient political issue. Even though some of the loadings differ, the same themes are expressed in both countries.

However, the loadings in Georgia show that the second factor is different. First, the institutions factor has loadings quite comparable to those in Kyrgyzstan. The second factor, which we call "Distrust in Democracy" revolves almost entirely on the question of whether democracy is normatively good. Some of these themes were present in the "Distrust of Rural Traditions," but the impact is more greater here.

For Hungary, the institutions factor remains important, but the second factor is now a

traditional social factor that relies heavily on religious beliefs and attendance.

These findings make sense if we consider Kazakhstan to be closest to authoritarianism, Kyrgyzstan in the middle, Georgia closest to democracy, and Hungary a consolidated democracy. Voters in Kazakhstan are most divided over whether the clan and nomadic lifestyle of their Communist past is something worth trying to return to. For example, the question about whether people should provide for themselves clearly provokes Communist thoughts as well as clan ties. Respondents in Kazakhstan associate this question strongly with the rural traditions factor, while respondents in Kyrgyzstan associate it less so. Georgians and Hungarians do not associate this question with either factor.

With Kazakhstan still seriously contemplating a return to the past, Georgia has made a break and is now debating the merits of democracy. This question is fundamentally different from the Kazakh one because it accepts that Georgia has departed from Communism and has to find a way to work with democracy. Kyrgyzstan is in the middle of these two regimes. Further, Hungary has entered the realm of traditional Western democratic political space with the emergence of a social dimension of political competition. We have shown that political space is similar in Kazakhstan to that in Kyrgyzstan, but different from that in Georgia and Hungary. This confirms the applicability of the results from a study of Kyrgyzstan to similar countries less democratically inclined than Georgia, but more democratic than Azerbaijan.[9]

Discussion and Conclusions

Using factor analysis, spatial models, and nested multinomial logit models, we find support for the hypothesis that countries with competitive authoritarian regimes have salient political dimensions, but that these dimensions do not predict vote choice. This positions competitive authoritarian regimes between authoritarian regimes, where only one dimension is present, and developing democracies, where voters tend to select parties based on their position

in political space. Perhaps the most interesting finding, however, is that the two Kyrgyz opposition parties appeal to specific voters in their platforms, but that these voters do not select parties based on this appeal. Subsequent analysis shows that this finding is not a direct function of voters' lacking information, but of parties not running on their stated platform. While some previous work has suggested that parties in competitive authoritarian regimes run based on personalities and not their platforms, this analysis is the first to show the impact that this decision has on voters. We also show that voters have salient policy dimensions that parties could choose to activate.

One common objection to this finding is that Kyrgyz parties follow a traditional personalistic model of party competition. Personalistic party competition is common in many consolidated democratic regimes including in Georgia and Hungary. By including these two countries in the analysis, we are able to show that the differences in political space in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are not a result of the personalistic nature of political party competition.[10]

The distinction to be made here is that personalistic party competition in democracies such as Georgia and Hungary is an intentional strategy of parties to increase electoral support. That is, personalistic parties *decide* to structure their campaigns around a figurehead leader and to ignore salient political dimensions. In competitive authoritarian regimes, it seems that personalistic party competition is a necessity of all parties because they *are not aware* that citizens have coherent political preferences. How do we know this? In Kyrgyzstan, in order to attract votes "party leaders choose evocative names such as Eagle, Justice, Dignity..." (Brooke, 2010). Coalitions form between programmatically opposite political parties of varying strengths, and these coalitions put forward a single candidate or list of candidates for an election. For example, coalitions in Kyrgyzstan include parties that want a closer relationship with the West and the United States as well as those who want exclusive trade with Russia. Contrast this with personalistic parties in Hungary where the campaign may be a personality based debate, but the two parties also have known policy differences.

In competitive authoritarian regimes, party leaders develop party manifestos, but they then put them completely aside in favor of coalitions between disparate groups for the sole purpose of trying to gain votes, ignoring the party platforms and policy goals.

To lend credence to this interpretation, recall that the intercepts in the NMNL models of Kyrgyzstan elections were all insignificant. This means that voters did not select parties based on valence characteristics like personality. However, compare these results to those for Hungary in Table 6.[11] Here we see that the intercept term is significant and negative. Since the reference category is the FIDESZ party, this means that the Hungarian Socialist Party has significantly lower valence than FIDESZ. The main take-away is that valence plays an important role in party choice in Hungary, but it does not in Kyrgyzstan even though political campaigns in Kyrgyzstan are personalistic as shown in the manifesto analysis.

