Book Discussion

Kelly M. McMann,* Corruption as a Last Resort: Adapting to the Market inCentral Asia *(Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014)

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Reflecting on Alternative Explanations and Legaciesof State Socialism

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Corruption as a Last Resort is an impressive study that makes new and important contributions to the scholarship on corruption in Central Asia and across a broader range of low-income countries. The book is a powerful critique of market liberalization policies of the past two decades. McMann's research points to a strong connection between market reform and the prevalence of corruption, especially in the context of state interventionist legacy and underdeveloped market-enhancing institutions. The connection between market reform and individual behavior that McMann uncovers runs against the expectations of those who have promoted market reforms in transition economies. The argument advanced in the book suggests that instead of reducing the role of the state in the economy, failed market reform created an environment in which individuals caught in difficult economic circumstances turned to petty corruption as their last resort. Reforms increased popular demand for corrupt behavior by state officials. Lacking market opportunities or personal networks, individuals resorted to patronage-based relationships with state officials.

Corruption as the Last Resort is an ambitious project that not only introduces a novel theoretical framework, but also marshals impressive evidence (original survey and interview data) to support it. For example, in McMann's nuanced theory, market reform is especially harmful to the welfare of the poorest citizens when there has been a long history of state involvement in the economy. In other words, reduction in redistributionist policies results in fewer funds directed to the neediest citizens; the people who previously relied the most on government aid. The weak market-enhancing institutions so common in the post-socialist transition context preclude the creation of market alternatives to the state, leaving no alternatives to petty corruption.

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In terms of the data reported and analyzed in the book, especially remarkable is the author's decision to use both direct and indirect measures of corruption (summarized on p. 17). This labor-intensive approach allowed McMann to systematically speak to very specific questions related to corruption (which goods and services were exchanged, which government officials participated in what type of corruption, etc.). McMann thus eschews the opaque "high politics" corruption among the elites that has received so much attention both in popular press and academic research. As she notes, "Corruption is a two-party exchange that can be a coping strategy for citizens, not just a scheme for officials to boost their income" (159). The book's focus on poor citizens and their decision to engage in petty corruption is reason alone for it to be required reading for researchers on corruption, market reform, and Central Asian politics.

Having read the book led me to outline a few critical reflections, which I am sure can be easily addressed by the author. Nevertheless, in the remaining half of my review I would like to focus on two issues: (1) an alternative explanation of the reported data, and (2) the problem of state socialist legacies.

One could provide an alternative explanation of the empirical phenomena presented in the book by simply claiming that both market reform and democratization were in large part unsuccessful in Central Asia. It is the failure of democracy and market reforms that is largely responsible for the lack of political and economic alternatives to petty corruption. Failed market reform most adversely affected the poorest citizens who previously relied on state assistance to survive. The question of why state officials are in position to improve the livelihood of struggling individuals is itself a political question. Especially in rural areas, state officials have maintained a great deal of control over land, access to water, property, and credit.

One may argue that when market reforms are executed successfully – or not executed at all – there is little demand for petty corruption among the low-ranking government officials. In the cases of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, reforms not only failed to "create institutions to strengthen markets" but also failed to rein in the state. McMann herself is of two minds about market re- forms. On the one hand, they are deemed successful in liberalizing prices and shutting down inefficient enterprises – both of which "reduce families' resources" in transition economies (3). On the other hand, the reforms failed to create market-supporting institutions. Once one stipulates that it is *failed* market reforms, rather than market reform generally, that produced more corruption, the argument becomes less novel. A failed reform certainly could be worse than no reform at all. A long line of studies has suggested a U-shaped

relationship among market reform, democratization, and a number of out- comes of interest, including corruption, economic growth, and others.

This is why the statistical analysis of the 92 countries does not actually test the hypothesis evaluated in the case studies, since the case studies do not provide the variation on some of the independent variables in the large-N analysis. The finding that "countries with weaker legacies of state economic intervention and more effective institutions to strengthen markets have less corruption" (9) is entirely consistent with the alternative explanation I have offered here.

Failed democratization also most disadvantaged the poor, who, in the absence of mechanisms of accountability and stable political parties, were left on the sidelines of political, and therefore economic life. Lack of democratic accountability is the reason market-enhancing institutions like credit bureaus or anti-monopoly agencies are very weak or still non-existent in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The emergence of petty corruption as a way of dealing with local government officials – one could argue – has actually been a saving grace for the poorest citizens who are at least able to gain some kind of help. Consequently, with all other alternatives being absent, at least the remaining vestiges of an otherwise dismembered state (especially in Kyrgyzstan) are keeping the most desperate part of the population afloat during the economic collapse. This interpretation, while entirely consistent with the reported data, would lead to a different set of policy prescriptions. With respect to explanations related to different levels of pluralism in the three countries, it was surprising to see little attention devoted to this variation. Certainly, the idea that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan experienced equal amounts of political liberalization goes against many conventional accounts of Central Asian politics (86).

