

**State capacity in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan: A comparative perspective.**

**By**

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The shift towards more state-oriented policies that occurred in the major financial institutions from the mid-1990s (The World Bank 1997) illustrated the fallacy of neo-liberalism as a suitable transition policy. The social costs incurred by the strategy proved its political infeasibility and the fundamentals of neo-classical economic and public choice theories were challenged, when identical policies and institutions produced widely different outcomes. These dilemmas in turn produced the innovative perspectives on the role of the state that had been developed by historians, sociologists and development economists since the mid-1990s). Different perspectives accompanied this renewed focus on the state in post-communist countries. A first perspective deals with the ability of state institutions to respond to and integrate political demands, mediate conflicts and maintain popular legitimacy while maintaining their autonomy and capacity to govern. 1980s (Leftwich 1995, 2000; Weiss 1998; Evans 1995; Evans et al. 1979; Krasner 1984; Skocpol 1979) Another focuses on the declining ability of the state to provide basic services for its citizens because of financial constraints and inefficient tax collection (Schleifer & Vishney 1999; Schleifer and Treisman 2000; Solnik 1998) while a third examines the capacity of incumbent state institutions and officials to adapt to the changed technical and administrative demands generated by the systemic transformation (Ágh 1997; Nunberg 1999, 2000; UNDP 1997; Horváth 2000; Galligan & Smilov, 1999.)

The present paper continues this work on the role of the state in political and economic transformation focusing in particular on the first perspective: how state-society relations can influence the ability of states to pursue broader developmental goals.<sup>1</sup> In the paper we present and compare the results of a survey in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan,<sup>2</sup> two countries that simultaneously face huge developmental needs and the legacy of seventy years of communist rule. Both countries experienced independent statehood for the first time when they gained independence in the wake

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<sup>1</sup> It is an integral part of the DEMSTAR program (*DEM*ocracy, the *ST*ate and *Administrative Reforms*), dealing with states and state capacities in post-communist and developing countries. A part of this program focuses on core political and administrative institutions where we so far have conducted structured interviews with 50-70 centrally placed politicians and executives in six countries and have initiated a new round of interviews in 5 countries. Eventually we intend to cover most of the post-communist countries, excluding Russia which deserves a comparative analysis of its own.

<sup>2</sup> In Kazakhstan the survey was conducted by the Komkon-2 Eurasia Research Institute, Almaty, Kazakhstan and comprise altogether 55 centrally placed decision makers in core ministries (30) and head of core parliamentary committees (25) and 5 independent experts. At the last moment access to the presidential administration was cancelled 'for reasons of national security'. In Kyrgyzstan the survey was conducted in association with the National Academy of Sciences: parliamentary respondents (17), ministerial (15) and presidential (23).

of the collapse of the Soviet Union. While sharing the international environment (Russia as the dominant regional player), core institutions (both are presidential regimes) and a number of political features (strong elements of ethnic and regional politics) they have developed quite differently during the 1990s. In the first years after independence Kyrgyzstan was largely seen as the success story of the region achieving high rankings on most indexes of economic and political liberalisation while Kazakhstan's economic and political reform programme was mixed, often slower and piecemeal. (Huskey, 1997; Cummings, 2000). By 2002, however, both states had become authoritarian (to a greater degree in Kazakhstan than Kyrgyzstan) and Kyrgyzstan had become associated with armed incursions, political feuds, corruption, administrative chaos and ensuing economic collapse. Kazakhstan, by contrast, had become the post-Soviet economic success story. While some of these differences certainly may be explained by Kazakhstan's large extractive industries (in particular the oil/gas and metals/minerals sectors) we ask in this article how state-society relations play a role in the different development of these two republics. In section one we elaborate the conceptual and theoretical background for the questions we ask, focusing in particular on the ideational, processual and functional aspects of state's capacities. Section two present the relevant results from the survey of core administrative elites in the two countries, while section three speculates about the origins and consequences of the observed similarities and differences.

## **1. Conceptual and theoretical framework.**

This paper focuses on state-society relations. The first state debate, emerging in the 1970s, asked whether 'states' predominate over 'social forces' and non-state actors. Neorealists argued that the state as the central actor has high autonomy, which contrasted with liberals who saw the state's autonomy constrained by interdependence and non-state actors (e.g. Keohane and Nye 1977 and Rosenau 1980). The neorealists counteracted (e.g. Gilpin 1975, 1981; Krasner 1978; Waltz 1979). Scholars in the disciplines of sociology and comparative political economy in the 1980s echoed this state debate. Theda Skocpol's seminal *States and Social Revolutions* (1979) was followed by the co-edited *Bringing the State Back In* (Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol, 1985). Here the state is viewed as an autonomous actor over domestic society and largely a reactor to international forces. Within the economy, 'statists'

argued that the key to successful economic performance was based on strong ‘developmental’ states with high autonomy and bureaucratic ‘proactivism’, with the East Asian economies used as case studies (Amsden, 1989; Johnson 1982; Wade 1990).

In recent years there has been a shift away from this ‘state-centric’ versus ‘society-centric’ debate towards what Hobson (2000) has usefully termed a ‘second state debate’. These theorists propose an alternative theory of state autonomy, namely one where state power derives from the extent to which states are embedded in society (e.g. Mann 1993; Evans 1995; Weiss and Hobson 1995; Weiss 1998). State-society relations are regarded here not as zero- but positive sum, usefully conceptualised by the notion of “mutual embeddedness”. Weiss (1998) also introduced the concept of “governed independence” which referred to “a negotiated relationship in which public and private participants maintain their autonomy, yet which is nevertheless governed by broader goals set and monitored by the state.” (Weiss, 1998: 38) Hobson also adds to Evans by arguing, first, that embeddedness only works if the state incorporates a broad range of social actors (rather than one social class) and second, that far from digging its own grave by including these forces as Evans suggests, the state increases its strength in the long run. (Hobson, 2000: 207).