Whereas the conclusions from previous research have cited voter apathy and lack of sophistication as the reason that parties choose not to compete programmatically, this research suggests that the opposite is the case. Some parties are formed by activists with strong programmatic preferences. However, those same parties believe that voters do not have programmatic preferences, so appealing to policy preferences would only lose votes for the party. This is why parties run campaigns based on personality, leading the median voter in each party to be positioned in almost the same space. Over time, minor differences emerge between parties as voters group together in political space, but party positions do not change dramatically because parties continue to believe that voters do not have salient policy preferences. These factors lead to erratic voter choice at the same time that party platforms clearly indicate which party a voter should choose.

In this way, parties and voters are suspended in an equilibrium where parties continue to run campaigns based on personality and voters ignore their own policy preferences because they cannot place parties in political space in a meaningful way. The solution to this problem is to develop an intervention to shock the parties such that they move toward their stated policy platforms. This will generate short term chaos in the political system, but it should

also move the parties from a completely uninformative equilibrium to one where voters can select parties easily based on their stated platform. Perhaps the intervention comes in the form of non-governmental organization assistance to political parties to help them develop programmatic messages that will resonate with voters in this policy space. Whatever the method, the foundations of voting based on policy preferences exist, but parties need additional help so that they recognize that voters share the same salient political dimensions as those espoused in party platforms. Whether parties in such a system will become personalistic in the future is an open question, but, at the present, parties do not believe they have an option to run programmatic campaigns.

Notes

[1]We shall not review the extraordinarily vast literature on spatial models of electoral politics here. See Schofield and Sened (2006), Schofield (2008), Stokes (1963), Ansolabehere and Snyder (2000), and Enelow and Hinich (1984) for a survey of different ideas about spatial voting and valence.

[2]This paper also looked at elections in Russia, but Russia inherited significant political leadership after the fall of the USSR making it inherently different from other competitive authoritarian regimes.

[3]Range for Polity IV from -10 to 10 with 10 as most democratic and for Freedom House from 1 to 7 with 1 as most free. The difference is likely explained by differences in legal competitiveness captured in Polity and actual competition captured in Freedom House.

[4]Fielding our own surveys was an option on a small scale, but this would eliminate the temporal and cross-country consistency under which the WVS is conducted.

[5]Respublika merged with Ata-Zhurt, so these two parties are considered as one in the 2011 survey.

[6]It is worth emphasizing here that the factor loadings that we use in the 2011 analysis are the same as those from 2003. If we use different factor loadings for the different years, it would be impossible to compare voter's positions in 2003 to 2011 because the loadings on each factor are slightly different. What is important is that the factors themselves are the same in both years even if the loadings change. A change in a factor indicates a fundamental shift in the political landscape while a shift in loadings on the same factors can indicate survey respondents in different regions of a country or at different times. We can observe how the voters move over time only when holding the factor loadings constant. Results do not change significantly based on if we hold the 2003 or the 2011 loadings constant.

[7]The equations for the marginal and conditional probabilities and a more detailed explanation from which this one was heavily based can be found in Train (2009).

[8]We do examine regional patterns in preferences and voting and, although some regions do vote strongly for one party over another, there are not clear patterns of regional fragmentation.

[9]Azerbaijan is the lower bound of applicability because Schofield et al. (2012) only find one dimension in their political space.

[10]Again, previous surveys were too far in the past to compare changes in party consolidation over time.

[11]There were only two major parties in Hungary in 2009.

