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Dynamics of Development of American Political Parties

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(vlastnoruční podpis)

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This is life's sorrow: That one can be happy only where two are…

Edgar Lee Masters – Spoon River Anthology (1915)

Preface

Schizophrenia, it might be this psychiatric term that enters one's mind when an amateur observer is asked to describe the contemporary nature of major American political parties in one word. Such an uncomplimentary connotation has its rationale, and, at first sight, the American party system indeed may remotely remind of this ambivalent psychological disorder. Its "Jekyll and Hyde" character can be illustrated by the simple fact that, for example, before the 2000 presidential election, according to a Gallup Poll, 67 percent of the electorate supported the idea of a third party, but, at the very election, only 3.8 percent actually voted for a third party candidate.[1] Also, Americans commonly complain that "there ain't a dime's worth of a difference between the political parties"[2] and they even compare them to two famous brothers from Lewis Carroll's Alice in the Wonderland – Tweedledum and Tweedledee; however, if we analyze the floor voting in recent Congresses, we can discern unprecedented high partisan voting patterns which demonstrate deep loyalties of the individual congressmen and senators to their parent party. Moreover, there exists a common feeling of apathy among American voters because, according to them, political parties are too remote, and they do not address their needs but, at the same time, over two thirds of the electorate associate themselves with either Democratic or Republican Party and the number of independents is relatively low.

These obvious discrepancies seem to perplex even political scientists, as they come to contradictory conclusions about American political parties – some claim that they appear in the stage of decline and decomposition, such as Martin P. Wattenberg in *The Decline of American Political Parties 1952-1984* (1986) or William J. Crotty in *American Parties in Decline* (1980), while others celebrate their resurgence and boom, such as Larry J. Sabato in *The Party's Just Begun: Shaping Political Parties for America's Future* (1988) or Xandra Kayden and Eddie Mahe, Jr. in *The Party Goes on: The Persistence of the Two-Party System in the United States* (1985).

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[1] Bibby, John F.2003. *Politics, Parties, and Elections in America*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, p.3

[2] This well-known phrase was coined by a former governor of Alabama and American Independent Party presidential candidate George Wallace so as to show his antipathy towards the Democratic and Republican parties

The goal of this thesis is to unravel the mystery of American party system and to explore its intricate maze, while focusing on different aspects that eventuate this illusive "schizophrenia." I try to answer the question of whether the contemporary parties decline or thrive, and how their organization, structure of electoral support and behavior in the government have changed throughout their historical development as their presence can be best understood through their anamneses.

Chapter 1 defines the notion of political party and introduces the Key-Sorauf triad, which becomes a dominant approach towards political parties throughout this thesis. Chapter 2 outlines historical development of American political parties from the 1790s until 1932, tracing continuity and discontinuity of the four distinct party systems, and also contemplates rise and transformation of the "mass-based" party. Chapter 3 analyzes the recent trends in the party-in-government, while focusing mainly on Rohde's conception of the so-called "conditional party government." Chapter 4 deals with structural innovations that were integrated into the party-as-organization in the 1960s and 1970s, while also describing the rise of a new form of political party in service to its candidates. Chapter 5 focuses on the seeming decline of the political party in the electorate and it also deals with correlation between changing political and social environment and the occurrence of a new American voter in the 1960s. The conclusion is devoted to assessment whether present parties find themselves in decline or resurgence.

1. Tripartite Nature of American Political Parties

In the context of the United States, a political party, per se, is characterized by high complexity and heterogeneity and political scientists find it hard to approach it in a uniform manner as it can be compared to a diverse mosaic consisting of many pieces just "begging" to be analyzed, which results in a great multitude of its definitions:

A political party is first of all an organized attempt to get power.[1]

E.E.Schattschneider

In the broadest sense, a political party is a coalition of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by legal means. By coalition, we mean a group of individuals who have certain ends in common and cooperate with one another to achieve them. By governing apparatus, we mean the physical, legal, and institutional equipment which the government uses to carry out its specialized role in the division of labor. By legal means, we mean either duly constituted elections or legitimate influence. [2]

Anthony Downs

[A party is] any group however loosely organized, seeking to elect governmental office-holders under a given label.[3]

Leon Epstein

[A party is] a group organized to gain control of government in the name of the group by winning election to public office.[4]

Joseph Schlesinger

A political party, at least on the American scene, tends to be a "group" of a peculiar sort...A fundamental difficulty about the term "political party" is that it is applied without discrimination to many types of groups and near-groups...Within the body of voters as a whole, groups are formed of persons who regard themselves as party members...Party in this sense of the party-in-the-electorate is an amorphous group, yet it has a social senility...In another sense the term may refer to the group to the group of more or less professional political workers...At times party denotes groups within the government...Often it refers to an entity which rolls into the party-in-the-

[1] Schattschneider, E.E. 1942. *Party Government*, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, p.37
[2] Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, New York:Harper Brunswick, p.24
[3] Epstein, Leon. 1967. *Political Parties in Western Democracies*, New York: Praeger, p.9
[4] Schlesinger, Joseph A.1985. The New American Political Party, *American Political Science Review*, vol.79, p. 1153

electorate, the professional political group, the party-in-the-legislature, and the party-in-the-government...In truth, this all-encompassing usage has its legitimate applications for all the types of groups called party interact more or less closely and at times may be as one.[1]

V.O.Key

A political party is a group of officeholders, candidates, activists, and voters who identify with a group label and seek to elect individuals to public office who run under that label.[2]

Larry Sabato

Political parties can be seen as coalitions of elites to capture and use political office...(But) a political party is...more than a coalition. A major political party is an institutionalized coalition, one that has adopted rules, norms, and procedures.[3]

John Aldrich

In spite of this diversity, we can find some common threads in some of the aforesaid definitions. Schattschneider, Downs, Schlesinger and Epstein all emphasize that the political party is primarily an instrumental organization with the goal of winning elections, which entails control of the government and acquisition of power. However, V.O.Key, Jr. emphasizes yet another dimension, which does not confine only to electoral and governmental structural elements represented by office-seekers, office-holders, activists and party members in general, but pertains also to voters, thereby pointing out existence of a certain link between the political party and ordinary citizen. Such a multi-faceted approach to the political party soon found resonance and acclaim within American scholarship, including the scholars as Frank J. Sorauf, Larry Sabato or John H. Aldrich. As a result, it has become quite a regularity to analyze American political party from the perspective of the so-called Key-Sorauf triad which distinguishes three interrelating party components, i.e., party-as-organization, party-in-government, and party-in-the-electorate.

According to Sorauf, the party-as-organization comprises "formally chosen party leaders, the informally anointed ones, the legions of local ward and precinct workers, and the members and activists of the party – that is, all those who give their time, money, and skills to the party, whether as leaders or followers."[4] Its

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[1] Key, V.O., Jr. 1964. *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, 6th ed , New York:Crowell, pp.163-164

[2] Sabato, Larry J. 1988. *The Party's Just Begun. Shaping Political Parties for America's Future*, Brown College Division: Scott, Foresman and Company, p.26

[3] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 283-284

[4] Sorauf, Frank J., and Paul Allen Beck. 1988. *Party Politics in America*, 6th ed., Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company, p.10

main function is the nomination of candidates for office, one which primarily entails mobilization of the electoral support. The party-as-organization derives its momentum not only from the formal machinery of national and state committees and conventions but also from the nature of its informal apparatus, which includes hierarchical relations, face-to-face contacts and interactions.

The party-in-government is represented by political actors who have been elected to public office under the party's label, i.e., chief executive and legislative office-holders on the state and national level. They make up the most visible and influential component of the political party, and the party-as-organization possesses only limited means how to exert influence on them. As a consequence, the interests of the particular office-holder may sometimes prove to be contradictory to those of the party as a whole. It is this discrepancy that shapes theoretical foundations for the necessity to treat these two structural party's constituents separately.

Out of all three components, the party-in-the-electorate exhibits the greatest vagueness. According to Beck and Hershey, it consists of "the men and women who see themselves as Democrats or Republicans: those who feel some degree of loyalty to the party, who normally vote for its candidates in primaries and the general election, even if they have never set a foot in the party's headquarters or dealt with its leaders and activists."[1] The party-in-the-electorate does not depend on the party-as-organization and it is not subject to its control and incentive. Yet the party-as-organization is dependent on the party-in-the-electorate, and it must continuously woo its supporters since it forms the basis of "the coalitions necessary for effective political power in the American political system."[2] The party-as-organization is a mass producer of candidates and appeals, destined to be consumed by the party-in-the-electorate. Unfortunately for the former, the latter is marked by great volatility of tastes and affections. The party-in-the-electorate very much influences and participates in the functioning of the party-as-organization (e.g. through the system of primary elections), hence it is not just a mere external group that needs to be mobilized for winning elections. The combination of the party-as-organization and the party-in-the-electorate shapes

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[1] Beck, Paul Allen, and Marjorie Randon Hershey. 2001. *Party Politics in America*, 7th Ed., Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., p.10

[2] Sorauf, Frank J., and Paul Allen Beck. 1988. *Party Politics in America*, 6th ed., Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company, p.11

the main identifying feature of American political parties and, as a consequence, they are "an open, inclusive, semipublic political organization," which differentiates them from the predominantly closed character of their European counterparts.[1]

[1] Sorauf, Frank J., and Paul Allen Beck. 1988. *Party Politics in America*, 6th ed., Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company p.12

2. Historical Perspective of American Political Parties

In his noted study entitled *A Theory of Critical Elections*, V.O.Key, Jr. noticed that there exists "a category of elections...in which the decisive results of the voting reveal a sharp alteration of pre-existing cleavages within the electorate. Moreover, and perhaps this is differentiating characteristic of this sort of election, the realignment made manifest in the voting in such elections seems to persist for several elections."[1] Ever after publication of this article, the concept of critical elections has been elaborated upon by many political scientists. American political history appears to be a never-ending but more or less regular alternation of two political parties in power. Yet there existed certain periods of time (political cycles) which witnessed a pronounced pattern in electoral preferences when one political party enjoyed the coherent and majority support of voters. The cause of these cycles is traditionally labeled by political scholars as electoral realignment. Sundquist defines realignment as "a shift in the distribution of basic party attachments, as distinct from a temporary alteration of voting behavior."[2] In other words, it indicates major and enduring change in affiliation of voters. The elections which incur dramatic and long-term turn in party loyalties classically bear the attribute "critical." Ever after coinage of this locution by V.O.Key, Jr., political scientists have been quarrelling about the classification and identification of critical elections. However, there is a wide consensus regarding appearance of critical elections in the years 1860, 1896, 1932 and 1968. If we add the pre-party era where parties were rather elitist governmental organizations, we get six distinct party systems: 1) the Federalist-Republican system (from the early 1790s until approximately 1815), 2) the Democratic-Whig system (from the mid-1820s to the mid-1850s), 3) the first Republican-Democratic system (from 1860 until 1896), 4) the second Republican-Democratic system (from 1896 until 1932), 5) the New Deal party system, which arose in 1932 and lasted until 1968, and 6) the Post-New Deal party system (1968 until now).[3]

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[1] Key, V.O., Jr. 1955. "A Theory of Critical Elections," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 17, No.1, p.4
[2] Sundquist, James L. 1981. *Dynamics of the Party System*. Rev. ed. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution
[3] see, for example, Bibby, John F.2003. *Politics, Parties, and Elections in America*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, pp. 24-39

The following subchapters deal with basic characteristics of the first four party systems through the eyes of the Key-Sorauf triad. I pay particular attention to the first two party systems due to their dynamism (i.e. crystallization of the political party as such and quick transformations of the party system including rise and fall of the Federalist Party and Whig Party). For the purpose of this thesis, I attribute these periods as follows – Era of Party Distrust, Era of Party Fascination, Era of Party Manipulation and Era of Party Democratization. The more recent developments of political parties are covered in great detail in the remaining part of this thesis.

2.1 Era of Party Distrust

Surprisingly, a political party was more than an unwelcome guest within the American political environment and it was treated with greatest contempt and suspicion with this antagonistic approach being predominantly apparent in the First and Second Congress, where it reached its nadir. This deep-rooted enmity was caused by lack of positive experience with political parties as they could not get rid of their ominous stigmata originating from the British tradition. The notion of political party traditionally merged with and had negative connotations of a faction, which, at that time, inherently stood for a clique that placed its own interests higher than well-being of the society. James Madison in his *Federalist No. 10* defines a faction as "a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community."[1] This *Federalist* also illustrates the interchangeable character of a faction and political party as Madison warns both against "the violence of faction"[2] and "rage of party".[3] Also, other Founding Fathers showed deep dissatisfaction with the phenomenon of political party. For example, Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1789 that "such addiction [to a political party] is the last degradation of a free and moral agent. If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all"[4] and Benjamin Franklin cautioned against "the infinite mutual abuse of parties, tearing to pieces the best of characters."[5] In other words, the organization into larger political groupings as such was viewed as necessarily inherent upon the natural manifestation of collective egoistic passions which contravened and obscured the individual will and led to oppression of non-participant citizens. As a consequence, the then political leaders perceived political party only within the framework of a faction and failed to appreciate the positive aspect of political party for the whole community. Another source of anathema in relation to the political parties sprang from the dogma that they could undermine

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[1] Madison, James, Hamilton, Alexander, and Jay, John. 1987. *The Federalists Papers,* London: Penguin Books, p. 123 (No. X),
[2] Ibid p. 122 (No. X)
[3] Ibid p. 318 (No. L)
[4] Quoted in Aldrich, John H. and Ruth H Grant. 1993. "The Antifederalists, the First Congress, and the First Parties," *The Journal of Politics*, Volume 55, p. 296
[5] Quoted in Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.93

the national unity, which was regarded to play a crucial factor in the stability of the state and constitution.

This traditional conception of political party necessarily poses some intriguing questions. If the key politicians in this epoch originally denounced and vigorously criticized the phenomenon of political parties immediately after the birth of independent American nation, how it is possible that political parties rapidly developed to become a vital part of the American political system? What caused this sudden change in the collective perception of political parties? Which factors stood behind the puzzle of their origination in the anti-party era? And, indeed, the rise of political parties in the United States in the 1790s can be interpreted as rather an accidental process that flowed from historical and political necessities than a result of deliberate actions taken by key political actors of that era. Surely enough, the birth of American political parties is more than paradoxical, and it can be viewed as a choice of a lesser evil.

American political parties were grudgingly formed due to the chaos and instability that haunted the first two Congresses. The roll-call voting failed to have any consistent pattern, with Congressmen voting rather randomly and depending arbitrarily on agreement and benefits promised by the individual factions.[1] In this sense, the term faction reflects its modern usage, and it stands for political groupings organized around temporary issues and key political actors. This situation created a certain *circulus vitiosus* as the inherent shifting majorities, founded upon bargaining or even vote trading, failed to coin a coherent policy, which undermined the stability of the "fragile" new-born state and presented imminent danger to its future. Inevitably, political leaders soon faced a serious dilemma – how to ensure consistent policy line and win the stable support of the individual Congressmen when approving bills. To this cause, political leaders did not have any other option but to utilize the lesser evil – the mechanism of hitherto unpopular political parties – whose *raison d'être* was an institutional solution to a shifting and fragile majority rule so as to ensure a coherent bloc of support inside the Congress for promoted policies.[2] Strangely enough, what one could perceive

[1] Hoadley, John F. 1980: "The Emergence of Political Parties in Congress, 1789-1803," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 74, p. 760

[2] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 77

with a certain hyperbole rather as an "unwilling bastard" within the American political system would later turn out to be one of its most celebrated idols.

The pre-party era poses yet another question – why did the United States develop a two-party system and not a multi-party system? Hoadley synthetizes theoretical conclusions by Hutchinson and Duverger and distinguishes four stages in the process of party development – factionalism, polarization, expansion, and institutionalization.[1] Naturally, the rise of a two-party system is to be attributed to the phase of polarization when the shifting majorities of factionalism transformed into more stable and consistent political groupings that fought over enforcement of their political agenda. Hoadley explains the rise of such distinct political crystallization as based on: appearance of a dominant issue and/or accumulation of several cleavages.[2] In the case of the United States, both aspects were relevant with the former predominating and the latter resulting implicitly from the political crux of the matter. The Constitution of the United States displayed great vagueness regarding the status of the new federal government and therefore the first Congresses played a vital role in allocating and assigning powers and functions to it and in shaping the precedent for the future. Aldrich labels the contradiction of key political actors, i.e., strong government vs. weak government, by the so-called "great principle," which basically stood at the fundamental polarization of the first political parties in the form of the Federalists (led by Alexander Hamilton and John Adams) and the Anti-Federalists (led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison).[3] The accumulation of cleavages was represented by their different views on economic orientation (industry vs. agriculture with the intrinsic division between the North and the South), foreign policy (England vs. France in relation to the establishment of stronger ties), location of the capital etc.

Alexander Hamilton was the first politician to explore the future bonanza of American politics – the mechanism of political parties since he began to utilize party caucuses and the consequential voting majorities to enforce his fiscal plan and to coordinate his legislative plans. Jefferson and Madison responded at the end of the second Congress by forming an organized opposition, yet the Anti-

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[1] Hoadley, John F. 1980: "The Emergence of Political Parties in Congress, 1789-1803," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 74, p. 757

[2] Ibid

[3] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 72

Federalist Party was conceived rather in agony, and it, in linguistic terms, resembled a patient, who suffered under the yoke of the agent in the form of the Federalist Party. Not until formation of intersectional alliance, the creation of party press, and the improvement of electoral organization did the minority position of the Anti-Federalist Party change.[1] By his analysis of roll-call voting in early Congresses, Hoadley demonstrates that the first two Congresses had factional connotations (in the modern usage of the term), with the political camps being arranged regionally, while the third and fourth Congresses already witnessed more coherent voting patterns with two stable opposing political groups, when virtually every congressmen identifying himself in terms of a Federalist or Anti-Federalist, and the index of party cohesion (frequency of voting in favor of the affiliated party) exceeding 60 percent. This period, i.e., 1793-1797, can be perceived as a turning point in the development of American political system as national politicians commonly started to exploit the *terra incognita* of political parties.

