It Takes More than a Village:
Mobilization, Networks, and the State in Central Asia

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Abstract

This dissertation develops and demonstrates a theory to account for the outbreak of mass mobilization in authoritarian settings. Two conditions make the expansion of protest across community boundaries more likely: (1) low levels of public goods, coupled with (2) economic opportunities that allow elites autonomous from the state to earn revenue.

Under regimes where the rule of law is weak, non-state elites have an incentive to protect their assets from state predation by developing a social support base. They do this by making symbolic gestures and providing surrogate public goods to communities. If the regime threatens to harm this relationship, by restricting elites' freedoms or denying them access to resources, top-down mobilization is one of the few means available to advance or defend their position. Elites base their appeal on shared local identity and the material benefit that people derive from elite charity. The ultimate scale of mobilization is determined by the number and geographic dispersion of elites who mobilize locally and then unite their protests.

Three mechanisms may be activated to expand mobilization beyond the local level: *demonstration*, in which people receive information of an event through an impersonal medium and emulate other people's actions by analogy to their own situation; *diffusion*, or direct contact between actors connected by strong social ties; and *brokerage*, or mediation between groups by a small number of well-connected individuals. I argue that only if diffusion and brokerage are activated in concert can an incipient movement overcome gaps between (1) elites and masses and (2) different communities (or regions).

I demonstrate my theory by comparing Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, then analyzing two cases of mass mobilization within Kyrgyzstan—one of regional scale and one national. In both cases, I illustrate the centrality of vertical networks in bringing about mobilization, and trace how both brokerage and diffusion were activated to expand mobilization from local to regional or national scale. I then test the theory on cases outside the region. The dissertation contributes to the comparative politics literature on contentious politics, the breakdown of authoritarian regimes, and the effect of Soviet legacies on state and society.

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It was a long, hard slog, but I couldn't have reached the finish line without the support of many, people, inhabiting three continents, who helped me along the way. I first "discovered" Central Asia during my junior year of college, when I looked with amazement and amusement at that space on the map, so distant geographically and culturally. Only when I went there and spoke with ordinary people did I realize that the exoticism surrounding the region was misleading.

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Introduction

In a dusty corner of Jalalabad province in southern Kyrgyzstan, poor farmers tilled the soil, herded their sheep, drank tea, and gossiped about village life, as they often tend to do. They had never taken part in a protest, visited a non-governmental organization (NGO), or met an American with the exception of a Peace Corps volunteer who had once resided in a neighboring village. The monotony of village life for these people would be briefly interrupted in March 2005 when they would participate in bringing about the first peaceful regime change in Central Asia's 14-year history as independent states. In that month, some of these villagers would congregate in Jalalabad's central square, forcibly enter and seize the governor's office, and appear on Russian and western television broadcasts defacing a portrait of Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev. The actions of these and other similarly ordinary citizens would spark a wave of revolts across the country that would culminate that month in the capture of the capital, Bishkek, and bring Akaev's reign to an end.

Kyrgyz villagers were an unlikely revolutionary vanguard. Widespread rebellion in Kyrgyzstan struck observers as remarkable due to the region's past passivity and many barriers to collective action.[1] Following the Soviet state's collapse in 1991, most Kyrgyz were left significantly poorer than they had been in the USSR. Most households do not own a telephone, nor do they need one, since few have acquaintances further than walking distance. People spend most of their lives in their villages, traveling only to visit relatives or obtain necessary administrative documents. So what brought these poor farmers—and others like them across the country—out onto the streets in a coordinated manner in numbers beyond any the region had seen since the 1920's?[2] Why did the "revolution" and several smaller earlier rebellions occur in Kyrgyzstan instead of its neighbors? And why did it take more than ten years after the Central Asian republics achieved their independence for the mass populace to become a factor in the region's politics?

In the explanation I provide, I reject some of the "usual suspects" found in popular and scholarly writing about Central Asia. For example, it has been asserted that radical Islam was a basis for mobilization. Although most Kyrgyz are Muslim, radical groups are institutionally

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[1] Central Asians were the nationalities least likely to take part in nationalist demonstrations in the USSR from 1987-1991. See Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 210-11; Nazgul Bakytbekova, "Next Revolution: Kyrgyzstan?" *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 1-12-05.

[2] The Basmachi revolt, an uprising of Central Asians against Communist rule that ended in 1931, probably involved 20,000 people. Monica Whitlock, *Land Beyond the River: The Untold Story of Central Asia*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 55.

weak and have little traction with the population. A second possibility, clans, also fails the test. Kin-based identity was historically a powerful basis of social and political organization in Central Asia, but today it is only weakly manifest in political life and does not serve as a basis for mobilization. The role of western NGOs in bringing down the Akaev regime, a popular conspiracy theory in the Russian press, has also been overstated. NGOs are most active in the capital, whereas most protests took place in rural areas and among people who had little contact with NGOs. Finally, the popular media in the West portrayed the "revolution" as a grassroots wellspring of popular indignation, yet closer scrutiny of the events reveals that the number of people protesting nation-wide was quite small[3] and the demonstrations were well organized.[4]

I look past these locally specific explanations to tell a more generalizeable story about mass mobilization in poor, mostly rural settings where the state is weak but the regime limits democracy. In such societies, the key actors are not elites at the top, who are co-opted by the regime, nor simple peasants at the bottom, who lack the initiative and the resources with which to mobilize. Instead, mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan was the result of networks made up of the everyday ties of neighbors and friends, activated by self-interested regional and local elites with the resources and the strategic incentive to organize mobilization. These elites possess local knowledge and have social ties with the bottom rungs of society. They maintain contacts with elites in other regions, including Bishkek, while also possessing legitimacy among ordinary residents of their home communities. Thus, they have the ability to simultaneously "reach down" to communities, and "reach out" across the country to similarly positioned actors. When parliamentary elections were held in 2005, local elites who lost in the first round had both the resources and the motivation to instigate rebellion, and constituted the crucial link between national leaders and the mass public.

The general theory of the outbreak of mass mobilization that I develop pays attention to the intricate processes of mobilization recruitment and expansion, while also identifying a small

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[3] The total number of people participating in demonstrations in Kyrgyzstan in March 2005 probably did not exceed 30,000. This pales in comparison other recent mass mobilizations, including the 100,000 who participated in Georgia's "Rose Revolution," 150,000 in Tiananmen Square in 1989, nearly 1 million in Mexico in 2005 to support the eligibility of Mexico City's mayor to run for president, and 3 million in Rome against the US invasion of Iraq. See Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "Georgia's Rose Revolution," *Journal of Democracy*, 15(2), April 2004: 116; "Chronology of Beijing Spring," Associated Press, June 6, 1989; Geri Smith, "The Downside of People Power; More Latin Americans are Taking to the Streets—and Losing Faith in the Ballot Box," *Businessweek*, May 9, 2005; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/February_15%2C_2003_anti-war_protest.

[4] For discussion of some of these theories, see Alisher Khamidov, "Religion Plays Growing Role in Kyrgyzstan's Parliamentary Campaign, *eurasianet.org*, 2-24-05; Martin Sieff, "Analysis: What Blooms after Kyrgyzstan's Tulips?" *Washington Times,* 3-29-05; Craig S. Smith, "US Helped to Prepare the Way for Kyrgyzstan's Uprising," *The New York Times*, 3-30-05.

number of critical variables that underlay these processes. A thorough explanation requires understanding the interaction of communities, autonomous elites, and the state. One piece is not sufficient to explain the process; it is necessary to understand how all the components function in order to predict the dynamics of mobilization. At the same time, my theory also aims for parsimony. By focusing on the relevant actors and mechanisms, I attempt to reduce otherwise daunting complexity (and presumed exoticism[5]) to a generalizeable story of how ordinary people, behaving rationally, can produce extraordinary results.

It should be noted that the interaction of the critical variables I identify is only one possible path to mass mobilization, and not the only path. In proposing such a theory, I join a crowded field of literature on social movements and rebellion. However, I highlights certain elements—the distribution of resources among state and non-state elites, a three-way game among actors endowed with differing resources and incentives, and the importance of certain social mechanisms—that have been under-emphasized or undeveloped in other theories of mass mobilization.

In this dissertation, I demonstrate the utility of my theory on two cases of mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan—one of regional scale and one national—before testing it on cases outside the region. The first detailed case study is of a series of protests in 2002 that began in response to the arrest of a local parliamentary deputy. Residents from the deputy's district, Aksy, staged a series of protest actions, including hunger strikes, sit-ins, and marches, over a period of six months. At one point, up to 20,000 people from all 12 villages in the district participated, forcing the president to agree to many of their demands. The second case is the "Tulip Revolution" in 2005, which began as a protest against fraudulent elections. It began after the first round of voting on February 27 and culminated on March 24 with the seizure of the government and the exile of the president. It involved up to 40,000 people from five of Kyrgyzstan's seven regions plus the capital.

A glimpse at Kyrgyzstan's post-Soviet development reveals how the foundation for mobilization was laid long before it happened—and how policy choices can lead to a distribution of resources conducive to mass mobilization. Yet the most important lesson to draw from the cases examined here is that Kyrgyzstan was not unique; the processes that led to mass mobilization in Central Asia may also be found in diverse regions of the world where similar structural conditions obtain.

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[5] A typical example: "The vast, empty landscape dotted with oases of vibrant populations and political ferment, sitting on the world's last great untapped natural energy reserves, is almost as unknown to Westerners as it was to Europeans in the Middle Ages." Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), Chapter 1.

Opposing Authoritarian Rule

Mass mobilization is a topic of both longtime scholarly interest and popular fascination. Large, angry crowds are not only among the most dramatic political events; they are capable of producing monumental and lasting political change. Mass mobilization puts authoritarian regimes in a difficult, maybe impossible position—accede to the demonstrators' demands or unleash repression that will most likely severely erode the regime's legitimacy. Understanding the motivations for individual participation and the conditions under which small movements can become large-scale can help us understand some of the century's most significant events, such as the downfall of the British Raj, the Civil Rights Movement, the Iranian Revolution, and fall of Communism and collapse of the Soviet Union.

This study elaborates a theory of the conditions under which mass mobilization, as opposed to localized mobilization, is likely to occur. The scale of mobilization is a function of the numbers of people participating (size) and the territory of their origins (scope).[6] Explaining large-scale mobilization, rather than simply the outbreak of protest, is critical because mass movements are more likely than isolated events to extract concessions from regimes and significantly alter the political landscape. Also, regime change following mass mobilization is thought to more conducive to democratic development than other modes of transition.[7]

Both the size and the scope of mobilization must be considered, for several reasons.[8] First, the instruments of repression are more costly for a regime to use against more people than against fewer people. Whereas a crowd of 100 or even 1,000 may be neutralized and dispersed using subtle forms of repression, when the regime faces 50,000 people, for example, achieving the same result would require causing massive bloodshed. Heavy repression can delegitimize the regime in the eyes of the people, which may lead to a fierce backlash and is likely to be materially and psychologically costly for the perpetrators of violence, which can further erode regime

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[6] For more explication, see Definitions, below.

[7] Michael Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle, "Popular Protest and Political Reform in Africa," *Comparative Politics* 24, July 1992: 419-442; Grzegorz Ekiert and Jan Kubik, *Rebellious Civil Society: Popular Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland, 1989-1993* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience," *World Politics* 55(2): 167-192.

[8] There is no numerical threshold beyond which a mobilization should be considered a threat to the regime. The size of the crowd and number of regions mobilizing may have different effects depending on a number of factors, such as the legitimacy of the regime, the scale of previous mobilizations, and the regime and people's tolerance for bloodshed. As a rule, however, more participants representing more localities pose a greater threat than fewer of both.

support.[9] Second, if leaders order violence, their commands are more likely to be disobeyed when crowds are massive, such as when the East German security chief told President Erich Honicker on October 9, 1989, "Erich, we can't beat up hundreds of thousands of people."[10]

When the scope of demonstrations is greater, that is, when demonstrations occur simultaneously in separate regions, or when protesters in one venue represent multiple communities or regions, the opposition is better positioned than when mobilization is regionally concentrated. In the first place, geographic diversity lends legitimacy to the movement.[11] Participation in (or from) many regions indicates that dissatisfaction is not limited to one group, but instead has wider resonance. It reduces the ability of the regime to claim that the opposition's grievances are limited to a small minority or that it has been manipulated by outside forces. In short, greater scope allows the opposition to frame their grievances as representing the "will of the people" rather than "special interests."[12] Second, wide scope indicates to the regime that countervailing power is dispersed more widely than when it is localized in the capital. This is especially the case where supporters of the regime are regionally concentrated and other regions are excluded from power. Participation in multiple regions, especially in the region of regime's base, signals that the regime has lost support in areas critical to its survival. Third, the more dispersed the protesters, the greater the costs of repression. Instead of concentrating troops only near the presidential palace, the autocrat must deploy forces to other regions, making repression more difficult to coordinate and discipline more costly to maintain.[13] Fourth, when protests are widely dispersed, tactics short of repression, such as blocking the flow of information, co-opting leaders, and gathering intelligence, are costly and more easily circumvented.

A brief look at major contentious events occurring in authoritarian contexts indicates the importance of size and scope in creating change through popular mobilization.[14] The all-encompassing Soviet state and party left their mark by preventing the development of

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[9] See James De Nardo, *Power in Numbers*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
[10] Lee Smithey and Lester R. Kurtz, "We Have Bare Hands: Non-Violent Social Movements in the Socialist Bloc," in Stephen Zunes, Lester R. Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher, *Nonviolent Social Movements*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 112.
[11] Anthony Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 308.
[12] See Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Chapter 7; Mark Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1995), 179.
[13] Ronald A. Francisco, "The Dictator's Dilemma," in Christian Davenport, Hank Johnston, and Carol Mueller, eds., *Repression and Mobilization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
[14] I do not claim that the scale of protests was the only factor determining the success of a movement. Obviously other factors such as the capacity and willingness of the regime to use repression—and other aspects of the political opportunity structure—also matter. This dissertation is focused on the production of mass mobilization, not its effects.

preconditions thought necessary for successful mobilization—strong civil society, inter-personal trust, and past participation in the political process.[15] Yet once 102 million people had participated in 6,663 demonstrations, the Soviet government was delegitimized and unable to employ widespread coercion to maintain power.[16] In India, nationally coordinated strikes and demonstrations provoked costly repression by the British which, by delegitimizing the colonial power and sapping its strength, contributed to its ultimate withdrawal. In Poland, a strike by dockworkers in Gdansk was initially dismissed as an isolated and manageable outburst of protest, but after the creation of Solidarity, a nationwide trade union, protesters were able to shut down commerce throughout the country and extract concessions from the Communist regime. Large-scale mobilization is not a guarantee of movement success, but it is far more likely to succeed than localized protest.[17]

Is not localized protest also a significant outcome worthy of explanation, since all protests may be politically consequential? Contrary to popular assumptions, even the most repressive dictatorships (level 7, according to Freedom House) do not usually seek to squelch all mobilization. In fact, autocrats often allow protests as a means of "letting off steam" and answer opponents with limited concessions rather than repression. The autocracies of the Middle East have long permitted select opposition groups to mobilize, using repression only selectively to keep the opposition off balance. Yet they manage to avoid meaningful political reforms that the opposition demands.[18] Even China, which showed the world in Tiananmen Square in 1989 how it regarded political challenges, has been nearly overwhelmed by demands from below. According to government statistics, there were 87,000 incidences of protest in 2005.[19] They covered a gamut of tactics, including "collective petitioning, demonstrations, besieging government compounds, sacking offices and the homes of local bureaucrats, destroying official

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[15] Mario Diani and Doug McAdam, *Social Movements and Networks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Mayer Zald and John McCarthy, *Social Movements in an Organizational Society: Collected Essays*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1987); Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Marc Morje Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); James Gibson, "Social Networks, Civil Society, and the Prospects for Consolidating Russia's Democratic Transition," *American Journal of Political Science* 45(1), January 2001: 51-68.

[16] Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization*, 76.

[17] Much of course also depends on the extent of repression that the regime is willing to use. China's suppression of the student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square and other regions in 1989 is an obvious negative case.

[18] Ellen Lust-Okar, *Structuring Conflict in the Arab World*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[19] *South China Morning Post*, 2-10-06.

vehicles, and rioting."[20] Yet for the most part, considering how many people have participated in protests (3.4 million in 2004[21]), they have achieved remarkably little in the way of political concessions.[22] When isolated and uncoordinated, protests may still be dramatic, but they are not very effective.

To clarify the initial puzzle, there were in fact isolated cases of mobilization in Central Asia prior to 2005, but mobilization beyond a single community was a very rare event. In 2004, Kyrgyzstan registered protests, pickets, and marches *against* corruption, Chinese bazaar merchants, progressive health textbooks, the high price of gasoline, and power outages; and *for* fair elections, higher pensions, and cheaper utilities.[23] Even Uzbekistan, which Freedom House has called "one of the most repressive regimes in the world"[24] and Human Rights Watch declared has a "disastrous human rights record,"[25] has seen its share of localized mobilization: From mid-2004 to mid-2005, there were demonstrations or riots directed against the government over trade regulations, expropriation of land, property seizures without compensation, farmers' rights, and disputed arrests. These incidents involved from 70 to 10,000 people and took place in at least five of Uzbekistan's thirteen regions,[26] yet none expanded beyond a single locale nor succeeded in securing political change. For most of Central Asia's short history of independence, protests have lacked the size and diversity of demonstrations that could extract concessions from the regime. So what enabled the aggregation of grievances to such a dramatic degree in Kyrgyzstan in 2002 and 2005—combining people from many localities or regions in a single united

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[20] Kevin J. O'Brien, "Collective Action in the Chinese Countryside," *The China Journal* 48, July 2002: 146.
[21] The Cauldron Boils," *The Economist*, 9-29-05.
[22] Yingying Chi, "China's Rural Challenge," *Harvard International Review* 22(2), July 2000: 34-37.
[23] Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); BBC Monitoring, Central Asia; Institute of War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), iwpr.net; and Russian-language sites: Ludwig Gibelgauss, "V Stolitse Kyrgyzii Proshel Miting Oppozitsii," *Nemetskaya Volna*, Alla Pyatibratova, "Kyrgyzy Vystupili Protiv Torgovtsev iz Kitaya [Kyrgyz went against traders from China]," kyrgyzby.narod.ru, 4-12-04; "News Roundup September 26-October 2," bio.fizteh.ru; kyrgyzby.narod.ru, 8-26-04. It should be noted that these are only events reported in the press and are heavily weighted toward the capital. It can safely be assumed that there have been many more incidents that have gone unreported. In the course of my fieldwork, I witnessed or heard of protests that were never reported in the press.
[24] "Freedom House Policy on Uzbekistan," Freedom House (freedomhouse.org), 7-9-04.
[25] "Overview of Human Rights Developments 2005: Uzbekistan," Human Rights Watch (hrw.org).
[26] See Yevgeny Zavyalov and Galima Bukharbaeva, "Angry Uzbek Farmers Force Official Climbdown, IWPR, 4-5-05; "Uzbekistan: A Year of Disturbances," IWPR, 3-13-05.

movement—but prevents such expansion in Uzbekistan, and for that matter also in China and Iran, today?

Summary of the Theory

The theory specified and demonstrated in this dissertation has both a structural and a dynamic component. The first part posits that certain economic and political conditions must be met to lay what I call the "mass mobilization infrastructure." The second part explains how, under these enabling conditions, the right mechanisms can be activated in the short term to produce mass mobilization. In other words, the first part tells us "what we need to have," and the second part explains "what can happen if we have it."

Three necessary conditions make the expansion of protest across community boundaries more likely in a setting where the conditions for mass mobilization are unfavorable. They are: 1) poverty and a low provision of public goods, 2) economic opportunities that allow elites autonomous from the state to earn revenue, and 3) horizontal networks of such autonomous elites. Mobilization is triggered in the short term when the state challenges the political or economic position of elites who maintain support in communities through material and affective ties, which I term "localism."

Where society is poor, but there are opportunities for enterprising or well-connected individuals to accumulate wealth, elites may earn political support by providing surrogate public goods to their communities and posing as a benefactor. If the regime threatens to harm this relationship, by restricting elites' freedoms or denying them access to resources, mobilization is one of the few means available to advance (or defend) their position. Through ties established in the course of their self-promotion, elites can marshal their resources—collaborators, communication, and cash—to initiate mobilization in the community or communities where they have invested. They base their appeal on shared local (or regional) identity and the material benefit that people derive from the elite's activities.

For mobilization to expand beyond the local level, certain mechanisms must be activated through which information can travel so that people in different places can coordinate their actions. I have identified three such mechanisms and formulated hypotheses about the conditions under which they may be activated. One mechanism that may expand mobilization is *demonstration*, in which people learn of the behavior of others through an impersonal medium and then emulate their actions. It is likely to function if mass communication is widely available and people possess the resources to mobilize spontaneously. A second mechanism is *diffusion*—

or direct contact—between actors connected by strong social ties. This mechanism is most likely to be activated within intra-community networks but is less likely to work across geographic or cultural boundaries. I argue that the most effective mechanism for cross-community (or cross-regional) mobilization is *brokerage*, or mediation between groups by a small number of well-connected individuals. Under the right conditions, embedded elites linked by networks that transcend geographic boundaries may mobilize their respective supporters and broker between them to form a single movement. Only if diffusion and brokerage are activated in concert can an incipient movement overcome gaps between (1) elites and masses and (2) different communities (or regions).

One implication of this theory is that mobilization in Central Asia is inherently self-limiting. People have a rational incentive to mobilize in support of issues of local and material concern, rather than for abstract principles such as good governance or fair elections. By its nature, then, mobilization tends to be narrow in geographic scope. Only when the state simultaneously challenges elites in different localities will multiple groups act simultaneously to defend their local interests while also coalescing into a single movement.

A second implication is that states can impede mass mobilization by blocking the formation of either localized vertical relationships or inter-elite networks. Autocrats can weaken vertical networks by restricting economic opportunities outside the state structure or by providing sufficient public goods to reduce the influence of wealthy independent elites. They can also monitor and repress potential opposition leaders and suffocate civil society to prevent economic and political elites from developing super-local ties.

Scope conditions

Scholars have proposed a variety of scope conditions in which large-scale mobilization (i.e. revolution) can take place. Their parameters address the state of both the state and society and include: agrarian states (Skocpol, Moore, Wolf, Paige), industrialized society and domination of workers by the capitalist class (Marx), rapid modernization (Skocpol, Huntington, Gurr, Johnson), weak states (Skocpol, Huntington, Wickham-Crowley, Goodwin), political and economic autonomy of the peasantry (Skocpol), and the intrusion of markets (Scott, Paige, Wolf).[27]

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[27] Barrington Moore, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Jeffrey Paige, *Agrarian Revolution* (New York: Free Press, 1976); James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion*

I do not deviate drastically from previous theories, but in formulating the scope conditions for my theory, which focuses on resources rather than grievances, I emphasize current conditions rather than processes and change: (1) the state must provide low levels of public goods, (2) wealth must be unevenly distributed throughout society—that is, there must be a small wealthy elite and a large underclass—but (3) within that elite, resources are dispersed among individuals inside and outside of the state rather than concentrated entirely in the hands of the state.

The first and second conditions are necessary as they lay the basis for the individual incentives to mobilize on behalf of local issues. The third prevents the state from stifling independent initiative. These parameters are general enough to encompass a broad swath of polities (and parts of polities) around the world, for example where a clientelist regime must share resources with potential opponents in order to co-opt them, or where the pressures of the global economy have compelled a command state to adopt reforms that aid in the distribution of resources from the state to society, but where former regime insiders acquire those assets at the expense of ordinary people.

Poverty and rebellion have often been seen to go together in one form or another. In its most direct form, deprivation acts through a psychological mechanism, generating desperation or anger, which people express by rebelling against the source of their grievances.[28] A more sophisticated theory states that the burden of rising expectations weighs heavily on people who resent seeing others gain at their expense, resulting in mobilization.[29] But poverty has other effects besides generating grievances.

In positing the first two scope conditions, I decouple people's living conditions from their motivation to rebel. Poverty and few public goods are necessary insofar as they contribute to localism, which is more accurately a product of lack of modernization, low provision of public goods, low mobility, and weak communication infrastructure.[30] As a result of these factors, ordinary people, who are often rural (but may also be urban poor), maintain strong "bonding ties"

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and Subsistence in Southeast Asia (New Haven: Yale University, 1976); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, Second Edition (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1982); Timothy Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America: A Comparative Study of Insurgents and Regimes Since 1956* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992); Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945- 1991* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[28] Neil J. Smesler, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1963); Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*.

[29] Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*.

[30] On the effects of modernization on the character of society, see Huntington, *Political Order*.

but weak "bridging ties."[31] People rely on local rather than extra-local institutions to solve problems. They are in some sense two degrees removed from the state, in that they receive private goods from intermediaries, who may have obtained their resources through the state, and their perceptions of the state and other authorities are largely shaped by those intermediaries.

The other condition is a separation of economic and political power, so that the upper class cannot overlap entirely with the ruling elite. That is to say, the state cannot possess a monopoly of the productive resources of society, as is common in socialist economies and leftist dictatorships. Conversely, the economic elite, assuming it has unified interests, should not be able to dictate policy, as in right-leaning autocracies. [32]

Between these two extremes—a relatively egalitarian distribution of resources throughout society and a concentration of political and economic power in the same hands—a "brokered" widespread rebellion is possible. The incentives of the three main types of actors—the state, non-state elites, and masses—must align or diverge in particular ways. Depending on actions of non-state elites, masses may not be dependent on the state, but may instead rely on the provision of private goods from local elites. Elites may be ambivalent toward the state: supportive when it protects their interests, opposed if they perceive it as too predatory or corrupt. When the interests of elites align with those of the masses against the state, then the foundation for mass mobilization is laid.

Why Kyrgyzstan?

Kyrgyzstan displays variation in mobilization scale over time. Like the other republics of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan was subject to a negligible amount of protests in the tumultuous years of nationalist mobilization that tore the Soviet Union apart.[33] Only beginning in the early 2000s did both the frequency and size of mobilizations begin to increase, culminating in the largest one of all in 2005. Kyrgyzstan has also been subject to mobilizations of local, regional, and national scale. The variation in scale over time permits the opportunity to identify factors that may account for this variation, while controlling for other variables.

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[31] See Ernest Gellner, "The Importance of Being Modular," in John A. Hall, ed., *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 1995), 32-55; Deepa Narayan, "Bonds and Bridges: Social Capital and Poverty," World Bank, 1999.

[32] Juan Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

[33] Of the titular nationalities of the USSR, Kyrgyz were the second least active group taking part in demonstrations between 1987 and 1992, tied with Uzbeks (at 3 people per 1,000) and ahead of only Turkmenistan. Jonathan Wheatley, *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution* (London: Asghate Press, 2005), 32. Data adapted from Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization,* 2002.

Kyrgyzstan also conforms to the scope conditions for the theory. First, Kyrgyzstan's state capacity has always been weak. Kyrgyzstan has a lower level of industrialization and infrastructure than the other Central Asian republics, and remains largely rural and agricultural to this day.[34] Lacking the generous subsidies that the Soviet system had provided, Kyrgyzstan underwent a budget crisis in the 1990s and severely cut back on social and physical expenditures. State weakness and poverty conspired to ensure that localism would be the primary determinant of social interaction and political identity.

Second, the distribution of resources is highly unequal. When the government embarked on neoliberal reforms, regime insiders exploited their connections to enrich themselves at the expense of the majority of the population. The gap between rich and poor is wider than it was in the Soviet period and large even among other post-Communist countries.[35] Third, by virtue of its economic reforms, Kyrgyzstan developed an independent business class that was not dependent on the state, nor did it control the state. The president was forced to co-opt potential rivals and make concessions, especially by devolving power to parliament. Thus, non-state elites, though not necessarily united, constituted a social force that could alternatively buttress or undermine the regime.

Kyrgyzstan's change of power has usually been placed in the context of the "colored revolutions" that occurred between 2000 and 2004 in other post-Communist states.[36] President Askar Akaev, who developed an early reputation as a liberal reformer, had more recently backtracked on democratic reforms. His regime had become increasingly riddled with corruption and he manipulated the constitution to increase his power. Like the peaceful revolutions of Georgia and Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan's "revolution" followed years of discontent and began after claims of fraudulent elections. However, these surface similarities mask underlying differences in how mobilization took place, in terms of level of urbanness, the role of civil society and political parties, and the role of business elites. While there is now a body of research on the other cases, little has been done on Kyrgyzstan. In order to make correct inferences about this category of peaceful revolutions and its potential to "travel" to other regions, it is necessary to elucidate the specific causes of mass mobilization in every case.

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[34] Thirty-four percent of Kyrgyzstan's population lives in urban areas, compared to 73% of people in Russia, 60% in Kazakhstan, and 37% in Uzbekistan. "United Nations Development Program, Human Development Report, 2005," www.alertnet.org.

[35] In 1993, Kyrgyzstan's Gini coefficient was 55.3, the highest from a group of 18 post-Communist countries surveyed. Branko Milanovic, *Income, Inequality, and Poverty during the Transition from Planned to Market Economy* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1998), 180.

[36] See Kathryn Westcott, "Revolutions: What's in a Name?" *BBC News*, 11-26-04; Fred Weir, "Democracy Rising in Ex-Soviet States," *Christian Science Monitor*, 2-10-05. This group includes Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine and, sometimes, Slovakia.

Research Design

Because the theory elaborated above makes specific predictions at different levels of analysis, I use a "layered" research design to demonstrate it. In the first case, to show how state weakness and economic opportunities have created the conditions for mass mobilization, I use the Mills method of difference with the case of Uzbekistan.[37] Both countries share many features such history, culture, and geography, permitting many factors to be controlled for. On the other hand, their differences, such as the level of subsidies received from Moscow and their respective natural resource endowments, contributed to the adoption of a different set of reform policies.[38] I trace the effects of post-1991 policies on the two countries' economic development, which had widely diverged by 2005.[39] Whereas in Kyrgyzstan state withdrawal and privatization allowed elites to earn revenue independently of the state, in Uzbekistan the state monopolized economic activity, preventing elites from accumulating wealth or power outside of the state. As an indirect result of these policies, although Uzbekistan has experienced localized protests, it has not experienced mass mobilization.

A second type of variation is within a single event in Kyrgyzstan. The theory predicts that communities are mobilized from the top-down through ties to elites, and then individuals are mobilized internally through diffusion. Contagion to another community should take place through brokerage. These hypotheses can be tested by comparing villages in which many mobilize with those in which few or none participates, and tracing the process by which mobilization expands. We expect to observe stark differences between communities where an elite initiated mobilization and those without elite involvement, and little or no effect of geography in determining which communities become activated.

A third dimension, offering a further test of the causes of mobilization, is of mobilization events of different scale. I analyze the dynamics of the Aksy protests of 2002, which were of regional scale, and the "Tulip Revolution" of 2005, which was national. The triggers for both, according to the theory, should contrast with the impetus for ordinary localized mobilization. We

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[37] Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 40.

[38] The policies were in fact due to a combination of inheritance and agency. I discuss this in greater depth in Chapter 3.

[39] In 2006, Freedom House rated Kyrgyzstan's economic freedom "mostly free" and Uzbekistan "mostly unfree." Golnaz Esfandiari, "World: Economic Freedom Advancing, Survey Finds," rferl.org, 1-4-06.

should also see more elites challenged in the case of national rebellion than in regional mobilization and state actions that contribute to perceptions of weakness leading to a greater propensity of elites to join the opposition. Table 1.1 summarizes the comparisons.

Table 0.1: Comparisons

Level of analysis	Testing?	Variation	Cases
National	Economic openness →autonomous economic elites	Mass mob/no mass mob	Kyrgyzstan/ Uzbekistan (1991-2005)
Local/regional within single cases	Dynamics and mechanisms	Active/passive Villages	Kyrgyzstan only: 3 active/3 passive villages in Aksy; multiple active and passive villages in 3 regions in "Tulip"
Regional/ National within Kyrgyzstan	Elite challenge and activation of inter-elite networks	Mobilization in 1 district/ mobilization in 5 regions	Aksy/Tulip

The material used in the empirical part of this dissertation comes from several sources. I began from the bottom-up, that is, from the perspective of the participants themselves. First, I spent 14 months in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan between 2003 and 2005, using participant-observation and conducting nearly 200 interviews in Russian and Uzbek with mobilization participants, organizers, and non-participants. Second, I analyzed original surveys of 1,000 respondents in each Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, conducted in June-July 2005, of which I was a co-author, which provide additional evidence on aspects of localism and dependence. The results are integrated into Chapters 2 and 4. Details can be found in the Appendix. Third, for background on Kyrgyz and Uzbek political development and factual material for both case studies, I used wire services and news organizations that provide the most thorough available coverage of Central Asian current events, including English-language sources BBC Monitoring, Radio Liberty, and FBIS, and Russian-language websites fergana.ru and akipress (for Kyrgyzstan).

The original fieldwork that I conducted also fills in an empirical gap in the social movement literature. Only a minority of social movement scholars rely on interview and observation of the activists involved in mobilization to try to understand behaviors from the participant's point of view. Of these accounts, the vast majority have taken place in the US or Western Europe. This dissertation is one of a few theoretically informed studies to incorporate

first-hand research on contentious politics in non-Western and non-democratic societies.[40] As such, it illuminates the common processes at work even in dissimilar cultural contexts and widens the scope for the generalizeability of social mechanisms.

Definitions

Mobilization is defined by its collective, public, and episodic character and its purpose of extracting concessions from a state authority, which generally conforms to McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly's definition of contentious politics: "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects."[41] In the cases considered here, demonstrations, sit-ins, and marches are the most common tactics. Several types of action, including terrorism (not collective), voting (not collective and no claim), and political campaigning (no claim) are excluded, as are two types of collective action commonly practiced in Central Asia—state-led collective campaigns (parades, holiday spectacles) and bottom-up social mobilization such as mass cleaning and construction projects. It is inherent in the definition that the episode pose a challenge to established political authority. As Tarrow points out, at its most fundamental level, mobilization is "the main and often the only resource that ordinary people possess against better-equipped opponents or powerful states."[42] The definition does not specify the type of people engaging in mobilization (elites or masses), nor does it presuppose the motives of the actors initiating mobilization or choosing to participate.

I operationalize scope in terms of the level of mobilization achieved—local, regional, or national. *Local* or *localized* mobilization is that in which all participants reside in two or fewer communities. A *community* is a group of people defined by many-sided and direct relations, reciprocal exchange, a set of common beliefs and values, and proximity of residence.[43] It is limited by geographic and social, rather than administrative, boundaries. Kyrgyzstan is divided

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[40] Others in this small but rapidly growing body of research include Charles Kurzman, "Structural Opportunity and Perceived Opportunity in Social-Movement Theory: The Iranian Revolution of 1979," *American Sociological Review* 61(1), February 1996: 153-170; Dingxin Zhao, "Ecologies of Social Movements: Student Mobilization During the 1989 Prodemocracy Movement in Beijing," *American Journal of Sociology* 103(6), May 1998: 1493-1529; Dmitry P. Gorenburg, *Minority Ethnic Mobilization in the Russian Federation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Elise Giuliano, "Who Determines Self in the Politics of Self-Determination? Identity and Preference Formation in Tatarstan's Nationalist Mobilization," *Comparative Politics* 32(3), 2000: 295-316; Vincent Boudreau, *Resisting Dictatorship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[41] McAdam et. al., 2001, 3.

[42] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 3.

[43] The first three characteristics come from Michael Taylor, "Rationality and Revolutionary Collective Action," in Michael Taylor, ed., *Rationality and Revolution*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 68. My definition is more restrictive by its limitation to groupings based on residence.

into three tiers of government: villages/cities, rayons, and oblasts. Since villages and cities do not necessarily correspond to geography, the definition of local mobilization conforms to geographic and social, rather than administrative, boundaries. *Regional* mobilization is that which simultaneously takes place in, or involves people from, three or more communities, but within no more than two oblasts (of which there are seven in Kyrgyzstan and 13 in Uzbekistan). *National* mobilization is that which occurs in, or involves people from, three or more oblasts. Throughout the dissertation, I refer to regional and national mobilization as *mass mobilization.* See Figure 1 for a diagram of Kyrgyzstan's vertical administrative structure and Table 2 for a breakdown of the three levels of mobilization.

Figure 0.1: Tiers of government in Kyrgyzstan[44]

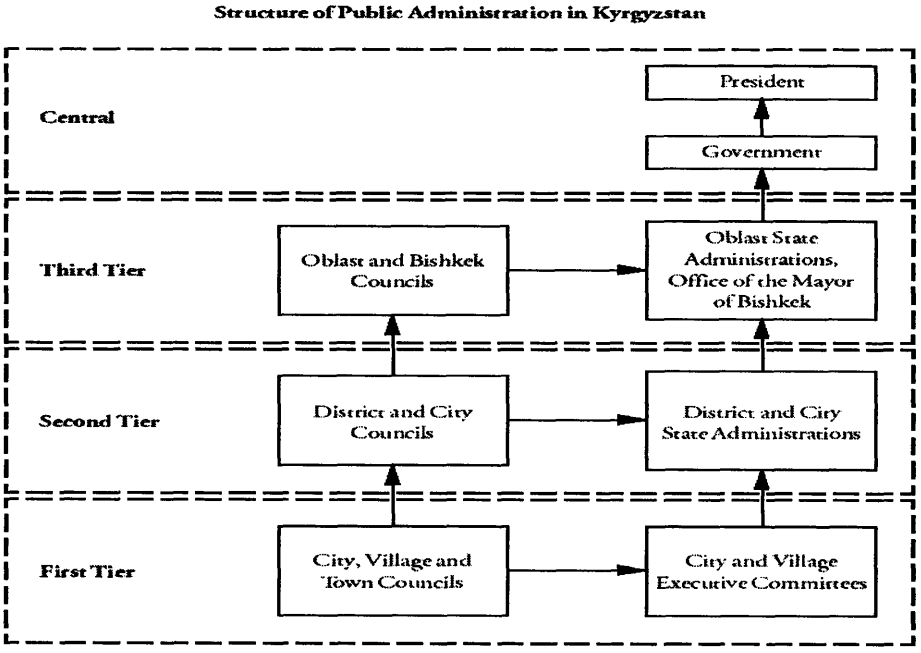

Table 0.2: Mobilization Scope

Scope	At least...	At most...
Local	--	Two communities
Regional	Three communities in one oblast	Two oblasts

[44] Reprinted from Emil Alymkulov and Marat Kulatov, *Local Governments in Eastern Europe, in the Caucasus, and Central Asia* (Budapest: Soros Foundation, 2000), 565.

National Three oblasts --

What constitutes an *elite* in post-Soviet politics is controversial and non-obvious. Should it be defined by formal authority, material superiority, or spiritual influence, to name only a few possibilities?[45] Because of the fluidity of political and economic power within the political system, I use a broad definition of elites: "those who wield power and influence on the basis of their active control of a disproportionate share of society's resources."[46] This definition has three advantages over others for my purposes. First, it contains no requirement that elites possess formal political authority, since official posts in Central Asia do not necessarily yield political power while some informal roles do; second, it allows for change in elite status by the acquisition or loss of resources; third, it allows us to identify elites by objective and measurable characteristics and not by their behavior (i.e. organizing collective action), which prevents tautology. One of the following four criteria is usually sufficient to attain elite status: significant wealth, state office, parliament (where members can be elected independently of the regime), or family connections to an elite of the first three categories.

It is also necessary to categorize elites according to their status, which corresponds to the levels of mobilization scope—local, regional, and national. Status is operationalized by subjective rather than objective criteria: *the highest level at which people commonly recognize him and perceive him as being influential.* These perceptions can be measured empirically. For example, in one community a businessman may be widely recognized as influential, but because most of his activities and social ties are centered on that community, neighboring communities do not perceive his influence. He is therefore considered local. In another case, a man whose father had occupied powerful positions within the oblast during Soviet times and who continues to exercise influence through associates throughout the oblast, would be considered a regional elite. The president, some cabinet ministers, and a small number of parliamentary deputies may be recognized as national elites. It is possible for elites to change their status. For example, a local businessman can win a seat in parliament. By then exercising influence throughout the electoral district, he becomes a regional elite. An elite can also make material and/or symbolic investments to increase his status.

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[45] See Vladimir Shlapentokh, Christopher Vanderpool, and Boris Doktorov, eds., *The New Elite in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1999).
[46] Eva Etzioni-Halevy, *The Elite Connection. Problems and Potential of Western Democracy.* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 29.

Networks have been conceived in several ways in the literature. One subfield measures their structural properties, categorizing them by size, density, and centralization of ties.[47] Another pays more attention to the actors—the relative power and resources of some members vis-à-vis others.[48] In my conception, a network is simply "the set of social relations or social ties among a set of actors (and the actors themselves thus linked)."[49] Following McAdam et. al., a *mechanism* is defined as "a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified elements in closely identical or similar over a variety of situations."[50] Mechanisms focus attention on the processes involved in causation by showing how macro-level events translate into individual decision-making.[51] Unlike variables, which can occur in greater or lesser quantities, mechanisms are either activated or they are not.

Contributions

The theory elaborated here, in its examination of post-Soviet inheritances and policies, networks, and mechanisms, contributes to several literatures in comparative politics: the breakdown of authoritarian regimes, revolutions and social movements, and scholarship on Central Asian.

The theory identifies several structural factors that may hasten the breakdown of authoritarian regimes. The distribution of resources between social groups has often been associated with various political outcomes, including regime type and revolution.[52] Some variants of modernization theory, such as that of Huber et. al, argue that industrialization alters the distribution of economic resources to empower the working class at the expense of the landlord class.[53] Modernization theory accounts not only for breakdown of authoritarian regimes,

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[47] Gerald Marwell, Pamela E. Oliver, and Ralph Prahl "Social Networks and Collective Action: A Theory of the Critical Mass III," *American Journal of Sociology* 94(3), Nov. 1988: 502-534; Roger Gould, "Collective Action and Network Structure," *American Sociological Review* 58(2), April 1993: 182-196.
[48] Karen S. Cook, ed., *Social Exchange Theory* (New York: Sage, 1987).
[49] Mustafa Emirbayer and Jeff Goodwin, "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency," *American Journal of Sociology* 99(6), May 1994: 1418.
[50] McAdam et. al., 11.
[51] Roger D. Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 12; Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg, "Social Mechanisms: An Introductory Essay," in Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg, eds., *Social Mechanisms* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 10.
[52] See Charles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[53] Evelyne Huber, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and John D. Stephens, "The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7(3), Summer 1993: 71-86. Others incorporate the balance of power between social groups less explicitly. See Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man*, (New York: Doubleday, 1960), 51-52; Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), Chapter 5; Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, "The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions," *Comparative Politics* 29(3), April 1997: 263-83.

but also for the establishment of a democratic one. My claim is not as ambitious. I identify two aspects of resource distribution—between the state and society, and between state and non-state elites—and trace how the balance of power between groups can result in alliances of elites and masses against the state. In this view, mass mobilization is only the realization of elite decision(s) to challenge a regime, but does not ensure its downfall nor presage the formation of a new regime.

Second, debates about "people power" and revolutions have recently returned to vogue, especially in the former Soviet Union, where scholars have sought to explain the "color revolutions."[54] Most explanations for this recent phenomenon have taken a top-down approach, focusing on factors such as manipulation of elections, corruption, international pressures, and failure to use violence.[55] Where they have sought to explain the actions of the protesters themselves, they have referred to mechanisms such as modularity and coordination to explain collective behavior.[56] Yet these theories have failed to incorporate insights from over 30 years of social movement theory, by assuming away people's motivation to join. SM Theory has demonstrated the strong influence of pre-existing social ties on the decision to participate in mobilization[57] and refuted theories that people join movements out of anger or frustration alone. My theory provides an explanation for how regimes' attempts to retain power interfere with people's attempts to maintain networks of sustenance, thereby sparking rebellion. It offers a rational explanation for participation and accounts for variation that other explanations do not.

Third, a crucial variable in SM theory is the political opportunity structure (POS), a concept which has expanded to encompass so many variables as to be nearly devoid of explanatory power.[58] Although the theoretical development of the concept came from western countries, where political participation is institutionalized, an increasing number of scholars have applied the concept to contentious politics where there are barriers to mobilization both from above and

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[54] See "Bloodless Regime Change," *The Economist*, 1-19-06.
[55] See Fairbanks, "Georgia's Rose Revolution"; Lucan A. Way, "Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy*, 16(2), April 2005: 131-145; Michael McFaul, "Transitions from Postcommunism," *Journal of Democracy* 16(3), July 2005: 5-19.
[56] Mark R. Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions," Working Paper, 2005; Joshua A. Tucker, "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and the '2nd Wave' of Post-Community Democratic Revolutions," Working Paper, November 2005.
[57] Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, "Specifying the Relationship between Social Ties and Activism," *American Journal of Sociology* 99(3), Nov. 1993: 640-667.
[58] "The concept of political opportunity structure is in trouble, in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up virtually every aspect of the social movement environment—political institutions and culture, crises of various sorts, political alliances, and policy shifts." William A. Gamson and David S. Meyer, "Framing Political Opportunity," in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer D. Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 275.

below.[59] While not testing components of the POS directly, I show that lack of political access and high levels of state repression do not deter all protests, nor is a favorable POS sufficient to cause mass mobilization. Instead, the state's economic policies, which determine the distribution of resources and may give rise to independent economic actors, are more important in creating the preconditions for mass mobilization than traditional aspects of the POS.

Another potential contribution is to the "Dynamics of Contention" project.[60] McAdam, et. al. argue for a dynamic methodological approach to contentious politics that seeks to identify casual mechanisms that occur across diverse events and underlie processes such as movement growth and decline, participation and identity, and shifts in objectives and tactics. Their aim is "not to identify wholesale repetitions of large structures and sequences, but to single out recurrent mechanisms and processes as well as principles of variation."[61] In identifying the mechanisms of transmission within and between communities and demonstrating how they can trigger mobilization under specific conditions, I employ this methodology. I also show how the dynamic approach can be combined with a traditional variable approach to make predictions about outcomes at different levels of analysis.

In the field of Central Asian studies, issues of post-Soviet identity and state –society relations have been on the agenda to explain outcomes such as institutional creation and regime trajectories. It has been argued that Soviet administrative regions, as the locus of competition for centrally distributed resources, became the basis for self-identification among post-Soviet elites, but this identity did not necessarily extend to the mass level.[62] Another study claims that clan affiliation in Central Asia supersedes even individual rationality and therefore solves collective action problems. Yet though it is claimed that both elites and masses share clan identity, the empirical material concerns only elite politics and, even then, direct evidence is never provided to show that clans exist.[63] In this study, I make no claim about identity per se, but my findings do shed some light on the question. Mobilization in Kyrgyzstan was driven by localism, which is the product of material deprivation and community-based social networks. Though people may also

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[59] See, for example, Marwan Khawaja, "Resource Mobilization, Hardship, and Collective Action in the West Bank," *Social Forces* 73(1), Sep. 1994: 191-220; Kurt Schock, "People Power and Political Opportunities: Social Movement Mobilization and Outcomes in the Philippines and Burma," *Social Problems* 46(3), August 1999: 355-375; Maryjane Osa, *Solidarity and Contention: Networks of Polish Opposition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).
[60] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[61] Ibid., 33.
[62] Pauline Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[63] Kathleen Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

possess ethnic, Islamic, regional, clan, and other identities, local ties are the most critical for survival in everyday life and therefore the basis of collective action for ordinary people. Other identities may be activated at different times, but they do not constitute a basis for mobilization.

One final set of debates about the region centers on the consolidation of authoritarian regimes. It has been argued that the fusion of political and economic power in the Soviet era left a legacy of weak society in the years after the Soviet collapse. It follows that the locus of competition over resources and policy takes place within the state rather than between the state and influential societal actors.[64] Further, anecdotal evidence from the region has been used to argue that wide income disparities have led to an "hourglass society," in which people enjoy substantial social capital within their respective classes, but there is little exchange between them. In my empirical work, I provide evidence that weakens both of these arguments. Through the ties of localism, the region has witnessed transfers from the wealthy to the poor, which have assisted the latter in acting collectively in pursuit of political, in addition to social, goals.

After the collapse of the USSR, the independence period witnessed a divergence of paths among Central Asia's states that the "first generation" of post-Soviet scholarship on Central Asia was unable to capture. Though Soviet legacies will still influence aspects of social and political life for a long time to come, a "second generation" of scholarship, in which this dissertation falls, can document a greater diversity of outcomes from the effects of such post-independence variables such as leadership, foreign influences, and critical junctures. As further divergence takes place, the Central Asia's states will come to resemble one another less and less, making them increasingly suitable for comparison with countries outside the region. Such diversity should also promote greater theoretical flexibility that sees the states not only through traditional lenses of the first generation (post-Communism, Islam, resource endowments),[65] but also as cases in which a broad range of issues pertinent to comparative politics can be tested. I attempt to demonstrate this by applying my theory to countries outside the region in the final chapter.

Dissertation Preview

Chapter 1 surveys the literature on mass mobilization and develops the theory of this dissertation. It lays out the necessary conditions that facilitate mass mobilization and describes how a triggering event can set off a dynamic process of mobilization expansion.

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[64] Anna Grzymala-Busse and Pauline Jones Luong, "Reconceptualizing the State: Lessons from Post-Communism," *Politics and Society* 30(4), December 2002: 546.

[65] See Pauline Jones Luong, "In Its Own Image: Toward a Re-conceptualization of Central Asia," *Program on New Approaches to Russian Security, Policy Memo No. 21.*

Chapter 2 is an ethnographic account of poverty and localism in five cities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, using data from participant-observation and over 100 interviews. It describes how state withdrawal and corruption have contributed to lower standards of living, and how communities have adapted to cope with these problems.

Chapter 3 compares economic opportunities and possibilities for autonomous association in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The first section shows how the Soviet collapse led to decreased public goods provision and damaged the system of patronage that sustained the Communist Party. The second section explains how the Uzbek state reestablished Soviet patronage ties with elites and retained a monopoly on economic activity, whereas Kyrgyzstan's permissive economic policies allowed elites to acquire wealth independently of the state and form inter-elite ties without the state's mediation. The third section compares how differing state policies affected the development of civil society and the formation of non-regime elite networks.

Chapter 4 centers on the vertical relationships linking local elites to communities in Kyrgyzstan. It identifies the material and symbolic contributions that elites make to increase political support and the benefits to communities of supporting such elites. Several examples from fieldwork illustrate how these relationships develop. I then show how, in isolated cases, wealthy elites have mobilized their supporters to defend themselves against challenges from the state.

Chapter 5 is a case study of mobilization from Aksy, Kyrgyzstan in 2002, using fieldwork conducted in Aksy including interviews with over 50 activists, participants, and observers. It began after the district's member of parliament, Beknazarov, was arrested. Beknazarov's close associates and relatives worked with his campaign representatives in Aksy's 12 villages to expand mobilization through brokerage. Informal networks based on everyday exchange were used to diffuse mobilization within villages.

Chapter 6 is a case study of the so-called Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in March 2005, using fieldwork including interviews with over 50 activists, participants, and observers in three regions of Kyrgyzstan following the revolution. I show that the mass mobilization was the result of an improvised alliance between opposition leaders after uncoordinated protests broke out around the country following rigged elections. Mobilization began when losing parliamentary candidates outside of Jalalabad mobilized networks from their communities to protest election results. Leaders affiliated with a national opposition coalition, the NDK, unified demonstrations in different regions to create a mass movement, which eventually toppled the government. Participation in mobilization spread by diffusion within communities and brokerage between them.

Chapter 7 tests the theory on cases beyond Kyrgyzstan. After analyzing the "Andijan events" of Uzbekistan in May 2005, it tests how well the theory explains the scale of mobilization in early modern France and England, and contemporary China and Iraq.

In the Conclusion, I discuss what the insights of this dissertation contribute to the study of Central Asia and other former Soviet states, social movements and democratization, and social capital. Finally, I discuss the theory with reference to the "colored revolutions" and identify policy implications of the findings that can be applied throughout the region and beyond.

Chapter 1: Mass Mobilization in Authoritarian Systems

Under what conditions is mass mobilization likely to occur in an authoritarian system? My theory argues that local ties and political competition provide incentives for certain elites and sub-sections of the masses to ally to defend their common interests. When the state blocks an elite's access to resources, the elite can mobilize the community in protest. Inter-elite ties can expand mobilization beyond the initial mobilizing community.

Many existing theories address the causes of mobilization but do not explicitly address variation in the *scale* of mobilization. Theories stressing social ties, selective incentives, and emotions, among others, have been proposed to account for mobilization within a locale,[1] yet they rarely make distinctions among the mechanisms necessary to produce collective action that cuts across communities. In authoritarian contexts, where repression deters participation in mobilization, access to political institutions is stymied, and civil society is likely to be weak, mass mobilization is especially problematic. Thus, the outbreak of mass mobilization in this context is historically rare and theoretically puzzling.

In this chapter, I attempt to address this puzzle by breaking the question down into its component parts. First I analyze the literature on contentious politics and the breakdown of authoritarian regimes to suggest (1) the mechanisms by which mobilization is likely to expand beyond a community, and (2) what enables and motivates certain actors to employ those means. I then elaborate an original theory that explains variation in mobilization scale in authoritarian settings.

I: How Does Mobilization Become "Mass?" Three Mechanisms

Social movement theories can be grouped into three broad categories based on the mechanisms by which mobilization expands: demonstration, diffusion, and brokerage. Each is associated with certain preconditions and has distinct implications for the scale of mobilization. See Table 2.1 for a breakdown of the mechanisms by their definitions, enabling conditions, strengths and weaknesses, and observable characteristics.

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[1] See Bert Klandermans, "Mobilization and Participation," *American Sociological Review* 49, Oct 1984: 583-600; Karl-Dieter Opp and Wolfgang Roehl, "Repression, Micromobilization and Political Protest," *Social Forces* 69(2), Dec. 1990: 521-547; Douglas D. Heckathorn, "Collective Action and Group Heterogeneity: Voluntary Provision versus Selective Incentives," *American Sociological Review* 58(3), 1993: 329-350. Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper and Francesca Polletta, "Why Emotions Matter," in Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper and Francesca Polletta, eds., *Passionate Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

Table 1.1: Mechanisms

Mechanism	Definition	Enabling Conditions	Strengths	Weaknesses	Observable characteristics – individual level	Observable characteristics -- community level
Demonstration (Huntington, Tarrow, Beissinger)	motivation by analogy; transmission through impersonal media	--access to mass media --perceptions of similarity or solidarity	--intuitive --explains action in response to state-level changes --accounts for "cascades" and "waves"	--does not provide a rational account for individual behavior --requires reliable mechanism for mass communication	--impetus for participation does not come from personal contact --individuals display high levels of outrage/idealism --solidarity and identification with earlier participating actors	--distribution of participation correlates with access to information from mass media --distribution of participation is not correlated with social networks --low levels of internal organization
Diffusion (Schelling, Kuran, Hedstrom, Lake/Rothchild, Petersen)	transmission by (horizontal) direct contact, "strong ties"	--geographic proximity --dense social interaction	--found in a wide variety of systems --reinforced by social norms and everyday interaction --conforms to logic of assurance games and "safety in numbers"	--unable to explain transmission of behaviors in cases of cultural or geographic separation --unlikely to function in sparsely populated areas or communities with weak social norms	--use of threats or normative appeals on the horizontal level to induce participation --individuals decide whether to participate based on social considerations --absence of involvement of elites	--distribution of participation is smooth, correlates with geography, and varies with density --initiative for mobilization emanates from grassroots
Brokerage (Gould, Granovetter, McAdam/Tarrow/ Tilly)	transmission through intermediaries; vertical/ hierarchical relationships; "weak ties"	--dissimilar, geographically separate groups --presence of self-interested actors with who maintain ties in multiple networks	--accounts for contagion among dissimilar or geographically distant groups --explains motivation of elites who interact with the grassroots level	--underspecifies reasons for individual behavior on mass-level --unnecessary where social networks are cohesive	--participants have ties to an elite with an interest in mobilization --appeals to individuals revolve around relationships with an elite or involve top-down pressures and incentives	--lack of identification with other communities' claims --wider dispersion of elites with an interest in mobilizing➔ greater scale --distribution of participation uneven, not correlated with geography --high levels of internal organization

Demonstration

One possible explanation for why local claims-making turns into mass mobilization is emulation, in which the actions of one group motivate other groups to act likewise by analogy to their similar circumstances. First, a group makes a public demand. Then another group learns of it, becomes aware of the possibility of contention (or realizes its own latent grievances), and decides to follow suit, especially if the first group has won concessions. Among other cases, this mechanism was shown to have enabled the rapid spread of protests in the USSR and throughout Eastern Europe in 1989, which occurred in increasingly diminishing time spans—Poland ten years, Hungary ten months, GDR ten weeks, Czechoslovakia ten days, and Romania ten hours.[1] I call the mechanism, following Huntington, the *demonstration* effect.[2]

The demonstration effect depends on access to mass media and feedback from the state. The transmission of the initial act and the state's response can only occur in the presence of a medium through which information can travel widely and quickly. If the state refrains from cracking down on a claims-making group or decides to negotiate, it may indicate that the political opportunity structure (POS)—or the exogenous factors that facilitate or inhibit a social movement's chances for success[3]—has opened, leading others to bandwagon. The aggregate effect of multiple protests has been called cycles, when the groups compete toward institutionalizing or radicalizing,[4] or tides, when structural conditions and protest actions conspire to create sudden and massive waves of contention. In extreme circumstances, the self-reinforcing dynamic of challenges by society and retreats by the state cause people to see as inevitable outcomes once thought impossible.[5]

Demonstration cannot account for the advent of mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan, the observed variation in communities and individuals that mobilize. First, the isolation of many

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[1] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* (New York: Random House, 1990), 78.

[2] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 100.

[3] It has several components, which are often debated. The most commonly accepted specification is Tarrow's: "When institutional access opens, rifts appear between elites, allies become available, and state capacity for repression declines, challengers find opportunities to advance their claims." Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 71.

[4] Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy 1965-1975* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989).

[5] Quoting Beissinger, Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, he specifies the demonstration effect without naming it explicitly: "...connections are also made between actors on the basis of analogy—that is, on a sense of similarity in the nature of issues, situations, or mobilization targets. It is here that mobilization gains its power to travel...across vast distances between communities with seemingly little in common with one another...The more open media flows of the *glasnost'* period played a critical role in the spatial spread of mobilization by crating the possibility for analogy making." See Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization*, 75.

villagers makes the acquisition of accurate information necessary for demonstration problematic. Second, demonstration does not account for variation in mobilization by community or region. If people responded automatically to the changes in the political opportunity structure, then mobilization would occur simultaneously in all regions of the country, a pattern that conflicts with reality. Third, demonstration-based theories do not account for agency. They do not explain who the leaders are or why followers follow. Without offering a rational motivation for individual behavior, the argument tends to lapse into organic inevitability or must rest on the dubious assumption that strain and deprivation are sufficient to compel individual participation.[6]

Diffusion

A second means of spreading across groups is commonly called *diffusion*, in which recruitment to collective action spreads through personal contact. A simple model conceives of transmission of behavior as contagion, in which neighbors influence the behavior of neighbors, or political entrepreneurs are able to selectively activate others' identities.[7] In explaining the spread of collective behavior, these theories usually assume that all participants are already in direct contact through social networks. Tipping models explain changes in behavior or identity as a consequence of observation of others' actions and the individual's threshold of change.[8] Using this concept, assurance games have been employed to explain the rapid expansion of protests in East Germany[9] and rebellion in Lithuania.[10] Diffusion has also been identified in the spread of trade unions in Sweden, ethnic conflict in Africa, and legal claims in Ottoman Turkey, to name only a few applications of the concept.[11]

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[6] See Smesler, *Theory of Collective Behavior*; Gurr, *Why Men Rebel.*
[7] Ian Lustick, "Agent t-based Modelling of Collective Identity: Testing Constructivist Theory," *Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation* 3(1), 2000.
[8] Thomas Schelling, *Micromotives and Macrobehavior* (New York: Norton, 1978); David D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).
[9] Timur Kuran, "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics* 44, Oct. 1991: 7-48; Susanne Lohmann, "The Dynamics of Information Cascades: The Monday Demonstrations in Leipzig, East Germany, 1989-1991," *World Politics* 47, Oct. 1994: 42-101.
[10] Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion.*
[11] Peter Hedstrom, "Contagious Collectives: On the Spatial Diffusion of Swedish Trade Unions 1890-1940," *American Journal of Sociology* 99(4), Mar. 1994: 1157-79; David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Karen Barkey and Ronan Van Rossem, "Networks of Contention: Villages and Regional Structure in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *American Journal of Sociology* 102(5), Mar. 1997: 1345-83.

Diffusion of collective action can function in both rural and urban areas. In rural communities, face-to-face contact is frequent and norms are strong, resulting in "strong ties,"[12] imputing a rational, socially influenced motivation for participation. Participation may result from norms of fairness[13] or expectations of reciprocity.[14] Dense urban areas also can produce the social bases for diffusion. Close proximity and interaction can create common identities that can be activated in response to critical events.[15] Even where people's identities are anonymous, coordination points and common knowledge can lead to diffusion between social groups.[16] In smaller-scale contexts, social networks arising through institutions such as the workplace[17] and university[18] can account for individual variation in recruitment and provide a rational account for why individuals join.

In Kyrgyzstan, where villages are often geographically isolated, mobility is low, and communication infrastructure is poor, as Chapter 2 will show, diffusion (with enabling mechanisms such as tipping) accounts well for variation in individual behavior *within* communities. However, the scarcity of regional- and national-level institutions and people's relative immobility reduce the possibilities for diffusion *across* communities. Diffusion processes also cannot account for the distribution of active and passive communities in Kyrgyzstan, especially in the "Tulip Revolution" (see Chapter 6). If diffusion were to function between villages, we would see a direct relationship between mobilization and distance, with an incremental gradation from active to passive communities. In fact, there is only weak correspondence between mobilization and geography.

Brokerage

A third mechanism that may bridge the gap across boundaries to compensate for localism is *brokerage*—the strategic positioning of individuals who mediate between dissimilar groups,

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[12] Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6), May 1973: 1360-80.
[13] Jon Elster, *The Cement of Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 123.
[14] Gould, "Collective Action and Network Structure."
[15] Roger V. Gould, *Insurgent Identities: Class, Community, and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995), 19.
[16] Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion*, Chapter 7; Hank Flap and Beate Volker, "Communist Societies, the Velvet Revolution, and Weak Ties: the Case of East Germany," in Eric Uslaner and Gabriel Badescu, *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
[17] Andrew G. Walder, "Collective Protest and the Waning of the Community State in China," in Michael P. Hanagan, Leslie Page Moch, Wayne te Brake, eds., *Challenging Authority* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).
[18] Doug McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer," *American Journal of Sociology* 92(1), 1986: 64-90; Dingxin Zhao, "Ecologies of Social Movements."

alternatively called liaisons and gatekeepers in the literature on networks.[19] McAdam et. al. define brokerage as "linking of two or more currently unconnected social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with each other and/or with yet another site."[20] Brokering is distinguished from diffusion in that discrete groups are connected at only a few points rather than a large number of diffuse ties, and from demonstration, because information is channeled through a small number of personal contacts rather than broadcast through an impersonal medium. It also differs from diffusion in that brokers are a qualitatively different type of actor than the members of the groups between which they mediate, for example, by being more powerful and not partisan to one group or another.[21]

Brokerage is the most favorable mechanism to link groups or populations that are segregated culturally or geographically.[22] The mechanism can be found in both informal networks engaged in everyday transactions and formal organizations specializing in political activity.[23] In authoritarian contexts, it may play a crucial role in linking groups that otherwise have little contact because civil society is weak and there is no independent media.[24] It has been identified as a component in several historical events, from the French Revolution to the US Civil War.[25] Yet brokerage has seldom been applied to explain the linkage of otherwise similar groups across geography boundaries.

In the case of Kyrgyzstan, brokerage may account for variation on the regional level and provide an explanation for how villages separated by geography coordinate their actions. In both 2002 and 2005, elites with ties across community and regional lines were involved in mobilizing people in their communities and coordinating with other elites. Where an elite was actively involved, there was mobilization; where there was no elite involvement, the community was unlikely to mobilize. In some cases, two villages mobilized, though separated by many kilometers, while those located in between did not.