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Table 1: Kyrgyzstan Political Parties, 2011

| Name	Founding	Platform
Ata-Meken	1992	Liberal, pro-Western
SDPK	1994	Liberal/Socialist, dominant party
Ar-Namys	1999	Conservative, pro-Russian
Ata-Zhurt	2006	Conservative, Nationalist

Table 2: Factor Loadings from 2003 World Values Survey

Question	Institutions	Rural
Dislike Immigrant Neighbors		0.123
How Conservative Are You?		
Agree That Income Gaps Should be Tolerated	0.132	0.192
Agree People Should Provide for Themselves		0.108
Distrust Central Government	0.462	0.193
Distrust the CIS	0.712	
Distrust the UN	0.659	
Agree to a Strong, Unelected Leader		0.369
Democratic System is Unimportant	0.166	-0.129
Never Attend Mosque	-0.253	0.243
God Very Important in Life		-0.330
Accepting a Bribe is Justifiable		0.165
Not Proud to be Kyrgyz		0.200
Not Part of Local Community		0.209
Earn a High Income		0.406
Highly Educated	-0.268	0.554

Factor analysis using sixteen questions from the World Values Survey. Columns represent two most important factors.

Figure 1: Kyrgyzstan Political Space in 2003

Vote Dispersion in Kyrgyzstan 2003
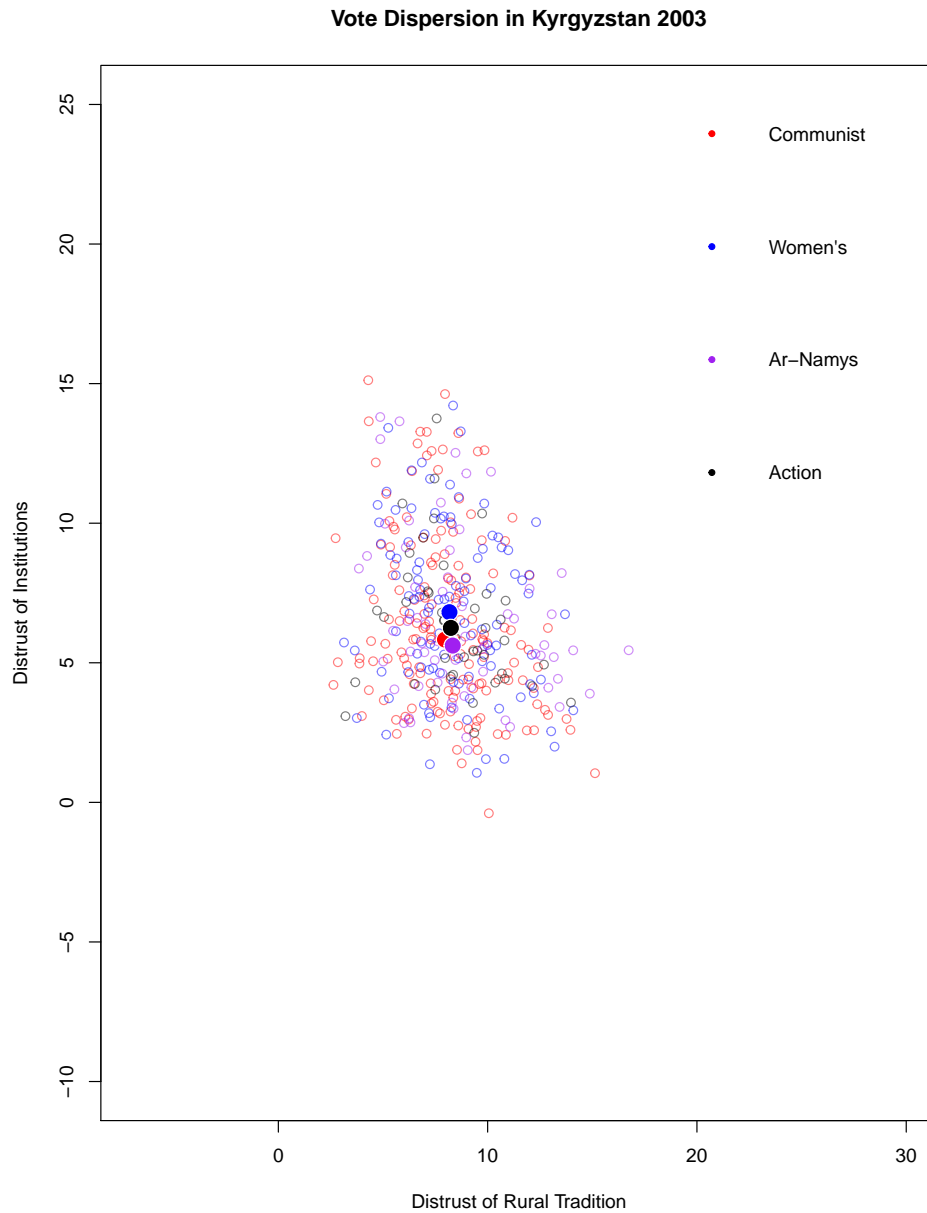
Outlined circles represent individual voters; solid circles represent party medians.