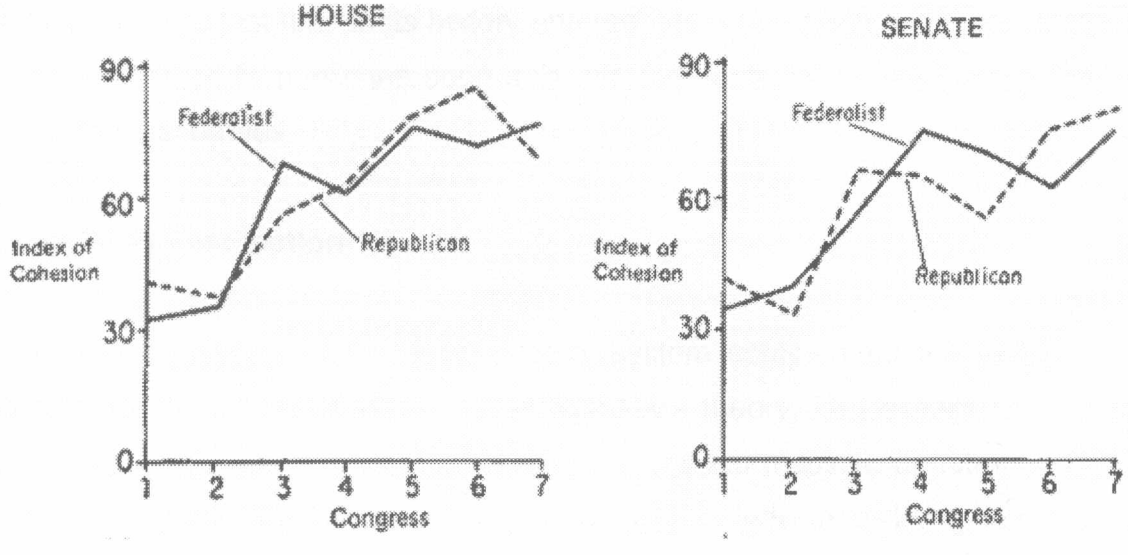

Figure 2.1. Index of Cohesion, United States Congress, House of Representatives and Senate, 1789 – 1803 (source Hoadley, John F. 1980: „The Emergence of Political Parties in Congress, 1789-1803," *The American Political Science Review*, Volume 74, p. 775)

Through the lens of the Key-Sorauf triad, the first political parties functioned only as the party-in-government, and hence they may be dubbed as mere archetypical distorted images of political parties. The Federalist and Anti-Federalist Party (Democratic-Republican Party since 1800) featured rather pragmatic and *ad hoc* quintessence – to win within the framework of the great principle and avoid

[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 80

nuisances of voting instability. Moreover, the first political parties and their political leaders failed to establish relevant ties with the ordinary voter (this especially applied to the Federalist Party) and in a way reminded of Olympian gods, who controlled lives of other people but had difficulty addressing them in a broader perspective for splendor of their veiled mountain. In other words, they resembled detached political organizations and encompassed only a small portion of the electorate, thus lacking legitimacy. Also, from an organizational standpoint, the functional cohesion of the national, state, and local parties exhibited much looseness and deficiency. In short, the time of "real" political parties embracing all elements of the Key-Sorauf triad was yet to come. The elitist nature of the Federalist Party eventually precipitated its doom, and the first portent of its decline was the election of 1800, when it irrevocably lost the presidency. The swan-song for the Federalists was the War of 1812, which definitely sealed their fate owing to their previous affiliation with Great Britain. As a consequence, the United States for the first and also last time in its history entered into a one-party era. Short as it was, the Democratic-Republicans soon split into two factions, hence closing the chapter of the first parties.

2.2 Era of Party Fascination

The political parties of the second party system complement the last two stages of party development according to Hoadley's theory, i.e., expansion and institutionalization. Under expansion, we may understand massive penetration of the political party into the life of ordinary citizens to include them firmly into the electoral process, which presupposes the comprehensive creation of local party organizations and the growth of the electorate.[1] Where the first parties remained intrinsically aloof from masses, the second system already brought some fresh air of popularization process, especially the reinforcement and extension of ties between the political party and the voter.

The key political actor who stood behind this party face-lift and, as though by waving of a magic wand, changed the nature of political parties at the end of the 1820s, was no lesser a man than the ambitious New York politician and future

[1] Hoadley, John F. 1980: "The Emergence of Political Parties in Congress, 1789-1803," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 74, p. 757

president of the United States, Martin van Buren. The unity of the Democratic-Republicans found itself shattered in 1824 since heavy struggles over nomination of the presidential candidate drove a fatal wedge into the heart of this party. However, the unsuccessful contestant, Andrew Jackson, showed his determination and responded by creating a mighty tandem with Martin Van Buren, the „Little Magician" from Kinderhook, with the purpose of winning the election of 1828.[1] Hence, out of ashes of the Democratic-Republican Party, Martin Van Buren constructed his *opus magnum* - a phenomenon of the mass-based party, one which survived in the American political world for more than one hundred years, and definitely buried the former peculiar political concept that blended elitism and democracy. Originally, Van Buren intended to erect a brand new form of political party on the foundations of the old party, yet the achieved result exhibited great differences separating both types of political parties.[2] If we should apply the Key-Sorauf triad, then the mass-based party entailed an unprecedented boom of voter mobilization, hence developing the party-in-the-electorate, while the first parties confined themselves only to the government. In addition, Van Buren's Democratic Party encompassed middle classes and its rise was deliberately elaborated as distinct from the aristocratic and casual character of the first parties.

Several important political, social, and historical factors enabled and accelerated the birth of the mass-based party: democratization of the presidential election with inherent massive extension of suffrage, rapid development of communication and transport channels, which made embracement of the political party by masses technically feasible, non-competitive and therefore tedious character of the Era of Good Feelings, immense popularity of Andrew Jackson as opposed to John Quincy Adams, possibility to integrate cognate factions into one identifying whole etc. Van Buren's plan for voter mobilization proved to be extremely successful, and the presidential election turnout more than doubled from 26.5 % in 1824 to 56.3 % in 1828 owing to skillful organization of election

[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 99
[2] Ibid, p.124

campaigns including bonfires, parades, markets, rallies, partisan newspapers and pamphlets.[1]

Naturally, the *conditio sine qua non* for some successful voter mobilization and consolidation of voter preferences is party institutionalization or, in other words, the development of the party-as-organization. The Democratic Party established several structural innovations such as the caucus, more frequent utilization of conventions, and integration of state and local factional organizations.[2] The caucus served as the organizational central brain of the party as its goal was to raise resources, coordinate partisan activities and financially support state and local political organizations willing to join the cause. A part and parcel of popularization of the political party was frequent employment of conventions, not a novelty in American politics but rather a theretofore "ostracized" political instrument, the main purpose of which focused on the selection of candidates and articulation of policy initiatives. The state and local organizations functioned as a communicator of the political message directly to the voter and guarantor of its correct interpretation, and they were integrated on the basis of the so-called strategic parties hypothesis, i.e., preference was given to those that brought the greatest benefit, whether economic or political that resulted in heterogeneity of party organization, varying from state to state.[3] As a reward for their loyalty, the individual party organizations were provided with relatively high degree of independence, thereby establishing a relatively long-lasting precedent of party decentralization.

Because of his pronounced political stances, Andrew Jackson started to gradually lose his unifying quality and, as a result, he became a *persona non grata* within certain political circles. Such political disproportions generated many incentives for the constitution of a new partisan body. Indeed, the political "avatar" of dissatisfied cries soon appeared in the form of the Whig Party, thereby reinstating the classical two-party system. Unfortunately, the very establishment of the Whig Party, bound initially only by opposition to Andrew Jackson and with only

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[1] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 7

[2] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 6

[3] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 112

few other things to offer, was greatly hampered by its inherently unsystematic and hasty character. Consequently, its candidates ran on a loose platform with hardly any organizational mechanisms how to mobilize the electorate, thus failing to secure the victory in the 1836 elections.[1] Nonetheless, by gradual implementation of the structural and mobilization principles of the Democratic Party, the Whig Party quickly became rooted in the American party system, which culminated in snatching the 1840 presidential election.

The emergence of the highly competitive second two-party system, augmented by vast expansion of the party-as-organization and the party-in-the-electorate, resulted in extremely high electoral turn-out with straight-ticket voting being the regularly recurring case, which means that the electorate would consistently retain its partisan preferences with only little respect to presented issues or personalities. In an unprecedented manner, the affiliated political party ran extremely deep under the skin of the voter, which naturally became reflected in high conservatism of party identification. According to Silbey, "their [citizens'] commitment to the parties moved beyond instrumentalist calculation of the rewards of specific policies or the benefits to be gained from particular candidates," which implies that the electorate worshipped more the idea of a political party than its concrete content.[2] If one should label the political mood of this period, political idealism would be a good choice, i.e., tendency to ignore particularities for idolization of the whole. As a result, political parties hyperbolically found themselves in a certain state of mythologization, and the political λόγος (logos – reason or logic) was slightly shifted to the background. From this perspective, the phenomena of high voter turn-out and straight-ticket voting of this period reflect skillful exploitation of the artificially created *mythos* or cult of political parties due to the unprecedented ubiquitous machinery of partisan institutionalization. Where the first parties failed (since they were too detached from the electorate to create a cult), the second parties succeeded owing to their extensive approximation to masses. In other words, affiliation with political parties

[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 123

[2] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 8

virtually acquired a sacred dimension in this period, and the antagonism of the first party system was therefore definitely overridden by ingrained adoration.

The political contests in the second party system displayed remarkable tightness. The utmost goal of both parties was to mark off their electoral territory and draw a thick line between their promoted policies. Each party carefully defended and extended its *mythos* by presentation of its unique and *unclichéd* political program and ostensibly manifested its superiority in relation to the rival party, as, naturally, only original political cults can build up loyalties of its devotees. The obsessive need of political parties to be different is illustrated by the following utterance in the Louisville Journal that claims that parties were "as opposite to each other as light and darkness, as knowledge and ignorance."[1] As we can see, political parties really prospered in this era.

2.3 Era of Party Manipulation

Both political parties had established an important structural mechanism when their members were unconditionally subordinated to the cause of the whole partisan body, hence securing that no faction, region, or politicians could become dominant and promote their interests to the detriment of other party constituents. The purpose of the so-created intersectional alliance was self-evident – to knit heterogeneous components together by means of commonly shared partisan principles and to avoid possible ideological splits within the party with the implicit goal of keeping the divisive issue of slavery off the party agenda.[2]

However, in the 1850s, the rising anti-slavery sentiments could not longer be smothered, throwing political parties into a highly dilemmatic situation. In the classical rational scenario, the appearance of a highly divisive dominant issue in a two-party system inherently forces political parties to polarize and to take a definite stance since slavery subsumed the function of the "great principle" from the first party system, i.e., the generation of political incentives that demand partisan responses. Nevertheless, political parties did not follow this rational scenario. They

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[1] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 7

[2] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 126

persisted in maintaining the intersectional alliance, thereby casting aside the pragmatic solution to the problem arisen. Such passive reaction on the part of political parties created political disequilibrium, with one ideological side of the dominant issue left vacant, which paved the way for the creation of the Republican Party. By the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, the Democratic Party shifted closer to the pro-slavery side while the Whig Party remained deeply divided over this issue along regional lines and kept on occupying the median position, which basically sealed its fate. Aldrich comes with yet another explanation of the decline of the Whig Party – theory of ambitious politicians.[1] With the devastating loss in the 1853 elections, some northern politicians started to desert the Whig Party because they did not believe in its future ability to saturate their political ambitions. Rather, they switched to the Republican Party, which they perceived as a more viable mechanism to achieve office. As a consequence, the decline of the Whig Party was invigorated by yet another political value totally unassociated with the ideological nature of slavery – pragmatic careerism of aspiring politicians.

It might seem that the excesses of the late ante-bellum era with its intrinsic unprecedented upheaval of partisan loyalties inevitably should herald an end to the deep-rooted *mythos* of political parties, and their unchallenged reign over the political processes should begin to crumble. However, such a scenario proved unfounded and a little bit premature. The substitution of the Whig Party for the Republican Party was purely of a mechanical character, without serious structural consequences for the whole party system. To use a metaphor, one inconvenient political gladiator was forced to depart unwillingly from the arena of political battles and a more popular one entered, even though the essence of the arena and style of fight remained the same as such. As Silbey puts it: "when the smoke cleared after series of intense voter shifts, after the death of one party and the rise of another, the essential structure of American politics remained largely as before."[2] The decline of the Whig Party, per se, symbolized merely retribution for its impotence of pragmatic action and dubious perseverence on conservation of status quo in spite of existence of heavy stimuli for partisan polarization. As a

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[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 136

[2] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 9

result, political parties learned an important lesson - non-responsiveness to salient issues entailed degradation of the established *mythos* and eventuated serious disintegration of party identification. The long-term endurance of bipartisan hegemony of the Democratic and Republican parties well illustrates their enlightenment from past party development and their ability to absorb in a sponge-like manner emerging matters of political concern, thereby greatly confining space for permanent success of the third parties.

Out of the components of the Key-Sorauf triad, only the party-in-the-electorate underwent turmoil; the party system experienced unparalleled shift in voters' commitments and, subsequently, due to the after-effects of the Civil War and sectionalism, "ostracization" of the Republican Party in the South became an important feature of the then political climate. As far as the party-as-organization is concerned, the political parties formally remained the same with only petty changes in their structural mechanisms and overall image. Primarily, the Democrats and Republicans concentrated their effort upon enforcing party loyalties and linking their voters with significance of new issues and conflicts. Although the United States experienced a turbulent change from an agricultural society into a highly industrialized one in this era, the political parties seemed to remain virtually untouched by this phenomenon. The Republican and Democratic parties still continued to "confront each other in the well disciplined, predictable phalanxes of people deeply committed to powerful, closely competitive institutions designed to fulfill group and individual needs."[1]

With respect to the party-in-government, it exhibited substantial strength with average party unity in the Congress reaching its all-time peak in this epoch. This was caused by an unparalleled hierarchization of legislative power in the 1880s. Centralization incentives came predominantly from one strong politician, Republican Speaker "Boss" Thomas Reed, who effectively monopolized and usurped control over proceedings in the House of Representatives by implementing partially autocratic and coercive structural mechanisms. For example, he managed to "appoint all chairs and all members of committees for both parties, virtually control the flow of legislation through committees and

[1] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed

maintained equally great control over the agenda on the floor itself."[1] As a consequence, the majority party found it much easier to hammer out its proposed policies, and the power of the minority party to block legislation was greatly impaired. Reed's centralizing practices were later taken up by "Czar" Joseph Cannon, who further reinforced the position of Speaker by granting access to the most important committees only to those politicians who exhibited deep loyalties to his cause, thus ruthlessly ostracizing the enemies within his party.

Paradoxically enough, whereas the whole country experienced its Gilded Age after the Civil War, American political parties enjoyed their Golden Age as their cult reached its zenith in this period, which can be illustrated by the enormously high voter turn-out in presidential elections (ranging between 70 to 80 percent, including the highest voter turnout in the history of the United States in 1876 – 81.8 %). So as to enhance their manipulative skills, political parties developed new forms for concentration of political power such as urban political machines and patronage-based party organizations that played a vital role in mobilization of voters on the election day, often even utilizing foul means. Indeed, the 1880s and 1890s witnessed a massive growth of fraudulent activities, including bribing and intimidating voters or falsifying and miscounting of votes.[2] It is obvious that often illiterate and uneducated electorate could hardly resist the omnipresent *mythos* of nearly omnipotent political parties. Yet, their duopoly over political processes should soon encounter its first disruptions.

2.4 Era of Party Democratization

The fourth party system triggered an inconspicuous and gradual trend that utterly changed the function, role and structure of political parties – they started to lose their hitherto impeccable and sacred glamor. This process ironically was brought forth by the over-accumulation or consolidation of power within their hands. As a result, the political parties of the Gilded Age succumbed excessively to delusion of their own omnipotence, utterly lost sense of self-reflection, and even put into practice massive electoral fraud that otherwise pertains only to

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[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.227

[2] Argesinger, Peter H. 1985: "New Perspectives on Election Fraud in Gilded Age, "*Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 100, p. 675

authoritarian regimes, which could not be left without response. In other words, the political parties of the Gilded Age had moved too far from the classical conception of democracy and fair contest over popular votes – their professional organizations, including party bosses, wielded unprecedented influence and started to misuse it drastically. Naturally, every self-complacency has its limits, so even the political parties experienced their Icarian fall. They too lost any contact with reality and strove to approach the sun without realizing the possibility of being scorched.

Already the 1880s witnessed the rise of alternative political forces in the form of third parties (especially the Greenbacks), which openly criticized arrogant political behavior of major political parties and initiated the introduction of the so-called Australian ballot (i.e. provisions for secret voting instead of party tickets), which can be viewed as the first omen of the future weakening of party organizations. Suddenly, more and more people started to show their deep dissatisfaction because "party control had led to rampant corruption and government inefficiency."[1]

The negativism related to major political parties in the 1880s and 1890s became translated into Progressive reforms at the onset of the 20th century, reforms which aimed principally, according to Richard Jensen, at banishing "all forms of traditionalism – boss control, corrupt practices, big business interventions in politics, 'ignorant' voting and excessive hands of hack politicians."[2] The Progressives could no longer tolerate the degenerate and iniquitous status quo of the then political culture, and they wanted above all to cure its intrinsic ills, thus breaking the artificial duopoly of major political parties over political processes. Indeed, never since the Progressive reforms have the political parties regained such a strong position as they had enjoyed in the Gilded Age. Essentially, the Progressive reforms helped to approximate two, theretofore relatively independent, components of the Key-Sorauf triad (the party-as-organization and party-in-the-electorate) by integrating the ordinary citizen into the partisan machinery. These reforms included introduction of direct senatorial primaries and

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[1] Beck, Paul Allen, and Hershey, Marjorie Randon. 2001. *Party Politics in America*, 7th Ed., Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., p.21

[2] Jensen, Richard. 1978. "Party Coalitions and the Search for Modern Values, 1820-1970." In Lipset, Seymour Martin, ed., *Emerging Coalitions in American Politics*. San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, p. 27

presidential primaries in the states, reformation of national conventions, or enactment of laws defining and limiting party organizations. They had two immediate consequences, which irrevocably changed the architecture of the party-as-organization – first, they substantially limited the party's privilege to select candidates and, second, definition of policy issues stopped being an exquisite matter of partisan arbitrariness.[1] Ultimately, Progressivism helped to implement the "democratic ethos" into partisan organizations as they have become "more public, more decentralized, and more active at the grassroots."[2]

A fresh breeze of the Progressive idealism also left a considerable imprint on the face of the party-in-government as the common creed of the 19th century politics regarding subordination of politicians to the cause of the party experienced its first heavy blow in the 1910s. The power over control of procedures and personal constitution of the individual committees was wrested away from party bosses and given to senior members of the Congress, a phenomenon, which substantially undermined partisan influence over legislative agenda and inherently disrupted the hegemonic and "sacred" position of the Speaker from Cannon's era. Consequently, parties "lost control over committee assignments and the Rules Committee, and their ability to reward or punish individual members also declined."[3] One can easily deduce that such a type of reforms enabled creation of new autonomous structures with a relative high degree of independence within the party, entailing substantial decentralization of the party-in-government.[4]

The Progressive Era brought yet another dimension to the Key-Sorauf triad that seemingly has only little connection to it. At the beginning of the 20th century, the federal government consolidated its position in a historically unparalleled manner as the idea of *laissez-faire* economy had worn itself out and the traditional role of a passive and non-interfering state had become an anachronism. The expanding power of government overtook some hitherto exclusive competences of political parties (e.g. the domain of social welfare), which implied drastic limitation

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[1] Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 12

[2] Beck, Paul Allen, and Marjorie Randon Hershey. 2001. *Party Politics in America*, 7th Ed., Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., p.22

[3] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 5

[4] Schlesinger, Joseph A.1985. "The New American Political Party," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 79, p. 1167

of partisan appeals and consequently entailed the collapse of the patronage system. As Silbey puts it, "the Progressives successfully promoted the growth of government power and a shift in focus from generalized, distributive policies to new regulative channels, which demanded technical budgeting, and an ability to deal with sophisticated control mechanisms – rather than more generalist negotiating talents of party leaders."[1] In other words, Progressivism became an incubator of technocratic and bureaucratic apparatuses and impersonal decision-making where party loyalties enjoyed only little relevance. Political parties simply lost their monopoly over execution of certain policies and, as a result, other channels arose how to shape governmental products in the form of non-partisan pressure groups. Daniel T. Rodgers calls this phenomenon "the explosion of scores of aggressive, politically active pressure groups into the space left space left by recession of traditionally political loyalties," which naturally becomes transposed into further attack on the party-as-organization.[2]

However, as I have already noted, the process of party transformation was distinguished by substantial sluggishness and territorial discrepancies. Whereas some regions quickly adapted to the political requirements and patterns of the new era, others looked backwards and steadfastly clung to the out-dated world of urban political machines and deep-rooted political loyalties. This schizophrenia of American politics of the fourth party system was further invigorated by the New Deal Era, when political parties, in a way, regressed to their 19th century status as a huge wave of recurring inveterate partisan loyalties appeared. To sum up, the 1890s to the 1960s were above all a transition period between two utterly distinct political worlds, between a mass-based party characterized by rigid electorate and straight-ticket voting and a "democratized" contemporary party marked by flexible electorate and split-ticket voting.