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[19] David Knoke, *Political Networks: The Structural Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 144-46.
[20] Doug McAdam et. al., *Dynamics of Contention*, 157. See also Granovetter, "Strength of Weak Ties"; and Ronald S. Burt, *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).
[21] Roger V. Gould, "Power and Social Structure in Community Elites," *Social Forces* 68(2), Dec. 1989: 536.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Mario Diani, "'Leaders' or Brokers? Positions and Influence," Diani and McAdam, *Social Movements and Networks*.
[24] John Foran, "A Century of Revolution: A Century of Comparative, Historical, and Theoretical Approaches on Social Movements in Iran," in John Foran, ed., *A Century of Revolution: Social Movements in Iran*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Vincent Boudreau, *Resisting Dictatorship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[25] McAdam et. al., *Dynamics of Contention*, 2001.

The literature on brokerage, however, provides only part of the story by telling us *how* mass mobilization occurs, but not *why*. It begs the question of who the brokers are and why they engage in mobilization. A complete theory must explain how elites with the capacity for mobilization arise in some contexts and not others, and what motivates elites and masses to cooperate under some circumstances.

II: Why Elites Oppose: Altering the Distribution of Power

The work on the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and institutional development provides partial insights into both questions. Most approaches to democratization link regime breakdown to economic growth or crisis, but they are either deterministic and lacking in agency, such as modernization theory,[26] or focused solely on elites without paying attention to the interests of the masses.[27] Scholarship on institutional design in early modern Europe is helpful in identifying processes that shift the balance of power from the sovereign to regional notables in a context analogous to contemporary Central Asia. However, such theories fail to account for variation in elites and only superficially consider the role of society in influencing outcomes.

One strand of democratization literature focuses exclusively on the agency of elites involved in challenging regimes. O'Donnell et. al. argue, based on analysis of Latin American cases, that peaceful regime change occurs when moderates from among regime and anti-regime contingents can negotiate a common solution.[28] Yet not only do they fail to account for how the interests of non-regime elites are formed or under what circumstances they are empowered to challenge the regime, but they also leave little room for the masses to play a role in democratization, even though that occurred in Eastern Europe three years after their work was published.[29]

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[26] Lipset, *Political Man*, 51-52; Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 66-67; Larry Diamond, "Economic Development and Democracy Reconsidered," *American Behavioral Scientist* 35(4-5), 1992: 450-99; Evelyne Huber, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and John D. Stephens, "The Paradoxes of Contemporary Democracy: Formal, Participatory, and Social Dimensions," *Comparative Politics* 29(3), April 1997: 323-342; Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi, *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[27] Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[28] O'Donnell et. al., eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule.*

[29] Mass protest is an ephemeral outgrowth of processes strengthening civil society already underway, and not a causal force. Ibid., 53-56.

The literature on institutional development in Western Europe sheds light on the conditions under which elites may challenge the authority of a sovereign. Levi and others have argued that trade and agricultural capitalism in England made merchants and landlords more powerful vis-à-vis the king than in France, where traditional agriculture prevailed. The English Crown granted political representation to capitalists and landlords in order to ensure a steady stream of revenue from the taxation of trade, which translated into parliamentary democracy.[30] Such theories do well to highlight the importance of economic factors, in both the long and short terms, in endowing elites with both the capabilities and the motivation to confront entrenched authority, complementing social movement theories that downplay elite-level bargaining.[31]

Political economy theories, however, still leave some conspicuous questions unanswered, such as why there is variation in the decisions of elites to defect, and when the masses may also exert influence on the bargaining process. Levi and Brustein provide one answer, arguing that regional rebellions in early modern France, England and Spain were the product of conditional cooperation *between* peasants and nobles. Collaborative collective action was more likely in regions dependent on subsistence agriculture, because in those regions there was greater interaction between landlords and peasants and a higher degree of mutual dependence than where agriculture was more developed. Even though grievances against the monarch's encroachment on the prerogatives of the nobility were widespread, rebellion would only occur when regional elites possessed sufficient resources, in the form of a mobilized peasantry, to challenge the sovereign.[32]

Wolf's class-based theory of revolution argues a similar mechanism of encroachment by the center creating a reactive alliance of groups whose interests are not otherwise aligned. Although peasants may have an interest in rebelling as the intrusion of capitalist agriculture threatens to destroy their way of life, they do not possess the means to do so. Instead, it is the "middle peasants," who own property and have access to resources independent of landlords and the state, that mobilize the peasantry against the state.[33] Although class-based theories do not account for variation *within* classes, they highlight the role of exogenous events in disrupting

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[30] Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 111-12.
[31] See Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[32] William Brustein and Margaret Levi, "The Geography of Rebellion: Rulers, Rebels, and Regions, 1500-1700," *Theory and Society* 16(4), July 1987: 467-495.
[33] Eric Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969). Other studies of peasant rebellion note the importance of a better endowed outside actors in initiating rebellion among the peasantry. See Moore, *Social Origins*; Joel S. Migdal, *Peasants, Politics, and Revolution: Pressures Toward Political and Social Change in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); Samuel L. Popkin, *The Rational Peasant* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

existing power relationships and identify critical actors who are essential in providing the resources required for collective action in rural societies.

The theories critiqued above provide persuasive accounts of the onset of elite opposition to authoritarian regimes and supplement sociological theories of collective action by emphasizing the interests and capabilities of actors. Rarely, though, does a theory link long-term economic or political change with short-term agency to produce more nuanced variation in outcomes.[34] My approach is to present an integrated theory explaining how exogenous state policies can, over time, lay the groundwork for mass mobilization. The theory will also account for variation in mobilization among elites and suggest a rational motivation for the decision of certain elites and masses to collaborate in opposing the regime.

III: Explaining Mass Mobilization Scale

There are four conditions that conspire to produce mass mobilization. The first three lay the foundation for the "mass mobilization infrastructure": (1) low levels of public goods provision, (2) the linkage of elites with communities, and (3) inter-elite networks.[35] The fourth triggers mass mobilization and determines its ultimate scale: (4) a state challenge of elites that denies them freedom or access to resources.

At least four observable implications emanate from this set of hypotheses. First, countries in which the three above conditions are not present are unlikely to experience mass mobilization. Second, where mobilization takes place, the majority of protesters should be (directly or indirectly) related to an elite who has invested in that community and who has been challenged by the state. Third, contagion to another community should take place through brokerage. Fourth, the greater the number and the wider the geographic distribution of embedded elites that are challenged, the larger the scale of mobilization should be.

Mass Mobilization Infrastructure

1) Absence or weakness of the state in daily life increases people's dependence on horizontal networks.

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[34] Some recent works integrating structure and agency include Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity*; and Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*.

[35] The first condition precedes the other two chronologically. The latter two conditions need not occur in sequence.

The first necessary condition for mass mobilization is a low level of public goods. This is important for two reasons: first, it creates interpersonal dependence within societal networks; second, it causes a search for benefactors to substitute for the state.

An individual's behavior is shaped by daily interaction, a major part of which takes place in his community. In communities, according to Taylor, relations are many-sided, exchange is reciprocal, and people maintain a set of common beliefs and values. Communities maintain social order and provide public goods through monitoring and positive and negative sanctions.[36] Besides relationships formed on the basis of proximity, there are also networks of friendship and exchange, based on activity and interaction through a school or university, a workplace, service in the army, relatives, and political or civic activity. These networks are often nested within villages or neighborhoods, or they may also span across them. It is not uncommon for people to have simultaneous ties within several partially overlapping networks.

To understand why state weakness causes greater cohesiveness within communities—and how community ties can be used for recruitment into mobilization—it is necessary to demonstrate how membership in a community can be both a benefit and a burden. Hechter [1987] provides a theoretical underpinning for why people invest in community membership and how community ties can influence behavior. Individuals join groups because they are dependent on the collective good the group provides. Dependence, and therefore obligation, is a function of the cost of exit, determined by the supply of close substitutes, the lack of information about alternatives, the costs of moving, and the strength of personal ties. In order to minimize costs, over time, the collective develops the means to monitor the collective and enforce decisions in order to prevent shirking.[37]

Where the provision of public goods is low, community members tend to become increasingly dependent on one another for sustenance, a self-reinforcing process that immerses people into ever-deeper mutual dependence relationships. People compensate for resource scarcity by relying on other community members for such material and non-material goods as information, farming equipment, and credit. Although members of the community are likely to share common identities and socioeconomic status, their association in various cross-cutting networks gives them differential access to various resources. Somebody may own a car, another a tractor, and a third may have access to goods from abroad. Ties within and beyond the community may be exploited to learn news of political events in other parts of the country or inside tips on gaining employment or entrance into a university. Understanding that because of the unpredictability of issues such as employment or the quality of harvests, one may be self-

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[36] Taylor, "Rationality and Revolutionary Collective Action," 67.
[37] Michael Hechter, *Principles of Group Solidarity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

sufficient today and needy tomorrow, people invest in a shared risk system based on reciprocity and mutual obligation. Individuals who partake in this system incur obligations to contribute to the collective or face the implicit threat of deprivation, social sanction or exclusion.

Another effect of state weakness is the existence of opportunities for actors within or outside the community possessing disproportionate resources to contribute to alleviate scarcity. High dependence within the community provides a partial remedy to problems of deprivation, but it serves only to redistribute wealth within a network rather than infusing new resources from outside the network. It is therefore also rational for communities to seek partnerships with wealthy actors or organizations that can substitute for the state. This willingness to seek out and ally with community benefactors enables the second condition for mass mobilization.

2) Where it is possible to earn and retain revenue outside of the state apparatus, elites have an incentive to cultivate a political base.

For the purposes of this theory, there are two ideal types of authoritarian systems,[38] ones in which access to resources is entirely concentrated in state hands, and ones in which it is possible to earn revenue independently of the state. In the former type of regime, earning and retaining wealth is a function of an individual's position in the state apparatus. A person who is not part of the state is unlikely possess opportunities to accumulate wealth, and one who uses the state for rent-seeking is unlikely to retain his fortune if he breaks from the state.

In the latter type of regime, there are opportunities to earn revenue independently of the state or to leave the state while retain one's wealth, but the legal system is nonetheless likely to be politicized or otherwise unreliable. Since property rights and individual liberties are insecure, wealthy or ambitious elites have an incentive to seek out alternative means of protecting their assets from a predatory state and insuring their freedom. One of the means to protect themselves is to form cross-class alliances with ordinary people by appealing to localism and contributing some of their wealth to impoverished communities as charity.

Elites can develop a social support base by exploiting feelings of localism in communities where they have personal ties. Localism as a form of identity is rooted in common residence and mutual dependence, and based on association with a particular territory. Unlike ethnic identities—such as those based on language, tribe, or region—where common interests are

[38] This definition also includes partially authoritarian systems such as electoral autocracies. See Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 5, January 1994: 56-69; Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13(2), April 2002: 51-65.

inferred through imagination and analogy,[39] localism is based on personal interaction and social ties. In a clientelistic society, elites are often linked with large numbers of people in their home community and its environs, if not personally then through networks of relatives and friends.

For a wealthy businessman or political aspirant, one's village or town of birth is a natural place to begin cultivating support. Although they possess a natural advantage as locals, developing and expanding political support is not automatic—it is also conditional on their demonstrating sufficient concern for their roots through populism. A populist image can be shaped by making symbolic gestures and engaging in displays of respect for traditions on one hand, and by providing material assistance, especially when the elite is wealthy (and people are aware of that fact), on the other. For those elites who have left their native village for the capital, the symbolic component is expressed through frequent visits, especially on holidays, when elites are expected to organize and finance festivities. It also means frequenting venues that "ordinary people" attend, such as tea houses and religious institutions, to show their solidarity. And they must attend—or send a representative to—major life cycle events such as weddings and funerals, where they are expected to hand out symbolic monetary gifts.

On the material side, elites may donate some of their wealth to the community, either as direct transfers to the poor or as donations to fix infrastructure or fund construction projects. They do not give away a major part of their assets, nor do they make significant improvements in the stock of public goods. Instead, they strive to get as much public exposure as possible for their money—more "bang for their buck." Projects should be centrally located, visited by many people, and socially useful. In some instances, in case the point is missed, donors may put up a plaque or build a monument noting the contribution. To hammer home the point, they may also sponsor elaborate ribbon-cutting ceremonies involving community elders, local media, and plentiful food and alcohol.

Elites also may offer their services by using their political clout to assist locals in dealing with the bureaucracy or acquiring needed goods, especially if they are not particularly wealthy. They may expedite the acquisition of documents such as internal passports, secure jobs for co-villagers who have moved to the capital, or even weigh on prosecutors to release accused criminals from custody or drop charges. Having a seat in parliament is also a means of securing benefits to one's region. Savvy politicians can reward their districts by steering funds from the national budget or NGOs to invest in local infrastructure. By claiming credit for such windfalls,

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[39] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

they are able develop reputations as benefactors (even if not independently wealthy) and dissemble as to whether the money came from their pockets or another source.

As a result of such elite activities, a "cult" is likely to develop around the actions of a local elite. People may speak with pride of the success of "their" benefactor, whom they perceive as "honest" and "hard-working." Despite his obvious wealth and the fact that he may have spent his entire working life outside of the village, they ironically label him as a "simple man," opposed to the interests of "the powerful." Such perceptions may not be unanimous within the community. In fact, some may deride the philanthropic actions of an elite as a cynical ploy for personal enrichment and self-advancement. They may complain that their member of parliament only makes material contributions prior to elections and then disappears again. But universal approval is neither attainable nor essential. If the elite has made sufficient investments—symbolic and material—in cultivating his base, he can count on his community to provide sufficient votes to win elections, and, if necessary, as a resource to be mobilized as a last line of defense against the state.

3) Autonomous elites form networks.

The third component of the mass mobilization infrastructure is inter-elite networks, which cross-cut vertical networks but do not overlap with ordinary horizontal networks. Unlike ordinary people, elites are not likely to be constrained by localism or parochialism. On the contrary, by virtue of their wealth and status, they are mobile and enmeshed in relationships across regions.[40] According to Mills's power elite model, members of elite networks share common social origins, socialization experiences, and class consciousness, which acts as a natural cohesive force.[41] On the other hand, because the wealthy have the advantage of mobility, access to diverse resources, and self-sufficiency, elite networks are likely to be based more on instrumental than normative considerations. This implies that, unlike horizontal networks at the mass level, which usually develop willy-nilly and are based on mutual dependence and shared norms, elite networks are voluntaristic, strategic, and transitory. It is therefore incorrect to speak of "one elite network," since elites are likely to possess multiple, overlapping, and shifting network affiliations.

Several types of institutions and events can facilitate the formation of elite networks. On the national level, a parliament, where elections allow local power brokers to win seats, is one of

[40] It should be recalled from the Introduction that I define elites as "those who wield power and influence on the basis of their active control of a disproportionate share of society's resources." Etzioni-Halevy, *The Elite Connection*,29.
[41] C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

the most important. First, it provides a forum where elites can exchange information and build trust. Second, it brings people from diverse geographical regions, together in one place.[42] Through these ties, these elites act as brokers between local-level elites who remain in the region. Third, networks that form within parliament are more likely to be explicitly political than others. Where independent businessmen mingle with pro-presidential or opposition politicians, the nature of their common ties is likely to be more ideological—and constitutive of new (political) identities—than in purely material networks. Below the national level, regional or city parliaments or councils, where they exist, may have similar effects, but because they do not bridge as great of distances, they may strengthen existing networks rather than lead to the formation of new ones. In some cases, NGOs or entrepreneurs may sponsor events at which unaffiliated or geographically dispersed elites can associate, exchange information, and develop longstanding relationships.

Another catalyst for elite network formation is an event which may act as a focal point for elites whose interests coincide but have never sought to collaborate. A war, revolution, or other anomalous event may unexpectedly put new issues on the agenda, bring together diverse people who previously not interacted, and lead to the formation of new and enduring relationships. For example, Bolsheviks who fought together in the Russian Civil War developed informal personal networks which they maintained in building the new Soviet state.[43] The Arab-Israeli wars, the 1956 Hungarian uprising, the US Civil Rights Movement, and perestroika and the fall of Communism all resulted in "generations" of leaders whose collective formative experiences spawned new networks.[44]

A third source of network formation is a change in the balance of power that weakens existing authorities and provides opportunities for new actors to vie for resources. Such a change may occur when the regime is perceived as weak or declines in legitimacy, when laws are passed that change the rules of the game to allow new competitors, or when an exogenous shock

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[42] Brustein and Levi, "Geography of Rebellion": 478.

[43] Gerald Easter, *Reconstructing the State: Personal Networks and Elite Identity in Soviet Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 47.

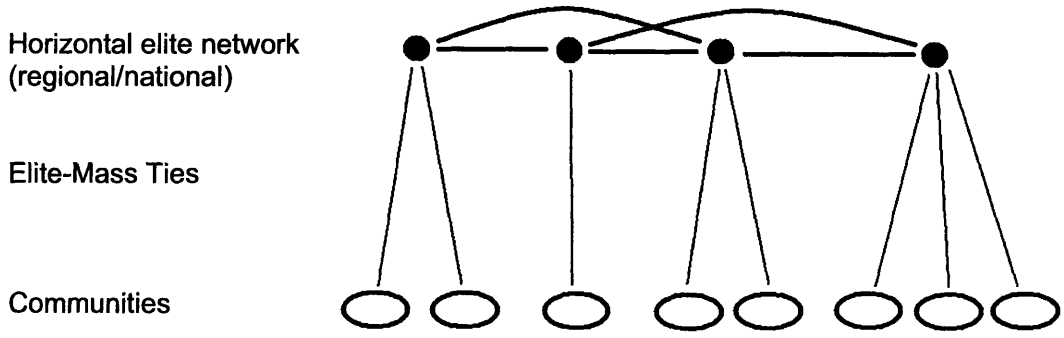
[44] More often than not, generations can defined clearly in relation historical moments; the members of the generation may also perceive themselves as being marked by shared historical experience: they would then, to borrow a concept from Marxist class theory, constitute a generation 'for itself' rather than only 'in itself.'" Volker Perthes, "Politics and Elite Change in the Arab World," in Volker Perthes, ed., *Arab Elites: Negotiating the Politics of Change* (Boulder: Lynne Riener, 2004), 17. See also Bill Martin, "Continuity and Discontinuity in the Politics of the Sixties Generation: A Reassessment," *Sociological Forum* 9(3), September, 1994: 403-430; Szonja and Ivan Szelenyi and Imre Kovach, "The Making of the Hungarian Postcommunist Elite: Circulation in Politics, Reproduction in the Economy," *Theory and Society* 24(5), October 1995: 697-722; Gregory L. Cascione and Anton Steen, *Elites and Democratic Development in Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

increases the resources available. Skocpol argues that rebellious groups seize upon state weakness resulting from international pressures.[45] Theories involving the POS also see regime decline or failure to use repression as a factor emboldening actors and leading to group formation or expansion.[46]

While elites in different regions may bring about simultaneous mobilization out of grievance or opportunism alone, informal networks can provide a basis for brokerage to take place. First, prior to an elite's decision to mobilize, information, such as the intentions of others and anticipated state responses, can be exchanged rapidly. Such communication can facilitate the coordination of timing, place, and tactics of mobilization. Second, where ties have produced trust between elites, they can overcome the prisoner's dilemma and are more likely to engage in simultaneous risky actions.[47] This is especially important across regional boundaries, where coordinated action is difficult but more likely to make a greater impact on the regime than localized mobilization. Finally, on the regional level, elite networks allow for the rapid pooling of (material and human) resources to increase the size of protests. Especially where the numbers that elites can contribute, or the resources available for them to mobilize, is small, combining assets can dramatically increase mobilization scale.

With all three networks in place, we can now see the contours of the mass mobilization infrastructure. See Figure 2.1, showing how the three conditions, if satisfied, link mass and elite networks through vertical ties to form a single interconnected structure.

Figure 1.1: The Mass Mobilization Infrastructure



[45] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, Chapter 2.
[46] Charles D. Brockett, "The Structure of Political Opportunities and Peasant Mobilization in Central America," *Comparative Politics* 23(3), April 1991, 253-74; Sidney Tarrow, "State and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements," in McAdam et. al., *Comparative Perspectives*.
[47] Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, Andrei Shleifer, and Robert W. Vishny, "Trust in Large Organizations," *American Economic Association Papers and Proceedings* 2, May 1997: 333–338.

The Challenge

The trigger that brings about mass mobilization is set off when the state severs the resource flow to or impedes the advancement of embedded elites who are providing a source of sustenance for a community. Elites bring in revenue through their private economic activities, position in parliament, or access to state budgets, in the process enriching themselves and sustaining a political base. Both elites and their communities therefore have an interest in maintaining this mutually beneficial relationship. Any action that threatens to reduce an elite's access to resources or political influence can be considered a challenge to this relationship: arrest, seizure of assets, denial of political posts providing access to resources, or demotion. Elements in the state may carry out these measures because they seek to retain the elite's assets for private gain, if they fear that the elite poses a political threat, or simply out of personal or ideological differences.

If the legal system does not provide a means of resolving the conflict through neutral and institutionalized channels, an elite who has been challenged can respond in several ways. He can quietly submit, especially if the state threatens to retaliate against resistance by harming him or his family. If he has a well-placed contact, he can "pull strings" to dissuade the authorities, often in concert with other tools that are typically used to regulate power in a clientelist system, such as backroom deals, bribery, threats, and blackmail.[48]

However, individual elites are usually at a disadvantage relative to the state. In the course of ensuring compliance among the citizenry, the state maintains the latent threat of coercion[49]—along with various "dirty tricks"[50]—to enforce its decisions. It can also manipulate the legal system to blackmail and neutralize actual or perceived political opponents. Non-state elites have fewer material resources they can use to protect or advance their interests and (usually) lack a credible threat of coercion.

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[48] See Keith Darden, "Graft and Governance: Corruption as an Informal Mechanism of State Control," Conference on Informal Institutions and Politics in the Developing World, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, April 5-6, 2002.
[49] Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue*, 44.
[50] "Illegal methods or quick changes of the law to remove key state figures, preempting the emergence of competing power centers, and weakening or destroying groups in agencies already powerful enough to threaten the rulers' prerogatives." See Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 223.

Elites who have cemented an alliance with a community through patronage possess an additional tactic in their choice set: mobilization. Because "human capital" is one of the few resources in which these elites have a comparative advantage, raising the masses may be their only viable weapon. The power of the street is a resource that can be marshaled in pursuit of various goals, as social movement theory recognizes.[51] This insight is even more pertinent in authoritarian political systems, where states tend to concentrate power and legal systems do not protect individual liberties or property rights. By disrupting the usual course of politics, undermining the appearance of stability, and publicly challenging the legitimacy of the regime, mobilization can level the playing field.[52]

Structural conditions are likely to restrict the scope in which elites will bring about mobilization. According to Brustein and Levi, writing of early modern European economic elites, "It is only where the region possessed sufficient economic and political resources to make success [in avoiding taxation] likely but not certain that rebellion became a good strategy for achieving the ends sought."[53] Elites are *able* use the mobilization option if they have formed an alliance with communities, but they are *likely* to use it only if they have limited recourse to other means. If they are too constrained economically, then they cannot provide the resources to the community necessary to build a political base. If they are extremely well off or possess a credible threat of coercion, they can address their grievances through less costly behind-the-scenes negotiations and not disrupt the political system.

Because they possess a weapon of last resort, elites connected to communities through clientelistic ties can be bolder than elites without such ties, thus increasing the likelihood of a challenge. Equipped with greater bargaining power, embedded elites are more likely to take risks and seek greater prestige than those without a base. Nevertheless, because the latent threat of ordinary people willing to mobilize is not a tangible asset, the state may misperceive an elite's capacity to resist a challenge by rebelling.

Diffusion

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[51] Bob Edwards and John D. McCarthy, "Resources and Social Movement Mobilization," in David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

[52] Ronald Aminzade, "Between Movement and Party: The Transformation of Mid-Nineteenth –Century French Republicanism," in J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans, *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives On States and Social Movements*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 40.

[53] Brustein and Levi, "Geography of Rebellion": 482. Emphasis on *where* removed.

In any collective activity, it is useful to have a vanguard. After an elite has been challenged, critical links to the community must be activated. Those who have the most direct contact with the threatened elite and the greatest incentive to defend his position, such as friends, relatives, employees, and colleagues, are the most likely to act first and expend the most energy in organizing resistance. Through their ties to the imperiled elite—and in turn greater access to material resources and secondary ties to networks beyond the community—this cohort is also the most capable of bringing about mobilization. They have been called "first actors" or "organizers" in collective action theories.[54] As this initial core of activists begins recruiting people through their horizontal networks, mobilization spreads laterally through communities.

A second group of people is likely to join mobilization through their social ties to the initial group of activists. Some agree to participate spontaneously upon hearing of the troubles of their local elite. Perceiving that the elite's continued survival is tied in with their own well being, they need only be approached by an organizer to agree. Others, who are socially more distant from the elite and for whom the bonds of localism are weaker, are more likely to join after appeals through the community's social and exchange networks. An individual's propensity to join mobilization is most susceptible to three types of influence—from kin or close associates to whom aid is automatic; from informal community authorities, whose exhortations carry greater weight than others; and from the participation of a critical mass of others in the village. Ironically, therefore, an individual may have little interest in the issue at hand, and would prefer to remain at home rather than mobilize, yet the need to honor his social obligations makes participation rational.

Depending on the initial mass of activists and the intensity of their recruitment efforts, and then the effects of secondary and tertiary appeals, the equilibrium participation level in a community may be a small number of participants, a medium segment of the population, or all able-bodied members. In general, the more people who participate, the more additional people will join them, a dynamic halted only by the boundaries of the community. This mechanism, called "critical mass" or "tipping," functions because (1) as more people participate, the non-contribution of a non-participant becomes more conspicuous, which may earn him a reputation as a shirker and damage his standing in the network, and (2) when repression is a possibility, the

[54] "Organizers, just like everyone else, have available resources and an interest in the collective good, but they use resources to organize a contract that will make others willing to contribute to the collective good." Marwell et. al., "Social Networks and Collective Action": 510. See also Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion*, Chapter 9.

chances of any individual getting hurt decreases as the size of the crowd increases.[55] By this process, one can see how mobilization spreads through diffusion from an inner circle of activists through personal ties to those with less of a perceived interest in mobilizing, potentially engulfing a large part of the community. But without further action, the mobilization will be limited to the community and is unlikely to make a major political impact.

Brokerage

The ultimate scale of mobilization is determined by how many elites decide to bring about mobilization in their own communities. This depends on the number of elites that are simultaneously challenged and their perceptions of the political opportunity structure. Because of the instrumental nature of actors in this type of network, trust and solidarity are unlikely to be relevant factors in the decision; elites would be reluctant to come to the rescue of a threatened comrade if they were not themselves threatened and perceived no strategic (i.e. material, reputational) benefit to joining. If, however, the state challenges several elites at once, there is a greater likelihood that they will cooperate through elite networks to realize common interests.

Perceptions of the relative power of the state vis-à-vis the opposition may play a role in the decision of elites. Once mobilization has begun in one region and a putative gap in the political opportunity structure has opened, elites' cost/benefit calculations may change in favor of mobilizing their own bases. One mechanism that may trigger participation is "safety in numbers," as the likelihood of receiving the brunt of retribution from the coercive apparatus decreases as more regions mobilize.[56] Another factor affecting the outcome is elites' perceptions of the future course of events, or their ability to "sense which way the wind is blowing." Just as states tend to bandwagon with the presumed victor in a war in order to be on the winning side, elites are capable of strategically changing sides if they perceive it is in their interests to do so.[57]

If elites decide to ally with other like-minded elites by mobilizing their own resources to support a claim against the center, the whole may be greater than the sum of its parts. Inter-elite

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[55] Mark Granovetter, "Threshold Models of Collective Behavior," *American Journal of Sociology* 83(6), May 1978: 1420-1443; Pamela Oliver, Gerald Marwell, and Ruy Texeira, "A Theory of the Critical Mass I: Interdependence, Group Heterogeneity, and the Production of Collective Action," *American Journal of Sociology* 91(3), Nov. 1983: 522-556; Schelling, *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*; Opp and Roehl, "Repression, Micromobilization and Political Protest," 1990; Kuran, "Now out of Never."

[56] See Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization*; Daniel S. Treisman, "Introduction," in *After the Deluge: Regional Crises and Political Consolidation in Russia* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Helene Carrere d'Encausse, *The End of the Soviet Empire: The Triumph of Nations* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), Chapter 7.

[57] See Randall Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security* 19(1): 72-107.

coordination is instrumental in pooling separate grievances— which by themselves could be neutralize through co-optation or repression—into a single movement with a unified command structure and tactics, and one set of demands. Elites in this scenario act as brokers, joining together through weak ties the mutually isolated communities held together internally by strong ties. This new mobilization network, which may extend as far as the elite network itself, consists not of individual elites, but of blocs of communities with which participating elites maintain pre-existing vertical ties, each undergoing its own diffusion processes of mobilization recruitment. Such a movement poses a greater threat to the state than isolated protests lacking unified demands or an equivalent number of protesters gathered at a single site. Participants from different communities will not know each other and may be acting purely out of parochial interests or social obligations, yet may unknowingly be the agents of a rebellion with major political ramifications.

Conclusion

I have argued, in fleshing out the theory on which this dissertation is based, that the scale of mobilization is determined by state weakness and its effect on communities; economic opportunities outside of the state; the propensity for elites to associate in cross-regional networks; and a state challenge of embedded elites. Because individuals are bound by mutual obligation within communities, it is not difficult organize mobilization, yet localism and isolation mean that such ad hoc mobilization is unlikely to spread beyond that community or be of great political significance. Only when regional elites who possess both vertical and horizontal ties also take up the cause and ally with other elites, is mobilization likely to spread beyond its local origins. The ultimate scope of the mobilization then depends on the extent of the elite horizontal network.

Of the three mechanisms for expansion, diffusion, though most common *within* networks, is unlikely to function *between* networks because it cannot overcome physical isolation and the deficit of weak ties among the population. Brokerage requires more permissive political and economic conditions in order to function, yet this mechanism is more likely to increase the scale of mobilization than diffusion or demonstration. Thus, mobilization scale is a function of both pre-existing economic opportunities and the short-term triggering of a stimulus to launch mobilization against the state. Chapters 2 through 4 will explain how the mobilization infrastructure was laid in Kyrgyzstan but not Uzbekistan, and Chapters 5 and 6 will trace how mass mobilization unfolded through the activation of these networks.

Chapter 2
The View From Below: Community Networks

Of the three components of the mass mobilization infrastructure, I begin from the bottom stratum of society, then I address the top and lastly, the links between them. The first task is to demonstrate how communities are suited to be the building blocks of mass mobilization. As scholars of collective action have noted, even if a group desires a collective good, individual participation to obtain it generally is not rationally self-interested, short of other incentives, and therefore the good is likely to be under-produced.[58] The ties established and maintained in the course of everyday life offer a possible solution to this problem. Within communities, where interaction is frequent, certain behavioral norms are well established, and mutual obligations are incurred, a social basis for collective action can develop.

I argue below that poverty and the low "infrastructural power" [59] of the state in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan following the collapse of the Soviet Union have led to high levels of dependence within communities, to varying degrees, and forced ordinary people to find new ways of coping with poverty and solving collective action problems. I provide concrete examples to show how (1) low levels of development coupled with post-Soviet shocks resulted in low personal incomes and public goods provision, as a result of which, (2) people exploit networks within the community (and to a lesser extent, other networks) to partially relieve their difficulties, as a result of which, 3) people are dependent on and obligated to other community members. These propositions correspond to the three sections of this chapter. Chapters 3 and 4 further develop the argument by showing how communities can link to elites who are able to broker mobilization. Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate how the mechanisms regulating community networks can be activated by these elites for political mobilization.

The points made here relate to the overall argument in two ways. First, by demonstrating how large questions of material well-being loom in ordinary people's lives, their motivations in searching for benefactors and identifying with local elites who appear to represent their interests can be better understood. Second, establishing the mechanisms that regulate community life and the role of informational and exchange networks is vital to make sense of people's choices in participating in mobilization. The importance people attach to these relationships helps to explain why recruitment through existing social networks is so effective.

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[58] Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).
[59] See Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results," in John A. Hall, ed., *States in History* (London: Basic Blackwell, 1986).

This chapter takes the community as the level of analysis. While not all communities are exactly alike, and there are subtle differences in social structure based on ethnicity and geography, commonalities at the community level emanating from similar circumstances generally outweigh the differences. The only major variation, discussed below, is that between major urban areas—for the most part, the national capitals—and all other towns and villages. Is should be recalled that the theory of this dissertation does *not* posit a correlation between poverty (or relative deprivation) and propensity to rebel. It is only necessary to establish that low levels of income and public goods provision can yield tight community networks and present opportunities for autonomous elites to provide surrogate public goods.

This chapter relies on fieldwork conducted in 2003-04 in at least two regions in each Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. I selected field sites that vary in ways that may affect social networks and standards of living—urban/rural, livelihood, and ethnic breakdown—in order to illustrate broad similarities across both countries that transcend economic or demographic differences. In Kyrgyzstan, I worked in the city of Osh, which is ethnically mixed between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks; and Aksy, which is almost entirely ethnically Kyrgyz and rural. In Uzbekistan, I worked Namangan, which is in the densely populated and fertile Fergana Valley, and rural environs; Karshi (and the rural outskirts), which is more arid and sparsely populated; and the capital, Tashkent.[60] See Table 1 for demographic breakdown by site.

Table 2.1: Field Sites

	Osh	Aksy	Namangan	Karshi	Tashkent
Country	Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan
Urban/rural	Urban	Rural	Mixed	Mixed	Urban
Livelihood	Industry/trade	Subsistence farming	Trade/industry/ Farming	Trade/farming	Industry/ trade
Ethnic breakdown	Uzbek/Kyrgyz	Kyrgyz	Uzbek	Uzbek	Uzbek/ Russian

Part 1: The "New Poor"

The collapse of the Soviet Union had a dramatic material effect on ordinary people. In cities, factories employing a large portion of the population shut down. In rural areas, most people working on collective farms found themselves with little land and equipment after officials with inside access took advantage of privatization schemes to appropriate assets. All but

[60] See Appendix for methodological details.

the most enterprising and well-connected individuals suffered a marked deterioration in living standards, and employed various survival strategies to cope.

Simultaneous with the massive job loss and shocks to personal income in Central Asia, people also endured the withdrawal of the state, once omnipresent in everyday life. The modern state is supposed to extract resources from the population it governs and provide public goods in return, from heat, water, and electricity, to security, education, health, and sanitation.[61] Despite the Soviet Union's massive inefficiency, it made great advances in providing Central Asia with infrastructure and social services.[62] These state functions began deteriorating in 1991 due to neglect and lack of funds, especially in rural areas.[63] In some cases, the actions of state agencies actively eroded state capacity. For example, police forces may take bribes but not solve crimes, and courts act on behalf of the executive branch but rarely protect individual rights.[64]

Some of the indicators of the effects of the USSR's collapse on Central Asia can be captured in statistics. The most immediate shock to the newly independent states was the end of Soviet subsidies.[65] All the Central Asian republics had been net beneficiaries of membership in the USSR and suffered from the decoupling of their economies.

Second, economic reforms, where they were carried out, hurt Central Asian economies in the short term, and many still have yet to recover to their pre-1991 levels. Economies in which greater reform was implemented, like Kyrgyzstan's, dropped most sharply and gradually improved thereafter, corresponding to the post-socialist J-curve described by western economists, while non-reformers such as Uzbekistan did not fall as rapidly, but declined steadily for a longer time.[66] All the Central Asian republics experienced significant impoverishment and the reformers additionally suffered from massive unemployment. Between 1988 and 1995, poverty increased from 24% to 63% in Uzbekistan, 5% to 65% in Kazakhstan, 12% to 88% in Kyrgyzstan, and 12% to 61% in Turkmenistan.[67]

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[61] Migdal, *Strong Societies*, 4.
[62] See Mark R. Beissinger and Crawford Young, "Convergence to Crisis: Pre-Independence State Legacies and Post-Independence State Breakdown in Africa and Eurasia," in Beissinger and Young, eds., *Beyond State Crisis: Postcolonial Africa and Post-Soviet Eurasia in Comparative Perspective* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2002), 27-30.
[63] Jane Falkingham, "Welfare in Transition: Trends in Poverty and Well-Being in Central Asia," Center for Analysis of Social Exclusion, London School of Economics, 1999, 21.
[64] Beissinger and Young, *Beyond State Crisis*, 46.
[65] It is estimated that subsidies accounted for 20% of GDP in Uzbekistan and 13% in Kyrgyzstan. Umirserik Kasenov, "Post-Soviet Modernization in Central Asia: Realities and Prospects," in Boris Rumer and Stanislav Zhukov, *Central Asia: The Challenges of Independence* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 30.
[66] European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Transition Report Update*, April 2001 (Table A1). On the J-curve, see Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market.*
[67] Milanovich, "Income, Inequality," 68-69.

Third, the effects of poverty were aggravated by the decline in public services that the Soviet state had excelled at providing. This change is evidenced by sharp decreases in state spending on social services, health, and education. For example, from 1991 to 1996, secondary school enrollment decreased between 23% to 41% in the four Central Asian republics besides Turkmenistan.[68] Between 1990 and 1995, real expenditure on health care declined from a base of 100 to 67 in Uzbekistan and 38 in Kyrgyzstan.[69] Last, surveys on corruption perceptions support the notion that the recent economic collapse was in part a problem of governance rather than attributable to structural factors alone.[70]

The extent of decline and the effects of economic crisis on ordinary people vary somewhat between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and from region to region, but the similarities outweigh the differences. By most measures, the decline in public spending in Uzbekistan was not as sharp as in Kyrgyzstan.[71] However, this statistic is offset by the level of impoverishment, which was somewhat less severe in Kyrgyzstan than in Uzbekistan, due in large part to the greater opportunities to earn revenue from Kyrgyzstan's privatized economy.[72]

Evidence from the 2005 survey supports this contention. Respondents were asked, "Which of the following best describes the level of well-being of your household?" and given the following choices: (1) It is difficult for us to afford even basic goods and food, (2) We can afford food, but it is difficult for us to pay for clothes and utilities, (3) We can afford food, clothing, and utilities, but we cannot afford such things as a new television or refrigerator, (4) We can afford food, clothing, utilities, and such things as a television or refrigerator, (5) We can buy everything we need. The average score was 2.71 for Kyrgyz respondents and 2.44 for Uzbeks.[73] In both countries, the average respondent was able to afford basic necessities but struggled to purchase anything more.

Within both countries, unemployment and decreased public goods provision hit different areas to a more-or-less similar degree, with one exception. In the capitals, Tashkent and Bishkek, the concentration of resources and international investment have shielded most residents from the most damaging effects of decline. Predictably, standards of living in cities in both countries are perceived to be somewhat higher than in rural areas (2.61-2.55). However, the difference

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[68] Falkingham, "Welfare in Transition," 30.
[69] Ibid., 7.
[70] On the 2005 Corruption Perceptions Index, out of 158 countries, Kyrgyzstan ranked 130; Uzbekistan, 137; and Tajikistan, 144. www.transparency.org
[71] As of 1996, social spending by the Uzbek government was 36.2% of GDP, compared to 23.3% in Kyrgyzstan. Falkingham, "Welfare in Transition," 6.
[72] See Chapter 3 for more on this divergence.
[73] For Uzbekistan, n = 991, standard deviation = 1.01; for Kyrgyzstan, n=990, standard deviation=.88.

between the capital city and the rest of the country (2.76-2.55) is even greater than that between urban and rural areas.

Land

In rural areas, land is the single most important factor determining whether a person lives at subsistence level or in prosperity. The amount of land one possesses, and more importantly, the quality, is largely a function of one's position in the collective farm (*kolkhoz*) hierarchy at the time of privatization in Kyrgyzstan, or current position in Uzbekistan.[74] When collective farms were dissolved in Kyrgyzstan, laws stipulated that land be distributed equitably. In reality, however, farm directors appropriated a large share of animals and equipment for their own personal use or sold them and absconded with the profits, leaving most workers with miniscule private plots.[75] Households could grow crops and raise animals on these plots, though farmers often slaughtered or sold off their livestock for fast cash. Workers were supposed to receive 15 *sotka* (one *sotka*=100 square meters) of irrigated land, but most were left with less, some as little as four.[76]

The most striking feature of a farming community in Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan is that people plant and harvest their crops by hand or with the aid of horses, much as they did in the nineteenth century. Such primitive methods are the result not of the absence of development, but rather of "de-modernization."[77] During Soviet times, collective farms employed tractors, combines, cars, and other equipment in an effort to increase efficiency. Workers were trained to use and repair the equipment, a skill considered minimal even on the most provincial farms. After the privatization of Kyrgyzstan's farms, machines were sold off by the directors as scrap and never recovered.[78] Now farmers work the land by hand, which is not only slower but also less profitable. Driving through the Fergana Valley in the fall, one can see cotton fields full of

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[74] Alisher Ilkhamov, "Shirkats, Dekhqon Farmers and Others: Farm Restructuring in Uzbekistan," *Central Asian Survey*, 17(4), 1998: 539-560.

[75] Author's interviews with multiple residents of Aksy, April 2004. For how the privatization was bungled, see Peter C. Bloch, "Land Privatization and Land Market Development: The 'Unsuccessful' Cases of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan," in David A.J. Macey, William Pyle, and Stephen Wegren, eds., *Building Market Institutions in Post-Communist Agriculture,* (New York: Lexington, 2004).

[76] Author's interviews, Turali, elders, Aksy 4-11-05; Ahmatali, Aksy 4-12-04.

[77] Term borrowed from Boris Rumer and Stanislav Zhukov, "Broader Parameters: Development in the Twentieth Century," in Rumer and Zhukov, eds., *Central Asia: The Challenges of Independence*, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 67. In 1981, 68% of Uzbek and 61% of Kyrgyz cotton was harvested by machine, but declined thereafter because, as Pomfret argues, collective farm directors perceived it as less costly to have workers pick by hand. Richard Pomfret, "State-directed Diffusion of Technology: The Mechanization of Cotton Harvesting in Soviet Central Asia," Working Paper, 2000.

[78] Interview, Mirzabek, Aksy, 4-12-04; Satilgan, Aksy, 4-17-04.

workers, mostly women wearing colorful dresses, stooping to pick cotton by hand 10-12 hours per day. One western expert estimated that 1.5 million Kyrgyz working full-time produce the same amount of cotton as 700 Illinois farmers working part-time, a 2,000-fold difference in efficiency.[79]

Daily life for a resident of a rural village is monotonous and depends on how much work is available on one's plot of land. It consists of waking up at dawn and beginning daily chores; men milk the cows and women clean the house. Breakfast consists of tea and bread. If the weather is good and work needs to be done, men spend the day working on the farm, plowing their land with the aid of a horse, chopping wood, fixing equipment in need of repair, and feeding the animals. Women spend their day cleaning, cooking, and tending to babies and animals. Lunch and dinner consist of eggs from people's own chickens, fried in cottonseed oil, and soup, heavy with potatoes and fat. Throughout the course of the day, neighbors stop by, come in for tea, and talk about neighbors, weddings, farming, and politics. If there are enough hands around the farm to perform the necessary labor, older men drink large quantities of cheap vodka starting early in the morning, alone or with friends. They spend the rest of the day sleeping or wandering about the village. People have substantial free time, since there is too little land to keep people constantly occupied,[80] and watch a great deal of television if they have one. The day ends when it becomes dark.

In rural Uzbekistan, where the majority of land remains under state control, farmers remain members of collective farms or sign contracts with the state. In the first case, families works year-round on several hectares, receiving payment from the collective in accordance with their contribution, as they did in the Soviet system. In the second case, which is rarer, there are "peasant farms" covering 8% of Uzbekistan's irrigated land, from which farmers can lease their plot and receive inputs to grow crops—usually cotton or wheat—in exchange for pledging to sell a specified amount to the state at a price set by the state. After paying off the land and costs of the inputs and equipment rental, farmers may sell the remainder on the open market.[81] Those that can raise the capital may buy land and hire workers to make greater profits. However, only a small minority are sufficiently well off to buy their own land.[82] Although by avoiding privatization, the system prevents concentration in the hands of few, some have argued that

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[79] Interview, Channing Sieben, IDFC, Osh, 10-14-03.
[80] In approaching people to do interviews in rural areas, I was never told to return later because the person was too busy.
[81] Ilkhamov, "Shirkats": 548.
[82] One local expert estimated that in his district in Karshi, only 5% of farmers own land. Tura-aka, Karshi/Kitob, 5-6-04. See also Richard Pomfret, "Agrarian Reform in Uzbekistan: Why has the Chinese Model Failed to Deliver?" in *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 48(2), 2000, 269-84.

farmers end up in poverty by being forced to accept artificially low prices for crops dictated by the state.[83] To make matters worse, compared to the USSR, they have less access to equipment, state services are less reliable, and the wages carry significantly less purchasing power.[84]

Nonetheless, the dismal state of the economy has swelled the agricultural labor force. Participation by non-farmers in gathering cotton is also increasingly seen as a source of income rather than as a burden, as it was earlier in the independence period. As in the USSR, every fall, the government sets quotas of tonnage for each region to fulfill. Governors are responsible for a massive mobilization of university students, government employees, and in heavy cotton-growing regions, schoolchildren, to meet the quota. Many parents prefer paying a $20-30 bribe for a medical waiver to prevent their children from being sent to cotton fields for two to three months, even though they can earn 25 *som* (2.5 cents) per kilogram. In a typical class, 25-40% choose not to participate due to health risks or better earning opportunities.[85] The majority, however, voluntarily participate in the cotton harvest because of the income it provides. At the going rate, even a slow worker at 40 kilos per day can earn $15 in a month, after returning the first 20 kilos to the state to pay for his food.[86] Where more manpower is needed, unemployed adults volunteer themselves and their families for the picking season for the opportunity to earn extra income.[87]

Employment

In urban areas, the collapse of the Soviet system led to both major job losses and the cessation of most workers' primary interaction with the state. Since all citizens of the USSR were state employees and post-independence governments have yet to create functioning market economies, the result has been major job loss with few compensating benefits. In one section of Osh, for example, a silk factory employing 3,000 workers shut down in 1992, leaving most of the district—men and women—unemployed. The majority of whose who did not qualify for pensions or disability sought out niches in which to trade at the bazaar.[88] The workplace in the Soviet system provided people with information, goods, access to cultural activities, and social

[83] "The Curse of Cotton: Central Asia's Destructive Monoculture," International Crisis Group, 5-28-05.
[84] Ibid., 6.
[85] Interview, Boys, Karshi, 5-2-04; Bekzod, Karshi, 5-8-04.
[86] Interview, Boys, Namangan, 2-7-04; Mirzohid, Namangan, 8-30-04.
[87] Interview, Deputy Governor, Namangan Oblast on Social and Religious Questions, 8-26-04; mahalla secretary, Namangan, 8-24-04.
[88] Interview, Hulkar, Osh, 6-20-04.

security.[89] The loss of such a point of contact with the state translated into a decrease in material well-being and social interaction, beyond the loss of income.

Another striking aspect of daily life is the pervasive corruption of civil servants. A retired police officer in Kyrgyzstan explained that a new officer's monthly salary averages $20 and may increase to $40 for senior employees. Employees of the infamous state automobile inspection stop cars at random in the hunt for traffic violations to collect up to 120 *som* ($3) and may collect 20 *som* ($.50) from every mini-bus (the most common means of transportation in cities) on the street, totaling an average daily intake of 400 *som* ($10). By custom, the traffic police pass 150 *som* to their bosses, who in turn set aside a portion for their bosses, and further up the ladder to the Minister of Internal Affairs. The minister's official monthly salary is $500, but in reality it turns out to be much higher.[90] In Uzbekistan, where the police have a greater presence, the system is equally corrupt. Police operate a number of checkpoints on the main road between Tashkent and cities in the Fergana Valley, where they examine the driver's documents and open passengers' luggage, ostensibly to prevent terrorists from entering Tashkent. However, a driver may pay 1,000 *som* ($1) to prevent his trunk from being opened and 3,000 *som* ($3) to avoid being asked to show identification.[91]

Competition for influential government jobs, which provide a stable income and opportunities for graft, is fierce and blocked to many. The best way to obtain such a job is through personal acquaintance. Typically, when a new department head (*nachal'nik otdela*) is appointed, he brings a new staff (usually relatives and acquaintances) and fires the staff of the old boss. One engineer at the State Oil and Gas Company in Tashkent was demoted and transferred to a different part of the city when a new manager took over and hired his own relatives, even though the engineer had held that job over 10 years.[92]

Another way to obtain state jobs is through large cash payments. For example, to become the director of a nature preserve in Kyrgyzstan costs $2,000,[93] a school director in Kyrgyzstan $750[94]; it costs $25-50,000 to be a mayor (*hokim*) or deputy mayor in Uzbekistan. Jobs in the police and auto inspection, which yield opportunities to earn money through bribes, likewise require an initial "down payment."[95] Just as having money facilitates job finding for some, it presents a barrier for qualified workers who lack the means to bribe. Among other

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[89] Besile Kerblay, *Modern Soviet Society* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 185.
[90] Interview, Kudrat, Retired Police Officer, Osh, 11-10-04.
[91] Author's observation.
[92] Interview, Ali, Tashkent, February 2004.
[93] Interview, Kustarbek, Aksy, 4-13-04.
[94] Interview, Tolqinbek, Osh, 7-5-04.
[95] See "Uzbekistan's Law Enforcement Incurably Corrupt—Expert," eurasianet.org, 6-19-03.

numerous cases in Uzbekistan, I came across a student nurse who was too poor to buy a job at a hospital and an engineer who could not afford a position at the state gas company.[96]

One telling sign of the desperation of those lacking connections and cash is the high number of Central Asians who do seasonal work abroad. It is estimated that 6-7% of the labor force of Uzbekistan and up to 25-35% Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan's population migrates for work, primarily to Kazakhstan and Russia.[97] Menial jobs abroad earn workers substantially higher incomes than they can earn in their own countries. For example, the father of my assistant in Osh worked eight months out of the year as a chef in St. Petersburg, earning enough to buy his son a stereo and finance his wedding.[98] In one Kyrgyz village called Vinsovkhoz, residents appeared to live at a higher standard than other villages, noticeable from their larger houses and western-style windows. It turned out that a large number of residents did seasonal work in Russia in the factory of a local businessman's son, which infused new money into Vinsovkhoz but not into nearby villages.[99] Despite the benefits of migrants' remittances, the absence of able-bodied men also changes the social structure of communities. In one village in Aksy, a widow with five kids reported that from April to December most working-age males migrate to Kazakhstan and Russia, leaving behind only pensioners in the village. The woman did seasonal work in Bishkek for several months each year and her neighbor's three children were all working in Russia.[100]

Education and Health

The dual paths to success—connections and bribes—pervade the university system, where degrees still confer status despite the rampant corruption.[101] For example, my assistant in Kyrgyzstan had written his dissertation in history and had a decent job teaching at the local college, earning $25 per month. With a PhD in hand, he could have earned twice as much. However, to defend his work would require paying $50 to each of nine professors on the committee that confers the degree.[102] Another acquaintance in Kyrgyzstan was unable to receive his B.A. in Slavic Literature because he could not afford to bribe his thesis advisor at Osh State

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[96] Rozi, Tashkent, February 2003; Alijon, Namangan, February 2004.
[97] Elena Y. Sadovskaya, "Labour Migration in Central Asia, Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan," working paper, International Organization for Migration, 2004.
[98] Interview, Isak, Osh, June 2004.
[99] Interview, Ulkan, Jalalabad, 4-15-05.
[100] Interview, Nazgul, Aksy, 4-17-04.
[101] Corruption in the education system was also widespread in the Soviet Union, but some accounts indicate that is has worsened in the independence period. See Esmer Islamov, "Uzbekistan's Corruption-Ridden Educational System Seen as Source of Frustration," eurasianet.org, 4-29-04.
[102] Interview, Sobir, Aksy, 4-12-04.

University. In Tashkent, the best jobs in the ministries of foreign affairs and economics are available only to graduates of the University of Diplomacy and World Languages for the former, and Law for the latter. Regardless of the qualifications of the student applying, entrance costs $5,000 and $3,000, respectively, creating a barrier to entry for all but the children of the political and business elite.[103]

The education system, in addition to being corrupt, also often neglects to provide a genuine education. In Tashkent's once-prestigious State Economics University, a respondent reported that after receiving two years of decent education, in her third and fourth years, teachers stopped teaching! Attendance was required, but grades were to be purchased rather than earned.[104] Another respondent, working at the US military base in Karshi, decided to buy his degree from the state university instead of attending classes, regarding English-language skills as more valuable for future employment than an Uzbek education.[105] This decline is not entirely a result of bad governance; many of the best-qualified (Russian) teachers emigrated from Central Asia in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[106]

The provision of state services has also been monetized in the field of health care, to the detriment of all but the wealthiest citizens. A 19-year-old law student in Jalalabad with heart problems needed to acquire $500 to have the required surgery in Bishkek. Though the cost was low by western standards, his family had to go into debt to pay for it.[107] A pensioner and amputee from Aksy created an NGO, the "Society of Invalids," providing money from international donors to purchase crutches with rubber tips, which were otherwise not only unaffordable, but also otherwise unavailable.[108] In Osh, due to budget shortfalls, when ambulances are summoned for emergencies, the person making the call must reimburse the driver for the cost of the gasoline.[109]

Infrastructure

Physical infrastructure in Central Asian cities has begun to break down and there are few with the means to repair it. In Osh, basic problems occur even in the city center. One community

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[103] Interviews, Uzbekistan. Officially, only the best students qualify for acceptance, and the best of those receive free tuition. In fact, money trumps merit.
[104] Interview, Rozi, Tashkent, March 2003.
[105] Interview, Jamshid, Karshi, November 2004.
[106] See George J. Demko, Grigory Ioffe, & Zhanna Zayonchkovskaya, eds., *Population Under Duress: The Geodemography of Post-Soviet Russia*, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1999), 110.
[107] Interview, Aibek, Jalalabad, 4-15-05.
[108] Interview, Mudalbek, Aksy, 4-12-05.
[109] Interview, Abdurashid, Osh, 10-13-03.

leader explained that when his neighborhood's transformer blew out, he reported it to the local government to send workers to repair it, but nobody came.[110] It turned out that the agency lacked the necessary equipment. After two days, he collected money from the community to buy materials and pay workers out-of-pocket to fix it.[111] In a newer community in Osh, developed on land awarded to ethnic Kyrgyz after rioting in 1990, an elder explained how the government had failed to install heating pipes even though it was originally part of the city's development plan for the settlement. Six months earlier, he had gone to the mayor with three other elders to complain, but their pleas were ignored.[112]

Decaying transportation and communication infrastructure has exacerbated the already severe isolation of some communities in Kyrgyzstan, of which Aksy is a prime example. A 50-kilometer journey from Jalalabad to Aksy takes four hours on a gravel road in an old Soviet car. Only a few families in each village own telephones and inter-city calls must be made at a central public phone bank. Calls to the capital cost a prohibitive 15 *som* ($.37) per minute. Though mobile phones are increasingly common in Kyrgyzstan, few can afford the service (minimum $.11 for local calls) and in any case, Aksy lies outside of the reception zone. Thus, isolation is also severe between villages within the region. A bus runs between villages once a day, whereas it ran twice a day before independence.[113] A local employee of the UN Development Program noted that Aksy's problems were exacerbated by the disruption of the distribution network of the Soviet system. Prior to 1991, the state had shipped gas from Osh to Aksy for heating. By the mid-1990s, transportation had been privatized and residents could no longer afford to pay the shipment costs, so deliveries of gas were discontinued.[114]

Part II: Community as a Partial Solution

Community social networks have qualities that allow their members to mitigate problems brought on by poverty and state withdrawal. Communities are brought about in part as an

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[110] A community leader (*domashnii komitet* in Russian, *mahalla raisi* or *yuz boshi* in Uzbek) is a formal salaried position tasked with maintaining order and cleanliness at the local level. In most cases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the creation of the office was the formalization of an informal institution. It has been argued, especially in Uzbekistan, that this reform increased the state's ability to monitor and control local-level political activity. See Eric W. Sievers, "Uzbekistan's Mahalla: From Soviet to Absolutist Residential Community Associations," *Journal of International and Comparative Law at Chicago-Kent* 2, 2002: 91-158; Neema Noori, "Delegating Coercion: Linking Decentralization to State Formation in Uzbekistan" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2005).
[111] Interview, Ilhomjon, Osh, 10-11-03.
[112] Interview, Abdurashid, Osh, 10-13-03.
[113] Interview, Talib, Aksy, 4-13-04.
[114] Interview, Maria, Aksy, 4-5-04.

accident of geography, that is, by the fact of the proximity of its members. Yet they take also take on a social function. The community is defined by the repeated face-to-face interaction of its members, which, over time, may lead to recognition of common interests by its members and a willingness to sacrifice in the short-term to guarantee benefits later. Relations in the community are not necessarily harmonious. The community's members may make selfish, oppressive, and burdensome demands.[115] Yet despite the drawbacks, most people decide that it is worth investing, personally and materially, to remain part of networks within the community.

Questions from the 2005 Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan survey on dependence and trust indicate some ambivalence toward community-based relationships. On one hand, neighbors are the second most likely source (after relatives) to which people in both countries would turn to take out a loan: 13.2% of Kyrgyz respondents and 10.3% of Uzbeks would first ask a neighbor.[116] On the other hand, trust of neighbors was significantly lower than trust of other personal relations. Forty-four percent of Kyrgyz respondents and 58.7% of Uzbeks trust their neighbors "very much" or "somewhat," which put neighbors in sixth place in Kyrgyzstan and fifth in Uzbekistan.[117] Thus, it seems most people's relationships with neighbors are based on necessity rather than affection and trust.

Communities provide several benefits that help to mitigate the effects of poverty and state withdrawal. They provide rotating credit to their members. They facilitate the creation of ties between neighbors, which can be used to borrow money and goods. They facilitate the dissemination of information about political events and community projects. Last, they provide a forum to coordinate collective action when members of the community make demands on the state. The institutions that govern these functions all have informal origins, although some functions, such as rotating credit or social mobilization, may be formalized on an *ad hoc* basis.

One function of community networks is to facilitate rotating credit associations, which are often created informally but may be institutionalized by community leaders. The most debilitating expenses in Central Asia are weddings and funerals, which most neighbors typically attend. Making *plov* for 1,000 wedding guests—an average-size wedding—requires 100

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[115]Gellner, "The Importance of Being Modular."

[116] The precise question was, "If you had a big project to do, such as repair a house, put on a wedding or send a relative abroad, and were short of cash, to whom would you turn for a loan?" "Relatives" was the most popular answer. Other choices included friend, co-worker, kin/clan relation (in Kyrgyzstan only), state organization, bank, village/city council, mosque, and local businessman.

[117] Neighbors lag behind family, friends, other relatives, and clan, (and in Kyrgyzstan, classmates as well). According to the World Values Survey, 20-30% of the citizens of most countries from the former Communist bloc trust people in general. Western Europe tends to score about 20% higher. Ronald Inglehart, "Trust, Well-Being and Democracy," in Mark E. Warren, ed., *Democracy and Trust* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 102.

kilograms of rice and 300 of meat, which can cost the organizers up to $3,000.[118] To soften the impact, communities usually have a supply of communal plates and cooking implements for free use.[119] Some communities use systems of rotating credit, such as one outside of Namangan. The community leader's assistants, or "*aktivisty*," go door-to-door to gather money for holiday celebrations and collect 2-3,000 *som* ($2-3) from every household. Leftover money is deposited in a fund for use by needy members for extraordinary circumstances, such as weddings or medical treatment, which they can borrow without interest. In August 2004, the fund contained $200.[120] Such funds also circulate among subsets of community members at their own initiative, in a group usually called a *gap* or "conversation."[121] For example, in Kara-su, outside of Osh, an informal group of 25 men living on the same street meets every Sunday at the bazaar, where each member contributes 25-35 *som* ($.02-.03). The fund is used to make *plov* and fund small projects. For instance, after a girl was killed by a speeding car on the street, the group paid to lay a speed bump.[122]

A second means of assistance is to facilitate everyday exchange of essential goods among those with similar resources. Unlike redistribution or rotating credit, this type of exchange is ad hoc, intermittent, and always outside of the formal structure of the community. In Aksy, where car ownership is practically nil, neighbors allow other neighbors to borrow their horses as transportation.[123] A second type of assistance taking place within the community is the *hashar* (in Uzbek) or *ashar* (in Kyrgyz), or voluntary assistance with physical labor. Many respondents reported having participated recently in *hashars*, many of which replicate lapsed state functions. Examples I encountered included building a house for newlyweds, building a bridge funded by an NGO, refurbishing a mosque, building a gymnasium, rebuilding a neighbor's wall that had collapsed, building a house for a woman evicted from her apartment, laying asphalt to build a

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[118] Soviet anthropologists called spending on community ceremonies and festivals "irrational" expenses. See Sergei P. Poliakov, *Everyday Islam* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), 90. Recent studies have emphasized the rational and reciprocal functions of such expenses. See Cynthia Werner, "Marriage, Markets and Merchants: Changes in Wedding Feasts and Household Consumption Patterns in Rural Kazakhstan," *Culture and Agriculture* 1(2), 1997: 6-13.

[119] Interview, Old Man, Karshi/Gubdin, 4-30-04.

[120] Interview, Kutibiddin, Namangan, 8-25-04.

[121] I attended several *gaps*, which usually consist of groups of overweight middle-aged men consuming large quantities of plov, imbibing large quantities of vodka, and gossiping about work and their families. One exception occurred at a *gap* in Namangan, where, in the past 10 years, every member had gradually sworn off alcohol (at least in the presence of other members) and taken up religion, and the entire group broke in the middle of the dinner to pray together in the adjacent room. At the event, the host showed a videotape of his recent journey to Mecca on a *hajj*. Author's observation, 2-9-04. In recent times, educated and wealthier women have also begun organizing their own *gaps*. Interview, Aziza, Osh, 10-18-04.

[122] Interview, Abdumuttal, Osh/Kara-su, 6-29-04.

[123] Interview, Anonymous, Aksy, 4-12-04; Ahmatali, Aksy, 4-12-04.

road, cleaning out the canal (*arik*) used for drainage and sometimes drinking, building a store for a new businessman, renovating and cleaning a hospital, building a house for an invalid, assisting in building the house of a neighbor, and renovating several houses.[124]

Third, community networks enable and enhance the spread of information. In Aksy, where newspapers arrive a month late, residents pass information about current events by word of mouth, often through taxi drivers who make frequent trips to Kerben, the district capital.[125] People then pass news within the community through informal interaction. The state disseminates and receives information through the community leader and a network of volunteer representatives from subdivisions or streets within the community, which in my research range from five to twenty-eight per *mahalla* (urban neighborhood) or village.[126] Representatives are tasked with informing residents about state directives and mobilizing them for collective events or projects. Informally, by virtue of their moral authority, community leaders and their assistants act as conduits for information within and about the community. They enforce social norms by gathering and selectively releasing information about community members. Numerous community leaders I spoke with use their assistants to gather personal information and maintain files about residents of the community.[127] A file usually includes information on individuals and their families such passport information, wealth, health, and personal details (*kharakteristiki*) such as infidelity, alcoholism, conflict with neighbors, and non-contributions to general funds.[128]

Mosques (which are primarily Sunni in Central Asia) also function as focal points for the dissemination of information and coordination of collective action within and between communities. For otherwise mutually isolated neighborhoods, mosques form a network through which information can be passed quickly if need be. When a resident dies, the imam sends a letter around to imams of mosques in other communities to inform them of the funeral, information which is then communicated to worshippers.[129] Community leaders may also use mosques as venues to discuss problems and hubs to spread important information throughout

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[124] Interviews from Aksy, Osh, Namangan, and Karshi.
[125] Interview, Nurdolyt, Aksy, 4-13-04; Raihan, Aksy, 4-13-04.
[126] Interview, Muhabbat, Namangan, 8-23-04; Mahalla Secretary, Namangan, 8-24-04; Anonymous, Aksy, 4-12-04.
[127] The practice of maintaining detailed information on all residents of a territory for social control is a holdover from the Soviet era, when neighborhood committees fulfilled that function. Theodore H. Friedgut, *Political Participation in the USSR* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 265.
[128] This practice was especially common in Osh. Community leaders I spoke with claimed they never shared such personal information with the state, but only used it to resolve problems internally within the community. Kabuljon, Osh, 10-20-03; Islom, Osh, 11-2-03. However, a deputy prosecutor explained that when a crime is committed, they first request the files that community leaders keep on suspects. Deputy Prosecutor, Osh, 11-7-03.
[129] Interview, Imam Sarajiddin, Osh/Kara-su, 6-29-04.

communities. Even if only 10-20% of men in the *mahalla* attend regularly—many more attend only Friday prayers—community leaders can reach a larger audience as information travels through the community after mosque by word of mouth, especially as it crosses the gender gap when (exclusively male) worshippers tell their wives.[130] One NGO employee said that visiting mosques is the most convenient means of informing people about meetings on community mobilization.[131] Candidates for parliament or city council also find it expedient to campaign by speaking at mosques.[132]

Fourth, community networks serve as means for organizing and coordinating collective action. This occurs because of the mutual familiarity of the actors, the density of ties between them, and the geographic proximity of the actors.[133] When a problem affects a large number of community members, they gather to aggregate their demands. In one *mahalla* in Osh, when the city shut off power in mid-winter because of accumulated debts, 40 elders gathered and brought their complaint to the power station. After being informed of the reason for the power outage, they spent the next three days gathering money from indebted residents so the power would be restored.[134] In several cases in Osh and Karshi, residents have gathered to complain about their community leaders to the district authorities to have them removed from above.[135]

Horizontal Networks beyond the Community

The community is not self-contained and autonomous. To the extent that a community is isolated by geography, communication, and the absence of pre-existing personal ties from other communities, then people's affiliations lie primarily within the geographic confines of the community. Such a degree of isolation is rare—members of one community almost always have cross-cutting ties with members of other communities. These networks may form through ties to relatives, co-workers, classmates, or civic organizations. However, severe isolation both reduces the probability that cross-community relationships will ever form and, when they do form, weakens such ties by limiting the frequency of interaction outside the community.

