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Developing State Legitimacy

The Credibility of Messengers and the Utility, Fit, and Success of Ideas

Kelly M. McMann

Legitimacy, citizens' belief that obeying the state is right and proper, is critical to governance. Legitimacy increases citizens' compliance with state directives, lowers enforcement costs, and provides states with a reserve of support, which is useful when government performance does not meet public expectations.[1] The absence of state legitimacy, on the other hand, requires states to employ fear to attempt to maintain order.[2] Despite the importance of legitimacy, we know little about the process by which it develops.

In particular, what explains why a population evaluates its state based on tradition, charisma, law, ideology, performance, or some other type of legitimacy?[3] The question is further complicated by the fact that across countries people may use different criteria to evaluate the same type of legitimacy. For example, to judge legitimacy in terms of performance, people in one country may consider the growth of personal incomes, whereas citizens of another country may focus on a reduction in income inequality.

This article offers a theory of the emergence of legitimacy criteria, standards many citizens in a country use to judge whether obeying their state is right and proper. The framework builds on findings from the "old institutionalists" of the mid-twentieth century and research from the last decade. The "old institutionalists" made the important observation that criteria for legitimacy can come from not only the authority itself, but also from society.[4] Their focus was not, however, exclusive to polities, but included a variety of organizations, such as families and schools. Research during the last decade on numerous polities has illustrated the old institutionalists' point about societal influences and documented that legitimacy criteria emerge and change over time.[5]

To illuminate the process by which these legitimacy criteria emerge, this article offers the following framework: government leaders and societal forces intentionally or unintentionally promote particular ideas as legitimacy criteria, and citizens choose which ideas to adopt as legitimacy criteria based on the credibility of the messengers and the utility, fit, and success of the ideas. This argument comes at a critical time. In the last twenty-five years, thirty-four new countries have emerged and twenty-eight

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additional states have failed and thus face the challenge of developing state legitimacy.[6] An explanation of how legitimacy criteria emerge may offer insight into how newly independent or failed states can better build legitimacy. With legitimacy these states would be more stable and, as a result of increased citizen compliance, more effective.

Argument

To account for citizens' use of similar standards for evaluating legitimacy, we must consider the role of government leaders and societal forces in promulgating ideas, citizens' evaluation of the ideas, and the characteristics of the ideas themselves. Government leaders and societal forces convey ideas about how officials should come to power, how they should run the government, and which policies they should adopt. Government leaders' and societal forces' promotion of these ideas may be for the purposes of shaping legitimacy criteria, as part of a government campaign or independence movement, for example. Or, the ideas may be propagated simply as part of an economic policy, for instance, and never put forth as legitimacy criteria.[7] As for the actors themselves, "government leaders" refers to those who hold positions of state power nationally or subnationally prior to and immediately after independence or failure; "societal forces" includes new or well-established, legal or illegal civic leaders, institutions, and movements.

The ideas government officials and societal forces promote can include ones they generate, ideas already familiar in the country, or ideas they borrowed from outside the country. Government officials and societal forces can propagate identical or competing criteria, and over time one side may adopt the other's idea. Government officials disseminate their ideas through policies, the media, and direct interaction with citizens; societal forces advance their ideas by means of public demonstrations, recruitment of members, electoral campaigns, speeches, and publications.

Individual citizens adopt these ideas based on who propagates them as well as how they judge the utility, fit, and success of the ideas. Citizens are more likely to adopt ideas from the most credible messengers—individuals, groups, and institutions who have coercive powers, material resources, and political longevity. An actor is credible in the sense that these attributes convince people that the adoption of the actor's ideas will bring advantages, specifically protection from punishment and the promise of material gain over a long period. Credibility is distinct from political legitimacy because government institutions are only one possible messenger, and they can possess these attributes without people believing obedience to the state is right and proper. The quality of ideas can, however, outweigh the credibility of the messenger: citizens will choose superior ideas from a less credible messenger over poor ideas from a more credible messenger. Citizens evaluate the ideas themselves based on their utility, fit, and success. Useful ideas provide explanations for the crisis associated with independence or state failure, offer solutions to the crisis, and promise personal material benefits. Fit means simply that ideas resonate with contemporary values and institutions. Successful ideas have

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been effective in other settings.[8] Their demonstrated effectiveness distinguishes them from ideas that are "useful."

Research Design and Data

To illustrate the framework, this article examines the development of legitimacy criteria in Central Asia. Central Asia is a relevant setting because it is home to new states. Since Central Asian and other Soviet republics gained their independence in 1991, scholars have studied the related concepts of citizens' support for and trust in government officials in the region, but little attention has been devoted to the separate idea of legitimacy.[9]

Within Central Asia I focus on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, and I find criteria for legitimacy in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are distinct from those in Uzbekistan. The difference is puzzling because of the similarities among the three countries. They share common Russian imperial and Soviet histories;[10] they have never had consolidated democracy; and they have predominantly Muslim populations. The fact that Uzbekistan falls between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on numerous socioeconomic characteristics, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, extent of urbanization, and levels of energy production makes the puzzle more perplexing.

I identified the divergence using mass surveys that colleagues and I administered to 1,500 adults in each country twelve years after independence.[11] In addition, from early independence through the first two decades, I conducted 266 in-depth interviews of government officials and average citizens and nine household observational studies, lasting more than a month each, in rural and urban areas of northern, central, and southern Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Interviews and observations in these countries are particularly useful for fleshing out the survey results because it is in these countries, more than in Uzbekistan, that criteria for legitimacy shifted from the Soviet era. The interview and observational data, as well as published analyses of governmental and societal leaders' preferences and actions, provide support for the causal argument.

Conceptualization and Measurement of Legitimacy

According to scholarly consensus, the term legitimacy refers to citizens' belief that it is right and proper to obey government laws and decisions.[12] To measure legitimacy the survey questionnaire asked respondents to strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree/ somewhat disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with translated versions of the following statements: 1) Acting according to government laws and decisions is proper and right, and 2) Our existing government institutions, such as ministries and government offices, are better than any others that might be established in Kazakhstan/ Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan. The scale ranged from 1 to 5, with 5 representing strongly disagree. Whereas the first statement reflects the consensus among scholars as to how to define the term legitimacy, the second statement represents the next most common

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understanding of legitimacy, legitimacy as support for government institutions.[13] These bare-bones operationalizations of the term legitimacy are preferable to other approaches that include criteria such as economic performance in their conceptualizations and thus presuppose how citizens evaluate legitimacy.[14] The similar findings from these two different measures increase our confidence in the results.