The public and political discourse in post-communist countries have perceived three ideal types of the role of the state in economic and political development: the totalitarian state, the liberal state and the developmental state. These ideal types also reflect classical theoretical and ontological categories in political theory. (Nørgaard, 2001).

*The totalitarian state* has in the region been first of all been represented by the Leninist State (also with deep historical and ontological roots reaching back to Plato) where the institutions are designed to promote ideologically defined policy goals and where civil society institutions are conceived of as transmission belts rather than political actors. In the same category fall other states legitimized by a comprehensive ideology rather by the consent, delegation and representation of the governed. In particular the proliferation of nationalist ideologies across the region may be assumed to fit the mentalities and cognitive structures of previous bureaucrats of the Leninist regimes. We may hypothesize that it is easier for civil servant to adapt to changing ideologies than to mode of behavior in relation to society. We may thus expect civil servants in post.-communist regimes with strong nationalistic ideologies to maintain

their traditional managerial habits one-way communication and commands in the relationship to organizations in society.

*The liberal state* is the insulated ideal type Anglo-American minimal state, as also envisaged in neo-liberal economic theory and reaching back to classical liberal thinkers. Here state-society interaction is conceptualized through the interest groups trying to convey their demands to the insulated institutions of the state. During the early phase of transition the majority of local political actors in post-communist countries wanted to drastically limit the role of the state and state institutions in the transformation process, as reported for the Baltic States in Steen's early survey of elites (Steen, 1994). In reaction to the predominant role of the state in the incumbent system, the realization that the administrative apparatus was unable to perform under the new circumstances and the prospects for personal profits from liberalization and privatization made local reformers easy targets for neo-liberal policy advisors. In a more positive vein, the expectation was that the market would generate not only efficient allocation of resources and carve out an international economic position based on comparative advantages, but also the structural preconditions for a liberal, pluralist democracy. In this understanding of what drives social and political change, there was little room for state intervention. The state was to provide the legal and institutional framework and leave the rest to the political and economic market. State failure was the problem of primary concern in the collapsed system, and a reduced (minimal) state a precondition for future success. In an awkward irony of history the expectation was that the market could succeed where Soviet Marxism had so dramatically failed: to foster the withering away of the state. We may here assume, that whereas it may be conceptually difficult for civil servants to cognitively accept their new managerial role as an insulated elite, the major problem will lie in their technical and administrative ability to handle the new tasks in a radically changed political and economic environment.

Finally, *the developmental state*, is calibrated to foster specific policy goals (very much like the Leninist State), but selected structures of society (e.g. business organizations) are given independent tasks in design and implementation of policies<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Leftwich has offered a more comprehensive definition of the developmental state as a relatively autonomous state apparatus that incorporates a developmental elite (often around a charismatic personality), is based on a competent and insulated bureaucracy in a society with a weak and subordinated civil society and the capacity to manage effectively local and foreign economic interests applying a varying balance of repression, legitimacy and performance, which appears to succeed by

This is the 'embedded state' as described earlier. In a democratic (or democratizing) context a developmental state will institutionalize representation of concerned interests in policy design and implementation and not allow specific interests to dominate the policy process. 'Embeddedness' may, however, also be negative and reflect the capture of the state and government by particularistic interests (elites or societal groups). (Schleifer and Vishny, 1999) We also argue that governmental integration or embeddedness ('international embeddedness') into the international system offers a parallel range of prospects and dangers.<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, may 'international embeddedness' provide the informational, political and financial resources, which are necessary for the government to perform adequately under the new conditions? On the other hand does international integration or embeddedness offer a risk of international 'clientistic capture' or 'elite capture' (World Bank, 1997, p.80ff), if the domestic policy process becomes subjugated to the agendas of international organizations or foreign powers not reflecting local concerns? Cognitive acceptance and implementation of the correlates of the developmental state may be the most difficult for a previous bureaucrat of a totalitarian state when redefining his managerial and organizational functions. The positive dialogue with and delegation of authority to institutions and organization outside the state's institutional hierarchy will be the very antithesis to his previous way of dealing with society. The individual may, because of the cognitive dissonance between his or her previous way of identity and behavior and the new ideas, be more exposed to corruption and illegal dealings.

We look in the questionnaires at both domestic state capacity and international state capacity. Domestic state capacity refers to the ability of states to make domestic policy decisions relatively unconstrained by domestic structural requirements or actors. This is broadly equivalent to the concept of state autonomy laid out by Skocpol and others. Second we are interested in the state's relationship to its international environment through the concept of international state capacity. International state capacity refers to the ability of states to make foreign policy free of international structural requirements or the interests of the international community.

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offering a trade-off between such repression as may exist and the delivery of regular improvements in material circumstances. (Leftwich, 2000: 154-9)

<sup>4</sup> We have previously made an attempt to estimate 'international embeddedness' in alternative modes by construction of an International Integration Index (Triple I), measuring the extent to which newly independent states manage to integrate into the international system. See Ole Nørgaard, Lars Johannsen, *The Baltic States after independence*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Edwin Elgar, Cheltenham, 1999, Chpt .1,

These two definitions draw on Hobson's definitions of state domestic and international agential power (Hobson, 2000: 5-7).

To conceptualise state capacity we employ four dimensions. *Political capacity* is what makes it possible to design and implement policies that meet the genuine concerns of society. In this terminology an *effective* government (it has a high *capacity*) is one that is able to integrate the concerns and objectives of society. In this understanding an effective government will include economic as well as social and political objectives in its policies. *Technical capacity* (efficiency) is about the ability of the state administration by means of its own resources or through institutionalized relations to extra-governmental bodies (think-tanks, universities NGO's etc.) to design coherent, viable and feasible policies. *Administrative capacity* (*efficiency*) measures the ability to implement the policies that have been chosen.. An administratively effective (efficient) state will establish institutions with the resources and competences to design and implement a chosen policy and the ability to remain an autonomous actor vis-à-vis pressures from specific groups and interest groups. The fourth, what we term *ideational capacity*, is the most unusual and we explain and justify its inclusion briefly here.