In villages such as Aksy, by tradition a bride moves to her husband's home after marriage, yet will not lose her old village identity if the groom lives in a different village. Though she will be accepted as a full member of the community, she nonetheless will maintain

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[130] Interview, Kurmanbek, Osh, 12-6-03; Mulajon, Osh, 6-24-04; Huriljon, Osh, 6-27-04.
[131] Interview, Gulchehra, Karshi, 5-4-04.
[132] Interview, Mulajon, Osh, 6-24-04.
[133] See Zhao, "Ecologies of Social Movements."
[134] Interview, Rahamjon, Osh, 6-24-04.
[135] Interview, Gulchehra, Karshi, 5-4-04.

ties with her former neighbors and relatives and will frequently return there. In this way, a network develops based on village of origin, linking through marriage villages that may otherwise experience little interaction due to geography.

Yet the effect of this linkage is limited. The majority of "mixed marriages" between residents of different villages occur between villages located within the same geographic cluster. Because of the distance and difficulty of travel, marriages are much rarer between clusters because fewer ties exist overall.[136] The result is that most marriages reinforce existing social ties.

Urban-rural networks are a second type of connection. Villagers frequently rely on relatives in cities to help support them, as they do in many developing countries.[137] However, though many migrate abroad for work, mobility between villages and cities is often difficult. The Soviet *propiska* system, which required special permission to live in another city and apply for a job, was designed to limit labor migration to cities.[138] Though residence permits were eliminated in Kyrgyzstan in the 1990s, they are still used in Uzbekistan, severely limiting work migration to Tashkent.[139] In poor regions, moving from a village to the district capital is a boost to status and earning potential. A journalist in Osh earned enough money to move out of his parents' house on the outskirts and rent an apartment in the costlier center. When he visits his parents, he is met with the high regard of someone climbing the social ladder (and able help financially). Some of his more conservative friends, however, disdain his violation of tradition, since most young men move out of their parents' home only when they marry, if ever.[140] Students who live in university dormitories also constitute a connection between their rural families and city life. They transmit information back to their home villages, though they cannot help materially.

In large cities, community networks are less important than in rural areas because residents are mobile, possess numerous cross-cutting ties, and have access to diverse sources of information. In addition to their neighborhood, they are also likely to maintain social ties through co-workers or business associates, alumni networks, or even NGOs. A typical urbanite encounters a large number of people, including strangers, with whom he can share information on a daily basis. The prevalence of technology complements the information-disseminating function of social interaction. In a city like Tashkent, it is common to see satellite dishes atop Soviet-era

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[136] One typical example is Akbarali, was born in Avletim. His son-in-law is from Kara-su and daughter-in-law is from Avletim. All three villages are very close to one another. See map in Chapter 5.
[137] See Deepa Narayan and Patti Petesch, eds., *Voices of the Poor From Many Lands*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[138] On the *propiska* system, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 46.
[139] Esmer Islamov and Kamol Kholmuradov, "Tashkent Mayor: 'Non-official' Residents Threat to Security," eurasianet.org, 10-27-04.
[140] Interview, Akbar, Osh, 6-19-04.

high-rises. Internet cafes proliferate and customers can buy or rent the latest pirated DVDs of blockbuster movies just as they open in American theaters.

The importance of having diverse sources of information was evident after the Andijan uprising in May 2005, in which several hundred protesters were shot.[141] When the Uzbek authorities blocked CNN, BBC, and Russian news broadcasts, Tashkent residents turned to other sources of information, by talking to acquaintances abroad on mobile phones, using Internet cafes or home dial-up modems, or speaking with the many expatriates living in Tashkent. Those without first-hand access to information about the events learned second- or third-hand at bazaars or through their social networks. Villages, which lack access to such media, were more susceptible to state propaganda campaigns launched shortly after the incident, conveying the government's version of events.[142]

III: Maintaining Status and the Status Quo

The community gives few free rides, and people perceive it that way. People I interviewed spend a significant amount of time and energy participating in community functions. An explanation for their behavior based on rational egoism might be sufficient to explain community participation, yet their behavior often exceeds the minimum effort required to remain in good standing to share in the benefits.[143] Actors earn and maintain social capital[144] in community networks in several ways: by adhering to general community norms of behavior and propriety, accruing "face time" with other community members by attending community events and festivals, participating in social mobilization activities, and sharing information with community leaders and elders. Although much of this behavior is reflexive—the product of ingrained norms and habit—there is also an undeniable element of calculation in people's investments to preserve their position in the community.

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[141] See Chapter 7 for more detail.

[142] Such sessions were shown on Uzbek state TV. Author's personal observation.

[143] See Leslie Anderson, *The Political Ecology of the Modern Peasant* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 8-9.

[144] I use social capital synonymously with reciprocity and trust. It is a currency that can be drawn on to achieve desired ends, closest to Lin's definition as "resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive actions." Coleman's analogy of "credit slips outstanding" is also useful. In these formulations, the level of available social capital may vary by individuals rather than by collectives. This is in contrast to Putnam's collectivist and functionalist usage of the term, as "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinating actions." See Nan Lin, *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 29; James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 94, 1988: S102; Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 167.

The effort expended to adhere to general behavioral norms is best illustrated by the garden of my host family while I stayed in Kerben, the district center of Aksy. The head of the household, Alai, is the most influential man in Kerben. Besides possessing the only indoor toilet in town and a marble sauna, driving a new Volga (a high-priced Russian car), and working as the director of the UN development program in Kerben, Alai comes from a long line of influential people from Aksy. His father was the First Secretary of the Aksy Communist Party district committee (*raikom*), his mother the former superintendent of schools in Aksy district (*zavrayon*), and his uncle the former *akim* (post-Soviet successor to *raikom* First Secretary) in Aksy. While I stayed with Alai's family, three strange men would come every day and work in his garden, an unusual occurrence, since in Kyrgyzstan people usually do their own yard work. When I asked Alai's mother what they were doing, she explained that Alai had decided to plant potatoes in his garden. Because everybody else in the neighborhood tended a private garden and prepared food for guests made from homegrown products, Alai was embarrassed that his family had nothing homegrown to offer. He therefore decided not only to hire gardeners to plant potatoes, but had purchased two cows that were being tended by hired hands at pasture.[145]

This story is revealing of two realities of village life. First, community perceptions matter even to those least dependent on it. Far from suffering financially, Alai was planning to buy a laptop and move to Bishkek to work for UNDP or a similar high-paying organization. He had little to lose materially if the community were to sever contact with him. Yet there are other side effects of being perceived as different. Alai's children attended schools in Kerben and his wife shopped at the same bazaar as everyone else. Some people I talked to privately spoke derisively of Alai and his patrician roots, an opinion of which Alai must have been aware. Such perceptions must have been a motivating factor in his feeble attempt at conformity. Second, it demonstrates that even people who fail to conform perfectly to community norms will be tolerated. It is unlikely that Alai's neighbors would suddenly be deceived into believing that Alai was a "regular guy," especially if they witnessed the major operation going on in Alai's garden without Alai's being present. Yet despite whatever contempt they held him in privately, they made no show of it publicly. Alai still attended community events and people came as guests without fear of retribution from others. For all intents and purposes, despite his flaws, Alai and his family were bona fide members of the community. This example is typical of a puzzling tendency throughout the sites I visited: residents are rarely excluded for non-conformity to the community, yet they go out of their way to conform.

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[145] Interview, Oktom-aja, Aksy, 4-19-05.

Like Alai, other respondents indicated their awareness of community expectations and their struggles to comply with them, however burdensome. For example, my host in Namangan, upon receiving a wedding invitation in late August—wedding season— remarked that he was tired of attending weddings, having already been to more than he could count. Nonetheless, he planned to attend, he said, out of obligation to the community.[146] In Osh, where Uzbeks generally lead more conservative lives than Kyrgyz, it was pointed out to me that while young unmarried Kyrgyz couples walk in the city center holding hands, Uzbek couples tend to walk several paces apart to avoid being noticed by a neighbor, a revelation which would create a scandal at home, since dating as such is prohibited.[147] "Shaming" is still the method of choice for inducing desired behavior, by community leaders persuading parents to discipline their children, wealthy residents to give money, and alcoholics to quit drinking; by teachers monitoring their students' picking during the cotton harvest; and by imams convincing community members to quit drinking and attend mosque.[148]

Being a good citizen is not only a matter of being responsible, moral, and solicitous, but also requires being visible and active. Weddings, circumcisions, and funerals, as the most important life-cycle events, have dual purposes in the community for the host and the guests. The host uses the opportunity to throw a good party, which boosts his reputation by proving that he respects traditional customs and cares enough to spend a good part of his wealth on food for others. Guests usually do not require an invitation—neighbors are expected to attend regardless of the quality of their relationship with the hosts. If they neglect to attend and do not provide a good reason, people will take notice. In the extreme, respondents said, a habitual no-show risks having no one attend his (or his children's) wedding, though none could recall such a case occurring.[149] Community members are also expected to attend public holiday celebrations such as *Navruz* and *Haid*—women to make *sumalak*, a labor-intensive dessert, and men to make and eat *plov*.[150] In addition to holidays, members take part in everyday interaction in the community that

[146] Interview, Karimjon, Namangan, 8-24-04.
[147] Interview, Akbar, Osh, 10-25-03.
[148] Interview, Community Leader Kabuljon, Osh, 10-20-3; Community Leader Salamat, Osh 7-7-04; Boys, Karshi, 5-2-04; Sheikh Sodiq Q. Kamal al-Deen, Osh, 12-16-03.
[149] Interview, Mirsoli, Namangan, 8-24-04. A caveat to this is the possibility of boycotting a person's wedding as retribution for graver offenses.
[150] For detailed description on Navruz customs, see Laura Adams, "Celebrating Independence: Arts, Institutions, and Identity in Uzbekistan" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1999): Chapter 4.

builds trust and social capital.[151] Older men typically meet (and usually drink) at the local *chaikhona*, or teahouse, and older women socialize on the street in front of their houses.

Another expectation of good community members, which is also enforced by community leaders, is to contribute their time and energy in community-wide endeavors. The most common example is a holdover of a Soviet practice called the *subbotnik*, which was a form of top-down coercive mobilization to marshal labor for various projects, such as building public works and harvesting crops.[152] Today, the practice continues as mass mobilization to clean neighborhoods, initiated by the state and monitored by the community leader. As with other matters, the community leader uses moral and social incentives to persuade people to participate.[153] Respondents expressed a range of attitudes about *subbotniki*, from enthusiasm to calling it "a sign of totalitarian government."[154] Most expressed a sense of resigned obligation to the community and a fear of being perceived by neighbors as a shirker, and therefore made an effort to participate the same amount as others in the immediate vicinity.[155]

A final, and no less important, means of maintaining status in the community, is taking part in information dissemination within networks. This requires observing a norm of transparency in one's behavior and family life, and participating in sharing information about others. Central Asian communities are generally inward looking, frown upon secrecy, and are suspicious of outsiders because of the scarcity of information about them. The norm of transparency ensures that members of the community have access to information on everybody else. This norm permits invasions of privacy to a degree that would be considered scandalous in most western countries.[156] The traditional basis for these intrusions is the need to maintain solidarity in the face of outside threats. A contemporary rationale is to ensure stability and prevent crime and other untoward behavior, such as membership in Hizb ut-Tahrir, a banned Islamic organization. People who violate this norm, by refusing to share personal information or by leading reclusive lives, will incur the suspicion of their neighbors and community leader and possibly be sanctioned for their excessive privacy.

It is not enough to cede one's privacy to the community; one should also share information about others. Thus, another aspect of community life is gossip, which, through its

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[151] On the rational utility of rituals in Uzbekistan, see Sievers, "Uzbekistan's Mahalla," 39; Victoria Koroteyeva and Ekaterina Makarova, "Money and Social Connections in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Uzbek City," *Central Asia Survey* 17(4), 1998: 582.
[152] See Friedgut, *Political Participation*, 284.
[153] Interview, Ganijon, Osh, 7-7-04.
[154] Interview, Achil, Karshi, 4-29-04.
[155] Interview, Karimjon, Namangan, 2-4-04; Mavluda, Namangan, 8-25-04; Aziza, Osh, 10-18-03.
[156] See Brad Knickerbocker, "America Wrestles with Privacy vs. Security," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 22, 2005.

effect on reputation, can be used to control or correct behavior. My assistant in Aksy was widely respected in the community for writing a dissertation, moving to the *rayon* center, and becoming a historian. Thanks to his reputation, we quickly gained access to informants and established credibility to conduct interviews on a sometimes-sensitive topic. Other people I encountered had less flattering reputations—politician and opportunist, parent whose daughter behaves promiscuously, alcoholic and wife-beater, etc. Gossip about personal behavior also applies to political views in Aksy. In response to a question I asked many times, whether people knew who their neighbors had supported in the 1999 parliamentary elections, people universally answered in the affirmative and could list which of their neighbors voted for whom.

One implication of living in an intensely gossip-filled milieu is that there is no anonymity, a reality I understood when my assistant and I made an initial visit to a village or section of the village and on several occasions found people expecting us. Apparently word that an American was inquiring about the Aksy events had spread by word of mouth ahead of my planned itinerary (though subtle details such as whether I was a graduate student, journalist, investor, or spy got lost in translation). In a similar, though unrelated, incident, while I was staying with a journalist in Osh, the SNB (successor to the KGB) knocked on the door early in the morning and asked whether a foreigner was living in the apartment. Apparently a neighbor had overheard a foreigner (me, most likely) speaking accented Russian on a mobile phone the previous night, and dutifully reported it to the police. My roommate answered in the negative but explained that sometimes foreigners come as guests. This answer apparently satisfied the agent, who did not return. The norm of transparency helps to maintain other norms, since the ready availability of information about people makes it easier to verify their compliance.[157]

The Threat of Exclusion

The lengths to which people go to maintain status is in most cases unfounded, since to live in a community but be excluded from its benefits is exceedingly rare. To achieve such a dubious honor requires being not only unpleasant, but usually criminal as well. In eight years, Ganijon, a community leader from Osh, expelled two people from his *mahalla*. One was a prostitute and the other "quarreled, drank too much, and did not participate." Even in these cases, the decision was not taken lightly—the latter offender was warned by elders three times before they voted to expel him. "By law," Ganijon said, "we can't kick people out, but sometimes we

[157] See Hechter, *Principles of Group Solidarity*, 59.

have to break the law to maintain traditions."[158] If an offender violates state laws but does not offend community norms, he need not be excluded. Such cases involving young men who join groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir are increasingly common. Most community leaders I interviewed said they preferred to handle the matter within the community, by pressuring parents to persuade their child to quit the group.[159]

Can someone be excluded from the network simply for not attending community events or participating in social mobilizations? The answer appears to be that partial exclusion is possible in some circumstances, according to the rule of reciprocity: people do not patronize those who do not patronize others.[160] In a community in Karshi, my assistant, Bekzod, identified one family in which a father and two sons—all police officers—are renowned for their excessive complaining. They are the only family that does not receive a verbal announcement about weddings, but they usually attend anyway. When one of those sons got married, Bekzod attended because he was a friend of the groom, but Bekzod's parents—and most neighbors—boycotted.[161] It is rarer to be punished for shirking *subbotniki*. Those who abstain usually have an acceptable excuse, such as work or taking care of family. Community leaders, who are responsible for ensuring fairness in work obligations, take various approaches in dealing with those without an excuse. Some encourage the neighbors of shirkers to reprimand them. Other community leaders are more hands-on, seizing the initiative: "Warn him, gather *oksokols* [elders, literally "whitebeards"], try to persuade him, then give him twice as much work as others."[162] Shaming is thus a preferred strategy to exclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the effects of post-Soviet changes on everyday life in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Specifically, it showed how informal community institutions are used to solve everyday problems stemming from the loss of a steady income and the decay of state institutions. Communities can mitigate the problems of poverty through rotating credit, everyday material exchange, information sharing, and coordination of collective action. In order to guarantee that they continue to receive these benefits, community members attempt to maintain their positions by adhering to community norms, attending neighborhood functions, contributing

[158] Interview, Ganijon, Osh, 7-7-04.
[159] Interview, Ilhomjon, Osh, 10-11-03.
[160] Elster calls this the "norm of fairness." See Elster, *The Cement of Society*, 123.
[161] Interview, Bekzod, Karshi, 5-8-04.
[162] Interview, Bahrom, Osh, 7-7-04.

their labor to social mobilization activities, and monitoring others' behavior. While community networks do not eliminate everyday problems, by virtue of proximity and the high frequency of interaction between members, they are nevertheless an important form of social insurance—second only to relatives in their ability to help—and a basis for organizing collective action.

The conception of (and evidence for) the nature of the community presented here hews closer to rationalist accounts of the "political economy" school of village life, than the moral economy school. First, norms demanding relative income equality, strong in Scott's portrayal of Vietnamese villages, are rather weak in Kyrgyzstan. Informal networks provide the means for members to solve collective action problems, including income distribution, and many take advantage, and some people go out of their way to assist poor families. However, redistribution is not built into the system. Families look out for their own interests first and do not hesitate to hoard surplus revenue if they come upon it.

Second, villagers in Central Asia do not perceive the system they inhabit as inherently legitimate, as part of the "shared moral universe" of Scott's description.[163] Instead, having been exposed to varying ideas (Soviet, Islamic, and western, communist and capitalist, and various hybrids) about how to live life and manage their finances, the ideal-type of closed corporate villages adhering to age-old practices is a bad approximation of reality in Kyrgyzstan, and, for that matter, other contemporary rural settings. I agree with Leslie Anderson that most people are individually rational and therefore pragmatic: "Where tradition best protects survival, traditional claims, such as on landlord reciprocity, will prevail. Where change best protects survival, new norms, such as an appeal to national or international agencies, will be the order of the day."[164]

Nevertheless, pragmatism also means that people will make investments where they are likely to reap the largest returns, and that is at the local level. Thus, the community is where collective action, in the form of keeping the neighborhood clean, collecting money, maintaining security, and regulating people's behavior, takes place. These very networks, bound by mutual obligation and common interests, can be mobilized to achieve political, in addition to social, goals, such as articulating grievances and putting forth demands to government officials.

I show later that communities also constitute the primary building blocks of *mass* mobilization. However, the potential of bottom-up mobilization is usually modest, limited by the scarcity of resources and small numbers of potential recruits. In fact, the strong ties based on dependence and diffuse reciprocity that are the basis of collective action within communities are

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[163] Scott, *Moral Economy*, 167.
[164] Anderson, *Political Ecology*, 13.

often associated with weak and infrequent interaction with other communities.[165] This problem can be solved by elites who have the means to bring about mass mobilization by simultaneously reaching down into multiple communities and activating ties with elites in other communities and regions. Ironically, as later chapters will argue, state withdrawal and poverty have inadvertently facilitated this possibility.

The next two chapters will complete the logical sequence that this chapter began. Having described the problems facing ordinary people in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and the means they use to solve them, I will focus on the interests and capabilities of elites in Chapter 3. In order for elites to broker between communities, they must be economically independent and capable of forming strategic cross-community ties to other elites. Only economic freedom and a modicum of political liberalization can create these conditions. In Chapter 4, I will analyze the end result of bottom-up and top-down forces: post-Soviet deprivation has not only increased the role of the community in social life, but has also opened opportunities for elites to provide surrogate goods to communities. Through this linkage of the top and bottom strata of society, cross-community and cross-regional networks can be utilized together to expand mobilization beyond what ordinary people can achieve on their own.

[165] See Narayan, "Bonds and Bridges."

Chapter 3
The View From Above: State Influences on Elite Opportunities

Whereas the previous chapter laid the groundwork for how mobilization is likely to spread within communities by focusing on processes common to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, this chapter emphasizes differences between the countries to explain how brokers arise that are capable of facilitating mobilization between communities. It should be recalled from Chapter 1 that both economic autonomy and the formation of inter-elite alliances are necessary preconditions for mass mobilization. This chapter will explain how the new regimes in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan adopted different political and economic policies after independence, creating divergent opportunities for new elites to arise, form independent power centers, and coalesce. Kyrgyzstan's economic policies allowed individuals to earn revenue independently of the state, whereas Uzbekistan's severely limited such opportunities. Kyrgyzstan's political orientation also permitted autonomous elites to coordinate and coalesce without the state's mediation, whereas Uzbekistan's policies created barriers. Over time, Kyrgyzstan's policies caused a shift in the balance of power favoring non-state elites at the expense of the regime. Some of these elites would later take part in initiating and brokering the mass mobilization that toppled the regime, as Chapter 6 demonstrates.

The first section of this chapter describes how the state shaped the economic environment facing Soviet-era elites when the Soviet collapse unexpectedly conferred independence on the Central Asian republics. It contrasts the post-independence economic policies of the consolidating regimes in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, in which Uzbekistan maintained a state-controlled economy and concentrated resources in the hands of the regime, whereas Kyrgyzstan privatized much of its economy, creating economic opportunities for individuals outside the regime. The second section argues that Uzbekistan's pre-emption of civil society and top-down appointment system hindered the formation of networks of non-regime elites, while Kyrgyzstan's more liberal policies created an environment in which they could coordinate and coalesce. As a result of these policy differences, the two countries had developed different political configurations by the late 1990s, in which non-regime elites in Kyrgyzstan held substantial economic resources and were able to form alliances based on common interests. When many of these elites began contributing resources and raising their profile in impoverished communities, as the next chapter will illustrate, they created as structure through which mass mobilization could be carried out. See Figure 4.1 for a diagram summarizing the causal arguments of this chapter.

Figure 3.1: State Policies and Elite Outcomes

Kyrgyzstan
Economic liberalization→autonomous revenue generation→independent power centers
Political liberalization→opportunities for autonomous coalescing→ elite networks
Uzbekistan
State control of economy→fewer economic opportunities→few autonomous businessmen
Limited civil society→fewer opportunities to coalesce w/o state→limited elite networks

I: Economic Opportunities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan

When the USSR collapsed, despite attempts by the Central Asian leadership to remain in the union,[1] resources ceased flowing from Moscow and existing patronage relationships were weakened. State officials' accountability to their superiors was thrown into doubt, allowing them to take advantage of uncertain property rights by appropriating state resources.[2] In industries where property changed hands from the Soviet state to new regimes, elites jockeyed for a share of control, and used their access to convert public resources into private gain.[3] Where the state found a replacement source of revenue, as Uzbekistan did in substituting foreign buyers of its cotton for Moscow, old patronage systems were maintained.[4] Where there were opportunities in the private sector, Communist bureaucrats quickly transformed themselves into capitalist businessmen. A new array of choices suddenly became available to elites, who had previously known only the stability and predictability of the Communist system. However, their decisions about how to maximize personal well-being were strongly conditioned by the new political and economic contexts they faced.

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[1] One theory of why there was no national mobilization in Central Asia's republics is the lack of national identity predating Soviet colonization. See Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization*, 257; Keith Darden, "The Great Divide: Pre-Communist Schooling and Post-Communist Trajectories," unpublished manuscript, 2006.

[2] Steven L. Solnick, *Stealing the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). On the Soviet patronage system, see John P. Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[3] "Country Profile: Uzbekistan," Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), 1998-99, 13.

[4] Alisher Ilkhamov, "The Limits of Centralization: Regional Challenges in Uzbekistan," in Pauline Jones Luong, ed., *The Transformation of Central Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 165.

Although Soviet policies created roughly similar political and economic configurations in all republics,[5] crucial decisions made at the beginning of the independence period—in part determined by their inheritances from the Soviet system— created two different types of opportunity structures in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. In Uzbekistan, regime consolidation around major state resources and Soviet-style centralized economic policies retained many constraints on actors not tied to the state from generating wealth. To defend its monopoly on resources and pre-empt opposition to its policies, the regime enacted draconian political restrictions and maintained hierarchical control over regional and local decision making through a series of personnel replacements and administrative laws.[6] Uzbekistan therefore failed to develop the autonomous (that is, non-state) vertical networks and horizontal elite networks that are the preconditions for mass mobilization.

In Kyrgyzstan, due to a convergence of factors—a new president from outside the *nomenklatura* and embodying liberal ideas, and the relative scarcity of resources—early economic reforms and flirtation with democratic reforms shaped a more favorable environment for the private accumulation of capital and network formation among elites. New economic and political elites arose with their own ambitions and sources of political support. After several years of liberal policies, the regime did an about-face and began cracking down on potential economic and political challenges. However, Kyrgyzstan's favorable opportunity structure had dispersed power to the extent that it was too late to "put the genie back in the bottle." This configuration laid the groundwork for mass mobilization later on.

There are several reasons for this divergence in policies. First, the two countries varied in economic potential. Uzbekistan is the world's fifth largest producer of cotton[7] and has large endowments of natural gas, coal, gold, and uranium. It also had a sizeable industrial sector (for Central Asia), including the production of military equipment and civilian aircraft. Kyrgyzstan is a mountainous country with little arable land. In the Soviet economy, it was developed for animal husbandry and had little industry besides a small textile sector.[8] Estimates of levels of GDP at the time of the Soviet collapse indicate the difference in economic potential the republics faced as independent states. Uzbekistan could continue to earn significant revenue from the

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[5] Bessinger Young, "Convergence to Crisis," 27.
[6] Ilkhamov, "Limits of Centralization," 163.
[7] "Curse of Cotton."
[8] John Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's Island of Democracy?* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press, 1999), 66.

export of natural resources and industrial production, whereas Kyrgyzstan depended on outside investment in order to survive.[9]

A second factor accounting for later differences has to do with leadership. Islam Karimov became president after serving as Communist Party first secretary and a career in the party hierarchy. Many argued that he was predisposed to continuing Soviet economic policies.[10] Askar Akaev, by contrast, was an anomaly in post-Soviet politics. A physicist by profession, he was selected as an outsider by conflicting regional factions. He immediately fashioned himself a "democrat" and set about courting the West. Economic inheritances only reinforced the predilections of these two leaders.

The Fusion of Money and Power in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan's new leadership, led by President Islam Karimov, who had recently come to power as the republic's first secretary, presided over an informal balance between rival regionally based groupings—from Tashkent, Samarkand, and Fergana—that had developed in the Soviet system.[11] The Tashkent elite, which had comparative competence in technical and economic matters, was put in control of ministries dealing with trade and finance.[12] The Samarkand group, which had been dominant in the republic from 1959 to 1983, took control of lucrative raw materials, including the Ministry of Gold, the Ministry of Oil and Gas, and the Ministry of Agriculture, which handled the production and export of cotton.[13] The "power ministries," namely the SNB (former KGB) and Ministry of Internal Affairs (which includes police), were divided between the Tashkent and Samarkand groups, respectively.[14]

The new regime retained a monopoly on political power by preventing rivals from impinging on its control of economic resources. Economic growth is thought to be a critical

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[9] See Gregory Gleason, "Political Reform Strategies: Early Starters, Late Starters, and Non-Starters," in Daniel L. Burghart and Theresa Sabonis-Helf, eds., *In the Tracks of Tamerlane* (Washington DC: National Defense University, 2004), 43-64.

[10] Neil Melvin, "Authoritarian Pathways in Central Asia," in Yaacov Ro'i, *Democracy and Pluralism in Muslim Eurasia* (New York: Frank Cass, 2004), 136.

[11] Ibid, 129.

[12] The former granted import and export licenses and the latter distributed international loans. Ilkhamov, "Limits of Centralization," 179.

[13] Rashidov had rewarded Samarkand when he was in power. After a brief period of disrepute, Rashidov's extended family and cohorts worked their way back into favor after 1991. See Kathleen Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics: Understanding Regime Transition in Post-Soviet Central Asia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1999), 347. The monopoly of the 1-1.2 million tons of yearly cotton exports for hard currency is the most valuable export in Uzbekistan. See "Uzbekistan's Reform Program: Illusion or Reality?" ICG, 2-18-03.

[14] Usman Haknazarov, "MVD and SNB: Voorujyonnie Sily Raznykh Klanov,"[Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Security Service: The Armed Forces of Different Clans] www.centrasia.ru, 1-7-03.

ingredient in democratization.[15] For that reason, it may be in the interests of autocrats to prevent new actors from amassing assets that might embolden them to demand a greater share of political power.[16] Thus, the Uzbek regime limited access to resources to a relatively small clique and trusted associates. Possession of "insider" status was the most reliable determinant of wealth.[17] Having designed a system in which political control was assured by economic domination, Uzbekistan's state elites were reluctant to make reforms that threatened to weaken their economic leverage over the population.[18]

For "outsiders," who were neither part of the pact nor associates of those who were, partial privatization and foreign trade presented a small number of avenues to earn money. Uzbekistan privatized all housing units and 90% of small enterprises by 1995, while retaining large and strategic enterprises in state hands.[19] Brave and enterprising individuals with capital purchased or opened businesses and sought investment from Europe and the US.[20] Those with business acumen and an understanding of the informal rules of local politics could earn a profit.[21] A more common source of income for those with little initial capital was shuttle trading, which entailed buying clothes or other consumer goods from Russia or Kyrgyzstan and reselling them in Uzbekistan's bazaars. They had to compete with stores selling better products, which were usually under control of the state-connected "mafia," who benefited from more investment capital and the connivance of local authorities.[22] For many, the only source of revenue available was selling produce at bazaars. Although most agriculture remained in state hands, farmers were

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[15] See Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53, 1959: 69-105; Huntington, *The Third Wave,* 69; Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyn Huber Stephens, and John Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy Of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics*, 49(2), January 1997: 155-183; Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*.

[16] In other words, they aim to minimize the size of the winning coalition. See Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003).

[17] ICG reports: "This elite is largely self-perpetuating and does not let independent figures into its midst." "Failure of Reform," 24.

[18] Pauline Jones Luong, Political Obstacles to Economic Reform in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan: Strategies to Move Ahead," paper presented at the Lucerne Conference of the CIS-7 Initiative, January 20-22, 2003, 16.

[19] "Republic of Uzbekistan: Recent Economic Developments," IMF Staff Country Report 00/36, March 2000, 14.

[20] Foreign investment declined sharply after 2000 as a result of high taxes, arbitrary customs, uneven application of the law, and limits on convertibility of currency. See "Uzbekistan: National Trade Summary, 2004." Office of the United States Trade Representative.

[21] I came across some examples of this type of entrepreneur in Tashkent and Namangan.

[22] "Failure to Reform," 16.

allowed to lease land from the government and maintain small private plots, then sell surpluses on the open market.[23]

Independent small business owners suffered from the regime's informal barriers to productive commerce, which appear to have been put in place to restrict competition and keep wealth in the hands of loyalists.[24] One means of strangling the independent accumulation of capital was the regulation of access to foreign currency. The Central Bank of Uzbekistan restricted the amount of cash in circulation and awarded loans based on personal and political, rather than economic, criteria.[25] Uzbekistan did not allow convertibility of Uzbek *som* until 2003—and even then only a limited amount—which prevented international investors from converting their profits into currency usable outside Uzbekistan.[26]

Two laws passed in recent years further squeezed the small space for independent business. The first, in 2003, prohibited the unlicensed trading of consumer goods in bazaars. It limited trade to merchants who could lease closed cubicles, which were auctioned off beginning at $3,000 per year. Karimov claimed the purpose was to "civilize" commerce in Uzbekistan, but the upshot was to restrict trading activity to only those with significant capital, which excluded petty traders without government connections.[27] Second, a 2004 law prohibited shuttle traders from selling goods through intermediaries and required them to purchase cash registers and place all their earnings in bank accounts, or risk losing their licenses.[28] This law, which many found it difficult to comply with, drove legitimate business underground and increased the market share of government insiders.

When independent businessmen became too rich or threatening, they were harassed, threatened, or arrested. Successful entrepreneurs attracted the attention of the tax authorities and were compelled to pay excessively high rates and hand out bribes to avoid additional harassment.[29] Visits from the prosecutor and short-term incarceration were also used by authorities to intimidate business owners and justify appropriation of assets, sometimes out of simple greed rather than perceptions of political threats. Reports of seizures of businesses and assets by local officials, with the collaboration of loyal courts, were widespread.[30] These

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[23] Ilkhamov, "Shirkats."
[24] See "Failure to Reform," 17.
[25] "Strategy for Uzbekistan," EBRD, 7-26-05, 7.
[26] Mark Baker, "Uzbekistan: Som Restrictions Reluctantly Relaxed, but How Real is The Commitment?" RFE/RL, 10-20-03.
[27] "Failure to Reform," 16.
[28] Matlyuba Azamatova and Hamdam Sulaimonov, "Uzbekistan: Furious Traders Riot," IWPR, 11-2-04.
[29] "Country Report: Uzbekistan," EIU, September 2001, 14; Luong, "Political Obstacles," 15.
[30] "The Failure of Reform in Uzbekistan: Ways Forward for the International Community," ICG, 3-11-04, 20; Lawrence I. Markowitz, "Sources of State Weakness and Collapse: Regionalism, Strongmen, and

informal predatory practices ensured that the business environment would remain uncertain, and prevented outsiders from rivaling insiders in wealth or influence.

Opportunities and Opportunism in Kyrgyzstan's Transition

As in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz elites rallied around their Communist Party First Secretary, Askar Akaev, as the date of independence approached. Unlike Uzbekistan, Akaev did not attempt to centralize power to the extent that Karimov did. Arriving without significant personal connections and inheriting a country with few natural resources, Akaev governed cautiously, ceding power to regional party elites and adopting reforms that could win him friends (and funds) from abroad.[31] In Kyrgyzstan's first years of independence, it was hailed by some as the "Central Asia's island of democracy."[32]

Despite Akaev's liberal tendencies, Kyrgyz elites used the state for rent-seeking, as in Uzbekistan. Akaev's first cabinet was heavily represented by the president's extended family and northern ministers, while excluding the southern oblast of Osh.[33] As in Uzbekistan, members of the regime (including the president's family) appropriated a disproportionate share of major assets such as gold, oil, and gas, and negotiated an informal agreement regarding control of the most profitable bureaucracies.[34] A commission set up after Akaev's ouster in 2005 compiled a list of 42 businesses reputedly owned or partially controlled by Akaev's family, including a cement factory, a gold mine, the largest cellular phone company, and the fuel supplier to the American air base.[35] Akaev's brother-in-law supposedly controlled the largest bazaar in Bishkek.[36] The coalition of elites supporting the regime also included *nomenklatura*-turned-businessmen from Bishkek (including "Kyrgyzstan's richest man," a longtime Akaev loyalist)

Patronage in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 2004); "Uzbekistan," in *2005 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers*, US Trade Representative, 485.

[31] Jones Luong *Institutional Change and Political Continuity*, Chapter 4.

[32] Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan*, 1999.

[33] Vladimir Khanin, "Political Clans and Political Conflicts in Contemporary Kyrgyzstan," in Yaakov Ro'i, ed., *Democracy and Pluralism in Muslim Eurasia* (New York: Frank Cass: 2004), 219. Osh Oblast later divided into three oblasts: Osh, Jalalabad and Batken.

[34] Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics," 343.

[35] Daniel Kimmage, "Kyrgyzstan: Follow The Money--The Akaev Investigation," RFE/RL, 5-4-05; Valerii Kodachigov and Dina Karat, "Imenem Kontrrevolutsii Syn Askara Akaeva Pytaetsya Vernut' Sobstvennost' [In the Name of Counterrevolution, Askar Akaev's Son Tries to Return His Property]," *Kommersant*, 5-24-05.

[36] R. Dyryldaev, Chairman of the Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights, Kyrgyzstan Daily Digest, RFE/RL, 6-7-01.

and elites from Naryn and Osh, who were rewarded with governorships (*akim*) of their regions.[37] Kyrgyzstan thus started as a corrupt democratizing regime rather than a consolidated authoritarian one.

Officials included in the new government benefited financially from their control of strategic resources. Because access to the state meant unequalled opportunities for graft, a "market" developed in which individuals could buy government jobs. One would use the sinecure in the hopes of making a "return" on his "investment" before the powers-that-be removed him.[38] For example, Kurmanbek Bakiev, the current president of Kyrgyzstan, had held high-level positions in the USSR, including factory manager and chairman of the gorkom (city committee) in Jalalabad. In 1994, he was appointed deputy chairman of the State Property Committee. Using the information and access gained from working in the government, Bakiev was reputed to be one of the 100 richest people in Kyrgyzstan before he left the government in 2002.[39]

Despite the using the state for the private benefit of its members, the Akaev regime undertook radical reforms which would later have major ramifications. Akaev first introduced a new currency, restructured banks, and privatized housing and small enterprises.[40] Using a voucher system similar to Russia's, the government distributed property to every Kyrgyz citizen that could be exchanged for shares in state enterprises.[41] Second, the government privatized land. Kyrgyzstan, a mountainous country with little arable land, was engineered to specialize in agriculture and animal husbandry. Experts advised that dismantling collective farms would increase efficiency and allow farmers to compete in a market economy.[42] Third, Akaev opened the country to foreign trade. By passing laws protecting property rights for foreign investors and allowing unrestricted currency convertibility and repatriation of capital, Akaev succeeded in gaining membership for Kyrgyzstan in the World Trade Organization in 1995.[43] These policies widened economic opportunities to non-members of the ruling apparatus, which led to the creation of a cohort of "new elites" who could accumulate wealth while bypassing that state.

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[37] "Political Transition in Kyrgyzstan: Problems and Prospects," ICG, 8-11-04, 9.
[38] See "Kyrgyzstan at Ten," 5; Jones Luong, "Political Obstacles," 17.
[39] Akyl Stamov, "Politicheskaya Likhoradka v Kyrgyzstane,"[Political Turmoil in Kyrgyzstan] www.gazeta.kg, 6-21-05; Akyl Stamov "Fergana: 100 Samykh Bogatykh Lyudei Kyrgyzstana 2004 Goda [Fergana: The 100 Richest People in Kyrgyzstan]," www.akipress.kg.
[40] Richard Pomfret, "Aid and Ideas: The Impact of Western Economic Support on the Muslim Successor States," in Ro'i, 85.
[41] Richard Pomfret, *The Economies of Central Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 113-14.
[42] "Kyrgyzstan: The Transition to a Market Economy," (Washington DC: World Bank, 1993), 123.
[43] Gregory Gleason, *Markets and Politics in Central Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 74.

Other decisions contributed to a wide distribution of economic resources in Kyrgyzstan, which also decreased the president's power. Unlike Uzbekistan, which maintained the infrastructure of the Communist Party intact and in state hands, Kyrgyzstan allowed regional elites to appropriate party resources and use them to increase their power vis-à-vis the central state.[44] Also, whereas Karimov aggressively targeted independent regional leaders and replaced them with more compliant ones, Akaev purposely devolved power to regional leaders for the sake of economic efficiency.[45] Finally, Kyrgyzstan's privatization of the agricultural sector had the effect of weakening the state's control over the countryside and concentrating resources in the hands of local elites. The two phases of land reform, in 1992 and 1995, disproportionately benefited collective farm directors, who were able to use their access to information and personal connections to acquire a larger share of resources than the law permitted.[46]

Elites in Kyrgyzstan

As a result of Kyrgyzstan's permissive economic policies and the failure to concentrate resources within a small winning coalition, people outside of the regime were able to prosper, especially in the south, where opportunities were diverse. Some entrepreneurs imported goods from China or revived inefficient factories and sought international investment. Ethnic Uzbek entrepreneurs exploited network ties to elites in Uzbekistan to profit from cross-border trade after the border was fixed. One such businessman, Davran Sobirov in Osh, gained his wealth from energy import stemming from connections in Uzbekistan and Russia.[47] Another Uzbek, Kadyrjon Batyrov, earned his fortune during perestroika transporting building materials from Russia to Central Asia. He later bought several enterprises and restaurants in Russia. He used his wealth to secure a seat in parliament and opened a $6 million Uzbek-language university in Jalalabad in 2003.[48]

Another source of revenue available in Kyrgyzstan was representation in parliament. In contrast to Uzbekistan, where members of parliament were handpicked by the regime and not responsive to any constituency,[49] regime outsiders in Kyrgyzstan could gain access to resources through elections to parliament. Besides businessmen, members of parliament included *akims*

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[44] Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity*, 112.
[45] Melvin, "Authoritarian Pathways," 129; Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity*, 115.
[46] Bloch, "Land Privatization."
[47] More about Davran Sobirov in Chapter 3.
[48] Interview with Journalist, Osh, 2004.
[49] Erika Dailey, "Election Assessment in Uzbekistan: Calling Things by their Proper Name," eurasianet.org, 12-16-99.

(regional governors) and other local elites who gained their authority from family legacies in their region.[50] A seat in parliament bestowed the ability to pass laws and distribute patronage to one's district (in addition to enriching oneself), an opportunity not available to members of Uzbekistan's parliament.[51] The only catch was that, whereas independent or pro-regime elites could be elected without facing resistance, candidates openly advocating opposition to Akaev faced a number of informal (and illegal) obstacles to winning.[52]

Kyrgyz non-state elites did not have unanimous preferences. Instead, they had three choices regarding politics—support the regime unconditionally, remain neutral or conditionally supportive, or oppose it—and often moved back and forth between the categories depending on their perceptions of the regime's strength and competence. The first group included Soviet-era officials who sought a position in the state apparatus, ethnic minority elites (mostly Russians and Uzbeks), and the wealthiest Bishkek businessmen (the so-called oligarchs).[53] They benefited from the status quo and were unconditionally loyal. At election time, this group would use its resources in support of the president and pro-regime parliamentary candidates.

A second group, often fluctuating in size, consisted of ordinary businessmen, the intelligentsia, and political elites not included in Akaev's inner circle. They were passively supportive of the regime as long as the state allowed them to exercise their (political or financial) activities unhindered. Additionally, the growing middle class valued stability and economic growth and feared the consequences of a change in government.[54]

A third category was opposition. Most of the initial members of this group came from the *intelligentsia* and included lawyers, journalists, teachers, and members of the NGO community. Some adopted a new profession in Kyrgyzstan, as *pravozashitniki* (literally, rights defenders), or activists trained in constitutional law, usually connected with western NGOs. They would advise opposition figures on forming political parties and carry out protest actions without

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[50] Eugene Huskey, "Kyrgyzstan: The Fate of Political Liberalization," in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, *Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 260.

[51] Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics," 345. One example of projects that benefited regions selectively was the establishment of free economic zones (FEZ), which provide tax breaks to foreign investors. FEZs were only created in some districts in Issyk-Kul, Chui, and Talas Oblasts in the North, which benefited economically as a result.

[52] In this respect, Kyrgyzstan could be called a "competitive authoritarian" regime or "managed democracy," in that it held elections for legitimacy but used various tactics to prevent the opposition from winning. See Levitsky and Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism."

[53] Huskey, "Kyrgyzstan," 266; Rafis Abazov, "Politicheskie Preobrazovaniya v Kygyzstane i Evolyutsiya Prezidentskoi Systemy [Political Transformation in Kyrgyzstan and the Evolution of the Presidential System]," *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 1(2), 1999.

[54] "Political Transition in Kyrgyzstan," ICG, 4. A similar argument has been made to explain the Russian business elite's support for President Vladimir Putin. See Stephen Sestanovich, "Force, Money, and Pluralism," *Journal of Democracy* 15(3), 2004: 32-42.

breaking the law. Later, the opposition contingent grew with the addition of former government officials who had broken with Akaev over personal or strategic differences, and disaffected businessmen who no longer saw Akaev as a guarantor of stability. Prominent former officials with pre-existing constituencies (mostly rural and southern elites) established political parties, and those without a local base of support sought allies among other disaffected elites.

Two examples of prominent officials who defected to the opposition were Kurmanbek Bakiev and Felix Kulov, who later became president and vice-president, respectively. Bakiev was a lifelong member of the *nomenklatura* and Akaev's Prime Minister until 2002. After being dismissed following the shooting of protestors in Aksy (see Chapter 5), Bakiev appealed to his rural base near Jalalabad to win a parliamentary seat. Over the next two years he would become the leader of the "centrist opposition," leading to his selection as the head of a coalition of opposition parties in September 2004, in anticipation of the 2005 elections.[55]

Kulov was also a member of the *nomenklatura* and served in a number of influential positions in post-independence Kyrgyzstan, including Minister of Internal Affairs, mayor of Bishkek, and Vice President. When a close relationship with Akaev turned sour over personal and policy differences, Kulov resigned as mayor of Bishkek and established an opposition party.[56] Kulov announced his intention to challenge Akaev for the presidency in 2000 and, as a viable candidate, he presented a threat. Akaev first used administrative resources to hinder his candidacy but when that failed, he had Kulov arrested and jailed for "abuse of power."[57]

Another group, comprising businessmen rather than politicians, became oppositionists due to disillusionment with Akaev, a perception that his regime had weakened, or simply out of boredom or hubris. One of those with the latter motivation was Jenishbek Nazaraliev, a wealthy psychiatrist and member of the Bishkek business elite. He used his comparative advantage—money—to bankroll opposition activities in Bishkek prior to the 2005 elections.[58] In the south, Bayaman Erkinbaev, an influential businessman, joined the opposition hoping to topple a weakening Akaev and become a major figure in the new regime. With reputed ties to organized crime, Erkinbaev owned a major share of the bazaar in Kara-su (the largest in the country), a

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[55] "New Political Bloc Formed In Kyrgyzstan," RFE/RL, 9-23-04.

[56] Some claimed that Kulov and his associates attempted a coup against Akaev in 1999. After the arrests of many of the accused plotters, Kulov resigned as Mayor of Bishkek in Protest. See Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics," 358.

[57] See Naryn Idinov and Bruce Pannier, "Kyrgyzstan: Bishkek Mayor Resigns as Investigation Begins," RFE/RL, 4-28-99; Dmitri Klimentov, "Nastoyaschii Polkovnik Feliks Kulov [The Real Colonel Felix Kulov]," *Yezhenedel'nik Ekspress* 6-1-00. See Chapter 4 for further details.

[58] Nazaraliev was a rare case of a businessman with no experience or interest in politics prior to 2005. He opened his first private clinic treating drug addiction in 1991, spent the next 14 years publishing and earning patents, and did not even run for a seat in parliament. "Kyrgyz Doctor Became 'Man of the Year' at American Institute," Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies, FBIS, 1-8-03.

cotton-processing factory, and several entertainment complexes.[59] After winning a seat in parliament in 2000, he began using his funds to help finance the opposition.

III: Political and Civil Society

Marc Howard, following Linz and Stepan, identifies the arenas of democratization to include economic society, political society,[60] and civil society.[61] Whereas economic society, discussed in the last section, helps to determine the distribution of wealth, the strength of political and civil society influences the possibilities for successful collective action. Even while the Central Asian states have gradually lost their infrastructural power,[62] they have been able to maintain a substantial amount of despotic power. With few exceptions, they have consistently scored lowest among former Communist countries in indicators of political and civil liberties.[63] Yet, as in the economic sphere, there is variation in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan's use of despotic power.

A strong civil society requires access to information for people to recognize common interests, the ability to interact to communicate those interests, and access to resources that people can mobilize to realize those interests. The policies of the two regimes have affected these possibilities in different ways. Whereas the Uzbek government's low levels of toleration for political parties, civic groups, independent media, and religious expression have made it difficult for citizens to establish enduring ties with like-minded people, Kyrgyzstan's early flirtation with democratic reform provided enough space for autonomous actors to seek out common interests, coalesce, and collectively act.

Obstructed Avenues in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan decisively limited the opportunities for pluralism in the political realm by inhibiting political challenges to the regime from within the state or outside of it. The main tools used were outright coercion, shuffling of regional cadres, and an extensive system of monitoring and surveillance. A first step was to eliminate organized opposition in the form of political

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[59] "The Unsung Role of Kung-fu in the Kyrgyz Revolution," Agence-France Presse, 3-28-05.
[60] Howard defined it as "political leadership and the competition for political power and office." Howard, *Weakness of Civil Society*, 34.
[61] "The realm of organizations, groups, and associations that are formally established, legally protected, autonomously run, and voluntarily joined by ordinary citizens." Ibid.
[62] Pauline Jones Luong, "Central Asia's Contributions to Theories of the State," in Jones Luong 2004.
[63] www.freedomhouse.org.

parties. The two most popular opposition parties, which had developed in the later years of the Gorbachev era, Erk and Birlik, were banned in 1993; Birlik's leader and Karimov's 1991 rival for the presidency was forced to flee the country. While neutralizing the opposition, the government created several pro-government parties, the largest being the People's Democratic Party, the Communist Party's successor, which Karimov chaired until 1996.[64] Since 1994, with few exceptions, only pro-government parties have been allowed to compete in elections or hold sanctioned meetings.[65] The Karimov regime also emasculated parliament as a source of opposition to the presidency. The parliament's role was to meet three to four times a year for several days to "confirm laws and other decisions drafted by the executive branch rather than to initiate legislation."[66]

Another state-imposed barrier to collective action was centralized control over regional and local governance. The president retained the Soviet vertical system of appointments to the regional level (*hokims*) but strengthened the power of the executive vis-à-vis hokims by limiting their responsibilities and reducing their role in appointing lower-level officials.[67] In order to minimize the possibility of insubordination, Karimov appointed new hokims who had never held a position in the same oblast and created an agency to monitor their activities.[68] When a hokim failed to meet targets for cotton production, tolerated too much independent economic or political activity, or allowed too much corruption, Karimov would remove him.[69] Dismissals were usually accompanied by harsh denunciations to send a warning to other governors. For example, when Karimov dismissed the hokim of Samarkand in 2004, he accused him of "unworthy tendencies, criminal activities, abuses of power, violations of justice and, worst of all, clannishness, regionalism, and serious errors in the training, selection, and assignment of staff."[70] Thus, noncompliance with presidential directives or collusion of any kind against the regime could be costly, dangerous, and a bad career move.

On the local level, Uzbekistan developed a dense and broad network of police and informers to monitor society.[71] The 1993 Law on Community Self-Government made the *mahalla*, a traditional neighborhood institution, into a virtual arm of the state. Community

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[64] "Uzbekistan at Ten," ICG, 8-21-01, 9-10. Other pro-government parties, all with indistinguishably pro-Karimov platforms, included *Adolat* (Justice), *Millii Taklanish* (National Rebirth), and *Fidokorlar* (Self-Sacrifice).
[65] "Country Profile: Uzbekistan," EIU, 1999-2000, 7.
[66] US Department of State, Country Report, 2000.
[67] Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity*, 123.
[68] Ibid., 123-25; Ilkhamov, "Limits of Centralization," 163.
[69] "Central Asia: Uzbekistan at Ten–Repression and Instability," ICG, 8-21-01, 18.
[70] Daniel Kimmage, "Week at a Glance," RFE/RL 4(29), 7-27-04.
[71] "Uzbekistan at Ten," 2; Bobomurod Abdullaev, "Uzbekistan: Police Surveillance Fears," IWPR, 6-7-02.

leaders were responsible for working with "neighborhood guardians (*posbon*)," who were placed in every mahalla and charged with maintaining order, gathering information on residents, and passing information to police.[72] Mosques, used as a venue for political association and collective action in other parts of the world,[73] came under the thumb of the state in Uzbekistan. After a proliferation of new mosques opened in 1990-92, many financed by Gulf States, the state began to crack down. Laws were passed requiring all mosques to register with the Ministry of Justice, mullahs were vetted by the state, and both were monitored by the SNB.[74] Worship at unregistered mosques was a criminal offense and many religious believers were arrested and imprisoned without trials in massive sweeps aimed at curtailing Islamic extremism.[75]

Other aspects of civil society in Uzbekistan were stifled from the beginning. The regime prevented the development of an independent media by shutting down newspapers and threatening journalists who did not write favorably of the regime's policies.[76] Consistent with Karimov's belief that civil society should be developed by the state,[77] NGO activity was limited to apolitical themes and subject to excessive monitoring by the state.[78] International organizations promoting human rights or democracy were allowed to operate sporadically, though subject to an arbitrary registration process and harassment by the authorities, until 2005, when they were shut down completely on suspicion of aiding regime opposition.[79] When citizens participated in "politics" in a collective fashion, it was usually through state-led mass organizations, such as Kamolot, the successor to the Union of Communist Youth, which reputedly has 4.7 million members;[80] and universities and workplaces, which forcibly mobilized workers and students to participate in spectacles, public works, and elections.

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[72] "From House to House: Abuses by *Mahalla* Committees," Human Rights Watch, September 2003, 11; Eric W. Sievers, *The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia*, (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 114.
[73] See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Introduction" in Quintan Wiktorowicz, ed., *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).
[74] Igor Rotar, "Muslim Clergy Under State Control," Forum 18 News Service, 4-23-02.
[75] Abdumannob Polat, "Can Uzbekistan Build Democracy and Civil Society?" *Civil Society in Central Asia* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 144.
[76] "Country Report on Human Rights Practices, 2004: Uzbekistan," US Department State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2-28-05. For a list of prohibited topics to write on, see Daniil Kislov and Andrei Kudriashov, "News, Views and the Internet," *Index on Censorship*, 43(1), February 2005.
[77] Islam Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 99.
[78] Polat, "Can Uzbekistan Build Democracy," 149.
[79] "Uzbek Government Exerting Pressure on Local NGOs to Close 'Voluntarily,'" www.eurasianet.org, 10-4-05.
[80] "Creating History, By Numbers and Skill," Press Service of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. See Alisher Abidjanov and Laura Adams, "GONGOs in Uzbekistan and the Development of Civil Society," paper presented at the 5th annual meeting of the Central Eurasian Studies Society, Bloomington, Indiana, October 14-17, 2004.

Conditions for Coalescing in Kyrgyzstan

In contrast to Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan began by liberalizing its political system.[81] Desiring to prove his democratic credentials to the international community, Akaev did not hinder the formation of opposition parties or their participation in elections. New political parties, with orientations ranging from communist to nationalist to social-democratic, came into and out of existence throughout the 1990s.[82] From the beginning, parliament displayed its independence and opposed the president on a number of initiatives, including land privatization, budgets, and attempts to increase the power of the presidency.[83]

Kyrgyzstan's relatively free political society was complemented by a modestly thriving civil society. Various associations sprang up in the 1990s, providing forums for business and political elites to establish ties and exchange information.[84] NGOs sprouted by the hundreds, totaling 430 in the cities of Osh and Naryn alone in 1997.[85] However, the legacy of state control of resources made civic activists dependent on the state, which limited their effectiveness in providing a check on state power.[86] Kyrgyzstan's liberal political orientation allowed an independent media to flourish, and a number of independent newspapers and journals were established, including those devoted to economic issues and critical of the president.[87]

The monitoring of groups and individuals by the state was less endemic in Kyrgyzstan than in Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan did not have nearly as many police per capita as Uzbekistan (nor could it afford to), and was not as concerned about threats to state security: it declared Hizb ut-Tahrir illegal only in 2003 and at the urging of Uzbekistan.[88] Parliamentary independence also translated into greater concern about executive power to monitor. The discovery in January 2004 that the security services had bugged the offices of several opposition deputies in parliament

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[81] For an analysis of Kyrgyzstan's hybrid liberal-democratic and neo-traditional political system, see Abazov, "Politicheskie Preobrazovaniya."
[82] Leonid Levitin, "Liberalization in Kyrgyzstan," in Ro'i, ed.. Some of the party instability was due to the fact that most parties were centered around personalities rather than policies and ideology. See "Kyrgyzstan's Political Crisis: An Exit Strategy," ICG, 14. For the weakness of parties in Russia, see Michael McFaul, "Explaining Party Formation and Nonformation in Russia: Actors, Institutions, and Chance," *Comparative Political Studies* 34(10), 2001: 1159-1187.
[83] "Kyrgyzstan at Ten: Trouble the 'Island of Democracy,'" ICG, 8-28-01, 8.
[84] John Anderson, "Creating a Framework for Civil Society in Kyrgyzstan," *Europe-Asia Studies* 52(1), January 2000, 82.
[85] Kelly M. McMann, "The Civic Realm in Kyrgyzstan," in Jones Luong, *Transformation*, 220.
[86] Ibid., 242.
[87] Such publications included *Delo Nomer*, *Ekonomika, Banki, Biznes*, and *Obschestvenii Reting*.
[88] Alexey Sukhov, "Kyrgyz Ban on Radical Islamic Group Lacks Legal Foundation—Ombudsman," eurasianet.org, 10-8-03.

created a scandal and led to a parliamentary investigation, at which members of the ultra-secretive SNB were forced to testify.[89] The state also permitted a wider scope of religious activity than Uzbekistan, allowing unregistered communities to worship with impunity, although there were occasional reported violations.[90]

Kyrgyzstan's relative freedom began to change in the mid-1990s, when Akaev attempted to retract some of his earlier reforms.[91] From the start, Kyrgyzstan had lagged in establishing an independent judiciary, which Akaev packed with loyal judges. Following the lead of his Central Asian neighbors, in 1998, Akaev engineered a constitutional change allowing him to run for a third five-year presidential term in 2000. He also clamped down on the media, closing down a critical newspaper, suing another, and jailing several prominent journalists for libel.[92] Civic organizations were hampered by laws requiring review by the Justice Ministry and limiting public meetings.[93] Opposition political activists were harassed, beaten up, or jailed. By 2004, although Akaev proclaimed his intention to step down in 2005, speculation mounted that he would yet again engineer a constitutional change to stay in power longer.[94] Since he was overthrown in 2005, his actual intentions may never be known.

Elite Opposition Networks in Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's favorable political opportunity structure allowed inter-elite networks to develop to an extent that was impossible in Uzbekistan. As discussed in Chapter 1, elite networks tend to form if there are institutions facilitating interaction, and in response to major political events and perceptions of regime weakness. In Kyrgyzstan, elite networks, uniting individuals with political savvy, organizational resources, and ties to local communities, would turn out to be critical in the 2005 regime change.

Opposition alliances began forming in the mid-1990s and consolidated in 2002, including networks that were activated in the "Tulip Revolution." In 1995, while Akaev was still popular, the first opposition developed in parliament. It revolved around the personalities of Omurbek

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[89] Leila Saralaeva, "Kyrgyzstan's Not-so-secret Service," IWPR, 5-28-04.
[90] Antoine Blua "Kyrgyzstan: Survey Reports Positive Findings on Religious Freedom," eurasianet.org, 1-11-04.
[91] Explanations for this include the erosion of formal institutions by informal, rent-seeking networks, the perception of weakening central authority vis-à-vis the regions, and infusions of foreign aid strengthening the executive. See Regine A. Spector, "The Transformation of Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan," Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies Working Paper Series, 2004.
[92] Anderson, *Kyrgyzstan*, 55-58.
[93] Anderson, "Creating a Framework," 84-85.
[94] Nazgul Baktybekova, "Resignation and Extension Campaigns Face Off in Kyrgyzstan," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 2-9-05.

Tekebaev, a former schoolteacher, and Dooronbek Sadyrbaev, a film director and Tekebaev's teacher, who came from neighboring villages in the south. They were joined by Almaz Atambaev, a wealthy Bishkek businessman, and later, by Usen Sydykov, formerly deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, who then broke with Akaev and became a businessman.[95]

The run-up to the 2000 presidential elections provided another impetus to coalesce against Akaev, who was, by now, quite unpopular with parliament. Former Prime Minister Felix Kulov (from the north), having broken with Akaev, and Tekebaev (from the south) planned to run as a tandem to oppose Akaev, until Kulov was jailed. Other MPs and new converts to the opposition began searching for allies, leading to the formation of several new opposition parties which were centered on personalities and some blocs of existing parties.[96]

In 2002, the Aksy Events, described in Chapter 5, provided a focal point that cemented alliances between new and old oppositionists and brought latent oppositionists into the open. These included Azimbek Beknazarov, the MP whose arrest sparked the Aksy mobilization, and MPs Adahan Madumarov (who was close to Tekebaev and Sadyrbaev), Bektur Asanov, and Duishenkul Chotonov, deputy chairman of a party comprising several other elites called Ata-Meken ("fatherland"), all of whom took part in the demonstrations and marches.

Proximity and family connections facilitated the formation of networks of elites with otherwise diverse interests. For example, a tacit alliance that would later turn out to be important was born between 2003 and 2004 between three unlikely bedfellows. Roza Otunbaeva was a former foreign minister and Akaev loyalist before splitting over personal differences. Bayaman Erkinbaev, as described above, was a famous wrestler, known drug smuggler, and owner of large amounts of valuable property. Anvar Artykov was an ethnic Uzbek (unlike the other two, who were ethnic Kyrgyz) son of a kolkhoz director who became a member of parliament in 1995. He turned to the opposition over his moral objection to the proliferation of casinos in the country. Artykov and Erkinbaev reputedly ran a joint venture together in Bishkek. Artykov and Otunbaeva had a working relationship since 2002 and formed a party called later Ata-Jurt (also "fatherland").[97] Erkinbaev provided ties to another opposition network because he was Chotonov's brother-in-law, while Otunbaeva would later act as a broker to other opposition elites. In March 2005, this alliance was decisive in the mass mobilization, leading and financing demonstrations in Osh and coordinating with the opposition in Bishkek.

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[95] Interview, Erkin Salimjanov, Sadyrbaev's nephew and political representative, Kochkorata, 6-24-06.
[96] "Kyrgyzstan: Dates Related to Elections, Officials, and Policy," RFE/RL.
[97] Interview, Izzatilla, director, human rights NGO and election observer, Osh, 7-1-06.

A similar coincidence of interests based on proximity developed outside of Jalalabad. Jusupbek Jeenbekov, a parliamentary candidate in 2005, was the brother of a deceased popular opposition journalist, through whom he inherited ties with Tekebaev and Sadyrbaev.[98] He was also closely aligned with Tagaibek Jarkynbaev, the head of the local branch of the Communist Party living in the village next to Jeenbekov's, and Jalalabad natives Asanov (of Aksy renown) and Jusupbek Bakiev, which also gave him indirect access to Jusupbek's older brother and former prime minister, Kurmanbek Bakiev.

In 2004, a number of unstable tactical alliances were formed, some declaring themselves parties, even though they usually revolved around personalities and lacked grassroots support. One such "party," the Civic Union for Fair Elections, managed to unite several longtime oppositionists and recent defectors in preparation for parliamentary elections. The alliance had no platform, but it managed unite northern and southern politicians, making it the most formidable opposition network to date.[99]

Later that year, a second coalition, the People's Movement for Kyrgyzstan (NDK), unified nine parties that had been ineffective individually and limited in support to particular regions. Its strength came not from party members, but from its union of influential ex-*nomenklatura* and ex-regime politicians, including Kurmanbek Bakiev and Roza Otunbaeva, with opposition elites from the countryside. Each group had weaknesses for which the other could compensate. The former contributed experience in government, ties to the business community in the capital, and media savvy. The latter maintained ties with their communities and possessed "authenticity" that cosmopolitan elites did not. Most important, through these elites, the NDK had access to voters in rural areas in different parts of the country. The formation of the NDK helped create a basis for mass mobilization by unifying opposition elites through a vast political network.