This study uses a number of techniques to overcome the challenge of exploring legitimacy in non-democratic states. The potential complication is that people in non-democratic states may not be able to speak openly for fear of government repression. Also, those who claim that they find their government legitimate may be merely rationalizing their compliance with their government's wishes.[15] In considering these potential obstacles, it is important to remember that the purpose of this study is not to explore levels of legitimacy, but rather the criteria by which people evaluate their governments. To ensure that the survey uncovered criteria, instead of rationalizations, the questionnaire separated questions on possible standards for states and actual assessments of legitimacy and posed them in the course of an hour-long interview that covered many topics. Whereas the statistical analysis links the possible standards and legitimacy assessments, it is unlikely that respondents were making these connections during the survey. The in-depth interview and observational study data directly link the two and provide a check on confusing rationalizations for criteria. The individuals and families whom I interviewed and observed could speak openly to me. I had had contact, and even lived, with them many times, in some cases over a fifteen-year period, so we had established a high level of trust. The fact that many of these people have criticized their governments and ignored government directives in my presence is evidence of their willingness to speak openly with me.

The relative openness of the three countries also made overcoming the challenge possible. Average citizens have been accustomed to speaking freely since the late Soviet era, when Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the policy of *glasnost* or openness. Also, the survey research was conducted before political violence in Andijon, Uzbekistan led to a reduction in civil liberties. Individuals' willingness to speak openly in Central Asia is evident from the relatively small number of survey respondents who considered the state legitimate (see Table 1). If people feared speaking openly, nearly all respondents would have indicated that they found the state legitimate. More respondents in Uzbekistan than in Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan do find their state legitimate. However, a later section shows that a different criterion for legitimacy and the Uzbekistani government's relative success in meeting it can account for the higher percentage of respondents in Uzbekistan considering their state legitimate.

State Legitimacy and Its Criteria

Using the measures of legitimacy, I found that criteria for legitimacy vary among the three Central Asian countries. In all three countries, democratic procedures and titular nationalism are criteria for legitimacy, and citizens also consider general economic

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Table 1 Legitimacy: Responses to Legitimacy Statements 1 and 2 (percentages)

	Kazakhstan		**Kyrgyzstan**		**Uzbekistan**	
	1. Proper and Right	2. Better Institutions	1. Proper and Right	2. Better Institutions	1. Proper and Right	2. Better Institutions
Strongly Agree	3	2	3	2	11	10
Agree	27	23	30	24	40	36
Somewhat Agree/Disagree	44	31	37	32	26	25
Disagree	14	22	15	22	10	12
Strongly Disagree	3	5	4	5	3	3
Difficult to Answer	9	16	11	13	9	14
Decline to Answer	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

n=1500 in each country
Some totals do not equal 100 due to rounding.

performance. However, their standards for economic performance diverge in regards to how the state distributes resources. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan people evaluate the economic performance of their states based on the Western version of the social contract: people pay their taxes, and, in exchange, the state provides goods and services. By contrast, in Uzbekistan people judge the economic performance of their state based on Soviet-style paternalism: citizens are guaranteed extensive state assistance without the implication of a corresponding obligation.

In each country I examined criteria for three possible forms of legitimacy: legal/rational, ideological, and performance-based.[16] My choice of these forms and the content of each, described below, was based on my ten years of experience conducting research and living in the region for extended periods prior to the surveys. I used measures of urban/rural residence, age cohort, gender, and level of education as control variables. I first ran ordinal logistic regressions to confirm that relationships approximated linear ones. I then used the ordinary least squares method to regress each measure of legitimacy on the different criteria. A positive relationship means that a particular criterion is closely associated with respondents' assessments of state legitimacy, thus citizens assess the legitimacy of their states based, in part, on the criterion.

For legal/rational legitimacy, I focused on democratic procedures because each country experienced some political liberalization in the late Soviet era and early independence period. It is likely that democratic procedures and expectations for a new state are linked in people's minds. To measure this, survey respondents reacted to the following statements using the five-point agree/disagree scale: 1) citizens can participate in government in Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan and 2) citizens can choose their government officials in Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan.

For ideology, I examined titular nationalism because of the countries' experiences in the Soviet era. The Soviet Communist Party, which was dominated by Russians, promoted other ethnic groups' cultures and political representation only to the extent that

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the minorities did not challenge the Party's monopoly on power. Nationalist sentiments rose in the late Soviet era and contributed to the collapse of the union, suggesting that citizens of the newly independent countries may judge their states based on the promotion of the titular ethnic groups. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan are multiethnic, so as a proxy for titular nationalism I used the self-reported ethnic identities of respondents. Members of the titular group are coded as 0, and non-members are coded as 1. As a second measure, respondents used the five-point scale to react to the statement: the government's promotion of the new flag of Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan is a good idea. Support for the new flags is a proxy for titular nationalism because, unlike their Soviet republican predecessors, each new flag showcases symbols and colors associated with the titular group. Through my interviews, observational studies, and pilot surveys, I found that people considered the new flags as part of titular nationalism.

For performance I focused on economic performance because the pre-independence period was characterized by an economic crisis in the Soviet Union,[17] suggesting that the economies and new states would be linked in people's minds. As a proxy for economic performance, the survey first asked respondents, would you describe the current economic situation in Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan as very good, good, so-so, bad, or very bad? I also suspected that views about how the state now distributes resources would be influential. The end of the Soviet welfare system, which provided extensive but low quality, cradle-to-grave benefits, was the most significant aspect of the Union's collapse for average citizens.[18] Thus, citizens' hopes for their new countries were likely to include expectations about state welfare. To address this, the survey questionnaire asked respondents to use the five-point agree/disagree scale to react to the following statements: 1) citizens expect that the state will provide services if they pay their taxes and 2) citizens use state resources such as medical services and education. The first statement reflects the Western notion of a social contract. All three countries currently require citizens to pay taxes, so the Western social contract statement has the potential to be salient in each country. The second statement captures Soviet-era paternalism where state goods and services were guaranteed without a corresponding citizen obligation.[19] I found in my interviews and observational studies that people used this language to describe possible relationships between citizens and states.

