

## 15. The Shrinking of the Welfare State: Central Asians' Assessments of Soviet and Post-Soviet Governance

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A farmer in Kazakhstan summed up life before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union as follows: "We are freer now. Before the KGB monitored with whom we spoke. Freedom is freedom, but people need to live and we have not reached a good level yet."<sup>1</sup> The farmer's comment suggests that the political liberties many people of the former Soviet Union have acquired do not compensate for the greater economic hardships they now face. New governments have emerged from the Soviet state and introduced political and economic changes; however, these new governments have not necessarily improved everyday life. As a result, citizens consider their current governments inferior to the Soviet one. This might come as a surprise to outsiders, who remember the Soviet state foremost as an oppressive government.

It is particularly interesting that Central Asians view Soviet rule in a relatively positive light. One might expect that they would remember the Soviet era unfavorably because ethnic Russians and other Slavs, not the local peoples, held the most powerful positions in the Central Asian republics. One might also anticipate that Central Asians would harshly judge the Soviet government for damaging the region's environment. By trying to make deserts into cotton fields, the Soviet regime contributed to the desiccation of the Aral Sea, the salinization of the drinking water, and the resulting increases in typhoid and hepatitis, particularly in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In Kazakhstan a legacy of forty years of nuclear testing continues to threaten human and animal life.<sup>2</sup>

Why do Central Asians consider their current governments inadequate relative to the Soviet one? To explore this question, I first examine the role of the Soviet state in citizens' everyday lives. By everyday lives I mean "those most repeated actions, those most traveled journeys, those most inhabited

spaces that make up, literally, the day to day."<sup>3</sup> I then describe how current governments have withdrawn from citizens' lives and the problems that have ensued for two residents of contemporary Kazakhstan, the farmer introduced above and a scientist from a large city. These accounts represent two of the 101 in-depth interviews I conducted in rural and urban Kazakhstan in the summer of 2001. Using survey data I ask to what extent are these two individuals' perceptions of declining state responsiveness common throughout Kazakhstan, as well as neighboring Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. In each country, colleagues and I surveyed a random sample of 1,500 adults in late 2003. A detailed description of the field and survey research appears in the appendix. I conclude by examining the impact of my findings on the study of everyday life and prospects for improved governance in Central Asia.

#### THE SOVIET STATE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Whereas Westerners recall how the Soviet government deviated from their own democratic ones, Central Asians remember the role that the Soviet state played not in their political but in their everyday lives. Over the years Westerners have portrayed the Soviet government primarily as a repressive regime that restricted freedom of speech, the practice of religion, free movement, and the expression of ethnic identity. During the Cold War the term "evil empire" became part of American political rhetoric. In the late Soviet era, during Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost*, Western media reported on revelations about the Stalinist purges. Today professors continue to introduce their students to the totalitarian model, which attributed to the Soviet Union a "terroristic" police and communications monopoly, among other features. Because the horrors of Soviet rule, such as political imprisonments and executions, directly touched only a portion of the population, few Central Asians consider the Soviet Union an "evil empire."

Instead, Central Asians remember the Soviet "nanny state" that met essential needs. Led by the Communist Party, the state provided extensive social services to the population. The system was far from perfect; there were shortages of some goods and many consumer products were of poor quality. Nonetheless, Soviet citizens could expect basic cradle to grave support. With the birth of a child, families received supplemental income. The state then provided free, or highly subsidized, day care, education, and recreation for the child, and upon graduation the child, now an adult, received a job assignment from the state. Through this state job, the individual not only earned income, but also acquired housing, received health care, took part in vacations, and had access to credit for consumer purchases.

#### CONTEMPORARY STATES IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Sit down today with a Central Asian at his or her kitchen table and the conversation quickly turns to how the new government does not address the problems that the Soviet state used to resolve. Or, more abstractly, people complain about the reduced role of the state in their lives.