Finally, turning to the issue of the state-socialist legacy, it is important to remember that neither democratization nor market reforms were introduced in a vacuum. Neither political nor economic reforms should bear all of the blame for the economic downturn of the 1990s. Those reforms, insofar as they failed, may have prolonged the crisis and made it worse in other ways, but they certainly did not cause it. The reforms were introduced *because there was an ongoing economic collapse* caused by the economic and political failure of state socialism. The alternatives to petty corruption began disappearing long before the privatization auctions of the 1990s.

This is why the idea that year 1991 represents "year zero" in the history of corruption in the region is certainly problematic. The claims that "market actors and societal groups start from scratch with few resources and limited opportunities to increase them" (3) is not historically accurate. Corruption was

widespread and in some sense necessary in the Soviet system. McMann does concede that there was corruption in the Soviet-era Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz- stan, though she states that "independence-era economic policies have had a more significant effect than Soviet experiences have had on citizens' decisions about whether to engage in corruption to meet basic needs" (8). Soviet life, especially during the latter stages of the USSR's existence, was centered entirely on gaining access to those who could help one access the necessities. It may or may not be true that economic liberalization policies of the last two decades played a more important role in engendering corruption, but they certainly aren't alone to blame – and the book does little to fully address the issue of state-socialist legacy in everyday bribery.

These critical reflections notwithstanding, this is an excellent and thought-provoking book about a very important but poorly understood topic. Experience with market reform in the region continues to have lasting legacies for eco- nomic life of Central Asian societies. More notably, *Corruption as a Last Resort* is among the best at giving real-life insights into the lives of the poorest citizens of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan during one of the most devastating economic collapses of the last century. I would recommend it to all students and scholars interested in the latest research into the political economy of everyday life in the former Soviet Union.

Why the Market Will Not Produce a Legal Order on Its Own

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In recent years, few issues have attracted as much attention among scholars and experts dealing with Central Asia as corruption. After the fall of the Soviet Union, observers regarded increased corruption as a temporary phenomenon that would eventually wither away as a new system of political and economic institutions consolidated. They assumed that new institutions and enforcement mechanisms would emerge almost voluntarily in response to the demands produced by economic reforms. However, in reality, corruption has become ever more pervasive, standardized, and rationalized in the post-Soviet region.

Confronted with this reality, scholars have increasingly come to focus on the emergence and consolidation of post-socialist patterns of corruption. The over-whelming majority of these studies take a state-centered perspective, focusing either on the grand schemes of political corruption or how bureaucracies are

organized to collect kickbacks and bribes. In sharp contrast, Kelly McMann's *Corruption as a Last Resort* recasts the study of corruption by firmly groundingit at the citizenry level. Drawing on rich empirical material, collected from personal interviews and survey work in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, she presents several intriguing findings on the nature of petty corruption in Central Asia. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, which have undertaken greater market reform and privatization efforts, petty corruption to access basic public goods increased much more than in the unreformed, state-controlled economy of Uzbekistan, where citizens have more access to state resources with- out having to use under-the-table payments. This finding runs counter to the widespread liberal expectation that market-reforming countries would more quickly benefit from reduced corruption and improved governance.

McMann argues that when market reforms are undertaken without market-supporting institutions, there are limited resources available from the market and societal groups. Consequently, individuals who cannot access basic goods and services through formal government programs, market actors, societal groups, or relatives and personal networks do not have an alternative to giving informal payments in order to secure their needs from the state. Hence, the book's apt title of corruption as a *last resort*.

The model McMann lays out to explain the neglected puzzle of why some citizens resort to corruption while others do not is both parsimonious and largely compelling, and it provides a powerful corrective to culturally inclined understandings, or even stereotypes, of corrupt practices in these countries as manifestations of how Central Asians do things. In this sense, her study expands upon some important previous post-Soviet scholarship arguing that corruption should be understood as systemic rather than culturally deter- mined. In countries characterized by systemic corruption, engaging in informal or even illicit practices often become the dominant strategy for citizens trying to muddle through. One possible way out of this dilemma, McMannconvincingly argues, is to target corruption more indirectly by focusing on pro- viding ordinary people with alternatives to bribery, in particular by strengthening the role of market actors.

This is an exemplary structured and well-written book that nonetheless raises a number of questions. Perhaps the most significant issue relates to the tradeoff between the book's neat theory and the complex reality in Central Asia. For instance, McMann's model treats personal connections and informal payments as essentially different phenomena. However, illicit monetary exchanges and personal connections are often much more complementary than typically assumed. Rather than rival coping strategies, the two mayvery well be mutually supportive in the sense that family ties can facilitate access to scarce resources but not necessarily override the need for adding

an informal payment. In Kyrgyzstan, many informal exchanges display such interwoven dynamics. Moreover, Natsuko Oka's field research on informal practices in Kazakhstan has shown that there is a tendency to evade return obligations even in relationships between people with strong personal connections. Instead, individuals opt to use informal payments to escape being indebted to relatives.[1]