The regression analysis demonstrates that each of the variables for democratic procedures and titular nationalism is closely associated with respondents' assessments of state legitimacy; thus citizens in the three countries assess the legitimacy of their states based, in part, on these criteria. Specifically, the relationship is positive, meaning that those who affirm a criterion statement were more likely to view the state as legitimate, whereas those who responded negatively were more likely to view the state as not legitimate. As indicated in Table 2, nearly all the relationships are significant at the .01 level.[20]

The regression analysis also indicates that economic performance is a criterion for legitimacy in all three countries, but criteria related to how the state distributes resources differ. The relationships between the current economic situation and the

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Table 2 Legitimacy Measures 1 and 2 Regressed on Possible Legitimacy Criteria

Measure 1: "Acting according to government laws and decisions is proper and right."

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Participate in Government	.157**	.025	.099**	.024	.236**	.030
Choose Leaders	.100**	.024	.085**	.024	.111**	.030
Ethnicity	.137**	.050	.189**	.051	.088	.070
Promotion of Flag	.098**	.033	.201**	.029	.189**	.036
Country's Economy	.129**	.032	.208**	.028	.128**	.031
Social Contract	.085**	.026	.156**	.024	.008	.029
Use State Resources	.026	.025	.067**	.025	.180**	.029
Soviet State Responsive	.009	.027	.005	.027	.079**	.030
Urban/Rural Residence	−.123**	.049	−.055	.053	−.017	.057
Age Cohort	.033*	.015	.021	.015	.003	.019
Gender	−.034	.046	.043	.047	−.046	.052
Education Level	−.015	.017	.013	.017	.033*	.020
Constant	1.297	.201	.459	.209	.252	.231
Observations	1099		1085		918	
Adjusted R-squared	.176		.270		.373	

Measure 2: "Our existing government institutions, such as ministries and government offices, are better than any others that might be established in Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan."

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Participate in Government	.171**	.028	.051*	.028	.243**	.030
Choose Leaders	.152**	.027	.085**	.027	.114**	.030
Ethnicity	.125*	.057	.185**	.059	.135*	.071
Promotion of Flag	.059	.036	.105**	.033	.191**	.036
Country's Economy	.170**	.036	.137**	.032	.230**	.032
Social Contract	.139**	.029	.165**	.028	−.013	.029
Use State Resources	−.018	.028	.015	.029	.123**	.029
Soviet State Responsive	.025	.031	−.022	.031	.036	.030
Urban/Rural Residence	−.161**	.056	−.078	.061	.086	.058
Age Cohort	.026	.017	.010	.017	.026	.019
Gender	−.087*	.051	.002	.054	−.072	.053
Education Level	.036*	.020	.026	.019	.087**	.020
Constant	1.125	.225	1.470	.239	.053	.234
Observations	1025		1044		889	
Adjusted R-squared	.208		.138		.390	

** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$.

Those who found these survey questions difficult to answer and those who declined to answer them were excluded.

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legitimacy measures are positive and significant, meaning a favorable view of the economy correlates with a favorable assessment of state legitimacy and vice versa. However, the Western version of the social contract has taken hold only in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; it has positive relationships with the legitimacy measures and is significant. My in-depth interview data also support this finding. For example, a wheat farmer in southern Kazakhstan described the goods that he would like from the state—long-term credit and control of energy prices—"We do not need anything else from the government." But, in the same breath, he also explained his responsibility, "The main thing is that we should work, pay our taxes ...."[21] A farmer in Kyrgyzstan had also adopted the Western social contract as a legitimacy criterion and believed that the Kyrgyzstani state had failed to meet it: "We rely on ourselves. We feed the government. ... You can only survive on your own with your own family."[22] She acknowledged the need to pay taxes but found that the state provided too few services, thus not meeting its end of the bargain. By contrast, the Soviet-era guarantee of state goods and services is still salient in Uzbekistan. The relationships between this measure and each legitimacy variable are positive, significant, and thus robust for Uzbekistan. These relationships are statistically significant in neither of the regressions for Kazakhstan, and they are not robust for Kyrgyzstan.

The different expectations for state resource distribution in the countries and states' varied success in meeting them likely account for the higher percentage of respondents in Uzbekistan who evaluated their state as legitimate.[23] At the time of my survey research, the government of Uzbekistan had managed to maintain many Soviet-era welfare benefits, which it funded with revenue from the largely state-controlled economy. Thus, the government likely was meeting, in many people's minds, the state paternalism criterion for legitimacy. By contrast, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were struggling with their new approach of collecting tax revenue from private enterprises in order to provide state goods and services.

The regression analysis also suggests that comparison among alternatives and personal characteristics do not shape citizens' assessments of legitimacy. I explored whether citizens' evaluations are related to their opinions of the Soviet state, a reflection of Linz's conceptualization of legitimacy as a comparison among alternatives and a logical alternative because respondents once lived in the Soviet Union. To assess this, the survey questionnaire asked participants to use the five-point scale to react to the statement, "in the Soviet Union the state responded to citizens' needs." This variable was not statistically significant in any of the relationships but one. Similarly, personal characteristics—urban or rural residence, age cohort, gender, and level of education—are statistically significant in fewer than a third of the twenty-four relationships.

Development of Criteria for State Legitimacy

The framework laid out earlier accounts for differences and similarities in legitimacy criteria among the three countries. Different criteria for performance legitimacy are

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attributable to government leaders' promotion of particular ideas. Government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have advanced the concept of the Western social contract instead of maintaining the promise of extensive state welfare benefits inherited from the Soviet era as government officials in Uzbekistan did. The credibility of the government leaders, particularly their control of material resources, encouraged citizens to adopt the ideas.