Post-Soviet states provide few, if any, of the benefits the Soviet state did. Post-Soviet governments that have undertaken market reforms have intentionally reduced the role of the state in the economy. Typically these states provide free elementary and secondary education but few of the other services. The state no longer serves as the primary employer, landlord, health care provider, entertainer, and banker, having devolved these roles to private entities. Post-Soviet governments that have not pursued market reform, as well as many of those which have, have reduced state services because of shortages of funds. With the demise of the Soviet Union, many newly independent countries lost subsidies from Moscow and had difficulty producing goods for export to world markets. As a result, government coffers quickly became depleted. Frustration over the reduced role of the state is common among men and women, in villages and in cities. However, rural residents and urban dwellers face different problems, as the following stories of Almaz and Anara depict.<sup>4</sup>

#### ALMAZ, A FARMER

Living in a village in southern Kazakhstan, Almaz was in his mid-seventies at the time of the interview. Like most rural residents of the former Soviet Union, Almaz had worked since he was a young man on a *sovkhoz*, a farm controlled by the state. Because the newly independent government of Kazakhstan stopped supporting the *sovkhoz*, Almaz's standard of living and economic security have declined precipitously. The governments that emerged from the Soviet Union have tended to close or privatize these farms or allow them to go under. As a result many people have lost their jobs, and many services are no longer available.

The *sovkhoz* where Almaz worked was founded in the mid-1930s and focused primarily on breeding livestock. The Soviet state provided all the inputs for the *sovkhoz*, including fuel, fodder, and vaccinations, and purchased its products. The disintegration of the Soviet Union made it more difficult to obtain the many inputs that came from other former republics. The economies of Soviet regions were highly specialized so that often it was possible to obtain a good from only one location. Independence for the fifteen Soviet republics introduced new borders, currencies, and paperwork, hampering the movement of goods. These new obstacles to trade also made

it difficult for the sovkhos to sell the livestock it bred to buyers in other former republics. Sales further decreased because guaranteed state purchases evaporated. Moreover, the sovkhos had to cope with an end to state subsidies—a result of the government's plan to move to a market economy and reaction to the general economic crisis facing the country. In the burgeoning market economy, the sovkhos faced the added challenge of paying freed, skyrocketing prices for energy. Eventually the government disbanded the state farm by auctioning it off to the workers. Yet, the farm had little value, as equipment and animals were dispersed to pay off debts for fodder, fuel, and salaries. Most employees who received animals in lieu of salary sold the livestock in order to meet immediate financial needs.

The obvious impact of the demise of the sovkhos, the main employer in the village, was that most people lost their jobs. This was a severe shock to people as the Soviet state had guaranteed employment for citizens, finding them jobs and rarely firing them. The sovkhos, where Almaz had worked as a livestock tender and then an accountant, once employed 780 individuals. The new collective farm has only eleven employees.

Almaz left the sovkhos in 1998 because he, like many workers, was not receiving his salary. But unlike most former employees who today work odd jobs and practice subsistence farming, Almaz has managed to develop a commercial wheat farm that supports him and his wife and his three children's families. He received a tractor from the state farm in lieu of his salary, and he has used his pension and savings to rent land from the collective and purchase inputs.

Almaz's relative financial success highlights another significant change in people's lives—increasing socioeconomic inequality. Whereas the Soviet state minimized wage differentials and controlled access to luxury goods, the new government of Kazakhstan has adopted market principles that have resulted in significant inequalities in standard of living. As Almaz noted, "Before, 99 percent lived equally; now some people are millionaires while others cannot stand on their feet . . . All five fingers are the same but they all live differently." Due in part to his growing inequality, resentful villagers have accused Almaz of using his former position at the sovkhos to his advantage in building his business.

Almaz has lost the economic security he had been accustomed to for the previous seven decades, and his relations with some villagers have deteriorated. Although he and his family are better off than many in the village, they have, nonetheless, also witnessed a steep decline in their standard of living. Quality of life has worsened because the sovkhos and village government no longer provide services to the community. Drawing the edge of his hand across his forehead to indicate abundance, Almaz said, "We lived well in the sovkhos," but today "everything is ruined here." In the Soviet era, the state funded the village school and hospital, and profits from the sovkhos went to other services, such as free home

repairs, subsidized day care, and a village club that housed a library and offered free concerts. The sovkhos sent young residents to study in the republican capital Almaty, paying for their education and hiring them when they completed their studies. The farm also contributed to the costs of residents' gas and water and subsidized villagers' vacations.

Today, the village offers few services and those it does provide are expensive. Primary education is no longer free. While the government continues to pay the salaries of teachers at the village school, parents pay for textbooks, provide coal for heating, and contribute building materials for renovations. The hospital now charges for all services and can no longer care for patients overnight or transport them by ambulance. Moreover, patients must obtain all medicines on their own. Almaz reflected on coping with discontinued medical services: "Now when my head hurts I know what medicine to take here at home. If it hurts badly, I go to [the county seat]. Before I would call the doctor and he would come to my house . . . I tell my family, my grandchildren, 'Try not to get sick, try not to get a cold.'"