Our central argument is that agency and structure provide incomplete explanations for state capacity. They must be supplemented by ideas, understood here in their widest sense of perceptual, discursive, attitudinal factors, and ones which are viewed as legitimate by state and non-state actors. This partly places our analysis in the ideational institutional school (see, for example, Hall 1989; Blyth 2000; Hay 2001 and 2002). Mark Blyth (2001) uses the Swedish case to argue persuasively that ideas are an important factor of institutional change, complementing rational choice based (material interests) explanations. In his account ideas influence institutional change in three ways: as institutional blueprints during periods of uncertainty, as weapons in distributional struggles, and as cognitive locks, here replicating classical historical institutional arguments. He further infers, that 'more hierarchic state structures that concentrate decision-making power essentially institutionalize ideas very quickly, and because of this such states are more likely to exhibit cognitive locking', (24), an observation that makes his arguments especially valid for the cases we are dealing with in this paper.

By including the ideational we acknowledge some role for constructivism in our understanding of what constitutes the state, its interests, identities and power. Constructivism assumes that state interests are malleable. This is because they are formed by a combination of norms and identities. Constitutive (rather than regulatory) norms are informed by what is considered “legitimate”. To be legitimate some constructivists emphasize structure over agency; others see the need for a combination of both, a synthesis in the form of structurationist theory (e.g. Wendt, 1987). These legitimating norms define state interests and identities and ultimately shape policy decisions. So, while realists see states as using regulatory norms to defend their interests, constructivists see states as using constitutive norms to define their identities.

The actors’ frames of reference shape their own behaviour, and it is in times of crises, or here transition, that those frames of reference are most starkly questioned. To paraphrase Colin Hay (2002: 215), the ideational and material are always intimately connected but their relationship is more obvious in times of crises. The ideational dimension of state capacity, then, resides both in the nature of these actors’ perceptions and in their ability to adapt them to changed circumstances. This approach incorporates psychological work on the need for consistency and self-esteem and linguistic and psychoanalytical literature regarding categorization. This literature is aptly summarized by Monroe:

Psychological studies on self-esteem and the need for consistent behavior and linguistic and psycho-analytical work suggest people do categorize and that such categorization is a universal of human nature. Basically that it is identity that make the constraint of moral choices - and that this identity is formed by categorization - and that this serve three basic adaptive functions: Managerial functions informs of our relationship to the physical and social world and help us organize our behavior for the future. The emotional function of the self helps us determine our expressive responses; The organizational function helps us create schemas, the mental structures around which we organize our knowledge. (2001: 501)

If there exists a conflict between how the individual bureaucrat sees his own role (his managerial, emotional and organizational identities) and how he is forced to behave on an everyday basis we obviously face an unstable situation. A bureaucrat who acts in conflict with their identities may be expected to change behaviour at the moment that the factors that induced him to act in conflict with his identities disappear. In a

transitional system it is thus crucial to modify the identities of the bureaucrats in keeping with behavioural changes if reforms are to be sustainable.

Combining the three ideal types of states with the four dimensions of capacity we obtain the following matrix:

**Tab. 1. State types and state capacity**

<b>Capacity\ state type</b>	<i>totalitarian</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>developmental</i>
<i>political</i>			
<i>technical</i>			
<i>administrative</i>			
<i>ideational</i>			

A *coherent* totalitarian, liberal or developmental state will reveal identical core features at all three level, because they solve their task on the basis of the same underlying ideas, reflected in the subjective identities (managerial, emotional and organizational) of the individual bureaucrat.<sup>5</sup> A totalitarian state will manage political conflicts by control (or force), have in house technical capability to draft viable policies and implement by control and directives. A liberal state will manage political conflict by balancing political forces in a liberal pluralist institutional environment, will maintain complete autonomy in the design of policies and administer by an ideal type weberian bureaucracy. A developmental state, finally, will institutionalize participation and codetermination of core social actors, will cooperate with external institutions in design of policies and involve social actors in the implementation process. If we combine the two components – state category and type of capacity – we may construct one (or rather three) conceptual spaces as illustrated in figure 2:

**Fig. 2. State type and type of capacities. Totalitarian, neo-liberal or developmental state?**

Political capacity

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<sup>5</sup> In real life and especially during rapid institutional changes we may of course expect to meet incoherent identities, where bureaucrats may express conflicting identities along the three dimensions. Such cognitive dissonance is, however, unstable and eventually the bureaucrat will amend his identities so they reflect the same underlying categorization.



Figure 2 pictures the property space that may be applied on each of the three ideal type state categories we have discussed in this section along political, technical and administrative capacity. We may thus start by placing a state into one of the three categories illustrated in figure 2. Is the state ideationally predominantly (in its relation to society) totalitarian, liberal or developmental? Having performed this categorization we may then assess the actual performance (capacity) of the state in a given country context. An initial analytical question is then if the type of state we have identified in a given country context ‘fit’ the developmental tasks that stands ahead. To which extent totalitarian, liberal or developmental states fares best in concrete country settings can, however, only be decided analytically, taking into account policy tasks and the concrete country context. A totalitarian state may, in the back sight of history, have proven to have been the most effective mean to manage reactionary forces, mobilize the population around common goals and generate investment resources needed for modernization.<sup>6</sup> Or if a state’s political capabilities (the links to society) are few (for one reason or another and if technical and administrative capabilities are in short supply) a limited liberal state will obviously work better than a developmental state, that stretches its tasks beyond capabilities. The same argument may apply to societies dominated by strong particularistic interests groups (for example ethnic). In these cases a limited and autonomous state that match tasks to capabilities and escape capture will obviously fare better.<sup>7</sup> From these arguments it also follows that it is pointless to assess the political, technical or administrative capacity independent from context.