Figure 2: Kyrgyzstan Political Space in 2011

Vote Dispersion in Kyrgyzstan 2011
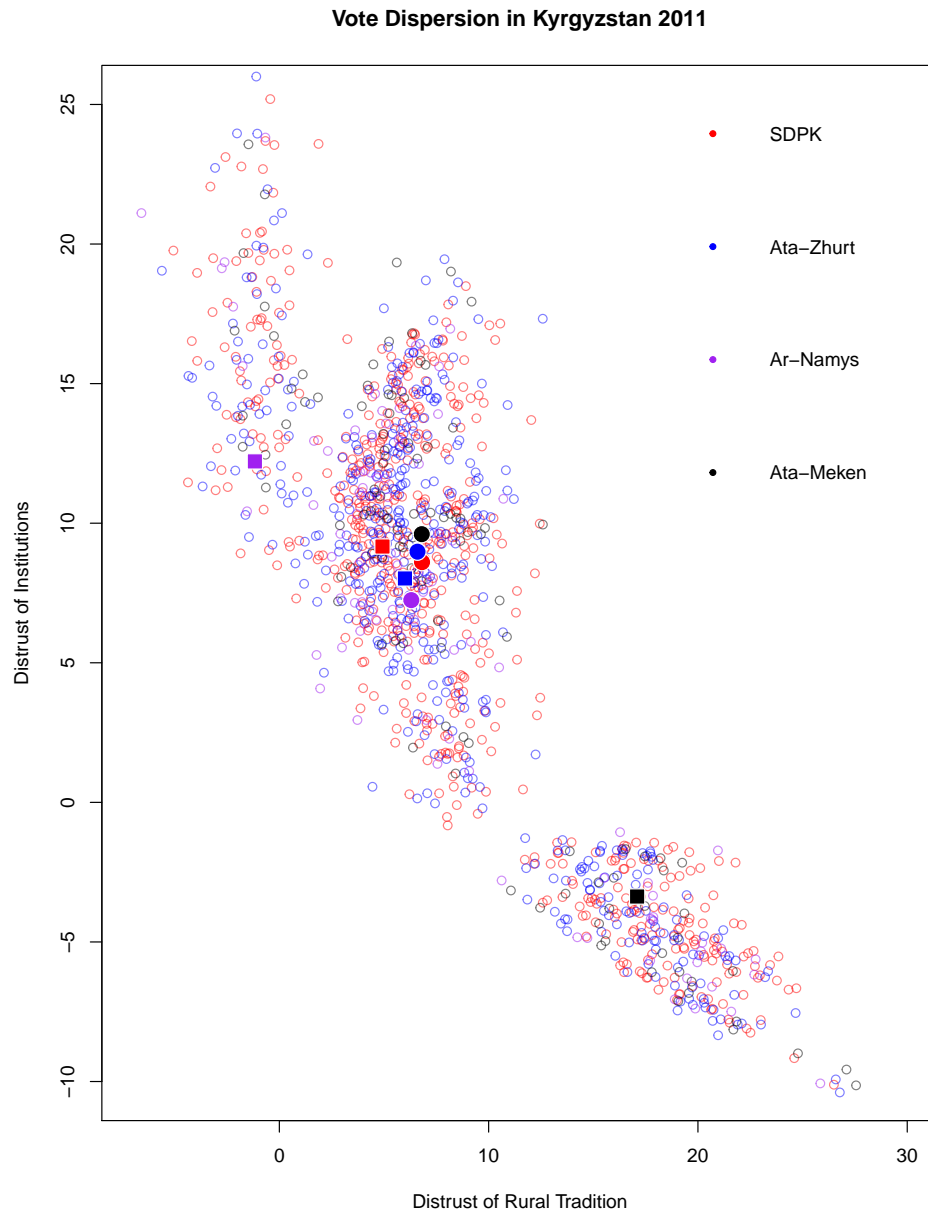
Outlined circles represent individual voters; solid circles represent party medians. Solid squares represent party manifesto positions.