The criteria for legal/rational and ideological legitimacy, by contrast, originated with society. In the late Soviet and early independence eras, movements for greater political liberalization and promotion of titular peoples and culture developed. These movements spread within the populations of each country the idea that democratic procedures and titular nationalism should be the bases for evaluating states. Although these movements did not have the coercive capabilities, material resources, or political longevity of government leaders, the superior utility, fit, and success of their ideas outweighed credibility. The following text describes the process by which these ideas became legitimacy criteria.

Adoption of Performance Legitimacy Criteria In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, national government officials broke with Soviet performance legitimacy by introducing the Western social contract as the new economic philosophy. Their counterparts in Uzbekistan, by contrast, sought to maintain the Soviet era criterion of extensive welfare benefits, with which citizens were already familiar. Government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan borrowed the idea of the Western social contract from the *Zeitgeist* and Western economic institutions, and disseminated it to the public through policies, media, and direct contact. Citizens adopted the idea as a criterion for legitimacy because the states' material resources made their messages most persuasive.

The Messengers: Government Officials The accounts of government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan indicate that they supported a Western social contract in place of Soviet paternalism. They describe their intentions to restructure state-society relations and thus, in practice, set new criteria for state legitimacy. The Minister of Labor and Social Protection in Kazakhstan advocated that "People should become less accustomed to state paternalism."[24] Lower-level officials also convey this message. The head of a county-level social assistance office in Kazakhstan explained that "In the USSR everyone relied on the state. Recently people have begun to understand that without action you cannot do anything, and they have begun to work. You cannot count on anyone. You cannot count on some uncle to help you. ...You can work a piece of land, take care of a herd, trade, but you cannot sit around. You are on your own."[25] The government's message is not only that state paternalism has to end, but also that citizens need to meet their end of the Western social contract. For example, the head of the Social Policy Department of Kazakhstan described how taxes collected by the state fund health care, education, and social protection.[26]

Government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan became familiar with the idea from the Zeitgeist and adopted it under pressure from international financial institutions.

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In the 1980s and 1990s, international financial institutions advocated the Western social contract as part of market reform—the reduction of states' roles in their economies through liberalization, deregulation, and privatization. Specifically, they recommended circumscribing states' provision of welfare benefits, and, in the context of postcommunist states, providing limited goods and services funded with tax revenue from private economic activity. From the perspective of a deputy in a provincial legislature in Kazakhstan, "The EBRD [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development] and World Bank ... dictated these conditions in order [for us] to receive money."[27]

Government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan promoted the Western social contract through their policies, the media, and their direct interactions with citizens. Since becoming independent, the governments of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have restructured their welfare systems as part of market reform. The governments have developed new mechanisms to distribute state resources through a social contract, rather than as a guarantee. State benefits are now officially targeted to people based on need instead of guaranteed to everyone, and citizens are now required to pay numerous taxes. This message about the end to Soviet paternalism and the new social contract has reached citizens both through the media and through their interaction with government officials. A deputy editor of a state newspaper in Kyrgyzstan described how provincial government officials have urged him: "'Do some more economic articles. Show the reform process. More explanation about the market economy.'" A deputy *akim* [leader] in Kazakhstan and the akim convey the message directly to residents of their village. The deputy akim explained, "We tell them each person needs to earn money on his own."[28]

In contrast to their counterparts in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, government officials in Uzbekistan have continued state paternalism, and they have explicitly promoted this measure of economic performance as a criterion of state legitimacy. "Strong social protection" is one of Uzbekistan's five principles of economic development and reform, which are part of President Islam Karimov's campaign to establish state legitimacy.[29] At the time of my survey research, the government maintained most of the Soviet-era guarantees of state goods and services, such as subsidized consumer goods and extensive children's benefits. This is evident from my survey data. For example, in Uzbekistan 28 percent of respondents received children benefits, whereas the percentages were 6 and 15 for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, respectively.[30] Even though Uzbekistan was only slightly better off than Kyrgyzstan as measured by GDP, a larger percentage in Uzbekistan received these benefits. Such continued state paternalism is part of a broader economic policy. Choosing to take an autarkic approach, Uzbekistan's leaders did not come under the market reform pressures that their neighbors did when they prepared to enter international markets and economic organizations.[31] Instead, "Uzbekistan's economic reform program has been distinguished by the effort to retain the state as the key actor and manager in the Uzbekistan economy."[32] Unlike its counterparts in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in Uzbekistan, "the government continues to rule out fundamental market-oriented reform."[33]

Three additional sets of evidence bolster the argument about the states by demonstrating that different criteria for legitimacy are not artifacts of the Soviet era, reflections

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of differences in public opinion, or the results of grassroots efforts. First, there are no significant differences in the three populations' experiences with the Soviet state to account for divergent legitimacy criteria today. Residents of the three countries overwhelmingly describe the Soviet state as a paternalistic one. In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, 90, 89, and 81 percent of respondents, respectively, strongly agreed or agreed with the following statement: "In the Soviet Union citizens used state resources such as medical services and education." Second, the surveys revealed that public opinion about whether market reform, including the social contract, improves living standards is similar across the three countries, so it cannot account for why the social contract is a criterion for legitimacy in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, but not Uzbekistan. In each country approximately 40 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, "Overall, countries in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that have undergone a significant degree of market reform provide a higher standard of living for their citizens than do countries where there has been little or no market reform." These data also lend support to the claim that it was government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, not grassroots efforts, who promoted the idea of the social contract. Had citizens of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan demanded a social contract, we would expect greater popular belief in market reform as a source of higher living standards. In fact, in the early independence period they continued to favor state paternalism.[34] Third, societal forces did not promote the introduction of a Western social contract. This idea was not a demand heard in protests or found in civic organizations' platforms in the late Soviet era. Protestors, instead, demanded that the government reduce prices, increase wages, and provide housing and consumer goods.[35] A review of the objectives of civic groups active in the late Soviet era in each country indicates that economic demands were rarely the focus before the new states introduced their economic programs. Moreover, no group pushed for the adoption of a Western social contract.[36] In sum, it was the states, not societal forces, that promoted the economic ideas that ultimately became legitimacy criteria.