## 2. Comparing state capacity in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan: empirical evidence.

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<sup>6</sup> Whether the human cost associated with the totalitarian state can be morally defended is a separate issue we do not deal with in this context.

In this section we present and compare the results of our interviews on the two core parameters we identified in the theoretical section:

- The ideational bases of the two states as identified through the self-identification of centrally placed administrators: do they see themselves as executives of a totalitarian, liberal or developmental state?
- The ‘real’ processes of the state as described of our respondents focusing on the interaction between the state and society in policy-making and implementation? Does the identity and categorization by the executives correspond to their own reality?

### 2.1 The ideational base of states as seen through the self-identification of executives

Table 1. Responses to question 45: ‘What roles should the public primarily play in politics and government?’ Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan* Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan* Pres. Adm.</b>
<i>The public should become actively engaged in parties, associations, local government, etc. in order to gain greater influence on politics.</i>	57,1 (16)	60,0 (9)	66,7 (14)
<i>The public should take an interest in politics and communicate their views to the representatives</i>	25,0 (7)	33,3 (5)	28,6 (6)
<i>Public should elect representatives and let them run the country</i>	17,9 (5)	53,3 (8)	42,9 (9)
Total	100 (28)	-	-

\* *Kyrgyzstan ( multiply answers): Percentages responding “agree” to the statements, N in parenthesis.*

Table 2. . Responses to question 28: ‘Do you believe that decisions are improved when concerned interests are incorporated or heard in the process of formulation?’ Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Yes, mostly	73,3 (22)	80 (12)	65,2 (15)
Yes, sometimes	26,7 (8)	13,3 (2)	34,8 (8)
No, worse	-	6,7 (1)	-
Total	100 (30)	100 (15)	100 (23)

<sup>7</sup> Whether we can infer a historical succession of state types, where totalitarian are best in early stages of development – and liberal and developmental states at later stages is a separate question we will not delve into in this paper.

Table 3 . Responses to question 27 about lobbying. Percentages responding “agree” to the following statements. N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Lobbying is positive because it provides the information you need to make the right decision	50 (14)	46,2 (6)	<b>85,7 (12)</b>
Lobbying is positive because you get support from the concerned groups	33,3 (9)	33,3 (4)	<b>42,9 (3)</b>

Table 4. Responses to question 4: ‘ If you needed external advice, whom would you prefer to rely on, or have you relied on to get the information you need?(multiply answer)

Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Political advisors	23,3 (7)	40,0 (6)	23,8 (5)
Political Parties	-	26,7 (4)	-
Academic Specialists	60,0 (18)	40,0 (6)	47,6 (10)
NGO specialists	10,0 (3)	26,7 (4)	42,9 (9)

Table 5. Responses to question 41: ‘To what extent do you agree with the following proposition?: To ensure compliance in the process of implementation, it is better when private business organizations or other concerned interests are involved in the implementation of the process’.

Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Strongly agree	3,3 (1)	13,3 (2)	14,3 (3)
Agree	86,7 (26)	73,3 (11)	71,4 (15)
Disagree	3,3 (1)	13,3 (2)	9,5 (2)
Strongly disagree	6,7 (2)	-	-
Do not know	-	-	4,8 (1)
Total	100 (30)	100 (15)	100 (21)

Table 6. . Responses to question 54: ‘ Which other country in the world do you think Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan resembles most in ten years? Per cent, N in parenthesis

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Russia and other CIS countries	27,3 (6)	25,0 (2)	27,3 (3)
A developing country	4,5 (1)	25,0 (2)	9,1 (1)
Central and Eastern Europe	22,7 (5)	-	18,2 (2)
South East Asia	9,1 (2)	25,0 (2)	-
Other newly industrialized countries	9,1 (2)	12,5 (1)	9,1 (1)

China	9,1 (2)	-	-
A Western democracy	18,2 (4)	12,5 (1)	36,3 (4)
Total	100 (22)	100 (8)	100 (11)

*Table 7A . Responses to question 23: ‘In general, in those cases when foreign actors did have influence, would you say that their influence on the decisions to be made had a positive or negative effect on the solutions of domestic problems?’*

Per cent, N in parenthesis.

**1) Positive effect:**

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
N/A	-	6,7 (1)	-
Always	-	40,0 (6)	14,3 (2)
Most cases	33,3 (9)	40,0 (6)	78,6 (11)
Rarely	59,3 (16)	6,7 (1)	7,1 (1)
Never	7,4 (2)	6,7 (1)	-
Total	100 (27)	100 (15)	100 (14)

**2) Negative effect:**

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
N/A		-	20,0 (3)
Always	3,6 (1)	-	6,7 (1)
Most cases	57,1 (16)	6,7 (1)	26,7 (4)
Rarely	32,1 (9)	40,0 (6)	46,7 (7)
Never	7,1 (2)	53,3 (8)	-
Total	100 (28)	100 (15)	100 (15)

*Table 7B . Responses to question 44: ‘What is your preferred degree of state involvement in the economy?’* Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Much more state involvement and/or social provisions	1 6.7		3 10.0
Some more state involvement and/or social provisions	1 6.7	4 19.0	7 23.3
Current balance	1 6.7	2 9.5	7 23.3
More individual initiative	2 13.3	12 57.1	10 33.3
Much more individual initiative	10 66.7	2 9.5	2 6.7
Do not know		1	1

		4.8	3.3
	100 (15)	100 (21)	100 (30)