2.5 Conclusion

Above all, the 19th century was the era of a great turbulence in the development of American political parties. Political parties appeared, enjoyed their

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[1] quoted in Silbey, Joel H. 2002. "From 'Essential to the Existence of Our Institutions' to 'Rapacious Enemies of Honest and Responsible Government': The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties, 1790-2000." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 12

[2] Ibid

moment of glory and than disappeared phantomlike, and it was not until the 1860s when the party system finally became stabilized. At first, political parties presented rather an anathema to the nation, but the antipathy and suspicion gradually attenuated and, subsequently, political parties even paradoxically became an icon of blind veneration on the part of voters. David simply became a Goliath, a timorous orphan of the first party system became perhaps too confident and self-centered giant of the third party system. However, most importantly, an aristocratic abstraction encompassing only one segment of the Key-Sorauf triad became a highly organized democratic mechanism with a wide appeal to masses, hence synthetizing all three components, i.e., party-in-government, party-as-organization, and party-in-the-electorate.

Nevertheless, if one should be more precise, the "democratic" expansion into the electorate was rather of a "pseudodemocratic" or "bastard aristocratic" character, as the 19th century and also the first half of the 20th century functioned rather as a medieval age of partisanship, with voters being rather meek and obedient followers of party commands and dogmas. The relative scarcity of informational sources enabled political parties to "enchant" and manipulate voters, very much resembling a cult. As a result, political parties were largely non-responsive to the electorate, hence still latently preserving their elitist character from the first party system. This basically shapes a unifying feature for the second, third, fourth, and, as we will see, also for the fifth party system, although Progressivism managed to partially erode their dominance. It was ironically the Goliath-like dimension of political parties that eventuated their relative fall in the fourth party system. The unprecedented over-accumulation of political power within the hands of political parties created a false idea of invincibility in them, which is incompatible with any democratic system and no wonder that it incited a small revolution within certain liberal circles of the American society in the form of Progressivism. As a result, political parties learned their lesson at the beginning of the 20th century, yet it had taken another while before things started to *really* change.

3. Party-in-Government

The New Deal realignment not only changed the gravity of political power in favor of the Democratic Party but, more importantly, it inconspicuously sowed the seeds of later partisan upheaval of the 1960s. The Democratic Party once and for all stepped out of its southern shadow and massively expanded to Northern urban areas, which entailed unexampled heterogenization and diversification of its individual constituencies. As a result, little by little, the Democrats started to shed their purely rural and agriculture orientation and increasingly began to attract metropolitan voters from industrial regions.[1] Naturally, such a multitude of contradictory interests implied considerable tensions and divisions within the partisan structures as one can hardly assume that a southern politician from rural areas would share the same system of beliefs and preferences as a northern politician from urban areas. Such irreconcilable differences included antithetical views on welfare programs, governmental role in economy but, ultimately, on the question of civil rights. As V.O.Key, Jr. put it in his classical work *Southern Politics in State and Nation*: "In its grand outlines the politics of the South revolves around the position of the Negro."[2] This salient issue inflicted much controversy upon the Democratic Party as, on the one hand, the southern Democrats still intrinsically clung to the doctrine of subjugation of blacks but, on the other hand, there existed an important share of African-American Democratic electorate in the north, which purposefully pushed extension of civil rights on party's agenda. As a result, in the 1940s, the Congress experienced the rise of a steady autonomous voting block within the Democratic Party – "an island, entire of itself" – in the form of the southern Democrats.

With a certain hyperbole, the period between the 1940s and 1980s can be termed a "tripartisan era" as the party-unity index and index of cohesion of the Democratic Party in the Congress reached its historical nadir and the southern Democrats very frequently revolted against their parent party and often formed the so-called conservative coalition with the Republican Party in order to block any liberal initiatives on the part of the northern wing of the Democratic Party. The

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[1] Stonecash, Jeffrey M. et al. 2003. *Diverging Parties. Social Change, Realignment, and Party Polarization.* Boulder: Westview Press, p. 36

[2] Key, V.O., Jr. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation.* New York: Knopf, p.5

ideological split became so prominent that Lubell even aptly labels this phenomenon as "a civil war inside the Democratic Party."[1] Therefore, this chapter will explore how the revolt against the Speaker from the 1910s facilitated the rise of the southern Democrats, how the conservative coalition influenced and shaped the functioning of the party-in-government, and what institutional mechanisms were developed by the Democratic Party in order to restore its unity in the 1970s.

3.1 Scholarly Reflections

As we have already learned, the post-Progressive Era Congress distinguished itself by a substantial diffusion of power, which resulted from dismantling the hierarchical structure from the Speaker Reed and Cannon eras. Majorities on the House of Representatives floor were no longer formed by the principle of subordination of the political actors to the cause of the whole party but rather one utilized concession-making mechanisms, which might, at least from certain perspectives, remotely symbolize regression to factionalism of the pre-party era. As a consequence, the impotence of political parties to automatically win majorities led many political scientists to the assumption that the political parties had declined. At the beginning of the 1950s, a group of prominent political scientists (e.g. E. E. Schattschneider, V.O.Key, Jr. et al.) published the 1950 Report of the American Political Science Association's Committee on Political Parties entitled *Towards a More Responsible Party System* which stated that "either major party, when in power, is ill-equipped to organize its members in the legislative and executive branches into a government held together and guided by the party program."[2] The Report also defined two basic prerequisites that should be met to achieve responsible party government: "An effective system requires, first, that the parties are able to bring fourth programs to which they commit themselves, and, second, that the parties possess sufficient internal cohesion to carry out these programs."[3]

The gloomy prospect about the future of American political parties even intensified in the 1960s and led a journalist David S. Broder to write a book called

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[1] Lubell, Samuel. 1956. *The Future of American Politics*. Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, p. 9
[2] Committee on Political Parties. American Political Science Association.1950a. "Towards a more Responsible Party System." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 44. Supplement, p.5
[3] Ibid, p. 1

The Party's Over, where he *inter alia* expressed his fears of "further fracturing of the already enfeebled party structure" in the near future.[1] Luckily, as it later became apparent, his worries did not materialize, and the period between the 1920s and 1970s functioned only as a mere vacuum era of search for alternatives to the rigidly hierarchical 19th century party-in-government under the new changing political conditions. In short, political parties, especially the Democratic Party, were simply not institutionally prepared for massive democratization resulting from the Progressive Era reforms.

3.2 Incentives for Reforms

The frustration of the inability to reach a coherent voting block culminated during the era of House Speaker Sam Rayburn where "leadership usually had no choice but to engage in the painful process of assembling shifting majorities behind particular bills through bargaining and maneuver."[2] Above all, Rayburn strove to curtail conflict, preferring peaceful and permissive compromise of the proposed legislative agenda, which naturally became reflected in disparagement of the function of the party leaders and disproportionately high accumulation of political power within the hand of the individual committees. In other words, "Rayburn was far more inclined to accept the defeat of party programs than to risk his influence and prestige in battles to attain them."[3] Naturally, the diffusion of power created more than a positive environment for creation of alternative political groupings which could easily challenge and block mainstream policy initiatives. If we add growing partisan cleavages and contradictory political preferences within the Democratic Party, then one can perceive the occurrence of a conservative coalition as inevitable. Between the beginning of the 1950s and the reform era of the mid-1960s, the conservative coalition formed on about one vote in four and the index of cohesion dropped under 60 percent for both parties.[4] Aldrich terms the situation as a "divided majority party," the scenario when "northern Democrats are

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[1] Broder, David S. 1971. *The Party's Over. The Failure of Politics in America*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, p. 251

[2] Cooper, Joseph, and Brady, David H. 1981. "Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 75, p. 419

[3] Ibid, p. 421

[4] Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1985. "The New American Political Party, " *American Political Science Review*, vol. 79, p. 1162

fairly homogeneous, and distinct from relatively homogeneous southern Democrats, who are in turn distinct from relatively homogeneous Republicans."[1] Consequently, the Democratic Party faced two immense challenges – how to assure homogenization of partisan preferences and how to structurally create a favorable environment for consequential policies based upon stable majorities.

Rohde identifies the beginning of reform attempts within the Congress as 1959 when the Democratic Study Group (DSG) was established.[2] The primary goal of this organization, composed mainly of liberal northern Democrats, was to conceive institutional mechanisms for restoring Democratic unity within the party-in-government. One of the leading protagonists of the DSG, Richard Bolling, in his book *House out of Order*, suggested basic remedies for curing the ills of House Democrats and attenuation of the influence of conservatives, who, according to him, "subverted the objectives and defied the spirit of the Democratic Party as a whole."[3] He called for restriction of the seniority system with subsequent more representative allocation of committee seats, enhancement of the role of the Speaker under supervision of the caucus, and reinforcement of members' commitments to party leadership.[4] That is, he wanted to merge the centralized and hierarchical model from the Cannon era with simultaneously increased accountability and responsibility of the individual politicians.

3.3 Reform Era

The stimulus that finally impelled the Democratic Party to act was the second half of the 1960s when Democrats received fairly high electoral support but their power to win majorities was further debilitated because southern committee leaders utilized the power vested in them by the seniority system to block the proposed agenda. The reforms primarily rested on institutional proposals by the DSG and bore much resemblance to theoretical conclusions of Richard Bolling. Rohde distinguishes basically three tracks of reform: curtailment of powers of

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[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 209
[2] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 7
[3] Bolling, Richard. 1966. *House out of Order.* New York: Dutton, p. 237
[4] Ibid, p. 238

committee chairmen, strengthening of the Democratic Party and its leadership, and establishment of collective control of power.[1]

The first group of reforms aimed at further fragmentation and redistribution of political power from committees to subcommittees, a phenomenon which may seem rather irrational at first glance but it very inconspicuously inflicted an immensely powerful blow to senior southern Democratic committee chairmen. First, significant reforms were executed in 1971 when the Democratic Caucus adopted recommendations made by its Hansen Committee. Among other things, they limited the power of the caucus when voting for committee chairs, and subcommittees became more independent of committees as for financial and staff resources.[2] The major innovation came in 1973 with the so-called "subcommittee bill of rights," which further stripped committee chairs of many privileges. Subcommittee chairmen were no longer appointed by committees, rather they were selected on the principle of seniority. Each subcommittee gained a specific jurisdiction and all legislation referred to a particular committee automatically became subject to review of the appropriate subcommittee. Moreover, each subcommittee was provided with own budget, and the subcommittee chairman acquired the privilege of choosing his staff.[3] Also, in 1973, it became a rule to vote for committee chairmen in the caucus with a secret ballot if so requested.

The second group of reforms centered on centralization and enhancement of political party strength in the policy-making processes. The first inchoative step in this area involved institutionalization of The Steering and Policy Committee under chairmanship of the Speaker in 1973, its main task being to deliver policy initiatives to the Caucus for appraisal.[4] Further reforms substantially reinforced the role of the Speaker - in 1975, the Speaker was vested with the important institutional privilege to appoint the chair of the Rules Committee and all its members with approval of the caucus. This again impaired conservative power to block the party agenda, and in 1977, the Speaker, at the House of Representatives, was empowered with the right to set time limits on committees

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[1] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 20

[2] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 230

[3] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 22

[4] Ibid, p. 24

when considering the bills.[1] Finally, firm ratios of Democrats to Republicans were established on committees and all subcommittees.

The third category of reforms dealt with greater accountability of party elites to rank-and-filer members of Congress and reinforcement of political party as a collectivity. Some structural provisions in this area were incorporated into the foregoing subcommittee bill of rights, which *inter alia* introduced the requirement of a Democratic caucus for each subcommittee. Special attention was paid to the four most important committees – Appropriations, Budget, Rules, and Ways and Means. For example, new privileges were bestowed upon the Caucus; it began to vote on the ratification of Appropriations subcommittee chairmen, to elect chairmen of the Budget Committee, to ratify all Democratic nominations to the Rules Committee etc.[2] Also, the Ways and Means Committee lost its privilege of making committee assignments and it was augmented by 50 percent so as to more represent the demographic composition of the Caucus. The ultimate goal of this reform surge was self-evident; it was the creation of a favorable institutional environment for intra-party homogenization of partisan preferences and an attenuation of the political power of elements incompatible with party's predominant policy positions. On the surface, these reforms may seem contradictory under certain perspectives but they effectively put an end to the political disequilibrium connected with excessive unipolarization of political power as it was transferred from committees to both superior and inferior hierarchical structures. Consequently, the era of revolt against the Speaker smoothly passed into the epoch of revolt against the committee chairs, which greatly undermined the power of the southern conservatives and helped to better reflect the positions of the party majority.

According to Rohde, these reforms institutionally prepared the ground for the creation of a consensual environment, which is a fundamental prerequisite for responsible political party to be operative; "there would be party responsibility *only if* there were widespread policy agreement among House Democrats."[3] This

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[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 231

[2] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 27-28

[3] Ibid, p. 31

postulation forms the very basis of his concept of the *conditional party government*, which is defined as follows:

> The obligation to support party positions, moreover was not intended to apply equally to all members. There was no intention to create a system of party responsibility like those that operate in parliamentary democracies, imposing on every member the requirement to support every party position. Instead obligation was to be imposed on members "who held positions of power" – party leaders, committee chairmen, members of prestige committees. In effect, seeking and accepting positions of influence within the committee or party leadership meant accepting an implied contract: such leaders were obliged to support – or at least not block – policy initiatives on which there was a party consensus. If these were violated, members risked the loss of their influential positions. Party support was also expected from representatives who aspired to these positions. Taken together, these elements define the system that we have termed conditional party government. Committee and party leaders were to be responsible to the members, not vice versa. Members were to be free to pursue their own goals within a generally decentralized system.[1]

Above all, the conditional party government generates considerable incentives for aspiring politicians on a *quid pro quo* basis. If one wants to occupy a prestigious position within the party hierarchy in the House of Representatives, one must accept responsibility for successful promotion of the party agenda within his or her operational range. In other words, the party distributes political rewards in exchange for loyal behavior and support of party positions. In the scope of the conditional party government, Barbara Sinclair discerns three major impacts of the reforms on the structure of the party-in-government: first, negative sanctions from the Cannon era are substituted with positive inducements when leaders and rank-file-members become partners and the rigid superiority/inferiority system is broken. Second, the leadership can utilize much more efficient and systematic tools to structure the choice situation of the rank-and-file members than in the Rayburn era. Third, and perhaps most importantly, a historically unparalleled number of politicians is included into the very process of coalition-building, a process further reinforced by extensive implementation of task forces and ad hoc groups in the 1980s, thus enabling junior members to participate in preparation of specific legislation.[2] As a consequence, the controlled unipolarization of political

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[1] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 166

[2] Sinclair, Barbara. 1983. *Majority Leadership in the U.S. House*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p. 28

power from the pre-Progressive Era and its subsequent uncontrolled multipolarization was replaced by its controlled multipolarization which inheres upon extensive integration of party members in policy matters.

One would expect that the implementation of reforms focused on reinforcement of the party-in-government became projected to increase party cohesion. However, the contrary was reality as the process of assimilation of partisan preferences exhibited sluggishness. In the 1967-1982 era, the number of party votes (proportion of votes when a majority of Democrats opposes a majority of Republicans) averaged 36 percent compared with 49 percent in the 1955-1966 period.[1] The turning point as far as party governance is concerned came in 1982 when party voting and party unity scores began their gradual but steady rise, and the impact of reforms finally manifested itself *in extenso*. The explanation of this phenomenon is simple. The reforms were tailored to the scenario of homogenous partisan preferences, thus the most important *if* of Rohde's conditional party government was not yet satisfied at the end of the 1970s due to still prevalent heterogeneity of the Democratic constituencies.

The underlying factor that eventuated the homogenization of partisan constituencies was adoption of the Voting Rights Act, which led to massive enfranchisement of the blacks in the South. Hence the Act irrevocably pushed the Democratic Party to the liberal side of the political spectrum and the Republican Party to its conservative side. The issue of civil rights drastically changed the electoral map of American politics, and it eventuated partisan realignment in the South and Northeast as these historical bastions of the Democratic and Republican Party suddenly started to favor the rival party. Conservative southern Democrats and liberal northeastern Republicans were simply no longer able "to hang on in their historic constituencies" and, as a result, "the centrist elements in both parties shrank in numbers."[2] For example, the southern Democratic membership in the House of Representatives was 40 percent during the 1953-1958 period, then it sank to 33 percent between 1959 and 1964, further to 30 percent in the period from 1965 to 1974, and to 25 percent during the 1975-1982

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[1] Sinclair, Barbara. 2002 "Congressional Parties and the Policy Process." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed., p. 211

[2] Fenno, Richard F. Jr.. 2000. *Congress at the Grassroots, Representational Change in the South, 1970-1998*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, p. 151

period.[1] Naturally, this phenomenon projected itself in the homogenization of partisan preferences and, as Fenno puts it, "the two parties became less conflicted internally, but more partisan externally."[2]

Aldrich basically distinguishes three main aspects that further solidified the unity of the Democratic Party and enhanced partisanship at the beginning of the 1980s – Reagan's aggressive conservative fiscal policy, including tax cuts, the loss of the Senate majority and the formation of very low House majority.[3] Consequently, the Democrats were left with only little maneuvering space and they could not afford to act as a non-cohesive group if they wanted to pass their agenda. As a result, the proportion of party votes rose to over 50 percent after the 1982 elections and it averaged 58 percent in the 1990s.[4]

The newly created unity in the Democratic Party reflected itself in the increased frustration in the Republican Party with the impotence to push forward its own agenda. To counter Democratic legislative success, the Republicans copied several structural mechanisms used by the Democratic Party during the reform era such as the strengthening of party leadership and the weakening of the influence of the committee chairmen. The Republican conference, a counterpart of the Democratic Caucus, was given power to ratify the nominations of the committee chairmen and the Republican leader was enabled to nominate the chairman of the Rules Committee and was vested with greater powers with committee assignments.[5] Hence we can say that "the party had become more central to the policy process in the House by the late 1980s" and the Democrats and Republicans started to resemble two distinct phalanxes prepared to battle it out on every presented issue.[6]

Unlike the House of Representatives, the development of the party-in-government in the Senate is a totally different story. Whereas the House needs

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[1] Sinclair, Barbara. 1983. *Majority Leadership in the U.S. House*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p. 6

[2] Fenno, Richard F. Jr.. 2000. *Congress at the Grassroots, Representational Change in the South, 1970-1998*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, p. 151

[3] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 236

[4] Sinclair, Barbara. 2002 "Congressional Parties and the Policy Process." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 211

[5] Sinclair, Barbara. 2002 "The Dream Fulfilled? Party Development in Congress, 1950-2000." In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson., eds., *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p. 128