The Ideas: The Utility, Fit, and Success of the Social Contract and Paternalism Why then did citizens adopt their states' ideas for economic performance as legitimacy criteria? This is especially puzzling in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where the states' ideas went against public opinion. In this case the characteristics of the messenger are more central to the explanation than the qualities of the ideas. In particular, the material resources of the states made it difficult for citizens in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to not adopt the new criterion for economic performance legitimacy. Due to the Soviet state economic monopoly and new political elites' capture of recently privatized property, government leaders of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan held the preponderance of economic resources. Thus, it is understandable that when they implemented new policies regarding the distribution of goods and services, citizens would be pressed to judge the state by the new schemes. Moreover, people discussed in the interviews and studies that there was no reasonable alternative to the Western social contract. The economic crisis of the late Soviet era and the collapse of the Soviet economy had discredited socialism as an alternative, and societal forces did not suggest how the state should distribute resources other

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than advocating that titular nationalities should or should not disproportionately benefit. Further increasing the states' influence was the success and utility of the Western social contract, according to the people I interviewed and observed. This approach had proven effective in other countries, so it promised success. It was useful in the sense that it provided an explanation and solution for the economic crisis at the time. That said, the Western social contract reduced citizens' personal material benefits, so it offered them only limited utility. Moreover, it did not resonate with the Soviet paternalistic values and institutions that were familiar to them, so the fit was poor. People explained that for these reasons they only grudgingly adopted this idea.

In Uzbekistan, citizens did not so much adopt a new criterion of legitimacy, but continue to accept a former one—state paternalism. In promoting this idea, government officials in Uzbekistan, like their Kazakhstani and Kyrgyzstani counterparts, had the advantage of a preponderance of material resources. However, only by tying the criterion to a plan to abandon regional economic efforts in favor of self-sufficiency could Uzbekistani officials offer the approach as useful for the economic crisis and arguably as a success in other countries.[37] A greater boost to the utility of the approach was the promise of personal material benefits. Citizens in Uzbekistan also had an easier time maintaining expectations for state paternalism since it was nearly a perfect fit with the Soviet values and institutions they knew.

Adoption of Nationalist and Democratic Legitimacy Criteria Unlike the social contract and state paternalism criteria, titular nationalism and democratic procedures became criteria for legitimacy in all three countries because of efforts by societal forces, not the states. Civic movements and public intellectuals did not explicitly call these ideas criteria for legitimacy, but these ideas served as frameworks for how officials should come to power, how they should run the government, and what policies they should promote. Movements and intellectuals borrowed the idea of titular nationalism from nationalist groups in other Soviet republics and details about democratic procedures from Gorbachev's political liberalization campaign. They then transformed these ideas into demands about how their republican, and, later, new national governments should operate, in other words criteria for legitimacy. Societal forces disseminated these ideas to citizens through public demonstrations, membership recruitment, electoral campaigns, public speeches, and publications. Although the movements and intellectuals were less credible than government officials, citizens adopted these ideas because their fit, utility, and success were superior to the alternatives.

The Messengers: Movements and Intellectuals In the second half of the 1980s in Soviet Kazakhstan, Kirgizia (later Kyrgyzstan), and Uzbekistan, movements emerged, and intellectuals went public advocating for the titular peoples and political freedoms. This advocacy was made possible by Gorbachev's policy of glasnost, which allowed for the formation of civic groups unaffiliated with the Communist Party and for public discussion of previously sensitive topics, such as ethnic identity. Hundreds of civic organizations formed in each of the three countries in the late Soviet and early independence

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periods, and a review of the most prominent ones indicates that many promoted titular nationalism and democratic procedures.[38] Public intellectuals were typically well-established figures, but with glasnost they could speak more openly.

The movements' and intellectuals' ethnic demands centered on the promotion of titular languages, a reexamination of history, and titular use of lands. Moscow had treated the titular languages as inferior to Russian, demanding that professionals use Russian and relegating titular languages to "kitchen table languages" and local art forms, such as epic poems. To rectify this perceived wrong, civic groups and public intellectuals in each country advocated for a greater public role for the titular languages. For instance, in Uzbekistan the civic organization Birlik, created by Uzbek scientists and writers in November of 1988, demanded that Uzbek become a state language. Historical grievances taken up by civic organizations and public intellectuals included a lack of information and misinformation about the impact of the Stalinist purges and collectivization on the titular peoples. For example, Olzhas Suleimenov, head of the Kazakhstan's Writers' Union, a prominent position in a culture that valued literature, called for a public evaluation of Stalin's impact on Kazakh individuals and their ethnic group.[39] Finally, a common demand was for territory to benefit the titular ethnicity. This claim included reducing environmental degradation and providing land to urban migrants. Soviet nuclear testing, mining practices, and promotion of agricultural monocultures had caused substantial environmental harm and health problems in the three republics. Soviet policies of sending Slavic specialists to fill leadership positions meant that titular groups were a minority in some Central Asian cities. Civic groups and public intellectuals took up these causes. For example, in Kyrgyzstan in the summer of 1989, ethnic Kyrgyz migrants to the republican capital Frunze formed Ashar, the first civic organization in Kyrgyzstan, as a means to secure places to live in the city. Poor rural economies and a high titular birth rate had forced them to leave their villages and try to find apartments in Russian-dominated Bishkek, according to the organizations' leaders.[40]

Civic organizations and public intellectuals also advocated democratic procedures, specifically the separation of powers, checks on executives, freedom of association and speech, multiparty elections, and free and fair elections. For example, in Kazakhstan, the party Alash, founded in 1990, called for the "[c]reation of a democratic republic with all the characteristics of a regime elected by universal suffrage (parliament, separation of executive, legislative and judicial powers, multi-party system …)."[41] It was common for groups to advocate both titular nationalism and democratic procedures. For instance, in Uzbekistan, the nationalist group Birlik held numerous protests in the late Soviet era concerning electoral fraud in semi-competitive elections.[42]

In the three countries, civic organizations and intellectuals did not form ideas from scratch. Instead, they adapted ideas familiar to the population and borrowed new ones. Policies to promote a particular ethnic group were familiar to Central Asians because of Soviet practices. Titular ethnic identities developed among the settled and nomadic peoples of Central Asia as a result of Soviet policies, and these policies promoted titular cultures as long as they were "national in form, but socialist in content." This resulted in

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the development of written languages, literature, and cultural performances in the titular languages with content that was acceptable to censors. Members of the titular ethnic groups were educated and employed as part of affirmative action policies.[43] In the late 1980s Central Asian activists altered the idea of titular nationalism familiar to the general population by linking it to the national demands that their counterparts in other Soviet republics had begun to make earlier.[44] The Central Asian civic organizations and intellectuals made titular nationalism a call for a new basis for government, instead of merely a feature of Soviet policy. Likewise, Central Asians were familiar with democratic procedures from Gorbachev's campaign of liberalization, which included protections for public criticisms, and from their knowledge of foreign countries. The civic organizations and intellectuals applied these Soviet and foreign ideas to local contexts, using them in their calls for reform in their republics and later in their new countries.