Table 7C . Responses to question 44a: ‘What is your preferred degree of state involvement in society?’ Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Much more state involvement and/or social provisions			
Some more state involvement and/or social provisions	1 6.7	4 19.0	4 13.3
Current balance	1 6.7	1 4.8	7 23.3
More individual initiative	7 46.7	9 42.9	12 40.0
Much more individual initiative	5 33.3	5 23.8	6 20.0
Do not know	1 6.7	2 9.5	1 3.3
	100 (15)	100 (21)	100 (30)

In general the results reported in tables 1 through 7 do not lend support to the theses about the enduring totalitarian bureaucrat. Rather, a majority of the interviewed officials disclose beliefs and attitudes consistent with a developmental perspective. In general they believe that popular participation and engagement (political capacity) is a good (albeit to a greater degree in Kyrgyzstan than Kazakhstan) (table1), that it increases the quality of decisions (table 2) and that also implementation (administrative capacity) is improved by participation of those concerned by the legislative acts (table 5). The majority of Kyrgyzstan’s ministerial officials supported inclusion of external interests in decision-making and implementation because it achieved a balanced policy based on ‘social consensus’; a smaller number also welcomed the ‘practical additional knowledge’ and ‘objective advice’. Kazakhstan’s ministerial officials were equally divided on the informational and consensual nature of including external interests. Also technical capacity is expected to be improved by the inclusion of external advice, although the countries differ over which type of specialists. (table 4) The respondents in both countries gave examples of actual programmes of a successful partnership between state and society, the favourites in

Kyrgyzstan being 'Kompleksnye Osnovy Razvitiya' in Kazakhstan 'Kontseptsiya Sotsial'noi Zashchity Naseleniya'.

Lobbying, however is especially criticised by both republics' officials, and their answers revealed very varied understandings of the concept of 'lobbying'. A large number of Kyrgyz ministerial officials made a distinction between 'state lobbying' and 'business lobbying': the first was good and 'might succeed in promoting Kyrgyzstan's interests in the international arena', the latter was bad, usually the result of individuals who were concerned with private gain and 'whose interests might be at loggerheads with those of the state'. Officials in Kyrgyzstan's presidential structures adopt a more positive view of lobbyism partly because they are more removed from the process than their ministerial counterparts. Although Kazakhstan's ministerial officialdom also viewed lobbyism negatively, they seem to have travelled further down the road by accepting it as a necessary evil but one which they feel the state should be in a greater position to control: for this reason many of the Kazakhstani respondents advocated 'the introduction of a law on lobbying'.

There is a tendency to be more open towards political parties and NGOs in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan, with Kazakhstan favouring academic specialists. Both mentioned foreign institutions as a source of information, in particular international organisations (IMF, World Bank, UN) and the Asian Development Bank. Regarding attitudes to international advice and participation, there is a very clear difference between responses from the two countries with state executives being definitely more positive in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan. While Kyrgyz Ministers stressed the positive effect of foreign assistance – because foreigners 'give money', 'help in financial questions and other advice', and 'provide general security', Kazakh ministers strongly criticised foreign businesses' and organisations' self-interest, their profit motive and their failure to comprehend the specifics of transition in Kazakhstan.

When asked which country they saw themselves as most resembling in ten years' time, a large minority of Kyrgyz officials still placed their state in the developing world, and many in the CIS. The remainder sees Kyrgyzstan closer to Eastern Europe, while Kazakhstani officials see their state as as further westward. Both state identities

are firmly European rather than Asian. (Table 6) Within this future trajectory, Kazakhstani state officials advocate more state involvement than do Kyrgyzstani state officials, as well as more state involvement in society (Table 7B and 7C).

## 2.2 State society relations as seen through the lenses of state executives.

While the previous section reflected the ideational bases as expressed in the self-identification of state executives – their opinion about how things should be – this section looks into how they perceive their actual interaction with society. The answers to questions addressing this issue are reported in tables 8-16. Table 8 – 11 addresses the scope and mode of interaction while table 12 – 16 addresses the nature of these contacts. Are they ‘sound’ relations in the developmental state tradition? Or are they rather a reflection of illicit practices, where the state or state institutions are bought or captured by particular groups?

Table 8. Responses to question 7: *‘In your own ministry, is/was it common practice that ministerial officials have close working relationships with significant organizations (Business, NGO, or state) within the field of the ministry?’*  
Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Yes	89,7 (26)	93,3 (14)	81,8 (18)
No	10,3 (3)	6,7 (1)	18,2 (4)
Total	100 (29)	100 (15)	100 (22)

Table 9. Responses to question 26: *‘Do the civil servants in your ministry have close working relationships with major interest organizations within the ministry’s resort?’*  
Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Yes, most of the time	36,7 (11)	60,0 (9)	57,1 (12)
Yes, but only concerning important issues	50,0 (15)	33,3 (5)	28,6 (6)
No	13,3 (4)	6,7 (1)	14,3 (3)
Total	100 (30)	100 (15)	100 (21)

Table 10. Responses to question 28a: *‘In which form is/was the concerned interests incorporated or consulted in the process of formulation?’* Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>

	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Presidential Adm.</b>
Institutional forum for discussion and cooperation	30,0 (9)	85,7 (12)	55,6 (10)
Institutional forums on ad hoc basis	66,7 (20)	14,3 (2)	5,6 (1)
Informal forums depending on character of the case	3,3 (1)	-	38,9 (7)
Total	100 (30)	100 (14)	100 (18)

Table 11. *Responses to question P22: 'How do interest groups seek influence on lawmaking?'*\* Percentage observations. 1<sup>st</sup> scores in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Parliament</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Parliament</b>
They contact the ministries	31 (6)	23,2 (3)
They use personal channels and connections	27 (9)	39,1 (9)
They contact the committee	25 (5)	13,9 (2)
They contact the Presidential Administration	17 (5)	21,9 (1)
Other	-	1,9 (-)
Total	100 (25)	100 (15)

\* *Weighted average: ranked as most important counted as 1, second as ½, third as 1/3.*

The responses clearly illustrate that it is common practice for ministries to have close interaction with organizations and institutions (table 8) although such relations seem slightly more intense and institutionalized in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan, where institutional fora more often are established on an ad hoc basis. (table 9, 10)) Seen from citizens perspective (Responses from the interviews of parliamentary deputies) show that channels of influence is divided between direct contact to ministries, personal contacts, contacts to president's administration and contact to relevant parliamentary committees. Citizens in Kyrgyzstan, however, are more likely to use personal contacts instead of turning to ministries or deputies.