[6] Ibid

only a simple majority to change its procedural rules, the Senate needs a two thirds majority, which aggravates any institutional initiatives, with only few structural modifications having been implemented in the 1970s, such as change of the cloture rule or enhancement of responsibility of committee chairs to the rank-and-file Senators by instituting the requirement of membership approval votes.[1] The unwillingness of Senators to renounce their own prerogatives follows from the very quintessence of the Senate when Senators, per se, wield much more power than their House counterparts since they can amend large pieces of legislation nearly *ad libitum*. Within the framework of the modern candidate-centered age, this privilege predetermines them to be an appealing object for the media spotlight and, more importantly, for interest groups as they can prove to be influential in a number of political issues, which makes them considerably independent of their parent party and supports entrepreneurial style of their senatorial experience. The individualism of Senators and their autonomy are even magnified by their longer terms and larger constituencies as opposed to Representatives. Consequently, the Senate has ignored the second track of reforms according to Rohde's categorization, i.e. strengthening of party leadership, and the Senate majority leader is denied control over the flow of legislation in contrast to the Speaker of the House. Yet, in spite of its loose hierarchy, the Senate has become more partisan in recent years as party votes amounted to 43 percent in the 1955 - 1990 period and the proportion rose to 57 percent between 1990 and 2000, a phenomenon which can be attributed not only to the increased role of political activists in American politics but also to extensive number of services and resources bestowed upon Senators by political parties.[2] As a consequence, we can say that the present dynamic political environment has facilitated a transformation of the Senate "from an inward-looking, committee- and seniority-dominated institution, in which influence and resources were quite unequally distributed, to an individualist, outward-looking institution with a much more equal distribution of resources."[3]

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[1] Ibid p. 126

[2] Sinclair, Barbara. 2002 "Congressional Parties and the Policy Process." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, p. 226

[3] Sinclair, Barbara. 2002 "The Dream Fulfilled? Party Development in Congress, 1950-2000." In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson., eds., *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas,, p. 125

3.4 Conclusion

Above all, the partisan turmoil from the 1960s and the reforms from the 1970s enabled to harmonize personal and operative preferences of political actors within the party-in-government and move them closer to the median position of the parent party (herewith I mean desired political orientation of the party). Rohde defines the personal preferences as "the legislator's own views on the alternatives available for choice - what he or she would choose if no other influences were present" and the operative preferences as "the preferences that actually govern the voting choice, when all the other forces pressuring the member are taken into account."[1] To put it differently, where personal preferences symbolize the inner will of the political actor devoid of disruptive outer elements, i.e., an internalized coherent set of stances he or she is likely to support under ideal circumstances, operative preferences can change under impact of external factors and represent real voting-decisions for the political actor. The outside forces that exercise influence on operative preferences include political activists, party leaders, and constituencies. During the Cannon Era, operative preferences in most cases coincided with the median position of the party, but frequently contradicted the personal preferences of the particular political actors due to the autocratic and coercive nature of the party-in-government, thus creating consensus within the party only by artificial means. The post-Progressive Era witnessed the harmonization of personal and operative preferences but, simultaneously, it witnessed frequent deviation from the desired median position of the party. The conservative coalition presents a nice example of this phenomenon since the power of many heterogeneous partisan constituencies became superior to party leadership, eventuating a lack of consensus in political parties, especially within the Democratic Party. However, as the constituencies of the individual parties gradually became homogenized as a result of partisan crystallization within the framework of liberal/conservative scale, symbiosis of party and constituency interests occurred. Parties have become more transparent for office-seekers and, as a result, a liberally-oriented politician is more likely to enter the Democratic Party and a conservative-oriented politician is more likely to join the Republican

[1] Rohde, David W.1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 41

Party. The relative uniformity of personal preferences of the political actors reflects itself in establishment of natural consensus within political parties, a prerequisite for responsible party government. The present party-in-government makes personal preferences and operative preferences only rarely antithetical and keeps them in relative propinquity to the median party position.

So, how does the contemporary parties fare more than 50 years after publication of the Report on responsible party government? Are they able to bring fourth programs to which they commit themselves? Beyond doubt, they now convey a much clearer message to the electorate than they did in the 1950s. They no longer overlap in the middle of the political spectrum since they are rather extensively polarized, which increases probability of their commitment to their promoted ideologies. And do they possess sufficient internal cohesion to carry out these programs? Even here, one has to conclude that they exhibit a substantial inner cohesion, which follows from data on voting in the Congress. There may exist certain ideological streams within the parties, but they are located within the basic consensual range of each political party. Hence, with respect to party-in-government, American political parties, after the eras of artificial consensus and missing consensus, have finally reached the era of naturally-created consensus, and they have substantially increased their responsibility.

4 Party-as-Organization

Of the three components of the Key-Sorauf triad, the one that underwent most turbulent changes in the 1960s is the party-as-organization. The vehemence and massiveness of the outer political incentives that appeared in this epoch forced the political parties to submit its deep-rooted structural mechanisms to an in-depth scrutiny and subsequent reassessment, which entailed unprecedented changes in the form, content and principles of the party-as-organization, considered by some as an omen of future possible collapse of the political parties (e.g. Broder in *Party's Over. The Failure of Politics in America*, 1973). Initially, this chapter focuses on the inherent flaws of traditional party organizations established in Van Buren's era, after which it focuses on the factors that triggered the unprecedented proliferation of structural reforms in the 1970s. In addition, it analyzes similarities and differences between the reforms implemented on the part of the two major parties and their immediate consequences. The whole chapter is concluded by a comparative analysis of aspects that distinguish the new candidate-centered era from the traditional party-as-organization, while also assessing present party strength.

4.1 Traditional Party Organization

Green and Herrnson basically classify three major weaknesses inherent in the traditional party-as-organization that was established in 1832. Firstly, the national conventions and national committees predominantly had an *ad hoc* character and served only as "temporary coordinating devices for presidential nominations and campaigns," with an otherwise negligible political impact. Secondly, they were "largely unrepresentative, often nonparticipatory and notoriously nonprogrammatic." Thirdly, party platforms "were largely campaign documents that stated general party principles, but they were rarely useful guidelines for policymaking."[1] Traditionally, the party-as-organization was based upon subjugation of the national party to the needs of local and state

[1] Green, John C. and Paul S. Herrnson. 2002. "Party Development in the Twentieth Century. Laying Foundations for Responsible Party Government?" In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson, eds., *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p. 41

organizations, as the former were to a great extent dependent on financial assistance of the latter. The national party resembled rather a chaotic mosaic of state interests, with little coordination and extensive fragmentation, where each segment enjoyed perhaps excessive freedom. In his classical work *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*, V.O. Key, Jr. even noted that "no nationwide organization exists...Rather, each party consists of a working coalition of state and local parties."[1] As though magically, state organizations remained virtually untouched by the flow of time and succeeded in artificial conserving of the confederative character of the entire partisan system for more than one hundred years. Accordingly, the local and state organizations held uncontested monopoly over the nomination processes, which reflected itself in their inherent elitist nature, with vital decisions being frequently made in smoke filled-rooms by a closed circle of party regulars.

The mechanism, which Marshall terms as the brokered convention system, survived even the menace of the Progressive surge during the 1910s when reformers tried to enfeeble the power of party bosses by heavy implementation of the system of direct presidential primary elections.[2] However, the party regulars managed to curb and even diminish the popularization of presidential primary elections by arguing that primaries undermined party unity, enhanced factionalism and were characterized by low-voter participation and high cost of campaigning. As a result, in 1935, only 14 presidential primary elections were held by the Democratic Party and 12 by the Republican Party compared to 20 by both parties in 1916.[3] Hence the monopoly of party leadership over the selection of presidential candidates remained nearly unaffected by Progressivism and the system of conventions and caucuses continued to prevail. A presidential candidate still did not need to seek support from grassroots party members, and he was likely to succeed by "assembling a core of committed supporters, then winning over other sympathetic or like-minded party leaders and uncommitted politicos" and wait for the "bandwagon effect" to do its job among the delegates during the convention.[4] As a result, the presidential nomination process preserved its elitist and

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[1] Key, V.O., Jr. 1964. *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, 6th ed , New York:Crowell, p. 315
[2] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 22
[3] Crotty, William, and John S. Jackson III. 1981. *Presidential Primaries and Nominations*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, pp. 16-19
[4] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 29

aristocratic nature with rank-and-file party members playing only infinitesimal role in it.

Naturally, such artificial perseverence of estrangement from the masses generated much antagonism and agitation within the electorate and, as a result, cries for more responsible parties became a common American reality phenomenon. What simmered throughout the nation for a long time revealed itself in its full nakedness in the 1960s. The social turmoils of this era irrevocably changed the ingrained mechanisms within the party-as-organization and produced the rise of a brand new system in presidential nominations – the system of popular appeal.[1] In a sense, the tumultuous 1960s finished what the Progressive Era had started, i.e. radical reassessment of the relationship between the grassroots party membership and party leadership. It also opened presidential selection procedures to the general public.

The first portent of the future attack on rigid party mechanisms was the rise of liberal amateur activists within the Democratic Party in the 1950s, activists who started to impugn the ostensibly ossified features inherent in the party-as-organization, such as patronage, balanced tickets, and party loyalty.[2] According to them, the ideological orientation of a candidate had to be unconditionally superior to partisan devotion or social and regional background. Democratic activists gained considerable support in northern metropolitan areas, and they seriously undermined the position of the local party regulars. However, the first systematic intervention in the selection of presidential candidates on the part of party activists first appeared in the Republican Party when they organized state by state to support conservative Arizona U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater in defiance to more moderate elements within the GOP.[3] Although he suffered a devastating defeat in the subsequent presidential elections, his example demonstrated that there might be an electoral alternative to the strictly partisan one.

4.2 Antecedents of Democratic Path of Reform

The incentive that definitely buried the concept of the brokered election system came in 1968 when the Democratic Party was stricken by a serious inner

[1] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p.32
[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid, p.33

crisis resulting from quarrels over the presidential candidate. Due to the dubious results of the Vietnam conflict, two distinct antithetical phalanxes arose within the ranks of the Democratic Party - one group, formed by the party elite, preferred continuity in U.S. foreign policy and supported President Lyndon B. Jonhson's candidacy while the other, united by deep anti-war sentiments, centered U.S. Senator Eugene McCarthy (D-MN). The announcement of presidential candidacy by McCarthy generated a large stir on the part of the anti-war political activists, including an unprecedented number of students, and he soon became a serious rival to Lyndon Johnson despite the rather quixotic beginnings of his campaign.[1] Although Johnson eventually triumphed in the New Hampshire primary by securing 49.6 percent of the vote compared to McCarthy's 41.9, his victory was rather Pyrrhic for several reasons. First, New Hampshire was a relatively conservative state, and second, more importantly, McCarthy received nearly no support from party regulars, had very limited partisan resources and was only assisted by a number of political volunteers.[2] Rather than risking a bitter defeat, Johnson decided to step out of the race in favor of his Vice President Hubert Humphrey. The field of contenders was further enlarged by a U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy (D-NY), whose personality had far greater potential to form electoral coalitions than McCarthy, who attracted a much more heterogeneous group of voters, such as blacks, antimilitarists, the poor and young.[3] Humphrey relied on the support of party elites and his strategy seemed to work well as vast majority of states (namely 35) still chose convention delegates by means of caucuses and conventions, by appointment or by commissions.[4]

The final showdown between the two irreconcilable camps within the Democratic Party took place in the August 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago with an uneasy and strained atmosphere magnified by the assassination of Kennedy. Thousands of demonstrators gathered around in Chicago to vent their frustrations over the Vietnam policies and to protest the non-responsive and rigid practices of the Democratic Party when selecting presidential nominees. The intense public pressure finally bore fruit - in order to appease the

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[1] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p.34
[2] Crotty, William. 1983. *Party Reform*. New York. Longman inc., p. 17
[3] Ibid, p. 19
[4] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 35

antagonized electorate, the Democratic Party finally agreed to create a commission that would consider reforms to the delegate selection process.

4.3 The McGovern-Fraser Commission

Shortly after the 1968 Democratic National Convention, the Democratic Party set up an important rules reform committee led by U.S. Senator George McGovern (D-SD) and later, after his resignation, by Congressman Donald Fraser (D-MN). The McGovern-Fraser Commission produced 18 guidelines concerning modifications to the national Democratic party-as-organization, guidelines categorized by Marshall into three tracks of reform: assurance of public access, prohibition of discrimination, and encouragement of grassroots control.[1]

The first group of reforms concerned those state organizations that did not employ primaries and that imposed restrictions on rank-and-file members in the delegate selection procedures. All fees associated with serve as a delegate or attending the selection meetings were to be decreased or removed completely, and the whole delegation process was to become much more transparent. The second track of proposals was focused on enhancement of the role of theretofore under-represented groups, such as blacks, women or young people, as it expressly barred any discrimination based on race, color, creed, national origin, age, or sex in public meetings at all party levels. Moreover, the McGovern-Fraser commission introduced the very controversial affirmative action quota system that called for representation of minority groups in convention delegation "in reasonable relationship to the group's presence in the population of the state."[2]

The most impressive attack on the position of party regulars was the third group of reforms. In the brokered convention era, party elites held a virtual monopoly over the delegate selection process, and rank-and-file party members had only very limited maneuvering space how to verbalize their political preferences. However, the proposals of the McGovern-Fraser commission entirely changed the hierarchical relations within the party-as-organization – it banned premature delegate selection by restricting it only to the year of the national

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[1] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, pp.36-37

[2] Crotty, William, and John S. Jackson III. 1981. *Presidential Primaries and Nominations*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, p. 33

convention, and it drastically curtailed the power of state party committees by limiting the total number of delegates appointed by the state party organizations only to 10 percent. Moreover, no party official could serve as a delegate on *ex officio* grounds and the filling of vacancies for delegates also became strictly regulated.[1] As a consequence, party elites could no longer count on automatic selection to the national convention since each delegate was subject to specific election. Neither could they influence the composition of delegations due to restrictions inherent in the provisions of the McGovern-Fraser report.

By 1972, already 40 state organizations fully complied with the guidelines, and the remaining ones exhibited fairly high compliance.[2] Yet, ironically enough, the main contribution of the McGovern-Fraser Commission was not postulated explicitly in its provisions at all; it sprang rather indirectly from the very quintessence of the reforms since it triggered a proliferation of presidential primaries. The state party organizations simply discovered that the primary system generates many more incentives for participation and much less controversy than the brokered convention system. In 1972, already 22 state organization adopted the primary system compared to 15 in 1968, and this number kept on rising reaching 30 states in 1976 and 35 in 1980.[3]

4.4 Other Commissions

The 1972 presidential election gave reform efforts a heavy blow to in the Democratic Party because its candidate, George McGovern, experienced a crushing defeat in the presidential elections. This naturally stirred castigations of the new rules on the part of adversaries who blamed the newly applied organizational mechanisms for the unprecedented electoral failure. To revise the reform surge and propitiate the dissatisfied party regulars, the Democratic Party established a new commission under leadership of Baltimore Councilwoman Barbara Mikulski. Much to the relief of the party's liberal wing, the Mikulski Commission upheld the achievements of the McGovern-Fraser commission and made only minor concessions to the party elite. As far as the second track of

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[1] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 38-39

[2] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 38

[3] Crotty, William, and John S. Jackson III. 1981. *Presidential Primaries and Nominations*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, p. 17

reforms is concerned, the Mikulski Commission removed the hotly disputed mandatory quota system while retaining affirmative action for minority groups. However, more important changes were introduced in the area of grassroots control where it raised the proportion of state-appointed delegates to 25 percent on the condition of appropriate representation of minorities. Also, it allowed Democratic governors, U.S. Senators, and U.S. Representatives to attend the national convention but denied them privilege of voting.[1]

Whereas the aforesaid provisions reinforced the role of party regulars, the Mikulski Commission also implemented certain rules that conversely augmented the power of the grassroots activists. In the caucus/convention states, any group scoring more than 15 percent of the vote at local meetings or later conventions was guaranteed proportional representation in the delegation. Also, the Mikulski Commission prohibited statewide winner-take-all primaries save in districts smaller than congressional districts.[2] The purpose of these measures was self-evident – to make delegation as much proportionally representative as possible.

The little anticipated boom of primary elections caused considerable alarm not only among the party leadership but also in the ranks of reformers due to concerns over further debilitation of party's power to influence the nominating process. To reverse this unpropitious trend, the Democratic Party instituted another reform commission in 1976, one chaired by a little known politician Morley Winograd. However, the public grew tired over the perpetual bickering in the Democratic Party, relegating the Winograd Commission deliberations to minor media attention. Moreover, it failed to reach its utmost goal and managed only to implement relatively modest modifications to the delegate selection process. For example, its provisions included restriction of the nominating primaries and caucuses to a three month period of the election year, or rules calling for equal representation of men and women on each state's delegation. Moreover, the commission adopted a much disputed "bound delegate" rule which imposed an obligation on the delegate to vote for the presidential candidate he or she was elected on behalf of, hence undermining the classical concept of "freedom of conscience." The Winograd Commission ameliorated the position of party leadership by instituting the "add-on" rule which provided for 10 percent in

[1] Crotty, William. 1983. *Party Reform*. New York. Longman inc., pp. 68-71
[2] Marshall, Thomas R.1981. *Presidential Nominations in a Reform Age*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 40

additional seats for party regulars or elected politicians, who were not otherwise included in state's delegation, thus lifting the ban on *ex-officio* delegates and creating the so-called "superdelegates."[1]

The last important Democratic commission was created in 1980 under leadership of North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., with the aim of strengthening the party-as-organization. Even the Hunt Commission fell short of party expectations and its main achievements comprised removal of the unpopular "bound delegate" rule and an increase of the "add-on" provision to 25 percent.[2]

As we can see, the party regulars finally succeeded in reversing some trends set by the McGovern-Fraser Commission, yet its legacy left a permanent imprint on the structure of the Democratic party-as-organization. It effectively dismantled the brokered convention system and enabled the party-in-the-electorate to play a much more central role in the nominating process by making "voters, through the primary season, the effective choosers of the presidential nominees."[3] Also, the McGovern-Fraser Commission significantly conduced to creation of what Herrnson terms "institutionalized national parties" owing to the harmonization of party rules and standards in selection of national convention delegates.[4]

4.5 Republican Party Reform

Although it may seem, *prima facie*, that the Democratic and Republican Party should encounter analogous difficulties in the presidential nominating process and employ similar institutional mechanisms to counter them, in reality, they form rather two totally different worlds as they are rather "distinctively separate entities, each with its own traditions, social roots, and organizational and personal values."[5] In comparison with the massiveness of Democratic Party reforms, those implemented by the GOP had a far humbler character. Crotty and Jacobson identify two main reasons behind this phenomenon. First, due to its inherently conservative quintessence, favoring order and gradual progress, the Republican Party did not experience any acute inner crises or any pronounced public attack

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[1] Crotty, William. 1983. *Party Reform*. New York. Longman inc., pp. 75-81
[2] Crotty, William. 1983. *Party Reform*. New York. Longman inc., pp. 74-87
[3] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 255
[4] Herrnson, Paul S. 1988. *Party Campaigning in the 1980s*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 30
[5] Crotty, William. 1983. *Party Reform*. New York. Longman inc., p. 206

on its political patterns in the 1960s, and hence there was hardly any rationale for profound partisan change. Second, the GOP is intrinsically repugnant to centralizing tendencies. Rather it advocates state's rights, which renders any in-depth implementation of national standards highly improbable.[1]

4.6 Procedural Reform

In 1969, mainly under the impact of some achievements made on the part of the McGovern-Fraser Commission, the Republican Party instituted the Committee on Delegates and Organization (DO Committee) led by the national committee-woman Rosemary Ginn and consisting purely of Republican National Committee members, a phenomenon which may have foreshadowed the nature of its political results. The DO Committee produced several recommendations which included opening convention delegate selection local and state meetings to rank-and-file party members, reducing fees for delegate candidates, prohibiting *ex officio* delegates, and equalizing representation of men and women, and giving a greater share of the delegates to the youth.[2] However, in compliance with the principle of a subordination of the national party to the state parties, these recommendations had little enforcement power and their adoption was left entirely to the arbitrariness of individual state organizations, without introducing any sanctions in case of their disregard.