Conclusion

Uzbekistan's twin strategies of limiting economic activity outside of the regime and restricting autonomous association had a stunting effect on entrepreneurship and politics. Wealth could be generated only through access to state resources, which was regulated by ruling elites.

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[98] Interview, Asylbek Tekebaev, Omurbek's brother, 6-25-06; Sovetali Nazaraliev, head of Sadyrbaev's campaign committee, 6-25-06;

[99] From the north were both businessmen and former regime officials: Otunbaeva, Melis Eshemkanov, Ishengul Boljorova, Almaz Atambaev, and Bolot Sherniyazov. Tekebaev and Madumarov represented the south. "Political Transition in Kyrgyzstan," ICG, 15; Leila Saralieva, "Changing Sides in Kyrgyzstan," IWPR, 6-7-04.

To retain one's wealth it was necessary to remain loyal to the regime. Those who accumulated too much wealth or dared to challenge the ruling structure were punished and had their businesses confiscated. Furthermore, the political space necessary for elites to resist these encroachments by acting collectively was severely limited by measures that ensured that all legal association was mediated by the state. On the whole, therefore, the opportunity structure for independent business elites to develop independent power centers and form autonomous organizations was dismal. Despite deteriorating economic conditions, in 2005, the regime was still largely capable of pre-empting challenges from rivals, who were few and far between.

Despite the Kyrgyz regime's occasional use of repression to retain power, which was able to successfully pre-empt a united opposition until 2004, the opportunities for economic and political activity were fairly favorable for most of the 1990s. Although regime members appropriated a large share of state resources, the decentralized and liberal economic environment meant that commerce could be conducted by those outside of the regime, and an independent business class could develop.[100] The regime later attempted to clamp down on the opposition and co-opt business elites, but it was too late to curtail the power of new elites. As a result, the regime was unable to prevent the formation of informal alliances of business and political elites that would later bring down the government.

An alternative argument to the one advanced here is that the level of collapse in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in the early 1990s later directly impacted on people's propensity to protest, rather than acting through the intervening variable of elites. This argument has two variants. In the first, because the state in Uzbekistan did not withdraw as far as Kyrgyzstan's, people did not suffer as much and therefore had less motivation to rebel. In the second, because the Uzbek state maintained a greater presence in society, it was able to prevent people from mobilizing. In addressing these possibilities, it is clear that the level of collapse had an impact on society in both countries that affected aspects of collective action. For example, it is known that Uzbekistan has experienced fewer protests than Kyrgyzstan. However, the first hypothesis is not borne out by the data and the second, if correct, would explain only the *frequency* of mobilization rather than the *scale*.

On the first question, whether the level of state collapse led to differences in grievance formation, the data does not confirm the conjecture. Many sources have documented the fact that Uzbekistan provided a higher level of public goods than Kyrgyzstan after independence, as discussed above. However, the survey also indicated that Uzbeks perceive themselves as worse

[100] It should be noted that the urban middle class was not active in the mass mobilization that led to regime change in 2005. The main elite actors in fact were rural. See Chapter 6.

off materially than Kyrgyz. The question then hinges on whether low levels of public goods or of income has a greater effect on grievance formation. A plausible argument could be made for either. However, to maintain that Kyrgyzstan has experienced a higher frequency of mobilization or more sizeable protests than Uzbekistan simply because Kyrgyz are more deprived of public goods—despite being wealthier—would require additional evidence and cannot be accepted *prima facie*.

The second hypothesis, that Uzbekistan is able to pre-empt mobilization through its greater control over society (state employment, surveillance, threat of repression, etc.) is more plausible. Mobilization is rare, but not unheard of, in totalitarian or repressive systems.[101] As mentioned in the Introduction, the overall number of protests in Uzbekistan is lower than in Kyrgyzstan, a fact consistent with this hypothesis. However, this argument does not provide an account of the difference in scale—the fact that, even considering the increasing frequency of protests,[102] Uzbekistan has not experienced regional or national mobilization. If people were intimidated by the threat of state reprisals, they would be put off from mobilizing in the first place, but if mobilization does in fact occur, the same mechanism cannot account for why it remains localized and does not expand to greater scale.

While (the threat of) repression is an undeniable consideration in an individual's decision to mobilize, it is one of many variables shaping the political opportunity structure and not a likely determinant of scale. Instead, if, as I argue, elites are needed to produce mobilization of greater-than-local scale, then their behavior must be examined as a possible explanation for the variation between the two countries. In the next chapter I will show how the otherwise separate processes described in this and the previous chapter—the impoverishment of ordinary people and the enrichment of elites—combine in the formation of locally based vertical relationships in Kyrgyzstan.

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[101] There were a mere 264 documented mass protest demonstrations in the USSR between 1965 and 1987. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization*, 70. However, Goodwin makes the opposite argument—that severe repression without other means of expression in fact increases the likelihood of revolution. Goodwin, *No Other Way Out*, 292.

[102] See "Uzbekistan: A Year of Disturbances," IWPR.

Chapter 4: Vertical Networks

The past two chapters have described communities and elites as if they exist in separate social and economic spheres. While ordinary people have lost jobs and purchasing power since the Soviet Union's collapse, the former *nomenklatura* and new elites have become rich by taking advantage of the availability of critical resources and access to international markets. Whereas ordinary people struggle to survive at near-subsistence levels, the new rich play political games and display their wealth in lavish ways.

The post-Soviet divergence into economic and social classes has been noted by other observers of the region. Echoing the findings from Chapter 2, a World Bank report from 2004, entitled "Better a Hundred Friends than a Hundred Rubles?" notes the some of the detrimental social effects of state withdrawal and resource scarcity in Kyrgyzstan:

> The size of networks and frequency of social encounters have significantly decreased among the poor, leading to greater economic, geographic, and social isolation. Simultaneously, the non-poor have become more reluctant to provide support to poor relatives.[1]

It further highlights the divergence of the two strata of the population:

> There is increasing differentiation in the form and function of social networks of the poor and non-poor. The polarization of these networks reflects the increasing socioeconomic stratification of the population. Kyrgyz society, relatively egalitarian during the Soviet period, has become strikingly unequal.[2]

Richard Rose makes a similar point about the separateness of social networks in calling Russia an "hourglass society," in which the poor maintain dense social networks built on face-to-face contact and trust, while rich also lead vibrant social lives, but there are few connections between the classes.[3]

Although these scholars' observations are correct, this chapter argues that there are also contradictory pressures, based on both norms and self-interest, which work to redistribute wealth from the top stratum of society to the bottom. The normative aspect is built on Islamic traditions of aiding the indigent, reinforced by the shared experience of coping with shortages during the

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[1] Kathleen Kuehnast and Nora Dudwick, "Better a Hundred Friends than a Hundred Rubles?" World Bank Working Paper #39, (Washington, World Bank, 2004), 3.
[2] Ibid., 25.
[3] Richard Rose, "Russia as an Hourglass Society: A Constitution without Citizens," *East European Constitutional Review* 4(3), 1995: 34-42.

Soviet era through mutual assistance networks.[4] The rational component stems from an awareness by new elites that they can benefit politically and materially by redistributing some of their wealth in the short run, just as community members rationally aid one another in expectation of reciprocity (see Chapter 2). Thus, even while the gap between the rich and poor has widened, there have been countervailing pressures to narrow it.

The developments described in the previous two chapters—state withdrawal and economic opportunities—converge when elites and communities find a common interest in providing charity for political support, a phenomenon that provides the final and critical link in forming the mass mobilization infrastructure. This relationship unites ordinary people bound by social interaction and mutual obligation with elites who possess resources that can be used to mobilize them and who maintain ties to other elites across community boundaries. To solidify ties with communities, elites do not give away a major part of their wealth, nor do they make a noticeable dent in poverty. They do, however, contribute enough materially and involve themselves sufficiently in the community to earn reputations as essential benefactors. Elites can take advantage of this loyal base of support to establish or advance their political careers.

This chapter explains how and why these relationships, based on localism, have developed in Kyrgyzstan, using concrete examples to illustrate the motivations of both elites and community members who take part. The first section describes how flaws in the system during the late Soviet period contributed to the development of patronage networks outside of the state. These networks and their redistributive functions persisted, to some extent, throughout Central Asia's transition to independent statehood. The second section explains what autonomous elites can provide for communities and how they stand to benefit, based on in-depth interviews with several benefactors. It argues that these vertical relationships can have major political ramifications because they undermine reliance on the state, and shows survey results indicating differences in the extent of these relationships in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The final section explains how unequal material relationships were exploited by the state to elicit mass participation during the Soviet era, and argues that some elites today can bring about mobilization through similar mechanisms, and may do so when the state threatens those elites' interests.

I: Community Patronage in the Soviet Era

The Soviet patronage system inadvertently encouraged elites subvert the system by diverting resources to those they ruled. Local officials developed often "parallel authority

[4] See Alena V. Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

structures" in order to obtain compliance from the population necessary to meet production quotas.[5] In order to show off their social status and generate good will, rural notables would maintain an open home, where people in the village could stop and avail themselves of a constant supply of expensive food, in the image of Islamic and mahalla-based norms of redistribution.[6] The institution of public charity cemented the reputation of elites in the community and facilitated perceptions of efficiency for higher-ups. When rural elites received promotions to the regional or national capital, they would assist their compatriots by awarding jobs or securing resources necessary to assist a villager who has moved to the city.[7] By the time of the USSR's dissolution, elites and society can be said to have been separate, but co-dependent.

In the Brezhnev-era Soviet Union, official neglect and weak monitoring by Moscow allowed Central Asian party officials to increasingly manage their own affairs, including appointments to party positions and the state apparat, and a shadow economy that siphoned off revenue intended for Moscow.[8] The systematic underreporting of cotton production in Uzbekistan in the 1980s generated enormous revenue for regional and local officials, who maintained public support by engaging in "unauthorized but necessary public construction" and "providing goods and services that would otherwise be unavailable."[9] Patronage networks that developed outside of the state that dispensed black market goods and favors in exchange for loyalty. In one case in Namangan, Uzbekistan, the director of a cotton combine who presided over 30,000 residents, created his own "small, sovereign state," replete with a police force and a prison system.[10]

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the legacy of regionally based patronage networks remained intact. Regional identities formed during the Soviet period persisted as the dimension

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[5] Gregory Gleason, "Fealty and Loyalty: Informal Authority Structures in Soviet Asia," *Soviet Studies* 43(4), 1991: 618.

[6] The notable's unofficial obligations to his village included "defending the *kolkhoz* [collective farm] in its dealings with the state apparatus, taking care of supplies, and redistributing part of his wealth in the form of ostentatious expenditure, which thereby reinforces his prestige." Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 93.

[7] Ibid., 99.

[8] The most egregious example of this was the so-called cotton affair, in which party officials in the Uzbek SSR systematically over-reported cotton output and siphoned the profits into private hands. Gregory Gleason, "Nationalism or Organised Crime–The Case of the Cotton Scandal in the USSR," *Corruption and Reform* 5(2), 1990: 87-108; Poliakov, *Everyday Islam*, Chapter 7. See also James Critchlow, "Prelude to 'Independence': How the Uzbek Party Apparatus Broke Moscow's Grip on Elite Recruitment," in William Fierman, ed., *Soviet Central Asia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 131.

[9] James Critchlow, *Nationalism in Uzbekistan* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 45.

[10] Boris Rumer, *Soviet Central Asia: A Tragic Experiment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 151. Rumer portrays the official in question as a dictator and sadist, who did not allow much to trickle down to the general population. However, this may not be the complete story.

on which officials negotiated the balance of power during the transition.[11] Gaining control of the state after independence, post-Soviet leaders naturally directed resources toward their home regions, but in competition with elites from other regions.[12] For example, Kyrgyz president Askar Akaev's primary support base (and his home region) of Chui, and his wife's region of Talas, benefited from higher investment than other regions, which provided jobs for that region's citizens.[13] Some of this assistance was reciprocated: in the 2000 election, Akaev relied on state employees from Talas to contribute to his campaign chest.[14] Perhaps the greatest source of revenue for the regions came from foreign investment and donor organizations, which state elites could direct to their own regions, indirectly providing patronage in the form of jobs.[15] Unfortunately for new state elites, these funds were not as plentiful as Soviet transfers, and they sometimes came with strings attached.[16]

The dispensation of patronage post-1991 was, in some ways, a continuation of Soviet practices, with two exceptions. First, since the factions that had captured the state had little of the egalitarian ethos of the Soviet Union, there was little attempt to ensure that redistribution was equitable among regions of the country or subgroups of the population. Second, economic decline meant that the overall amount of revenue to be divvied was smaller than before, leaving less for the state and even less for the population, which was forced to seek out supplementary income from alternatives to the state.

II: Patronage, Power, and *Plov*

In Kyrgyzstan, the most important surrogates for the state, as regards political change, are entrepreneurs who have successfully navigated the difficult terrain of the post-Soviet economy, who are therefore significantly wealthier than the majority of community members, and who have voluntarily returned some of their wealth to their communities. They are more reliable than state organizations because they often have a larger reserve of cash, and are more durable than NGOs because their presence is long-term and their charity is not dependent on the whims of donor

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[11] Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity*, 8.
[12] Melvin, "Authoritarian Pathways," 129.
[13] Kathleen Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics: Understanding Regime Transition in Post-Soviet Central Asia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1999), 345.
[14] Khanin, "Political Clans," 217.
[15] Ibid., 227.
[16] See "IMF Leaves Tashkent, Warns of Uzbekistan's Increasing Isolation," *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* 7(69), 4-9-01.

countries. Elite benefactors do not act out of altruism, since their gifts are usually tied in with political aspirations and expectations of reciprocity.

In nearly all districts in Kyrgyzstan, one runs into cases of voluntary contributions by wealthy elites with political aspirations. In some cases, there is more than one such donor, and the potential candidates must compete for people's loyalty. There are three main types of help that I encountered—material public, material private, and symbolic public. Most benefactors gave out some combination of all three types of charity.

Material public contributions are probably the most expensive type of donation. This includes buildings and infrastructure that are useful to the community but which the state (or investors) does not provide. In their choice of projects, elites aim to maximize the exposure of their charity and, where possible, to demonstrate some symbolic fact about themselves, such as their respect for Kyrgyz tradition or their religiosity, to show that they have not been spoiled by wealth. Thus, building mosques is the single most popular project for displaying public beneficence. This is followed by building or repairing schools, gyms (*sportzaly* in Russian), bridges, and bathhouses (*banya*). Less expensive, but also material and public, is the purchase of materials for these organizations to use, such as furniture or textbooks. Finally, infrastructure improvement, a direct result of the withdrawal of the state in Kyrgyzstan, is highly in demand. In many cases, groups of neighbors put out requests for—and elites gave—money to fix roads, water pipes, and electrical infrastructure.

Material private charity is usually less expensive than public, but also has positive externalities for the elite, since news of a good deed is likely to travel far within a community by word-of-mouth. In many communities, poor people arrive daily at the home or office of an elite (or his representatives) to request money. Some elites can afford to give a small amount ($5-10) to all supplicants. Sometimes they grant larger sums for special requests, such as for an operation or help in traveling to Russia for seasonal labor. Another popular ritual is to appear at schools to give out money to top students (*otlichniki*, in Soviet parlance), who will usually spread word. Elites usually limit their beneficence to people in their districts, though some are more discriminating, for example, giving money only to "those who really deserve it" or only to those of their own ethnic group.[17]

A third type of charity I call symbolic and public. In such cases, elites do not address people's material problems directly but instead sponsor events open to the mass public that show the elite in a positive light. It is desirable for wealthy elites, especially those who have moved to the capital and whose "authenticity" is in some question, to demonstrate their adherence to (and

[17] Interviews in Kara-su (6-29-06) and Barpy (6-23-06).

knowledge of) Kyrgyz culture. Thus, elites make appearances on important holidays—including Soviet ones[18]—to finance public feasts. To be true to Kyrgyz customs, they are obligated to buy sheep or, in mountainous regions, horses, to slaughter for the meal, which is always *plov*. And they provide plentiful amounts of vodka.[19] Such events are especially common in the period of campaigning prior to parliamentary elections. Elites (or their local representatives) also make appearances at funerals and weddings and make small monetary contributions. Finally, they endear themselves to youth by sponsor traditional sporting events (usually wrestling or *ulak*, a local and more violent version of polo) and award cash prizes to the winners.

Elites do not discourage misperceptions that work in their favor. In many cases, people with whom I spoke reported that they had heard that an elite had financed a project, such as a mosque or school, but did not know where it was or when it was built. Upon further investigation, it often turned out that the contribution was less than the informant believed, such as only replacing a roof. Many times respondents reported perceptions of an elite's diffuse charitable activities, saying, for example, "He always gives money to poor people," but were unable to name a single concrete case. Furthermore, in some cases, people believed that an elite had paid for projects that they in fact did not. Members of parliament are sometimes able to steer funds for local projects through NGOs or the state budget. Yet they would often claim credit for donating the money out-of-pocket instead of only soliciting it—or would purposely leave the matter ambiguous—giving rise to widespread beliefs that the MP spent his own money. Thus, perceptions of charity may be more important than reality insofar as attitudes toward the elite are concerned.

Equally striking is the fact that ordinary people expect their parliamentary deputies to serve them not through passing legislation or delivering patronage (although MPs understand the political benefits of doing so), but to spend their own money to help the district. When people, referring to their MP, said, "He helps us," they usually meant that he personally contributes out-of-pocket. This expectation may be attributed to the fact that Kyrgyzstan has little experience with the democratic process (that is, selecting leaders) and people do not understand the distinction between public office and private business. In a system where money and politics are so intertwined, is only natural that most members of parliament would be businessmen. Since

[18] Including International Women's Day (March 8) and Victory Day (May 9).
[19] Plov is a national dish made from rice and carrots. Vodka is in many ways a national drink, made from fermented grain and local river water.

people expect the government to help them, it is a logical extension that they would demand that elites redistribute some of their wealth in exchange for support.[20]

Quantifying Reliance on Elites

Reliance on independent elites for economic assistance should be more common in Kyrgyzstan than in Uzbekistan as a result of processes described in Chapter 3. Results from the 2005 survey provide some supporting evidence for this argument. Several questions inquired about people's reliance on non-state actors, including businessmen, to capture the monetary aspect of vertical relationships. First, a question was asked about loans: "If you had a big project to do, such as repair a house, put on a wedding or send a relative abroad, and were short of cash, to whom would you turn for a loan?" Respondents from both countries were statistically equally likely to turn to a state entity for a loan, weighted for the order of their responses.[21] However, Kyrgyz respondents (i.e. citizens of Kyrgyzstan) were more likely to turn to a non-state entity[22] and twice as likely to turn to a businessman for a loan.[23] When weighted for the order of their responses, the result was even stronger.[24] The differences of means for the last three variables were significant at the .001 level. See Table 5.1 for the results.

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[20] Another view—most often expressed by elites—is people's so-called Soviet mentality, which in the West is often referred to as a "culture of dependence." In this formulation, people who were weaned on a welfare state come to expect handouts from those in power and are unwilling to do work themselves, although capable.

[21] Choices included: local businessman, state organization, bank, and village/city council, friend, relative, neighbor (who is neither friend nor relative), co-worker, mosque, and clan relation. State organization, bank, and village/city council were coded as state entities. All others were coded as non-state. Respondents were asked to list, in order, the first three sources they would turn to. Responses were weighted as follows: 3 points for a state entity as the first choice, 2 points for second, and 1 point for third. Then the three responses were summed so that the resulting variable ranged from 0 to 6.

[22] Local businessman, friend, relative, neighbor (who is neither friend nor relative), co-worker, mosque, and clan relation were coded as non-state, and all others as state. The replies were weighted as for StateLoanWeighted.

[23] Local businessman was coded as 1, and all other choices as 0.

[24] The variable ranged from 0 to 3, depending on whether the respondent named businessman and whether it was the first, second, or third response.

Table 4.1: Sources of Loans in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

	StateLoan Weighted	NonState Loan Weighted***	Business Loan***	BusinessLoan Weighted***
Uzbekistan	**.709**	**3.95**	**.06**	**.09**
N	1000	1000	1000	1000
Std. Deviation	1.22	2.22	.24	.37
Kyrgyzstan	**.707**	**4.93**	**.13**	**.21**
N	1000	1000	1000	1000
Std. Deviation	1.12	1.62	.33	.59
Average	**.71**	**4.44**	**.10**	**.15**
N	2000	2000	2000	2000
Std. Deviation	1.17	2.00	.30	.50

***Significant at .001 level

A second question asked about influence.[25] Uzbek respondents (i.e. residents of Uzbekistan) were somewhat more likely to cite a state representative as the most influential person, but also more likely to name a non-state actor, meaning more Kyrgyz respondents answered "other" or "nobody" more often. However, Kyrgyz were twice as likely to cite a businessman as the most influential person in his/her community as Uzbeks, significant at the .05 level. See Table 2. Likewise, Kyrgyz were also more likely than Uzbeks to consider a member of parliament (MP) (roughly 80% of whom in Kyrgyzstan are businessmen and a source of revenue for a constituency[26]) the most influential person, by a wide margin, significant at the .001 level.[27] See Table 5.2 for means comparisons on influence.

[25] The question asked: "Whom do consider the most influential person in your village/mahalla?" Respondents were allowed to name one from the following list: head of village committee/community leader, city mayor, district head, district police chief, head of a (state) enterprise, and urban community leader, which were coded as state; and member of parliament, elder (not government representative), local religious authority, Local businessman, a respected person (educated, experienced, cultured, influential etc.) – who is none of the above, and wealthy landowner, which were coded as non-state.

[26] Interview, National Democratic Institute, Bishkek, 7-5-06.

[27] Coded as 1 for MP and 0 for other.

Table 4.2: Influence in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

	InfluentialState*	Influential NonState*	Influential Businessman*	Influential MP***
Uzbekistan	**.43**	**.52**	**.012**	**.006**
N	1000	1000	1000	1000
Std. Deviation	.49	.50	.11	.08
Kyrgyzstan	**.38**	**.47**	**.024**	**.088**
N	1000	1000	1000	1000
Std. Deviation	.49	.50	.15	.28
Average	**.40**	**.49**	**.018**	**.50**
N	2000	2000	2000	2000
Std. Deviation	.49	.50	.13	.21

***Significant at .001 level, *Significant at .05 level

The previous result could be interpreted to imply that parliamentary deputies are considered more influential in Kyrgyzstan only because parliament is more powerful vis-à-vis the president than its counterpart in Uzbekistan. However, another question probed more deeply into the reasons that people select their MPs. When asked to rank the qualities people considered most important in their MPs,[28] Kyrgyz respondents were more likely to name prosperity as an important characteristic than Uzbeks overall and when weighted by the order of their responses.[29] A similar result was found with regard to the desired qualities of their community leaders. All four differences of means were significant at the .001 level. See Table 5.3 for the results.

[28] Respondents were asked to list their top three choices from the following list: personal acquaintance, blood relative, comes from a good family, honest, experienced, hard-working, prosperous, poor, educated/intelligent, and member of a political party.

[29] As with other weighted variables, a first choice was weighted as 3, second choice as 2, and third choice as 1, and no response of prosperity as 0. The variable ranged from 0 to 3.

Table 4.3: Qualities of Leaders in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan—Is Wealth Important?

	MPRich***	MPRichWeighted***	ComLeaderRich***	ComLeaderRichWeighted***
Uzbekistan	**.06**	**.09**	**.04**	**.07**
N	1000	1000	1000	1000
Std. Deviation	.23	.41	.20	.39
Kyrgyzstan	**.12**	**.20**	**.10**	**.16**
N	1000	1000	1000	1000
Std. Deviation	.33	.60	.30	.53
Average	**.09**	**.15**	**.07**	**.12**
N	2000	2000	2000	2000
Std. Deviation	.28	.52	.26	.47

***Significant at .001 level

These results clearly demonstrate the importance of independent sources of wealth in Kyrgyzstan as compared with Uzbekistan. Kyrgyz are significantly more likely than Uzbeks to seek loans from non-state entities, especially businessmen, to perceive businessmen as influential, and to perceive wealth as an important attribute of both their elected representatives and community leaders. These insights are consistent with the argument that, where economic reforms were carried out (i.e. Kyrgyzstan), materially based relationships have developed between businessmen and the impoverished masses, and that wealth can be converted into political influence. Through their connections to these elites—and their dependence on them—the masses develop a stake in their continued prosperity and access to resources, and, to the extent that elites have political ambitions, are inadvertently brought into the political process.

Profiles of Donors: Kyrgyzstan

In Osh, a major patron[30] of the Uzbek community who converted wealth into political power is Davran Sobirov. Like most businessmen who got rich in the 1990s, Sobirov had achieved a high level of responsibility in the Communist Party hierarchy. Born in Osh in 1953, he attended the Tashkent Polytechnic Institute studying civil engineering. Returning to Osh, he worked as a technician at the state gas company and worked his way up to manager. In 1979, he was appointed deputy secretary of the city party committee (gorkom), and then to head the

[30] I use the patron here not in the anthropological sense, but in its more colloquial meaning of "one that supports, protects, or champions someone or something, such as an institution, event, or cause; a sponsor or benefactor." *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000).

Communist Youth League (*Komsomol*) in Osh, responsible for 35,000 members. In 1989, as perestroika reached its height, Sobirov was appointed vice-mayor of Osh and the next year was nominated and won a seat in the Kyrgyz Supreme Soviet in the first competitive Soviet elections. In a more liberal economic environment and with access to the economic levers of power, he took up business in 1990, importing liquid gas from Russia and Kazakhstan. In 1991, he founded the Uzbek National Cultural Center, devoted to advancing the interests of Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan and created an Uzbek-language television station in 1995. After earning his fortune, he quit in 1997 when he was called back to the Osh city gas company (Gorgas).[31] He also owns a hotel and a glass factory in Osh.[32]

Sobirov used his wealth and influence in part for philanthropic ends, especially for the Uzbek community of Osh. He was seen as a hero after an energy shortage from 1994-97, when he proved that the government had cheated people by selling gas at inflated prices. As the head of Gorgas, not only did he work out payment plans for people with debts, but he also occasionally made individual exceptions by forgiving debts entirely and paying out-of-pocket.[33] Over the years (and especially before elections) Sobirov financed the construction of buildings in Uzbek communities, including a mosque and a school. For the opening of the latter, President Akaev flew in to attend the ceremony and the event was shown on Kyrgyz television. People in Sobirov's community, including community leaders, would appeal to Sobirov when a problem arose and money was needed.[34] Sobirov himself expressed annoyance at people's "Soviet mentality."

In return for his largesse, Sobirov has been elected to parliament four times and continues to be one of the most influential politicians in Osh, despite a reputation as member of the opposition. With his advocacy of minority interests and authenticity, Sobirov attained the status of a near-cultlike figure among Osh Uzbeks, who constitute 60-70% of the city's population of 250,000.[35] He would later rely on this support to save his political career.

Another pair of patrons in Osh is Alisher and Hulkar Sobirov (who are not related to Davran). Alisher got his start in the security services of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and parlayed his position into business by investing in restaurants. He won his first seat in parliament in 1995. His wife, Hulkar, worked as an accountant in the Ministry of Trade before capitalizing on her husband's popularity and influence and winning a seat on the Osh City Council in 2004.

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[31] Interview, Davran Sobirov, Osh, 12-24-03.
[32] Interview, Russian Journalist, Osh, 6-15-04.
[33] Interview, Davran Sobirov, Osh, 12-24-03.
[34] Interview, Maksumjon, Osh, 6-24-04; Kadirjon, Osh, 6-28-04)
[35] A survey of Uzbeks carried out in 2002 by the Uzbek Cultural Center in Osh found that far more respondents (71%) considered Davran the "leader" of Uzbeks than any other Uzbek elite.

Both Sobirovs have become increasingly philanthropic in recent years. I happened to be across the street from a gym that was under construction thanks to a donation by Alisher when his lawyer came to assess the progress. The community leader I was interviewing at the time admitted that his mahalla was dependent on "the Sobirovs" to sponsor projects because the state does not provide enough funds.[36]

In the run-up to the city council elections, Hulkar splurged on charity for her election district: she started a charity (*Elim Uchun*, or "For My People") devoted to alleviating poverty; she opened a sewing workshop employing 75 employees and providing free sewing lessons to 37 local girls; she donated 100,000 *som* ($2,500) for micro-credit, in units of 3,000 som per person at 10% interest; and she handed out the equivalent of welfare benefits to 120 poor residents of the community. Unsurprisingly, she won her seat with one of the highest vote counts in the city.[37]

A third patron, from Kara-su, outside of Osh, had a lower profile, but exemplified the same relationship between philanthropy and political support that the other cases do. Interview subjects in the neighborhood had told me that Zaibiddin was the most active member of the community. After locating his house, my assistant and I told his wife that we wanted to speak with her husband. She immediately responded by asking whether we needed money, not in a contemptuous way, but in a manner indicating that it was typical request. His house did not stand out from others, nor did he appear to have a car, which would be atypical for the new rich. Yet Zaibiddin had managed to make significant contributions to the community, in part through "rich friends" in his *gap*,[38] among them a factory director and several entrepreneurs. Zaibiddin himself appeared to be involved in trading at the nearby Kara-su bazaar, the largest in ex-Soviet Central Asia (the bazaar in Kashgar in western China is larger), admitting that he regularly travels to Iran and the Gulf states, though not revealing the source of his income.

Zaibiddin earned support primarily by building and repairing local infrastructure. A former employee of Gorgas, in 1994 he used connections to import pipes and gas from Uzbekistan to supply 460 people with gas. He lobbied to obtain two hectares from the district government to expand the local cemetery, negotiated with Andijan's governor to provide water pipes to channel water from the Kara-su River, and helped negotiate the release of nine local men who had been arrested for membership in Hizb ut-Tahrir. He also contributed to the repair of schools, mosque, and a kindergarten, financed weddings for the poor, built several houses, and settled people's gas and electricity debts with the city. When asked why he devoted so much time

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[36] Interview, Saidjon, Osh, 11-2-03.
[37] Interview, City Councilor Hulkar Sobirova, Osh, 6-20-04.
[38] A gap is a social and material support network, usually of men, that meets regularly to share food and gossip.

and money to help others, Zaibiddin answered, tersely, that he acts because the government does not, and because Islamic principles dictate that the rich help the poor. Along these lines, he argued that the government would better serve the people if it adopted the principles of Sharia, or Islamic law. Despite his outspoken distaste for the government, Zaibiddin had held political office, working as a community leader from 1990-1993, a deputy on the city council from 1999-2004, and as Akaev's local political representative (*doverennoe litso*) in the 1995 presidential election.[39] Since he had been active in community politics since 1990, it was not clear which came first—political influence or access to wealth. Clearly the two reinforced each other.

Other examples abound in various regions of Kyrgyzstan. Outside of Jalalabad, Abdumutalip Hakimov, owner of a large cotton factory (who won a seat in parliament in 2005) built a mosque three years prior to the elections and paid for the construction of two bridges. He regularly sponsored holiday celebrations and rewarded highly performing students with his own money. For his overall contributions, his constituents named a school that Hakimov attended and the street where the school is located, in honor of Hakimov's father (and the name of his factory).[40] In Barpy, Kamchibek Tashiev, the owner of a large chain of gas stations, ran for parliament unsuccessfully in 1995 and 2000. In the desire to increase his popularity, Tashiev, among other charitable ventures, refurbished a school, paid to install a drinking water system in a village, lent out farming supplies without interest, and helped individual poor who ask for money. According to one respondent living in his district, he gave out three million som (the equivalent of $450,000) in charity in 2005.[41]

Near the capital, Bishkek (five miles from which people live in near primitive conditions), one runs into cases of random charity. Kubatbek Baibolov, formerly an official in the KGB who used connections with the regime to acquire part of a large shopping plaza, built a community center (with an engraving on the front entrance proclaiming that Baibolov built it), regularly paid for repairs of transformers, water pipes, and roads, and threw lavish parties on holidays such as Navruz, including slaughtering a horse.[42] Baibolov ran for parliament unopposed in his district. Even in Bishkek proper, Roman Shin, an ethnic Korean who earned his wealth from casinos, opened a charitable fund through which he fixed roads, paid for funerals,

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[39] Interview, Zaibiddin, Osh/Kara-su, 6-29-04. Most of these details were independently confirmed by the local imam. Sarajiddin, Osh/Kara-su, 6-29-04.
[40] Both are called Doma-ata. Interviews with factory deputy director and school director, personal observation, Suzak, 6-22-06.
[41] Interviews, Barpy, 6-23-06.
[42] Interview, administrator of Jal museum in Baibolov's community hall, Jal, 6-17-06.

and provided clothes for orphans, all documented in brochures he passed out during the parliamentary election campaign. He won in the first round.[43]

Potential Patrons in Uzbekistan

Because of the restrictive economic conditions in Uzbekistan, cases of autonomous vertical relationships are rarer than in Kyrgyzstan. This is true for three reasons: (1) most wealth is concentrated in the hands of the state, which limits opportunities for private business, (2) there are few channels through which to transfer independently earned wealth into political power, and (3) if an individual develops an independent political base, the state immediately removes or neutralized him. My fieldwork in Uzbekistan uncovered few examples of individuals who possessed both wealth and a local support base, as several examples of individuals with one or the other attribute will show. However, recent cases from outside my fieldwork may indicate the formation of localistic relationships in their incipient stages.

The greatest dispensers of patronage in Uzbekistan are the directors of collective farms (renamed "cooperatives") and state officials who are impressed upon to provide a modicum of public goods. As in the Soviet Union, the state employs millions of workers tied to their land who receive wages determined by the state. Farm directors dispense inputs for farming and monthly wages, often in kind rather than cash, and can deny workers their share of wages for non-compliance.[44] Even most "private farmers" are dependent, since they must usually borrow money for inputs and lease land from the state, which in Karshi requires over $1,000 up front.[45]

Uzbekistan's state control of the economy militates against non-compliance by collective farm directors.[46] Most directors benefit from their position and may be removed from above if they accrue too much power or act in an independent manner. Workers on the collective are also unlikely to act in defense of a collective farm director who is removed or transferred and replaced by another. A change of personnel is unlikely to affect farmers' well-being since they are likely to receive the same wages and benefits regardless of who is in charge. Some have argued, however, that privatization of agriculture in Uzbekistan would result in instability, as it would detach workers from their sources of income and increase unemployment.[47]

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[43] Interview, correspondent, Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service, 6-15-06;
[44] Interview, Alisher Ilkhamov, Tashkent, 1-28-04.
[45] Interview, Tura-aka, Karshi/Kitob, 5-6-04.
[46] Jones Luong, "Political Obstacles," 21.
[47] Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, "Prelude to the Resource Curse: Explaining Oil and Gas Development Strategies in the Soviet Successor States and Beyond," *Comparative Political Studies* 34(4): 367-399.

A second source of charity comes from wealthy state officials who finance projects or pay for services using personal resources, but do so under the guise of providing public goods. In cases of egregious corruption, central authorities, in the interest of maintaining stability, sometimes compel local officials to spend their own money on public projects, such as schools, swimming pools, and waste removal.[48] On the local level, officials sometimes feel an obligation to provide public goods in the form of social assistance to their communities. Due to limited budgets, they are sometimes forced to extract rents from local businessmen for the purposes of seizing funds for redistribution.[49] Theoretically, the actions of a particularly generous and well-liked official could lead people to identify with that individual and generate the type of public support seen in Kyrgyzstan, but it is difficult to identify such cases.

One case has recently come to light that may indicate that vertical relationships exchanging philanthropy for political loyalty like those in Kyrgyzstan have emerged in Uzbekistan. In June-July of 2004, 23 Andijan businessmen were arrested and charged with membership in an extremist organization, known as "Akramiya."[50] It is not known for certain whether they were actually associated with extremist groups, but it is evident that they were embedded in the community and provided jobs and social assistance to its members. Residents of Andijan reported that the accused, whose businesses included "food textile, and goods production and merchandise,"[51] acted as community benefactors, donating money to the poor and building schools and orphanages.[52] They enjoyed wide public support, which manifested itself after the arrests, when thousands took to the streets to protest their arrests.

The event is significant because it indicates that the 23 businessmen were able to convert philanthropy into political support, to the extent that their popularity threatened to undermine the state's control over potential threats to their power. Uzbekistan's unitary system and tightly controlled personnel policy at the local level check the growth of rival centers of power to the state, yet the unexpected success of small and medium enterprises in Andijan created a new set of

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[48] Bahodir Sidikov, "'Shadow State' and Strategic Groups in Central Asia and the Caucasus" (unpublished manuscript), 27. A typical figure in this role is former Deputy Prime Minister Usmanov, who also runs a chain of successful supermarkets in Tashkent. I distinguish such goods from public goods, in that the provider is not a state agency using funds from its budget in a rationalized manner consistent with the agency's function, but individuals who have appropriated funds from the state and provide goods selectively from private funds.

[49] Luong, *Obstacles*, 20. In contrast to community leaders who rely on persuasion and appeals to conscience to obtain funds for redistribution, mayors and district-level hokims have coercive means at their disposal, such as the prosecutor and tax authorities, which aid in the seizure of assets.

[50] Yusuf Rasulov and Matluba Azamatova, "Uzbekistan: Not the Usual Suspects," IWPR, 2-18-05.

[51] "Report of the Mission to Kyrgyzstan by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Concerning the Killings in Andijan of 13-14 May 2005," Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 6.

[52] "Uzbekistan: The Andijan Uprising," International Crisis Group, 5-25-05, 3.

economic elites.[53] Furthermore, these elites appeared to be providing public goods that the state had ceased to provide. The unwarranted arrest of neighbors may provoke anger, but when the government's actions sever patronage ties and threaten people's economic security, people are directly affected and more likely to accept greater risk to change the outcome.[54] Therefore, those who benefited from the businessmen's largesse were quick to support them. (See Chapter 7 for more detail on the "Andijan events.")

III: Mobilization, Then and Now

The relationship between material dependence and (coerced-voluntary) political participation is not new to Central Asia. In fact, the Soviet Union's unique blend of authoritarianism and universal participation institutionalized top-down mobilization and created a template for post-Soviet elite-led collective action. Despite the Soviet state's lack of accountability and the inability of citizens to influence politics, people across the country were organized into groups that could be mobilized for a variety of purposes initiated by the state. Citizens were also organized into brigades for community policing, construction and repair of buildings, cleaning, and planting trees.[55] On election days, despite the fact that only one candidate was on the ballot, local party members (who answered to higher-level members) would go house-to-house to get out the vote and bring about total participation.[56] Participation in mass activities and compliance with official decrees were monitored and enforced by voluntary neighborhood committees and through the workplace. Although the regime attempted to create an atmosphere where social sanctions were sufficient to induce compliance, the passport regime[57] and the regulation of access to goods through the workplace could be used as leverage.[58] Thus participation in mass mobilization, though technically voluntary, has a coercive component as well.

Soviet legacies of "coerced-voluntary" mobilization persisted after independence. School employees are beholden to the state and used as instruments to advance state policy, a legacy inherited from the Soviet Union. Teachers are required to "get out the vote" to support the state's

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[53] McGlinchey similarly argues that the Uzbek authorities arrested the businessmen because they perceived the success of their rotating credit system as a political threat. Eric McGlinchey, remarks at the Central Eurasia Studies Society 6th annual meeting, Boston, September 30-October 2, 2005.
[54] For the psychological basis of this behavior, prospect theory, see Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," *Econometrica* 47(2): 263-91.
[55] Friedgut, *Political Participation,* 273.
[56] Ibid., 114.
[57] "A registration system controlling an individual's right to reside in a given place." Ibid., 265.
[58] M. Steven Fish, *Democracy from Scratch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 165.

preferred candidate, and schools mobilize students to pick cotton, clean streets, and take part in political and holiday spectacles.[59] When the state held a convention in Osh and dignitaries arrived from out of town, the dean of Kyrgyz-Uzbek University ordered all students, including my assistant, to dress in ethnic clothing, form a human corridor for arriving guests, and applaud.[60] It is still common practice in Central Asia for government officials to order community leaders to mobilize their residents, and for directors of both state enterprises and private firms to mobilize employees on their territory for mass cleaning.[61]

The above actions are apolitical, insofar as they had little bearing on the distribution of power, other than to bolster the legitimacy of the state. However, where free market reforms in Kyrgyzstan have enabled private entrepreneurs to form new kinds of dependence relationships, non-state actors are now in a position to bring about mobilization against the state. Even before 2002 (the date of the first case explored in-depth in this dissertation), protest in support of individual elites was not unusual, provided that the elites had established vertical ties to a territorially based group of people and the elite thought he would benefit from mobilization.

One such case involved an elite-patron discussed earlier in this chapter when, in 2000, Davran Sobirov's (pro-government) opponents for parliament brought a frivolous suit against him and persuaded the Osh election commission to annul his candidacy.[62] Sobirov asked the mayor of Osh, a personal friend, to hire somebody to pressure the commission to change its decision. The mayor, in turn, asked a former colleague and political activist, Tolqinbek (whose name is changed for his protection), to do the legwork. Tolqinbek had been a prominent city government official in Osh since perestroika and maintained close connections both with the Osh elite and Uzbek community leaders, having designed the system of local administration himself. He convened a group of loyal associates who went to designated parts of the city, spreading information and selectively applying pressure on community leaders and other influentials to urge people to take to the streets.[63]

Given the necessary information and a dose of moral suasion, over 1,000 people protested on Sobirov's behalf. The highest representation at the protests came from Sobirov's mahalla and employees of his firm, Gorgas. Community leaders and imams helped recruit

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[59] Tolqinbek, 7-5-04; Ugilhon, Osh, 6-28-04. See also Adams, "Celebrating Independence," 155.
[60] Isak, Osh, 6-23-04.
[61] Interviews, Kara-su, Namangan, Karshi.
[62] Election commissions were not independent of the government at the time, so there was good reason to believe that President Akaev stood behind the decision. "Final Report on the Parliamentary Elections in Kyrgyzstan, 20 February and 12 March 2000," OSCE, http://www.osce.org/odihr-elections/14479.html, 4-10-00, 3.
[63] Tolqinbek, Osh, 7-4-04.

protestors by rallying people over whom they had influence. The unexpected show of numbers led the election commission (and Akaev) to reverse the decision. A pensioner from Sobirov's neighborhood, when asked why people protested, explained that his community leader had walked around the neighborhood telling people, "Davran Sobirov helped us, [so] we should support him."[64] In the end, Tolqinbek was paid handsomely, Sobirov was able to run, and he was re-elected deputy.

The Benefits of Having Friends

A final contrast can serve to show how establishing a community base creates the possibility of mobilization, whereas the lack of a base forecloses that option. Two most notable protests in Kyrgyzstan prior to 2002 occurred following the arrests of two opposition politicians, Felix Kulov and Danyar Usenov, after they had announced their intentions to run against Akaev for president. The protests did not save Kulov from prison nor did they prevent the state from seizing Usenov's assets, but it was not for lack of trying. By contrast, a prominent journalist and opposition activist, Topchubek Turgunaliev, was imprisoned in 1997 on dubious charges of embezzlement. Despite his ties to prominent activists in Bishkek, only a small number protested on his behalf. He was sentenced to ten years in prison but served four. The difference between the outcomes (in terms of mobilization) in these two cases was due to wealth of the imperiled individual and his connection to a political base.

Both Kulov and Usenov had spent their career rotating between their home regions and the capital, maintaining ties to their respective bases even while accruing political capital in Bishkek. Kulov, though born in Bishkek, worked in several Ministry of Internal Affairs posts in the northern region of Talas for most of the 1980's before returning to Bishkek to become interior minister and then vice president. Though he served as governor of Chui region (also in the north) between 1992 and 1997, he decided to run for parliament in the constituency of Kara-bura, where he had served earlier.[65] Usenov was also born in Bishkek but served most of his career in Chui's city and oblast administrations before creating an investment company and amassing up to $10 million.[66] He also decided to run for parliament in the district where he had worked, Kara-balta.

Kulov and Usenov also shared a common bond in having split with Akaev before running for parliament in 2000 and intending to challenge Akaev for the presidency. Being wealthy and

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[64] Muhammad, Osh, 6-27-04.
[65] Erbol Kurmanbaev, "Kazakh, Kyrgyz—Bir Tugan," navi.kz, 4-17-00.
[66] "Political Transition in Kyrgyzstan: Problems and Prospects," International Crisis Group, 8-11-04, 28.

having a popular base, both were perceived as threats. One month prior to the elections, on January 19, the government charged Usenov with assault-and-battery for an incident that had occurred four years earlier, revoked both his and his party's right to run for parliament, and had him arrested.[67] Kulov was allowed to run in the elections but lost a runoff that he had widely been expected to win, a result that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe called "highly suspicious."[68] Still intending to run for president, Kulov was arrested soon after the elections and charged with abuse of power, which, after an acquittal, a second arrest, and additional charges of embezzlement, would land him in jail with a ten-year sentence.[69]

Neither candidate went down quietly, as supporters quickly mobilized to support them. Immediately after the annulment of Usenov's candidacy, more than 200 people protested in front of Bishkek's government headquarters demanding his release.[70] The response was greater after Kulov's parliamentary loss on March 12, when 400 supporters in Bishkek gathered at the Supreme Court to protest the results and several thousand demonstrated in his Talas district and occupied the regional administration building.[71] The Talas protests continued for two weeks and ended only when the government dispersed and detained the protestors.[72] The supporters of the two candidates, whose combined numbers totaled up to a thousand in Bishkek, pooled their grievances in mid-March, when both men's cases were under consideration at the Supreme Court.[73] After three weeks of continuous protests in Bishkek, the police dispersed the demonstrators on April 4.[74] Usenov was cleared of wrongdoing in early April, although he later had much of his wealth confiscated. Kulov's supporters persisted for three months.[75] Despite the mobilization on his behalf, Kulov was imprisoned in early 2001.

In contrast to the obstreperous crowd reactions to the defrauding, detention, and asset stripping of two prominent politicians, there was no outburst of support for the most prominent human rights activist in Kyrgyzstan. Topchubek Turgunaliev, who also ran afoul of Akaev, had developed neither a fortune nor a wide base of supporters. A student of philosophy, Turgunaliev

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[67] "Leading Kyrgyz Opposition Member Arrested," Agence France-Presse, 1-20-00.
[68] "Preliminary Statement on the Second Round of the Parliamentary Elections in Kyrgyzstan, 12 March 2000," OSCE, http://www.osce.org/odihr-elections/14479.html, 3.
[69] "Political Transition," 3.
[70] Bruce Pannier, "Kyrgyzstan: Party Official Arrested in Hospital," RFE/RL, 1-31-00.
[71] "Picketing at Supreme Court Building Continues in Bishkek," RFE/RL Kyrgyzstan Daily Digest, 3-15-00, reports that 10,000 "expressed support" for Kulov in Talas. Another report cited "1,000 people" gathered outside the local court five days later. See "Kyrgyz Protests Continue," IPR Strategic Information Database, 3-20-00.
[72] "Local Protestors in Kyrgyzstan Tried, Sentenced," IPR Strategic Information Database, 3-27-00.
[73] "Street Protest Follows Kyrgyz Parliamentary Vote," Agence France-Presse, 3-15-00.
[74] "Police Disperse Kyrgyz Protesters," RFE/RL Kyrgyzstan Daily Digest, 4-5-00.
[75] "Protest Picket Continues in Bishkek," RFE/RL, 6-20-00.

studied in Moscow and worked as a teacher and then a university rector in Bishkek before taking up opposition politics in the mid-1990s.[76] He created several opposition parties and became one of the first outspoken critics of Akaev. After several close scrapes with the law, including a suspended sentence for libel against the president, Turgunaliev was arrested in late 1996—ironically, while leading a protest rally of pensioners against bad bank management—and charged with embezzlement that had allegedly occurred in 1993.[77] He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, although the sentence was later cut to four years.[78]

Despite a strong network of colleagues and ideological allies in Bishkek, including party activists, journalists, and human rights lawyers,[79] people did not storm the barricades to free Turgunaliev. After his arrest, an estimated 50 people demonstrated at Bishkek's municipal court but dispersed "upon word that the trial had been postponed."[80] The numbers only declined from there. Two weeks after the sentence was handed down, 30 people protested the verdict.[81] Several weeks later, a protest of 40, led by the Chairman of the Human Rights Movement of Kyrgyzstan Tursonbek Akunov, demanded that the verdict against Turgunaliev be overturned.[82] In the end, his sentence was reduced due not to popular mobilization, but more likely as a result of pressure from the international community.[83] While not decisive, these two examples illustrate the differences in the options available to those with abundant independent resources and those who lack them.

Conclusion

The void left by the partial withdrawal of the state has been filled in some cases by businessmen with newly acquired wealth who have used philanthropy to win political support. Where they have established strong local ties, these new elites have played the role of a surrogate state, converting their provision of resources into political loyalty, which they can use to trigger contentious action if their position is challenged. When the state has underestimated the grassroots support of elites it has challenged, the reaction from below has weakened the regime

[76] "Kto Est' Kto v Kyrgyzstane [Who is Who in Kyrgyzstan]," www.centrasia.ru.
[77] Narynbek Idinov, "Kyrgyzstan: Rally Organizer Detained," RFE/RL, 12-17-96.
[78] "Opposition Leader Receives Ten-Year Sentence," BBC Monitoring Service: Former USSR, 1-11-97; Narynbek Idinov, "Kyrgyzstan: Opposition Leader's Sentence Reconsidered," 3-31-97.
[79] Among them prominent journalist Zamira Sydykova, former presidential candidate Medetkan Sherimkulov, and MPs Jypar Jeksheev, Omurbek Tekebayev, and Tursonbai Bakir-uluu.
[80] Narynbek Idinov, RFE/RL 12-23-96.
[81] Narynbek Idinov, "Kyrgyzstan: Demonstrators Protest Opposition Leader's Sentence," RFE/RL, 1-22-97.
[82] Narynbek Idinov, "Kyrgyzstan: Ethnic Uighurs Demonstrate in Bishkek [sic]," RFE/RL, 2-17-97.
[83] Amnesty International had declared Turgunaliev a "prisoner of conscience." Kyrgyz Report, RFE/RL, 2-26-00.

and dealt blows to its projected image of stability. This form of political subversion is increasingly widespread in Kyrgyzstan, where the economic environment has permitted independent generation of revenue and the political system offers alternative paths to power. It is less common in Uzbekistan, where the state strictly limits opportunities to generate wealth and accrue political support.

Having now laid the third and final component of the infrastructure for mass mobilization, it is evident that economic policies have major implications for the possibility of political change. Some observers of the post-socialist region have argued, with a sense of resignation, that geography or culture are determinant in shaping political outcomes, enabling rapid democratization in the case of Central Europe and the Baltic states, while dooming Central Asia and, to a lesser extent, the Caucasus, to a fate of perpetual backwardness and tyranny.[84] The findings of the last three chapters indicate otherwise—agency, while not the only variable, can nonetheless heavily influence the direction of political and economic development. Despite their surface similarities, shared geography, and common predicaments in the late 1980s, by 2005 Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan differed in many respects. Kyrgyzstan, due to its geopolitical location, was susceptible to the anti-democratic influences from Russia and China, yet it nonetheless stood out from its neighbors in its potential to develop in democratic directions. Its success in this regard was a direct effect of the balance of power between the state and non-state actors, which in turn was a result of Akaev's policies and the actions of oppositionists and independent elites in the 1990s.

From here, the story turns to Kyrgyzstan alone, and the ability of "brokers"—the elites who came about as a result of their ability to produce wealth independently of the state, establish ties with similar elites, and aid impoverished communities—to bring about mass mobilization. The narrative also shifts from a focus on political factors affecting the balance of power to sociological analysis of what the actors described in last three chapters—elites and ordinary people—are capable of doing when their interests are threatened. To this end, the state itself also becomes an actor. The interaction of these three forces determines the scale of mobilization, as described in the following chapters.

The next two chapters present a solution to the puzzle of how mass mobilization is likely to occur in atomized, impoverished societies and when the scope is local, regional, or national.

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[84] See Patricia Carley, "The Soviet Legacy and the Prospects for Civil Society in Central Asia," in Vladimir Tismaneanu, ed., *Political Culture and Civil Society in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995); M. Steven Fish, "The Dynamics of Democratic Erosion," in Richard D. Anderson, Jr., M. Steven Fish, Stephen E. Hanson, Philip G. Roeder, *Postcommunism and the Theory of Democracy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Limited by scarcity of resources and isolated by communication and geography, the impoverished masses have difficulty creating larger movements through which to articulate their grievances. Thus, while diffusion may be effective in overcoming the fear and lack of trust engendered by authoritarianism in urban contexts where people possess numerous cross-cutting ties,[85] it is less effective in mostly rural societies where those ties are fewer. In the latter type of polity, only elites who are influential in their communities and linked to similar actors in other communities can bring about mass mobilization. When the state has underestimated the grassroots support of elites it considers threatening and those elites lack other means of defending themselves, they can activate a powerful weapon to undermine the state's projected image of stability. The next two chapters explain when and how this occurs.

[85] Kuran, "Now out of Never."

Chapter 5
Mass Mobilization in Rural Kyrgyzstan

The last three chapters have described the factors that led to the creation of three types of networks in Kyrgyzstan: horizontal community networks, vertical ties between elites and community members, and horizontal inter-elite networks. It explained the functions the networks serve and why people choose to become members. This chapter and the next will demonstrate how those networks interact to produce mass mobilization. This chapter uses a case of regional mobilization to focus on the individuals and their interaction with the community. The event reached regional scale thanks to the (mostly human) resources of a single elite, whose network of activists spanned across otherwise isolated communities. As opposed to Chapter 6, it highlights the ties that bind people in everyday life and puts individual motivations in their proper context. It shows how material deprivation translates into dependence relationships and how the diffusion of recruitment is an extension of everyday interaction. The story is therefore primarily about regular people become political.

Chapter 6, addressing national mobilization, will focus on brokerage between regions rather than villages, and emphasize the role of elites with regional and national, rather than local, renown. It is a story first and foremost of political actors who selectively concern themselves with everyday problems. Yet although the scale and focus of the narrative of the two events are different, the dynamics and underlying mechanisms are the same. The production of regional mobilization in Aksy followed the same process as national mobilization of 2005: First, activists, united by their loyalty to an elite, mobilized within their home communities. Second, within communities, recruitment spread laterally through neighbors and relatives. Third, activists brokered across their villages to expand the mobilization to regional scale.

As shown in Figure 1.1, regional mobilization is likely to occur when a single elite (or elites in the same region), bound by ties of localism to more than one community, is challenged. Regional elites have access to financial resources and ties to activists in communities beyond their home village. Given these resource advantages, they can expand mobilization to a greater scale (in both scope and size) than a community could achieve if acting without regional elite intervention. Regional mobilization can fail to become national-level if other similarly placed elites lack an incentive to join the first mobilizer, either because they fear the consequences or because they simply do not see the benefits outweighing the costs. Aksy reached regional but not national scale because the challenge that sparked mobilization only affected an elite in one region.

The case of Aksy, in addition to being theoretically useful, is also empirically interesting because it shows how ordinary people, acting through everyday networks, and in the absence of factors favorable to mobilization, managed to build a movement of nearly 10,000 protesters over 10 months and perturb an authoritarian government. The events demonstrated how a small number of activists with no prior leadership experience—but united around service to a single regional elite—managed to coordinate the actions of poor and isolated villagers by activating pre-existing networks and exploiting mechanisms that regulate community behavior. And they held the movement together not out of narrowly conceived rationality—the hope for material gain—but out of devotion to their MP and a sense of obligation to their community. The events of 2002 showed that what people lacked in resources, they made up for in organization and discipline.

There are two major narratives that are often used to describe mobilization in general and Aksy in particular. One view sees it as a case of cynical manipulation of naïve people by calculating and self-interested political enemies of the president. The other version, which is common in popular accounts of the "color revolutions," and which the protesters themselves usually promote, views it as a spontaneous groundswell of righteous anger.[1] Yet the detailed description that follows reveals that the Aksy campaign cannot easily be placed into either of these frames. In fact, it was accomplished through the strategic collaboration of political activists with unofficial village leaders, who utilized the structure of community self-government and networks of personal relationships to draw people into participating in demonstrations and institutionalize the movement. The uprising's scope and success was due to the activation of both vertical networks connecting elites and non-elites, and horizontal networks within the community.

In the final analysis, the event gave rise to the "Aksy syndrome," a tendency for people in villages across Kyrgyzstan to protest at the slightest perceived injustice. Moreover, it paved the way for the mass mobilization of 2005 that brought down the Akaev regime by cementing a new alliance of opposition activists with common interests and experience in mass organization, and by demonstrating the effectiveness of mass protests and exposing the vulnerability of the Akaev regime.

This chapter first gives an overview of the conditions in Aksy, with reference to the problems facing Aksy and the political opportunity structure in Kyrgyzstan. A chronology of the Aksy events follows, structured in terms of the networks and mechanisms introduced in Chapter 1. Finally, participation in mobilization is analyzed with reference to variation by village, the

[1] See Justin Burke, "Kyrgyz Clash Marks End of 'Era of Peaceful Protest' in Kyrgyzstan," eurasianet.org, 3-18-02; "Kyrgyz Police Crush Protest, Detaining 100," *New York Times*, 11-17-02.

state's efforts to disrupt mobilization, variation among individual participants, and the use of networks in recruiting and coordinating.

I: Background

Aksy Rayon (district) is one of the poorest in Kyrgyzstan, although not the poorest. Though statistics from Kyrgyzstan should be interpreted skeptically, poverty can still be measured comparatively. Aksy receives the greatest amount of subsidies from Bishkek of all rayons in Jalalabad Oblast, comprising 62% of its budget. Aksy also has the highest unemployment rate and the second-lowest income of the eight rayons in the region.[2] More relevant measures of wealth and poverty in rural regions include arable land per capita, where Aksy comes in last.[3] For the present study it is also necessary to consider a breakdown of the district into villages. Here the only indicators of well-being available are land and irrigated land. As is apparent from Table 6.1, the worst-off villages in terms of irrigated land per person are Kara-su, Ak-Jol and Jangi-Jol.

Table 5.1: Aksy's Villages, Population, and Land

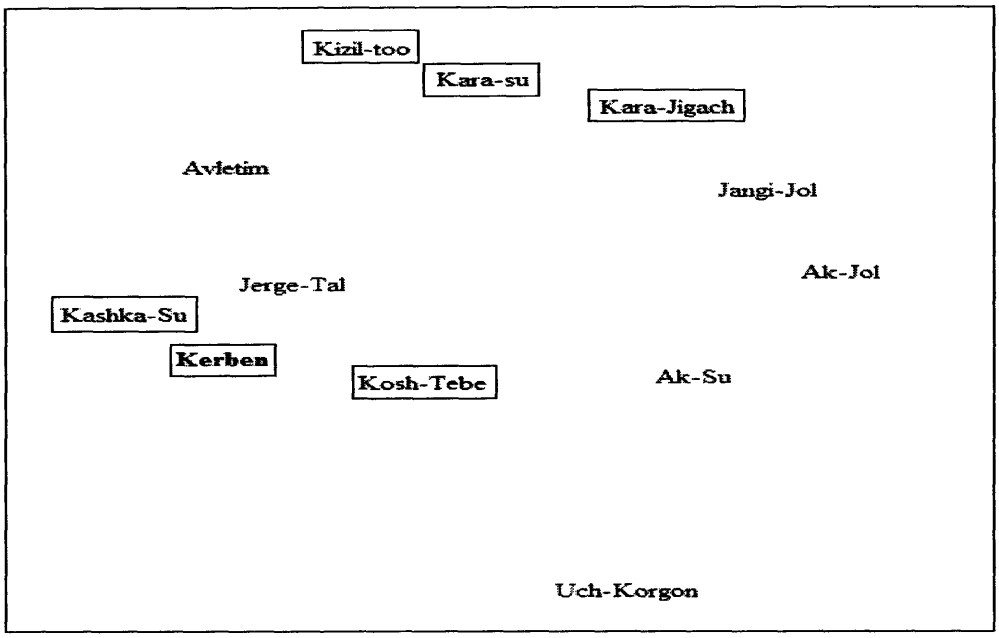
Village	Number of households	Population[4]	Land (hectares)	Irrigated land (hectares)[5]	Population per Irrigated land (per hectare)
Avletim	2430	9340	7743	120	77.83
Ak-Jol	1441	6317	7342	13	485.92
Ak-Su	1058	5397	10676	32	168.66
Jangi-Jol	1383	5939	4699	14	424.21
Jerge-Tal	1918	6620	6593	390	16.97
Kara-Jigach	1312	5964	3483	103	57.90
Kashka-Su	1878	7748	5683	65	119.20
Kerben	5808	22409	6466	1354	16.55
Kosh-Tebe	2380	11664	8462	972	12.00
Kizil-Too	1320	5443	4169	18	302.39
Kara-Su	1540	6642	3428	--	--
Uch-Korgon	2998	16451	11146	3458	4.76
Average	**2122.2**	**9161.2**	**6657.5**	**594.5**	**16.8**

[2] Based on a survey by United Nations Development Program (UNDP), *First Early Warning Report at Regional Level: Jalalabad Oblast, 2003*. The survey found Aksy Rayon's actual unemployment rate to be the highest of the regions surveyed, 61.7%, compared to 48.8% in Bazar-Kurgan, 48.6% in Nooken, and 48.5% in Ala-buka Rayons. Aksy was only the second poorest in average annual income.
[3] Ibid.
[4] "Plan Razvitiya Aksiiskogo Rayona," (Kerben: UNDP, 2004).
[5] "Aksy Rayon Boyuncha Maalymat [Information on Aksy Rayon]," Aksy Rayon Statistical Bureau, 1-1-02.

Geographic and communication isolation in Aksy are severe. Aksy borders Uzbekistan in the west and is surrounded by foothills on all other sides. A drive to the regional capital of Jalalabad, 185 kilometers away, takes four hours by taxi. Internally, Aksy Rayon is divided into 12 administrative areas that roughly correspond to geography. (They are properly called village councils but I will refer to them as villages). They are arrayed in clusters, which are separated from one another by several to many kilometers, and only a public bus and taxis connect one village to another. The northernmost cluster consists of Kizil-too, together with Kara-su, and Kara-Jigach. They are contiguous and within walking distance of one another. The other three villages in the northern half of the rayon are Jangi-Jol, Avletim, and Jerge-Tal, which are only within driving distance from the other cluster. The rayon's center, Kerben, is located in the western edge of the Rayon near the Uzbek border. A drive on the dirt road from Kerben to Avletim of 25 kilometers requires over an hour in an old Soviet taxi (even longer in a bus), and the 30 kilometers to Kara-su requires an hour and a half. From Kerben to a southern village such as Kush-tebe or Kashka-su is a 45-minute drive. To compound people's isolation, there is also a scarcity of easily accessible information. Newspapers are only sold in Kerben. Ironically, people are often better informed about events in the capital than in neighboring villages: though 78% watch television, most do not own telephones: as of 2003, there were 3,037 telephone lines in the rayon for nearly 24,000 households.[6] See Figure 6.1 for a sense of the geography.[7]

[6] *First Early Warning Report on the Rayon Level: Jalalabad Oblast, Aksy Rayon* UNDP, 2003.
[7] I conducted interviews in six villages: three in the north (Kara-su, Kizil-too, Kara-Jigach) and two in the south (Kashka-su, Kush-tebe), and Kerben in the center, shown in boxes.

Figure 5.1: Approximate Locations of Aksy's Villages



Within villages, governance works through a formal hierarchical structure. Villages were segmented horizontally and vertically as part of Kyrgyzstan's local self-governance initiatives, a set of reforms adopted in 1993 that were intended to bolster democratic governance, compensate for budget shortfalls at higher levels of government, and formalize informal village structures. The village is led by a chairman (*predsedatel'*) of the village council, who administers a territory of 5-10,000 people and has many more responsibilities than his Soviet predecessor, the chairman of the *sel sovet*. His duties include, but are not limited to organizing and budgeting for development projects, collecting taxes, administering pensions and social benefits, maintaining and repairing roads, disposing of waste, maintaining street lighting, removing garbage, and working with the local police to ensure security.[8] He is assisted by a deputy, an accountant, and several other paid assistants, and meets weekly with the mayor (*akim*) of the rayon. A village is subdivided into 5-9 sections (*uchastki*), each of which has a non-paid unofficial representative, the *Juz-Boshi* (literally "head of one-hundred," hereafter JB), who is usually an older and active community member. He (or she) meets weekly with the village council chairman and is in turn assisted by several *un-boshi* (UBs), or "heads of ten." Their duty is to carry out decisions made by the village council and to inform and mobilize citizens according to local initiatives.