The collective farm does not offer services as the sovkhos once did. The daycare center closed, and the village club is now a private disco that charges admission. The farm cannot afford to send youth to study or guarantee them employment once they have graduated. Almaz's grandson has to work as bank guard in Almaty and study through an evening program, even though his family is one of the wealthiest in the village. Private firms provide electricity and gas at higher rates. Furthermore, the gas company has turned off the gas to the entire village because some people have not paid and it is not profitable to supply gas to only some residents. With the economic deterioration in the village, all but one of the stores closed.

#### ANARA, A SCIENTIST

Like Almaz, Anara, a fifty-nine-year-old widow living in a northern city with her daughter, has faced greater economic uncertainty and declining state services since Kazakhstan became independent. As an urban resident, however, Anara has more possibilities for earning income and has a wider selection of goods and services. As her daughter clarified, "Everything is in stores. Now the problem is money." While urban residents no longer face Soviet-era deficits in goods, they do have difficulty earning sufficient income. In cities, unlike in villages, jobs are available, but finding high-paying, stable work in one's field of expertise is difficult.

Anara had a career as a chemist until she retired in 1997. Late in her career she and her fellow scientists began to use their laboratory's technical equipment for commercial barter. In collaboration with a metallurgical plant, they developed inputs for Chinese firms in return for consumer goods. Anara obtained clothing, a television, and a videocassette recorder

through these transactions. Anara and her colleagues' involvement in the market was not unusual, as declining salaries for scientists forced many of them into trade. This group of researchers was fortunate to be able to profit from its scientific knowledge. Many intellectuals have had to completely abandon their laboratories and books for the daily grind of selling macaroni and slippers in the local bazaars.

As a pensioner, Anara has also experienced economic insecurities. Delayed and unpaid pensions have been a problem throughout Central Asia and most of the former Soviet Union. In Kazakhstan, the promise of substantial pensions in a declining economy encouraged many people to retire early. At the same time, newly privatized companies concerned with their bottom lines failed to contribute to the pension system, and local officials used pension funds to pay other social benefits.<sup>5</sup> Prior to the government's reform of the pension system in the mid-1990s, people often waited three months for their pensions. This was quite a shock to citizens, who remembered their parents' steady and relatively generous retirement benefits. Today Anara nearly always receives her pension on time or, at worst, one month late; nonetheless, her retirement funds do not go far. She receives 8,000 *tenge* per month and uses all but 2,000 of it to pay utilities for her apartment.<sup>6</sup>

For urban residents the end of free and subsidized utilities is a daily reminder of the reduction in state services. Utilities are no longer guaranteed but depend on a person's ability to pay for-profit companies for service. Fearing that they would not be able to pay their bills, Anara's neighbors began to refuse to let the electric companies' representatives into their apartment, forcing the firm to move its meters to the hallways. Anara recounted how the electric company has confiscated personal property and cut wires to apartments of residents who have not paid. Anara and her daughter do not fear having the wires to their apartment cut. As her daughter explained, she and her mother have made utilities a high priority, outranking other items, such as certain foods. "We just decide to pay the bills on time. Then no apples or no oranges."

In Kazakhstan, as in much of the former Soviet Union, the state has also withdrawn from the landlord business. In the Soviet era, urban residents received housing from the state based largely on their position in the workforce, and the state was responsible for repairs. Kazakhstan privatized apartments, so today Anara owns and maintains hers. She no longer receives free government maintenance but must make repairs herself or pay the government or a private firm to do so. She has opted for a maintenance contract, costing 326 *tenge* a month, from the communal services committee, which is run by the government.

Anara could not afford utilities and repairs to her apartment, not to mention food and clothes, were it not for her daughter's salary. Her daughter, in her twenties, works as an English-language instructor at a

private language institute. Unlike government organizations, the institute pays its instructors on time and also provides pay advances when needed. As an urban resident Anara's daughter had the option of studying English and finding work as a language instructor. Other lucrative career options in the fields of law and business are also more readily available in the cities than the countryside.