The failure of the DO Committee to reach meaningful results somewhat exasperated the moderate Republican politicians and, consequently, mainly at their instigation, the GOP established the so-called Rule 29 Committee chaired by a reformist Wisconsin Republican William A. Steiger in 1972. From its very beginnings, the Rule 29 Committee was steeped in controversy because its conservative members perceived it to be a direct attack on their established positions. Much to their chagrin, the Rule 29 Committee recommended that state organizations be required to elaborate "positive [affirmative] action" plans and present them to the Republican National Committee. However, the anti-reformers eventually prevailed and the Republican National Committee rejected this

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[1] Crotty, William, and Gary C. Jacobson. 1980. *American Parties in Decline*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, p. 162

[2] Crotty, William, and John S. Jackson III. 1981. *Presidential Primaries and Nominations*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, pp. 46-47

provision by a narrow margin due to the occurrence of serious concerns that the plan posed "a threat of party domination from Washington."[1] Instead, a weaker version was adopted which, on the one hand, called for greater inclusion of minorities into the nominating process but, on the other hand, did not stipulate any coercive or penalty mechanisms.

After 1976, "reform efforts" became solely the domain of the Republican National Committee's (RNC) Rules Committee, which effectively blocked up any potential proliferation of national standards within the Republican party-as-organization, and, in effect, it confined its activities only to certain technicalities in convention operations and party rules.[2] To sum up, as Longley puts it, "the GOP rejected proposals for national party control of delegate selection practices and has explicitly adopted rules that protect state delegate selection procedures."[3] As a result, hegemony of state parties in the nominating process remained virtually intact, at least from the procedural perspective, by the turmoil of the 1960s owing to enduring intrinsic Republican reluctance to change *overtly*, and the Republican national organization preserved its status of confederation of state parties. The only significant procedural achievement was extensive implementation of the primary system, nevertheless, this phenomenon occurred rather as a by-product of the new Democratic rules since the individual states principally commenced applying this structural mechanism simultaneously to both parties. Hence the power of the Republican Party regulars over the presidential nomination process did somewhat decline but not on account of codification of any explicit institutional modifications.[4]

Before the 1970s, American political parties were traditionally associated with the concept of "cadre parties," which Beck and Hershey define as an organization "run by a relatively small number of leaders and activists," who "make the organization's decisions, choose its candidates, and select the strategies they

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[1] Bibby, John F. 1980. "Party Renewal in the National Republican Party." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 104-105

[2] Crotty, William, and John S. Jackson III. 1981. *Presidential Primaries and Nominations*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, pp. 47-48

[3] Bibby, John F. 1980. "Party Renewal in the National Republican Party." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers. p. 106

[4] Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 215

believe voters will find appealing" with the utmost goal of winning elections.[1] Cadre parties are the opposite of the so-called mass parties, which "seek to enroll as many people as possible in their membership and to make their decisions according to the expressed desires of the mass memberships."[2] In other words, whereas the cadre party is based upon *exclusion*, conserves party elites and is tied together by the pragmatic goal of winning elections, the mass party rather tends to negate elites and ideologically clings to *inclusion* and representation of masses, which is superior to winning elections. Through dramatic increase of popular participation and elite accountability, the Democratic Party, according to Longley, interrupted the American tradition of cadre parties as it significantly approximated to the mass party model. Conversely, the GOP decided to remain largely intact by the institutional *inclusive* reforms and thus "opted to become a contemporary derivative of the classical cadre party model."[3]

4.7 Organizational Reform

Yet, the Republican Party did become nationally institutionalized and did change; however, by choosing a totally different and less ostentatious path than the Democratic Party. The Republican Party always showed much greater organizational skills than its Democratic counterpart and, even before the 1960s, it very much reinforced the position of the RNC by providing it with a full-time chairman and numerous staff. This structural innovation enabled more systematic procurement of financial resources, which prepared ground for a later massive regional expansion of the Republican Party in the direction "top down." Republican nationalization efforts actually predate the political operations of the McGovern-Fraser Commission and falls within the tenure of the RNC chairman Ray Bliss, who, after catastrophic defeat in the 1964 election, utilized the accumulated financial resources for a gradual strengthening of local and state organizations by granting them assistance through the Republican National Committee.[4]

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[1] Beck, Paul Allen, and Marjorie Randon Hershey. 2001. *Party Politics in America*, 7th Ed., Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., p.52

[2] Longley, Charles H. 1980. "National Party Renewal." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 82

[3] Longley, Charles H. 1980. "National Party Renewal." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 84-85

[4] Bibby, John F. 1980. "Party Renewal in the National Republican Party." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers. p. 107

Strangely enough, one of the most important factors that accelerated nationalization of the Republican Party was the adoption of new federal campaign finance laws in 1974. Their provisions restricted party donations by individuals to $20,000 annually, which intended to target party tendency to raise excessive funds during elections. And indeed, in the first years after implementation of the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA), the Republican Party found itself in a deep financial crisis. For example, in 1975, the RNC managed to raise only $300,000 of its $2.3 million budget.[1] However, it quickly recovered and responded by implementation of a system of direct-mail solicitations, which helped to build "a financial empire of millions of small contributors instead of a relative handful of financial angels."[2] Although the FECA clearly sided with candidate-centered politics, it provided implicit advantages to political parties committees as it stipulated that they might receive greater contributions than other committees (mainly political action committees (PACs)) or candidates. Simultaneously, the national committees could give larger contributions to candidates than individuals or other committees.[3] Also, in *Buckley v. Valeo* 424 U.S.1 [1976], the Supreme Court struck down the limits on independent expenditures of political party committees, originally enforced by the FECA, which encouraged them to focus on multiple roles and not solely on the one associated with the presidential election process.

In 1977, RNC Chair William E. Brock was elected chair of the RNC, the Republican Party launched a vast offensive on the dominant position of the Democratic Party. By this time, the GOP faced one of its worst electoral nadirs ever as it controlled only one third of the seats in Congress, twelve governorships and four state legislatures.[4] To remedy the ill-stricken Republican Party, Brock concentrated the accumulated financial resources upon a massive rebuilding of state and local party organizations as he perceived this activity central to the process of national party revitalization. In 1977, the RNC implemented a very

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[1] Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 216

[2] Sabato, Larry J. 1988. *The Party's Just Begun. Shaping Political Parties for America's Future*, Brown College Division: Scott, Foresman and Company, p.71-72

[3] Sorauf, Frank J. 2002. "Power, Money, and Responsibility in the Major Parties." In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson, eds., *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p. 85

[4] Bibby, John F. "Party Renewal in the National Republican Party." In Pomper, Gerald M. 1980. *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers. p. 107

expensive Organizational Director (OD) program (at an annual cost of $1 million), which sought to support staff professionalization by paying the salary of an OD in each state party organization. However, this project was abandoned in 1979 due to increasing financial demands. Also, under Brock's chairmanship, the RNC set up the position of Regional Political Directors (RPDs), whose main task was to assist state leaders in the process of strengthening their respective organizations and coordinate their utilization of RNC services. Another body under the auspices of the RNC, the Regional Finance Directors, concentrated on improving financial management of state organizations. In addition, the RNC quickly apprehended the potential benefits of IT development and developed a data processing network offering a wide range of electronic services to state organizations.[1]

Primarily, Brock established a new organizational unit called the Local Elections Campaign Divisions (LECD), whose task was to prepare elaborate strategies with the aim of gaining state legislative seats. It not only monitored and analyzed election districts, but also provided extensive services to candidates.[2] RNC activities did not confine only to state legislatures but also pertained to the gubernatorial level. In 1977, Brock decided to invigorate the role of the Republican Governors Association (RGA), originally founded in 1964, whose operational range was analogous to the LECD and it focused chiefly on helping challengers. The amount of assistance provided to state parties on the part of the RNC in the second half of the 1970s was indeed unparalleled in the partisan history, which is aptly illustrated by the following statement of a veteran Midwestern Republican state party chairman: "Bill Brock has changed the whole concept of the National Committee. The field people we had helping us were the best I have ever seen. They gave us staff, resources and money. In the last two years, we've had more help from the National Committee than in the whole time I've been around."[3] It may seem that national and state party organizations formed a perfect symbiosis in this epoch, yet the latter eventually undertook a small rebellion against rising influence of the former. In 1980, the GOP adopted a new provision, Rule 26 (f), which conditioned assistance of the Republican National Committee in a campaign by

[1] Bibby, John F. 1980. "Party Renewal in the National Republican Party." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 107-109

[2] Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 222

[3] Bibby, John F. 1980. "Party Renewal in the National Republican Party." In Pomper, Gerald M., ed., *Party Renewal in America. Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 112

consent of the state party chairperson and national committee persons from the particular state. However, this limitation did not apply to congressional and Senate campaign committees.[1]

According to Bibby, the reforms implemented under Brock's leadership influenced the future arrangement of state organizations in four distinct areas: institutionalization of permanent party headquarters, professionalization of staff, more effective state party organization funding, and more extensive candidate support and party building. In the era of traditional party organization, state organizations had no stable administrative and technical background and the location of party headquarters constantly changed depending on the residence of their respective leaders. Brock's reforms helped to suppress the rather casual and chaotic nature of state parties and turn them into modern, effectively managed institutions, with advanced computer technologies. This led to the greater efficiency of campaign management owing to substantial facilitation of fund-raising, mailings, voter registration, voter contact, and recruiting volunteers. The rationalization of party-as-organization at the state level is also associated with a re-evaluated staffing policy. Formerly, state party headquarters had limited human resources, in most cases only a secretary or executive director and a bunch of volunteers, while, nowadays, state party organizations employ today full-time professionals including an executive director, field staff, public relations director, research staff, fund-raiser etc., which again enhances the outputs on the part of state parties.

Naturally, the rebuilding of state organizations was primarily the question of money provided by the national party committees. According to Epstein, the nationalization of Republican campaign effort can be compared to the federal government's grant-in-aid-system. Under the grant-in-aid-system, the administrative units receive financial support associated with certain projects on the condition of compliance with federal standards. The Republican Party successfully copied this model and transposed it to the partisan level – to gain access to national party funds and other assistance, state parties and candidates are obliged to "maintain organizations or conduct campaigns serving general

[1] Kayden, Xandra , and Eddie Mahe Jr. 1985. *The Party Goes On: The Persistence of the Two-Party System in the United States*. New York: Basic Books, p. 78

Republican purposes."[1] As a result, state parties now both generate substantial financial resources themselves through various sophisticated methods of fund-raising, and they receive vast financial assistance from national party headquarters. All of the aforesaid aspects contributed to massive extension of services that can be actually provided to candidates: they include candidate recruitment, assistance in polling, fund-raising, staff assistance, survey research, campaign seminars or media consulting.[2] As a consequence, the state parties, per se, may have lost their monopoly over the nomination processes. At the same time, they have grown substantially stronger and developed complex mechanisms to control candidates in a less overt and coercive manner, which very much minimizes the "damage" done by the primary system.

4.8 Democratic Response

At the beginning of the 1980s, the Democratic Party achieved the worst electoral results since the New Deal realignment as it experienced heavy losses in the House of Representatives, lost control of the Senate and its incumbent President Jimmy Carter did not get reelected. Such poor showings urged the Democratic Party to reassess its organizational policy and thoroughly scrutinize the reasons of its unparalleled failure. As a result, through wide consensus among DNC members, Congressional Democrats, and partisan activists, the Democratic Party decided to duplicate the successful Republican organizational model of reform.[3] Herrnson associates mainly three men with the Democratic Party renewal at the beginning of the 1980s: Charles Manatt (DNC Chair), Tony Coelho (Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) Chair), and Lloyd Bentsen (Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) Chair), who, according to him, made large contributions to "building the national party organizations' fund-raising capabilities, improving their professional staffs and

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[1] Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 223

[2] Bibby, John F. 2002. "State Party Organisations: Strengthened and Adapting to Candidate-Centered Politics and Nationalization." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, pp. 29-31

[3] Herrnson, Paul S. 2002. "National Organisations at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed., p. 54

organizational structures, and augmenting the Republican model to suit the specific needs of Democratic candidates and state and local committees."[1]

Nevertheless, the Democratic delayed reaction to the requirements of the new era did eventually reflect itself in the fact that it has never really succeeded in matching the scope of Republican institutionalization. This failure has been further intensified by factors that inherently spring from the very ideological quintessence of the Democratic Party, one which tends to attract less educated and less affluent voters. Hence the financial benefits of its direct-mail solicitations cannot measure to the Republican ones, the gap having been pronounced especially in the first years after implementation of Democratic organizational reforms. For example, in 1982, the DNC's contributor list included 200,000 names, compared with RNC's list, which boasted itself of 1.7 million names.[2] As can be seen in the following figure, the DNC also fell behind the RNC substantially in the volume of hard money receipts. Even in 1984, in the epoch of heightened Democratic institutional efforts, the RNC managed to raise $105.9 million compared to $46.6 million on the part of the DNC, which is more than twice as much. In the whole time span between 1976 and 2000, this ratio averaged approximately 2.8. The dichotomy becomes even more profound if we compare receipts of all the national committees, including the congressional ones, where the ratio averaged 3.4 in the aforementioned time span. However, if we take into considerations only the recent results, then the prospects look much more optimistic for the Democratic Party as it managed to close the advantage of the Republican Party from the ratio of 6.7 in 1980 to 1.7 in 2000.

[1] Herrnson, Paul S. 2002. "National Organisations at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed., p. 54

[2] Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 224

Party	*1976*	*1978*	*1980*	*1982*	*1984*	*1986*	*1988*	*1990*	*1992*	*1994*	*1996*	*1998*	*2000*
Democrats													
DNC	13.1	11.3	15.4	16.5	46.6	17.2	52.3	14.5	65.8	41.8	108.4	64.8	124.0
DCCC	.9	2.8	2.9	6.5	10.4	12.3	12.5	9.1	12.8	19.4	26.6	25.2	48.4
DSCC	1.0	.3	1.7	5.6	8.9	13.4	16.3	17.5	25.5	26.4	30.8	35.6	40.5
Total	15.0	14.4	20.0	28.6	65.9	42.9	81.1	41.1	104.1	87.6	165.8	125.6	212.9
Republicans													
RNC	29.1	34.2	77.8	84.1	105.9	83.8	91.0	68.7	85.4	87.4	193.0	104.0	212.8
NRCC	12.1	14.1	20.3	58.0	58.3	39.8	34.7	33.2	35.2	26.7	74.2	72.7	97.3
NRSC	1.8	10.9	22.3	48.9	81.7	86.1	65.9	65.1	73.8	65.3	64.5	53.4	51.5
Total	43.0	59.2	120.4	191.0	245.9	209.7	191.6	167.0	194.4	179.4	331.7	230.1	361.6

Table 4.1 National Party Hard Money Receipts, 1976-2000 (in million $) (*source:* Herrnson, Paul S. 2002. "National Organisations at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed, *p.55)*

The shortage of Democratic funds naturally correlates of party organizations with other aspects, e.g. staff size. As we can see in the following figure, in 1972, both national committees employed the same number of professional workers, namely 32. Nearly twenty years later, in 1990, the Democratic staff amounted only to 130 people, whereas the RNC employed 400 staffers or roughly three times as many. However, ten years after, in 2000, the ratio already shrank to 1.66 as the DNC employed 150 full-time employees, compared to 250 on the part of the RNC, which again clearly indicates that the Democratic Party slowly catches up with the GOP, even if this ratio is very much distorted by massive reduction of the RNC staff in the 1990s.[1] To sum up, we may say that the Democratic Party slowly closed the gap that resulted because of it belated reaction to the requirements of the new dynamic era; yet it seems to be fairly unlikely that it will catch up or even surpass the Republican Party in the amount of the funds raised in the near future due to its ideological orientation and the composition of its electorate.

[1] Herrnson, Paul S. 2002. "National Organisations at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century." In Maisel, L. Sandy, ed., *The Parties Respond*, Boulder: Westview Press, 3rd ed., p. 58

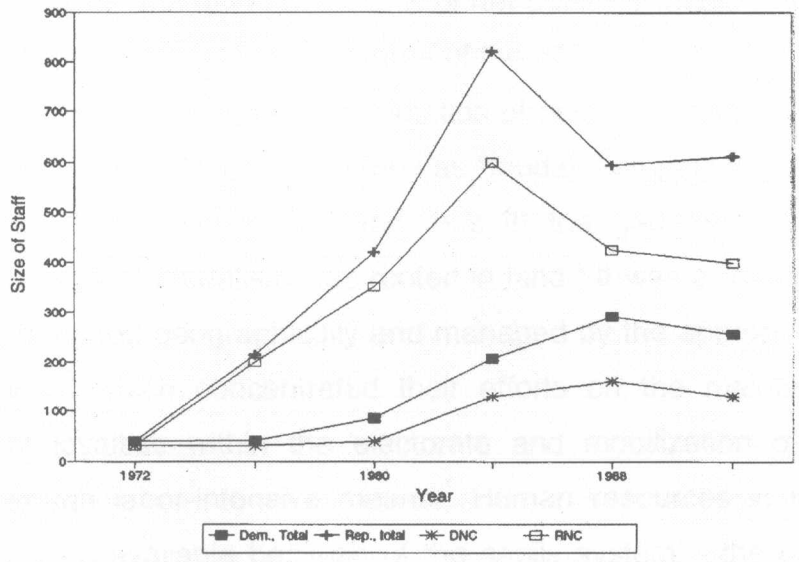

Figure 4.1 Staff of national, House, and Senate Committees, both parties, 1976-90 (source: Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press,p.257)

4.9 Party-Centered vs. Candidate-Centered Elections

Despite structural measures implemented in the Progressive Era, political parties still succeeded in conserving their position as central actors to the nominating and campaigning processes until the 1960s. If a politician wanted to gain access to an elective office, he or she had no choice other than utilizing the strictly partisan channels because political parties held virtual duopoly over the fundamental means for an office-seeker to get elected – financial funds, human resources, and political know-how. Consequently, ambitious politicians were *de facto* subject to the arbitrariness of local and state party elites, which implied compliance with an unwritten agreement – the party machines supported office-seekers as long as the latter conformed to preferred policy of the former. Should a political actor decide to revolt against the will of party regulars, he or she risked withdrawal of the fundamental resources needed for election or reelection. To put it differently, a long-term political career was feasible only within the framework of political parties (i.e., local and state party organizations), which, if I should use an overstatement, degraded office seekers and office holders to the role of an extended hand of party bosses. In short, political actors in the party-centered era

to a certain extent were forced to put side his or her personal ideology in exchange for gaining perquisites flowing from the tenure of the office.