Table 12. . *Responses to question 49: 'Do you agree that misuse of status positions is common in Kyrgyzstani politics?'* Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Strongly agree	20,0 (3)	18,2 (4)
Agree	46,7 (7)	50,0 (11)
Disagree	33,3 (5)	31,8 (7)
Total	100 (15)	100 (22)

Table 13. . *Responses to question 50: 'At which level of government do you think that the phenomenon of misuse is most common?'*

Percentages responding "common" to the following levels, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
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Top level	66,7 (20)	33,3 (5)	30 (6)
Ministers	63,3 (19)	40,0 (6)	35,0 (7)
Medium level	43,3 (13)	53,3 (8)	45,0 (9)
Lower level officials	86,7 (26)	26,7 (4)	40,0 (8)
Parliament	73,3 (22)	33,3 (5)	35,0 (7)

Table 14 Responses to question 42: 'To what extent do you agree with the following proposition?

There are cases when powerful state and non-state actors (companies or individuals) can escape regulatory measures. Please evaluate the above statement in the case of the following actors:

Per cent, N in parenthesis.

**a) Individuals:**

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Strongly agree	13,3 (4)	13,3 (2)	-
Agree	20,0 (6)	60,0 (9)	76,2 (16)
Disagree	43,3 (13)	26,7 (4)	-
Strongly disagree	3,3 (1)	-	4,8 (1)
Do not know	20,0 (6)	-	19,0 (4)
Total	100 (30)	100 (15)	100 (21)

**b) Interest organizations:**

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Strongly agree	-	13,3 (2)	-
Agree	30,0 (9)	40,0 (6)	52,4 (11)
Disagree	43,3 (13)	46,7 (7)	19,0 (4)
Strongly disagree	3,3 (1)	-	-
Do not know	23,3 (7)	-	28,6 (6)
Total	100 (30)	100 (15)	100 (21)

**c) Business actors:**

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Strongly agree	6,7 (2)	7,1 (1)	-
Agree	63,3 (19)	64,3 (9)	55,0 (11)
Disagree	20,0 (6)	28,6 (4)	10,0 (2)
Strongly disagree	-	-	5,0 (1)
Do not know	10,0 (3)	-	30,0 (6)
Total	100 (30)	100 (14)	100 (20)

Table 15. . Responses to question 53: 'In your opinion, what are the main cause(s) of corruption in the state administration? (please rank these options, if possible.)'\*

Percentage observations. 1<sup>st</sup> scores in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>
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	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Ministry</b>
Too low salaries	35,2 (14)	51,5 (13)
Low moral quality of civil servants	21,3 (6)	26,4 (1)
Legacy of the soviet system	27,9 (8)	1,2 (-)
Illegal organization (mafia)	14,9 (1)	9,2 (-)
Other	0,6 (-)	11,7 (1)
Total	100 (29)	100 (15)

\* Weighted average: ranked most important counted as 1, second as ½, third as 1/3.

Table 16. Responses to question 52: 'In your opinion, are current laws sufficient for combating corruption?' Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Yes	58,6 (17)	-	20,0 (4)
No	41,4 (12)	93,3 (14)	70,0 (14)
Do not know	-	6,7 (1)	10,0 (2)
Total	100 (29)	100 (15)	100 (20)

Table 17. Responses to question 39b: 'Do you agree that regional interests are the greatest obstacles to an efficient and effective implementation of policies?' Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Agree	60 (18)	53,3 (8)	50 (11)
Disagree	40 (12)	46,7 (7)	50 (11)
Total	100 (30)	100 (15)	100 (22)

Table 18.. Responses to question 53a: 'From your point of view, do clan-structures have any influence of the level of corruption in the Republic of Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan?' Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Clan structures are fertilizer for corruption	96,6 (28)	71,4 (10)	80,0 (8)
Clan structures do not have any significant influence on the level of corruption in the country	3,4 (1)	28,6 (4)	20,0 (2)
Total	100 (29)	100 (14)	100 (10)

Table 19.. Responses to question 54: 'Which other country in the world do you think Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan resembles most? (Now)' Per cent, N in parenthesis.

	<b>Kazakhstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Ministry</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan Presidential Adm.</b>
Russia and other CIS countries	52,4 (11)	46,2 (6)	46,2 (6)
A developing country	14,3 (3)	30,8 (4)	38,5 (5)
Central and Eastern	4,8 (1)	-	-

Europe			
South East Asia	19,0 (4)	-	-
Other newly industrialized countries	9,5 (2)	15,4 (2)	15,4 (2)
A Western democracy	-	7,7 (1)	-
Total	100 (21)	100 (13)	100 (13)

The responses illustrate that it is common practice for ministries to have close interaction with organizations and institutions (Table 8) although such relations seem slightly more intense and institutionalized in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan, where institutional fora more often are established on an ad hoc basis and are at the level of information exchange. (Tables 9, 10) Seen from citizens' perspective (as gleaned from responses by Kyrgyzstani parliamentary deputies interviewed) channels of influence are divided between direct contact to ministries, personal contacts, contacts to president's administration and contact to relevant parliamentary committees. Citizens in Kyrgyzstan, however, are more likely to use personal contacts instead of turning to ministries or deputies.