Civic organizations and public intellectuals disseminated their ideas about titular nationalism and democratic procedures to a broad audience through public protests, membership expansion, electoral campaigns, speeches, and publications. For example, in the summer of 1990 Ashar held protests not only in the capital of Kirgizia, but also throughout the republic.[45] Birlik claimed to have 50,000 official members in six regions of the Uzbek republic and 400,000 supporters by early 1990. Ten winners in the February 1990 republican legislative elections identified themselves as members of Birlik, and the organization claimed to have supported the candidacies of forty other winners.[46] The titular nationalism campaign in Kazakhstan reached a large number of people in June 1989 when Suleimenov, who had been elected a deputy in the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, gave a speech at the televised convocation of the Congress where he demanded compensation for the suffering of Kazakhs under Moscow in the imperial and Soviet periods.[47] Besides submitting articles to general publications, civic groups issued their own newspapers as well.[48]

Two additional pieces of evidence provide further support for the argument that it was societal forces, not the state, that promoted these criteria for legitimacy. First, government officials in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan explicitly promoted internationalism, instead of titular nationalism. For example, President Askar Akaev supported the establishment of the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavonic University so that Russian culture would not disappear in a wave of titular promotion. Second, in all three countries, government officials reacted to nationalist and democratic demands with force and arrests, indicating that they did not seek to be evaluated by the criteria of titular nationalism and democratic procedures. In Kazakhstan, the republic's government arrested up to 2,400 people following nationalist-tinged demonstrations in 1986 over the selection of a non-Kazakh outsider to lead the republic; imprisonments and executions followed.[49] In Uzbekistan, the government regularly reacted to Birlik protests with arrests and in March 1990 ordered internal police to beat and fire on 5,000 demonstrators.[50] Eventually, the government made Birlik's activities illegal and imprisoned or exiled its leaders. In Kyrgyzstan, the head of the Communist Party Absamat Masaliev relied less on force, but did try to prevent the movement in Kyrgyzstan from expanding as movements in other Soviet republics had.[51] As movements elsewhere had their demands met, the government leaders

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of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan began to adopt some of their opponents' ideas.[52] It was civil society, however, not the state that first made titular nationalism and democratic procedures criteria for state legitimacy.

The Ideas: The Utility, Fit, and Success of Titular Nationalism and Democratic Procedures Citizens adopted titular nationalism and democratic procedures as legitimacy criteria more because of the qualities of the ideas than the identity of the messengers. In the interviews and observational studies I conducted, citizens used the idea of titular nationalism to explain the crisis of the late Soviet era: the crisis was the result of Moscow's anti-titular policies, including the settlement of non-titular peoples in Central Asia, the awarding of plum jobs to Slavs, environmentally unsustainable agriculture, and the extraction of national resources. According to titular nationalist thinking, the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek republics would be more prosperous if they had more autonomy. Such an approach promised personal benefits to the large titular populations in each republic, and it resonated with Soviet values and institutions that had promoted minority peoples (within socialist limits) in the union.[53] Moreover, nationalist campaigns in other republics seemed successful in expressing demands to Moscow. These nationalist ideas were more appealing than the alternatives—Soviet-style internationalism, pan-Turkism, non-titular nationalism, and Islam—that were offered by government officials and competing societal forces.[54] Soviet-style internationalism was responsible for many of the policies that aggravated members of the titular ethnic groups. So, even though it was advocated by more credible messengers (i.e., government officials) and was thus a privileged idea, it did not offer utility or success and therefore did not become a legitimacy criterion. Pan-Turkism did not fit with the Soviet focus on nationalities, with which citizens were familiar. Moreover, people did not perceive it as offering utility or success. "Turkey is not much more developed than our country" was a refrain I heard. Compared to titular nationalism, Russian or Slavic nationalism did not offer utility, fit, or success, especially to members of the titular ethnic groups. And, finally, Islam did not fit with populations that had been isolated from the global Islamic community and formal religious learning for decades because of the Soviet policy of atheism. As an imam in a village in Kazakhstan explained to me, "For seventy years people were told religion was the opiate of the masses. ...This is still in people's heads ...."[55] Moreover, my survey respondents ranked government organs as more trusted on average than Islamic leaders and institutions in each country, and fewer than 2 percent of respondents had turned to Islamic leaders or institutions for assistance with everyday problems in the last year.

Like titular nationalism, democratic procedures offered utility, fit, and success. In terms of utility, the absence of these procedures could account for the economic crisis because, according to Gorbachev, a lack of openness hampered innovation and honesty in the economy. Moreover, in the interviews and studies I conducted, titular Central Asians attributed Soviet economic biases against titular peoples to their own lack of political voice. Most individuals also mentioned the opportunity to speak more freely as a personal benefit of democratic procedures. Democratic procedures fit with the values and institutions Gorbachev was promoting. Citizens also associated democratic

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procedures with the success of the West, which was envied for its greater standard of living.

Even though the messengers were less credible, citizens adopted the ideas of titular nationalism and democratic procedures because they judged these ideas as superior to the alternatives. In contrast to the states, civic organizations and public intellectuals had minimal material resources, no tools of coercion, and, in most cases, no political longevity. What they did have were useful, suitable, successful ideas.