Placing emphasis on regional fragmentation of political parties, Aldrich terms the electoral mechanisms prior to the 1960s as "feudal" campaigning since it was "rooted in local party organizations, and thus in the geography that defines electoral districts, just as feudalism was rooted in land." It was a "retail" campaign because it was bounded geographically and managed by the appropriate state or local organizations, which concentrated their efforts on the maintenance and reinforcement of loyalties within the electorate and mobilization of voters on election day through labor-intensive means.[1] Human resources in the form of benefit seekers were available because of the spoils system – the election of a party candidate entailed material rewards for them, ranging from patronage jobs to distributive policies. Accordingly, the control of office primarily had pragmatic and utilitarian dimensions, with ideology playing rather a secondary role.

Albeit the overall effects of Progressive reforms were much shallower than originally expected, they managed to create rifts in the concept of party-centered elections. The burgeoning governmental apparatus dramatically curtailed the power of political parties to provide rewards to office-seekers and benefit-seekers as it successfully "usurped" some theretofore strictly partisan policy domains. Moreover, the onset of bureaucratization and technocratization enabled office-seekers to build long-term governmental careers, rendering them totally independent of the organizational mechanisms of political parties. Consequently, the Progressive Era irrevocably changed the function of party machines and condemned them to inevitable atrophy; yet it took another half a century until the party monopoly over access to elective offices was dismantled.

The collapse of party-centered elections can be attributed mainly to two pivotal factors: extensive technological changes and rise of policy-motivated benefit seekers. Proliferation of mass media, a substantial decrease in travel time and subsequent dynamic development of information technologies made it much easier for office-seekers to contact potential financial contributors and political activists without assistance of political parties. In other words, political parties

[1] Aldrich, John H. 1992. Presidential Campaigns in Party- and Candidate-Centered Eras. In Mathew D. McCubbins, ed., *Under the Watchful Eye: Managing Presidential Campaigns in the Television Era*, Washington D.C.: CQ Press, p. 60

ceased to be the sole proprietors of funds and labor for political campaigns and it became possible for a candidate to manage a personal campaign despite the will of party elites, such as John Fitzgerald Kennedy in 1960.[1]

As already noted, the Progressive surge eventually led to the break-up of the patronage-based system, and it marked the end of profit-oriented benefit seekers. Instead, an entirely new brand of activists emerged, sometimes referred to as "purists" or "amateurs," who participate in political processes mainly from ideological reasons and their goal is to shape policy outcomes.[2] As Aldrich puts it, while "the patronage-based benefit seeker cared only about whose party made up the government, the contemporary policy-based benefit seeker cares primarily what government will do."[3] Naturally, external factors urge major American political parties to embrace an immensely large scope of diverse interests as they must be capable of forging far-reaching coalitions in order to win elections. However, this tendency directly contradicts the political activists' conception of pure policy, hence they are more likely to endorse a particular candidate since he represents a much more transparent alternative to the intricate maze of a party. As a result, the 1960s became an era of unprecedented boom of political activism which assaulted the anachronistic and pragmatic quintessence of political parties, their focus only on winning elections. As a result, candidates started to gradually step out of obscurity of the party's shadow since the dynamics of the modern era favors an individualistic style of campaigning, one with party becoming a partner rather than a master to an office-seeker.

Aldrich labels the present system of candidate-centered elections as "bastard feudalism," which is "rooted in personal ambitions as well as in the earlier feudal basis of party, and, to a lesser extent, electoral geography."[4] To put it differently, the primary incentive of the benefit-seekers to focus on a particular candidate is no

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[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 270-271

[2] Wildavsky, Aaron. 1965. "The Goldwater Phenomenon: Purists, Politicians, and the Two-Party System," *Review of Politics*, vol. 27, p. 393, and Wilson, James Q. 1962. *The Amateur Democrat: Club Politics, in Three Cities*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.2

[3] Aldrich, John H. 1992. Presidential Campaigns in Party- and Candidate-Centered Eras. In Mathew D. McCubbins, ed., *Under the Watchful Eye: Managing Presidential Campaigns in the Television Era*, Washington D.C.: CQ Press, p. 69

[4] Aldrich, John H. 1992. Presidential Campaigns in Party- and Candidate-Centered Eras. In Mathew D. McCubbins, ed., *Under the Watchful Eye: Managing Presidential Campaigns in the Television Era*, Washington D.C.: CQ Press, p. 61

longer land in the form of patronage and distributive policies but rather influence over the policy outputs. The benefit-seekers and the candidates have hence formed a perfect mutualism on the *quid pro quo* basis: the former provide the latter with the vitally important financial and human resources and technologies in exchange for their share on the power.

If I should note a hyperbole, the 1960s became a watershed between two distinct epochs: "the era of partisan planned economy" and "the era of partisan market economy." In the partisan planned economy system, party organizations virtually regulated and controlled the flow of financial and human resources associated with campaigning and centrally planned how much assistance will be provided to a particular candidate. As a result, a candidate was rendered fully dependant on the arbitrariness of few party regulars since *they* made the final decisions concerning production, allocation and consumption of goods and services for political campaigns. However, with the onset of media, and dynamization and computerization of society, new producers and providers of goods and services arose in the form of political activists, implying the loss of the so carefully guarded monopoly over funds, labor, and technology available to a candidate. In other words, political parties no longer held an extraordinary place in the electoral arena since many other gladiators set their foot in their theretofore sacred preserve. Consequently, due to the rise of competitors and massive development of the new campaigning market, political parties were forced to modify their approach to office-seekers whose price started to rise spectacularly in the mean-time. Production, allocation, and consumption of campaign goods and services lost many barriers that had been artificially imposed by political parties. The whole campaigning process began to be governed by the classical market economy rules.

The freshly lost monopoly over campaign resources became reflected in creation of a sword of Damocles over political parties: they could either passively conserve their intrinsic mechanisms, thus risking fatal consequences, or they could actively reassess their time-worn partisan principles and try to hold out and survive within the changed context of electoral competition. As always, the Democratic and Republican parties exhibited great sense of pragmatism and resourcefulness in dealing with intricate and arduous situations and voluntarily accepted the implications of the new individualistic-centered era and renounced a

certain share of political power by means of extensive reforms in the 1970s, rather than follow the self-destructive path of obstinate insistence on unconditional subordination of political actors to the cause of the party. As a result, political parties no longer function as monopolistic producers of political candidates who directly influence the content and form of the political market. Rather they have assumed the role of a provider of goods and services to political candidates, retaining extensive influence upon the processes within the electoral arena. As Aldrich puts it, the 1970s witnessed the emergence of a new form of political party, "one that is 'in service' to its ambitious politicians but not 'in control' of them," as the one that was conceived in the 1820s by Martin van Buren.[1]. By virtue of their organizational reform, political parties have become much more effective and professional in producing and allocating goods and services needed by the candidate to succeed in elections. Hence they have become a much more competitive and central participant in the battle of winning influence over the individual candidates than many political scientists would have thought after the seeming decomposition of the political parties in the 1960s.

Formerly, political cards were laid openly on the table: party bosses made the decisions and ambitious office-seekers had to obey and conform to them if they were to build up a decent political career. Now the situation has become much less explicit and much more complex. From certain perspectives, it may seem that a candidate has actually become hierarchically superior to the political party which, as some indications may imply, has been degraded to the humble position of a "servant." However, appearances may be deceiving since it is sometimes the "servants" who effectively manage the household with their masters being confined to a largely representative role, and such is the case of American political parties. Servants can do without their master, yet a master can hardly do without his servants. Political parties may have retreated to the background, but they have developed mechanisms to skillfully manipulate candidates in a more inconspicuous manner – they provide them with extensive services, which becomes reflected to a substantial degree in the dependence of the office-seekers on the "invisible" hands of the party. Formally, the candidate functions as an

[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 273

autonomous unit – he or she can seek support from various political channels and build up his own campaign organizations. Yet the massive scope of resources provided by the party-as-organization is nearly irresistible, and it is this irresistibility of their goods and services that makes the political parties so strong in the contemporary era.

In addition to possession of substantial resources, political parties have retained another vitally important feature – their "brand." The brand of the major parties still serves as a basic orientation for voters as it gives them some fundamental clues what to exactly expect from the given "product." No other label since the 1860s has ever succeeded in attracting the voters more powerfully than those of the Democratic and Republican parties. As a result, the very affiliation of the politicians with the major parties brings one big certainty – "the quality and tradition of the brand," which further greatly increases the value of the major parties in the electoral market.

4.10 Conclusion

In his masterpiece *Politics, Parties, Pressure Groups*, V. O. Key, Jr. describes the relationship between the national parties and state parties as largely autonomous and confederative, with the two major parties resembling rather a disorganized association of 50 loosely-knitted partisan units.[1] Such a scenario is aptly described by Schlesinger as the "centrifugal multinuclear party," which implies existence of a multitude of nuclei diverging from the center.[2] Necessarily, the frustration concerning the impossibility of implementing coordinated strategies due to intrinsic fragmentation, coupled with a correlative increasing inability to address the public needs, generated important incentives for profound change of the system. In order to counter the challenges of the new era, the Democratic Party introduced a procedural reform, based on the enforcement of national party standards, yet the irreconcilable differences between the reformers and party regulars over the extent of reforms brought the whole process to a stalemate, having only a minor impact on the strengthening and modernization of the national party organization. On the other hand, the Republican Party followed a totally

[1] Key, V.O., Jr. 1964. *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, 6th ed , New York:Crowell, p. 334
[2] Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1991. *Political Parties and the Winning of Office*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 177

different path and implemented a much more clever strategy – by virtue of new federal campaign laws, which encouraged a more extensive collaboration under the aegis of the national party organization, it started to strengthen the party center through a vast redistribution of the funds raised on the national level among the state parties, thus effectively subjugating them by financial means. Inspired by the Republican success, the Democratic Party copied this strategy at the beginning of the 1980s, and, as a result, in Schlesinger's terminology, both the Democratic and Republican parties have become "centripetal multinuclear parties," as the state parties no longer have the tendency to diverge from the center but rather substantially converge to it.[1] Given the largely insignificant and subordinate position of the national political parties in relationship to the state parties in the traditional party organization system, their roles have reversed and the former slaves have actually become the present masters. Sabato aptly comments on this irony with the following words: "The national parties were once creatures of the state affiliates and financed by them; today, the state parties are chartered chapters of Washington-based groups, and they owe much of their health to the national party committees."[2]

Paradoxically enough, the analogy of slaves becoming masters might also seem to fit the relationship between the candidates and political parties. With the onset of mass media and computers and appearance of a brand new breed of policy-motivated activists, it has become much easier for a candidate to build his own campaign organization outside the "moloch" of the political party. Hence, it may seem that the present "individualism-friendly" era substantially marginalized the political party and decreased its relevancy. However, such a conclusion has one major hitch – the recent institutionalization and professionalization of political parties became reflected in better quality and greater quantity of provided services, relegating other competitors in the electoral market to a largely secondary role. As we all know, money makes the world go round, and the political parties, owing to their organizational reforms, can now generate substantial amounts of funds and thus effectively buy the favor of the political actors.

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[1] Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1991. *Political Parties and the Winning of Office*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 187

[2] Sabato, Larry J. 1988. *The Party's Just Begun. Shaping Political Parties for America's Future*, Brown College Division: Scott, Foresman and Company, p. 90

Consequently, candidates may be independent *formally*, but they are still largely dependent *financially*, which renders, though covertly, political parties still extremely relevant to the election process.

5 Party-in-the-Electorate

The central thesis of the general decline of political parties is usually based upon an intensive weakening of party allegiance. Throughout this chapter, I try to impugn this commonly accepted assumption and show that even this final component of the Key-Sorauf triad no longer degenerates. First, I present basic characteristics of the "mythologization" era when the voting behavior was primarily determined by ingrained psychological ties. Then, I observe the critical era of the 1960s, when the extensive "demythologization" of the American electorate occurred, one correlating with a rise of a new type of independents. Finally, I analyze the changed perception of political parties by the American public and assess the strength of political parties in the electorate.

5.1 Mythologization Era

The phenomenon of partisan *mythos*, the substance of which is rather devout veneration of the "shrine" of political party without seeing its inherent flaws, peacefully survived in American politics for approximately 130 years, experiencing only little turbulences, e.g. in the ante-bellum era. Even in the 1950s, V. O. Key, Jr. still characterizes electoral behavior as rather steeped in "inertia" and observes that "the time of casting a ballot is not a time of decision for many voters; it is merely an occasion for the reaffirmation of a partisan faith of long-standing."[1] Partisan loyalties ran deeply under the skin of the voters, with policy issues being subordinated to the very idea of the political party. The affiliation with political parties functioned similarly to religious cults with reason (*logos*) playing a largely secondary role here. To put it differently, the emotional or affective components of partisanship in the mythologization era (roughly 1830s – 1960s) preponderated the cognitive aspects as follows from the conclusions of the classical work on voting behavior, *The American Voter*, which appeared in 1960:

In characterizing the relation of individual to party as psychological identification we invoke a concept that has played an important if somewhat varied role in psychological theories of the relation of individual to individual or of individual to group. We use the concept here to characterize

[1] Key, V.O., Jr. 1953. *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, 3rd ed. , New York:Crowell, p. 582

the individual's *affective* orientation to an important group-object in his environment. [1] *(emphasis added)*

According to the findings by Campbell et al., the dominant feature that shaped affective partisan identification at the time of publication of *The American Voter* (and obviously in a myriad decades prior to it) was the influence of family, with partisan loyalties effectively passing "from one generation to the next," hence having a hereditary character.[2] As a result, the preference of a political party, implemented through the intermediate social milieu in childhood, had the tendency to remain invariable throughout one's life, entailing only limited responsiveness to the very performance of the political parties. Joseph Schlesinger aptly characterizes such voting behavior as based on "rigidities," which are "factors that limit variations in voting behavior....and thus exclude such short-run influences as the qualifications of the candidates or immediate issues."[3] Naturally, rigidities imply high levels of partisanship and straight-ticket voting, i.e., voting for the same party under all circumstances, which can be regarded as a fundamental quintessence of the party-in-the-electorate in the mythologization era.

5.2 Rise of Independents

The 1960s represent a landmark in the historical development of the party-in-the-electorate because partisan ties underwent a profound change in this epoch. The artificially established cult of political parties no longer seemed to fascinate and attract voters, and the intense partisan loyalties from the mythologization era started to erode drastically. In the 1952-1964 period, strong partisans made up on an average of more than one third of the populace, with Independents forming only one fifth. However, the decade after 1964 witnessed unprecedented reversal in partisan allegiance. As a result, in 1974, the number of strong identifiers amounted only to one fourth of the electorate, while the number of Independents surged to 38 percent.[4] No wonder the aforementioned figures led the authors of the classical

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[1] Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes.[1960] 1980. *The American Voter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Midway Reprint, p. 121

[2] Ibid. 147

[3] Schlesinger, Joseph A.1985. The New American Political Party, *American Political Science Review*, vol.79, p. 1166

[4] Nie, Norman H., Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik 1976. The Changing American Voter. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 49

study, *The Changing American Voter* (1976), to conclude that "perhaps the most dramatic change in the American public over the past two decades has been the decline of partisanship."[1]

The independents traditionally, and perhaps legitimately, did not enjoy very positive connotations, and many political scientists treated them with great disdain owing to their intrinsic propensity to be apolitical and apathetic. This can be after all illustrated by the following uncomplimentary excerpt from *The American Voter*, which contrasts them with an ideal archetype of civic virtue:

> The ideal of Independent citizen, attentive to politics, concerned with course of government, who weighs the rival appeals of a campaign and reaches a judgement that is unswayed by partisan prejudice, has had such a hold on civic education today – that one could easily suppose that its habitual partisan has the more limited interest and concern with politics. But if the usual image of the Independent voter is intended as more than a normative ideal, it fits poorly the characteristic of the Independents in our samples. Far from being more attentive, interested, and informed, Independents tend as a group to be somewhat less involved in politics. They have somewhat poorer knowledge of the issues, their image of the candidates is fainter, their interest in the campaign is less, their concern over the outcome is relatively slight, and their choice between competing candidates, although it is indeed made later in the campaign, seems much less to spring from discoverable evaluations of the elements of the national politics.[2]

Yet, in the course of time, some political scientists started to gradually reassess these sharp judgments from *The American Voter* and subject the category of independents to a more thorough scrutiny, which eventually became reflected in partial rehabilitation of this term. The 1960s witnessed a rise of a new breed of independents, one which, paradoxically enough, very much fits the category of the exemplary politically conscious citizen as defined in *The American Voter*. For example, already by 1970, Burnham inferred that "there exist at least two sets of independents: "old independents" who correspond to the rather bleak classical survey-research picture, and "new independents" who may have declined to identify with either majority party not because they are relatively politically unconscious, but because the structure of electoral politics at the present time turns on parties, issues, and symbolisms, which do not have much meaning in

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[1] Nie, Norman H., Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik 1976. *The Changing American Voter*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 47

[2] Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes.[1960] 1980. *The American Voter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Midway Reprint, p. 143

terms of their political values or cognitions."[1] According to his findings, these new independents usually belonged to a higher strata of society, falling into a group with college education and better-than-average income, and presumably were also more interested in political issues.[2] The theory of a new independent was further elaborated by Pomper, who terms these species as "behavioral independents" because they "switch votes from one election to other," hence making electoral decisions based on the content of individual policies presented to them rather than on some psychological affiliations.[3] As Pomper's research showed, the new independents were no longer ignorant of political matters but, on the other hand, they showed a vivid interest in issues, candidates, and their ideological orientation, thereby "largely eliminating the cognitive gap" between them and strong partisans.[4] Moreover, as Keith et al. demonstrate, the new independents are not as "independent" as it may seem and function rather as "closet Democrats and Republicans," due to their relatively high interest in voting and partisan contests in general.[5]

Formerly, in the mythologization era, political parties skillfully utilized substantial scarcity of informational sources, with voters functioning rather as passive receivers of the "sacred" partisan dogma. The relative monopoly of political parties over access to political data became transposed into augmentation of the impact of their cult since, as it has been proved many times in history, ignorance is a fertile ground for efficient manipulation. However, with the onset of the dynamic development of high technology, political parties lost effective control over distribution of political information due to the rise of new alternative communication channels which helped to increase political awareness without party's assistance. The media "massage" with diverse issues and multi-faceted views on them forced the electorate to become more engaged in critical analysis of party programs and more responsive to governmental policies and performance.