On the issue of the nature of links between state and society, political circumstances did not permit us to ask direct questions about corruption in Kazakhstan. In Kyrgyzstan 60-70 per cent agreed that misuse of position is a common phenomenon in the state administration. (Table 12) However, other sources<sup>8</sup> indicate that the level of corruption is not less in Kazakhstan. These data are indirectly supported when we asked about at which level of government our respondent believed corruption to be most widespread. (Table 13) The level of affirmative answers to the existence of corruption at all levels (except the medium level, the level of our respondents) was notably higher than in Kyrgyzstan: 60-80 per cent against 30-50 per cent. Significantly, the medium level is considered particularly corrupt in Kyrgyzstan. Regarding ability to escape regulation around 70 per cent in both countries thought that this was possible for business interests while there was a distinctly stronger belief in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan that also individuals and non-business organization could operate outside government control. (Table 14) This reflects a tendency on the part of Kazakhstani elites toward placing faith in laws to

<sup>8</sup> See data from World Bank Institute at <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/kkz/worldmap.asp#map>

solve disputes, with more members of Kyrgyzstani elite blaming local institutions and the lack of a legal basis.

With regard to perceived reasons of corruption (Table 15), responses from both countries are quite similar, pointing in particular at low salaries and to a lesser extent morale and Soviet time legacies as the major causes. The blame accorded to the Soviet period is significantly higher in Kazakhstan than Kyrgyzstan, suggesting a more negative view of the impact of the Soviet period. Few interviewed attribute organised crime as a cause of corruption in either countries, while the position of regional and clan interests is seen as a major problem in both countries. Many respondees see their states as undergoing a process of de facto decentralisation, and this is generally portrayed as anathema to central state interests. Simultaneously, the legal base of fight against corruption is evaluated much more positively in Kazakhstan than in Kyrgyzstan, again suggesting the elite's greater faith in legal measures to solve social problems. Only a very small minority suggest the need for social measures to combat crime (Table 16). As a summary final observation we asked which countries Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan contemporarily most resemble. Corresponding to the other questions a majority see their country as a replica of other post Soviet states, but, as seen earlier in the question on future trajectory, at least twice as many in Kyrgyzstan place their country in the developing world than in Kazakhstan (Table 17).

### **3. Similarities and differences in state capacities: possible explanations**

We started this section by asking three sets of interrelated questions: First, what is the ideational basis of the two states with regard to state-society interactions as expressed through the self-defined identities of senior civil servants? Second, do these perceptions correspond to the reality they live in? Finally, does the observed societal inclusion of concerned interests in society reflect a positive pattern of mutual beneficial interaction between state institution and society, as prescribed in concepts of the developmental state? Or is it rather a reflection of illicit or corrupt practices where decision making and state institution are dominated by particular interest at the expense of common developmental objectives?

On the first issue our results demonstrate that a large majority of our respondents consider themselves as officials in a developmental state. They see

inclusion of social and institutional interests in decision making and implementation as an unquestionable good. In most cases they describe a system where concerned interests are included in decision making on a more or less permanent basis. The dissonance that may exist, but cannot be openly articulated in a generalized questionnaire, is about the character of the social and political inclusion. The admission in both countries of widespread abuse of public office and the confession that business organisations, and to a lesser degree individuals and organizations, are able to escape state control and oversight speak of an everyday life where involvement of external actors exposes state institutions to the hazards of corruption and privileged treatment of particularistic interests. This is a danger that is attributed partly to the vulnerability of low-paid individual bureaucrats and partly to the structural factors of strong regional and ethnic/clan interests in both republics.

Thus, even if officials in both states view themselves as developmental, the reality of widespread corruption means that this needs to be qualified. Systemic corruption – defined broadly as the abuse of public office for private gain – thus continues to be a baseline similarity between both countries, leaving its mark at virtually all levels. The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Risk Service found corruption in Kazakhstan to be among the highest in the world. The EIU study asked country experts to assess the ‘degree to which public officials are involved in corrupt practices’ on a 0 (very low) to 4 (very high) scale.<sup>9</sup> Kazakhstan received the highest rating (4) for corruption among public officials. That Kazakhstan has missed out on its opportunity to become a developmental state by becoming a predatory state is a central argument made recently by Martha Brill Olcott (2002). Our respondents suggest that in Kyrgyzstan corruption is less marked in the higher echelons of power than among middle- and lower-range cadres.

Responses by the two republics, then, show significant similarities. Three important differences have emerged, however. On the attitudinal level we have observed a strikingly more negative attitude to foreign influence in Kazakhstan than in Kyrgyzstan. Second, we have also observed that societal participation is more regularized in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan, where participation is said to occur more on ad hoc basis, and where more faith is placed in legal than social measures to regulate interaction between the state and society. Third, the more regularized

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<sup>9</sup> The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Risk Service, *Kazakhstan*, 1997.

participation in Kyrgyzstan, however, takes the form of personalized channels of influence, expressed and operationalised either through clan or regional interests. where people seem more likely than in Kazakhstan to use personal connections to obtain influence.

Bringing the above observations back to our original questions of state-society relations and the four dimensions, our central conclusion from the above preliminary observations is that Kyrgyzstan's state is captured by both domestic and international forces, while Kazakhstan's enjoys domestic and international autonomy.

The reasons for this difference are threefold. First, we acknowledge the role played by extractive industries in shaping the nature of the Kazakhstani state. Kazakhstan's natural wealth meant that already by 1997 the republic had become the primary post-Soviet recipient of per capita foreign investment, and by 2002 had earned the title of a 'market economy'. The Kazakhstani state has to a considerable degree been able to set the terms of international engagement to transnational corporations. By contrast, Kyrgyzstan had become the primary post-Soviet recipient of per capita international aid during the 1990s, and is beholden to the goodwill of the international community for the continuation of this aid. Here we note nevertheless the considerable political and ideational capacity Kyrgyzstan has shown in this endeavour: President Akaev managed with enormous success to market his country as the Switzerland of Central Asia, earning his country the title of 'darling of the donors'. In short, Kazakhstan enjoys considerably greater international state autonomy than Kyrgyzstan.