Conclusion

This article advances our understanding of legitimacy by offering a framework of how criteria for state legitimacy develop. This framework moves beyond research that identifies the state and society as the sources of ideas by explaining how citizens are exposed to ideas and how they choose legitimacy criteria from among them. Government ideas reach citizens through policies, the media, and citizens' direct interaction with officials. Societal forces promote their ideas through public demonstrations, recruitment of members, electoral campaigns, speeches, and publications. Citizens adopt ideas as legitimacy criteria based on the credibility of the messengers and the utility, fit, and success of the ideas.

This argument is generalizable, although illustrated here with only three Central Asian cases. The process is not limited to a certain regime type, economic system, or culture. The argument allows for citizens' decisions about which ideas to adopt to be affected by the specific characteristics of a country. Identifying important actors, pinpointing the ideas they promote, assessing the credibility of the actors, and evaluating the utility, fit, and success of the ideas in a particular context can reveal how legitimacy criteria develop in a country.

The argument also offers insight into policies that might bolster legitimacy and promote democracy in newly independent states and states that are recovering from failure. To increase state legitimacy, government leaders must meet not only the expectations that they have promoted, but also those popularized by societal forces. Of course, in cases of inhumane or ineffective states, their transformation, not their increased legitimacy, is preferable. Assuming that democracy is the goal, it is worth considering the implications of this analysis for the democratization of such states. In short, the outlook is mixed. Societal forces shaping criteria for legitimacy bodes well for further political liberalization in non-democratic countries. It suggests that states may not be able to ignore societal forces when trying to develop reserves of support to survive unpopular actions. That said, grievances with the state do not guarantee a successful democratization movement. Moreover, this analysis has shown that democratic procedures may not be the only criteria by which people assess the legitimacy of the state. While some societal forces might promote democratic procedures as a criterion, citizens might find competing, even anti-democratic, ideas of states or other societal forces more appealing.

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NOTES

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1. Legitimacy is thus distinguishable from public support for particular leaders and policies. David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964); James L. Gibson, Gregory A. Caldeira, and Lester Kenyatta Spence, "Why Do People Accept Public Policies They Oppose? Testing Legitimacy Theory with a Survey-Based Experiment," *Political Research Quarterly*, 58 (June 2005), 187–201; Robert W. Jackman, *Power without Force: The Political Capacity of Nation-States* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993); Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Tom R. Tyler, *Why People Obey the Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

2. Juan J. Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown and Reequilibration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

3. David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965); Linz; Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in Hans Heinrich Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 77–128.

4. Reinhard Bendix, *Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Harry Eckstein and Ted Robert Gurr, *Patterns of Authority: A Structural Basis for Political Inquiry* (New York: Wiley, 1975); Philip Selznick, "Foundations of the Theory of Organization," *American Sociological Review*, 13 (February 1948), 25–35.

5. Matthew D. Esposito, *Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics in Porfirian Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010); Graeme J. Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy in Soviet Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Heike Holbig, "Ideological Reform and Political Legitimacy in China: Challenges in the Post-Jiang Era," in Thomas Heberer and Gunter Schubert, eds., *Regime Legitimacy in Contemporary China: Institutional Change and Stability* (London: Routledge, 2009), 13–34; Eugene Huskey, "Legitimizing the Russian Executive: Identity Technocracy, and Performance," in Per-Arne Bodin, Stefan Hedlund, and Elena Namli, eds., *Power and Legitimacy: Challenges from Russia* (London: Routledge, 2013), 46–58; Duncan McCargo, *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); Jothie Rajah, *Authoritarian Rule of Law: Legislation, Discourse, and Legitimacy in Singapore* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Vivienne Shue, "Legitimacy Crisis in China?" in Peter Hays Gries and Stanley Rosen, eds., *Chinese Politics: State, Society and the Market* (London: Routledge, 2010), 41–68; Gwynn Thomas, *Contesting Legitimacy in Chile: Familial Ideals, Citizenship, and Political Struggle, 1970–1990* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011); Teresa Wright, *Accepting Authoritarianism: State-Society Relations in China's Reform Era* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); J. Michael Williams, *Chieftaincy, the State, and Democracy: Political Legitimacy in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

6. Political Instability Task Force, "PITF Consolidated Events List, 1955–2007," available from the author; "Fragile States Index," http://ffp.statesindex.org/; Matt Rosenberg, "New Countries of the World," The New York Times Company, http://geography.about.com/cs/countries/a/newcountries.htm.

7. Prior studies, particularly of governments' deliberate campaigns to boost their own support, have emphasized that governments intend to promote certain legitimacy criteria. Muthiah Alagappa, *Political Legitimacy in Southeast Asia: The Quest for Moral Authority* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995); Michael G. Schatzberg, *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Andrew F. March, "State Ideology and the Legitimation of Authoritarianism: The Case of Post-Soviet Uzbekistan," *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 8 (June 2003a), 209–32; Edward Schatz, "Access by Accident: Legitimacy Claims and Democracy Promotion in Authoritarian Central Asia," *International Political Science Review*, 27 (July 2006), 263–84.

8. Harry Eckstein, "Congruence Theory Explained," CSD Working Papers (Irvine: Center for the Study of Democracy at University of California, Irvine, 1997); Sheri Berman, "Ideas, Norms, and Culture in Political Analysis," *Comparative Politics*, 33 (January 2001), 231–150; Mark Blyth, *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002);

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Kathleen R. McNamara, *The Currency of Ideas: Monetary Politics in the European Union* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

9. An individual might dislike or distrust a government official but believe that it is right and proper to obey the state, thus the concepts of support, trust, and legitimacy are distinct.

James R. Kluegel and David S. Mason, "Fairness Matters: Social Justice and Political Legitimacy in Post-Communist Europe," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 56 (September 2004), 813–34; Rudra Sil and Cheng Chen, "State Legitimacy and the (in)Significance of Democracy in Post- Communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 56 (May 2004), 347–68; Rossen Vassilev, "Economic Performance and Regime Legitimacy in Post-Communist Bulgaria," *Politics*, 24 (May 2004), 113–21; William Mishler and Richard Rose, "What Are the Politicial Consequences of Trust? A Test of Cultural and Institutional Theories in Russia," *Comparative Political Studies*, 38 (November 2005), 1050–78.