Despite these benefits of urban living, Anara and her daughter still struggle economically. They earn enough for food, clothes, and utilities, but they cannot buy extras, such as new warmer winter coats. They also have not been able to save money. There are unexpected expenses, like medicine for Anara's mother, and they have lost money in banks, causing them to abandon such institutions. Instead, Anara has invested money in a private financial venture, which sounds suspiciously like a pyramid scheme. She sells certificates to friends and acquaintances, and after selling a certain number she will supposedly receive more back than she contributed. She has confidence in the program because a friend already received money. As the state has reduced its monopoly over banking functions, citizens of Kazakhstan have increasingly faced challenges in trying to save and invest money.

#### GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS: THEN AND NOW

The stories of Almaz and Anara illustrate how contemporary governments play a smaller role in everyday life than the Soviet government did. As a result of this withdrawal of the state, residents of Kazakhstan, as well as Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, consider their current governments less responsive than the Soviet state.

In each of the countries, our study asked 1,500 adult respondents to react to the statements "The Soviet government responded to citizens' needs" and "The [current] government responds to citizens' needs." Across the three countries a considerably larger percentage of people agreed with the statement about the Soviet government than with the statement about the current government. And, conversely, a substantially larger percentage of respondents disagreed with the statement about the current government than with the statement about the Soviet government.

Although considerably fewer respondents in each country assess their current government as responsive relative to the Soviet state, there is variation across the three countries. Of the three groups of respondents, residents of Uzbekistan are most positive about the current period. This is likely due to the government's attempt to maintain extensive welfare services, reminiscent of the Soviet era. For example, mothers continue to receive payments for the birth and care of their infants. However, state subsidies are sometimes delayed and the number of recipients and level of benefits have

Table 15.1. Country Differences

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	Soviet	Current	Soviet	Current	Soviet	Current
Strongly Agree/ Agree	49.7	9.1	70.3	16.9	48.1	28.1
Somewhat Agree/ Somewhat Disagree	32.7	36.7	16.7	33.7	22.1	28.9
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9.9	47.6	6.3	42.9	6.9	28.5
Difficult to Answer	6.6	5.7	6.3	6.3	21.4	13.9
Decline to Answer	1.0	.9	.5	.2	1.5	.7
TOTAL (percentage rounded)	100	100	100	100	100	100

declined over time. The fact that Uzbekistan has fewer ethnic minorities might also increase the percentage of people evaluating their government positively: as this chapter later suggests, titular groups find their government more responsive than ethnic minorities do. It is less likely that the lack of a public discourse about declining standards of living inflates the percentage of positive responses. Uzbekistan's more authoritarian system does make public criticism of the government riskier, yet officials are open to complaints about everyday life. Also, people discuss economic difficulties with friends and family, and these conversations prime people for assessing government responsiveness across eras.<sup>7</sup>

Compared to people in Uzbekistan, fewer residents of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan believe their current governments measure up to the Soviet regime. This difference likely reflects more extensive market reforms, including the dismantling and privatization of state services, in Kazakhstan in Kyrgyzstan. Governments of both countries have also reduced services in reaction to fiscal constraints. As a forty-year-old woman in a village in Kazakhstan explained, "The state has distanced itself . . . we live on our own strengths, no one else's . . ." The larger percentages of ethnic minorities in these countries might also account for the difference.

Surprisingly, within each country unemployed people, women, and rural residents are generally not more negative about the current govern-

ment than employed people, men, and urban dwellers. (See table 15.2.) We would expect that a higher percentage of people who lack employment and face the challenge of finding a job would assess their current government negatively relative to the Soviet one, which provided an employment guarantee. Yet in Kazakhstan there is almost no difference between the assessments of the unemployed and employed; in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan the differences are relatively small.

Women have suffered the brunt of economic decline and reforms. They have had to cope with reduced maternity and children's benefits and shuttered child care centers. They are also typically the first to be laid off because, despite decades of Soviet ideology about gender equality, they are viewed as less productive because of their responsibilities to their families, and their breadwinning is seen as secondary to men's. Having lost their jobs, many have had to work in the local bazaars, reselling products they have purchased from others. Yet, women's assessment of the state in each country differs little from men's. For many women, their experience as entrepreneurs has given them a sense of satisfaction. One middle-aged woman in a city in Kazakhstan began trading in dry goods in 1992 while continuing to work as an engineer. She used the profits from her business to purchase a home for her family. She recounted, "At work I told people I bought a home, and I just cried . . . I earned money slowly, but it was honest money."