[8] Alymkulov and Kulatov, "Local Government."

The economy of Aksy is primarily agricultural. During the Soviet era, Aksy was divided into five collective farms, four state farms, and three forest preserves. These farms typically consisted of 20-30,000 workers and, where the primary commodity was cattle, usually with up to 50,000 sheep and 10,000 horses. Collective and state farms acted as self-contained cities, replete with health clinics, tea houses, recreation centers, stores, and child care centers. All workers received pay at or above subsistence level and benefited from free medical care, generous pensions, and four weeks vacation per year. After the farms were privatized in 1993-4, all three types of farms were dissolved, and the land and animals apportioned to their members, though a disproportionate share of land and equipment was appropriated by their managers. Most people sold off their animals for cash and lost their future income potential.[9] In several villages, an average family was left with no more than 10 sotok (each the equivalent of 100 square meters) of land, though some own more land and animals than they report officially. Unemployment is officially low, at 3%, but this does not count the majority, who lives off personal plots of land and sell enough crops at the bazaar only to remain at subsistence level—according to official survey data, 61.7% report themselves as unemployed.[10]

Although there is variation in the wealth of Aksy's villages, their economic plight is more similar than it is different. In the years following independence, roads, public services, and infrastructure have deteriorated. A question I often asked was which villages (out of 12) people considered the poorest and which the wealthiest. Invariably people considered their own the poorest, based on unemployment or scarcity of land or water. Residents of Kara-su and Kizil-too in the north claimed to own the lowest amount of irrigated land, but others pointed out that those villages make unreported income from nut trees that only grow in that region. In Kush-tebe in the south, people pointed out that though they had more land than the northern villages, their water supply was diminished since Uzbekistan cut off the downstream flow from their river after independence. Universally people reported being poorer and less satisfied than they were during Soviet times. Even those that (discreetly) supported Akaev were nostalgic for the Soviet system that provided universal employment, salaries sufficient to buy all necessary (and some luxury) goods, paid vacations, and generous pensions. Since the collapse, people have been left to fend for themselves and rarely can afford the tuition (or bribes) necessary to send their children to university. Yet this sharp decline in living standards is reflected throughout Kyrgyzstan, especially throughout the south, not to mention in Central Asia and other republics. Since people's perception of their relative condition usually determines grievance formation, it should

[9] Bloch, "Land Privatization."
[10] *Early Warning Report, 2003, Jalalabad Oblast*, UNDP.

be noted that though Aksy's *absolute* income level is lower than others, its *relative* decline is comparable to that of wealthier regions.[11]

Aksy is not a place one would expect to see a well-organized mobilization, if only because it lacks resources.[12] Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, minimal investment has been made to maintain existing infrastructure. From superficial observation of Aksy's villages (besides Kerben), there appears to be no business activity—café, tea house, bathhouse (*banya*), market, car repair—which is so common in Central Asian population centers. Almost all commerce takes place in Kerben, which is a six-dollar taxi ride from most villages. Bazaar merchants travel around the rayon, setting up in different location each day of the week. The vast majority of people make their living from raising sheep, gathering nuts or berries, and growing potatoes. Those with steady incomes, such as teachers or doctors, earn around $15 a month.

Despite, or possibly as a result of Aksy's economic problems, community and family are the most important aspect of life. It is typical for someone who grew up in a village to know everybody else in his village of the same gender and age cohort by name and many in neighboring villages as well. In the three-village cluster in northern Aksy Rayon, people frequently walk from village one to another to see relatives. It is common for somebody on a 10 kilometer walk through the three villages to recognize and greet everybody he meets along the way. As there is no public venue in which to socialize, with the exception of the bazaar one day a week, people usually congregate in neighbors' homes for tea. Since the state is virtually absent in daily life,[13] one's community is also one's social support network, therefore maintaining a good reputation with one's neighbors is of utmost importance. One symbol of being a good member of the community is putting on a good wedding, which can cost the hosts 100,000 som (or $2,500), an enormous sum by any measure, for which parents often sell off much of their property and take on large debts.[14]

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[11] See J.C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27(1), 1962: 5-19.
[12] Aksy's villages differ from closed corporate villages as described by Wolf, in which the community collectively owns land and distributes land equitably to its members, while also making sure that members equitably share the burden of paying taxes. Kyrgyz villagers, by contrast, own private plots of land, determine what to grow, and pay taxes to the local government individually. The social and economic structure of Soviet-era collective farms more closely resembled closed corporate communities. See Eric Wolf, "Closed Corporate Peasant Communities in Mesoamerica and Central Java," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 13, 1957: 1-18; Robert H. Bates and Amy Farmer Curry, "Community Versus Market: A Note on Corporate Villages," *American Political Science Review* 86(2), June 1992: 457-58.
[13] Although the village council represents the state, people generally perceived it as ineffectual--more a forum for the chairman to increase his prestige and take bribes than a body that can solve real problems.
[14] See Kathleen Kuehnast and Nora Dudwick, "Better a Hundred Friends than a Hundred Rubles?" World Bank Working Paper #39, (Washington, World Bank, 2004).

Ethnicity is not politicized in Aksy, even though people are aware of superficial differences. Aksy Rayon is comprised of majority Kyrgyz, with a large minority of Uzbeks (especially closer to the Uzbek border), and a small and decreasing number of Slavic nationalities. In interviews, Kyrgyz and Uzbeks would reveal their mutual hostility to me, but it rarely surfaces. Kerben's bazaar is highly integrated. The rayon also divides into two main "sub-tribes," a vestige of identity from Kyrgyz nomadic history prior to Russian colonization. As reported by respondents, the people of the six villages in the northern part of the rayon are from the *Bagysh* tribe, and in the southern five villages, from *Saruu*.[15] Kerben is said to be mixed. The *Saruu* are said to be more religious, having adopted some characteristics of the proximate and more religious Uzbeks, whose ancestors converted to Islam earlier than the nomadic Kyrgyz. Though most people are aware of their tribal identity, it does not act as a barrier to social or economic interactions.

Political Opportunities

Despite backsliding and selective persecution of opposition politicians, Kyrgyzstan in 2002 provided a permissive environment for citizen action in politics. Kyrgyzstan developed a free press, permitted NGOs to function, including ones devoted to human rights and democratic education, and allowed relatively competitive elections. In the early years of independence, Akaev enjoyed the legitimacy that came with being the country's "founding father", but he gradually lost support due to the country's economic decline and open and widespread corruption. This led Akaev to retake some of the freedoms that had been granted early on. He cracked down on opposition publications, harassed political opponents, began monitoring religious activity, and changed the constitution to increase presidential power. Yet newspapers openly ridiculed the president and his cohort and parliamentarians held rallies denouncing Akaev.

For the most part, however, ordinary people remained quiescent despite the resources provided by parties, NGOs, and international assistance. Western funding of local NGOs in the early 1990s produced a new profession in Kyrgyzstan, so-called "rights defenders" (*pravozashitniki*), who received training in constitutional law, human and civil rights, and advocacy. These people were concentrated in regional capitals, especially Bishkek, and, though appealing to western funding organizations, had little pull with either the population or the government.

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[15] The northern villages are Avletim, Kizil-too, Kara-su, Kara-Jigach, Jangi-Jol, and Ak-Jol. The southern villages are Kashka-su, Jerge-tal, Kosh-tebe, Ak-su, and Uch-Korgon. See Figure 1.

Popular opinion was expressed through elections, for which local parliamentary candidates would compete for votes by throwing feasts for constituents and having campaigners go door-to-door promising favors in exchange for votes. Failing this, wealthy candidates could improve their chances by bribing election commissions. People protested only in unusual circumstances, in response to matters of immediate and local concern.

One institution where opposition was entrenched was parliament. Unlike other Central Asian republics, where the president consolidated power and emasculated the legislature, in Kyrgyzstan, Akaev made concessions to regional elites by allowing them seats in parliament. Content to enjoy their privileges throughout most of the 1990's, some members of parliament began opposing Akaev's initiatives as his popularity declined, for example, by rejecting the government's budgets and not confirming ministerial appointments. They attempted to thwart Akaev's move to engineer constitutional changes at the expense of parliament.[16] And in 2001, a member of parliament, Azimbek Beknazarov, led a movement to block an agreement that Akaev had signed to cede Kyrgyz territory to China.

Beknazarov and China

Beknazarov lacked many of the qualities typical of a post-Soviet opposition figure, such as *nomenklatura* status in the Soviet Union, ties to western governments and organizations, and even fluency in Russian. Instead he embodied another form of charisma—authenticity. He was raised in a poor family in the village of Kara-su in Aksy to become a shepherd. Excelling in school, he took advantage of the Soviet system's opportunities for mobility and studied law in Tashkent. Unlike most Kyrgyz elites, he never studied or worked in Russia, and remained predominantly Kyrgyz-speaking, a factor limiting his chances for national recognition but cementing his credentials with his home region.

Beknazarov's diligence and nationalist aura helped him embark on a successful legal career, as chief investigator at Jalalabad's prosecutor's office, then a judge on Bishkek's city court, followed by a seat in parliament. Beknazarov's success also translated into financial well-being, which he used in part to the benefit of Aksy's residents, especially his native village of Kara-su. His salary as a government employee, complemented by the side payments that his position allowed, far exceeded the meager incomes earned by most of his co-villagers.[17] He became a deputy of the lower house of the *Jogorku Kenesh*, the Kyrgyz parliament, in 1999. It

[16] RFE/RL Newsline, 7-29-02.
[17] MPs receive 25,000 som ($600) per month.

was widely rumored, though not proved, that his constituents contributed money to a fund to buy his parliamentary seat, which investment they could expect to recoup through subsidies and handouts.[18]

Beknazarov also gave hope to his district in his advocacy of the interests of poor farmers. In 2000, he ran for parliament on an oppositional platform, criticizing President Akaev for corruption and accusing him of treason for a 1999 agreement in which Akaev agreed to return 95,000 hectares of disputed territory to China without the advance knowledge of parliament. The issue appealed to his compatriots, whose impoverishment was primarily a result of the scarcity of land, even though the dispute with China did not affect Aksy. And after Beknazarov won his seat, it was the land issue that halted his political career. Continuing his crusade once elected, he brought impeachment charges against Akaev, a decision which, though popular in his district, did not sit well with the president.[19]

Akaev responded by striking back in typical fashion for a post-Soviet autocrat, by using "dirt" or *kompromat* to neutralize his adversary. In January 2002, he had Beknazarov arrested and charged with "abuse of power or service position or excess of power," for releasing a murder suspect without proper cause while an investigator with the Toktogul prosecutor's office in 1995.[20] An independent committee investigating the events later determined that the charges against Beknazarov were unfounded.[21] Although the politically motivated arrest neutralized Beknazarov in the short run, Akaev was not ready for what came next.

II: Chronology of the mobilization

Initiation

The idea for collective action in his defense began with Beknazarov and his closest associates. On January 5th, the day after the arrest, two of Beknazarov's confidants—a childhood friend and campaign advisor named Janysh Kurbanov and Beknazarov's right-hand man, comparable to his chief-of-staff Tajimamat Turaliev—met with Beknazarov in his cell in Jalalabad and held a press conference announcing that Beknazarov had begun a hunger strike in protest of the arrest. Kurbanov, an art teacher, knew Beknazarov's from being neighbors in Kara-

[18] Interview, Svetlana, 4-5-05; NGO leaders.
[19] Lola Sigaeva, "Impichment v Obmen Territorii," GazetaSNG, 5-13-02.
[20] "Summary of the Work of the State Committee for Study of the Reasons and Conditions Enabling the Tragic Events of 17 March 2002," General Prosecutor, Jalalabad Oblast, 2002: 7.
[21] Ibid, pp. 8-10

su. He later became his campaign manager (*doverennoe litso*) in the village. Turaliev had known Beknazarov from their work as prosecutors and became his advisor for the 1999 parliamentary elections. Following the press conference, Kurbanov returned home to Kara-su and Turaliev to his office in the rayon capital of Kerben. News about the arrest had already spread through Kara-su and people gathered informally to discuss the incarceration of their native son. Several sympathetic opposition members of parliament (MPs) met in Bishkek to discuss the issue and appealed to President Akaev and the prosecutor-general to release Beknazarov on bail, to no avail.[22]

Meanwhile, Kurbanov and Turaliev began recruiting Beknazarov's past supporters to put pressure on the government. Kurbanov first recruited two classmates in Kara-su, Tabalde, an unemployed physical education teacher and Begimkul, an unemployed former teacher, who agreed to help.[23] Turaliev went to Bishkek to confer with MPs and anti-Akaev "rights defenders," then returned to Aksy. As the MPs and Turaliev began making reports to Radio Liberty in Kyrgyz, knowledge of the arrest widened, leading the mayor (*akim*) of Aksy and prosecutor of Aksy Rayon to come to Kara-su on January 8 to assure people that Beknazarov would receive a fair trial.[24] Despite efforts to quell the outrage, the number of Beknazarov's core supporters grew.

After further consultation with MPs in Bishkek, Kurbanov and his neighbors decided to conduct a public protest in Kerben on January 14, the day charges were formally brought against Beknazarov. Not knowing how to conduct a protest, Kurbanov instructed the other participants to hold up signs they had made, stand still, and remain silent. The 23 protesters, who arrived at the mayor's office on public mini-buses, were met by police who ordered them to return home. They went back to Kara-su that night as ordered, but returned the next day. When they approached the building the next morning, they were met by a larger number of police and soldiers, who immediately and dispersed the crowd and arrested its putative leaders. Most were released immediately and five were detained for several days.[25]

Next, in order to widen participation, the Kara-su group adopted less confrontational tactics: collecting signatures, holding their kids from school, and beginning a hunger strike. By January 16, volunteers organized in Kara-su had gathered 5,300 signatures demanding that Beknazarov be freed and sent a copy to the BBC, which aired the news.[26] According to

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[22] *Aksiiski Dnevnik* [Aksy Journal], IWPR, 2.
[23] Interviews, Tabalde, Kizil-too 4-13-04; Begimkul, Kara-su 4/10. Other friendly deputies included Tekebaev from a district in neighboring Osh Oblast and Bektur Asanov from Suzak in Osh. Interview, Asylbek, Fund for Tolerance International, Kerben, 4-6-04.
[24] Interview, Janysh Kurbanov, Kara-su, 4-15-04.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Interview, Begimkul, Kara-su, 4-10-04; *Aksiiski Dnevnik.*

organizers, they gathered up to 17,000 signatures, which were stolen by the intelligence services (*SNB*), following which volunteers gathered an additional 32,000.[27] On January 14, Beknazarov's supporters in Bishkek announced a hunger strike on the radio. Following their lead, Kurbanov and other leaders in Kara-su announced they would also hunger strike, and 300 followed. Participants were examined constantly by doctors, which information was then sent to Radio Liberty, through March 14.[28] In mid-February, parents in Kara-su decided hold their kids back from school in protest. Several began, others followed suit, then after two weeks children were no longer attending Kara-su's main school.[29] This tactic lasted into April, when it was eclipsed in drama and effect by demonstrations.

Once leaders realized that the civil disobedience would be protracted, they decided to formalize the informal and ad hoc arrangement of decision-making. On January 15, activists in Bishkek formed the Committee to Defend Beknazarov (CDB) to coordinate support on his behalf. Kurbanov and others decided to follow suit and form a committee to coordinate at the rayon level. To create the committee, they invited Beknazarov's political representatives from all 12 villages to Aksy for an outdoor assembly on January 20, suggesting that they in turn invite residents of their respective villages. Each village nominated candidates and chose their representatives for the committee. Some suggested that all five main activists from Kara-su, the organizers of the event, serve on the committee. After some debate, the Kara-su activists decided that three of them would join. Of the 14 representatives finally selected for the rayon-level CDB, most were Beknazarov's political reps at the village level, though some declined to serve out of fear. Its members had not all met previously and several did not even know Beknazarov personally.[30]

The CDB planned, organized, and publicized all subsequent acts of protest. As personal assistants to Beknazarov who had experience campaigning for him, the CDB members' leadership in this instance was not questioned. It met in Kerben once a week to make decisions, after which each representative would return to his home village and inform people about the decision taken. In this manner, all 12 villages were able to coordinate the place and time of protest actions. Each member took on a responsibility such as taking minutes of the meetings or communicating with the media. The group, a motley crew of politically naïve villagers with no experience in social movement leadership or tactics, decided first to inform themselves on their

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[27] Interview, Tabalde, Kizil-too, 4-13-04; *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 11.
[28] Interview, Turaliev, Kerben, 4-6-04; Begimkul, 4-10-04. Radio Liberty is a station funded by the US Congress that broadcasts throughout the former Soviet bloc and Middle East in local languages.
[29] Interview, Tursunbek, Kara-su, 4-15-04; *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 15.
[30] Interview, Janysh, Kara-su, 4-15-04.

legal options and agreed to consult lawyers. This legal advice was indispensable, by instructing organizers on how to carry out protest tactics in accordance with the constitution. The legality and nonviolent nature of the movement turned out to be a critical weapon in winning public sympathy, recruiting activists, and countering government propaganda.

From the beginning, two rights defenders—Tursunbek Akunov and Topchubek Turgunaliev—played an important role in advising the Aksy movement. Schooled in the lingo of western NGOs and oriented toward the opposition since the early 1990's, they linked up with CDB members through their ties to opposition MPs in Bishkek. Their contributions explain, in large part, how this group learned to use tactics of the American Civil Rights Movement. Akunov held tutorials for CDB members and addressed crowds of demonstrators on constitutional rights and proper behavior while on marches, notably on March 15, before the biggest gathering of protesters.[31] These professional activists were accused by the government and some protesters of opportunistically appropriating the Aksy events to advance their own interests. Akunov later became the government's "public enemy number 1" for his unrelenting advocacy of Beknazarov's cause, a vendetta which later sparked violence.

Escalation

In February, members of the CDB established subcommittees within their villages to more efficiently coordinate the spread of information throughout the community. The first was created in Kara-su, where the five instigators appointed themselves and three JBs to form a committee of eight, corresponding to the village's eight subdivisions. After Kurbanov informed the CDB of Kara-su's subcommittee, others voted to create them in their own villages.[32] In most cases this simply formalized a structure of communication that had naturally arisen, as active citizens, who had already taken upon themselves the task of distributing information in their neighborhoods, now became subcommittee members. When asked how representatives were selected to serve on a sub-committee, respondents invariably answered, "The people (*narod*) chose them!", but when pressed further it became clear that each CDB member—the mobilization organizer of the village—appointed them. Many were JBs, who were already well-connected, respected, and had experience in mobilizing people for other tasks, such as gathering money or working on NGO projects.[33]

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[31] Interview, Kadrali, Kara-Jigach, 4-14-04.
[32] Interview, Janysh, 4-15-04.
[33] While I was there, USAID and UNDP had several ongoing projects, for which communities "socially mobilized" people to work and contribute a share of money for the project. In the single case where people

Relations with the government became more confrontational as Beknazarov's court date approached and protest numbers increased. On February 17, in response to rumors that Beknazarov had been beaten in prison, a crowd of 2,500 people with 200 horses greeted eight rayon officials, who had come to Kara-su to calm them. Not satisfied with official explanations, they took the eight officials hostage and did not release them until rumors of the beating could be checked and refuted. Among those kidnapped were the governor (*akim*) of Aksy Rayon, his deputy, and the rayon head of the security services, the SNB.[34] On March 11th, the trial began, with 250 protesting at the courthouse in Toktogul (200 km away), 300 in Kara-su (including some who had come from neighboring villages Kizil-too and Kara-Jigach), and 20 in Bishkek.[35] The next day 1800 showed up in Kara-su and 300 at the courthouse.[36] After the court called a three-day recess, more people began gathering in Kara-su in anticipation of a large march planned for the 17th. On the 13th, 50 police came to arrest the CDB member from Kara-Jigach, only to be chased away by an angry crowd of demonstrators. A crowd of 4,000 gathered there and demanded an explanation and apology for the attempted arrest. Jalalabad's governor Urmanaev promised to do so on March 15. Eight hundred gathered in Kara-Jigach on the to meet him, but the governor failed to appear, mostly likely because officials in Bishkek had ordered him not to.[37] Indignant from being rebuffed, a large crowd gathered in Kara-su on the 17th and split into two groups: 300 marched toward Kerben to pick up people in villages along the way, while 2,500 set off for Toktogul.

The shootings of March 17, which later became known as the "Aksy events," were the result of crowds that got out of hand, government forces unprepared to handle them, and a self-perpetuating dynamic of mutual hostility. Aware of protesters' intentions to march on Kerben, the government deployed Special Forces (OMON) to halt them on the way. The protesters consisted of those who had gathered to meet the governor and been stood up, plus many who had not participated earlier. In the three northernmost villages, this was the only time outright coercion was used to compel people to participate,[38] and many from other villages who had not protested before joined the crowd out of curiosity. This large and increasingly angry group was

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spoke badly of their JB, the JB did not take part in the protests and even denied they happened in my interview with him. Whether people's dislike for him was a cause or effect of his disdain for protests (and admiration for Akaev) is unclear.

[34] Interview, Begimkul; *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 15. A similar situation, in which the masses took police hostage in exchange for releasing protesters under custody, took place in September. "Respublika" newspaper, 9/10/02.

[35] *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 20.

[36] *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 21.

[37] Reported by Kadrali, ex-teacher and JB, later member of CDB, Kara-Jigach, 4-14-04; *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 21.

[38] Including the threat of horsewhipping, mentioned by two sources, Kara-su 4-13-04 and 4-19-04.

stopped by soldiers in the town of Bospiek, 10 km from Kerben, and given an ultimatum to turn around within 15 minutes. Instead of backing down, the protesters unpacked their bags and started to lunch. The soldiers then demanded that the crowd hand over rights defender Akunov, who was in the crowd. Several soldiers lurched forward, but people in the front rows prevented them from penetrating the crowd, leading to a scuffle. In the midst of the chaos, soldiers began shooting at the crowd. Six died and 12 were wounded.[39]

The shootings resonated around Aksy Rayon and galvanized many who had previously sympathized with the government or had paid little attention. An hour after the shooting, Begimkul, one of the initial activists from Kara-su and the leader of the demonstration at the time of the shooting, decided to press on toward Kerben, where the demonstrators were joined by more people from around the rayon. Many respondents reported participating only on that day out of rage and solidarity.[40] A bus driver from Kush-tebe had previously been indifferent to protests in the north. On March 17, driving his usual route to Kerben, he had his bus stopped and searched by soldiers and SNB officers before continuing to the rayon center, where he learned of events from the thousands of people in the central square. Returning home, he saw young men who had heard of the shooting walking toward Kerben from Kush-tebe and other southern villages, and offered to drive them.[41] By the 18th, 6,000 had gathered in Kerben, and by the 19th, 8,000.[42]

The massive crowd and outrage at the shootings put new pressure on the government. Members of the crowd threw stones and set fire to several buildings, some being wounded by return fire of the police.[43] As the situation threatened to escalate out of control, officials began to negotiate for the first time. On the 19th, the regional chief of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) Kuliev and Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiev met with protest leaders Begimkul, a CDB member from Kara-Jigach, and Akunov, imploring them to calm the crowd. In exchange, Bakiev promised to release Beknazarov. That night, Beknazarov then came to Kerben from Toktogul along with Turaliev and Kurbanov, having been released on bail, though not relieved of the charges against him.

Aftermath and Institutionalization

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[39] "Informatsiya o Situatsyii v Aksiiskom Rayone Jalalabadskoi Oblasti za Period 17-19 Marta 2002 Goda [Information About the Situation in Aksy Rayon, Jalalabad Oblast in the Period of March 17-19]," Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI); Sigaeva, "Impichment v Obmen Territorii," reports 80 injuries.

[40] Interviews, Ahmatali, Kizil-too, 4-12-04; Shairbek, Kara-Jigach, 4-14-04.

[41] Interview, Satilgan, bus driver and later CDB member, Kush-tebe, 4-17-04.

[42] Figures from FTI. Higher figures in the range of 15,000 provided by Svetlana, Pravo i Lyudi, 4-5-04; Interview, Begimkul, 4-10-04.

[43] *Aksiiski Dnevnik*, 25.

The mobilization continued after the March events as a result of inertia and a surge of impassioned new recruits. On April 8, 680 protesters from Kara-su articulated a new demand—to punish the perpetrators of the Bospiek "massacre." On April 12, 5,400 met in Kara-Jigach, calling for an independent commission to investigate the deaths. Nearly 2,000 gathered in various places in Aksy on May 5; 3,300 on May 6; and 6,500 on May 7, articulating the additional demand that President Akaev resign. On May 13, nearly 1,500-3,000 protesters employed a more disruptive tactic: People lay in the road to block traffic on the Osh-Bishkek highway connecting northern and southern Kyrgyzstan, cutting off commerce for twelve days.[44] By the next day, the number had grown to 8,300.[45]

With their authority established, the mobilization leaders determined to increase control over the demonstrations. After unfamiliar people had joined the protests in mid-March and engaged in "hoolganism," the CDB took measures to enforce discipline among participants. On April 3, they decided to create a structure to monitor and contain protests based on traditional Kyrgyz military structures. At the top were CDB representatives from each village. Below them, sub-organizers in turn appointed people to look after 100, 50, or 10 people. Each kept close track of and answered for the behavior of his group and reported to his superior. People whom nobody could account for were deemed suspect and questioned, and some suspected infiltrators from state organs were discovered this way.[46] This structure was explained to the people as emulating the military formations from Kyrgyz history, which gave it legitimacy in the eyes of the protesters. Dosbaev (one of Kara-su's CDB reps) and Begimkul also passed a resolution at a CDB meeting prohibiting consumption of alcohol during protests on punishment of 100 lashes with a horsewhip, another symbol from Kyrgyz nomadic tradition.[47]

Events came to a head after June 28, when a court overturned Beknazarov's conviction but parliament, under pressure from Akaev, amnestied the soldiers accused the March 17 shootings. Several days prior to the hearing, 1,200 left Aksy for the courthouse in Jalalabad. By the time the protesters reached Jalalabad and the number of protesters had reached 3,000, the prosecutor decided to move the court proceedings to Toktogul, which the marchers could not reach by the beginning of the hearing.[48] Not satisfied when they heard decision, 800 decided to

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[44] Interview, Kadrali, Kara-Jigach, 4-14-04.
[45] *Aksiiski Dnevnik, Part II*, 6.
[46] Interviews, Kurbanov 4-15-04; Kadrali, 4-14-04.
[47] Interviews, Begimkul, Toktogul, Kerben, 4-7-04, Kurbanov 4-15-04. This punishment was never actually carried out, though Begimkul showed me his whip to substantiate the threat.[47]
[48] *Aksiiski Dnevnik, Part II*, 24.

march further south to Osh while the remainder protested in Jalalabad.[49] Fearing that if the demonstrators entered Osh it could ignite ethnic clashes, police and Governor Kasiev of Osh halted them outside the city and pleaded with them to turn around. The demonstrators in turn threatened that unless their demands were met within three days, they would enter the city.[50]Akaev flew back from a summit in China to deal with the problem, agreeing to overturn the verdict against Beknazarov and reinstate his seat in parliament. Though only one of their three demands had been met, the protesters in Osh had grown tired and decided to board buses that had been sent by the government, and went home.[51]

This was not the end however, as protesters conducted two more major marches that year. In the first, over eight days in September, 2,000 marched toward Bishkek. Halfway to Bishkek, the marchers were met be a government delegation and 400 counter-demonstrators hired by the government, most of whom were state employees such as teachers and doctors.[52] After five days of negotiations, the opposition agreed to a two-month moratorium on protest activities in exchange for the prosecution of the police suspected in the March 17 shootings.[53] The protesters accepted the concession and disbanded. However, before the "armistice" with the government was set to expire November 15, several hundred took set off on the longest march of all, from Aksy to Bishkek, to demand Akaev's resignation.[54] However, since their numbers had dwindled by the time they arrived, the police loaded them onto buses and drove them home.

After the Bishkek protest, since most of the demonstrators' demands had been met and they were exhausted, the protests decreased in size and frequency, though the CDB continued to meet periodically. They warned that if Akaev were to run for an illegal fourth term as president or engineer a succession within the family, they would take to the streets again in large numbers. They had sustained mobilization for 8 months and trained several thousand people in protest tactics. They had won back Beknazarov's freedom and parliamentary seat. They had forced the trial of the soldiers involved in the Aksy events and the resignation of Akaev's prime minister, Kurmanbek Bakiev. And they had learned that citizen action, when properly coordinated and sustained, could force concessions from the government.

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[49] Interview, Kadrali, 4-14-04.
[50] Their demands now included 1) dropping all charges against Beknazarov, 2) punishing those guilty of the March 17 shootings, and 3) Akaev's resignation.
[51] Interview, Kudrat, Osh, 10-22-03.
[52] "Respublica" newspaper, 9-10-02. Many of these people came from Bishkek and were apparently threatened by the government with losing their jobs if they do not participate. Alexei Sukhov, "Dva Dnya iz Jizni Demonstrantov [Two Days in the Lives of Demonstrators]", *Kommersant,* 9-2-02.
[53] Bert Herman, "Kyrgyz Opposition Gives Government Until Mid-November to Sentence Those Behind the Protest Shootings That Galvanized Country," Associated Press, 9-15-02.
[54] "Armistice between Aksy people and Government ends on November 15," Kabar News Agency, 10-11-02.

III: Analysis

Variation by Village

Participants joined in three groups, best depicted as concentric circles. The inner core was Beknazarov's neighbors and familial relations in Kara-su and political representatives in other villages. The second circle of demonstrators consisted of people without direct ties to Beknazarov and who had no vested interests, but joined as a result of peer pressure or ties to relatives and neighbors in the inner circle, or simply out of a desire to join the excitement, though even then only a minority of households in any village participated. The third circle joined after the March 17 events, when many came on their own after hearing news of the shooting or were dragged out by indignant friends or neighbors.

Recruitment followed from a combination of vertical and horizontal social ties. Vertical ties from Beknazarov extended to those in his community—Kurbanov, Turaliev, other organizers, and his family and their neighbors. Neighbors and friends of the first group were recruited through horizontal networks. This dynamic, of vertical and then horizontal expansion (or brokerage then diffusion), began in Kara-su and remained strongest there. Once the CDB was formed, consisting of many of Beknazarov's political representatives in each village, this dynamic repeated itself 12 times, though in varying degrees depending on the distance from Kara-su.

Examining the number of participants by village demonstrates the effect on mobilization rates of being closer, geographically and socially, to Beknazarov. Kara-su had a higher density of what are often called "fanatics" or "zealots"—those who voluntarily take risks and recruit people for their cause—than other villages.[55] Identification with Beknazarov, though a local hero, benefactor, and savior of Aksy, was not sufficient to compel people to mobilize—they also needed a personal stimulus. Beknazarov's political reps and neighbors, loyal and (for the most part) unemployed, took the initiative of organizing people. They recruited their neighbors, relatives, former classmates, and former co-workers. These networks were mostly concentrated in Kara-su and the two neighboring northern villages—Kizil-too (though mostly in the section closest to Kara-su) and Kara-Jigach. In villages further out from the epicenter, prior to March 17 participation was virtually nil.

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[55] See James S. Coleman, "Free Riders and Zealots: The Role of Social Networks," *Sociological Theory* 6(1), Spring 1988: 52-57; Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion,* Chapter 9.

In the second stage, the scope of participation widened as the CDB was formed and its members created sub-committees in each village, linking the committee directly with the population. Through such brokerage, leaders mobilized people in more distant villages, but in far lesser numbers than in the northern cluster. Representatives of CDB would return from their meetings in Kerben at night with news and meet a crowd waiting to hear it. Although it had been decided that subcommittee members were responsible for passing on information, in the active villages information spread informally through various channels. Though modern communications are lacking in much of Aksy Rayon—most people do not own telephones—communication was not difficult. The most common means of communication was by "air (*vozdushnii*) telephone."[56] People living inaccessibly far from the "epicenter" of mobilization could learn the previous day's news and the next day's plans from a spouse's family living in a northern village, utilizing the inter-village spousal network.[57] Taxi drivers on their routes would also deliver messages for free between Kerben and the villages.[58] And gossip worked on its own accord.

In the third stage, beginning after the shootings on March 17, the number of participants in each village rose dramatically, but in the same proportions as earlier. The shooting turned many who had no particular love for Beknazarov or any grievances against the government, into oppositionists. In fact, the government could not have helped to galvanize the opposition more effectively than shooting unarmed protesters, spurring previously neutral people to join. On that day, at least one member of each household in Kara-su participated, having achieved a critical mass beyond which nobody could safely refrain from participating. But if 99% of homes in Kara-su sent a participant, the ratio was 60% in parts of Kizil-too and Kara-Jigach and 20% or less in the southern villages.[59] These are, of course, also high proportions, but the events were of less significance in villages such as Kush-tebe and Jangi-Jul. Whereas uninterested parties in Kara-su were pressured into going to Kerben by their leaders and neighbors, in other villages only the willing participated, while the majority could remain at home without fear of retribution.

Government Responses

[56] Interview, Kara-su, 4-11-04.
[57] Interviews, Raihan, Kashka-su, 4-18-04, Babakulov, 4-14-04.
[58] Interview, Raihan, 4-18-04.
[59] Unfortunately nobody kept statistics on how many people participated from each village; estimates are based on author's interviews.

Government policies influenced opportunities for mobilization in both the long run and short run. Over the 1990s, state decline left rural areas with deficits of public goods (see Chapter 2), and the relative economic and political freedom created opportunities for elites to win support outside of the state. In the short run, the government was unable to offer the people of Aksy a positive program and its half-measures to staunch the protests created a backlash that allowed the movement to expand.

The government's first mistake was to lose control over Aksy and other regions outside the capital, and concentrated in the south. The majority of cabinet officials and the bulk of investment went to northern regions with heavy industry.[60] As the economies of isolated rural areas crumbled and communications, roads, and utilities deteriorated, the state was unwilling or unable to intervene, outsourcing development to organizations such as the Asian Development Bank and USAID. Local self-government, which devolved decision-making and revenue collection to the local level made national officials less accountable for Aksy's deterioration while leaving appointed local officials without the means to make improvements. The only contact residents of Aksy had with state officials was with the tax inspector and military recruiters (*voenkomat*).[61] They were essentially left to police themselves. Beknazarov acted as people's link with the outside world.

From the start of the controversy over Beknazarov, the government showed its ineptitude in dealing with a mass mobilization, preferring sticks over carrots, but using both clumsily. Early attempts to negotiate with protesters in Aksy ended with public officials being kidnapped, beaten, or chased out. When the government resorted to using repression, it backfired. Only once the situation had gotten out of control did Akaev agree to make concessions, but by that time opposition had gained confidence and would not be placated by fulfillment of their earlier demands. The government's primary responses to the mobilization were a campaign of slander to shift public opinion away from the demonstrators, meeting protesters with large shows of force in the hopes of intimidating them, and harassment and attempts at co-optation of the movement's leaders. These attempts failed because they could not penetrate the networks that had developed to transmit information and because they had lost all influence in the community. Local leaders, nominally working for state officials, were captured by mobilization leaders. And control, once lost, was too costly to take back.

Akaev's government considered opposition to the charges against Beknazarov fundamentally illegitimate and responded from the first episode of collective action with a

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[60] Valentinas Mite, "Kyrgyzstan: North-South Divide Is A Factor In Politics," RFE/RL, 3-24-05.
[61] Interview, Akmatali, KS, 4-12-04.

campaign to discredit the activists. This battle was mainly waged over the airwaves, where each side put out propaganda for its cause; in one case the opposition reported 700 people hunger striking, while the government reported three.[62] The government tried to paint its enemies in a negative light, claiming they were criminals and drunks. On several occasions, as protesters marched toward a town, police would announce over megaphones that the approaching crowds were marauders and urge people to lock their doors and protect their children. Some of this propaganda backfired: The rumor that protesters were often drunk was one of the reasons organizers claimed they took special care to monitor demonstrators and enforce discipline.[63]

The government also used intimidation and direct meddling in protest actions. It used varying tactics and degrees of force against demonstrators, sometimes allowing a protest to happen unhindered, other times deploying police or special forces to observe and intimidate, and other times physically removing people or detaining them overnight. It was said on many occasions that SNB undercover agents hid themselves in crowds of protesters, videotaped, and kept detailed files on the ringleaders.[64] Soldiers were usually deployed as a deterrent but overt force was rarely used. The only time firearms were used was when the clash came to a head on March 17. Though it is doubtful that it had been decided in advance to shoot protesters, the government nonetheless had decided to "draw a line in the sand" and use force if necessary to prevent a convergence of the masses in Kerben.[65] For intimidation purposes, a large and well-armed contingent of internal affairs special forces and soldiers was sent to meet the crowd.

Another tactic that developed as the conflict continued was harassment of the leaders of the movement and their families. People widely acknowledged that the police had paid informants in the community to pass the government information about the organizers and planned protests. On February 18, the police came to harass Begimkul, but were mobbed by local people and forced to flee. They arrested his brother instead in September and held him for six days. On June 8, near Tashkomir, seven members of the CDB were arrested and sent to the Jalalabad internal affairs office (UVD) and were later freed.[66] Turaliev was arrested and released several times. Kurbanov was twice fired from his teaching job and re-hired. In another case an

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[62] Interview, Kurbanov, 4-15-06.
[63] Interview, Turaliev, Kerben, 4-6-04.
[64] Interview, Kadrali reports they caught a "KGB" agent red-handed with 1,000 files, 4-14-04.
[65] All participants I talked to were convinced that an order to shoot protesters had come from above. Their main evidence was that hospitals were apparently informed in advance to prepare extra staff and store blood for transfusions on March 17. However, this only indicates that the government thought bloodshed a likely possibility that day, maybe even intended for soldiers expecting to face a raucous crowd. On the contrary, it may indicate a responsible government that took proper precautions in advance to deal with a combustible situation. No evidence has yet come to light proving that the shootings were ordered from above.
[66] Interview, Turaliev, 4-6-04; Kadrali, 4-16-04.

elder who had been a spiritual leader in the movement met with Akaev and agreed to join a government commission, after which he stopped supporting the opposition. Rumor had it that the government had threatened to punish his sons, who both held high positions in Kyrgyz universities.

Finally, when all else had failed, the government attempted to co-opt or bribe the leaders. One leader was offered the post of chairman of the Kizil-too village council or deputy akim of the rayon. When parents in Kara-su held their kids back from school, a teacher and classmate of the core organizers was offered a position as school director in exchange for working with the government. Kurbanov was offered posts in exchange for information. A video of the shooting on March 17 had apparently been shot by an agent of the SNB and expropriated by the crowd, then passed to Kurbanov. He reported that he was visited by the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee investigating the Aksy events, who offered Kurbanov the post of governor of Jalalabad in exchange for the video. Kurbanov did not call the bluff and never became governor.[67] Beknazarov himself, though sitting in prison most of the time, was offered the positions of governor and prosecutor-general in exchange for calling off the protesters.[68]

Individual Behavior

What did people perceive as the costs and benefits of joining? Unlike insurgency or civil war, people in Aksy never faced a severe threat of injury or death from joining the movement.[69] On the day of the greatest violence, five people were killed—accidentally, the government claimed—and there was no expectation prior to that, that participation entailed major risks. On the other hand, there were also few expected benefits. Beknazarov was not wealthy and there was no reason to think that he or anyone else could reward his most loyal supporters. So, given the fact that both costs and benefits were low, three questions about the participants must be answered: First, what accounts for the dynamics of participation in the most active villages? Second, why were Beknazarov's organizers so dedicated to securing his freedom? Third, how can the seemingly irrational behavior of people after the shooting, when thousands flocked to the scene of the action, be explained?

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[67] However, ironically, three years later, after the "Tulip Revolution," Kurbanov was installed as the deputy governor of Jalalabad.

[68] Though these incidents cannot be verified, they were reported independently and in great detail. The government's tactics, as described, are broadly consistent with the known methods of the security services in many post-Soviet countries.

[69] On the perceived dangers of joining a rebel movement, see Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion*, 18.

When asked why they participated, many people initially proudly proclaimed that they protested for "justice," "freedom," and "democracy." Such statements should be examined critically, however, especially two years after the fact.[70] When pressed further, people's stated motivations for mobilizing varied: some said that they participated out of support for Beknazarov, others out of frustration with the government for their problems, others to show solidarity with their neighbors. As mentioned above, Aksy's grievances were shared more-or-less equally throughout the rayon and in other regions as well, but only a small number actually protested. In trying to discern why some individuals participated while others did not, it is necessary to look past their stated motivations and instead focus on the social factors that may account for spatial variation in participation. The two critical mechanisms explaining this variation were locally based support for Beknazarov and community-based pressures.

The strongest evidence that support for Beknazarov was a factor can be seen in the amount of discourse about the movement in various villages. In Kara-su—Beknazarov's village—topics such as his arrest, Akaev's iniquity, and participating in marches became an all-consuming obsession. The organizers in Kara-su did not have to work hard to persuade most people to join. One irony of village life is that information can travel with great rapidity through a small space, and people in Kara-su learned of the arrest by word-of-mouth. They took for granted that they should support Beknazarov. Mobilizing was interpreted as supporting "one's own" and people perceived a personal stake in the outcome. They only needed to be informed of the place and time of an event to appear

By contrast, those outside of Beknazarov's immediate social and geographic circles were often left unawares of events happening nearby. In Kara-Jigach, many people who later became participants had little idea of the events going on in Kara-su until they witnessed the massive crowds on March 17. Although a CDB member had started recruiting people, there were not enough enthusiastic people to raise talk of the movement to the fever pitch reached in Kara-su. Only news of the shootings created a dynamic of information transmission that exceeded the information thresholds of previously uninformed people, though even then they did not necessarily participate. Even where people widely considered their standard of living to have declined due to bad governance, it simply never occurred to many to join a demonstration.

A second factor that facilitated recruitment and consolidation of the movement was appeals through horizontal networks, backed by the stuff that holds communities together—

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[70] On the problems of memory and recall of political events, see Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 33-40; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 408-10.

norms of reciprocity, reputation, and the threat of coercion. Though many joined purely out of identification with Beknazarov and required no extra encouragement, in the active villages where support for Beknazarov was widespread, people who were otherwise indifferent were compelled to participate to maintain their reputations. To be sure, the leaders of the movement in Kara-su (Begimkul, Kurbanov, Shatmanaliev, etc.) were, by virtue of their non-elite status, in no position to single-handedly coerce people into participating by threatening to withhold resources. Instead, the community exercised a sort of tyranny of the majority. In Aksy, relations with one's neighbors are essential in surviving the grinding poverty of post-Soviet life. People who do not uphold community norms can, in extreme circumstances, be ostracized. Therefore, an individual is always conscious of the need to maintain his reputation in the eyes of the village and conformity of opinions and behaviors results. When, in February and March, people on the streets of several villages began talking of justice, solidarity, and action to help a fellow son of Kara-su, it became difficult to remain on the sidelines. Even people with little inclination to participate were compelled to do so to retain their reputations.[71]

The use of coercion, though rare, was evident when examining the experience of those who did not participate, rather than those who did. By all accounts, the only non-participants in the most active villages were businessmen who spent much of their time outside of Aksy, government employees, and devoted opponents of Beknazarov. No doubt bad blood already existed between some of these people and Beknazarov's supporters, but when the mobilization started, sometimes conflicts broke out into the open.[72] In Kara-Jigach, where a large proportion participated after March 17, the campaign manager of Toktobulatov, Beknazarov's 1999 opponent for parliament, refused to participate, yet he was not harassed, since people understood his dilemma.[73] By contrast, Toktobulatov's representative in Kara-su never participated and was ostracized and slandered by neighbors some time after.[74] The only cases of outright coercion occurred in Kara-su, where people who were reluctant to march with the majority were branded "enemies of the people" and a decision was (reportedly) adopted at a meeting in Kara-su to punish non-participating adult men with 60 lashes.[75] Only in Kara-su was opposition silenced completely; in neighboring and active Kizil-too, it was possible to openly oppose the mobilization and (god forbid) openly express support for Akaev.[76] A similar dynamic was evident during the

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[71] Specific cases related by residents of Kara-su, 4-15-04 and 4-18-04, Kizil-too 4-15-04, and Kara-Jigach 4-14-04. No such dynamic took hold in the southern villages Kerben, Kashka-su, Kush-tebe.
[72] Interview, Nurkadr, Kara-su, 4-11-04.
[73] Interview, Akbarali, KJ, 4-14-04
[74] Interview, Saparbek, Kara-su, 4-19-04.
[75] Interview, Marat, Kara-su, forester, 4-13-04.
[76] Interview, Mirzabek, JB, former sovkhoz chauffer; Mairam, Kizil-Too, 4-12-04.

Tulip Revolution (Chapter 6) in the home villages of losing parliamentary candidates who disputed the results, from which, respondents reported, "at least one person from every household" participated. In other villages, participation was optional.

It has been conjectured that clan is the most politically relevant identity in Central Asian, and that Aksy was actually a clan- or tribe-based conflict.[77] This is at best unfounded, at worst, a case of superficial primordialization of identity. Though the first-movers in Kara-su were reputedly of one tribe, Saruu, they also had other reasons to be the first to mobilize: they were more likely to know Beknazarov personally, to be distant relatives of Beknazarov or his wife, to come into contact with his relatives more frequently, and to have personal acquaintance with organizers and Beknazarov's political reps. Since these factors all overlap, tribe cannot be singled out as an explanation for these people's involvement. Additionally, once the first protests began, members with other tribal identities, including Bagish, joined in large numbers. What's more, six out of the 14 CDB members, including Turaliev, Beknazarov's most trusted advisor, were Bagish, and not Beknazarov's Saruu.

Yet while tribal differences did not prevent people from uniting, neither did shared history act as a basis for formation of a larger southern "mega-clan" that opposed Akaev's "northern clan," as some outsiders have read into the conflict.[78] Though most residents of Aksy certainly despised the president and often cited how people in the north live better than in the south, there was by no means a "southern identity." The vast majority of participants were from Aksy Rayon, plus a small number joining on marches from the neighboring rayons of Bazar-Kurgan and Ala-Buka. But outside of Jalalabad Oblast, people from the other two southern oblasts, Osh and Batken, did not participate, nor did Aksy residents indicate having any contact or feeling any solidarity with the population of the other two oblasts. In fact, the protesters were not concerned how many southern politicians Akaev appointed to his cabinet, nor how Osh and Batken deal with their ethnic and border problems. Their concerns, like their identity, were local. Unlike northern or southern identity, which outsiders have projected, a tribal identity does exist, but as mythology and memory, and does not have influence on social or political life, neither enabling nor inhibiting mobilization.

The second question is, who were the organizers of the Aksy events and why were they so dedicated to the movement? Aksy is unique because the region had no history of activism and

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[77] Alisher Khamidov, "Kyrgyzstan's Unrest Linked to Clan Rivalries," Eurasianet.org, 6-5-02. For a clan-based argument on Central Asian politics, see Kathleen Collins, "The Political Role of Clans in Central Asia," *Comparative Politics* 35(2), January 2003: 171-190.

[78] See "Rivalry Between Kyrgyz Clans in Echelons of Power Analyzed," *Argumenty i Fakty*, 1-18-02; "Kyrgyzstan's Political Crisis," ICG.

the people in charge were novices at mobilization. Kurbanov mentioned that when the events began, he did not know what a hunger strike was or how to hold a protest. Professionals, such as rights defenders, trained the leaders in tactics, but members of the community, who had no relevant experience, did most of the hard work done in managing participants.

Although most planning occurred among a small coterie of organizers, the Aksy movement did not rely on elites to do most of the work. In Kyrgyzstan, elites may be businessmen, politicians, ex-*nomenklatura*, ex-kolkhoz directors, or religious leaders, yet these people did not participate in mobilization. The organizers in Aksy—kolkhoz mechanics, bus drivers, petty traders, and, most commonly, teachers—were no wealthier and had no more political authority than the people they led.[79] Teachers, though not usually considered politically influential, are the closest villages have to an *intelligentsia*, skilled in transmitting knowledge and respected for their profession. The only visibly wealthy individual I saw, a "new Kyrgyz" who had built an ostentatious colonial-style house on a hill in Kizil-too, said he was too busy during the time of the Aksy events to participate and had no opinion on the matter.[80] Since Aksy's social structure had been decapitated of elites when its businessmen, intelligentsia, and political elite fled for Bishkek (including Beknazarov himself) in the 1990s, people of less influential professions had to fill the void.

Most organizers emerged somewhat haphazardly but always through prior relationships. As mentioned, the five main organizers from Kara-su were classmates. Likewise, in Kashka-su, where Turaliev was CDB representative, his classmate Nukun was an active organizer and replaced Turaliev on the committee when he had to resign.[81] The most reliable path to being an organizer was to have been Beknazarov's campaign manager in a village. These people were the first to respond to Kurbanov and Turaliev's call to action, and many served on the Committee. The second best predictor of ending up on the CDB or a sub-committee was to be a close friend of one of the organizers or to have certain demographic characteristics: being male, educated, and of a profession that involves leadership or coordination. To be an activist it was not necessary to have had any personal relationship to Beknazarov or even to have been a prior supporter.

Organizers were motivated by many of the same factors that led ordinary people to join. Some were wholeheartedly devoted to Beknazarov. To some, he was a personal friend. Others respected him for his authenticity, his advocacy of the district's interests, the fact that he "raised

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[79] This observation corresponds to Wood's account of the South African and Salvadoran insurgencies, whose "leaders were elite *only* by virtue of their leadership of powerful insurgent organizations." Wood, *Forging Democracy*, 12.
[80] Interview, Rashibek, Kizil-too, 4-12-04.
[81] Interview, M. Subanova, retired math and physics teacher, Kashka-su, 4-18-04.

questions of rights and justice,"[82] or the perception that he stood up to Akaev.[83] They identified his well-being with their own.

A second factor was to raise their social status. The organizers enjoyed the notoriety that came from being a leader, which gave them temporary prestige in their villages. They bragged about defying the authorities, especially when they became the objects of (probably exaggerated) threats or were offered bribes to discontinue their activities. Even when intimidated by threats, although some quit the CDB, others were persuaded to stay by the peer pressure of other organizers and ordinary people. Whenever the perceived costs of organizing would increase, the CDB was motivated by the increased psychic and social benefits from their peers that came from resisting authority. Finally, one other motivation should be considered in a situation of poverty and high unemployment—the desire to find work. The organizers may have hoped for Beknazarov's patronage in finding work if they succeeded in securing his release.[84]

Beneath the organizers, on the second level of the hierarchy, activists were motivated by the same incentives. Many were respected community members (JBs) who worked in the village government structure. They received no salary yet contributed significant time since they handle problems when they arise. It was this stratum of unofficial community leaders that played the largest direct role in mobilizing people. Though selected by the chairman, a state employee, they nonetheless felt free to act on their own volition, since their service was voluntary, yet suffered the same perceived hardships as other people. In the course of the Aksy movement, they converted their local authority into political influence by speaking at meetings, volunteering to work on subcommittees, and supervising protesters during marches. They also gained psychic and social benefits from the community for their leadership.

The final puzzle about participation is why more people, counterintuitively, participated *after* the March 17 shootings than before them. Conventional wisdom, expressed in game theory terminology as "assurance games" or "tipping" assumes that people will participate only when safety in numbers is assured.[85] Repression should, at least temporarily, deter people from mobilizing unless the probability of being injured is rendered negligible by the size of crowds. Yet when people heard of the shootings, they immediately headed for Kerben's central square seemingly without heed of the consequences.

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[82] Interview, Tajimamat Turaliev, Kerben, 4-6-04.
[83] Interview, Akbarali, Kara-Jigach, 4-14-04.
[84] Incidentally, Kurbanov, having become an opposition activist after the Aksy events, later became the deputy governor of Jalalabad after the Tulip Revolution.
[85] Timur Kuran, "Now out of Never"; Lohmann, "The Dynamics of Information Cascades."

Speaking with people who went to the square for the first time on that day revealed that their actions were not as irrational as they appeared at first glance. First, most did not simply join as isolated individuals, motivated by outrage and passion (through the mechanism of demonstration). Though many who learned of the event were outraged, most people who joined that day were *brought* by someone they knew. As before, recruitment occurred through social networks, but on March 17, diffusion was much more rapid and penetrated more deeply into communities than on any previous day. The appeal made that day was also of a different nature, revolving around a new frame: not support of Beknazarov (who was not popular in all villages), but solidarity with people of Aksy against a repressive government. On that day, people viewed the matter personally and marched to the square to show solidarity—not with Beknazarov, but with their compatriots. Thus, people who went only on March 17 did so to support their neighbors,[86] after "hearing that people were wounded,"[87] because their "opinion of the government changed,"[88] and because all their friends went.[89]

Another factor that must be taken into account is that, despite the shootings, most people still did not perceive the risks of participating to be very high. Most knew that the government had not used force throughout the previous two months of protests. People had had little contact with state authorities and did not fear the police or military. The events of March 17 were therefore seen as an aberration, not as a new strategy to massacre protesters. Additionally, people may have assumed that they would be among many demonstrators that day. Most people came to Kerben in small groups and always had the option of turning back, but they also had good reason to believe that people in other villages, having also heard the outrageous news, would also rush to the focal point of the rayon center. The dynamics of a coordination game were therefore at work, although for some, it may have also doubled as an assurance game.

Networks

The organizers in Aksy both used existing networks (local self-government and community structures) for a novel purpose and improvised a brand new structure (the CDB and sub-committees) to join these networks together. Mobilization was, naturally, not all planned and coordinated in advance; despite the apparent order and discipline of the organization, there was

[86] Interview, Rashibek, Kizil-too, 4-12-04.
[87] Interview, Saparbek, Kashka-su, 4-18-04.
[88] Interview, Ahmatbek, Rashibek, Kizil-too, 4-12-04.
[88] Interview, Saparbek, Kashka-su, 4-18-04.
[89] Interview, Anarali, Kara-Jigach, 4-14-04.

much improvisation. Yet neither was it a natural or spontaneous wellspring from below. The innovation of Aksy was to institutionalize an informal process of recruitment and information sharing that, after some trial and error, was able to efficiently disseminate information and coordinate groups of people over the territory of the whole rayon. It succeeded because it combined features of both a pyramidal or hierarchical structure and a decentralized, web-like model.

The CDB institutionalized brokering conducted across villages, which was crucial to sustaining a movement beyond the immediate vicinity of Kara-su. It united groups with otherwise disparate interests in a common cause and coordinated the place and time of collective action. It bore more resemblance to a corporate board of directors than to any traditional or Kyrgyz institution. A steering committee that meets weekly, keeps records, votes on decisions, and distributes information regularly to the press showed a surprising amount of organization and discipline. By this measure, the mobilization can be described as top-down, though "elite-led" would be misleading, as the last section explained. Centralization of decision-making had the advantage of being able to overcome the long distances between villages and enormous communication problems, for which existing local government structures were insufficient. Plans were usually made only a day or two in advance of an action, so as to minimize the chances for the government to learn of the plans and disrupt them pre-emptively. After a decision, it was essential that news of the time and place of a protest be conveyed rapidly to participants, for which the village structure was well-suited.

At the same time, centralized movements run the risk of concentrating too much information in one place.[90] CDB members were constantly harassed and sometimes arrested by authorities, yet were decentralized enough that the removal of members would not harm the movement. In April, when the government began to more aggressively pursue the organizers, they created a backup committee for activation in the case that CDB members were detained. When seven leaders were arrested in Jalalabad, their alternates took over for them. The official structure had enough informal channels backing it up that information would be relayed regardless.

The CDB subsumed a vertical network structure in the villages—institutions of local governance—which turned out to be easily fungible to mobilization. The existing local government structure was not only a product of 1990's post-independence reforms, but also an adaptation of community governance during the Soviet era. JBs fulfilled a role in support of traditional and official norms— community involvement in governance matters, maintenance of

[90] See Gould, "Collective Action and Network Structure."

stability, and economic development. The authority and legitimacy they wielded to this end also strengthened their ability to use their power to different ends, organizing people to mobilize against the state. In the course of the Aksy events, JBs mobilized people by convening street meetings, going door-to-door, and employing the same methods of persuasion as in his semi-official duties.

Horizontal networks facilitated mutual trust and rapid transmission of information. The common bond of being classmates, colleagues, or neighbors helped leaders to recruit trusted associates into the movement horizontally. Social networks, especially those of alumni, helped Beknazarov's supporters recruit trusted activists. On the level of participants, meeting places such as the pasture, bazaar, or town hall (*ayil okmoti*) acted as coordination points for information exchange. And as mentioned, networks of relatives across villages helped to transmit information and recruit people into the movement over large distances. Large, diffuse networks were easier for the government to penetrate than the secretive meetings in small groups at the level of the CDB, and there were cases of people taking payments to inform the intelligence services about plans, although by that time information had disseminated down to the level of the general populace and there was little its could do other than slander and intimidate.

One question that remains is why the Aksy mobilization did not expand more widely than it did. Though a small number of sympathetic people from other regions joined the marches as protesters passed through their settlements, participation from outside the region was negligible. Several MPs from other regions lobbied the government on Beknazarov's behalf and paid lip service to the goals of the movement, but they never mobilized their own constituents.[91] This was because they had little to gain and much to lose by joining. Parliamentarians from outside Aksy had little personal stake in Beknazarov's fate. The escalation of demands to include the resignation of Akaev can be seen as an attempt to broaden the aims to as to attract support from outside the region. But in other regions, like in Aksy itself, people were content to acquiesce as long as they did not feel personally affronted, and elites, who believed the government was strong enough to defeat the protesters, had no presumptions to dislodge to president. In other words, the movement was self-limiting because the interests of MPs—and most of their constituents—are locally rooted. Only if the government were to simultaneously challenge many elites on their own turf would it risk a wider revolt, which happened in 2005. That is the story of Chapter 6.

[91] This group includes Madumarov, Tekebaev, Erkebaev, Kadyrbekov, Sydykov, and Asanov. They failed to support Beknazarov despite the majority being from the south.

Chapter 6: Elite Networks and the "Tulip Revolution"

This chapter analyzes the mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan in March 2005, with reference to the networks and mechanisms of the theory. The event is useful for analysis for two reasons. First, the mobilization was national in scope, rather than regional, as Aksy was. Unlike Aksy, which expanded gradually over eight months but never transcended the oblast level, the 2005 mobilization escalated rapidly and encompassed most of the country in less than a month. This variation can be used to check the accuracy of the theory in explaining the expansion and scale of mobilization. Second, the event turned out to be politically significant, as it culminated in the first peaceful transfer of power in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The so-called "Tulip Revolution" was the result of multiple localized mobilizations that were united on the elite level to form a single movement. It began as the collaboration of losing parliamentary candidates, who were well-known and philanthropic within their districts, with their close associates and relatives. The latter in turn mobilized others in the community by activating ties based on obligation and norms of mutual support. In each locale, after a critical mass of protesters had occupied the oblast capital's central square, people without direct connections to the unsuccessful candidates—but linked to people already demonstrating—joined the protests. In other cases leaders seeking to benefit by joining a growing opposition movement mobilized people within their own communities. Simultaneous mobilizations in different regions were then united by an improvised alliance between aggrieved or calculating candidates. Provocative actions by the government to quell the demonstrations served instead to signal its weakness to the opposition, emboldening leaders to expand the amount of demonstrators and eventually causing the government's downfall.

Individual and geographic variation in participation presents a puzzle that cannot be explained by grievances, repression, or diffusion. Mobilization was the most prevalent in Jalalabad and Osh in the south but there were also events in the north. Within each oblast, mobilization took place primarily among residents of rural districts where opposition candidates lost their parliamentary elections. Though many Kyrgyz citizens had sufficient motivation to join with the "opposition," the vast majority of people chose not to participate, even in oblasts with the greatest number mobilizing. Grievance is not sufficient to explain the formation of protests in Kyrgyzstan in March 2005, much less the collapse of the government. If it were, millions of Kyrgyz, rather than thousands, would have taken to the streets. The state's capacity repress also does not account for variation, since it was virtually the same in every region, both where protests did and did not break out. Neither does simple diffusion explain the pattern: some communities

where many participated abutted on ones where few participated, and in other cases highly activist communities were separated by ones with no activity.

Patterns of participation can best be explained with reference to community and elite networks and brokerage, using the network schema presented in Chapter 1. The catalyst was vertical networks that bind local elites (wealthy businessmen, officials in the state structure, offspring of former party secretaries) to their populations, which works both because the former provide the latter with needed material resources and because these elites work hard to cast themselves as "local." Second were horizontal networks from those elites' most fervent supporters to their neighbors and other associates. Activists used appeals citing the need to support the losing candidate and in some cases, took advantage of people's dependence on the community to compel fence sitters to join. The process of recruitment of demonstrators revealed how community networks that solve everyday collective action problems can be activated for other purposes in extraordinary situations. The third network was a tactical alliance of elites from different oblasts—and districts within oblasts—that brought together previously separate mobilizations and combined them into a movement with a common objective and united under a single leadership.

The Tulip Revolution highlighted the importance of the relatively permissive environment in Kyrgyzstan, as opposed to Uzbekistan, for elites to earn revenue and form cross-village and cross-regional ties. Elite-level brokerage successfully transcended both Kyrgyzstan's north-south divide and the mutual isolation (that is, geographic barriers and lack of communication) between smaller-scale units, from oblasts down to villages. It also solved a problem posed by the lack of other cross-regional networks. For example, NGOs are mostly concentrated in the capital and have little contact with ordinary people. Mosques are heavily monitored by the state and imams answer to the government. Universities, which are state-run, wield the threat of expulsion over students who engage in unsanctioned activities. Also, there are no cross-regional associations of students.

This chapter analyzes how Kyrgyzstan's March mass mobilization began, expanded, and consolidated, through in-depth analysis of Jalalabad and Osh Oblasts and the city of Bishkek. Part I is a brief background to the 2005 elections in Kyrgyzstan. Part II describes the process whereby elites in Jalalabad, Osh, and Bishkek initiated mobilization within their districts, participants recruited through family and community ties, and elites united independent demonstrations through existing alliances and ad hoc coordinating committees. Part III analyzes the March events with reference to three types of networks and considers alternative explanations.

I: Background

Askar Akaev's government intended to ensure that it gained a majority of seats in the 2005 parliamentary elections. It selected candidates who had shown loyalty in the past and had sufficient resources to bankroll a campaign with minimal administrative help. Akaev's party, *Alga Kyrgyzstan*, was created in 2003 from four pro-government parties in order to consolidate resources in a single party. *Alga* fielded candidates to run in 27 out of the 75 districts, however, many pro-government candidates ran as independents in order to distance themselves from Akaev, who had become increasingly unpopular.[1] Amidst campaigning in late January 2005, a publication of dubious authenticity appeared listing candidates in every constituency whom the government had supposedly decided to support—and would use any means necessary to help win. The government denied the charge, but the fact that many candidates on the list were close to Akaev or had benefited from the use of state resources in the past led many to believe it was true. As it happens, actions taken by the government in the lead-up to the elections lent credibility to the document.

In the months before elections were held, the government took measures to shore up its slate of candidates and weaken the opposition. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) determined that state-run media coverage prior to the elections heavily favored pro-government candidates.[2] The president's son and daughter entered the race in districts where they had advantages: Akaev's hometown of Kemin and the Kyrgyz State University district in Bishkek, where university employees could be mobilized by the state to get out the vote. The government also manipulated eligibility requirements to eliminate strong opposition candidates. The most controversial move was made against Roza Otunbaeva, a former member of the *nomenklatura* and foreign minister under Akaev who had significant ties to western governments, and a former ambassador. Otunbaeva had returned to Kyrgyzstan in 2004 to run for parliament (and possibly later the presidency) as an opposition candidate.[3] Fearing the challenge she posed if elected—and consistent with its handling of previous threats— the government instituted a requirement that, to be eligible, candidates must have resided in Kyrgyzstan for the five years prior to running, which automatically disqualified her. When Otunbaeva appealed the ruling, a compliant supreme court affirmed the decision.