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[1] Burnham, Walter Dean. 1970. *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics*. New York: Norton, p. 127
[2] Ibid, p. 130
[3] Pomper, Gerald M. 1972. *Voter's Choice: Varieties of American Electoral Behavior*. New York: Dodd, Mead, p. 32
[4] Ibid, p. 33
[5] Keith, Bruce E. et al., 1992, *The Myth of the Independent Voter*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. 4

Another factor that contributed to the growth of new independents in the 1960s was the growth in general level of education in the American society, one which implies more complex and efficient treatment of political knowledge. This, again, increases the overall independence from the party cues and leads to greater dynamism in the electorate. According to Pomper, "with more schooling, persons are better to assimilate political data and to use the information they acquire outside of factional channels."[1] The growing correlation between formal education and an inclination to be independent can be illustrated by the following figures: in 1944, 47 percent of those having a college degree identified themselves with the Republican Party, 31 percent with the Democratic Party, and independents trailed considerably with only 22 percent. In 1973, the proportion looked totally different: independents moved to the lead with 38 percent of the college-educated electorate, with Democrats finishing second with 32 percent and Republicans third with 30 percent.[2]

We can say that the mixture of the two aforementioned changes in partisan orientation largely contributed to a pronounced distortion of ingrained partisan ties and their substitution for increased volatility within the party-in-the-electorate. As Ladd and Hadley aptly put it: "the massive increase in formal education and the role of the electronic media – along with a more diffuse set of changes attendant on entry into a society characterized by affluence, advanced technology, high physical mobility, and impersonalization – have produced an electorate, which is so fluid as to obviate the old 'star and satellite' majority and minority party relationship."[3] The 1960s simply became an epoch when, applying Schlesinger's terminology, the voting climate began to become rather hostile to rigidities and favorable to generation of "flexibilities," which he characterizes as "structural factors that permit variations and attitudes that emphasize short-run, immediate factors."[4] With the occurrence of reliable and detached mass media and a generally better informed society, the artificially created *mythos* became exposed to the rising pressure of new communication channels which had the tendency to

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[1] Pomper, Gerald M. 1972. *Voter's Choice: Varieties of American Electoral Behavior*. New York: Dodd, Mead, p. 35

[2] Ladd, Everett C., with Charles D. Hadley. 1975. *Transformations of the American Party System*. New York: Norton, p. 292-293

[3] Ibid, p. 303

[4] Schlesinger, Joseph A.1985. "The New American Political Party," *American Political Science Review*, vol.79, p. 1166

subject its fundamental quintessence to substantial objectivization and relativization, thus considerably eroding it. *Mythos* simply cannot thrive in the era dominated by rapid dissemination of information. To use an analogy to Kant's famous dictum, then the 1960s can be perceived as the voter's release from his self-incurred tutelage, hence assuming the role of Enlightenment in American political history.[1]

With the inevitable attenuation of *mythos*, the electorate started to be predominantly governed by *logos*, i.e. cognitive attitude towards political parties, which understandably heralded the onset of a new epoch which I term as a "secularization era" due to the effective break-up of the sacred cult of political parties. A typical voter of the secularization era looks at political parties with more caution and deliberation and with less emotional involvement. In other words, voting decisions are no longer predominantly shaped by psychological links to political parties, rather they are shaped by "a kind of calculation by the voter, in which he or she computes a 'running tally' of party preference."[2] According to the conclusions by Fiorina, basically two variables enter into the cognitive process of party evaluations on the part of the rational voter of the modern age: assessment of past governmental performance and future expectations.[3] Casting a ballot is simply the output of the comparative study of the expected future benefits which are based on the retrospective analysis of the given party and candidate. As Popkin puts it, the voter utilizes the so-called "low information rationality" or "gut reasoning," which is a "method of combining, in an economical way, learning and information from past experiences, daily life, the media, and political campaigns."[4] He uses the term "low information" since the modern voters usually do not utilize thorough and intensive political knowledge, rather they rely on their assessment of the data provided by intermediary channels in the form of mass media, while consequently confronting their conclusions in communication with other people. As a result, their analysis of the electoral market is largely based upon cognitive

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[1] Originally, Kant's dictum reads as follows: "Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage."

[2] Pomper, Gerald M. and Marc D. Weiner: "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party Voter. The Evolving Bases of Partisanship." In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson. 2002. *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p. 186

[3] Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 198

[4] Popkin, Samuel L. 1991. *The Reasoning Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.7

shortcuts, but this is still great progress in comparison with irrationality inherent in the mythologization era.

The rationalization of the individual consumers of electoral "goods" is closely associated with the increased volatility of the party-in-the electorate, a phenomenon which can be demonstrated in the substantial increase of split-ticket voting, i.e., voting for candidates of different parties for various positions. As follows from the following figure, in the 1950s, less than 30 percent of voters split their tickets at the state and local level and 10 to 15 percent at the national level, while, in 1980, this proportion doubled to 60 percent at the state and local level and to more than 30 percent at the national level.

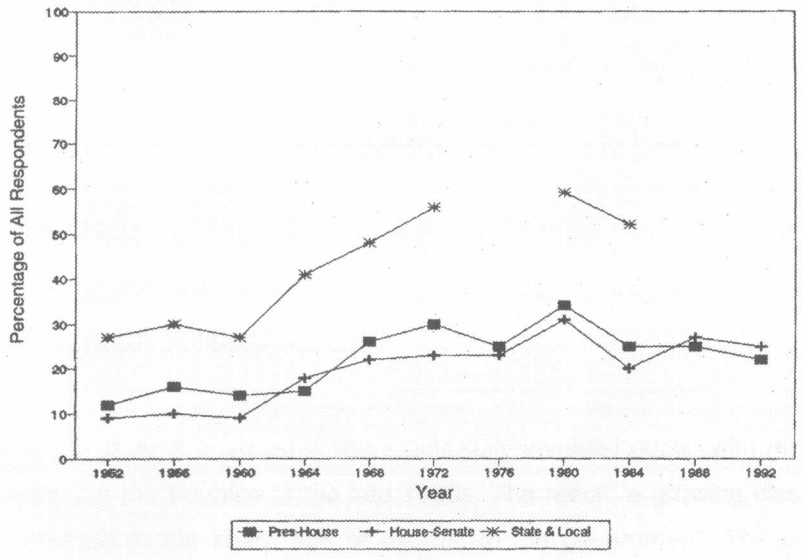

Figure 5.1 Split-ticket voting, full electorate 1952-1992 (source: Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, *p.268)*

Such a trend may seem to be consistent with dealignment theories that stress ongoing attenuation of partisan loyalties.[1] However, if we analyze Figure 5.1 more closely, we can see a surprising gradual decline in the split-ticket voting towards the 1990s, a decline which suggests a renewal of partisan loyalties. As we can see, 1980 undoubtedly represents a nadir in the party identification. However, since then partisan allegiance has risen a little, thus uprooting pessimistic

[1] For example, Carmines, Edwards G., John P. McIver, and James A. Stimson. 1987: "Unrealized Partisanship: A Theory of Dealignment," *Journal of Politics*, Volume 49, pp. 376-400

perspectives about political parties on the part of dealignment thesis supporters.[1] Yet, one has to emphasize the fact that the strength of partisan ties in the recent era can by no means match their intensity in the mythologization era. The increase in partisan affiliation presumably can be attributed to the strengthening of party-as-organization. In the 1960s and 1970s, this component of the Key-Sorauf triad was steeped in chaos and substantially debilitated, the first signs of regeneration occurring around 1980, paralleling the trend of the partisan allegiance. The nationalization and institutionalization of political parties simply entailed increased effectivity of voter recruitment and loyality reinforcement. Still, future regression to the golden age of partisanship of the pre-1960 era is extremely unlikely, especially taking into account the changed dynamism of electoral conditions.

5.3 Changed Attitude of the Electorate Towards Political Parties

In 1976, the authors of *The Changing American Voter* noticed strong anti-partisan sentiments within the electorate and hence made the following bleak comments about American political parties:

> The next step in the story is obvious. A more politically involved public with more coherent political views runs right into the troubles of the late 1960s. The result: a growing disenchantment with government – reflected in the sharp rise of distrust in the government. The issues of the 1960s, furthermore, do not clearly coincide with party lines; thus the parties offer no meaningful alternatives that might tie citizens more closely to them. Thus the political parties reap the results of disaffection. Citizens come to look at the parties in more negative terms; they also begin to abandon parties in growing numbers. [2]

According to Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, the public no longer saw differences between the parties and exceedingly distrusted the government, which, according to them, augured inevitable decomposition of political parties. Luckily enough, the future development proved the dissatisfaction thesis and the related apocalyptic visions wrong as follows from the following figure:

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[1] Lawrence, David G. 2001. "On the Resurgence of Party Identification in the 1990s." In Cohen, Jeffrey E., Richard Fleisher, and Paul Kantor, eds., *American Political Parties. Decline or Resurgence?* Washington D.C.: CQ Press, p. 33

[2] Nie, Norman H., Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik 1976. *The Changing American Voter.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 283

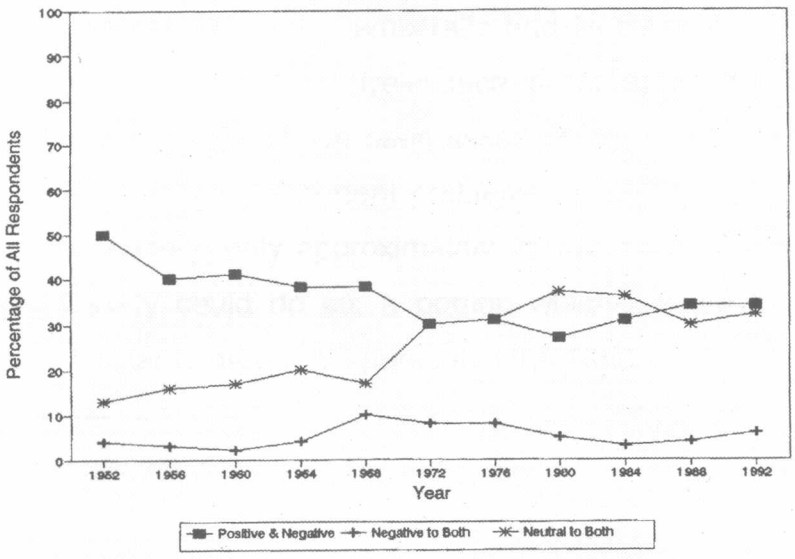

Figure 5.2 Affective evaluations of the political parties, 1952-92 (source: Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, *p.249)*

As we can see, the end of the 1960s and onset of the 1970s merely exhibited an unprecedented surge of negative partisan sentiments which can be apparently associated with the general decline of all components of the Key-Sorauf triad in this epoch. The year 1968 was simply the time of major social turmoils and protests against the general non-responsiveness of political parties, and it functioned as a catharsis of the accumulated antagonisms and antipathies on the part of the electorate, with the faith in political parties and government gradually rising thenceforth. As a result, the ominous conclusions of Nie et al. were simply distorted by short-term influences, resulting from the general extremely antipartisan spirit of the time. Yet, the year 1968 seems to be the landmark also for another phenomenon – the increase of neutral attitudes towards both parties, which implies that the voters increasingly perceive political parties neither positively nor negatively because they are irrelevant to them. As Wattenberg puts it, "the decline of parties in the electorate has been more a function of a reduction in saliency," which he considers "as a long-term secular trend and such trends are usually difficult to reverse."[1]

[1] Wattenberg, Martin P. 1986. *The Decline of American Political Parties: 1952-1984*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 51

The increased irrelevance of political parties is further demonstrated by the following figure. As we can see, the Democratic and Republican parties exhibit similar degree of neutrality, hence the irrelevance is not confined just to one of them. Also, since 1960, the voters have been asked which of the two parties was more likely to counter "the most important problems facing the country."[1] At the very beginning of this survey, only approximately 25 percent of the respondents thought that neither party could do so, a portion which jumped to roughly 40 percent in 1968 and further to around 50 percent in the 1980s.

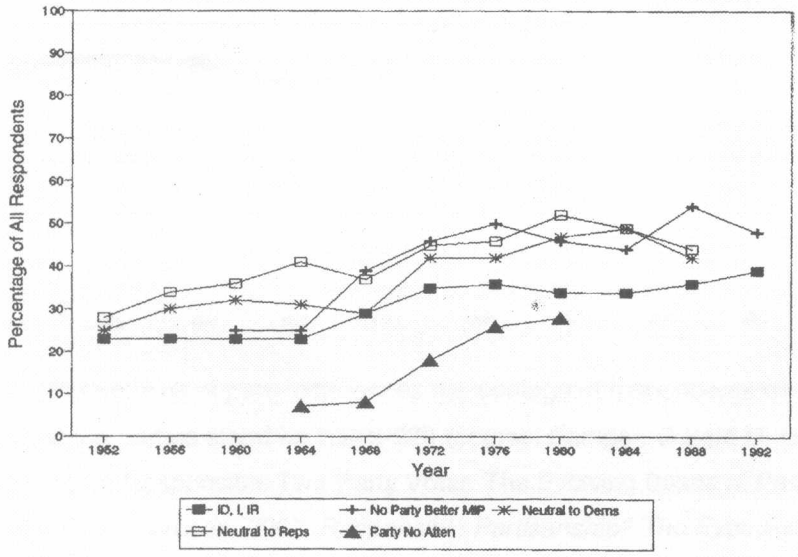

Figure 5.3 Indications of the irrelevance of parties, 1952-92 (source: Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, *p 251)*

A student of political parties may be puzzled if he or she looks at the following figure assessing the perception of party differences by the electorate. As we can see, although the voters view political parties as more and more irrelevant, they increasingly perceive differences between the political parties. Whereas in 1972, in the climax of party decline, only 50 percent of the electorate discerned party differences, this proportion amounted nearly to 70 percent in 2000. The explanation of such increase lies at hand and is based upon factors that have been already dealt with throughout this thesis: rationalization of the electorate and

[1] Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 250

actual increase in party differences.[1] Since the modern voter handles political information in a more sophisticated and efficient manner, it is self-evident that his or her ability to recognize interparty dichotomies must improve assuming that it is an objective phenomenon.

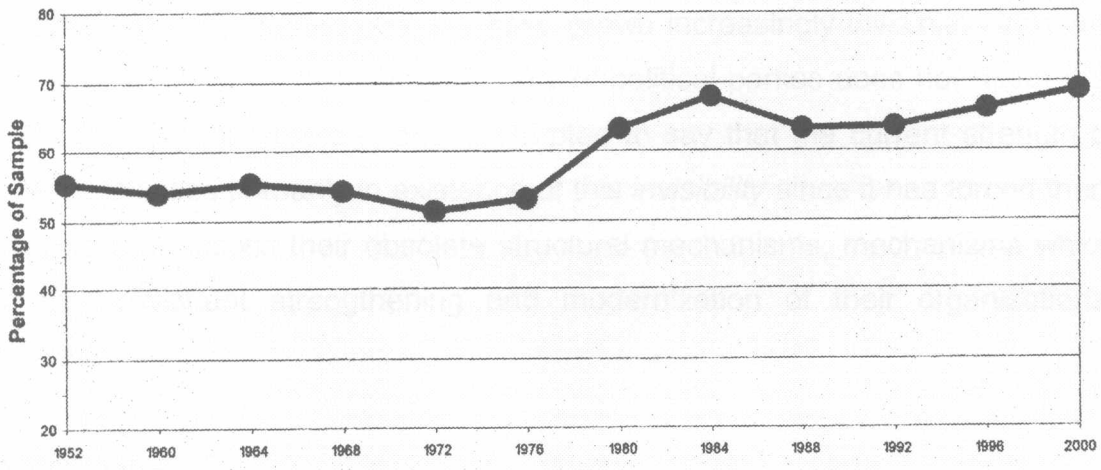

Figure 5.4 Perceptions of party differences (percentage of respondents who indicate a perception in what the parties stand for [1952-92]) (source: Pomper, Gerald M. and Marc D. Weiner: "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party Voter. The Evolving Bases of Partisanship." In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson. 2002. *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p.185)

Yet, such an explication of party differences as perceived by the electorate does not itself clarify the puzzle of the simultaneous growth of party irrelevance in the eyes of voters. The great irony is the fact that the parties were stronger in the electorate when they exhibited fewer differences and their programs overlapped. Such a seeming contradiction may be best elucidated through the changed function of the party-as-organization. As Ladd and Hadley put it, "as personal images become more salient, the importance of the party label to the voting decision must lessen."[2] The boom of the mass media and personalized campaigns simply pushed political parties out of the limelight, and replaced them with candidates in that erstwhile role. Whereas political parties formerly played the

[1] Pomper, Gerald M. and Marc D. Weiner: "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party Voter. The Evolving Bases of Partisanship." In Green, John C. and Paul Herrnson. 2002. *Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties since 1950*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p. 189

[2] Ladd, Everett C., with Charles D. Hadley. 1975. *Transformations of the American Party System*. New York: Norton, p. 301

leading part on the electoral stage, they now have moved behind the scenes. Hence it has become very difficult for the spectators to actually see them. Wattenberg aptly notes that "the ideological differences between the parties may remain but on the crucial short-run policy issues of the day it is the candidates that now matter most."[1] In other words, if the public now perceives political parties to be more and more polarized, it is mainly due to the "heralds" of their program – candidates since the parties, per se, have grown increasingly invisible. However, as we have already learned, the invisibility of political parties does not mean that they decline. On the contrary, one is tempted to say that the current strength of political parties lies primarily in existence of this *invisibility* since it has forced them to act and to reassess their obsolete structural mechanisms, mechanisms which entailed subsequent strengthening and modernization of their organizational structures.

5.4 Conclusion

The American voter of the mythologization era was largely passive, only reacting to party initiatives. No wonder that this entity was castigated in the Report of the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Association. According to the Committee, the ideal voter would affiliate with political parties "in terms of support of [their] program, rather in terms of personalities, patronage, and local matters."[2] Their dream did not come true entirely because the present candidate-centered era generates great incentives for voters to associate themselves with candidates. Yet the fundamental idea of more responsive voter eventually became a reality.

Shortly after the publication of the Report, in the 1960s, a changed American voter appeared, one rather unburdened by rigid psychological ties and pragmatically weighing the investment benefits of his vote. As a result, present electorate much resembles a rational consumer of goods in the market economy – they choose that kind of a product that will benefit them most. No wonder that under such circumstances, partisan strength eroded in the electorate, and the

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[1] Wattenberg, Martin P. 1986. *The Decline of American Political Parties: 1952-1984*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 58

[2] Committee on Political Parties. American Political Science Association.1950a. "Towards a more Responsible Party System." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 44. Supplement, p. 69

roots of voter loyalties became shallower. The phenomenon of attenuation of partisan loyalties became reflected in a plethora of skeptical sentiments on the part of political scholars who seemed to vie with each other over who would bring the gloomiest prophecies about the fate of American political parties. None of them has really materialized; political parties still fulfill their electoral function, and they are able to attract voters under completely different circumstances than in the mythologization era. The phenomenon of weakened partisan links did not appear primarily as a result of a malfunction of political parties. Rather it appeared as a natural consequence of the new dynamic era characterized by the rising influence of mass media and better-educated voters. While it may have seemed that the changed social and political environment environment was effectively killing political parties, they managed to avert the danger of their doom, as they have done many times in their history, and they have shown excellent abilities to adapt themselves to the requirements of the changed political context. They have countered the severe decline of partisan affiliation by enhanced organization which effectively stopped the aforesaid negative trend and even reversed it, although the return to the age of golden partisanship is, perhaps fortunately, extremely improbable.

6 Evaluation of Contemporary American Political Parties

There is still one essential question that needs to be answered – are the contemporary political parties in decline or resurgence? For an eager student of American parties, the following answer will probably sound not very satisfactory and perhaps disappointing as they find themselves *both* in the stage of decline *and* resurgence. It may seem that such a conclusion did not unravel the mystery of American political parties and the goal of this thesis has thus not been met as such a postulation only affirms the schizophrenia mentioned at the very beginning. Yet, such a harsh condemnation is more than precipitate due to the substantial complexity of American political parties, which has already been more than abundantly manifested throughout this thesis. Surely enough, they find themselves in decline but this decline began already at the turn of the 19th century, thus being of a long-term character, and it can be rather attributed to non-controllable external factors, such as vast social changes within American society. Moreover, political parties lost their power because they have grown more democratic, by increasing their responsiveness to the grassroots and electorate in general. It is this democratic quality that renders them, at least from ideological perspectives, immensely vigorous.