With fewer job opportunities available in villages, we would expect rural residents to feel that the government has done less to respond to their needs. Yet in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, rural residents are slightly more likely to evaluate the state as being more responsive. In Kazakhstan rural and urban dwellers differ little in their assessments of the state.

The difference in urban-rural assessments in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan versus Kazakhstan might reflect ethnicity patterns. In Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan rural residents are more likely titular peoples, with minorities residing mainly in cities; whereas in Kazakhstan ethnic minorities are common in the countryside and outnumber Kazakhs in urban areas.

Ethnic identity, in fact, has a significant influence on people's assessment of state responsiveness. Across the three countries, it is not unemployed people, women, or rural residents who are most negative about the state. Instead, members of the non-titular ethnicities are the demographic group that finds it least responsive. Whereas 51.0 percent of non-Kazakhs disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that the state responds to citizens' needs, only 43.8 percent of Kazakhs disagree. Opinions diverge even more in other countries, with 50.9 and 37.7 percent for non-Kyrgyz and Kyrgyz and 36.9 and 26.4 percent for non-Uzbeks and Uzbeks. (See table 15.3.)

Minority groups in each country are likely more negative about the current governments because they do not view sovereignty as a benefit. With the independence of the Central Asian republics, Russians and other

**Table 15.2. Demographic Differences**

The government responds to citizens' needs.  
(percentage of respondents; 1,500 per country)

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed	Employed
Strongly Agree/Agree	7.0	9.0	16.8	15.3	26.4	28.9
Somewhat Agree/ Somewhat Disagree	37.1	38.4	37.8	34.0	26.0	29.5
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	50.3	46.6	38.3	44.9	36.0	28.1
Difficult to Answer	5.2	5.7	6.6	5.6	11.6	12.8
Decline to Answer	.3	.3	.5	.2	0	.7
TOTAL (percentage rounded)	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL (number)	286*	633	392*	483	250*	688

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Strongly Agree/Agree	9.6	8.4	15.1	19.2	26.3	30.1
Somewhat Agree/ Somewhat Disagree	38.0	35.1	35.7	31.3	29.4	28.3
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	46.0	49.6	43.1	42.5	27.8	29.3

Difficult to Answer	5.4	6.2	6.0	6.6	15.4	12.1
Decline to Answer	1.0	.7	0	.4	1.1	.3
TOTAL (percentage rounded)	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL (number)	820	680	832	668	803	697

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Strongly Agree/Agree	10.1	8.0	18.8	13.3	31.3	22.3
Somewhat Agree/ Somewhat Disagree	32.8	40.5	33.7	33.7	25.9	34.1
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	48.9	46.3	40.2	48.0	26.6	31.7
Difficult to Answer	6.9	4.6	7.0	4.9	15.6	10.9
Decline to Answer	1.2	.5	.3	0	.6	.9
TOTAL (percentage rounded)	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL (number)	740	760	990	510	958	542

\* Unemployed refers to those people who are currently out of work and are looking for jobs. People who are unemployed for other reasons, such as retirement, illness, education, or child care, are not included in either category.

Table 15.3. Ethnic Differences

	The government responds to citizens' needs. (percentage of respondents; 1,500 per country)					
	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan	
	Kazakhs	Others	Kyrgyz	Others	Uzbeks	Others
Strongly Agree / Agree	10.1	8.1	21.4	10.0	29.0	24.1
Somewhat Agree / Somewhat Disagree	39.0	34.6	34.4	32.7	28.6	29.8
Disagree / Strongly Disagree	43.8	51.0	37.7	50.9	26.4	36.9
Difficult to Answer	5.9	5.6	6.3	6.3	15.3	8.1
Decline to Answer	1.1	.6	.2	.2	.7	1.0
TOTAL (percentage rounded)	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL (number)	712	788	924	576	1205	295

Slavic peoples lost their privileged standing in these societies. Prior to the Soviet period, Russians moved to Central Asia seeking land and jobs building the railroad and mining natural resources. The Soviet government sent Russians and other Slavs to serve in government and industrial management positions. Other groups, Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan and Tajiks in Uzbekistan, became minorities in these countries because of the borders drawn by Soviet planners. With the demise of the Soviet Union, titular groups grew dominant in the governments and began to introduce policies and informal practices to advantage their own countrymen. As a result, ethnic minorities have found it more difficult to live in these countries. Whereas enthusiasm for sovereignty dampens titular groups' frustration with their current government, it does not reduce minorities' irritation; in fact, it most likely contributes to it.