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[1] "Kyrgyzstan: After the Revolution," International Crisis Group, 5-4-05.
[2] "Kyrgyzstan: Media Censorship Ahead of Parliamentary Poll," UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2-8-05.
[3] "Kyrgyzstan Opposition Strong, Lacks Unity," Associated Press, 3-22-05.

Besides the usual means of gaining popularity over time through charity, some candidates also used more direct and cruder means of winning votes. One observer called the pre-election vote buying the worst she had seen in 15 years of Kyrgyz elections.[4] Some candidates simply handed out cash in exchange for a promise to vote for them.[5] One method employed was the "carousel," in which the candidate's assistants would give a voter a ballot with the candidate already selected. The voter would enter the booth with that ballot, deposit it, and exit with a blank ballot to prove that she had voted as promised.[6] Candidates would also distribute baskets of food and sacks of flour to needy families. One reputedly gave out packages containing clothes, tea, soap, and a towel to 12,000 people.[7] In a frigid, mountainous region, a candidate distributed three sacks of coal to each family.[8] Vodka was poured liberally, especially for local elders, whose influence could be counted on to shape public opinion.[9] A more direct method was simply to buy the district's election commission, which counts votes and certifies the winner. Some candidates were rumored to have paid up to 100,000 som ($2,500), but even then were not guaranteed a victory.[10]

Kyrgyzstan did not have a united opposition prior to March 2005, but the disunity was more the result of infighting than prevention by the government. Kyrgyzstan had many small parties, which were usually the creation of wealthy local elites or former members of the regime, and whose membership was confined to a single region. Yet instead of attempting to broaden their appeal, party leaders usually preferred to retain control rather than share it. Thus, most members of parliament eschewed parties altogether.[11] The 2005 parliamentary elections raised the stakes for the opposition: Akaev was constitutionally required to step down in October 2005, and the March elections were seen as the first test of who would be his successor. Thus the months prior to the March elections saw a flurry of new parties, alliances between parties, and alliances between alliances, impeded only by half-hearted harassment of opposition figures by the authorities.

The most important alliance to emerge from the flurry of political activity was the People's Movement of Kyrgyzstan (*Narodnoe Dvijenie Kyrgyzstana—NDK*) in September 2004,

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[4] Election observer, Coalition for Civil Society and Democracy, Jalalabad, 6-26-06.
[5] Payments for votes sometimes reached up to $25, where there was stiff opposition. Sultan Kunazarov, Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service, Bishkek 6-15-06.
[6] Sultan Kunazarov, Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service, Bishkek 6-15-06.
[7] Kochgin, election observer in Kochkor, Bishkek, 7-4-06.
[8] Kial Tuksonbaev, nephew of an elder who distributed the coal, National Democratic Institute, Bishkek, 6-16-06.
[9] Kubaniych Joldoshov, Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service, Osh, 7-1-06; Kochgin, 7-4-04.
[10] Jybek Joroeva, Journalist, head editor of Alai newspaper, Gulchi village, 6-28-06.
[11] See Gregory Koldys, "Constraining Democratic Development: Institutions and Party System Formation in Kyrgyzstan," *Demokratizatsiya* 5(3), 1997: 351-375.

a union of nine small parties which elected Kurmanbek Bakiev—a former prime minister who had earlier parted ways with Akaev—as its leader. This was a significant development because it united two influential opposition figures and transcended the north-south rift in the country, with Roza Otunbaeva's supporters based in both Osh and Bishkek and Bakiev's in Jalalabad. They also attempted without success to ally with Kyrgyzstan's most popular politician (at that time), Felix Kulov, a northerner, who had been imprisoned on dubious charges.[12] The NDK had little in the way of a common platform—only to support fair elections and urge Akaev's resignation by October 2005—and lacked a charismatic figure comparable to Saakashvili or Yushchenko from the Georgian and Ukrainian revolutions. Yet the NDK created a temporary alliance of several powerful personalities with bases in diverse regions of the country.

It has been noted that the systems most prone to revolution are those neither the most repressive nor the most liberal, and Kyrgyzstan fell into this category.[13] Despite several controversial disqualifications of candidates, the 2005 elections saw a diverse and colorful group of nearly 400 candidates compete for 75 seats.[14] Ironically, the first round of voting taking place on February 27, which sparked the protests that eventually led to Akaev's downfall, was probably the freest and fairest in Central Asia to that point. According to the OSCE, the first round of elections were "more competitive than earlier elections, [though they] fell short of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections in a number of areas."[15] Violations in the second round, on March 13, took the form of government manipulation of the media in the period prior to the elections, denial of access to diverse sources of information, and manipulation of the eligibility requirements to run for parliament.[16] Many losing candidates in the parliamentary election additionally complained of widespread corruption during the campaign, including the use of bribery by pro-government candidates.[17] Out of 75 seats in parliament, 32

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[12] Kulov was also former *nomenklatura* and a prime minister under Akaev, who lost favor when he announced he was challenging Akaev for the presidency in 2000.

[13] McFaul, "Transitions from Postcommunism": 7.

[14] The 2005 elections were the inauguration of a unicameral legislature. Kyrgyzstan used a first-past-the-post system and single-member districts. Runoffs would be held between the top two vote recipients if a majority could not be won in the first round. Previously the Kyrgyz parliament was composed of an upper house of 35 and a lower house of 70.

[15] Daniel Kimmage, "Analysis: Kyrgyz, Tajik Elections Present Familiar Issues, New Context," RFE/RL, 3-2-05. This endorsement, though tepid, was stronger than previous ones.

[16] "Missiya BDIPCh/OBSE po-prejnomu otmechaet nalichiye znachitel'nykh nedostatkov vo vtorom ture vyborov JK KR [Bureau of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights/OSCE mission notes as earlier significant flaws in the second round of elections to the parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic]", Akipress.org, 3-14-05.

[17] This may be true, but it might be the result of candidates' individual initiatives rather than a concerted campaign by the regime, and losing candidates often used the same tactics in their own campaigns, though they rarely admit it. A typical campaign event in a Kyrgyz village would involve slaughtering sheep and throwing a large feast according to Kyrgyz tradition, with plentiful alcohol being distributed while the

races were won outright in the first round. Of these, only two went to opposition candidates, while the remainder went to pro-government candidates and independents.[18] Overall, opposition figures won ten seats in parliament.[19]

The results suggested that money and government support were helpful in securing a seat in parliament. Taking into account two factors—being registered as *Alga* and being one of the 100 richest people in Kyrgyzstan[20]—one could make strong predictions about who would win. Of the twenty-seven *Alga* candidates, twenty won seats. Of the seven defeated *Alga* candidates, five made it to the second round before losing. Three of the seven losers suffered defeats to candidates on the "wealthiest" list.

Money lends itself to power in Kyrgyzstan: forty-eight of the wealthiest 100 Kyrgyz ran for parliament. Twenty-eight of them won their seats, sixteen in the first round and twelve in the second. Of the twenty losers, six defeats were to other candidates from the list. Only eight of the forty-eight lost to somebody who was neither an *Alga* candidate nor another member on the "wealthiest" list. The most formidable candidates were those on both lists—all eight candidates who were on the "100 wealthiest" list *and* representing *Alga* won seats.

II: Mobilization

The first protests began long before election day. On January 6, after Otunbaeva's candidacy was rejected, several dozen activists from NGOs and youth groups in Bishkek mounted protests near parliament in her defense. Daily demonstrations continued over the next two weeks but did not succeed in changing the outcome. Beginning in mid-February, candidates in other regions who had been disqualified due to violation of campaign rules began challenging the decisions of election commissions. Challenges took place both through the courts and in the streets. Protests ranging in size from several dozen to 5,000 took place in Osh, Jalalabad, Naryn, Issik Kul, Talas, and Bishkek. Protesters held signs, demonstrated in front election commission offices, blocked roads, and forcibly entered several government buildings.

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candidate solicits people's votes. However, if this type of election violation was employed by both government and opposition candidates, most of the time the former could buy more votes, having access to a larger supply of cash from the state's budget and the use of administrative resources such as venues to hold meetings and transportation to campaign. In any case, the charges added fuel to the fire against Akaev.

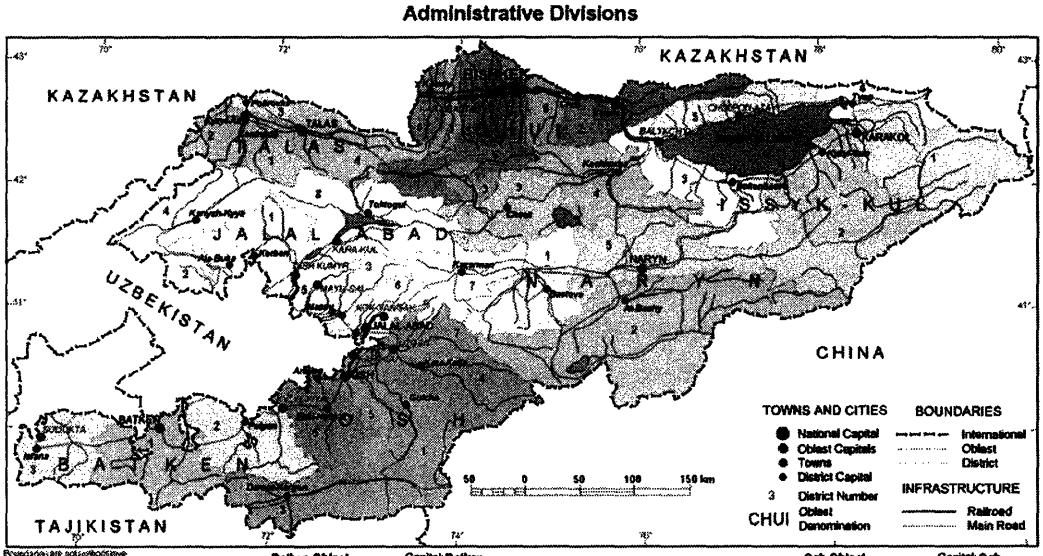
[18] Michael A. Weinstein, "Kyrgyzstan's Chronic Complications," Eurasianet.org, 3-18-05.

[19] RFE/RL Newsline 5(12), 4-5-05.

[20] From an unscientific 2004 survey conducted by the regional newspaper "Fergana," in which readers were asked to nominate people to the list and experts from around the country winnowed it to 100. It was conducted three years straight, and 80% of the names from the 2003 list appeared again in 2004.

After the first round of voting, the number and size of protests increased. Supporters of candidates in disparate parts of the country who had lost in the first round or performed worse than expected—whether legitimately or by devious means—turned out to protest. The day after the election, people began gathering in Aravan in Osh Oblast. On March 1, there were protests in Kara-su—also in Osh Oblast—and in Naryn. Then demonstrations began outside of Jalalabad city, to be follower later by outbreaks in Uzgen, Osh, Kurshab in Osh Oblast, in Bazar-Kurgan and Toktogul in Jalalabad Oblast, and also in Issik Kul, Talas, Chui, and Bishkek. In almost all cases the aggrieved candidates were different people from those who had mobilized before the election. The tactics also changed: whereas before the election people had protested election commission headquarters and blocked roads, they now staged massive sit-ins and sought to occupy government buildings. See Figure 7.1 for a map of Kyrgyzstan's administrative divisions.

Figure 6.1: Kyrgyzstan's Administrative Divisions



Chui Oblast	Capital: Bishkek
No	District
1	Alamudun
2	Chui
3	Jeti
4	Kemin
5	Moskva
6	Panfilov
7	Sokuluk
8	Issyk-Ata

Batken Oblast	Capital: Batken
No	District
1	Batken
2	Kadamchai
3	Leilak

Jalal-Abad Oblast	Capital: Jalal-Abad
No	District
1	Aksy
2	Ala-Buka
3	Bazar-Korgon
4	Chatkal
5	Nookan
6	Suzak
7	Toguz-Toro
8	Toktogul

Issyk-Kul Oblast	Capital: Karakol
No	District
1	Ak-Su
2	Jety-Oguz
3	Ton
4	Tyup
5	Issyk-Kul

Naryn Oblast	Capital: Naryn
No	District
1	Ak-Tala
2	At-Bashy
3	Jumgal
4	Kochkor
5	Tien-Shan

Osh Oblast	Capital: Osh
No	District
1	Alai
2	Aravan
3	Chon-Alai
4	Kara-Kulja
5	Kara-Su
6	Nookat
7	Uzgen

Talas Oblast	Capital: Talas
No	District
1	Bakai-Ata
2	Kara-Buura
3	Manas
4	Talas

Why did they protest? In some cases, losing candidates believed that a fraud had been perpetrated and that mobilizing people was the only way to set things right. In other cases, candidates who lost in the first round—even if they believed the result to be legitimate—may have claimed fraud in order to save face after an embarrassing defeat. For those who made it to the second round but received fewer votes than expected, crowds could be used to intimidate their rivals, and, if there were suspicions of first-round fraud, to deter second round manipulation. Once protests had broken out in several places, the potential costs of mobilizing one's supporters declined, while the benefits increased: leading demonstrations was now seen as a symbol of heroism and martyrdom—and could attract media attention.

Who were the candidates involved in mobilization? They did not fit one mould, but two characteristics increased their likelihood of leading protests: wealth and a history of opposition activism. Of the twenty-nine people on the list, eight were also on the list of the 100 wealthiest Kyrgyz. Ten to twelve can be considered active oppositionists. The remaining mobilizing elites were wealthy but not in the top 100. Most on the list (all but two or three), including those in opposition, owned businesses. See Tables 7.1 and 7.2 for a breakdown of all mobilizing candidates.[21]

Two additional factors should also be noted from the table. First, most pre-election protests took place in northern regions and usually ended before the first round of elections, whereas most post-election protests were in the south and continued until the protesters won.[22] The fact that pre-election protests ended on their own, while post-election protests continued until the government collapsed, indicated that a different dynamic was at work after the elections, in which separate protests united rather than remain isolated. Second, protests began and ended in Bishkek, but did not take place there in the middle. This was because Bishkek opposition figures and NGOs were unsuccessful in building the movement. Only when mobilization gathered strength in the south did momentum push it back to Bishkek. The rest of this section will explain how this occurred and the third section will explain why.

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[21] This table is not a comprehensive list of every protest that occurred in February and March. It includes only events that were reported in the press and involved at least 100 people. It was compiled from reports by RFE/RL and akipress.kg.

[22] Analysts have noted that unrest in the typically docile north should have been a warning signal to Akaev about the extensiveness of the opposition. However, one can draw the opposite conclusion, that the relative calm in the south meant that elections would go smoothly. See "Kyrgyzstan: After the Revolution," ICG.

Table 6.1: Major Protests, Pre-election

Date	District[23] (oblast in parentheses)	Candidate	Profession	Affiliation	Opponent/ target	Tactic	Result
1/6	University (Bishkek)	Otunbaeva (with student-led orgs)	Former foreign minister, ambassador	Opposition	Election commission; Bermet Akaeva	Protests at parliament	Disqualified
2/10	Osh (Osh)	Achahan Turgunbaeva	Head of Ellet Party	Independent	Election commission; Alisher Sobirov	200 blocked road	Disqualified
2/20	Tiup (Issik Kul)	Sadyr Japarov	Managing director of the Nurneftegaz oil and natural gas limited liability company in the town of Balykchi	Pro-government	Kurmanbek Namazaliev	Blocked roads	Disqualified and reinstated; won in 2nd round
2/21	Ton (Issik Kul)	Arslanbek Maliev*	Director, Center for land and agricultural reform in the Kyrgyz Republic	Independent	Dokon Kydykbaev	2,500 blocked road	Eventually won after court decision
2/21	Bakait (Talas)	Ravshan Jeenbekov*	former chairman of the State Committee for the Management of State Property	Pro-government until 2004	Jusup Imanaliev, head of the Kashka-Jol agricultural production cooperative	2/21 2,000 protest; 3/14 5,000 protests, blocked roads, took buildings, (3/15 kidnapped governor	Disqualified, restored; Lost in 2nd round
2/22	Kochkor (Naryn)	Beishenbek Bolotbekov, Akylbek Japarov	Director of Center for Direct Investment	Bolotbekov pro-government; Japarov centrist	Governor Shamshybek Medetbekov, Candidate Usubaliev (ComParty)	5,000 blocked road	Disqualified Vote against all
2/22	Kara-Unkur (Jalalabad)	Kurmanbek Bakiev*	Head of NDK	Opposition	N/A	500 protested	Lost in 2nd round

*On list of 100 wealthiest Kyrgyz

[23] Districts were drawn to include 30-35,000 eligible voters.

Table 6.2: Major Protests, post-election

		Candidate	Profession	Affiliation	Opponent	Tactic	Result
2/28	Aravan (Osh)	Tursunbai Alimov	Head of Aravan Village Council	Pro-gov	Mahamadjan Mamasaidov, director, Kyrgyz-Uzbek University in Osh, **Alga**	1-3,000 blocked highway	Lost in 1st round
2/28	Nooken (Jalalabad)	Dooronbek Sadyrbaev	Former nationalist MP; member of the nationalist Kayran-El Party	Opposition	Jeneshbek Eshenkulov, former MP	5,000 protested, blocked road, joined Jalalabad demonstrations	Won in 2nd round
2/28	Kara-su (Osh)	Arap Tolonov	Director of agricultural cooperative in Kara-su	Independent	Bayysh Yusupov, chairman of village council Ak-Altin, **Alga**	600 demonstrated, captured building 3/7, dispersed 3/10	Lost in first round; later won after court decision
3/1	Kara-Kulja (Osh)	Duishenkul Chotonov	MP	Opposition: deputy chairman, "Ata-Meken" party	Sooronbai Jeenbekov, MP	Hundreds demonstrated in Osh	Lost in 1st round
3/2	Kogart (Jalalabad)	Jusupbek Jeenbekov	Head of Osh Committee for External Economic Ties	Independent	Rashid Tagaev, head of Jalalabad regional police department	400 demonstrated	Lost to Tagaev in 2nd round
3/4	At-Bashy (Naryn)	Naken Kasiev*	Governor of Osh Oblast	Independent	Askar Salimbekov, Governor of Naryn Oblast, **Alga**	300 demonstrated	Lost in 1st round
3/4	Jalalabad City	Jusupbek Bakiev	MP	Opposition	Batyrov,* businessman	1,000 demonstrated	Lost in first round
3/4	Jalalabad City	Bektur Asanov	MP, party activist	Opposition	Ergesh Torobaev, Managing Director of Jalalabad Elektro open joint-stock company, **Alga**	Several hundred demonstrated	Lost in 1st round
3/6	Naryn	Ishenbai Kadyrbekov	Former MP	Opposition	Karganbek Samakov*	500 Blocked highway	Reinstated; lost in 2nd round
3/6	Nariman (Osh)	Anvar Artykov	Ex-deputy, director, ORP Credit-Technical Assistance	Opposition	Inom Abdurasulov, Head of Rural Council Kashgar-Kishtak	Hundreds demonstrated in Osh	Lost in 1st round

3/12	Chui	Turatbek Andashev	President of the Altyn Jeek (Golden Shore) travel agency	Independent	Medetbek Kerimkulov **Alga,** former MP	500 demonstrated	
3/13	Kurshab (Osh)	Adahan Madumarov	MP	Opposition: leader of "Ata-Jurt" Party	Mamat Orozbaev*, head of the Osh regional state-run union of consumers	2,000 occupied building	Lost in 2nd round, then won after review
3/13	Alai (Osh)	Marat Sultanov*	Former MP, finance minister	Independent	Abdygany Erkebaev, MP, former speaker of parliament	500 blocked road	Lost in 2nd round
3/14	Toktogul (Naryn)	Toktosun Madiyarov*	President of the Azamat Oil corporation	Independent	Tairbek Sarpashev former MP, **Alga**	5,000 blocked road; later occupied building	Lost in 2nd round
3/16	Asanbai (Bishkek)	Melis Eshimkanov	Editor-in-chief of the opposition Agym newspaper	Opposition	Salima Sadybakasova, Bank Chairman	500 held a demonstration near Oktyabrsky district administration	Lost in 2nd round
3/16	University District (Bishkek)	Bolot Maripov	Editor, correspondent	Opposition	Bermet Akaeva, President Askar Akaev's daughter	Protests of 1-2,000	Lost in 2nd round
3/16	Kara Unkur (Jalalabad)	(Kurmanbek Bakiev*)	MP, head of NDK	Opposition	Sadylla Nyshanov, entrepreneur	500 occupied Bazar-Kurgan admin building	Lost in 2nd round
3/16	Tunduk (Bishkek)	Janysh Rustenbekov*	Former MP	Independent	Jyrgalbek Surabaldiev, head of the Association of Kyrgyz Businessmen	3,000 blocked road near Talas	Lost in 2nd round
3/19	Asanbai (Bishkek)	Non-candidates Atambaev* (Soc- Dem Party) Jekeshev (Dem Mvt. of Kyr), Imanaliev (Jangi Bagyt)	Businessmen/ party leaders	All opposition	N/A	3,000 participated in march	N/A
3/19	Bishkek	Kabai Karabekov	Former MP	Opposition	Olga Bezborodova, editor-in-chief of Vechernii Bishkek newspaper, **Alga**	Several hundred demonstrated	Disqual-ified, reinstated, lost in 2nd round

*On list of 100 wealthiest Kyrgyz

Jalalabad

Of the regions where mobilization took place in March, Jalalabad was the most significant. It amassed the greatest number of protesters and its capital, Jalalabad, was the first city in Kyrgyzstan in which the regional government headquarters fell to the opposition. In-depth analysis of its mobilization shows how the combination of localism and ties to elites produced a formidable movement on a low budget. As in Aksy, informal ties gave way to a formalized structure that maintained the movement and began coordinating with other regions (see Chapter 5). The opposition's success in Jalalabad acted as a stimulus to opposition in other regions.

The origins of mobilization in Jalalabad lay in support for a local elite. On March 3, 200-300 supporters of Jusupbek Jeenbekov gathered to protest in front of the district's election commission headquarters in the village of Oktyabrskaya, 20km from Jalalabad. They claimed that the campaign committee of the first-place finisher— the government's candidate, Rashid Tagaev[24]—had tried to intimidate Jeenbekov's campaign staff prior to voting. Jeenbekov himself was not a prominent (or wealthy) elite. However, he was the younger brother of a popular deceased opposition figure. More importantly, his son, Bahtiyor, was a successful businessman in Russia who ran an association that hired exclusively from Vin-Sovkhoz and a charitable fund that helped residents of the village.[25] The village stands out from its neighbors in the striking and open displays of wealth, including two-story houses, new mosques, paved roads, and a modern drainage system.[26] One of his campaign activists (*doverennoe litso*) was Roza, a schoolteacher who had been in charge of running his campaign locally. She explained that she rounded up election workers and friends of Jeenbekov in her village of Vin-Sovkhoz and brought 30-40 of them to the protest.[27] Another protester explained how Jeenbekov's son organized people in the center of the village and told them to mobilize for his father.[28] Other assistants used similar means to gather people from other villages in the district.

This local complaint became a regional matter when the demonstrators, rebuffed by the election commission, moved en masse to the central square in Jalalabad on March 4, where they protested the election results in front of the regional-administrative building and demanded to

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[24] Head of the Jalalabad Interior Ministry
[25] Interview, Cholpon Ergesheva, Jalalabad, residents of Vin-Sovkhoz, 6-26-06.
[26] Author's personal observation, Vin-Sovkhoz, 6-26-06.
[27] Interview, Vin-Sovkhoz, 4-17-05.
[28] Interview, Vin-Sovkhoz, 6-26-06.

speak to the governor, Jusupbek Sharipov. They were joined there by several hundred supporters of local candidates with similar grievances, one of them Jusupbek Bakiev—the younger brother of Kurmanbek, head of the NDK—who had lost outright in the first round in Jalalabad.[29] Another was Bektur Asanov, an opposition deputy from outside Jalalabad who had lost in the first round to Marat Kaipov, a former justice on the constitutional court and Ergesh Torobaev, a wealthy energy magnate representing *Alga*.[30] Asanov, through his party, paid for and distributed 4,000 leaflets in his and a neighboring district encouraging people to join the protests, accounting for the rare cases of participation not tied directly to a losing candidate.[31]

The Jalalabad events took on national significance and attracted new attention to the opposition when the demonstrators undertook a provocative act. On March 4, after demanding a meeting with Jalalabad's governor, 300 protesters were met by police. After a scuffle, the crowd then forced its way past police cordons and occupied the regional-administrative building. For the next two weeks, protesters would constantly occupy the building and sleep there. Although it was unclear whether the siege happened by design or spontaneously, it worked in the opposition's favor.[32] When the event attracted media attention, previously unassociated oppositionists, most of whom were dissatisfied with the election results, lost their inhibitions and brought their supporters to join the demonstrators. For example, candidate Dooronbek Sadyrbaev, whose supporters had been blocking the road in his district 40 kilometers away to protest perceived first-round violations, sent several thousand to Jalalabad on March 13, even after he won in the second round.[33] Emboldened, the leaders began demanding Akaev's resignation.

Not long after protesters had begun gathering in Jalalabad's central square, well-connected elites from Jalalabad appropriated the movement from the rural candidates who first organized people, such as Jeenbekov, since the latter were well-known only within their own communities and lacking in political experience. The new leaders, who had national recognition, included two more of Bakiev's brothers, who not only had name recognition, but were also

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[29] Two losing candidates from Jeenbekov's district, Samagan Mamatov and Bakytbek Sydykov, brought their supporters to the square. (Interview, election commission official [*nachal'nik shtab*], Suzak district headquarters, 4-18-05.) A longtime Communist Party activist from Oktyabrskaya, Tagaibek Jarkynbaev, also joined at this time.

[30] Asanov was a devoted opposition activist who founded the Erkin (Free) Kyrgyzstan Party, which later merged with the NDK, and who took part in the Aksy mobilization of 2002.

[31] Interview, Bektur Asanov, Jalalabad, 6-23-06; residents, Kizil-too District, 6-21-06.

[32] Akipress reports the Bakiev brothers, along with a third leader, Bektur Asanov, organized the storming. V Jalalabade mitinguyuschiye zakhvatili zdaniye oblgosadministratsii [In Jalalabad demonstrators seized the government administration building]," 3-4-05. Asanov claimed it was his idea. Interview, Jalalabad, 6-23-06.

[33] Tellingly, the posters and slogans of Sadyrbaev's supporters were directed against the local authorities (*akim*) and called for fair elections. Only later did they begin shouting slogans against Akaev. Erkin Salimjanov, Sadyrbaev's nephew and chief representative, Nooken, 6-24-06.

influential professionally[34]; and Medir Usenov, an opposition activist previously acquainted with local elites in Jalalabad and the founder of a national organization dedicated to forcing Akaev from office. This cohort began supervising the regional-level mobilization taking place in Jalalabad communicating with elites who had begun mobilizing in other regions and a self-appointed committee of oppositionists operating in Bishkek. The Bakievs, for example, had access to the decisions of the NDK through their brother and direct contact with leaders in Jalalabad with only local following. On the national level, Kurmanbek Bakiev and other leaders of the NDK visited Jalalabad but remained in Bishkek throughout most of March.[35] The now-demoted local candidates, who had been the first to mobilize, concentrated on winning the second round of voting or worked with their associates to recruit more protesters and coordinate transportation between the villages and the square.[36]

Organizers cooperated to police the crowds and formalize the organizing structure. As more people gathered, numbering 1,500-2,000 on March 7,[37] protest leaders began to fear losing control of the actions of the crowd and took several measures to maintain order. On March 5, several activists had created a "defense militia" (*otryad oborony*) to monitor the crowd and deter provocative behavior. It consisted of two groups of 12 young men, equipped with red arm bands to identify them and megaphones to communicate.[38] They regularly patrolled the streets and reported to the leadership. On March 12, the leaders created a coordinating committee, made up of a variety of people who had been participating in Jalalabad to that point, to oversee decision-making. It comprised 15 people, with at least one representative of each candidate, plus the leaders with ties to the NDK.[39]

The coordinating committee would communicate with the national-level committee in Bishkek and organize ordinary people arriving every day from villages. Its members oversaw the collection of money, which was solicited from local businessmen and villagers that came to the square; the provision of food, which they bought at the bazaar or arranged with local restaurant and tea house (*chaihona*) owners, and then distributed to village protest leaders; security, which

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[34] They worked as the director of the legal department of the Ministry of Justice; president of the republican fund of the Ministry of Emergency Situations; and a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Interior.
[35] Kurmanbek Bakiev, who had been in Bishkek, made a surprise appearance with another opposition leader from the south, Usen Sydykov, on March 6. "V Jalalabade Kurmanbek Bakiev Prizivaet k smene vlasti [Kurmanbek Bakiev calls for a change of power in Jalalabad]," Akipress, 3-6-05.
[36] However, they were later rewarded for their efforts: After the change in power, Jeenbekov became governor of Jalalabad and Jarkynbaev became mayor (*akim*) of Suzak Rayon.
[37] "Mitingi v Jalalabade prodoljayutsya [Protests in Jalalabad Continue]," Akipress, 3-7-05.
[38] Interviews, Jalalabad, Gamal, 4-20-05 and Keres, 4-15-05.
[39] Included were a financier from the village Komsomol, a lawyer from Intimok, Asanov's sister, a teacher, teachers from Jalalabad and Jerge-tal, and Jeenbekov's campaign coordinator and a teacher from Vin-Sovkhoz.

they maintained by supervising watch committees; and registration, by recording the villages of participating groups and the number and names of participants, in order to keep track of them and identify "provocateurs."[40] Eventually the committee set up a makeshift headquarters in the square in seven yurts brought by the villagers, where they would sleep and keep vigil over the 200-300 people who slept in the square.[41]

At the village level, informal ties and common frames of reference facilitated recruiting and led to a surprisingly sophisticated level of organization. Far from the chaos that images of village protests evoke, participants organized themselves into hierarchical structures and willingly subordinated themselves to the hierarchy that had developed. Villagers selected leaders, officially or unofficially, who would coordinate transportation between the square and the village, inform the coordinating committee of the number of participants and the amount of food they required, and answer for the group's behavior. In the village of Ok-took, a retired physical education teacher was the organizer of his group of 15-20. Well-known in his village but not outside of it, he was selected by participants to liaise with Jalalabad's protest organizers. Beginning on March 6, every day people would gather early in front of his house to catch a bus into the city, 30km away, then return home in the afternoons. Three or four times he slept over at a park near the square in Jalalabad and coordinated sleeping shifts with other men from his group who slept there. From nearby Jeri-guchgun, a woman farmer and mother of at least 10 (honored as a *mat'-geroina*—mother-heroine—in the Soviet Union) was selected the head (*komandir*) of her group. Where did this initiative for self-organization come from? The organizers claimed that they were under no orders to choose leaders. However, it is an unlikely coincidence that people in scattered villages all adopted the same methods of organization. More likely, once people from different villages began associating at the square in early March, the idea diffused throughout the crowd. It was also facilitated by the fact that the language used to describe this structure, both by leaders and participants, was culturally resonant. The pyramidal structure of organization, in which leaders are put in charge of 10 people and answer to leaders higher in the hierarchy (who oversee 50, 100, or 1,000), is based on traditional Kyrgyz nomadic organization. This common frame of reference provided a ready set of symbols and images around which people could organize.[42]

Inter-elite ties transformed what had initially been a local matter. Within a week of its creation, Jalalabad's committee was absorbed unofficially into a republican-wide operation being

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[40] From interviews with committee members and participants.
[41] Interview, Roza, 4-17-05.
[42] In this "framing" of contentious politics, "Symbols are taken selectively by movement leaders from a cultural reservoir and combined with action-oriented beliefs..." Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 112.

improvised from Bishkek and led by the NDK, a change that dramatically altered the scale and importance of actions in Jalalabad. Bakiev and Otunbaeva communicated from Bishkek with leaders in Jalalabad and Osh, respectively, to direct their activities. By virtue of being the first whose administration building was occupied, Jalalabad now became the vanguard of a national struggle incorporating similar demonstrations simultaneously taking place in the central squares of Uzgen, Osh, Talas, and Naryn. The parallels with Georgia and Ukraine, which had experienced regime-changing mass mobilizations the previous two years, cannot have escaped any of the leaders. By this time, politicians who had doubted the tactics of the opposition jumped on the bandwagon or risked being left out of any future government should the opposition succeed. To increase media exposure and send a signal to the government, the NDK held a party congress (*kurultai*) in Jalalabad on March 15 consisting of delegates from all parties in the alliance from most regions of the country. To this end, a reported 4-6,000 delegates came to Jalalabad, including both longtime opposition and recent converts. A people's committee" (*narodnii kenesh*) was selected to act as a shadow government—governor, deputy governor, and district mayors—in case Akaev's government were to fall.

For most of March, the number of protesters remained under 2,000, but there were latent network ties yet to be activated. After protesters had seized Osh's administrative headquarters, Akaev decided to regain control of the country and made a bold move that eventually led to the fall of his regime. Early in the morning on March 20, soldiers stormed Jalalabad's administrative building, disgorged its occupants, and arrested the leaders. After this, news quickly worked its way around the region by mobile phone, radio, and taxi cab, and face-to-face communication, replete with rumors exaggerating the event (women were thrown from third-story windows; the special forces [*OMONovtsy*] were drunk and beat unarmed women and children). Many previously passive people, outraged at the news or dragged out by their neighbors, began converging on the city. Asanov decided to make use of this opportunity by organizing a demonstration later that day at *Koltsovaya*, a junction of several roads at the entrance to the city. There, 10-20,000 people (depending on the source) assembled, this time not peacefully—many had prepared and brought rocks, sticks, and Molotov cocktails. After overrunning a barricade of soldiers, people ran into the central square, burned down the district Interior Ministry building (*ROVD*), re-occupied the administration building, seized the airport, and installed a new government when the old one fled. For all intents and purposes, this was the end of Jalalabad's contribution to the "Tulip Revolution." Immediately, the coordinating committee sent people to Osh and Bishkek by bus to "export the revolution" beyond Jalalabad.

How did the contingent grow from two thousand people to become ten times larger in one day? The answer is that the emotional impact of an attack on unarmed civilians changed the calculus for people who had known of the protests but had had insufficient motivation to join. As in Aksy in 2002, when soldiers shot and killed six demonstrators, the storming of Jalalabad's administration building and the resulting injuries evoked a sense of outrage, which protesters immediately rushed back to their village to convey. For one day, sympathetic but neutral bystanders were persuaded to join out of solidarity, aware that simultaneously in hundreds of other villages, others were likewise being persuaded. Large parts of villages were seen walking together down the main highway in Kyrgyzstan in groups of 500-600.[43] Some city residents joined the boisterous crowd instead of going to work,[44] including much of Jalalabad's bazaar, whose workers are mostly from outlying villages but who had previously refrained from protesting.[45] Additionally, where opposition or independent candidates had won seats and remained neutral toward the mobilization prior to March 20, they were now compelled to participate and mobilize their followers as well.[46]

The demographic makeup of the protesters suggests rurality and poverty were facilitators of, rather than hindrances to, participation.[47] The majority of demonstrators holding vigil throughout the 17 days were not from Jalalabad proper, but rather from the outlying villages.[48] The majority of demonstrators were older men, unemployed or retired, with a smaller number of older women, followed by unemployed men or poor farmers. These people tend to have the most free time and be most dependent on others—community, elites, the state—financially. Students and middle class professionals did not show up in large numbers until after the government seized the administration building back from its occupants, when they came with everybody else.[49]

If it is true that many participants were impoverished, where did they acquire the

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[43] Interview, Abdumajid, 4-22-05.
[44] Interview, Aibek, Jalalabad, 4-15-05.
[45] Many who joined apparently came from the bazaar, which partially closed down on March 20, and whose workers are mostly villagers. As an experiment (which I repeated in Osh and Bishkek), I chose twelve random merchants at the bazaar to test how many people joined on that day, and whether ties to fellow villagers played a role. Six of the twelve went to the square on the 20th. Three had also participated in demonstrations prior to that. Four either participated only when they were met by protesters from their village or went alone and found fellow villagers at the square. The ethnic Russian and Uzbek respondents never participated, nor did the three from Jalalabad. All of the participants were Kyrgyz from surrounding villages. In itself, this sample proves little, but lends strength to the notion that most participants were rural rather than urban citizens, and that horizontal social ties played a role in spreading mobilization.
[46] Interviews, Kochkor-aka 4-22-05; Asylbek, 4-19-05.
[47] (Kyrgyz) ethnicity also correlated highly with participation. Even though nearly 40% of Jalalabad is ethnically Uzbek, Uzbeks refrained from participating, even on March 21. Interviews, activists and bazaar merchants.
[48] Interviews with participants.
[49] Interview with students, 4-20-05.

resources needed to protest? Transportation (in a region usually with a single unpaved road connecting villages to the city) was burdensome and expensive—usually a public bus going once a day to Jalalabad—and most people returned home every night. By mid-March, minibuses (*marshrutki*) were supplied to pick people up in the villages and shuttle them to the square.[50] Activists spoke of a "treasury" (*kassa*) used for food, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses, to which participants and local businessmen donated. One activist gathered money from merchants at the bazaar.[51] Participants also hinted that the candidates themselves donated a large portion of their campaign funds to the mobilization. Considering the relative wealth of the mobilization leaders (Bakiev, Jeenbekov) versus regular participants, it is likely that the leaders' donations constituted a large part of the funds, which was then used to hire transportation and supply food.

The decisive factor in determining which villages mobilized and which did not was whether the village had close ties to a losing candidate with an interest in mobilizing. Participants came from places where a losing parliamentary candidate challenged the results of the elections. Where there was no challenge, there were few protesters. The largest contingent of participants through March 21 was from two districts—Kizil-too and Kogart—from which approximately 70% of protesters came, according to the estimates of participants and leaders (See figure 2). Within the districts, the most intense participation came from the candidates' home villages, where people reported that at least one person from every household participated. These were Jeenbekov's village, Vin-Sovkhoz[52] and Asanov's village, Ak-selik.[53] Similar dynamics took place in candidates' home villages where protests took place in the center of a district, rather than an oblast.[54] Only in these villages did pressure to mobilize reach a fever pitch similar to that in Aksy, where social obligations in some villages demanded full participation. By contrast, few protesters from the district of Barpy, Bozor-Kurgan-Suzak, or Jalalabad proper, where wealthy candidates won in the first round won, participated, even though they are located near Jalalabad. See Figure 7.2 for a map of Jalalabad Oblast indicating the level of participation in protests by district.

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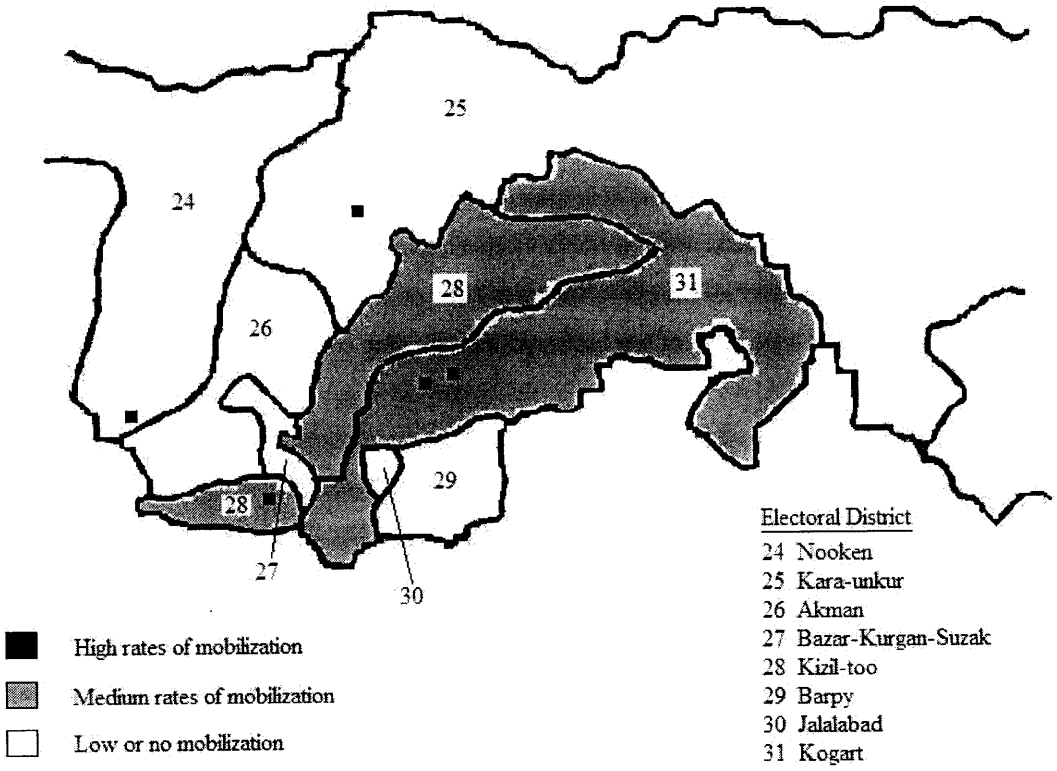
[50] Interviews, Keres 4-15-05, Participant, 4-17-05.
[51] Interview, Keres 4-15-05.
[52] Interview in Vin-Sovkhoz, 6-26-06.
[53] Interview in Ak-Selik, 6-22-06.
[54] These include the districts of Aravan, Alai, Uzgen, and Kara-su in Osh and Nooken in Jalalabad.

Figure 6.2: Participation Rates by District, Jalalabad Oblast



Localism made for a potent political weapon. As one student from Barpy, 7 km from Jalalabad, explained, the winning candidate from there, independent Kamchibek Tashiev, specifically held people back from participating until March 21 when speakers at the square goaded Tashiev into mobilizing.[55] He obeyed Tashiev because "We look up to him, what he says we respect. He's like the president for us; he did so many things for our village."[56] Another constituent lauded him to for having built roads and donated money to the poor in the village.[57] Jeenbekov, through his son, had provided profitable work and contributed large amounts of charity to his village. Asked why they mobilized, his co-villagers would respond, "Because he's *ours*" in the same breath as they described the benefits they gained through his son. Jusupbek Bakiev reportedly motivated people by informing them that his brother would become president

[55] Interview, Asylbek 4-20-05.
[56] Interview, Barpy, 4-20-05.
[57] Interview, Barpy, 4-22-05.

if they mobilized.[58] Localism is not automatic—people also expressed contempt for some local candidates even while extolling others—and people do not simply vote (or protest) for those who share the same last name or "clan." Instead, they are more willing to expend and risk when they perceive a material stake in the outcome.

The Jalalabad case indicated the primacy of brokerage over other mechanisms of recruitment. Mobilization was primarily top-down, with parliamentary candidates deciding whether or not to activate their assistants to mobilize people. Though isolated individuals from districts without a mobilizing candidate may have chosen to participate, without a top-down stimulus the numbers were small. The numbers of protesters increased dramatically whenever a new candidate brought a contingent. Brokerage at the regional level created mass mobilization in Jalalabad, and brokerage at the national level linked Jalalabad's elites to elites in other oblasts. Only after the attack on March 20 did diffusion and demonstration play a greater role than brokerage. At that moment, recruitment occurred from villager to villager, rather than from elite to elite to villager, spreading by word-of-mouth and Radio Liberty.

Osh

The networks and mechanisms that best explain mobilization in Jalalabad also functioned in Osh, Kyrgyzstan's second city. On the whole, demonstrations in Osh were less dramatic than Jalalabad. There were fewer participants than in Jalalabad and the bulk of protesters came from two groups as opposed to the wide array of candidates and villages constituting the mass that was Jalalabad. Yet the dynamics underlying mobilization in Osh also had much in common with its neighbor to the north. The movement began as a result of the individual grievances of losing candidates, and people were recruited in their villages from the top-down (by candidates' associates) and then laterally (by friends and neighbors). Leaders in Osh established a coordinating committee to monitor Osh's central square and then subordinated decision-making to the national-level leadership. Finally, after the government stormed Osh's administration building and removed its occupants, it too created a spark of anger and produced a flood of protesters who overpowered local law enforcement and installed a new government.

In Osh Oblast, as in Jalalabad, there were many aggrieved candidates after the elections on February 27. The city of Osh saw several lawsuits over the disqualification of candidates and many disputes over the first-round results, most of which were localized and not directed against Akaev. In the center of nearby Kara-su, 600 supporters of Arap Tolonov, a businessman and

[58] Sultan Kunazarov, Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service, 6-15-06.

director of a cooperative (former collective farm) with 21,000 people, protested in front of the courthouse where his case against a pro-government candidate was being heard. In nearby Aravan, 500 supporters of village council director (equivalent of mayor) Tursonbai Alimov blocked the Osh-Aravan highway in protest of the first-round victory of another pro-government candidate.[59] In mountainous Alai, several thousand supporters of wealthy banking magnate Murat Sultanov blocked the main road. However, the catalysts for mass mobilization in Osh came from farther away, near the Chinese border, in Kara-kulja. From there, on March 8 over 200 supporters of Duishenkul Chotonov, an MP, deputy chairman of the opposition Ata-Meken Party (not in the NDK), and an activist in the Aksy protests of 2002, began marching on foot 100km over two days to the administrative center of Osh where they were to remain for 12 days.[60] They were joined several days later by the ethnic Uzbek supporters of Anvar Artykov, a businessman and former opposition MP, from Sharq, 7km outside of Osh. Together they occupied the square, then the administrative building, before being thrown out and then, as in Jalalabad, re-taking it.

The organization of protesters in Kara-kulja is a case study in community networks that become politicized by external events. After Chotonov lost in the first round with 20% of the vote to pro-government candidate Sooronbai Jeenbekov (no relation to Jalalabad's Jeenbekov), Chotonov and two of his campaign organizers, who later became members of the coordinating committee—and then deputy governors of Osh—began plotting in Kara-Kulja. They utilized Chotonov's mobile group (*mobil'naya gruppa*) of 20-30 campaign activists, which had done most of the legwork during the campaign. Chotonov and his aides coordinated from the center of the district while the mobile group worked in villages, some separated by up to 100 kilometers.[61] On February 28, the mobile group went door-to-door and made phone calls to mobilize people for a protest at Kara-kulja's courthouse on March 2. In all, 217 were recruited to protest on behalf of Chotonov, more than half of them from the district's center Alai-kul, and most of those from Koch-ati village, where Chotonov was born and his family lives—a small but committed portion of the total population.[62] After protesters had gathered, the remainder of the election committee returned and reconstituted as the leadership of the movement. After losing their case, they decided to appeal to higher authorities—and began marching toward Osh.

By the time they reached Osh on March 9, the Kara-kulja contingent was aware of events in Jalalabad, including the opposition's occupation of its government building. It adopted many

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[59] Information taken from interviews and akipress.org reporting between February 28 and March 4, 2005.
[60] See Chapter 5.
[61] Interview, Abdumamat 4-29-05.
[62] Interview, Zamir, candidate from Kara-Kulja, 4-30-05.

of Jalalabad's tactics and demands, including Akaev's resignation, but still had to improvise much. Chotonov's coordinating committee consisted of a lawyer/ex-police officer, a bazaar administrator, a secretary, two teachers, and three farmers, of whom none had experience in politics. Yet Chotonov's experience and the Jalalabad example provided help. For the walk to Osh, they divided marchers into squads of 50's and 10's, a tactic used in Aksy three years earlier. They created a "people's brigade" (*narodnaya drujina*) of young men that maintained order and punished transgressors. When the marchers arrived in Osh, since they could not return home each day, protesters found shelter with local residents who (or whose families) were from Kara-Kulja. A successful opposition journalist originally from Kara-kulja took in and fed 25 for the duration of the demonstration. [63] A poet from Osh unaffiliated with the opposition, but whose mother was from Kara-Kulja, offered food and shelter to 30 protesters. [64] A rugged group of 50-60 slept in the square each night to prevent the police from occupying it.[65]

On March 11 the group from Kara-kulja was joined by Artykov's contingent and the two formed an unlikely alliance. Chotonov was an MP and longtime opposition activist. His neighbors and relatives from Kara-Kulja, who were all ethnic Kyrgyz, came from an isolated region in the foothills of the Tien Shan Mountains, where they herded sheep. Artykov's 100-150 supporters—mostly *his* neighbors and relatives—were Uzbek farmers from a collective farm (*kolkhoz)* bordering Osh. Having heard of Chotonov's protest in Osh, after losing his court case, Artykov's advisors urged him to join.[66] When Artykov arrived with his supporters, they acquiesced to the leadership of Chotonov's committee, which had already been organizing the demonstration.[67]

Organization in Sharq also occurred through the social ties witnessed so many times in Jalalabad. Artykov's supporters, mostly pensioners, supported him because he was "our boy"(*o'zimizning bolamiz*, in Uzbek),[68] and because he "helps us" and is "familiar with agriculture," in addition to perceiving that his close relatives had been influential—his uncle being the former head of the collective farm and his father the head the rayon (district) Communist Party (*raikom*).[69] These initial protesters then agitated in their communities to recruit

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[63] Interview, Alisher 4-28-05.
[64] Interview, Sharopat, 4-28-05.
[65] Interview, Mirzobek, 4-27-05.
[66] Interview, Muhammadjon 4-29-05.
[67] One reason for Artykov's keeping a low profile may be his nationality. Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan had been notoriously apolitical, and many feared that political activism on the part of Uzbeks might be exploited by the authorities to cast the conflict as ethnic rather than anti-government. Despite the addition of several hundred Uzbeks, ethnic Kyrgyz remained the majority of oppositionists in Osh.
[68] Interview, Muhbabahon, 4-29-05.
[69] Interview, Urinboi-aka, 4-29-05.

more participants once the group moved to Osh. Protesting became routine: participants would meet in small groups, usually with friends, catch a public minibus (*marshrutka*) at 9 am into the city, and return each day at 4 pm. Their initial demand was to challenge the election results, but once they united with Chotonov's group, they also joined in the demand for Akaev to resign.

Yet despite the overwhelming impact of Sharq's new activism, most residents did not participate—despite the tendency to exaggerate numbers, participants from Sharq claimed there were never more than 150 protesters before March 21, out of a total of 24,000 eligible voters in the district.[70] One reason for the low turnout is that most people supported Artykov's rival, the winning candidate, Abdurasulov, the pro-government candidate nicknamed the "president's wallet."[71] As a result of the split, politics vitiated neighborly relations in Sharq. When an Artykov partisan would run into a supporter of Abdurasulov, they would greet one another, but not speak on friendly terms as before. Some streets were split down the middle. Artykov's supporters accused Abdurasulov of being an opportunist by running in Sharq's district after having lost in another district and of buying people's votes; presumably the resentment was mutual.[72]

The small operation in Osh was greatly aided by ties to wealthy elites who joined the opposition when they began sensing the government's weakness. The greatest contribution came from two businessmen and former wrestlers—Timur Kamchibekov and Bayaman Erkinbaev. Both had converted wrestling careers into successful business ventures. Timur, at the age of 27, owned 15 enterprises including sports clubs, where he developed a network of young athletes committed to serving him. Bayaman had developed a similar reputation and owned a large stake in Central Asia's largest bazaar. His network of young men, unlike Timur's, stretched beyond Osh throughout the entire southern part of the country. In a fluid situation where muscle and money could make a difference, both contributed with an eye toward gaining political influence.

The wrestlers compensated for the smaller numbers and lack of political influence among Osh's opposition. Timur, after running unsuccessfully for parliament, contributed resources to the opposition, including a truck with a loudspeaker, money for distributing leaflets, and over 100 young men who helped recruit after March 21.[73] Bayaman, a relative of Chotonov's, joined the opposition despite having won his seat in the first round. He took it upon himself to finance the mobilization in Osh. His donations paid for transportation, food, leaflets, and, it appears, a small

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[70] www.shailoo.gov.kg
[71] Interview, Kubaniych Joldoshov, Radio Liberty Kyrgyz Service, Osh, 7-1-06.
[72] Interviews, Sharq, 4-29-05.
[73] Interview, Kushtar, 4-30-05.

amount of pocket change for all the protesters staying at the square.[74] He also appeared in Jalalabad after the collapse, announcing a contribution of 20,000 som ($500) and financing 15 mini-buses for protesters to go to Bishkek.[75] Timur and Bayaman's contributions of human capital were out of proportion to the numbers they contributed—they provided the movement with quality, not quantity. It was their followers who instigated confrontations with heavily armed government forces, providing physical strength and boldness (or stupidity) that most protesters lacked. In the chaos following the collapse of the government in Osh, Bayaman had his followers patrol the streets to restore order,[76] possibly with the intention of controlling the city when a post-Akaev government took power.

Regional brokering at the elite level—Artykov communicated with Otunbaeva in Bishkek and Chotonov with Asanov in Jalalabad—locked Osh into the centralized decision-making structure being improvised from Bishkek. At least once each day, leaders in Osh spoke with leaders in Jalalabad on mobile phones.[77] Otunbaeva, collaborating with Bakiev in Bishkek, strengthened Bishkek's influence on events in Osh, shuttling between the two cities and strategizing with Osh's leaders.[78]

Osh's mobilization suffered from having too few candidates mobilizing their supporters. After the administration building had been seized in Jalalabad, leaders in Osh planned to do the same but Chotonov worried that there were too few people to overpower the police. Candidates such as Arap Tolonov and Tursunbai Alimov had been protesting in nearby venues but did not join the sit-in in Osh. In a desperate effort to increase their numbers, Chotonov's assistants and another losing opposition figure from Kara-kulja, Zamir Bojonov, visited nearby villages to recruit people, only to find that few were willing to participate.[79] As a result, Chotonov was forced to reach a temporary agreement with the authorities: The governor and head of the Interior Ministry assured Chotonov that they would review his case, while Chotonov agreed to restrain his followers even while they demonstrated in front of the building, and a tense status quo remained.[80]

The agreement was a tactical move, to be reneged on when word came from Bishkek to seize the initiative. After the successful party congress in Jalalabad on the 15th, to which the Osh

[74] Interview, Alisher T., 4-28-05, Sharopat, 4-28-05, Kushtar, 4-30-05.
[75] Interviews, students, Medir, 4-20-05.
[76] Interview, local journalist, 4-26-05.
[77] Interview, Alisher T., 4-28-05.
[78] Interview, Alisher S., 4-26-05.
[79] Interview, Zamir, 4-30-05.
[80] Interview, Zamir, 4-30-05.

contingent sent 30 delegates,[81] the NDK planned to hold a second one in Osh four days later. Not wanting to be exposed as incapable, especially in comparison to Jalalabad, the leaders in Osh decided to storm the administration building on the 18th. Since the Osh protesters were wanting for manpower, Timur's men proved effective. Tipped off in advance that the police were prepared to stand aside in the face of an attack, his militia led the assault and took over the building without incident. The congress took place the next day and, as in Jalalabad, a "people's committee (*narodnii sovet*)" was selected as a shadow government. Two more contingents joined for the event—those of Arap Tolonov and Adahan Madumarov, whose supporters had been protesting not far from Osh in Kara-su and Uzgen.[82] Alimov's sit-in had ended after five days without success due to a lack of funds to feed the protesters.[83]

It only remained for one last event to secure Osh—and the entire south of Kyrgyzstan—in the hands of the opposition. Simultaneous with the storming of Jalalabad's administration building, Kyrgyz soldiers also took back Osh. Informed in advance by a leak, on March 19 Chotonov's advisors had obtained items for the defense of the 100-150 people guarding the building, including 20 liters of gasoline for Molotov cocktails. Two protesters from Sharq reported they had just begun their morning prayers at 5 am when Special Forces entered unexpectedly from the roof and side entrances. Caught off guard, the defenders had no time to use their means of defense. In the scuffle, several were injured, the leaders arrested, the remainder driven off in buses.

The seizure of Osh's administration building lowered the thresholds of participation for thousands of people through the same mechanisms as in Jalalabad. On March 20, aware that protesters in Jalalabad had toppled the government, Osh's movement leaders plotted to do the same. To increase the participation among city dwellers, Erkinbaev planned to shut down the bazaar and all restaurants and cafes so that people would have nowhere else to go.[84] On March 21, several protesters "kidnapped" the vice-president of Osh State University and persuaded him to allow students (who had previously been forbidden to participate) to participate. To the opposition's good fortune, that day coincided with Navruz, a holiday marking the vernal equinox, on which people typically stroll around the city to attend outdoor events; many people came by the square to watch the proceedings out of curiosity and some decided to join the crowd.[85] Bazaar

[81] Interview, Muhammedjon, 4-29-05.
[82] Tolonov's activists sent 1,000 people from Kara-su on March 18 on eight buses financed by Bayaman Erkinbaev (Tolonov's godson) and Kurmanbek Bakiev. Interview, Raisa, election observer and assistant to Tolonov since 1991, Kara-su, 6-29-06.
[83] Interview, Muhammadshukur Alimov, Tursonbai Alimov's son, Aravan, 6-30-06.
[84] Interview, Kushtar, Timur's assistant, 4-30-05; Zamir, 4-30-05.
[85] Interview, Zamir, 4-30-05.

merchants reported hearing rumors of gangs of marauders that threatened to wreak havoc at the bazaar and most closed their shops. Some went home and others joined the protests.[86] Additionally, after seizing Jalalabad on March 20, activists there immediately sent at least 200 people on six buses to Osh to share their experience. With momentum on the opposition's side and the police sympathetic, the outcome was hardly in doubt—Osh became the second city to fall.[87] And in the front the crowd were the young warriors of Timur's sports club, with Timur himself leading the charge—on a horse—for the television cameras to capture.[88]

As in Jalalabad, the people who mobilized in Osh were dedicated first and foremost to their local candidates, including those who did not join the demonstrations in the oblast center. Tolonov of Kara-su, in addition to being the largest employer in his district through his cooperative, was said to have installed water pipes, built roofs for homes, spent one-million som ($25,000) on roads and electricity, and given numerous handouts to the poor in his district.[89] His supporters referred to him as a "simple guy (*prostoi chelovek*),"[90] despite his being obviously very wealthy, and a "good man (*normal'nii mujik*)."[91] Sultanov from Alai had paid 20% out-of pocket toward a development project to drain a swamp, bought furniture and computers for schools, built three mosques, given out stipends to poor students, secured passports for residents of a village recently transferred from Tajikistan, and was known to appear often in person, despite living in Bishkek.[92] Supporters of his who mobilized did so because, "He passed many bills in parliament [second only to Tekebaev], he's honest, and helps people," and "we're proud of him."[93] In all cases, both in Osh and outside of it, the slogans of protesters initially demanded

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[86] I conducted an unofficial survey in Osh's bazaar similar to the one conducted in Jalalabad. Though not intended, the most striking result I found was that people in Osh's bazaar were more afraid to talk about the protests than those in Jalalabad—whereas everyone I selected in Jalalabad had spoken with me, in Osh, one-third refused or told me obvious lies. At the very least, this indicates a lower rate of participation. I succeeded in getting only nine interviews in two hours. Of those nine, two admitted to participating at least once and only one on March 21. A man who participated twice, a strawberry salesman, was from Kara-Kulja and joined his fellow villagers several times in the square. A woman who went several times was a shoe salesman from Osh. She said that on March 21, she saw four to five men enter the bazaar warning of mobs on the streets. She, like others, closed up her stall. While other traders went home out of fear, she saw that the crowds were peaceful and decided to join them. Another woman, from the village Jo-osh, selling soap, went home for her safety, but noted, "It's good that people protested." Another woman from Osh, selling candy, estimated that only 10% of traders joined the demonstration. Given the responses of the interviewees, this appears to be a reasonable estimate. Interviews, bazaar merchants, 5-3-05.
[87] Interviews, Medir 4-20-05, Kerem, 5-2-05.
[88] Interview, Kushtar 4-30-05.
[89] Interviews with numerous random people in Kara-su, 6-29-06.
[90] Interview, Raisa, Tolonov supporter, Kara-su, 6-29-06.
[91] Interview, Oibek, National Democratic Institute, Kara-su, 6-29-06.
[92] Interviews with numerous random residents of Gulchi, Alai district center, 6-28-06.
[93] Interview, old medic, Gulchi, 6-28-06. These statements are not to imply that support was universal. In fact, other respondents made negative statements about the same elites, referring to their corruption, selfishness, and detachment from the people. These people were obviously not likely to have mobilized.

only rectification of the elections. Only after opposition activists began demanding the resignation of Akaev did candidates change their slogans.

Bishkek

Only after the fate of the government was sealed in the south did the NDK plan protest acts in Bishkek. Prior to March 20, there were sporadic protests by opposition candidates, but they were not unified or directed against Akaev. Despite the fact that Bishkek is home to a variety of groups with diverse interests, especially a high concentration of NGOs, it was difficult to recruit demonstrators who did not have attachments to mobilizing elites. Civil society organizations participated in the movement but brought few protesters. The preponderance of protesters in Bishkek were not young, middle class, educated urbanites clamoring for democracy, but candidates' supporters and migrants from outside of Bishkek.

The means used by the opposition in Bishkek indicate the prominence of top-down mobilization over western-style grassroots activism. NDK leaders cobbled together a variety of willing actors, including NDK and independent politicians, local businessmen, protestors from other regions, local opposition leaders, and prominent figures from the NGO community. The leaders who traveled to Bishkek from the south—Otunbaeva, Bakiev, Omurbek Tekebaev, Azimbek Beknazarov, and Adahan Madumarov—had worked in Bishkek in the past but retained support primarily from the south. Several leaders had support bases only in the capital, including Jusupbek Nazaraliev, a world-renowned psychiatrist and multi-millionaire; Bolot Maripov, a journalist and (defeated) opponent of Bermet Akaeva; and independent elites Melis Eshemkanov and Almaz Atambaev from the outskirts of Bishkek.[94] Their supporters had begun protesting in mid-March and joined with the NDK only after the fall of the south. Prominent "rights defenders" Topchubek Turgunaliev and Tulekan Ismailova and NGOs such as the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society had pre-existing ties to opposition figures and helped in transmitting information between groups, but brought few protesters of their own. A first attempt to broker between these diverse groups led by the Coalition of NGOs attracted 1000-1,500 people and was broken up by the police.[95]

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[94] "Oppozitsiya Provela v Bishkeke Mnogotysyachnii Miting [The Opposition Conducted a Demonstration in Bishkek of Many Thousands]," Akipress.org, 3-19-05.
[95] Daniel Kimmage, "Kyrgyzstan: How Bishkek's Revolution Happened so Fast," RFE/RL, 4-4-05.

On March 24, better coordination and the arrival of 1,500 protesters from Naryn and Talas[96] and contingents from Osh and Jalalabad vastly increased the size of the crowd. The opposition held rallies at 9am on opposite sides of the city, led by NDK members, who marched in the front rows of protesters, flanked by prominent NGO leaders. After several hours, the two halves were to march toward the center and converge at Ala-Too Square, at the government administration building (the "White House"). The NDK had planned to gather 50,000 people, including 10,000 from the south, in the center of Bishkek to participate in a long-term standoff with the government along the lines of the oppositions in Georgia and Ukraine.[97]

The large crowds that gathered on March 24 were composed mostly of elites' supporters, but picked up others through ties based on common origins. Nazaraliev's clinic, where half the protesters met, was located conveniently near Bishkek's Osh Bazaar where many southern merchants worked. The bazaar closed in the late morning in anticipation of rioting. Its workers either went home or joined the demonstrators. At noon the Nazaraliev contingent finished their rally and headed toward Ala-too Square, arriving two hours later with around 5,000 people, including over 2,000 who had joined spontaneously from the bazaar.[98] Observers reported that a large portion of the crowd appeared to be from outside of Bishkek, including a group of several hundred young men with posters saying "Osh" that later led an attack on soldiers guarding the White House.[99]

For all intents and purposes, the scuffle at the White House was inconsequential—since half the country was in the hands of the opposition and over 10,000 people had gathered at the central square, the Akaev regime was imperiled; it was only a matter of when and how he would leave. Once there, the crowd was blocked by police and soldiers who sealed off the entrance to the White House. Several hundred men in civilian clothes and white hats, armed with primitive weapons, emerged from behind the White House gates and formed a human wall. After first

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[96] These were Japarov and Jeenbekov's contingents, who had taken over their respective regional governments. "Storonniki Eks-Kandidata A. Japarova Osvobodili Zdanie Kochkorskoi Raiadministratsii [Supporters of Ex-Candidate A. Japarov Freed the Kochkor Regional-Administrative Building]," Akipress.org, 3-21-05.

[97] Hundreds of protesters being bused from Osh and Jalalabad did not arrive in time to participate in Bishkek's "revolution." Interviews, Zamir, 4-30-05, Aziza 5-6-05.