Table 3: Nested Multinomial Logit for Survey Respondents in 2003

	Dependent variable[a]:
	Party
CP[b]:(intercept)	−56.438 (589.648))
DP[c]:(intercept)	287.364 (1,271.015)
PA[d]:(intercept)	290.671 (1,270.915)
CP:Institutions	2.362 (6.120)
DP:Institutions	1.008 (2.488)
PA:Institutions	0.928 (2.464)
CP:Rural	−10.186 (24.302)
DP:Rural	−4.154 (9.797)
PA:Rural	−4.152 (9.778)
CP:Female	13.846 (42.163)
DP:Female	11.974 (19.044)
PA:Female	4.209 (16.318)
CP:Age	−1.761 (4.198)
DP:Age	−0.761 (1.694)
PA:Age	−0.642 (1.686)
iv.Minor	467.719 (2,231.863)
iv.Major	3.837 (2.781)
Observations	376
R^2	0.101
Log Likelihood	−429.345
LR Test	96.194*** (df = 17)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

[a]Reference is Ar-Namys
[b]Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan
[c]Democratic Party of Women of Kyrgyzstan
[d]Party of Action

Table 4: Nested Multinomial Logit for Survey Respondents in 2011

	Dependent variable[a]:
	Party
AZ[b]:(intercept)	−205.083 (809.197)
AN[c]:(intercept)	20.896 (100.191)
AM[d]:(intercept)	22.590 (100.210)
AZ:Institutions	−0.238 (0.187)
AN:Institutions	−0.259 (0.161)
AM:Institutions	0.065 (0.049)
AZ:Rural	−0.501* (0.261)
AM:Rural	−0.459** (0.228)
AN:Rural	0.070 (0.064)
AZ:Female	2.615* (1.525)
AM:Female	2.504* (1.318)
AN:Female	−0.219 (0.374)
AZ:Age	0.098* (0.050)
AM:Age	0.072* (0.043)
AN:Age	−0.031* (0.017)
iv.Major	132.722 (520.924)
iv.Opposition	4.262* (2.395)
Observations	1,277
R^2	0.202
Log Likelihood	−1,132.422
LR Test	574.233*** (df = 38)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

[a]Reference is SDPK; regional interactions not shown as none were significant.
[b]Ata-Zhurt
[c]Ar-Namys
[d]Ata-Meken

Table 5: Factor Loadings from 2009 to 2014

Question	Krygyzstan		Kazakhstan		Georgia		Hungary	
	Institutions	Rural	Institutions	Rural	Institutions	Democracy	Institutions	Social
Dislike Immigrant Neighbors				-0.159	-0.155	-0.275		
How Conservative Are You?	-0.114	0.435		0.155			0.121	-0.152
Agree That Income Gaps Should be Tolerated		0.352		0.615		-0.174		
Agree People Should Provide for Themselves		0.312	0.108	0.600		0.170		
Distrust Central Government	0.437		0.495		0.415		0.393	
Distrust the CIS (EU)[a]	0.920		0.872		0.933	-0.111	0.894	0.166
Distrust the UN	0.797		0.834		0.919		0.835	0.215
Agree to a Strong, Unelected Leader					-0.111			
Democratic System is Unimportant	0.215	-0.124	0.142	0.141	0.217	0.780		0.155
Never Attend Mosque		-0.122						0.628
God Very Important in Life		0.454					0.223	-0.818
Accepting a Bribe is Justifiable	0.166	-0.157		0.143	0.224		0.137	
Not Proud to be (nationality)		-0.254		-0.200				0.302
Not Part of Local Community	0.208	-0.325			0.207		0.268	
Earn a High Income		0.216		0.335		0.156		
Highly Educated				0.215				

[a]Georgia and Hungary were asked about the EU, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan about the CIS.

Table 6: Logit for Survey Respondents in Hungary in 2009

	Dependent variable[a]:
	Party
Institutions	−0.052
	(0.051)
Social	0.071
	(0.062)
Age	0.036***
	(0.009)
Female	0.216
	(0.286)
Constant	−1.864**
	(0.772)
Observations	284
Log Likelihood	−152.864
Akaike Inf. Crit.	353.729
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

[a]Logistic regression on vote choice. Reference is FIDESZ. Region fixed effects included, but not reported here.