Moreover, the thesis of resurgence of political parties does not have its justification only in their "democratization," but it rests also on other factors. After the attack on party's omnipotence in the form of Progressivism at the beginning of the 20th century, political parties severely declined and submerged into the era of "party debilitation." In this epoch, political parties were characterized by the practical non-existence of a party center, lack of cohesion in the Congress, and relative disregard of an ordinary voter. This led the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association to subject the very mechanism of political parties to heavy criticism, while also presenting some apocalyptic visions about their future development in its 1950 Report. In spite of rapidly changing outer conditions, political parties seemed to be complacent in peaceful preservation of their realm up to the 1960s, when the discrepancies between the party-as-organization and party-in-the-electorate were no longer tolerable, resulting into great social turmoils. The unprecedented antagonism towards

political parties at the end of the 1960s even intensified the doubts of many political scientists about the viability of political parties and triggered a plethora of political obituaries, positing that political parties could no longer fulfill their proper function in the changed political and social environment.

Yet, as I have shown in this thesis, the parties responded, refusing slow but relatively comfortable dying, and chose rather a thorny path in the form of painful reforms that sometimes substantially curtailed their power (e.g. primary elections). Nevertheless, one should emphasize that the main incentive for change came from the voters, from the party-in-the-electorate, as a result of newly gained political knowledge, which cast political parties into a totally different light. The "informational boom" eventuated that voters rebelled and stopped being mere passive and obedient absorbers of party programs. As a result, *they* started to dictate the rules of the political game and not the political parties. In the present era, the affiliation of voters is no longer won automatically as in the mythologization era and political parties must meticulously "pamper" the voter and take heed to his or her needs. In the sixth party system, voters continuously analyze and evaluate the performance of political parties and, as a consequence, political parties must try hard to bring fourth programs to which they commit themselves if they want to gain sufficient support in the next elections. If I should describe the historical development of the party-in-the-electorate in one phrase, than an apt choice would be the triumph of *logos* over *mythos*, due the rise of the reasoning voter in the second half of the 20th century. The flexibility in choosing party allegiance does not necessarily mean alienation from the political party as some dealignment theorist would infer since, as we have seen, the phenomenon of a "vanishing voter" was limited only to the 1960s and 1970s. In this chaotic period, affectual loyalties were simply being transformed into less stable cognitive partisanship, hence presenting a watershed between the era of party mythologization and era of party secularization.

If I should make a bold prediction about the future of American political parties, nor another realignment seems to be probable as the phenomenon of rational voters naturally logically entails a counter-reaction in the form of rational political parties. In order to reverse the trend of attenuation of partisan ties, political parties introduced highly professionalized and nationalized organizations, which rendered the whole battle over the favor of the voter increasingly competitive.

Naturally, vigorous competition does not usually imply long-lasting conservation of a status quo, and the associated flexibility inherently generates a hostile environment for any future realignment. The future scenario may very likely include regular alternation of political parties in power, with neither being capable of winning any permanent majorities.

Also, rationalization of the electorate became reflected in diminution of ideological discrepancies within the individual political parties. Whereas formerly voters tended to repeatedly cast their ballot for the very label or form of political party, very frequently disregarding the content, now the voters predominantly decide on the basis of the content of political parties, i.e., depending on presented issues and ideology. In other words, the rational voter prefers political parties to be more ideologically oriented. Consequently, this helped to uproot sectional divisions within political parties since, for example, a typical voter of the modern epoch does no longer want southern Democratic politicians to be conservative because they are from the *South* as in the mythologization era, but rather liberal because they are *Democrats*. In turn, the rationalization of the electorate made political parties more transparent for the office-seekers as, in the present party system, conservative politicians naturally prefer to join the Republican Party and the liberal ones the Democratic Party because it better reflects their world view but also enhances their chances of election into the office. Consequently, parties have grown more intrinsically cohesive since the 1970s, which *inter alia* helped to eliminate the conservative coalition that so much pestered the party-in-government in the era of "party debilitation." Coupled with the institutional reforms that were implemented in the 1970s, political parties now possess sufficient internal cohesion to carry out the programs they committed themselves to before the elections.

Unlike the second, third, and fourth party systems, when political parties may have wielded substantial power but were substantially irresponsible, and the fifth party system, when they were neither strong nor responsible, the present political parties have succeeded in mixing a unique combination of responsibility and strength. The 1970s simply saw the rise of a "superparty," one that is perfectly democratic but at the same time extremely powerful. Both conditions postulated in the 1950 Report of the American Political Science Association's Committee on Political Parties about the responsible government have thus been met and its

authors would probably have been extremely proud that the phenomenon of American political party not only persists but it even lives on in an extremely healthy manner. The present party system can be aptly termed as “the era of party revitalization,“ as American political parties seem to have taken the right road and that has made all the difference.

Resumé

Cílem mé diplomové práce je analýza současných amerických stran a posouzení, zda se nacházejí ve stádiu úpadku či revitalizace. Za tímto účelem jsem do své práce zakomponoval též jejich historický vývoj, neboť objektivní obrázek o stavu současných amerických stran si lze učinit jen prostřednictvím jejich anamnézy. Jakožto hlavní pomůcku pro analýzu amerických stran používám tzv. Key-Soraufovu triádu, která rozděluje politickou stranu na tři komponenty, a to na stranu jako organizaci, stranu ve vládě a stranu v elektorátu. Strana jako organizace představuje samotné jádro politické strany a jejím hlavním cílem je mobilizace elektorátu za účelem úspěchu ve volbách. Strana ve vládě je tvořena konkrétními politiky, kteří prošli volebním sítem a byli zvoleni do určitého exekutivního či legislativního úřadu, ať už na celonárodní či státní úrovni. Strana v elektorátu je z celé Key-Soraufovy triády nejabstraktnější a nejméně čitelná, neboť zahrnuje voliče, kteří jsou větší či menší měrou svázáni s tou či onou stranou a svou náklonnost vyjadřují v lepším případě politickým aktivismem nebo účastí v primárních volbách, či v horším případě pouhou účastí ve volbách. Právě strana v elektorátu nejvíce odlišuje americké strany od těch evropských vzhledem k poměrně velkému stupni zangažovanosti amerického voliče na fungování strany jako organizace.

Podíváme-li se na blíže na historický vývoj amerických stran, pak zjistíme, že probíhal v cyklech, které je ohraničeny jevem, jenž je v americké politologii nazývaný jako „realignment", což se dá stručně charakterizovat jako intenzivní přeskupení stranické příslušnosti v elektorátu. Volby, při kterých se objevuje tzv. realignment, mají přívlastek kritické a američtí politologové se většinou shodují na kritických volbách v letech 1860, 1896, 1932 a 1968. Vezmeme-li v potaz ještě tzv. předpartijní období, pak dostaneme šest stranických systémů: 1) federalisticko-republikánský systém (od začátku devadesátých let osmnáctého století až přibližně do roku 1815), 2) demokraticko-whigovský systém (od poloviny dvacátých let devatenáctého století až do poloviny padesátých let devatenáctého století), 3) první republikánsko-demokratický systém (od roku 1860 do roku 1896), 4) druhý republikánsko-demokratický systém (od roku 1896 do roku 1932), 5)

stranický systém New Dealu (od roku 1932 až do roku 1968) a 6) stranický systém navazující na New Deal (od roku 1968 až dosud).

V první stranickém systému v podstatě existovala jen jakási praforma politické strany vzhledem k de facto neexistenci strany jako organizace a strany v elektorátu. Strany tak fungovaly pouze ve vládě a spíše připomínaly aristokratické organizace, absolutně odtržené od voličů. V druhém stranickém systému již vznikla politická strana v pravém slova smyslu, neboť zde došlo k vytvoření základních stranických organizačních struktur a k masivní expanzi do elektorátu. Zatímco v prvním stranickém systému byly politické strany vnímány veskrze negativně, v druhém nastal kompletní obrat, neboť došlo doslova k jejich zbožštění. Příslušnost ke straně byla hlavně založena na nekritickém obdivu a měla tak převážně emocionální rozměr. Ve třetím stranickém systému došlo k vytvoření té podoby amerického systému, kterou známe až do dnes, a to republikánsko-demokratickou. Moc politických stran v tomto období neúnosně vzrostla, přičemž dosáhla až absolutistických rozměrů, nehledě na četné volební podvody. Naštěstí reakce demokraticky smýšlejících elementů v americké společnosti na sebe nenechala dlouho čekat a naplno se projevila ve čtvrtém stranickém systému ve formě progresivismu. Právě tento směr zasel první zrnka pozvolného oslabování a s tím související demokratizace amerických politických stran, ale je nutno podotknout, že jejich radikální reformace se dostavila až mnohem později

V další části diplomové práce se již detailně věnuji pátému a šestému stranickému systému, přičemž každé komponentě Key-Soraufovy triády je věnována vlastní kapitola. V pátém stranickém systému došlo ke značné diskrepanci ve straně ve vládě, obzvláště uvnitř Demokratické strany, kde na jedné stál silně konzervativní jih a na druhé liberálně smýšlející sever, což může evokovat reminiscence na americkou občanskou válku. Nepřekonatelné ideologické rozdíly vedly k vytvoření tzv. konzervativní koalice, kdy jižní demokraté velmi často hlasovali s republikány, aby zabránili přijetí legislativy týkající se občanských práv, což velmi destabilizovalo Demokratickou stranu. Šestý stranický systém přinesl znatelnou změnu, neboť došlo pod vlivem strany v elektorátu ke značné polarizaci politických stran a s tím spojenému zvýšení vnitřní jednoty. Strany nenávratně opustily svou často se překrývající střední pozici na ideologické škále, kterou tak dlouho zaujímaly, a Demokratická strana se přimkla k liberalismu

a Republikánská ke konzervatizmu. Pokud k tomuto jevu přidáme strukturální opatření, které obě stany implementovaly v sedmdesátých letech dvacátého století a které měly za cíl vytvořit příznivé prostředí pro realizaci vlastních programů, pak dostáváme relativně silnou současnou stranu ve vládě.

Až do šestého stranického systému byly politické strany spíše konfederací státních organizací s minimálním vlivem národní centrální stranické buňky. Každá státní organizace se tak vyznačovala značnou autonomií a téměř zde neexistovala jakákoliv koordinace mezi nimi. Pod vlivem sílících nepřátelských a bouřlivých reakcí, kterými elektorát začal dávat najevo svoji nespokojenost s přetrvávajícím arogantním chováním politických stran, došlo k podstatné restrukturalizaci strany jako organizace. Aby byly politické strany efektivnější a pružnější v reakcích na vůli voličů, bylo nutno vytvořit silnější celonárodní stranické centrum. Obě dvě strany si vybraly jinou cestu. Zatímco demokraté šli cestou procedurální reformy, postavenou na implementaci různých standardů, republikáni vsadili na organizační reformu, kdy si centrum podmanilo státní organizace tím, že je zahrnulo službami a peněžními zdroji. Jak se ukázalo, republikánská cesta byla o hodně úspěšnější a demokratům nezbylo než úspěšný model jejich soka okopírovat. Díky těmto reformám vznikly nesmírně silné celonárodní organizace, které nemají v americké politické historii obdoby. V šestém stranické systému se též začal objevovat nový typ voleb, který se nezaměřuje už na stranu, ale na kandidáty, jakožto důsledek změněné dynamiky společnosti. I když strana formálně ustoupila do pozadí, tak si stále uchovala vliv na kandidáta, neboť ten stále potřebuje její zdroje a služby, které v takovém rozsahu může poskytnou jenom ona.

I strana v elektorátu si prošla v druhé polovině dvacátého století dynamickým vývojem. Zatímco dříve byla stranická příslušnost určována spíše emočními složkami osobnosti, tak v šedesátých letech dvacátého století došlo k vytvoření nové formy vazby k politickým stranám, a to na kognitivní úrovni. Dříve měla politická strana monopol na politické informační zdroje, ale pod vlivem medializace a větší vzdělanosti společnosti tento monopol ztratila. Následkem toho může politická informace k voliči proudit i nestranickým kanály, přičemž ten nyní disponuje lepším schopnostmi pro nakládání s touto informací než v minulosti. Jeho příslušnost k politické straně je o hodně flexibilnější a nemá tak hluboké kořeny jak v předchozích stranických systémech. Volič analyzuje výkonnost politických stran a podle toho se rozhoduje, do jaké investuje svůj hlas. I když se

v sedmdesátých letech zdálo, že dochází k odcizení voličů od politických stran a k mizení stranických pout, tak tento jev v osmdesátých letech ustal a strana v elektorátu začala postupně ale jistě posilovat.

I když některé škarohlídské hlasy tvrdí opak, tak současné americké politické strany rozhodně neupadají. Možná jsou slabší než v 19. století, ale za to jsou o hodně zodpovědnější a demokratičtější, a právě v tom spočívá jejich síla a revitalizace. Co víc, politickým stranám se podařilo zastavit propad z pátého stranického systému a ve srovnání s ním se veškeré tři komponenty Key-Soraufovy triády nacházejí ve stádiu rozkvětu. Americká politická strana prostě žije dál, a to o hodně zdravěji než kdy předtím.

Bibliographic analysis

According to Epstein, American political science has been mainly influenced by two groups of political thinkers: defenders of indigenous institutions and advocates of responsible government. The former group rejected implementation of any foreign political assets and claimed that political parties had to reflect the specific context of the United States. The followers of this doctrine, such as A. Lawrence Lowell, Herbert Agar, and most importantly V.O.Key, Jr., preferred political parties to be largely decentralized, rather non-ideological, non-cohesive in the government and with limited mass membership. The latter group, featuring James MacGregor Burns and especially E. E. Schattschneider, very much denounced traditional party organizations and called for greater collective responsibility of political parties, which, according to them, should strive for increased inner cohesiveness and greater responsiveness to the electorate.[1]

However, the inclusion of V. O. Key Jr. under the group of defenders of indigenous institutions is somewhat tricky as his work is too complex and very much reflects the schizophrenia of American political parties. Some of his ideas even classify him into the responsible government category as he advocated strengthening of political parties and increase of their efficiency, yet without implementation of foreign assets and increase in mass membership, and hence he is rather affiliated with the first group. In his classical work *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (1949), he heavily criticizes one-party politics in the South because it conserves the status quo and does not generate any incentives for change. In his other famous book, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (1964), V.O. Key, Jr. expresses the assumption that greater accountability and responsibility of political parties can be achieved only through their greater competitiveness. According to him, the degeneration of party organizations in the first half of the twentieth century occurred as a result of introduction of direct primary elections, which degraded the interparty competition to the level of personalities. In other words, he advocates traditional political parties, claiming that, if properly organized and competitive, they suit well the American environment.

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[1] Epstein, Leon D. 1986. *Political Parties in the American Mold.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. pp. 23-37

Unlike defenders of indigenous institutions, E. E: Schattschneider rejected the idea that the main functions of American political parties should be merely to reflect diversity of interests. Within the electorate, he identified a distinct majority that parties should strive to represent. Also, in his masterpiece *Party Government* (1942), Schattschneider emphasizes egalitarianism and urges political parties to be more socially responsible as he thinks that business elites exercise excessive influence on party agenda. Interestingly, in this book, Schattschneider does not approve of Progressive reforms based upon democratization of political parties, and, similarly to V.O. Key, Jr., clings to the assumption that vigorous competition suffices to achieve the party revitalization. Also, Schattschneider proposes to create a national leadership, independent of state and local organizations, as, according to him, decentralization very much prevents responsible government from being operative.

In order to counter the continuing crisis of American politics, a group of political scholars decided to establish the American Political Science Association's Committee on Political Parties, under Schattschneider's chairmanship, which introduced more concrete prerequisites for implementation of the responsible party government in its 1950 Report. The Report basically calls for a strengthened role of national party committees and conventions, in order to make party policy more coherent and coordinated. It also finally acknowledges the mechanism of direct primaries as a method of selection candidates, however, it gives preference to a closed type of primaries, with participation limited to political activists. By postulating this, Schattschneider abandoned his concept of interparty competition being a sole means in achieving the responsible party government as this could be accomplished also by another mechanism, i.e., by enhancement of intraparty democracy and more extensive inclusion of the politically aware electorate into the functioning of party-as-organization.

Whereas the literature on political parties before the 1970s dealt rather with the function of political parties and their possible reformation, after the 1970s, it focused mainly on assessing party strength. As a result, two irreconcilable camps of political scientists appeared, one advocating the thesis of party decline, while the other one heralding party resurgence. One of the earliest representatives of the former group is Walter Dean Burnham, who in his classical work *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (1970), expresses profound

doubts about the future viability of democracy in the United States due to the continued decline of party efficacy in addressing voters. Burnham's findings were elaborated upon by Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik., who in their noted study *The Changing American Voter* (1976) argue that the electorate has made "a great leap forward," which includes more sophisticated handling of political information and greater utilization of ideological thinking. However, such "awakening" of the American voter sharply clashes with the unpreparedness of American parties to reflect these changes, which results in growing dissatisfaction with political parties. It should be noted that *The Changing American Voter* is an allusion to *The American Voter* (1960), which is a seminal study on voting behavior by Angus Campbell et al. It basically established methodology in analyzing the electorate, yet many of its findings have proved inaccurate over time. The dissatisfaction theory was refuted by findings of another defender of the party decline, Martin Wattenberg, who in his famous book *The Decline of American Political Parties: 1952-1984* (1986) postulates that political parties, rather than being antagonized by voters, have become largely irrelevant to them as a result of the rise of candidate-centered elections.

Another famous study about the changing American party-in-the-electorate entitled *Transformations of the American Party System* (1975) by Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., with Charles D. Hadley, stands somewhere aside from the traditional party decline doctrine as it assumes rather neutral attitude towards the consequences of this change. In this book, they deal with the phenomenon of vanishing die-hard partisans and increased electoral volatility as a result of profound transformations taking place in the American society. In addition, they analyze the reasons of the shift from the once one-party South to a relatively bipartisan regional unit.

After the gloomy 1970s, the 1980s saw the rise of more optimistic prospects about American parties. In their book *The Party Goes On: The Persistence of the Two-Party System in the United States* (1985), Xandra Kayden and Eddie Mahe Jr. demonstrate that American parties do not collapse but has rather regained vigor. Also, according to them, they have largely changed their function because they are no longer predominantly structures that organize the electorate but rather agencies offering services to candidates. In a similar fashion, Larry Sabato in *The Party's Just Begun: Shaping Political Parties for America's Future* (1988)

celebrates the development of political organizations at the beginning of the 1980s, namely their unprecedented strengthening at the national level. Nevertheless, he also warns against their becoming mere service agencies to candidates, which would entail excessive increase in independence of party affiliation.

Whereas the two aforementioned books deal with revitalization of party organizations, David W. Rohde in his excellent study *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House* (1991) traces the renewed strength of the party-in-government. According to him, the realignment of electoral forces in the 1960s contributed to attenuation of intraparty sectional divisions and increased polarization of political parties, while such electoral changes became subsequently reflected in greater homogeneity of House Democrats. Also, the institutional reforms from the 1970s implemented by both parties helped to substantially decrease the influence of party dissidents, and, as a result, the consensus in political parties is much greater than it used to be in the fifth party system.

All the listed books evaluating rise or decline of political parties deal predominantly only with one segment of the Key-Sorauf triad. However, Aldrich's book called *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America* (1995) synthetizes all three components and presents one of the most complex studies on American political parties ever written. In addition to evaluation of the post-World War II political parties, Aldrich also observes their development from formation in the 1790s to the Civil War and analyzes three basic issues that every political party faces in democracy: how to regulate access to public offices, how to mobilize voters and how to win and maintain majorities to accomplish the set goals once in office. His evaluation of contemporary parties is based upon the argument that the onset of candidate-centered elections did not hamper them at all and, on the contrary, now they are revitalized, with highly effective governing abilities and increased level of polarization.

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