[98] Of the ten who agreed to be interviewed, two were from Osh, one from Jalalabad, one from Batken, four from Bishkek, one from Talas, and one refused to say where he was from. Of those from the south, all four participated. From the north, none of the five did. Most traders closed their shops between 10 and 11 am on March 24, having been warned of marauders; then they went home or to Nazaraliev's office. One man from Batken, selling springs, described how people hesitated and debated whether or not to participate once they heard of the approaching demonstrations. Half of the traders in his section of the bazaar accompanied him to Nazaraliev's clinic. A woman from Bishkek, selling sausages, went home but heard a group of men yelling to those exiting the bazaar, "We're all from Osh, let's go together." Interviews, Osh bazaar in Bishkek, 5-10-05.

[99] Interviews, Askat, 5-9-05, Bolot 5-7-05.

retreating, elements from the crowd surged forward only to find themselves beaten back. On a third attempt, elements from the crowd (reportedly young men from the south) broke through the line of defenders and stampeded into the building. Akaev, who reportedly ordered against using force, had earlier left the building to preserve his own safety. Shortly after, he fled the country, and, after ten days of failed attempts to regain his lost stature, formally resigned his post.[100]

III: Analysis

Regional and Sub-regional Variation

Variation in participation in the March mass mobilization can be explained by reference to the three types of networks— horizontal, vertical, and inter-elite—and the incentives built into them. It should be recalled from Chapter 2 that networks within communities are held together by reciprocity and trust. Social capital that is accumulated through repeated interaction can be called to account when assistance is needed. Vertical relations tie elites together with ordinary citizens. Elites fill a void by securing needs that the state left unfulfilled when it partially withdrew from society, an absence more pronounced in rural areas. Elites themselves are connected to one another through different types of interaction—business, politics, and rallying events. Elites strategically activate their ties to communities or other elites as their social and financial capital permit.

Variation in the size of the crowds and the geographic scope of villages that protesters came from was largely a function of the number of candidates protesting the elections in that region. The largest crowds of demonstrators occurred in Jalalabad, where the numbers may have reached 15,000 on March 20. Bishkek and Osh may have attracted 10,000 people each at their peak. There were up to 5,000 in Talas, 3,000 in Naryn, 2,500 in Issik Kul, and scattered protests reported in Chui and Batken provinces. There were no reported cases of "spontaneous" protests.[101]

Most parliamentary races were not controversial. Certainly many candidates were disappointed after losing, especially where the government spent enormous resources on behalf of its candidate. Yet most did not mobilize. Those that did mobilize were likely to be from one of

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[100] For other accounts of March 24, see "Kyrgyzstan: After the Revolution," ICG; Bolot Maripov, "Ot pervogo litsa [From an eyewitness]." *Obschestvennii Reiting*, March 31, 2005; Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Kyrgyzstan: Eyewitness to the Revolution," RFE/RL, 3-24-05.

[101] The only protests in this period that did not occur in support of a candidate were pro-government demonstrations by government employees, in Jalalabad and Bishkek. Circumstantial evidence suggested that they were not spontaneous, but rather cases of coerced mobilization by the authorities.

two groups: wealthy businessmen, especially those who have held influential state posts; and activists with a history of opposition politics. As a rule, government candidates did not mobilize, even when they lost. On the other hand, a pro-government victory along with the perception of cheating, especially in tight races, was likely to provoke mobilization.[102] Yet it is not possible to predict which candidates would mobilize and which would not from these indicative factors alone. We also have to take into account the geographical clustering of candidates and bandwagon effects.

The numbers in Jalalabad and Osh were higher not only because of the concentration of high-profile candidates, but also because these candidates were joined by sympathetic and opportunist local elites in a bandwagon effect. Jusupbek Jeenbekov, though the first to mobilize in Jalalabad, had no prior history of opposition politics, although his brother, Satybaldi, did (see Chapter 3). When Bektur Asanov also began mobilizing people in his district, further participation was triggered through elite networks: Kurmanbek Bakiev, a second-round loser, and Jusupbek Bakiev, a first-round loser, then brought their supporters. Less influential elites and non-elites, who had been resenting Akaev or who simply wanted to be part of the action, joined in the capacity of organizers, rather than leaders, and activated participation in their villages.[103] In Osh, unaffiliated elites Erkinbaev and Kamchibekov, sensing an opportunity to boost their prestige, joined the cause, as did others who had not run for parliament.[104]

Within oblasts, participation did not correspond smoothly to geography. In the midst of "hot zones" of activity there were gaps from which people did not participate, for various reasons. In most districts, there were no accusations of impropriety and the candidate favored by the majority of voters won, such as in Aksy. Aksy, which had mobilized in the past, elected Azimbek Beknazarov in the first round with 55% of the vote. Beknazarov was in touch with NDK leaders and spoke at the party congress in Jalalabad, but residents of Aksy did not march to Jalalabad.[105]

Another reason for non-participation was people's opposition to opposition candidates. Many government candidates were popular, for the same reasons as other candidates—by virtue of localism and their assistance of the community. In Osh, for example, pro-government candidate Alisher Sobirov ran unopposed and won 80% of votes in the first round. His putative

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[102] Examples of close and fiercely contested races include Orozbaev-Madumarov in Kurshab (49.27%-48.54%); Sadybakasov-Eshimkanov in Bishkek (46.60-46.24); and Yusupov-Tolonov in Kara-su (49.37-46.79).
[103] These people worked on the coordinating committee.
[104] Included are opposition-journalists such as Alisher Tuksonbaev and activists such as Usen Sydykov from Osh and Tagaibak Jarkynbaev from Jalalabad. Interviews, Kerem 5-2-05, Alisher T., 4-28-05.
[105] Interviews, Tagaibek 4-18-05; Medir 4-20-05.

opponent, Achahan Turgunbaeva, had been disqualified from running after being charged with buying votes.[106] She mobilized 200 people in a protest that gained little notice and quickly fizzled out because Sobirov, who had already served two terms in parliament, was popular in his district. In some cases, as in Nariman, districts were split down the middle between villages that supported the government's candidate, Abdurasulov, and the opposition candidate, Artykov.[107]

Individual Participation

At the individual level, mobilization began with, but was not limited to, the close associates of the candidate. The candidate's political operatives functioned as recruiters, activating networks such as the candidate's family, their friends and neighbors, and other members of the community who had free time. Only later in the course of mobilization, when the situation escalated, did people join without being directly solicited. For the most part, people did not look beyond their neighbors and local elites for cues about how to act.

Activists organizing mobilization knew how to provoke righteous anger in their appeals to potential protesters. In addition to referring to the need to help "our" candidate, they would also accuse the other side of cheating, noting election violations or local authorities' support for their opponent(s). Protesters learned of the reputed violations (some of which were documented by independent observers as well) from the candidates' assistants and could recite them back over a year later.[108] In most cases, people's anger was directed against the winning candidate rather than against Akaev himself, even if the regime was known to have assisted the winner. Activists understood that it was easier to rally people in response to a common affront from an immediate target—the rival—than to play on grievances against the regime. The former was concrete; the latter, abstract. Thus, slogans that the candidates' team designed initially called for "fail elections" and "justice," and only later escalated to demand Akaev's resignation.

Conclusion: Networks and Mobilization Scale

Participation in the March mass movement can only be explained with reference to the pervasive localism in Kyrgyzstan. Some scholars have accounting for political and economic

[106] Interviews, Izzatilla, director, human rights NGO and election observer, 7-1-06.
[107] Artykov obtained most of his support from his home village of Sharq. Abdurasulov's support came mostly from *his* hometown of Kashgar-Kishtak in the same district.
[108] Interviews in Jalalabad, Aravan, Kara-su, and Alai, June 2006.

outcomes in Central Asia by arguing that clans or regionalism is the most salient cleavage.[109] However, this meso-level of analysis cannot explain variation at the village level. The bonds of *localism*, on the other hand, are the glue enabling collective action at the community level. Top-down mobilization by candidates in the Kyrgyz "revolution" indicated the strength of ties between certain elites and members of their communities.

The fact remains that not all candidates who had spent large amounts of money to provide charity to their district mobilized (since many won their seats and had no incentive to protest), but they were probably capable of mobilizing. Those that lacked money compensated in several ways: If they were already MPs, they could reward their district by using their influence—providing jobs for residents, steering funds from the budget and claiming credit for the results, and solving miscellaneous constituent problems.[110] Others could compensate by emphasizing their local credentials, by relying on personal acquaintances centered on their village rather than broader appeals made throughout the district.[111] On the whole, however, the majority of those leading mobilizations (probably 75%) had made significant material investments in their districts; a smaller number relied mostly on their work in parliament to gain district-wide popularity; and the remaining two or three relied on charisma and family ties alone to mobilize supporters.

The view from below confirms the impact of localism. Invariably the first protesters to take part in mobilization were the cohorts of the martyred candidate, oriented not against Akaev, but toward the candidate. Later participants, recruited through social ties, expressed support for "their" (*svoi*) candidate and had little trouble recalling charitable contributions that the candidate had made in the district—even if mistaken! Villagers thus reciprocated with their manpower and time for the material help they had received. When asked what led them to mobilize, participants rarely made reference to national- or even regional-level politicians. Local issues predominate in villages—communities support their own and because of scarce information and lack of vested interests in other regions, they do not mobilize on behalf of issues or actors located outside the community. But if this is the case, how does a rural and fragmented society organize a movement on a national scale? To answer this question one must search for a means of reaching across villages and oblasts.

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[109] On the former, the chief proponent of the argument is Kathleen Collins. See "Clans, Pacts, and Politics."

[110] Tekebaev and Sadyrbaev were known especially for their work as MPs.

[111] Chotonov and Artykov, who brought a meager 200 and 150 supporters, respectively, were in this category.

One suspect is NGO networks.[112] Since its independence, Kyrgyzstan has been home to the sprouting of NGOs; as of 2000, 4,000 were registered with the Justice Ministry.[113] Human rights lawyers (*pravozashitniki*) and various NGO activists spent the campaign season engaging in civic education and media outreach. In the scheme of the March events, however, NGOs played a smaller role than would at first appear. Though NGO leaders provided the majority of interviews the international press criticizing Akaev, they played an insignificant role in Jalalabad or Osh, and a supportive and secondary part in Bishkek's mobilzation.[114] In the south, especially Jalalabad, NGOs are fewer than in Bishkek, and demonstrators had had little contact with them. Once protesters began their sit-ins, several NGO activists arrived from Bishkek and instructed leaders on how to conduct demonstrations which observing Kyrgyzstan's laws on unsanctioned meetings. In Bishkek several human rights lawyers acted as liaisons to help organize rallies, but did not have direct contact with people on the mass level. In contrast to the revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan lacked networks through which to raise the masses. Its NGOs were either uninvolved or late, and the people most often engaged with NGOs, predominantly urban residents, did not mobilize. Convincing one's co-villagers to participate in localized demonstrations is not a problem in Kyrgyzstan, as was demonstrated in Aksy in 2002—and many cases since then—but extending that movement across the republic is more difficult.

Other institutions that may provide cross-regional networks—such as universities, mosques, or large enterprises—were either controlled or restricted by the state, a legacy of Soviet control.[115] Unlike other "color" revolutionaries, Kyrgyzstan's students were largely absent from its movement. Students in every city included in the research reported being warned by the university administration or their teachers not to join the demonstrations, or risk being expelled. Some brave students called their bluff and joined anyway, and none I talked to suffered any reprisals (in most cases because the leadership of the institute was replaced after March 24). But most students, though probably sympathetic, were too frightened to participate.

Mosques also played no role in mobilizing people. Kyrgyzstan's imams are vetted by the state and subject to removal for meddling in politics. The only mention I heard of religious authorities was when a village mullah exhorted protesters to be peaceful on their march to the city

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[112] Bruce Pannier, "Youth Groups Show Renewed Interest in Politics," RFE/RL, 2-23-05; Claire Wilkinson, "Kyrgyzstan: e-revolution," 7-21-05.
[113] Daphne Biliouri, "The Cyanide Spill in Kyrgyzstan: Measuring Civil Society Development," eurasianet.org, 1-4-00.
[114] Interview, Aziza, 5-6-05.
[115] See Kelly M. McMann, *Economic Autonomy and Democracy: Hybrid Regimes in Russia and Kyrgyzstan* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

center.[116] The heads of large enterprises, which have branches in different parts of the country, were also hindered by their relationship to the regime. Business leaders, especially in urban areas, had vested interests in maintaining stability. They had found a niche under Akaev and were reluctant to risk the uncertainty of a regime change. This, however, did not limit independent businessmen from contributing to the opposition, as Nazaraliev and Erkinbaev demonstrated by their actions. A compromise decision, which many businessmen made, was to contribute anonymously to opposition NGOs and donate food for participants in sit-ins, but make no attempt to mobilize people.

The network that turned local power struggles into a national movement was an inter-regional alliance of elites—brokered through the NDK—that compensated for the lack of communication and civil society networks in the Kyrgyz provinces. The NDK's constituent parties such as Ata-Jurt, Jangi Kyrgyzstan, and the Communist Party did not lacked broad-based support and, besides opposing Akaev, had little in their platforms to indicate a common identity or political agenda. What it did was more important in a society where localism is so strong—it created a republic-wide network of opposition elites, both by creating new ties and reviving old ones, that in March united and coordinated otherwise isolated outbursts of opposition. This network provided the weak ties to unite the strongly Kyrgyzstan's strongly knit mobilizing villages. Party activists acted as brokers between independent candidates, provided funds for transportation, and communicated across regions on mobile phones. By providing the opposition with a united set of goals and tactics—and the physical means to organize thousands of people—the NDK succeeded in building a mass movement, barely able to overthrow the government, before fragmenting again.

[116] Interview, Roza 4-17-05.

Chapter 7: Extending the Theory

This theory identifies four factors that determine the difference between localized and large-scale mobilization: state weakness, inter-elite networks, elite-community patronage networks, and a state challenge of elites. A key insight is that not only political liberalization but also economic liberalization is necessary for the bridges between communities to form. This frees up elites to acquire the political support of communities and use them as a last line of defense if challenged. Elites can coalesce into networks if there is an institutional mechanism allowing them to do so, and in response to major political events and perceptions that the regime is weakening. When the conditions are present, social mechanisms can be activated that expand the scale of mobilization. In Kyrgyzstan, brokerage occurred when there was a particular conjuncture of forces that enabled elites to convert their economic resources into people power. Mass mobilization by other means was hindered by the weakness of civil society and the absence of institutions that spanned across territory.

To what extent does the theory apply beyond Kyrgyzstan? Is Kyrgyzstan idiosyncratic or are its implications universal? In this chapter, I test how well the theory explains the scale of mobilization in other countries keeping in mind the scope conditions specified earlier—a state that provides little in the way of public goods, and an unequal distribution of income in society, but absence of concentration of resources in the state. By selecting cases that maximize variation in general background (demographic and historical) variables and identifying the actors and institutions involved in expanding mobilization (or the lack of it), I test how well the theory travels, first to Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan's neighbor and the source of earlier national-level comparisons. Then I test cases outside the region that have different historical, cultural, and political legacies from Kyrgyzstan, namely early modern France and England, rural China, and Shiites in Iraq.

I selected these cases for several reasons. First, since they represent a wide geographic and historical range, different from Kyrgyzstan on many dimensions, they allow me to test the limits of the theory. Countries that have experienced different processes of economic and social development than Kyrgyzstan, especially those outside the former socialist bloc, may possess different institutions that can be used to expand mobilization. Thus, mobilization may be spread by demonstration, diffusion, or brokerage by different actors and institutions than in Kyrgyzstan. Alternatively, the elements that led to the rise of brokers in Kyrgyzstan may be absent in other contexts, limiting cross-regional networks and preventing mass mobilization. This variation

allows me to test whether the explanatory variables (economic openness, patronage and elite networks) had the predicted effect on the dependent variable (scale of mobilization).

Second, though they all possess non-democratic regimes and independent elites who can challenge the state, they vary in terms of the how they arrived at that point—consolidation in Europe, political control together with economic liberalization and decentralization in China, and tight economic and political control followed by the sudden opening of both in Iraq. Again, a wide range of case types provides a strong test of the theory.

I have excluded several cases for comparison, such as Eastern Europe (1989), Lithuania (1991), because mass mobilization there differed in several fundamental ways, despite sharing similarities from Soviet influence. In the twentieth century, they all underwent massive industrialization changing them from rural to predominantly urban societies. This affected the character of mass mobilization, since, "with the exception of the Iranian Revolution, the revolutions of 1989-91 in the former Soviet bloc have been the only successful revolutions in history of a more or less exclusively urban character."[1] While some aspects of the recent mass mobilizations in Ukraine and Georgia may conform to the theory of this dissertation, such as the effects of economic reform and the role of brokerage in mobilization, I select cases here that maximize variation on background variables to see how far the theory "travels."

Kyrgyzstan was a positive case, in having experienced mass mobilization, though we saw from internal comparisons that not every instance of mobilization extends beyond the local level. Uzbekistan is, in many ways, the ideal foil for Kyrgyzstan. Despite geographical proximity and historical and social similarities, the Uzbek state's control over resources has pre-empted mass mobilization, as analysis of its mobilization history will demonstrate. England and France, as they underwent state consolidation, were sporadically engulfed by minor and major rebellions, mostly peasant-led and easily manageable, but some involving notables, whose interests were also threatened by encroachment from the crown. These rebellions tended to be of much larger scale than mobilization involving peasants, which were usually localized.

Further afield, China's peasantry has shown both initiative and organizational competence in using mobilization to express opposition to a wide variety of policies. However, a surprisingly small number of these mobilizations have spread across community lines. I argue that atomization on the elite level, that is, the prevention of the formation of networks, has hindered pooling of grievances through elite brokerage.

I use the case of Iraq even though it fails to meet one of the scope conditions, that is, that there is an independent business elite. The Ba'ath Party dominated the Iraqi economy for more

[1] Goodwin, *No Other Way Out.*

than 40 years, restricting the scope for non-regime elites to acquire. In this respect, it appears at first glance more like Uzbekistan than the other two cases. However, unlike Uzbekistan, Shiites in Iraq showed that they had mass mobilizational potential. Despite suffering through a Sunni-led dictatorship, the Shiites maintained national networks of mosques, which were activated once a vacuum of power opened and political restrictions were removed. Thus, Iraq demonstrated brokerage at work in simultaneously mobilizing large amounts of people. The form was the same although the substance was different.

The theory helps to understand the underlying dynamics of the cases. Where the economy was relatively liberal but where political institutions did not offer opportunities for change within the system, elites were more likely to take part in mobilization. Yet only where the regime allowed a niche for civil society to develop could elites coordinate and widen the scope of mobilization beyond localities and regions. Where there was neither political nor economic openness, protests were likely to be localized. Without detailed information, including interviews with activists and potential mobilizers, it is impossible to know for certain whether the dynamics of mass mobilization unfolded in a similar manner to Kyrgyzstan. However, existing data from the four cases considered here is sufficient to provide preliminary tests of the theory.

I: Uzbekistan

What is the upshot of Uzbekistan's failure to develop an autonomous business sphere or a civil society? The contrasts drawn with Kyrgyzstan described in Chapters 2-4 have indeed had an impact on mobilization scale: Uzbekistan has experienced an increasing frequency of mobilization, but it has all been localized. The regime has successfully managed to avert widespread mobilization. Most often protests have broken out in support of elites imprisoned or otherwise persecuted by the state, or in opposition to economically ruinous policies.[2] They have failed to inspire copycat actions beyond the initial locale of mobilization, despite expressions of solidarity from human rights activists and NGOs in the capital.[3] Conciliatory tactics or low levels of harassment have usually been sufficient to defuse minor crises.

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[2] From the former group, protests have occurred in Kashkadaryo, Jizzakh, Tashkent, and Andijan. From the latter, in Kokand, Margilon, and Tashkent, among others. See "Uzbekistan: The Andijan Uprising," ICG, 5-25-05; and "Uzbekistan: A Year of Disturbances," iwpr.net, 5-13-05.

[3] Galima Bukharbaeva, "Rights Crackdown Mars Uzbek Independence Day," IWPR, 9-8-03.

Major Mobilization Events: 1991-2005

Prior to 2005, three events in Uzbekistan stand out as the largest and widest collective occurrences of expression of grievances.[4] All three indicate the difficulty of expanding a movement beyond its locale of origin, despite the intensity of the grievances. Comparison of events across time also serves to demonstrate how policies have affected the mode of mobilization, as two occurred at the beginning of the transition period, when civil society made a brief appearance, and one thirteen years later, when most institutions had been closed off. Mobilization after glasnost but before Uzbekistan's crackdown on economic activity and dissent in 1992 had the greatest chances to expand. However, even in that period of relative openness, and despite the nascent formation of opposition movements, there was no mobilization beyond the local level.[5] By the mid-1990s, the avenues for diffusion and brokerage across communities had been closed off.

The first noteworthy contentious event, which occurred in December 1991 after Uzbekistan (and all other republics), had declared independence from the union, remained limited to the city of Namangan. Several religious parties with support from Gulf States had gained control of mosques and madrassahs in the Fergana Valley and recruited followers who supported making Uzbekistan an Islamic state. During the first campaign for president of Uzbekistan, when then-first secretary Islam Karimov was touring the country campaigning, several of these organizations, Adolat (Justice) and the Islamic Renaissance Party, organized a rally of several thousand men in Namangan and demanded that Karimov agree to establish Islamic law in the republic.[6] He initially assented, but after winning the presidency, he cracked down on sympathetic imams and arrested leaders of the revolt. Other followers fled the country or were arrested, and open Islamic activism has effectively been stifled ever since.[7]

A second disturbance occurred seemingly spontaneously in early 1992 in the context of social dislocations stemming from partial liberalization of the economy, but never expanded beyond the capital. Quiescent during the dramatic events of the Soviet Union's collapse, students

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[4] Due to the repressive media environment, it is likely that protests have occurred that have not come to light. However, the events most likely to be missed in press accounts are short-term, small, and localized. It is unlikely that information in press sources would be lacking from large-scale events, especially when they last for several days, have eyewitnesses, and result in casualties, as the cases described here are.

[5] The most popular opposition parties were Birlik and Erk. The latter achieved a membership of 40,000 in 1992. See Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 124.

[6] Vitaly Naumkin, *Militant Islam in Central Asia: The Case of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan*, Berkeley Program on Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2003.

[7] Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics*, 94.

at Tashkent's largest university began demonstrating against rises in the price of bread. When police were summoned, students began throwing stones. Over two days, the number of students grew to several thousand, and with the addition of opposition parties (whom Karimov had recently begun to suppress), began marching from the outskirts of Tashkent into the center to demonstrate against Karimov. Police opened fire, dispersing the crowd and killing several students, and arrested many.[8] A spontaneous vacation from school was declared. Subsequently, the government controlled and monitored the campus more tightly and dismantled opposition parties, preventing any subsequent documented case of student mobilization.

Between 1992 and 2004, the Uzbek government exiled the opposition or forced it underground, while retrenching on early economic reforms. The absence of mobilization did not mean that claims were not made on the government—they were simply channeled into violent forms. Several acts of political violence marked the period: four policemen were killed in Namangan in 1997, sparking a brief show of mosque-based support for anti-government activists; a bombing as part of an assassination attempt on the president in 1999 killed 16; and in 2004, two sets of bombings killed up to 40 in March and August. In each case, violence was met swiftly with massive repression including the arrest and summary conviction of many suspected Islamic radicals. Between 1993 and 1996, exiled Islamic leaders coalesced to form the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), reputedly intent on overthrowing the government. Despite much fanfare by analysts,[9] the IMU never made a confirmed attack within Uzbekistan (although they did in Kyrgyzstan) and were mostly destroyed in the US invasion on Afghanistan in 2001.

Declining standards of living through the first decade of independence fed frustrations, which exploded into rioting in 2004 in response to onerous restriction on bazaar trading (see Chapter 3 for background). In an apparently spontaneous outbreak, 300 merchants in Kokand whose goods had been confiscated by the authorities began demanding that they be returned. After beating up several policemen, up to 6,000 traders began rioting, throwing stones, and lighting cars on fire. They disbanded only when the mayor of Kokand promised to temporarily rescind the new law. A similar incident reportedly occurred in Fergana, the capital of the neighboring province, under similar circumstances.[10] Both protests were localized at their respective bazaars, lacking in coordination, and, without any reported leaders, made no specific demands. Rioting on this scale was unsurpassed either before or after, although there have been

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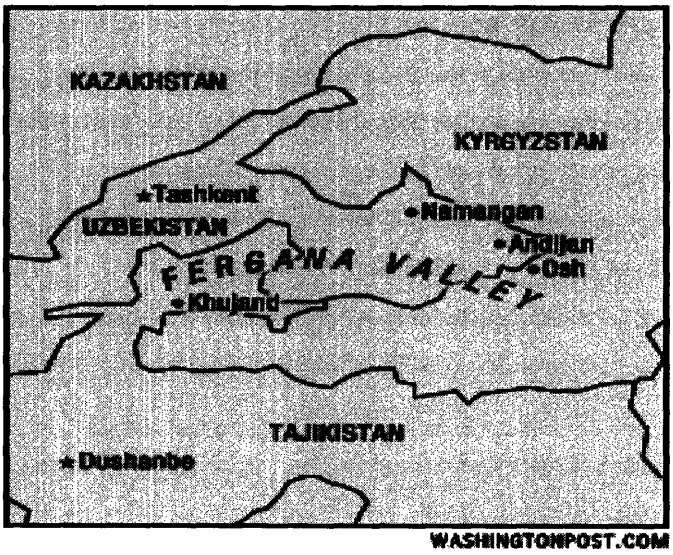
[8] Aleksei Volosevich, "Recalling a Not So Distant Past," fergana.ru, 1-24-06.
[9] "Is Islamic Radicalism Inevitable in Central Asia? Priorities for Engagement," ICG, 12-22-03: 8; Rashid, *Jihad*, Chapter 7.
[10] Matlyuba Azamatova and Hamdam Sulaimonov, "Uzbekistan: Furious Traders Riot," IWPR, 11-2-04.

reports of skirmishes at bazaars occurring between merchants and police seeking bribes or enforcing unpopular laws.[11]

Andijan

The Andijan events of May 2005, in which several thousand people demonstrated on behalf of detained local businessmen, offer a confirmation of the prediction that the mechanisms causing mass mobilization will not be activated in Uzbekistan, where the necessary conditions are absent. The precise nature of events in Andijan is uncertain, and it is infeasible to conduct first-hand interviews. However, the events are worth analyzing for two reasons. First is the fact that, due to its tragic outcome, more information has come to light than from any other episode of contentious action in Uzbekistan, regarding the stimulus for mobilization, the identity of demonstrators, and the basis of their recruitment.[12] Second, analysis of the dynamics of mobilization Uzbekistan tests the extent that the post-independence policies detailed in Chapter 3 differentially influenced the potential for mass mobilization in Uzbekistan versus Kyrgyzstan. Since Andijan lies near the border with Kyrgyzstan, and communities on both sides of the border share similarities such as rural/urban distribution, population density, and ethnic breakdown, such factors can be controlled for. See Figure 8.1 for Andijan's location with respect to Kyrgyzstan.

Figure 7.1: Map of the Fergana Valley



[11] "Uzbekistan: The Andijan Uprising," ICG, 5-25-05, 9.

[12] Organizations that conducted first-hand interviews and released reports included the UN High Commission for Human Rights, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group, and the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute.

The region of Andijan has suffered since the mid-1990s due to the reliance of its economy on cotton and the restriction of trade with southern Kyrgyzstan. The majority of Andijan's population works on collective farms that grow cotton under state quotas, which is sold at artificially low procurement prices.[13] Even as the government limited alternatives to petty trading, it further restricted access to markets for those traders when it destroyed a bridge to the Kara-su bazaar in Kyrgyzstan in response to smuggling.[14] People who had made a living from shuttle trade across the border were required to buy expensive licenses and pay large bribes, which drove many out of business. As a result of the stagnation or decline of these two mainstays of Andijan's economy, people have been reduced to penury.[15]

Mobilization in Andijan began when the state took actions that materially harmed a significant part of the population. In June-July of 2004, 23 Andijan businessmen were arrested and charged with membership in an extremist organization, known as "Akramiya."[16] It is not known for certain whether they really were associated with extremist groups, but it known that they were embedded in the community and provided jobs and social assistance to its members. Residents of Andijan reported that the accused, whose businesses included "food textile, and goods production and merchandise,"[17] acted as community benefactors, donating money to the poor and building schools and orphanages.[18] Coverage of the trial prior to demonstrations emphasized the financial success of the businesses run by the accused, their role in creating rotating credit associations, and their wide public support.[19]

When the trial began in February 2005, friends, relatives, and neighbors of the businessmen started demonstrating on their behalf, on a scale unprecedented in Uzbekistan. As in the Tulip Revolution, demonstrators would gather in the city's central square, where the courthouse and regional administration building are situated, and return home in the evenings. The protests were peaceful, orderly, and focused on the specific demand of releasing the prisoners. The composition of the crowd was diverse, encompassing children as well as the

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[13] "Curse of Cotton," ICG.
[14] "At least 80 Kyrgyz drowned since Uzbekistan Destroyed Cross-border Bridge," Agence France-Presse, 11-4-03.
[15] "Uzbekistan: The Andijan Uprising," 8.
[16] This organization was named after its reputed originator, Akram Yuldashev. Yusuf Rasulov and Matluba Azamatova, "Uzbekistan: Not the Usual Suspects," IWPR, 2-18-05.
[17] "Report of the Mission to Kyrgyzstan by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Concerning the Killings in Andijan of 13-14 May 2005," Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
[18] "Uzbekistan: The Andijan Uprising," 5-25-05.
[19] "Not the Usual Suspects."

elderly, with a high proportion of women.[20] The protesters appeared to be local (supporting the claim that they were neighbors or acquaintances of the accused) and poor (which would be a cross-section of Andijan's population), and there were no indications that Islam was used as a recruiting tactic or that the protesters made demands relating to Islam.[21] On May 13, group of unidentified armed men stormed the prison holding the businessmen, released many of the occupants, and seized the administration building and its employees. The action galvanized new people to participate, with numbers reputedly reaching 10,000.[22] Demonstrators then began airing new grievances—such as poverty, unemployment, and corruption—at a public microphone and, after an announcement that President Islam Karimov would arrive from Tashkent to address the crowd, the numbers grew larger still.

The hopes of the protesters to gain concessions from the government ended abruptly when the Uzbek military fired on the crowd, killing several hundred and dispersing the rest.[23] Instead of galvanizing more people to protest, as in Romania (1989) or Lithuania (1991), the shooting effectively deterred further mobilization. The government quickly closed off access to outsiders into Andijan, expelled all journalists from the city, and concentrated soldiers in regions at the border with the neighboring oblast of Namangan. Thus ended Uzbekistan's brief attempt at change through peaceful mobilization ala the "colored revolutions."

Analysis

Based on press accounts of what occurred, we can test whether the presence or absence of the necessary preconditions—state withdrawal, patronage, and elite networks—helped determine the scale of mobilization in Andijan. The withdrawal of the state and impoverishment in Andijan left communities vulnerable and eager to attract resources from any available source, as in other Central Asian locales, as documented in Chapter 2. It will be recalled from Chapters 3 and 4 that economic opportunities have allowed elites in Kyrgyzstan to fill the void, whereas in Uzbekistan's policies limited the distribution of wealth. However, Andijan may be exceptional (and thus reminiscent of Kyrgyzstan's economic environment) in its greater latitude of regional officials to run the oblast's affairs with minimal intervention from the center.

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[20] Photographs of the crowds in fact show few grown men among the demonstrators.
[21] Galima Bukharbaeva and Matluba Azamatova, "No Requiem for the Dead," IWPR, 5-16-05.
[22] "Bullets Were Falling Like Rain: The Andijan Massacre, May 13, 2005," Human Rights Watch 17(5), June 2005, 19.
[23] Most independent analyses do not dispute that the military fired at unarmed civilians, and place the number of deaths at between 500 and 750, although the government claimed that fewer than 200 were killed.

A relative lack of control by the center may have exempted Andijan from strict regulation of private economic activity. Andijan's hokim (governor), Kobiljon Obidov, had served longer than of any other hokim by a wide margin, from 1993 to 2004. (The average tenure of an Uzbek hokim between 1991 and 2002 was three years).[24] Obidov was rumored to be well-liked by Karimov, and while the hokim fulfilled cotton quotas and grew the regional economy, the president left him in power. Only after wage arrears and gas and electricity shortages had led to demonstrations against the local government, was he removed.[25] Yet it was in this permissive environment that the 23 businessmen were able to open value-producing firms, accumulate capital, and provide patronage in the form of jobs and charity, all independently of the state.

The trigger for mobilization was not anger about unemployment or corruption (although those grievances were later expressed), nor was it diffuse demands for democracy or accountability, but rather the arrest of business elites who were providing jobs and charity to the community. As in Aksy, there appeared to be multiple layers of participants. The first group consisted of close associates of the businessmen and people who were directly affected by the loss of resources.[26] This would be typical of protests in Uzbekistan during trials or following harassment of suspected extremists, when only the family members of the victims have been brave enough to break the law that bans unauthorized protests.[27] At least one brother of one of the businessmen admitted to being a protest leader.[28] Against this, formal community leaders actively tried to suppress mobilization by warning people and propagating the government's version of events.

A second group consisted of people who were not directly related to the businessmen or affected by the trial, but who were linked to the first group through network ties. In early May, this cohort took advantage of the anonymity of increasingly large numbers of demonstrators to express their economic and political grievances.[29] Interviews with people from the square who had fled to Kyrgyzstan after the shootings revealed that information had spread informally though mahallas by word-of-mouth rather than ties developed through civil society, Islamic, or other

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[24] Ilkhamov, "Limits of Centralization," 169.
[25] Kudrat Sharipov, "Deistviya novodo hokima Andijanskoi oblasti Begalieva poka privetstvuyutsya nasileniem [The Actions of the New Hokim of Andijan Oblast Begaliev is Welcomed by the Population for Now," www.fergana.ru, 7-12-04.
[26] "Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May, 2005," OSCE/ODIHR, 11.
[27] See "Uzbekistan: Human Rights Developments 2003," Human Rights Watch.
[28] "Bullets Were Falling," 10.
[29] Human Rights Watch reports the leader at the microphone asking the crowd, "Have you invited people from the mahallas?" "Bullets Were Falling," 19.

groups.[30] Relatives of those who were shot claimed that the victims were unaffiliated bystanders who had come to observe the protests out of curiosity.[31]

Unfortunately, little is known about the elite networks to which the businessmen belonged. If the limitation of the scale of mobilization was the result of a lack of network contacts outside of the region, it would be consistent with the overall effects of Uzbekistan's restrictions on autonomous association. Thus, despite the large number of participants, who gathered through diffusion within a single locale, none of the three mechanisms were activated beyond Andijan. [32] It is also possible that the businessmen were indeed members of an extremist group with ties to Hizb ut-Tahrir, as the government alleged. If so, the armed attack on the prison may have been intended to spark mobilization in other regions through the demonstration effect. Yet if this was their intention, it would indicate their failure to understand the dynamics of mobilization—due to the political situation and the parochial nature of people's interests in Uzbekistan, brokerage would be the only way to expand the movement beyond Andijan.

II: Early Modern England and France

Early modern Europe and post-Soviet Central Asia have several common characteristics that justify a comparison of mobilizations. First, localism and isolation prevailed in pre-industrial Europe. The major rebellions of seventeenth-century Europe occurred in an era prior to the arrival of nationalism and consolidated statehood. Local and provincial ties predominated until the eighteenth century, when technology and external wars conspired to created national identities and facilitate cross-regional communication.[33] Second and related, the most common networks that were mobilized in early modern Europe were located within villages. Solidarity and local institutions facilitated collective action against the state. Third, a power struggle was taking place in this period pitting centralizing monarchies against traditional landowners defending their autonomy and privileges. Although European states were expanding rather than withdrawing as in Kyrgyzstan, in both cases autonomous elites sometimes allied with the masses to increase their

[30] Ibid., 16.
[31] Ibid, 17.
[32] There was one exception, which complicates classification of the Andijan events. On May 14, people in the border town of Kara-su (within Andijan Oblast) "set government buildings on fire and took the district government head, Malikjan Kasimov, hostage." It is not clear whether they made demands similar to those in Andijan, nor who was involved. It is possible that the same people participated in both events, since several hundred people fleeing violence in Andijan had moved into Kyrgyzstan through Kara-su. If the two events had similar aims and tactics, then Andijan would qualify as regional, but only barely. See Sultan Kanazarov, "Calm Before Storm in Karasuu?" IWPR, 5-16-05.
[33] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1990* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1990).

leverage against a stronger state. Fourth, the rebellions in early modern Europe were predominantly reactive in character rather than proactive. Rebels—both elite and mass—were often angered by encroachments of the state in the form of taxes or religious imposition, and then tried to restore the status quo. Rarely did a revolt break out with offensive or progressive aims.[34]

This section compares localized revolts with regional or national ones in England and France between 1500 and 1660[35] to test the generalizeability of the theory of mass mobilization. If the theory is correct, then events of at least regional scope should involve a notable (e.g. noble, landlord, magnate) with at least partial control (i.e. the ability to extract resources) over a given area. Where more of these elites participate, the scale should be larger still. Larger rebellions should therefore occur in regions where elites and masses are bound by patron-client ties or common interests in opposing the state. Finally, we should see larger-scale mobilizations where institutions exist for non-state elites to exchange information and collaborate, and at times when the state is perceived as unable or unwilling to use repression against disloyal elites.

Western Europe was no stranger to rebellion. England and France experienced a greater amount of large-scale mobilization in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than in any other period because the dispersion of wealth as a result of industrialization had empowered local notables, but the state was not yet strong enough to simultaneously co-opt or repress regional alliances.[36] Localized peasant rebellions or *jacqueries* were so frequent that individual rebellions usually do not merit close study by historians. By one count, there were 47 uprisings in France between 1590 and 1635, 282 between 1635 and 1660, and 130 from 1660 to 1715.[37] The last major rebellion of the period, called the Fronde (1648-53), was brutally suppressed. It heralded an age of repression and declining mobilization until the French Revolution over 100 years later. Tilly counts 31 "revolutionary situations" in the same period, primarily fought over tax burdens or rejection of Catholicism.[38] England experienced a smaller amount of localized peasant uprisings—most over the issue of enclosures[39]—but compensated for this by the major struggles

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[34] Robin Briggs, *Early Modern France: 1560-1715* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 114.
[35] This is the period that scholars roughly agree bounds a transition period characterized by struggles between the crown, landlords, and the capitalists, attempts by the crown at state-building, and numerous peasant revolts, which subsided after the state consolidated its control of the provinces. Yves-Marie Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts: The Social Origins of Rebellion in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1990), 326, Tilly dates the century 1598-1715. Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French: Four Centuries of Popular Struggle* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 11.
[36] In the middle ages, peasant revolts were more parochial, directed primarily against their landlords and not against the state. In the seventeenth century, by contrast, local lords often collaborated with peasants against central authority. Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 338.
[37] Ibid., 327.
[38] Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492-1992* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 151.
[39] Perez Zagarin, *Rebels and Rulers, 1500-1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 178.

over dynastic succession, state power, and religion. The majority of uprisings in both countries were contained within a province, and most incidents in which people from several provinces rose up were in fact the spontaneous reactions of people responding to the same provocation in an uncoordinated manner.[40]

In this period, the overarching struggle was over the degree of centralization of the state, which played out differently in England and France, and which shaped the form and scale of contention. In England, where trade was more developed and agricultural capitalism predominated over feudal structures, middle-level elites were relatively more powerful vis-à-vis the monarch than in France, where regional power-brokers had fewer resources.[41] In England, the monarch's overreach in extracting resources led to rebellions by those with capital and the creation of a parliament as a permanent counterweight to royal authority. This body constrained the monarch's ability to extract from the population without its collaboration. France, by contrast, developed a stronger bureaucracy to implement a uniform tax system, and was able to extract resources from the population without the intervention of provincial elites.[42]

The people occupying the middle rung between the monarchy and the masses played a critical role in determining the path of state-building and the ability of the monarch to act. Tilly describes this cohort as:

> powerful intermediaries who enjoyed significant autonomy, hindered state demands that were not in their interest, and profited on their own accounts from the delegated exercise of state power. The intermediaries were often privileged members of subordinate populations, and made their way by assuring rulers of tribute and acquiescence from these populations.[43]

While these elites bridled at the monarch's constant expansion of power, their relations to the people they ruled were ambivalent. They simultaneously extracted rents from the populations in their territory while protecting them and providing financial or food security.

The political allegiance of lords and nobles, nominally directed toward the crown, was conditional and limited by strong ties to people in their region. Interests and identity often coincided as "local solidarities created paternalistic bonds between peasants and seigneurs, who were impelled to protect as well as to exploit their peasant subjects and who had their own interests in resisting fiscality."[44] Patronage held together "social groups which integrated

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[40] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts,* 1990, 322; Zagarin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 177.
[41] Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue*, 111.
[42] Ibid., 119
[43] Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States*, 104.
[44] Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 218.

cultivators of the soil, artisans, officials, priests, and noble landowners by mutual relations of protection and service, a vertical division of society more important than horizontal stratification."[45] Scholars claim that provincialism in the form of distinctive provincial identities, values, and family attachments often outweighed obedience to the state, especially in France,[46] and more commonly in subsistence regions where survival was dependent on cooperation between classes.[47]

War indirectly sparked the grievances that led to the majority of rebellions, but only when they encroached on people's daily routines.[48] During the middle ages, rulers had relied on tributes from nobles to finance their frequent wars. As war makers began raising standing armies to cope with the increasing costs of war in the sixteenth century, both England and France took on large public debts and developed national tax systems.[49] As tax rates became increasingly burdensome (Tilly estimates that they increased from two days' wages in 1620 to four days' wages to eight to twelve days' wages in 1640[50]) to cover the state's ever-growing debts, impoverished peasants sometimes fought back. They would often pass around petitions to repeal the tax and attack tax collectors sent in to enforce compliance.[51] When new taxes threatened the interests of mayors, councils, and lords by diverting to the crown part of their anticipated revenue, these elites could join with aggrieved peasants or lead revolts themselves to protest the taxes.[52]

In the majority of cases of rebellion, the initiation and organization came from within the village and usually continued without the aid of outsiders until it exhausted itself. The ties binding people in daily community life, strengthened by fairs, festivals, and religious events, provided the primary vehicle for organizing collective action against the state. Disgruntled community leaders would gather at village inns and taverns, pass messages informally for people to gather at coordination points, usually on Sundays, or by ringing the town tocsin, and select leaders to articulate demands to local magistrates or to governors in the provincial capital.[53] Separately they would make lists of grievances and send through a representative to take to the

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[45] Sharon Kettering, "Patronage and Politics During the Fronde," *French Historical Studies* 14(3), Spring 1986 (citing Roland Mousnier, "Recherches sur le soulevements populaires en France avant la Fronde," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 5, 1958): 409.
[46] Zagarin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 110.
[47] Brustein and Levi, "The Geography of Rebellion": 480.
[48] Rebellions also occurred in the background of the Protestant Reformation, though in many cases, religious motivation was used by notables in France as a pretext for resisting central authority. See William Brustein, "Class Conflict and Class Collaboration in Regional Rebellions 1500 to 1700," *Theory and Society* 14(4), July 1985: 460.
[49] Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States*, 74.
[50] Ibid., 157.
[51] Tilly, *The Contentious French*, 87-88.
[52] Ibid., 86.
[53] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 323.

governor or king. Sometimes the protesters would bring weapons, destroy the homes of tax collectors or other authority figures, raid the provincial capital if their demands were dismissed, and recruit people from nearby villages.

The majority of mobilizations remained small and limited to a village or set of proximate villages. The ability of villages in seventeenth-century Europe to collaborate and unite was impeded by isolation: "Geographic distance was of great physical and psychological importance, and while each community held no secrets from its members, it was often isolated from the wider world to a degree unthinkable today."[54] Most protests would end when the local governor promised concessions or crushed the revolt forcibly, or the peasants' improvised militia dissolved out of frustration or the need to return to the fields.[55] .

In contrast to peasant revolts, Tilly argues that "the great rebellions of the seventeenth century all built on the complicity or active support of local authorities and regional magnates."[56] Rebellion could spread more widely and deeply when allied with elites than when peasants rallied from the bottom-up and laterally through diffusion. Although peasants on their own could muster enough forces to alarm local governors, it was when a movement found a wealthy patron or "major rivals to the crown" who could unite local rebellions, that opposition took on alarming proportions.[57] Nobles could provide protection, organization, arms, and even the use of their castle to rebel against tax collectors.[58]

Alliances between peasants and their landlords were variable yet critical in determining scale. Brustein argues that class-collaborative rebellions against the state were more likely in regions based on subsistence than commercial agriculture. Where the former prevailed,[59] landlords were dependent on their cultivators and had an interest in providing for productive labor. This economic interdependence often aligned the two classes' interests regarding enclosures and taxes. The two groups would therefore be expected to collaborate against the state more often than in a commercial agricultural regime and where they had greater interaction with third parties.[60] Brustein and Levi add several factors to explain the variation in determining whether peasants and landlords unite in rebellion, including access to resources, religious

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[54] Thomas Munck, *Seventeenth-Century Europe: State, Conflict and the Social Order in Europe, 1598-1700, Second Edition* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 287.
[55] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 1990, 324.
[56] Tilly, *The Contentious French*, 40.
[57] Tilly, *European Revolutions*, 158.
[58] Karen Barkey, "Rebellious Alliances: The State and Peasant Unrest in Early Seventeenth-Century France and the Ottoman Empire," *American Sociological Review* 56(6), Dec. 1991: 702.
[59] Subsistence agriculture predominated in western and southwestern France, northwestern and southwestern England, and northern Spain. Brustein, "Class Conflict": 450.
[60] Brustein, "Class Conflict": 447.

homogeneity, communal (i.e. village) institutions, and regional parliaments that facilitate collective action among nobles.[61]

In the Croquant rebellion of the 1630s, an ordinary tax revolt became a low-level war when the residents of the communes of Perigord created a peasant army of 6,000 men.[62] Several prominent noblemen led the rebellion, and lower-level seigneurs were compelled by peasants to support the rebels' aims, though many already sympathized with their demands and took an advantage of a pretext to oppose the crown.[63] In the subsequent months, even though the initial uprising was suppressed, the neighboring provinces also rebelled, provoked by contact with rebels and a manifesto asserting demands on the state. Yet although there was rebellious activity in many villages throughout western and central France in response to the same general grievance, the outbreaks remained isolated and did not unite into a single movement.[64] With few exceptions, uprisings that did not gain the patronage of intermediaries remained isolated, were easily suppressed, and had little political impact.

Brokerage was likely to occur when elites possessed significant resources and autonomy. For example, the majority of rebellions in France in the period in question took place in the southwestern part of the country because of grievances and opportunities. In this region, which had been fought over by English and French monarchs, localities enjoyed greater autonomy from the center than regions that had submitted to French rule longer ago. Residents of the region were more sensitive to new taxes and capitalists were able to amass greater resources without paying tribute to the crown.[65] Brustein also notes that low population growth and high population dispersion in this region led landlords to offer contracts more favorable to peasants than in other regions, for example, by stipulating the landlords share the burden of paying state taxes.[66] Thus, the region from the Pyrenees to the Loire saw not only a greater frequency or revolts, but also greater numbers of participants and the majority of the country's rebellions that achieved regional scale.[67]

When the issue was sufficiently general to ally nobles and magnates from several regions with shared grievances with peasants who benefited from the alliance, mobilization would

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[61] Brustein and Levi, "The Geography of Rebellion": 481.
[62] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 130.
[63] Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 221, Briggs, 117.
[64] Berce writes that "there was never any question of a general, concerted rebellion. The idea was inconceivable. These scattered manifestations of an inchoate uprising took place on their own accord in different parts of the country, and no single model or incident was needed to spark them off." Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 1990, 144. See also Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 222.
[65] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 333.
[66] Brustein, "Class Conflict": 454.
[67] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 322.

combine diffusion and brokerage to achieved wider scope. Two examples, one from each country, illustrate how elite brokerage was the critical factor in achieving national mobilization.

Major rebellions in England were often tied in with religious conflict, as religion often coincided with dynastic struggles and provided a grievance used to mobilize the masses. As a case in point, the so-called Pilgrimage of Grace (1536) in northern England was nominally a protest against Henry VIII's attacks on Catholicism, but opportunistic aristocrats joined to curb absolutist rule.[68] The region, including York and Nottingham, was especially prone to rebellion due to two factors: the relative independence of nobles because of the proximity of the Scottish border, and the extreme poverty of the population, which was dependent on the clergy for survival.[69] Local outbreaks of indignation occurred when the king began expropriating monasteries, which had provided peasants with benefits such as "charity, hospitality, the provision of tenancies, or other benefits."[70] For reasons of ideology and power, elites from the region joined and "this involvement of men in the governing class was crucial" to mobilizing the peasantry and sustaining an insurgency.[71] Eventually, a "Council of pilgrims" was organized comprising lords, knights, and commoners uniting the mobilizing towns in a single movement that put together petitions to the king demanding not only restoration of the authority of the Catholic Church, but also to reform parliament and rein in the power of the king.[72] Eventually, the Pilgrimage capitulated after the king promised to make concessions (on which he later backtracked), having amassed an army of 36,000 people but never expanding beyond the northern counties.[73]

In the Fronde, "shifting alliances of urban power-holders and great warlords opposed royal demands for greater subordination and financial support in connection with the enormous expenses of wars against Habsburg power."[74] In contrast to previous French rebellions mostly revolving around peasant grievances and mobilizing structures, the Fronde movement represented a wider diversity of regional actors and communities coordinated over space and more-or-less united toward achieving common aims. It is also distinguished from ordinary peasant uprisings because "the masses became involved only as followers of other social groups."[75] The Fronde began as the confluence of an anti-tax rebellion in Paris and demands by Parisian judges to

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[68] Brustein, "Class Conflict": 459.
[69] Yves-Marie Berce, *Revolt and Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester : Manchester University Press, 1987), 167.
[70] Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 23.
[71] Ibid., 25.
[72] Ibid., 27-28.
[73] Ibid., 25; Berce, *Revolt and Revolution*, 168.
[74] Tilly, *European Revolutions*, 129.
[75] Berce, *History of Peasant Revolts*, 320

restrict the fiscal policies of King Louis XIV and his chief minister.[76] Participation by nobles, who, like their dependents had an interest in curtailing royal authority, expanded the movement throughout most of western France.[77] Governors with provincial clienteles mobilized provincial nobles, who, in turn, used their patronage ties to raise peasant armies.[78] Regional parliaments, which Brustein and Levi contend facilitate rebellion by providing a forum in which elites can exchange information and cooperate, enabled elites to broker between mobilizing locales and unite localized protests into provincial movements.[79]

In the eighteenth century, the king and parliament in England reached an understanding that limited the potential for their disagreements to degenerate into war. Parliament became the most convenient forum through which to express grievances, and popular revolts declined accordingly. In France, after suppressing the Fronde, the state regularized a system of agents serving in the provinces, usurping the power of some local notables, co-opting others and shifting people's loyalties from the provinces to the center.[80] The advance of capitalism and a strong state aligned the interests of the crown and wealthy elites in opposition to the peasantry. Rebellions arising out of bottom-up indignation and the creation of peasant armies continued as before, but without the aid of elite allies to who had "deserted popular rebellion," the ability to bridge geographical gaps declined and the scale of protest was severely limited.[81] This state of affairs held up until the state overreached in its need to finance foreign wars, causing the Revolution of 1789.[82]

By the nineteenth century, after nationalism and industrialization had dramatically reshaped society, contention had transformed into the forms we see today—of mobilization around identity, organization on a vast scale in disparate parts of the country, and the peaceful use of mass demonstrations as opposed to violence. The state's imposition of direct rule and its increased power to surveil and monitor reduced the potential for all social groups to foment rebellion.[83] The state's consolidation of a monopoly on violence further limited the potential for secessionist movements. Communities were replaced as the basis of collective action by cross-

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[76] Tilly, *European Revolutions*, 159.
[77] Brustein, "Class Conflict": 461.
[78] Kettering, "Patronage and Politics": 412.
[79] The first parliaments to rebel after a change of power in Paris were those in Aix, Rouen, and Bordeaux. Ibid., 412.
[80] Tilly, *European Revolutions*, 129, Tilly, *The Contentious French,* 40.
[81] Tilly, *European Revolutions*, 160.
[82] The dynamics of the French Revolution also follow the outlines of the theory, as a critical mass of bourgeoisie joined with local parliaments to lead the peasantry, but because of the major social and economic changes that had taken place since the Fronde, the different background conditions resembled less a state-building rural society and more a semi-industrialized polity with a growing civil society.
[83] Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States*, 114.

cutting interest groups, which obviated the need of elite allies and enabled a wider diversity of people to protest on a larger scale than in previous centuries.[84]

III: Rural China

The rarity of mass mobilization in China presents a greater puzzle than in Uzbekistan. With so many aggrieved people (who took part in 87,000 documented protests in 2005[85]), increasingly accustomed to the mechanics of contention and cognizant of dissatisfaction in other regions, what has prevented them from uniting their demands and increasing the scale of protests? As with Uzbekistan (another "level-7" autocracy), repression alone is not the answer, since small-scale mobilization is a frequent occurrence and is usually dealt with peacefully. The answer lies in the parochial nature of protesters' demands and the weakness of cross-regional elite networks.

In the twentieth century, China was witness to mass mobilization on a grand scale relying on the "brokerage-between-and-diffusion-within" model of organization explicated in Chapter 1, but that template is less viable today. According to Skocpol, the Chinese peasantry prior to the Communist takeover was dominated by the gentry class and therefore "not in a structural position to revolt collectively and autonomously..."[86] The Communist Revolution of 1949 overcame this weakness by infiltrating cadres into villages, railing against tyrannical landlords and promising to redistribute land, and organizing peasant committees.[87] The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established rural bases across the country from existing village militias that had been created in the 19th century to defend from invaders.[88] After the Communist victory, a CCP network that penetrated villages nationwide remained in place to organize production and carry out mass mobilization campaigns.[89] Today, however, besides the CCP, there are no organizations that unite the diverse regions and groups that make up today's China, especially across the sparsely populated rural areas far from the coast. Social segmentation stemming from the recent

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[84] Tilly, *The Contentious French*, 74.
[85] *South China Morning Post*, 2-10-06.
[86] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 239. Perry disagrees with this characterization of the Chinese peasantry, however, noting the cross-class nature and organizational potential of "villages, lineages, secret societies, sects, markets, etc." Elizabeth J. Perry, "Collective Violence in China, 1880-1980," *Theory and Society* 13(3), May 1984: 443.
[87] Ian F. W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 74.
[88] Tetsuya Kataoka, *Resistance and Revolution in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 104.
[89] Jonathan Unger, *The Transformation of Rural China* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 11.

influences of economic fragmentation, privatization, and decollectivization also militate against mass mobilization.[90]

Although the CCP permits no rivals to its political domination, it introduced reforms that reduced the role of the state in society, especially in rural areas. After Mao's death, the Chinese government undertook several major reforms, including the decollectivization of agriculture, experimentation with a market economy, and devolution of decision-making to the local level. The state ceased providing financing for health care, welfare, schools, and public security,[91] relying on privatization and the initiative of village leaders to compensate, even while the state continued to enforce meddlesome laws such as the one-child policy.[92] In the late 1980s, village elections were instituted to improve accountability at the local level and channel demands for political change.[93] However, critics have argued that few elections have in fact been democratic and, in any case, real power rests with the Party-appointed village secretaries.[94]

The devolution of political and economic control created opportunities for new elites to develop independent power centers. The state provided incentives for local governments to attract investment or to engage in business themselves.[95] Village and township leaders, who manage or distribute a substantial amount of the village's resources, have gained the most from the opportunities for private enterprise.[96] In the 1980s, team leaders who managed work brigades, as liaisons between the state and the village, were already in a position to profit from side payments and accrue informal authority.[97] Upon decollectivization and market reforms, team leaders-turned-entrepreneurs have benefited from excess profits that accrue to them legally as enterprise managers and from side payments that come from granting licenses, designating land, and awarding preferential tax rates.[98] Thus, the resources that rural elites with burgeoning

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[90] Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, eds., *Chinese Society: Conflict, Change, and Resistance, 2nd Edition* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 17.
[91] Anne F. Thurston, "Muddling Toward Democracy: Political Change in Grassroots China," United States Institute of Peace, August 1998: 8.
[92] Tyrene White, "Domination, Resistance, and Accommodation in China's One-child Campaign," in Perry and Selden, eds., *Chinese Society*,185.
[93] Yingying Chi, "China's Rural Challenge," *Harvard International Review* 22(2), July 2000.
[94] Jean C. Oi and Scott Rozelle, "Elections and Power: The Locus of Decision-Making in Chinese Villages," *The China Quarterly* 162, June 2000: 531; Unger, *The Transformation*), 219.
[95] Jean C. Oi, "The Role of the Local State in China's Transitional Economy," *The China Quarterly* 144, December 1995: 1137. Though 1983, most enterprises were owned by local government. Thereafter, most were privately owned. Jean C. Oi, *Rural China Takes Off: Institutional Foundations of Economic Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 62.
[96] As of 1998, there were 20 million village enterprises in China employing 130 million people and producing one-third of national GDP. Gilley, 149.
[97] Jean Oi, "Communism and Clientelism: Rural Politics in China," *World Politics* 37(2), January 1985: 256.
[98] Unger, *Transformation*, 143-46.

local economies have accumulated have changed the balance of power between the central government and localities. As journalist Bruce Gilley writes, "The doyen of party sociologists in China, Dang Guoyin, warned in an internal report in 1998 of 'a new power class' that was forming in rural areas, which was forming 'independent interest groups' that openly challenged central policies."[99] However, Chinese entrepreneurs are more likely to seek accommodation with the state rather than confront it.[100]

The ability of the new stratum of Chinese elites to oppose or resist state policies is limited by the collective action problems they face. The CCP is the sole political party and the only institution that spans the entire country.[101] Like Uzbekistan, the Chinese government has pre-empted the formation of cross-regional networks outside of the state and Party. The CCP has brooked no opposition to its rule, as the events of 1989, its treatment of dissidents, and control of the media have shown.[102] To hedge its bets, even while dealing conciliatorily with protestors, the government has pre-empted autonomous coalitions from forming by cracking down on NGOs, especially foreign ones, out of fear they could broker coalitions of the opposition, especially between urban and rural discontents.[103] Several mechanisms for monitoring local officials, including investigations by the Ministry of Supervision, regular inspections by higher officials, and encouragement of Party and non-Party members to report the "misdeeds" of local leaders, place an additional barrier on collective action and discourage disloyal behavior.[104]

Mobilization in Rural China

Partial state withdrawal, rapid development, and political reforms have all been sources of discontent among people in the countryside. Despite local elections, corruption among village leaders has been rampant. They have taken advantage of their authority by arbitrarily seizing land and selling it to outside investors,[105] retaining rents from the sale of village property, and pocketing bribes for providing basic services. Rising unemployment (or underemployment) has

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[99] Bruce Gilley, *Model Rebels: The Rise and Fall of China's Richest Village* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 161.
[100] Kellee Tsai, "Capitalists without a Class: Political Diversity among Private Entrepreneurs in China ," *Comparative Political Studies* 38(9), November 2005: 1130-1158.
[101] Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, "Introduction: Reform and Resistance in Contemporary China," in Perry and Selden, eds., *Chinese Society,* 7.
[102] "Democracy, Chinese-Style," *The Economist*, 10-13-05.
[103] Ibid., 19; "The Cauldron Boils," *The Economist*, 9-29-05.
[104] Yang Zhong, *Local Government and Politics in China: Challenges From Below* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 146-53.
[105] Kathy Wilhelm, "China's Peasants Angered by Economic, Political Abuses," *Associated Press*, 7-21-93.

forced many rural citizens to migrate to cities, and fed rises in crime and alcoholism. [106] Massive development projects like the Three Gorges Dam have forced the displacement of millions from their ancestral homes with insufficient compensation.[107] The proliferation of factories has also polluted the air and water of villages as entrepreneurs have been able to skirt environmental laws that are poorly enforced.[108]

The losers from the new changes, especially in rural areas, have responded to social dislocation in part by mobilizing to express their grievances. The tactics they have adopted are diverse, including "collective petitioning, demonstrations, besieging government compounds, sacking offices and the homes of local bureaucrats, destroying official vehicles, and rioting."[109] Compared with Central Asia, the amount of mobilization is staggering: The Chinese government estimates that in 2004 there were 74,000 protests involving 3.4 million people and 58,000 the previous year, compared with 10,000 in 1994.[110] The majority of claims involve local issues, whereas ideological or rights-based grievances are rarely voiced.[111] Protests have taken place in most regions of the country—in 337 cities and 1,955 counties (out of 2,861) in 2004.[112] Most last for only a few days, ending when the grievance is satisfactorily addressed or forcibly neutralized. For the most part, the government has responded by making concessions and has rarely used force.[113]

In contrast to Kyrgyzstan, where the "haves" are more likely to initiate mobilization than the "have-nots," the initiators of Chinese protest are often people who have not benefited from China's booming economy. They are from the rural intelligentsia, who possess organizational skills, access to information, and prestige.[114] They have also been called "organizing outsiders," including "prosperous peasants, lower middle-class city dwellers, taxi drivers, small businessmen, and an array of new social groups..."[115] In cases where a complaint is directed against a higher level of government than the village, protest leaders are often village cadres, who may rebel

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[106] "Misery Behind the Migration," *The Economist*, 11-16-00.
[107] "Dam Shame," *The Economist*, 7-4-02.
[108] "Cadres vs. Villagers - Can China's government manage rising rural conflict," *Asiaweek*, 5-21-99.
[109] O'Brien, "Collective Action": 146.
[110] "The Cauldron Boils," *The Economist*, 9-29-05.
[111] O'Brien, "Collective Action": 144.
[112] "The Cauldron Boils."
[113] Exceptions include a protest in December 2005 of the appropriation of land for an electricity plant in the relatively wealthy region of Dongzhou, in which police opened fire and killed at least three people. In a sign of the government's concern about popular perceptions, it arrested the arrested the commander reputedly responsible for the violence. "As the Economy Booms, So Does Unrest," *The Economist*, 12-13-05.
[114] Thomas P. Bernstein and Xiaobo Lu, *Taxation without Representation in Contemporary Rural China* (New York: Cambridge, 2003), 148-49.
[115] Bruce Gilley, "Civil Society: China's Organizing Outsiders," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 2-15-01.

against a perceived lack of support from above and sympathize with the heavy tax burdens that peasants face.[116] There have also been cases in which (elected) village leaders have themselves initiated and financed mobilization against government policies, since they are more likely to identify with the populations they serve than unelected cadres.[117]

Inevitably, some newly empowered village leaders have attracted the attention of the state when they have failed to comply with state edicts or shown too much independence of thought—and used or threatened mobilization to defend themselves. In a well-documented case, the Party secretary of the poor village of Daqiu, taking advantage of early reforms, used his connections to build several factories producing various industrial materials.[118] The factories were later expanded into conglomerates that reinvested earnings to spawn over 200 smaller village firms. Exploiting the demand from across the country, the village became the wealthiest in China. Having gained national notoriety, the village leader, Yu Zuomin began challenging some the central government's policies. He articulated a new philosophy at odds with the party line, advocating less meddling by the bureaucracy and more conspicuous consumption by peasants. After the government attempted to arrest Yu for a murder in which he was indirectly responsible, he ordered the village to mobilize to defend it with arms. When the Politburo decided that Yu had flaunted party doctrine for too long, he was finally arrested two months later.