#### PROSPECTS FOR GOVERNANCE

With the demise of the Soviet welfare system, citizens of Central Asia and other post-Soviet states have had to take additional responsibility for their lives. The state no longer supports one from cradle to grave. This is espe-

cially true in market-oriented countries where individual responsibility is part of the new ideology.

These changes in the former Soviet Union offer a different perspective on everyday life. The study of everyday life has emphasized repetition and boredom in people's private lives, particularly in capitalist societies.<sup>8</sup> In the post-Soviet context, the withdrawal of the state from the economy represents a step toward capitalism; however, capitalism has brought neither repetition nor boredom to Central Asia. Instead, capitalist development has transformed everyday life. In part, as states play smaller roles in their economies, people's private lives have expanded relative to their public lives. Now most economic activity falls within the private realm, where state welfare guarantees are largely absent. Overall, this chapter suggests that everyday life is a useful subject of study even in societies experiencing upheaval, such as initial capitalist development.

While Central Asians have adapted to these new conditions, they remember the role of the Soviet state in everyday life fondly and assess their current states' responsiveness as inadequate. Ethnic minorities evaluate their states even less positively. They have experienced not only a reduction in welfare services, but also a drop in their status in society. Improved economies are unlikely to alleviate their dissatisfaction because they are also suffering from the trauma of becoming second-class citizens. Yet, the ethnic divide is not great; many members of the titular group are disgruntled as well.

From the perspective of some foreigners and Central Asians, increasing contentment with existing government is not the top priority. Instead, according to this viewpoint, these governments need to be replaced in order to provide better services and guarantee freedoms. There are signs that Central Asia will obtain more responsive governance. The survey results in this chapter suggest that citizens have a sense of entitlement to good government, and protests in Uzbekistan and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan indicate that citizens have not grown politically passive. Only through engagement with their states will citizens of Central Asia initiate change, either gradual or dramatic, in government to improve their everyday lives.

#### APPENDIX

In the spring and summer of 2001, I conducted 101 interviews in Kazakhstan. These in-depth interviews were with three sets of people: 1) average citizens who are coping with economic problems, 2) individuals who might be helping people survive economically, and 3) individuals who have background information about economic problems and assistance. This chapter draws on two interviews from the first set. This set of interviews took place in a northern city and its satellite towns, a southern province, and a

village in that region. The purpose of the interviews with average citizens in Kazakhstan was to inventory problems no longer resolved by the state, to catalog people's coping mechanisms, and to begin to understand how coping experiences shape attitudes toward and relationships with the state. For this reason, I did not select the individuals randomly. I chose to interview members of households to get a broad overview of problems no longer resolved by the state.

With the assistance of BRIF, a private research firm in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and in cooperation with Pauline Jones Luong, I conducted mass surveys in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan in late November and early December of 2003. The surveys were face-to-face interviews lasting approximately an hour and in Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, or Uzbek. The sample for the mass survey in each country was a multistage stratified probability sample of the country. In each country the mass survey questionnaire was administered to 1,500 individuals, age eighteen and older. In each country, macroregions were defined—14 for Uzbekistan, 14 for Kazakhstan, and 8 for Kyrgyzstan, including the capital cities as macroregions. Strata were distributed among the macroregions based on each macroregion'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.

#### NOTES

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1. The KGB or the Committee of State Security was the Soviet secret police.
2. Erika Weirthal, "Beyond the State: Transnational Actors, NGOs, and Environmental Protection in Central Asia," *The Transformation of Central Asia: States and Societies from Soviet Rule to Independence*, ed. Pauline Jones Luong (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004), 246.
3. Ben Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1.
4. Almaz and Anara are not their true names. I use these names to protect their privacy.
5. W. Baldrige, "Pension Reform in Kazakhstan," *Central Asia 2010: Prospects for Human Development* (The Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, United Nations Development Programme, 1999), 177.
6. At this time 8,000 tenge was approximately fifty U.S. dollars.
7. In the administration of the survey, interviewers reported that these sur-

vey questions were not troubling to respondents in the three countries. Therefore, differences in results across the countries likely reflect true differences in experience and opinion and not fear on the part of Uzbekistanis.

8. Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, vol. 1 (New York: Verso, 1991). David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, "Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc," *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2002), 7.