But experience elsewhere shows that extractive industries do not necessarily strengthen state capacity, and an important intervening variable must explain why the Kazakhstani elite has been able to manage this process. The second reason appears to be Kazakhstan's decision to control political and economic liberalisation, compared to Kyrgyzstan's rapid decision to do both. By controlling political and economic liberalisation, the Kazakhstani state has been able to keep resources in the hands of a minority, and hence preserve some of its autonomy. Kazakhstan came to epitomize what has been called 'capitalist without capitalism' (Eyal, 2000: 50). The state's autonomy has been abetted by a considerable streamlining of the state since 1997 under World Bank guidelines. This streamlining occurred in the executive branch as a whole, rather than just within the presidential apparatus alone, and may have imparted greater institutional coherence.

By contrast, Kyrgyzstan's rapid liberalisation empowered external actors – in particular the regions and the international community – to the detriment of the central state. President Akaev began to decentralise political authority soon after his election in 1990. Moreover, from independence until the beginning of 1994 Kyrgyzstan arguably had among the most free and open media in the former Soviet Union. Also political parties and social movements were allowed to develop and Akaev actively included them in the decision-making process. The republic was also the first former Soviet republic after Russia to implement price liberalisation and the first Central Asian republic to introduce its own currency. Both political and economic liberalisation gave momentum to international community to further this liberalisation process.

Third, and relatedly, this empowerment of non-state actors, and the increased competition between them, has heightened clan and regional cleavages in Kyrgyzstan which have ultimately captured the state. In Kazakhstan by contrast, the mixed policy of controlled reform with de facto decentralisation ensured that key economic interests have been incorporated. Kazakhstan has managed to coopt these non-state identities and interests into its state-building programme. For the moment these motley interests and identities have managed to coexist. Recent authoritarian repressive measures, however, threaten to upset this balance. Moreover, Kazakhstan's sheer size reduced the risk of capture by insular regional and kinship networks such as is the case in Kyrgyzstan.

If this picture then speaks of Kazakhstan's greater political, administrative and technical capacity than Kyrgyzstan's, the same cannot be said of the ideational. Ideational capacity, as explained earlier, relies partly on legitimacy. But public opinion polls in both countries showed in the 1990s that Kazakhstan's public views its government as less legitimate than its Kyrgyz counterpart. 56 per cent of Kyrgyzstani citizens regard their state and social institutions as (partially) transparent, compared to only 35 per cent of Kazakhstanis, and only 29 percent of Kazakhstanis express satisfaction with reform, compared to 42 percent of Kyrgyzstanis. And yet only 31 percent of Kyrgyzstan's respondents – as opposed to 48 percent of Kazakhstan's – have confidence that their 'government has the capacity to deliver what it has

promised'.<sup>10</sup> Other findings also show that if Nazarbaev's regime has increased in power over the years, its authority has declined. (Cummings, 2001)

#### **4. Conclusions: Preliminary Hypotheses**

Historical-structural factors define the actors, their preferences and their relative capacities. All can change in a period of transition, as ideational, political, administrative and technical capacities change in the transitional context.

Our findings, still at a preliminary stage, suggest two important hypotheses. One, that the link between the ideational and the material is complex but important. The Kazakhstani elite views itself as developmental but in reality has managed to tightly control the resources to the point where corruption has reached the highest echelons of power. The elite's behaviour does not match its perceived role as a developmental state. Furthermore, its behaviour is viewed as illegitimate by the public. This suggests that there is no immediate link between ideational capacity and the other three capacities. It also suggests that in the long run Kazakhstan may run into problems as a result of this dissonance between its ideational and other dimensions of state capacity. The regime's more recent repressive actions toward civil society also suggest that a hard state in Kazakhstan may undermine what Kazakhstan has to date achieved in strengthening its state capacity.

Second, our initial findings suggest that, in state capacity terms, early political and economic liberalisation is not necessarily advisable in societies with considerable socioeconomic cleavages and low participation. This is because in a cleavaged society the empowerment of external political, economic and social forces has been to the detriment of the centre. Our results suggest that in cleavaged societies statist political and economic political reform has a better chance of preventing social forces from capturing the state.

The two hypotheses suggest that a state in a transitional context with high socioeconomic cleavages and low social participation may need to control its reform programme. Kazakhstan's more statist and less liberalised reform programme has been achieved with one dominant class' help, an alliance between the domestic and international business communities. Kazakhstan's experience would also seem to bear

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<sup>10</sup> Marketing Research Agency, *Brif*, Almaty, July 1999.

out Evans' (et al., 1985) findings on transnational corporations (TNCs) and extractive industries. TNC involvement in Kazakhstan, may, as Evans has suggested for other states, increased the capacity of the state. This refers also to the state's political capacity as investment returns have provided some cohesion to an otherwise fragmented Kazakhstani elite, strengthening the project of state consolidation. This project has been helped by the perception that foreign actors are engaged in a zero-sum relationship with the state, borne out by our findings on the Kazakhstani elite's negative attitudes toward foreigners. Kyrgyzstan's experience, by contrast, suggests that the state included non-state actors too indiscriminately and too quickly.

Ultimately, the dissonance between what the Kazakhstani elite thinks it is doing and what it is actually doing may run into trouble, especially if its present authoritarian repression continues. This is where Weiss and Hobson's (1995) more inclusive view of social forces may come into play. Their findings elsewhere suggest, that if state capacity is to be sustainable, Kazakhstan's state-builders may need to engage in a second stage of their relations with society, one which incorporates a broader range of social forces.

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