The Daqiu case, though exceptional, illustrates how new elites may convert wealth into political loyalty, in a process similar to that Kyrgyzstan. The enrichment of a village as a result of manufacturing was a common occurrence through the country in the 1980's and 1990's. Only the decision of the Party secretary to openly express political independence, especially to the point of criticizing China's leadership, was unusual. Whereas village leaders and farmers who protest on concrete issues such as pollution or land expropriation are usually tolerated, those who cross the line and challenge the political system are more often repressed. The residents of Daqiu supported Yu not because they agreed with his opposition to CCP ideology, but because their interests coincided with his. In a historically impoverished village that had not only prospered

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[116] Ibid., 153

[117] In one such case, several village leaders along the Chaushui River in central China united against Party authorities to protest against pollution from upstream mines. After demonstrators destroyed several mine sites and police did not intervene, 60 village leaders, maintaining contact by cellular phone, threatened to resign if the pollution did not cease, and then conducted a sit-in in the county center. After threatening to mobilize 100,000 villagers, county officials promised to close the factories. No village leaders were punished. Edward Cody, "China's Rising Tide of Protest Sweeping Up Party Officials," *Washington Post*, 9-12-05

[118] This summary taken from Gilley, *Model Rebels*.

under Yu, but also built new schools, hospitals, and brick houses,[119] villagers became dependent on Yu.

Although protests in China are usually localized and isolated, as in Kyrgyzstan, when an issue affects many people simultaneously, mobilization may reach a wider scale through brokerage. In a small number of cases, where grievances have had greater resonance, there has been spreading across counties, though newspaper reports do not indicate how they are organized. In 1997, 200,000 peasants, along with township and village cadres, in 15 counties from 87 townships of Jiangxi province protested against high taxes, grain prices, and wage arrears.[120] In an unrelated "peasant rebellion," 200,000 farmers from all 12 counties of Hubei province protested against corrupt Party cadres. After a week of rioting, burning buildings, and hostage-taking, the government in both cases relented by agreeing to the protestors' demands and granting amnesties to those arrested.[121] This example indicates that, where an issue simultaneously affects numerous communities, they are able to coordinate to pool their grievances. However, events of such large scale are the exception rather than the rule.[122] Even the mobilizations of 200,000 people were contained within a single province, where the interaction necessary for diffusion or the inter-elite contacts of brokerage was likely to be stronger.

To summarize, post-Mao reforms appear to have facilitated local mobilization even while making mass mobilization more difficult. Chinese village leaders, like Kyrgyz autonomous elites, possess ties to communities, plentiful resources, and the ability to organize collective action. They have used their resources on numerous occasions to initiate mobilization against the government, yet we have rarely seen elites coalesce horizontally as in Kyrgyzstan, for several reasons. First, village leaders are less likely to be punished when initiating mobilization over local and particular issues than when making a political statement, as the Daqiu incident demonstrated. By their very nature, then, the concerns over which village leaders are likely to act are unlikely to be shared by other leaders at the same moment. Only a simultaneous challenge by the state in multiple locales or regions would be likely to trigger simultaneous mobilization. Second, village leaders lack strong horizontal networks (such as parties [besides the CCP], interest group, economic guilds) through which to associate with other leaders to identify common interests. The absence of such information networks makes it less likely that they will coordinate mobilization across village or regional lines. These problems are compounded among

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[119] Ibid., 53.
[120] "Thousands of Peasants Reportedly Protest Against Local Party Levies," *BBC Monitoring: Asia-Pacific*, 10-13-97.
[121] Ibid.
[122] O'Brien, "Collective Action": 141.

the rural intelligentsia, who lack political and economic resources, and are thus even less capable of brokering across communities.

Ultimately, the difference in outcomes between China and Kyrgyzstan can be explained by differences in the extent of political reform. Economic opportunities in China empowered several types of actors to challenge the government over local grievances, but whereas Kyrgyzstan's early political opening (which later closed somewhat) allowed elites to associate and develop opposition networks, which turned out to be critical in uniting different regions in protest against the government, China's Communist Party maintained a monopoly on political power (despite the advent of village elections) and prevented independent interest groups from operating, which limited the potential for mass mobilization.

IV: Shiites in Iraq

The Middle East has historically seen its share of citizen activism outside of the formal political system, from demonstrations and strikes to Islamic mobilization to revolution.[123] This despite (or as a result of) heavy-handed repression by authoritarian states, which have shaped the scope of contestation so as to ensure the continuation of regimes.[124] Iraq presents the most interesting test case for the theory of mass mobilization developed in Central Asia, for several reasons. Identity in Iraq has historically been expressed primarily in terms of villages, neighborhoods, and tribes. The Ba'ath party dismantled civil society and prevented the development of widespread networks apart from the state. Yet immediately after the fall of Saddam's regime in 2003, one sectarian group, the Shiites, were able to mobilize massive amounts of people seemingly effortlessly. Just two weeks after the fall of Baghdad in April 2003, up to one million Shiites marched to Karbala, in a pilgrimage marking the end of the month of Ashura.[125] In early 2004, up to 100,000 Shiites in Baghdad and 30,000 in Basra demonstrated against US plans to transfer power to Iraqis through regional caucuses rather than direct elections.[126] And on the two-year anniversary of regime change, tens of thousands of Shiites gathered peacefully in three cities simultaneously demanding the withdrawal of US troops.[127]

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[123] See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Introduction: Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory," Wiktorowicz, ed., *Islamic Activism.*
[124] Lust-Okar, *Structuring Conflict*, Chapter 2.
[125] "Pilgrims Flood Karbala on Final Holy Day," *Washington Post*, 4-23-03.
[126] Hamza Hendawi, "Iraqi Shiites Demand Direct Elections in Peaceful Protest," *Associated Press,* 1-19-04.
[127] Dexter Filkins, "Demonstrators in Iraq Demand That US Leave," *New York Times*, 4-10-05.

Sunnis, on the other hand, have not been able to carry out successful widespread collective action.[128]

That so many people could mobilize so quickly points toward the existence of a hidden network that was allowed to persist, in a dormant state, even while the Ba'ath regime under Saddam atomized society. One basis for mobilization that had persisted under Saddam but was weaker in Kyrgyzstan is religion, which provided a unifying identity with historical roots around which Iraqis could identify. I argue that the networks that mobilized in 2003 were enabled not by religious bonds per se, but by public goods provision during the Ba'ath era by clerics and parties through mosques, which maintained cross-regional networks through brokerage. These intricate networks eluded the grasp of the state and allowed elites to retain the loyalty of the populace even while they were closely monitored and prevented from building civil society from the ground up.

While the parallels with Kyrgyzstan are not obvious, certain features of the Iraqi state and its impact on society had a similar influence on mass mobilization potential. First, the weakness of the state historically in providing public goods in Shiite areas presented opportunities for mosques and wealthy families to provide patronage to compensate. Second, even while the Ba'ath brooked no organized political opposition, it did not limit autonomous economic activity to the same extent, and philanthropic donations from outside Iraq strengthened the heads of families that had traditionally run the holy cities of Karbala and Najaf. These families provided patronage and established ties with tightly knit communities. Third, even while clerics maintained ties with worshippers by assisting them materially, potential opposition figures were harassed or co-opted, limiting their ability to act collectively. Only when the state collapsed in 2003 could clerics in different regions coordinate to simultaneously mobilize latent networks of followers to advance Shiite interests. As in Kyrgyzstan, Shiite mass mobilization occurred through brokerage. However, though the mass mobilization infrastructure was structurally the same as Kyrgyzstan's, cultural context makes a critical difference: The brokers in Iraq were clerics using mosques and not business elites acting through autonomous informal networks.

Autonomous Shiite institutions, which would become the basis of mobilization, predated the monarchy and Ba'ath rule. Shiite clerics in the shrine cities of Najaf and Karbala ran a quasi-state in the Ottoman period parallel to the Sunni administration.[129] As the world's center of Shiite worship and learning, these cities' religious institutions ran on donations from abroad and taxes from pilgrims. In turn, they trained students from around the world in Shiite madrassahs,

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[128] David Siddhartha Patel, "Ayatollahs on the Pareto Frontier: The Institutional Bases of Shiite Religious Authority in Iraq" (Working Paper), 2005: 28.
[129] Faleh A. Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement in Iraq* (London: Saqi, 2003), 64.

provided services to local Shiites, and often raised their own militias as well.[130] Ayatollahs, who hold the highest rank in Shiite jurisprudence, are an integral component of Shia society: besides handing out welfare payments, they also preside over Shiite courts, mediate disputes between tribes, and rule on ordinary aspects of daily life.[131]

The structure of Shiite society is well suited for collective action because of the hierarchical form of organization. In contrast to Sunnis, Shiites have historically submitted to the decrees of a living cleric—a *marja*, or object of emulation—who interprets Islamic law and whose decisions are absolute and binding.[132] Power is exercised by clerics who preside over networks of followers through their former students, who are also linked by intermarriage and regional or kinship ties.[133] Scholars have noted the network properties of Shiite scholarly communities: "Patronage networks linking the teacher and his former disciples who resided as 'ulama' in various Shia localities came close to the ideal type of radically connected network. In this model each member is directly linked to the central figure, i.e., the teacher, and members communicate with one another only through him."[134]

Throughout the Ottoman, British, and independence periods, Shiites bridled under rule by the minority Sunnis, and used their organizational skills to level the playing field. The Sunni Ottoman rulers placed Sunnis in control of Iraq and tried to strengthen central authority over nomadic tribes and wrest control from the religious aristocracy.[135] In 1920-21, the British cobbled together what became modern Iraq and placed a Sunni monarch in control over Shiite objections. Historically divided by socio-economic division, under the monarchy, Sunni favoritism and common grievances caused "a reconstruction of Shiite identity along communal and Islamic lines."[136]

Under the Sunni Ba'ath regime (1968-2003), the government repressed the majority Shiites and co-opted their leaders. Large rebellions in 1977, 1979, and 1991 were met with severe repression.[137] The regime cracked down on the Shiite leadership: Clerical leaders were killed or driven into exile. In the 1990s, following the Gulf War, Friday sermons were banned, seminary students ceased studying in Najaf, and the center of gravity of Shia Islam shifted to

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[130] Ibid., 65.
[131] Alex Berenson, "Anti-US Cleric Harangues, but Iraqi Shiites Heed Four Ayatollahs," *New York Times*, 10-22-03.
[132] Juan Cole, "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions in Post Ba'athist Iraq," *Middle East Journal* 57(4), October 2003: 545.
[133] Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement*, 157.
[134] Meir Litvak, *Shi'i Scholars of Nineteenth-Century Iraq* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 28.
[135] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 12.
[136] Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement*, 67.
[137] Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 216, 220.

Iran.[138] Beginning in the 1960s, as a reaction to Sunni nationalism and the rise of the secular Ba'ath Party, conservative clerics from Najaf created the Da'wa Party, which politicized Shia identity in opposition to Ba'ath rule.[139] The Da'wa recruited mullahs and propagandized at mosques in the shrine cities through clandestine cells, concentrating on migrants from the rural south and pilgrims taking part in ceremonial processions.[140]

Though civil society was undeveloped and political expression banned, Shiites managed to maintain a cohesive structure through patronage and mosques. Traditionally the budget for *hawza*, the network of religious institutions in the holy cities, came from worshippers, who paid seven types of taxes to shrine custodians, in addition to money from abroad.[141] In return, the hawza gave charity to the poor and provided social services to maintain the loyalty of believers, in addition to funding their scholarly activities. In order to reduce its political weight, the Ba'ath dissolved religious trusts in 1978, co-opted the merchant class, and attempted to marginalize the Shiite leadership by subsidizing Shiite religious activities through the Ministry of Religious Endowments.[142] Yet the hawza still managed to receive funds from abroad (mostly from Shiites in the Gulf States), averaging $36 million per year in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[143] After the first Gulf War, Shiite religious charities helped to mitigate the effects of UN sanctions by providing "food, medical care, and certainty in a world of macabre arbitrariness," which the state could (or would) not provide.[144] Thus, even during Ba'ath rule, when repression of Shiite elites was as its height, Shiites of the establishment still managed to run their state-within-a-state.

In the final eight years of Saddam's rule, even as the most charismatic Shiites were in exile or conspicuously absent from politics, several leaders were able to build and maintain organizational networks in their regions. Saddam's success in weakening Shiite networks was evident in a split that occurred between mainstream and radical clerics. The Shiites were divided into two camps, each of which had developed large followings based on the patronage of their respective communities. The first was a radical, politicized group centered in Nasariya and the slums of east Baghdad, led by Mohammad Sadiq, and after his assassination, his son Muqtada al-Sadr. Sadiq had established a network of mosques and Shiite courts that operated underground

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[138] Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq, 2nd Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 279; Cole, "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions": 550.
[139] Ibid., 138.
[140] Hanna Batatu, "Iraq's Underground Shi'i Movements," *MERIP Reports* 102, Islam and Politics, January 1982: 5; "Iraq's Shiites Under Occupation," ICG, 9-9-03: 12.
[141] Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq*, 205.
[142] "Iraq's Shiites Under Occupation," 8.
[143] Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement*, 151.
[144] Ibid., 272.

and financed hospitals, schools, and charity for the poor.[145] Even before the downfall of the regime, two million pilgrims had made the journey to Karbala in each 1999 and 2001 under the ideologized leadership of Sadiq.[146]

The second faction was the quietist, or non-political, school led by Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the highest-ranking cleric in Iraq, and therefore recognized by mainstream believers as the preeminent figure in the Shiite community.[147] Sistani's leadership, centered in Najaf, had wider appeal among the middle class. His faction also controlled a vast network of mosques and received most of the funds arriving from Shiite supporters abroad.[148]

Shiite Mobilization

The organization of both groups showed itself when the fall of the regime left a vacuum of power, which was quickly filled by the Shiites. When Saddam was deposed, Sadr immediately reopened mosques that had been shut since the early 1990s[149] and mobilized his supporters, unsuccessfully, to gain the upper hand over Sistani. After the breakdown of the state, Shiites set about fulfilling state functions, such as garbage collection and security, by using neighborhood mosques to coordinate collective action.[150] When looting began in Baghdad, hawza militias organized to stop looting and protect hospitals.[151] In east Baghdad and Basra, Shiite militias openly enforced Islamic law, banning music, requiring women to wear the veil, destroying liquor stores, and driving away Sunni property owners.[152] In the first weeks after the regime change, Shiites proved that they were better organized that Sunnis, had large numbers, and were politically active.

Shiite leaders used numbers and coordination to press their political advantage. Believing that Shiites constituted the majority of Iraqis and cognizant that democratic elections would favor his sect, Sistani did not oppose the American occupation. He judiciously used his authority to mobilize followers to influence the transitional government by demonstrating Shiite power. Though Sistani was included in the Coalition Provisional Authority's (CPA) discussions and unofficial negotiations about Iraq's future, US officials did not anticipate his ability to

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[145] Cole, "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions": 553; Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement*, 273.
[146] Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement*, 272.
[147] "Iraq's Shiites," 9.
[148] "Iraqi Backgrounder: What Lies Beneath," ICG, 10-1-02: 33.
[149] Cole, "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions": 554.
[150] Patel, "Ayatollahs on the Pareto Frontier," 8.
[151] Elizabeth Neuffer, "Shiite Leaders Run the Show in Najaf," *Boston Globe*, 5-8-03.
[152] David Rieff "The Shiite Surge," *New York Times*, 2-1-04.

mobilize.[153] This influence only became clear when, in January 2004, 100,000 Shiites were coordinated through mosques to mobilize at a common time and place to indicate Sistani's displeasure with the CPA's plan to hold local caucuses instead of direct elections.[154]

Sadr mobilized his followers through his own mosque network. Soon after the occupation began, he mobilized 20,000 in Baghdad who called for the departure of the US.[155] In May and June 2004, there were several more demonstrations in Baghdad and Basra, of up to 10,000 participants—none as large as Sistani could mobilize—against the US and British militaries, calling for the establishment of an Islamic state and rule by clerics.[156] There is no doubt that Sadr's demonstrations were organized rather than spontaneous: mosque sermons would rail against the occupation, and protesters were often bused in to the protest sites.[157] Sadr also organized his supporters into armed militias, which were used to demonstrate his political muscle vis-à-vis the occupation and Shiite rivals.

Perhaps the power to wield the masses for political advantage is better demonstrated through what Shiites have not done than what they have done. On numerous occasions, they have demonstrated the power of self-policing. Against a mostly Sunni insurgency intent on provoking a civil war through attacks on Shiite interests, Sistani has repeatedly restrained his followers retaliating. After an aide to Sistani was assassinated in January 2005, Sistani and his associated again urged followers not to seek revenge and to focus on elections.[158] In 2006, when bombers destroyed the Golden Mosque in Samarra, which houses the tombs of two of the 12 imams revered in Shia Islam, Sistani called for restraint and seven days of mourning, while Sadr's followers carried out retaliatory destruction of Sunni property, killings, and kidnappings, despite Sadr's official call for calm.[159]

The success of Iraq's Shiites in mobilizing in large numbers appears on the surface to be unified, cohesive, and spontaneous action, but is in fact the result of deliberate organization. Coming from a rural and tribal society where the central state had actively hindered the formation of civil society, Iraqi Shiites developed a sense of collective identity relatively recently but possessed no legal political institutions that could maintain political cohesiveness. There was,

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[153] Cole: "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions," 543.
[154] Edward Wong, "Security Seen as Greatest Obstacle to Holding Direct Elections in Iraq by June 30," *New York Times*, 1-22-04.
[155] Ian Fisher, "Free to Protest, Iraqis Complain About the U.S.," *New York Times*, 4-16-03.
[156] Cole, "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions,": 561.
[157] "Support for al-Sadr Seen Widening," *Associated Press*, 4-11-04.
[158] "Iraq: Violence Continues as Shi'a Clerics Urge Restraint Following Killing of al-Sistani Aide," RFE/RL, 1-14-05.
[159] Arwa Damon and Mohammed Tawfeeq, "Gunmen Strike 27 Baghdad Mosques, Kill Imams," cnn.com, 2-22-06.

however, one institution predating independence by several hundred years, whose resources and organizational capacity rivaled the state itself. Iraq's "shrine cities" and the clerics that administered them provided the basis for a cross-regional network that could be used to mobilize Shiites. Shiites were able to overcome Iraq's stifling levels of economic freedom by marshalling the resources they had in a concerted way. Through the continuation of religious ceremonies, illegal operation of Shiite mosques, and redistribution of income to the poorest citizens, even during periods of severe Sunni-led repression, Shiite elites built and maintained network of otherwise disunited communities and villages. When power changed hands in 2003, leaders were able to mobilize massive numbers of people by triggering networks of neighborhood mosques in Shiite areas. Through these means, both mainstream Shiites and their rivals were able to signal their relative power—to would-be state-builders and to each other—through their ability to raise the masses.

The case of Iraq's Shiites demonstrates another application of the theory. Iraq's mosque network constitutes a means of brokerage on the elite level that, like party networks in Kyrgyzstan, could unite otherwise separate constituencies. (In Central Asia, mosques, which never had the importance that they do in Iraq, are tightly controlled by the state.) Networks with a similar function and scope are absent in China, where the state has succeeded in pre-empting cross-regional associational ties between rural elites, and in Uzbekistan, where the state has prevented the rise of autonomous economic actors. On the local level, Iraqi Shiites have demonstrated how rapidly and efficiently information can travel vertically from a mosque to worshippers and then horizontally through neighborhood ties to mobilize people. Such local face-to-face contacts based on interaction and trust have also been shown to be the basis of community mobilization in Central Asia and China. In cases reviewed thus far where mass mobilization has succeeded, brokerage processes are responsible for the pooling of grievances rather than diffusion or demonstration, owing to the low level of development in the societies and the weakness of grassroots ties across group and geographic boundaries. Mass mobilization has failed where the state has neutralized potential brokers through co-optation or repression.

Conclusion

This chapter has applied this dissertation's theory to cases beyond Kyrgyzstan in order to better explain the conditions under which mass mobilization is likely to occur cross-nationally. It demonstrated that the processes that facilitated mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan had similar effects in countries with similarly unfavorable preconditions. Where all the necessary conditions

were met, as in parts of seventeenth-century France and England, we saw political contenders employ mass mobilization to show their power. Where a civil society alternative to elite networks persevered under a repressive regime, as in Iraq, post-2003, the same result obtained. Where one or more of the conditions was absent, as in Uzbekistan and China, mobilization of local or regional scale materialized, but national-level mobilization—which is most likely to generate political change—did not occur.

The four cases reviewed here indicate the scope of the processes derived from the Kyrgyz case and provide some insights for social movement theory. First, political repression is not sufficient to deter mobilization. Economic opportunities are at least as important as they redistribute resources and empower a larger swath of actors that becomes increasingly difficult to co-opt as the economy grows. Thus, the Chinese Communist Party carefully manages crises, understanding that heavy-handed measures against peaceful demonstrations risk alienating the populace and providing an impetus for independent elites to aggregate their interests and coalesce.

Second, the withdrawal (or weakness) of the state strongly pushes people to seek out alternatives to satisfy their needs, and, where there are autonomous economic actors, may create non-state patronage networks. People will take advantage of even a small opening in the ability to accumulate capital to develop a political base as an insurance policy—implicitly or explicitly—where the rule of law is weak, as in the Andijan case. In early modern Europe, a similar conjuncture of forces—a relative balance of power between the state and autonomous elites, divided loyalties within the population, and the use of the masses, otherwise powerless, to tip the scales—obtained, but from the opposite direction: the state was consolidating rather than withdrawing. Elite-mass alliances may alter the balance of power as the state must carefully weigh the probability of a backlash from society—or worse, a unification of elites defending their interests—before it challenges perceived opponents.

Third, political repression matters, but not in the way it is usually conceived, as a means of intimidating ordinary people otherwise inclined to revolt. Instead, the destruction of civil society and intimidation of elites limit the formation of cross-regional elite networks. This variable was prominent in the Ba'ath's repression and co-optation of Shiite elites, which ended suddenly when the coercive apparatus ceased to function. The greater the territorial extent of a civil society network, the more likely elites in different regions can share information and recognize common interests, and the wider mobilization is likely to spread.

The comparisons also illustrate the relationship between the configuration of actors and distribution of resources on one hand, and the dynamics of mobilization on the other. Contrary to

popular perceptions of spontaneous and grassroots mobilization, this chapter highlighted the role that strategically placed elites play in initiating and brokering mobilization. Mid-level elites who maintain ties to communities and have preexisting contacts and common interests with other elites can take advantage of their position if they seek to defend their interests or challenge the state. True bottom-up mass mobilization may be possible where there are cross-cutting cleavages, well-informed populations, and coordination points for organizing, as in Eastern Europe in 1989. Without those favorable attributes, however, and without the preconditions for brokerage, as in China or Uzbekistan, a movement is unlikely to expand beyond the local level and will not achieve the numbers or geographic scope that is likely to be politically consequential.

Conclusion: State, Society, and Collective Action in Postcommunism

This study began with the puzzle of how ordinary villagers in Kyrgyzstan, preoccupied with their farm work and otherwise apolitical, came to take part in large-scale political mobilization. Their participation in the "Tulip Revolution" surprised many outsiders because it confounded stereotypes of Central Asians (and post-Soviet citizens) as obedient, passive, and desiring of despotic government. Explanations were often shaped by perceptions of the region formed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which tended to be simplistic and primordial. Some viewed Central Asia through the prism of Islam, fearing Islamic mobilization that would spread across borders and engulf the southern tier of the Soviet Union. Others looked to Central Asia's pre-Russian social structures and saw the revival (or re-creation) of clans. Still others emphasized the influence of western donor organizations and saw the indoctrination of democratic (and US-friendly) ideologies as the instigator of mobilization. I reject these explanations in favor of a focus on community networks and local elites—not because Islam, clans, and NGOs are irrelevant in Central Asian life, but because close analysis of the actors and mechanisms that led to mass mobilization suggests a less exotic and more generalizeable explanation.

To understand how, why, and when mass mobilization occurred in Kyrgyzstan, and how it might occur in other hybrid regimes, I argued that it was necessary to break the relevant interaction down into three component parts. First, there are community networks, in which ordinary people invest time and energy to maintain ties that help alleviate poverty and compensate for shortcomings of the state. Through these networks, people can act collectively in some circumstances to solve common problems, and under the right conditions, networks can be activated to recruit people to mobilization within the community. I further argued that community networks thrive in conditions where contact with people in other communities is limited and the state provides few public goods (primarily in rural areas).

Second, it is necessary to understand the impact of elite networks. Unlike community networks, these networks form not on the basis of proximity or shared norms and values, but on common experience in government service or through venues such as political party or business functions. These networks are shifting rather than stable and strategic rather than normative. Elites are not interested merely in surviving, but also in advancing their business or political interests, making money, and enhancing their prestige. They may be co-opted by the regime, independent of it, or in open opposition to it. Because elites possess disproportionate resources in

society, if networks can remain cohesive for long enough and if the preferences of their members are aligned, they can be a decisive factor in determining the continuation or downfall of a regime.

Third, in order to create the final condition for mass mobilization, community and elite networks must fuse. Vertical networks connecting local elites (some of whom are members of elite networks) and people embedded in community networks form when the former contribute financially to the latter and build reputations as benefactors or patrons. If an elite's interests are threatened by the state and he decides that mobilization would be in his interest, the elite has the financial, organizational, and "human" resources to make that happen. His close associates, including friends, family members, and local political campaign staff, can bring about mobilization by activating pre-existing social ties in the community and appealing on the basis of people's interest in the elite's continuing freedom and prosperity.

This confluence of these networks, which I call the "mobilization infrastructure," occurred in the wake of liberal reforms taken by the Kyrgyz government in the 1990s. Even while living standards deteriorated, Kyrgyzstan inadvertently laid the foundation for its own demise by privatizing its economy and enabling unhindered association for most of the decade. In doing so, it followed in the footsteps of previous state-builders and modernizers who empowered critical actors in society (or at least did not actively repress them) that would later coalesce to challenge the dominance of the regime. The process that enabled mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan—including the redistribution of resources that empowered some actors and weakened others, and the shaping of interlocking networks—resembles processes in other regions and has implications for several themes in comparative politics. This chapter will discuss what the theoretical and empirical material from this dissertation can contribute to our understanding of the state, social capital, identity, and social movements and mass mobilization in the former Soviet Union and more generally.

Soviet Legacies: States and Collective Action

Scholars have previously noted the effect that the state can have on the potential for collective action and opposition to authoritarian regimes of the former Soviet Union, but their prognoses is almost universally pessimistic. M. Steven Fish argues that state power directly and indirectly impeded the development of emerging civil society organizations in Russia during the late Gorbachev years. The Soviet state's monopolization of economic resources left a lasting impact on people's ability to organize autonomously, from the national level to collective farm and enterprise directors. Where large enterprises and military factories dominated local industry

in small towns, the legacies of workplace control (the "triangle" of the party committee, the official trade union organization, and the enterprise director) hindered people's participation in opposition movements.[1] In the provinces, the infiltration and repression of demonstrations by the security services directly undercut the actions of opposition groups.[2]

Kelly McMann, studying Kyrgyzstan and Russia, also sees the not-so-hidden hand of the state behind struggles to form and maintain civic groups. The lasting control of organizational resources by local government left activists dependent on the state's financial assistance and good will to continue their activities.[3] Furthermore, individuals who are dependent on a state salary may be loath to engage in NGO or opposition activity for fear of losing their livelihoods.[4] Kathryn Stoner-Weiss identified concentrated regional economies as the crucial variable necessary to facilitate collective action in Russia's regions. However, the coalitions that result are used to establish "stability and consensus" with regional governors to improve governmental performance—not to debate or oppose official policy—and can stifle dissenting voices.[5]

Perhaps the least controversial common feature of the post-Soviet world is the passivity of society. Marc Howard argues that the persistence of friendship networks and forced participation in state-run organizations made post-Soviet citizens reluctant to join voluntary organizations. Instead of creating a vibrant civil society, people have substituted participation in informal networks as a means of maintaining social capital.[6] Pauline Jones Luong argues similarly that the potential for opposition to regimes in Central Asia is limited by the weakness of society vis-à-vis the state. This weakness is a product of the thorough penetration of society by the Soviet state, the co-optation by new regimes of potential independent forces, and the extensive apparatus of repression.[7] Opposition, if it were to arise, would necessarily emanate from within the state itself.[8]

This dissertation, while not refuting the above arguments, has identified processes that indicate that the extent of state control over society in Central Asia may have been overstated. In order for an independent counterweight to the state to develop, two conditions must be met: first, potential oppositions must be able to acquire resources to strengthen vis-à-vis the state. Second, they must be able to act collectively to utilize those resources and achieve their goals.

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[1] Fish, *Democracy From Scratch*, 163.
[2] Ibid., 158.
[3] McMann, "Civic Realm," 214.
[4] Kelly M. McMann, *Economic Autonomy and Democracy: Hybrid Regimes in Russia and Kyrgyzstan* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[5] Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, *Local Heroes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 193.
[6] Howard, *Weakness of Civil Society*, 153.
[7] Jones Luong, "Conclusion: Central Asia's Contribution to Theories of the State," in Luong 2004, 274-75.
[8] Ibid., 277; Grzymala-Busse and Jones Luong, "Reconceptualizing the State": 544.

Even while the coercive apparatuses have remained strong throughout Central Asia, economic reforms in Kyrgyzstan succeeded in redistributing power from the state to society. In other republics—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan—where resources are relatively more concentrated in the hands of the state, incompetent governance and pervasive corruption can be expected to weaken the regime's control of the state over time and have two effects.[9] First, as the resources that the state controls declines, there are fewer resources available to use to co-opt. The decline in benefits the regime can provide co-opted elites to remain in the transitional coalition can be expected to cause ambivalence toward supporting the regime, or, in extreme cases, defections to the opposition.[10]

A second effect of state decline is to create elite-mass alliances. Though not directly empowering society vis-à-vis the state, the state's withdrawal as compared with the Soviet Union has simultaneously delegitimized the state, reduced people's dependence on it, and increased their dependence on non-state actors. Typically, state elites unite to use their resources to repress society and prevent reforms that would redistribute resources to their detriment. Yet presented with an opportunity, wavering members of the regime and independent businessmen (if there are any) or popular local elites can ally and seek out alternate bases of influence. In this process, a nascent opposition may discover that a critical resource—an angry and underemployed citizenry—has been neglected. Instrumentalized "people power" can be used by elites to gain fiscal or cultural autonomy,[11] fight off encroachments by the center,[12] or raise their personal profile.[13]

Thus, after the change of government in Kyrgyzstan, elites who had not mobilized during the mass mobilization demonstrated the vogue of "people power" by mobilizing their supporters to secure parliamentary seats or demand the resignation of government officials.[14] This outbreak of "hyperdemocracy" ushered in a new phase in Kyrgyz (and perhaps Central Asian) politics in which contenders for power or desiring a share of the spoils take to the streets (with their

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[9] It is debatable whether the regimes running the "petro-states" of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan will lose their hold on power, but there is some evidence to support this contention. See Sievers, *Post-Soviet Decline*; Najia Badykova, "Turkmenistan: Trouble at the Top?" RFE/RL, 6-21-05; Daniel Kimmage, "Kazakhstan: A Shaken System," RFE/RL, 3-3-06.

[10] This is the opposite of the process by which infusions of western money strengthened Central Asian regimes in the early 1990s, as described by Eric McGlinchey, "Paying for Patronage, Regime Change in Post-Soviet Central Asia," (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2003).

[11] Treisman, *After the Deluge.*

[12] Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States.*

[13] Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).

[14] Leila Saralaeva and Sultan Jumagulov, "Kyrgyzstan: Protesting About Everything," Institute of War and Peace Reporting, 4-29-05.

supporters and potential beneficiaries in tow) to extract concessions from the government. Thanks to Akaev's reforms, the structure that had tenuously maintained an autocratic regime for 14 years cracked open, revealing a multitude of independent opportunists, allied with sub-sections of a loyal and newly politicized populace underneath.

Populism as such never took root in Central Asia—the transition from the Soviet Union was elite-led and did not involve popular mobilization—but former nomenklatura and "new" elites alike discovered the benefits that could be gained from cultivating relationships with ordinary people. Soviet officials, for the most part, were rotated between regions and even republics in order to accumulate experience and minimize the opportunities for corruption. But in Central Asia, most Party elites remained within the republic and many even served in their native oblasts, accumulating patronage ties and aiding in the widespread deception of Moscow.[15] Despite the continued dominance of the state after the transition, elites learned that localism could be converted into political currency and provide leverage for elites to avoid compliance with the state. A popular base could be used to maintain assets from arbitrary seizure, to support a bid for formal political power, and to put pressure on unpopular politicians to make certain decisions.

It is important to note that the myriad demonstrations and mob scenes following the collapse of Akaev's government did not herald a resurgence of civil society, despite some local groups' attempts to frame it as such.[16] In fact, the lesson learned by participants may have been harmful ones from the point of view of establishing democracy. The revolution showed that the best (perhaps only) means of extracting concessions from the state is to take to the streets, a practice tried and honed in the months after the event. Intimidation thus trumped negotiation as means of solving problems. This mutually adversarial attitude between the regime and those vying for a share of power and resources has stunted, rather than encouraged, civil society, increased the gap between the state and its citizens, and exacerbated the potential for violent conflict.[17]

The downside of the recent wellspring of mobilization is that Kyrgyzstan appears to be sliding further into clientelism, which is characterized by the fragmentation of the polity into strongmen who supply resources to their own (ethnic, regional, tribal) sub-group, or possibly

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[15] Critchlow, "Prelude to Independence," 141-42.
[16] Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Kyrgyzstan: Youth Group Says Fight is Not Over," RFE/RL, 3-31-05.
[17] According to Narayan's categorization, Kyrgyzstan's state-society relations are located somewhere between Quadrant 4 (coping), in which informal networks substitute for a poorly performing state, and Quadrant 2 (conflict) in which the state fails and society breaks up into warring factions. Narayan, "Bonds and Bridges": 16-17.

even into what Reno calls "warlord politics."[18] Although this scenario has not yet taken root in Kyrgyzstan, the slow-motion collapse of Kyrgyzstan's state, the weakness of civil society and scarcity of "bridging" ties, and the proven ability of non-state elites, including criminal elements, to mobilize people after the "Tulip Revolution," do not bode well for the future of the country.[19] The Kyrgyz state already exhibits early signs of Zartman's criteria for state collapse: "The normal politics of demands and responses atrophies; the political processes for popular legitimation are discarded and prostituted; politics and economics are localized; and the center becomes peripheral to the workings of society."[20]

The civil war in neighboring Tajikistan, because of common characteristics such as the mode of resource distribution and the strength of regional identities, may be instructive as a plausible worse-case scenario for Kyrgyzstan. When Soviet power collapsed and subsidies from Moscow ceased, it led to a struggle over control of the state between the dominant regional grouping, Khojand, and historically excluded groups, Garmis and Pamiris. Instead of reaching an agreement to divide power for the sake of stability, leaders of regional groupings (government officials, collective farm chairmen, army officers) united and mobilized people through patronage networks centered on kolkhozes.[21] On the local level, ordinary people were mobilized into the conflict en masse as members of kolkhozes, which often coincided with solidarity groups and were dependent on patronage from the center.[22] While Kyrgyz government officials have shown moderation in crises and most elites have demonstrated a preference for non-violent confrontation, a spate of political assassinations and an increased impatience for change among the political class may be signaling a dangerous trend.[23]

Identities and Networks

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18 "In these cases, rulers reject the pursuit of a broader project of creating a state that serves a collective good or even of creating institutions that are capable of developing independent perspectives and acting on behalf of interests distinct from the rulers' personal exercise of power." William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 1.

[19] "Kyrgyzstan: A Faltering State," ICG, 12-16-05; "Kyrgyzstan's Government Struggles to Improve Business Climate," eurasianet.org, 2-2-06.

[20] I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse," in Zartman, ed., *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 6.

[21] Barnett R. Rubin "Russian Hegemony and State Breakdown in the Periphery: Causes and Consequences of the Civil War in Tajikistan," in Barnett R. Rubin and Jack Snyder, eds., *Organizing the Former Soviet Space: Origins of Political Order and Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1998), 149.

[22] Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 140.

[23] Anara Tabyshalieva, "Political Violence on the Rise in Kyrgyzstan," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 1-25-06.

A second theme in the literature on Central Asia focuses on society rather than the state, and on social interaction rather than strictly political outcomes. It asks, what are the bases of group formation and primary identity cleavages in independent Central Asia? This dissertation, while not making claims about identities per se, identifies patterns of relations that are conducive to collective action and may act like an identity group.

After Soviet-era studies of Central Asia focused primarily on ethnicity and Islam,[24] post-Soviet accounts from the field directed attention to sub-ethnic identities. Kathleen Collins and Edward Schatz, notably, argued that clan was the most salient identity. While Collins saw clan as the basis of group formation among elites, undermining formal political institutions, Schatz argued that clans in Kazakhstan helped to alleviate scarcity on the everyday level and the concealability of clan identity strengthened clans when the authorities tried to repress it.[25] Other sub-ethnic identities include regional ones. Pauline Jones Luong argued that the Soviet administrative structure strengthened regional elite identities at the expense of tribal identity by making oblasts the basis of competition for resources from the center.[26] However, the claim does not extend to the identities of non-elites or to officials whose purview lay below the regional level.

I have argued that the networks in which people are involved in daily life exist on a smaller scale—the community—which may coincide with villages in rural areas or mahallas or rayons in cities. These networks arise due to the convenience of proximity and the need to exchange goods and information to cope with scarcity and poverty. Other scholars have noted how informal local institutions in Central Asia help solve collective action problems, including the social control in the mahalla,[27] gift exchange and life-cycle events, [28] and rotating credit associations.[29]

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[24] Helene Carrere d'Encausse, *Decline of an Empire* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978); Alexandre Bennigsen and Marie Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983); Yaacov Ro'i, *The USSR and the Muslim World* (New York: Harper Collins, 1984).
[25] Edward Schatz, *Modern Clan Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004); Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition.*
[26] Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity.*
[27] Morgan Liu, "Recognizing the Khan: Authority, Space, and Political Imagination among Uzbek Men in Post-Soviet Osh, Kyrgyzstan" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2002); Sievers, "Uzbekistan's Mahalla."
[28] Cynthia Werner, "The Dynamics of Feasting and Gift Exchange in Rural Kazakhstan," in Ingvar Svanberg, ed., *Contemporary Kazaks: Social and Cultural Perspectives* (London: Curzon Press, 1999), 47-72.
[29] Asli Baykal, "A Community in Flux: Competition for Social Standing in Post-Soviet Uzbekistan," paper presented at the 6th annual meeting of the Central Eurasian Studies Society, Boston University, September 30-October 2, 2005.

Instead of focusing on social or economic outcomes of community-based networks, I explained why, in addition, these networks are conducive to being activated for mobilization. Because of the power of proximity—for example, the finding that people are most likely to turn to their neighbors, second only to their family, to take out a loan—it is not surprising that elites and their assistants turned to community networks to recruit people to protest. They appealed to people's reliance on the elite whose position as a benefactor was being challenged, and activated everyday ties of friendship and obligation. As a result, mobilization on behalf of a challenged elite could easily spread throughout a community but, absent ties to top-down mobilization in another community, rarely expanded beyond.

This finding does not directly negate the importance of other identities that have been uncovered through ethnography. Scholars of ethnic politics have noted that people simultaneously possess identities on numerous dimensions, for example, a person can simultaneously be a Kyrgyz, a Muslim, a resident of Jalalabad, a southerner, a representative of the Bagysh tribe, a farmer, a father, and an elder, but these identities are activated selectively depending on the situation.[30] Although local ties dominated in mobilization, not all other identities were "switched off"; in fact, other identities often made appearances. For example, in the course of a demonstration, organizers exhorted protesters to behave as good Muslims and refrain from violence. They also evoked symbols of Kyrgyz tribal history, such as whips and military formations. When criticizing the president, many southern Kyrgyz invoked regional identity in asserting that president Akaev, a northerner, discriminated against southerners. However, the allusions to these identities were used as framing devices rather than as appeals for recruiting to mobilization, and they do not account for variation among locales or individuals that mobilized.[31]

Even though local ties were exploited to trigger mobilization, it would be inaccurate to refer to "local identities" per se. During mobilization, protesters did not exude pride as residents of villages or cities. Their discourse reflected none of the above identity categories; instead, people spoke in abstract but politically charged terms, such as "people vs. the powerful (or corrupt)" or "democrats vs. the dictator." Yet the findings from the empirical chapters of this dissertation provided evidence that people were recruited through their communities and were motivated to join to defend of their and their community's interests. Though many were indeed outraged by national politics, the geographic variation in mobilization showed that indignation

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[30] See Kanchan Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 43.
[31] On framing, see David A. Snow, "Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields," in David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

alone was not sufficient to ensure participation. Local networks—perhaps "localism" is the best term—are both more immediate and direr than other possible identity categories.

Localism vs. Moral Economy

The theory I have elaborated proposes elite and mass behaviors that may seem counterintuitive: On one hand, why do elites share resources? On the other, why do people support them? The literature on moral economy addresses these questions and also offers an explanation of peasant revolt. My treatment of localism is a variation on themes from the moral economy school, but differs in several ways consistent with the rationalist-based critique offered by Popkin. The points of similarity relate to the connection between deprivation and obligation which leads to the development of vertical exchange networks. The major differences lie in the precise nature of those networks and the reasons people rebel.

Moral economy, as elaborated by Scott, Wolf, and others, describes a system in which peasants live on the brink of starvation and village institutions function to provide insurance in the form of redistribution. Peasants are inherently conservative, preferring tradition and stability to progress and change. They live according to a "safety-first" principle, by which they make decisions aimed at avoiding starvation and are therefore unwilling to take risks. Landlords who live in the village emerge as patrons, providing resources and protection in exchange for loyalty and labor. The patron-client relationship takes on a moral dimension since, because it ensures a minimal level of subsistence, it is considered more just and equitable than the individualistic market-based system that later encroaches on village life. When social guarantees disappear, replaced by the uncertainty of the market, peasants may rebel to maintain their traditional way of life.

My conception of community networks reflects some of the same understandings as moral economy, but with subtle differences. In my view, like the moral economy position, the cause of both the strength and durability of community networks, and people's willingness to mobilize on behalf of local elites, is vulnerability stemming from scarcity. However, my explanation of the cause of that scarcity differs: people engage in community networks not because they live in closed, corporate villages untouched by capitalism, but because the state provides low levels of public goods and because people are too immobile to have significant interaction outside the community. In addition, in contrast to the safety-first principle, I do not believe that avoiding starvation drives people's behavior. Instead, people attempt to improve their well-being beyond basic subsistence, even in the hopes of growing rich—or in formerly

Communist settings, restoring the benefits of the socialist welfare state—which can account for a significant amount of their decision-making.[32] Finally, I do not view community networks as inherently egalitarian. Scott claims that "all village families will be guaranteed a minimal subsistence niche insofar as the resources controlled by villagers make this possible."[33] Like Popkin, I argue that individuals take part in reciprocal village institutions only insofar as they expect to gain benefits from participation, not out of any moral logic.[34]

Patrons fit into the moral economy framework by acting as a protector of the poor and a hedge against starvation. Patrons, according to Scott, "often provided services to the community as a whole that included organizing and contributing to local charities, public works and festivals, settling local disputes, and acting as the representative of local interests to outside authority."[35] They not only contribute money, but also take active part in village life. In return, clients are morally obligated to reciprocate when called upon. On the surface, my local elites and Scott's patrons appear to fulfill the same function, since I also show how elites invest a combination of material resources and symbolic capital to gain the support of locals. However, the similarities of the outcome mask underlying differences in the cause.

According to moral economy, patronage has a moral and traditional basis. Scott argues that strong norms of equity compel the better-off to attend to the welfare of poorer members of the village.[36] Patrons genuinely identify with and care about their clients: face-to-face interaction generates mutual trust and affection.[37] Despite the inherent inequality of the relationship, clients view the patron's role as legitimate because of the "moral idea of reciprocity, of mutual rights and obligations, which gives them their social force."[38] In return for his largesse, the patron enjoys psychic benefits including "growing prestige" and "a grateful clientele which helps validate their position in the community."[39]

By contrast, I see voluntary redistribution from rich to poor as occurring more rarely than Scott does, on an ad hoc basis, and based mostly on political calculations. First, not all wealthy elites give charity. Elites who have no political ambitions may help their immediate family or individual co-villagers in emergency situations, but they have little incentive to cultivate a

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[32] See Popkin, *The Rational Peasant*, 46-55.
[33] Scott, *Moral Economy*, 40.
[34] Popkin, *The Rational Peasant*, 31.
[35] Scott *Moral Economy*, 174.
[36] Scott, *Moral Economy*, 41. Popkin points out, however, that according to Scott's conception of the village, elites with unequal resources should never emerge in the first place. See Popkin, *Moral Economy*, 61.
[37] James C. Scott, "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia, *American Political Science Review* 66(1), March 1972: 94.
[38] Scott, *Moral Economy*, 169.
[39] Ibid., 41.

clientele or political base by providing moral economy-style largesse and protection. Norms of equity are not strong enough to compel somebody to donate who otherwise does not intend to do so. Second, due to the mobility of elites, affective bonds with co-villagers are relatively weak. A "local" elite who comes upon wealth is unlikely to remain in his village of birth. It is more common for him to reside in the capital, where living conditions are better and his wealth is not as conspicuous. He may have reasons to contribute to his village through intermediaries, but, from a distance, the normative pressures to give are weaker still. Charity, when given, is strategic and limited—elites calculate to spend only as much as is necessary to gain political support. They invest in activities that are visible and symbolically meaningful, but are relatively inexpensive and not time-consuming.

If this is the case, then why do peasants reciprocate? Scott argues that in settings in which land and physical security are scarce, peasants lack an exit option and end up as clients by default. In such situations, patrons are more likely to be abusive while offering few benefits. At the other end of the spectrum, where peasants have more options, patrons must offer greater inducements or the client may seek out other patrons.[40] When the patron conforms to the community's moral expectations by voluntarily sharing his wealth and providing security, it is natural for clients to reciprocate out of affection rather than obligation alone.[41]

In my framework, vertical ties are mostly instrumental. Elites can earn the genuine affection of their beneficiaries, but to a lesser degree than in the moral economy literature. On one hand, the elites that I describe do not possess any coercive power over villagers because they do not control the state and do not exclusively command enough resources so as to bring about total compliance. Elites must therefore win support through positive inducements alone. Though people usually recognize the calculating nature of elite beneficence, most are sympathetic to generous elites and can develop emotional attachments reflected in their identification of the elite as "ours." On the other hand, individuals in my theory are more cynical than Scott's—they are more likely to support those who make concrete contributions, even if aware of the political calculation, than those who make only symbolic gestures or appear only before elections. Furthermore, even when the elite wins over a loyal corps of supporters, there are likely to be a significant number of detractors who distrust the elite's motives or blame him for not giving enough, especially if he lives in the capital and drives flashy cars. These people are unlikely to participate in elite-led mobilization unless the pressures emanating from within the community are strong.

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[40] Scott, "Patron-Client Politics": 100.
[41] Scott, *Moral Economy*, 170.

Finally, the moral economy approach(es) and mine make differing predictions about the sources of rebellion. The former sees the penetration of market forces, which undermine traditional networks of subsistence, as the catalyst. When such intrusions threaten to eliminate the only guarantee that peasants value, they are compelled to rebel. Mobilization is thus bottom-up and reactionary for Scott. Wolf, however, recognizes that the weakness of peasants acts as a barrier to rebellion, arguing instead that they must be led by smallholders or peasants living outside landlord control, who are able to protect them and provide needed resources.[42] My argument is more in line with Popkin's—that rebellion is not a reactionary impulse but a self-interested response to selective incentives offered by political entrepreneurs.[43] However, in contrast to Popkin, I argue that under the right conditions, the initiators of mobilization need not appear from the outside communities but may also come from within. It only requires an exogenous force to provide an incentive for elites and the masses to align, by threatening to harm their mutually beneficial relationship.

Social Capital

Localism, encompassing both the horizontal ties of similarly situated community members, and the ties between ordinary people and local elites who patronize them, has several implications for the study of social capital in the former Soviet Union. In the chaos accompanying market transition in the successor republics, a small elite often managed to seize a disproportionate amount of the resources while most people lost their social guarantees. The "new elite" enjoyed the benefits of their newfound wealth and freedoms; they could travel abroad, buy imported consumer goods, and associate with their counterparts in a small but thriving stratum of people with more money than they could spend.[44] Meanwhile, the private social networks that had developed in the Soviet era to alleviate scarcity remained intact in countries where the economy did not improve.[45] One prominent view sees social capital in post-Soviet countries diverging into distinct strata, in which there is substantial exchange within these networks, but minimal exchange between them—an "hourglass society."[46]

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[42] Wolf, *Peasant Wars*, 290.
[43] Popkin, *Moral Economy*, 259.
[44] Thane Gustafson, *Capitalism Russian-Style* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Paul Klebnikov, "Live Like a Russian Billionaire," *Forbes Russia*, May 2004.
[45] Howard, *Weakness of Civil Society*, 28; James Gibson, "Social Networks": 60.
[46] Richard Rose, "Getting Real: Social Capital in Post-Communist Societies," Studies in Public Policy #278, Center for the Study of Public Policy, (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1997): 7.

This model of social capital may overstate the actual distance between the new elite and the new poor. In fact, the literature on post-Soviet identities identifies countervailing influences to this separation into classes. For example, Collins argues that clan norms ensure that clan elites assist non-elites at "finding jobs, dealing at the bazaar, gaining access to education, getting loans, obtaining goods in an economy of shortage, and obtaining social or political advancement."[47] Work on ethnic mobilization in the former Soviet Union has noted the flow of patronage between elites in regional capitals and co-ethnics in rural areas as a factor shaping opinion for or against secession.[48] Regionally based strategic groups are also premised upon patronage and imagined kin ties that transcend power or class differences.[49]

The evidence presented in this dissertation suggests another process militating against the "hourglass" effect. Redistribution from haves to have-nots based on common origin and material and political calculations provides a source of capital to the poor. The assistance of a benefactor can be exploited to solve everyday problems created by poverty and state withdrawal, or to circumvent excessive bureaucracy and corruption. Thus, social capital in Kyrgyzstan may resemble less an "hourglass society" than a funnel, with the rich enjoying dense network ties and sharing some of their wealth with those connected through community networks, leaving only the small few who are excluded with minimal social capital.

A more serious deficit of social capital in Central Asia may obtain horizontally, through people's lack of "weak ties."[50] The density of trust networks based on kin and friendship has been documented throughout the former Soviet Union and Central Asia. The failure of these networks to extend between communities in rural areas, with the exception of bonds established by marriage—or on rarer occasions, school, work, or army—severely limits people's stock of social capital and necessitates the effort to cultivate relationships vertically with those possessing greater resources. While benefactors may help solve problems of subsistence and collective action with their infusion of resources, "putting all their eggs in one basket" instead of relying on diversified ties risks either exploitation or total deprivation if that source were to disappear.[51] This concentration of resources and isolation of social networks also stifles the bottom-up

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[47] Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition*, 29.
[48] Giuliano, "Who Determines Self": 307.
[49] Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 93.
[50] Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties."
[51] The absence of cross-cutting ties is thought to be detrimental because primary groups "reinforce pre-existing social stratification, prevent mobility of excluded groups, minorities or poor people, and become the bases of corruption and co-optation of power by the dominant social groups." Narayan, "Bonds and Bridges": 13.

accumulation of capital needed to achieve positive collective outcomes that strengthen democracy.[52]

A Horse of a Different Color? Post-Soviet and Other Revolutions

The insight that the unraveling of a regime can emanate from its own actions has implications for states and collective action more broadly. A regime that desires to retain power can tolerate isolated expressions of dissent, which may even be useful for ensuring its long-term survival.[53] Understanding that when disparate grievances coalesce they pose a greater threat, the state can try to pre-empt their unification—if it understands the mechanisms. It can selectively use its coercive and financial resources to prevent large-scale mobilization of the masses through diffusion, or by elites through brokerage. In the short term, if it can fend off both types of challenges by impeding communication and coordination, it can succeed in maintaining power through a divide-and-rule strategy. However, if the state misperceives the most likely source of opposition (or fails to understand how to neutralize it), it can lead to a misallocation of the state's resources. And in the long term, social processes may doom authoritarian regimes completely.[54]

Rebellions have always been intimately linked with the process of state-building and the expansion of the center's fiscal authority. Yet the most dangerous rebellions from the state's point of view are those where elites ally with the interests of the masses, rather than "peasant revolt" per se.[55] Chapter 7 noted that cross-regional rebellions in early modern France and England occurred most often when elites allied with the peasantry against the state and brokered between regions. Karen Barkey argues that consolidating France, unlike the Ottoman Empire of the seventeenth century, experienced frequent and large-scale rebellions because France's state centralization strategies directly challenged provincial power holders and provoked them to collaborate with the masses where there were pre-existing patron-client relations.[56] Roger Gould

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[52] Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, 175.
[53] Khawaja, "Resource Mobilization": 214; Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 85.
[54] Such a transformation hastened the breakdown of authoritarian regimes in Europe through mass mobilization. When political identities in early modern Europe broadened as a result of industrialization and nationalism, mobilization, which was once "parochial, particular, and bifurcated," became "cosmopolitan, modular, and autonomous." "New" forms of collective action "made claims on extralocal authorities, and entailed coordination with claim-making groups in other localities..." Thus, an era of mass mobilization ushered by the French Revolution brought about the integration of popular forces into the political arena, Charles Tilly, "Political Identities," in Michael P. Hanagan, Leslie Page Moch, Wayne te Brake, eds., *Challenging Authority: The Historical Study of Contentious Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 12-13.
[55] See Tarrow, *Power in Movement,* 35.
[56] Barkey, "Rebellious Alliances": 699.

also found a link between patron-client relations and rebellion in early post-revolution United States. The initiators of the Whiskey Rebellion were local notables who were disconnected from the local patron-client system and stood to lose influence from a new federal excise tax.[57] In developing countries, an analogous situation to these cases—the three-way struggle between the state, regional elites, and masses—still applies today.

Several insights about the political opportunity structure (POS) follow from the findings in this dissertation and can contribute to the literature on state-building and rebellion. Regime splits that made elite allies available to potential protesters were, as social movement theorists predict, a component in Kyrgyzstan's regime change.[58] However, this explanation misses two parts of the story: first, there were economic, in additional to political, factors that increased opportunities for mobilization. Second, it neglects bottom-up forces that accompany top-down changes.

A liberal economic environment is a source of political opportunities analytically prior to the presence of elite allies, and critical in setting the conditions for mass mobilization. By creating financial incentives outside of the state, economic opportunities empower non-state actors and provide a livelihood (that can be used for patronage) to state officials who split from the regime. While the effects of economic reforms may not transfer directly to the masses—usually success in business entails high initial costs and informal ties to influential officials—they can trickle down through strategic elites. By linking simultaneously with communities and one another, independent elites can create a formidable counterweight to the regime as a substitute for interest groups or deeply rooted political parties. This process occurred in the years before the "Tulip Revolution," laying the foundation for mass mobilization but lacking only a spark of a critical mass of elites willing to depose Akaev to defend their interests.

Another problem to conventional applications of the POS is that attributing mobilization to political opportunities alone assumes that people are already inclined to revolt but simply waiting for the right moment. This argument is incomplete; it does not explain which people join or why. In western contexts, where the concept originated, the organization of mobilization may not be problematic.[59] However, leaving out the rich set of "supply-side" variables such as grievances, social networks, and emotion reduces human behavior to a mechanical response that does not accord with the complexity of reality.

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[57] Roger V. Gould, "Patron-Client Ties, State Centralization, and the Whiskey Rebellion," *American Journal of Sociology* 102(2), Sep. 1996: 411.
[58] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 79.
[59] On criticism of the POS for being western-centric, see Schock, "People Power"; Osa, *Solidarity and Contention.*

In the scheme of other post-Soviet "revolutions," Kyrgyzstan's mass mobilization is poorly explained by existing accounts. Some variables that have been identified as important in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, including a semi-autocratic regime, an unpopular incumbent, and a relatively independent media, apply in Kyrgyzstan as well.[60] Like the others, the "Tulip Revolution" also occurred after elections and was led by former members of the regime. However, the underlying dynamics of the event—necessary to analyze in order to draw correct conclusions about Kyrgyzstan's membership in the "color" club and the causes mass mobilization in general—reveal a difference in the process, which also led to a different post-revolution outcome.

First, the forces that were most instrumental in producing mass mobilization in Georgia and Ukraine—a large urban population, a strong civil society, a national-level student movement—were undeveloped in Kyrgyzstan. Second, whereas Georgia and Ukraine's movements were spearheaded by opposition parties that had recently established deep roots in society,[61] Kyrgyzstan's "opposition" consisted only of a tactical alliance of elites whose parties had made few inroads among the population. Third, and most important, whereas the first two mobilizations utilized a top-down hierarchical structure, in which party and NGO activists recruited the majority of demonstrators, Kyrgyzstan's movement was the result of uncoordinated organization by local elites, who were absorbed into a network of national elites only after the mobilizations had begun—and NGOs did made only a small impression.

The findings from this dissertation suggest aspects of the Georgian and Ukrainian cases—different from those identified above—that deserve closer scrutiny in order to better distinguish the similarities from the differences among the revolutions. First, observers should direct attention not only to state-centric variables of regime weakness, cleavages, or corruption. Instead, it is important to understand the links between ordinary people who protest and the activists who recruit them. The shared weakness of civil society in all three countries belies a smooth application of social movement theories developed in the west. If party networks or NGOs were the primary recruiting vehicles in Georgia and Ukraine, it is necessary to ask how ordinary people become implicated in these networks and where variation in participation comes from. The "Tulip Revolution" showed that grievances against the regime are necessary but not sufficient to ensure mobilization. Closer inspection of the other color revolutions may reveal that the organizations that received the most publicity, such as the youth groups *Kmara* in Georgia

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[60] McFaul, "Transitions from Postcommunism."
[61] Wheatley, *Georgia*, 174; Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 66.

and *Pora* in Ukraine[62] may have been only superficially involved, masking underlying social ties—based on ethnic, regional, economic, neighborhood, or other identities—that are directly responsible for participation.

A second commonality between the three revolutions that should be investigated further is the dispersion of economic power that enabled elites to break free of the regime and marshal the resources to oppose it. All three countries implemented market reforms in the 1990s, leading to the creation of "oligarchies" that controlled major resources outside of the state. During these countries' regime changes, a critical mass of wealthy magnates defected from the regime and used their considerable resources to aid the opposition.[63] Regimes that resisted market reforms, or partially reformed but reached stable accommodations with oligarchs, such as Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Azerbaijan, did not experience revolutions even though attempts were made.[64] Thus, the effect that economic reforms have on mass mobilization may deserve more attention than they have received in analyses of post-Soviet revolutions.

Several policy prescriptions flow out of the detailed analysis of the process of mass mobilization in Kyrgyzstan. First, it should be asked whether mass mobilization is desirable. Insofar as it challenges authoritarian regimes and may hasten their breakdown, it may be an enabling, albeit not a sufficient condition, for democratization. Assuming that mass mobilization is preferable to the status quo, then there are three obvious policy implications for outsiders hoping to encourage the region toward democratization. The first is to encourage privatization and economic decentralization, which distributes resources to a wider variety of actors and minimizes the chances of a smaller winning coalition coalescing around the regime.[65] Second, it is useful to provide forums where people can exchange information, especially across community and regional boundaries, where collective action is otherwise handicapped by geography and social cleavages. Third, outsiders should support media and communication infrastructure. People who are well informed are more likely to be able to act autonomously without the mediation of elites. Greater access to communication resources would facilitate mobilization by demonstration and diffusion rather than brokerage, thus eliminating the need for the intermediary.

A final lesson to draw from this dissertation is that "people power" comes in different forms, and is not always the boon for democracy that it is portrayed to be in the media. Reformers should consider the fact that mass mobilizations, even "revolutions," do not

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[62] Julie A. Corwin, "East: Regime Change on the Cheap," RFE/RL, 4-19-05.
[63] Fairbanks,"Georgia's Rose Revolution," 120; Way, "Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism": 140.
[64] C.J. Chivers, "Crowd Protests Fraud in Azerbaijan Vote," *New York Times*, 11-10-05; C.J. Chivers, "Belarus Police Deter Thousands of Protesters and Arrest an Opposition Leader," *New York Times* 3-26-06.
[65] Bueno de Mesquita et. al, 8.

necessarily drastically alter the political system. Change is slow and old habits die hard. It takes a concerted effort by a large group of people to steer a country onto a virtuous course, and very few to knock it off track. Such has been the experience of the new leaderships following all three "color revolutions," where ambitions to right the mistakes of their predecessors have been slowed or stymied by infighting and vested interests.[66] Mass mobilization may provide the impetus necessary to destroy the old regime, but creating a truly new regime requires long-term change and significant hard work.

[66] See "Ukraine's Political Crisis: And Then They Woke Up," *The Economist*, September 15, 2005; and "Georgia and Ukraine: An Odd Couple," *The Economist*, August 18, 2005.

Methodological Appendix

Notes on Interviewing

This dissertation relies heavily on interviews to gather micro-level data, especially in Chapters 5 and 6. Working at this level of analysis is necessary both to test the hypotheses generated in Chapter 1 and to get a better understanding of the minds of the people who are the subjects of the study. As Kalyvas argues in discussing civil wars, a focus solely on the macro- or meso-level requires analytic shortcuts that yield misleading assumptions, for example, that groups are monolithic.[1] Instead, to better understand the dynamics of mobilization, it is necessary to start from the individuals themselves and determine what factors influence their behavior.

In order to gather individual-level data, I relied mostly on semi-structured interviews. Depending on the relevant behavior of the informant (participant or non-participant in mobilization), his/her social status (elite or mass) and other particularities (gender, ethnicity, age), I would adapt the template I used to gain information to the situation. When I began working at a site, I naturally posed broad questions (How did you find out about the demonstrations? How many people from your village mobilized? How did they get to the square?). Later, as the outline of the event in question became clearer, I probed to cross-check information made by previous informants (especially from people who occupy different social positions) and sought out details to complete a coherent narrative of mobilization that I was attempting to construct. In general, I adhered to the following mantra: "I did, I saw, I heard." In other words, I aimed to get the most information out of direct participants (those who could say, "I did..."). If they were unavailable or unreliable, then the second best informants were direct eyewitnesses ("I saw...") Only if the other two sources were insufficient to complete the picture, did I rely on those with only indirect knowledge of an event ("I heard...")

When conducting interviews, I was usually accompanied by an assistant/translator from the local area, usually a student. At every site, I lived with a local family to gain trust, and usually began seeking out informants through the family. I conducted the interviews in Russian or Uzbek, whichever informants were more comfortable speaking. Because of the sensitivity of interviewing in repressive settings, I informed informants that they could speak to me anonymously if they preferred (although in some cases it was important for me to know their identity) and always took notes by hand. In most cases, people were willing to speak candidly

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[1] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 10.

with me, especially because I was accompanied by a local. In a small number of cases, people distrusted me and either declined the interview or told me obvious lies. Because I never used a tape recorder, I was rarely able to quote informants verbatim. Some informants cited here have been given aliases to protect their identities.

Survey Methodology

The survey, drafted by two colleagues from Free University-Berlin and myself, was conducted in July and August 2005 by a research firm based in Tashkent and a partner firm in Bishkek. After a pilot phase interviewing 30 respondents in each country, one thousand respondents were randomly selected in each country by three-stage stratified clustered sampling. All 13 oblasts in Uzbekistan were covered, while six out of Kyrgyzstan's seven oblasts were surveyed, excluding Batken for logistical reasons. Supervisors hand-checked the completed questionnaires and verified the accuracy of interviews by making in-person follow-up visits to 23% of respondents in Uzbekistan and 11% in Kyrgyzstan. I personally accompanied and observed several interviewers during the pilot phase in Tashkent.

The questionnaire consisted of 36 questions in Uzbekistan and 39 questions in Kyrgyzstan (or which 36 were the same as the Uzbek version), translated in the local languages, and read by local employees of the research firms. It informed respondents of the academic purpose of the survey, guaranteed their anonymity, and informed them that they were free to refuse to answer any questions. The average response rate was about 70% (with 428 non-responses) in Uzbekistan and 85% (117 non-responses) in Kyrgyzstan. Interviews lasted 45 to 60 minutes on average.

The questionnaire covered four main areas: the (mostly unofficial) networks people rely on for survival and gaining advantages over other people; characteristics of official and unofficial leaders and people's perceptions of what qualities a leader should possess; measurement of "social capital" in communities (how often people exchange information, where and with whom, and how isolated they are from other communities and other regions in the country); and the mechanisms that regulate social control in communities, especially as they elicit participation in community events and more intensive projects. In addition, questions were added to the Kyrgyz version of the questionnaire inquiring about how the ways people self-identify and whether they own a car or a telephone.

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