10. Prior to Soviet rule, populations in the territory that became Uzbekistan tended to be sedentary and observant of Islam; whereas populations in the territories that became Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan tended to be nomadic and practice shamanism and animism. Soviet rule minimized or eliminated such differences.

11. The sample for the mass survey in each country was a multistage stratified probability sample. Macroregions were defined—14 for Kazakhstan, 8 for Kyrgyzstan, and 14 for Uzbekistan, including the capitals as macroregions. Strata were distributed among the macroregions based on each's proportion of the total population. Primary sampling units (PSUs) were administrative districts. PSUs were selected randomly using probability proportional to size. Within each PSU, households were randomly selected. One respondent was randomly chosen from each household. If a potential respondent declined to participate, another was selected randomly from the PSU. The estimated response rate in the three countries ranged from 60 to 80 percent. Pauline Jones Luong and I shared space on the questionnaire. The Almaty firm BRIF administered the surveys.

12. David Easton, "The Political System Besieged by the State," *Political Theory*, 9 (August 1981), 303–25; Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Seymour M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review*, 53 (March 1959), 69–105; Joseph Rothschild, "Observations on Political Legitimacy in Contemporary Europe," *Political Science Quarterly*, 92 (Autumn 1977), 487–501; Tyler.

13. Easton, 1965; Ronald Rogowski, *Rational Legitimacy: A Theory of Political Support* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); Tyler. The language is from Linz.

14. As an example of such a study and a review of this approach to legitimacy, see John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Political Support and Democracy in Eight Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

15. Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

16. I did not include measures for charismatic and traditional forms of legitimacy. Charismatic legitimacy better captures the popularity of leaders than the belief that obeying government laws and decisions is proper and right. In Central Asia people value performance more than clan affiliation or elder status—the potential sources of traditional legitimacy in the region. Kelly M. McMann, *Economic Autonomy and Democracy: Hybrid Regimes in Russia and Kyrgyzstan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 125–28.

17. For economic performance as a source of legitimacy, see Juan J. Linz and Alfred C. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 79.

18. Kelly M. McMann, "The Shrinking of the Welfare State: Central Asians' Assessments of Soviet and Post-Soviet Governance," in Jeff Sahadeo and Russell G. Zanca, eds., *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 233–47.

19. In the Soviet Union, union dues and money to support a poverty fund were taken directly from citizens' pay; however, these deductions were not comparable to the payment of taxes as part of a Western social contract.

Some scholars have used the term social contract in the Soviet context to refer to state provision of extensive welfare benefits in return for consent to Communist Party authoritarianism. However, more survey respondents found the second statement, rather than a statement describing a social contract, an accurate description of the Soviet era.

20. In all but two of twelve cases, the relationships are statistically significant at conventional levels. The lack of statistical significance of the relationship in Uzbekistan between ethnicity and the first legitimacy measure may be attributed to the smaller amount of variation on the ethnicity variable. Uzbeks comprise 80 percent of the respondents in Uzbekistan, whereas the titular ethnic groups account for only 48 percent and 61 percent in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, respectively. These data are from World Factbook 2005, http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ and the 1999 census in Kazakhstan, the 1999 census in Kyrgyzstan, and an estimate for 1996 for Uzbekistan.

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The relationship between the promotion of the flag variable and the second legitimacy measure in Kazakhstan almost reaches conventional significance levels; the t statistic is 1.627.

21. Author's interview, July 17, 2001.

22. Author's interview, May 30, 2009.

23. Considering the government's harassment of independent Islamic leaders and institutions, it is unlikely that observance of democratic procedures boosted the Uzbekistani state's legitimacy relative to its neighbors'.

24. Author's interview, May 21, 2001.

25. Author's interview, July 24, 2001.

26. Author's interview, May 19, 2001.

27. Author's interview, July 9, 2001.

28. Author's interview, July 26, 2001.

29. Andrew F. March, "From Leninism to Karimovism: Hegemony, Ideology, and Authoritarian Legitimation," *Post Soviet Affairs*, 19 (2003b), 307–36.

30. The higher percentage in Kyrgyzstan relative to Kazakhstan reflects the greater degree of need because of more severe poverty.

31. Keith A. Darden, *Economic Liberalism and Its Rivals: The Formation of International Institutions among the Post-Soviet States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

32. Gregory Gleason, *Markets and Politics in Central Asia: Structural Reform and Political Change* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 119.

33. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, "Transition Report 2005: Business in Transition" (London: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2005), 199.

34. Eugene Huskey, "Kyrgyzstan: The Politics of Demographic and Economic Frustration," in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras eds., *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 654–76.

35. Mark Beissinger, "Mass Demonstrations and Mass Violent Events in the Former USSR, 1987–1992," http://www.princeton.edu/~mbeissin/research.htm.

36. Vladimir Babak, Demian Vaisman, and Aryeh Wasserman, eds., *Political Organization in Central Asia and Azerbaijan: Sources and Documents* (London: Frank Cass, 2004); V. Ponomarev, *Samodeiatel'nye Obshchestvennye Organizatsii Kazakhstana I Kirgizii 1987–1991 [Independent Public Organizations of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, 1987–1991]* (Moscow: Institut issledovaniia ekstremal'nykh protsessov (SSSR), 1991).

37. Darden.

38. This conclusion is based on my interviews with civic group leaders in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and Babak, et al.

39. Martha Brill Olcott, *The Kazakhs*, 2nd ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

40. Author's interview, Summer 1994.

41. Babak, Vaisman, and Wasserman, 107.

42. Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

43. Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

44. Kathleen Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Beissinger.

45. Collins.

46. Beissinger.

47. Olcott.

48. This finding is based on my interviews with civic group leaders in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and Babak, et al.

49. Beissinger; Olcott.

50. Beissinger.

51. Huskey.

52. March, 2003a.

53. To ensure that an idea's resonance is not assessed based on its successful promotion, it is important to establish that the values and institutions existed before the idea was promoted, as was the case here. For a discussion of this potential pitfall, see Wedeen.

54. Babak, Vaisman, and Wasserman.

55. Author's interview, July 30, 2001.

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