The distinction between state and market may also be convenient, and it is definitely a standard occurrence in the research on industrial democracies in the West, where the political system and the economic system are usually studied as two separate and distinct spheres. A similar separation is, however, insufficient for understanding the intimate links between the state and the private sector in most post-Soviet states. In fact, the continuous perception of the post-Soviet systems in a state-versus-private-sector dynamic is, as has been noted by a number of prominent scholars, not always analytically helpful. Given the significant legacy of state intervention, a broader political-economic perspective is necessary. Even if it is tempting to draw a sharp distinction be-tween countries that undertook significant privatization, like Kyrgyzstan, and those that did not, notably Uzbekistan, the real situation is more complicated. In these types of systems even state-owned corporations can have significant informal discretion in how they dispose of their resources. Similarly, the state can exert a very strong degree of informal control over private enterprises through legislative and regulative means.[2]

In connection with this, a caveat is warranted regarding McMann's argument that private-sector corruption is less of a problem. While probably correct to a certain extent, it would nevertheless be false to believe that this sector is exempted from corruption. In the case of Kyrgyzstan, it is not uncommon to come across private-sector kickback (*otkat*) arrangements that are similar to those in the public sector. In the banking sector, informal payments to a banking official can help individuals and firms get bank loans, as well as "rectifying" the status of individuals and firms "blacklisted" for failing to pay off on their bank loans. Thus, under conditions of systemic corruption, it is questionable whether we can assume the existence of certain non-corrupt sectors.

Furthermore, the perception of market actors and social groups as tantamount to "the existence of multiple sources for obtaining essential goods and

1 Natsuko Oka, "Informal Payments and Connections in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan," *Central Asian Survey*, June 16, 2015.

2 Henry E. Hale, *Patronal Politics: Eurasian Regime Dynamics in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Andrew Barnes, "Russia's New Business Groups and State Power," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 19, no. 2 (2003): 154–186.

services" (165) seems to suggest a contrast with the state as a coherent actor handling public resources. In reality, however, Central Asian states are far from unitary; there are multiple sources to approach. The actual functioning recalls a kind of franchise system, in which multiple public officials gain licenses to use the state's brand name and its resources to supply the goods and services in their possession, often competing with other branches of the state.

One might also wonder whether McMann's picture really depicts coping strategies and corruption in Central Asia since independence (which seemsto be the intention), or whether she essentially offers a more time-specific explanation of the transitional period of Central Asia in the 1990s? The bulk of the data was gathered in the early 2000s, and it is never clearly spelled out how this data may dovetail with the situation more than a decade later. The Uzbek case appears to be the big "elephant in the room." Frequently reported to be one of the most corrupt countries in the world, where the state at the local level has been informalized to the extent that the formal-informal dichotomy very much is elusive,3 one naturally wonders whether the relatively favorable situation claimed to exist in Uzbekistan remains applicable. In Uzbekistan, theeconomy did not collapse to the extent seen in the neighboring countries, and the state remained relatively strong and more capable of exerting control and order. Although the inertia of the Soviet-style centralized leadership sheltered the country from the worst shocks of independence, this system appears to have stagnated long ago with increasing resource scarcity as a result. Admittedly, McMann alludes to as much in a footnote (78) but a more careful discussion is necessary to determine whether Uzbekistan really represents a distinct sustainable alternative or if the situation described by McMann already is a thing of the past.

Corruption à la carte

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Most observers would agree that post-Soviet states have widespread corruption. Although the Soviet-era economic practices of resource allocation have much to do with behavioral norms of falsification, as Timur Kuran illustrated

3 Johan Rasanayagam, "Informal Economy, Informal State: The Case of Uzbekistan," *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 21, no. 11–12 (2011): 681–696.

vividly in his book, *Private Truths, Public Lies*, the transition to capitalism did not eradicate moral double standards.4 Instead, clientelist institutions and corruption deepened further in the newly sovereign states of the former USSR. Why did new market institutions fail to bring more reliable and equitable distribution regimes? If the markets are not at fault, are some societies more predisposed to manipulating and cheating through corrupt practices than others? How are critical economic resources being allocated in environments where there is a high degree of informal dealings and bribery?

Kelly McMann's book, *Corruption as a Last Resort*, provides a sophisticated and well-grounded analysis on the causes and outcomes of petty corruption through a literature survey and empirical findings from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. Her analysis is enriched with extensive readings on political economy, international relations, and development economics. McMann suggests that corrupt behaviors are neither innate nor are they prized by Central Asian societies. They cannot solely be associated with state practice or opportunistic officialdom, either. Individuals resort to diverse forms of bribery, favoritism and clientelism to survive, given the highly uneven distribution of public goods and market opportunities. Scarcity leads to intense competition among different stakeholders. Corruption is simply a response, as well as a tool, to get ahead of others when such goods and opportunities are limited, and alternative institutions for distribution and allocation do not exist. Thus, petty corruption is dependent on market distortions and poor institutional settings lacking more equitable alternatives.

The first two chapters provide an excellent start as McMann forcefully illustrates that the lack of alternatives is a more fruitful scholarly approach to provide international comparisons and to take into account different institutional variations on markets and governance. The critical effects of market reform on corruption emerge when Central Asia's states are compared with one another. A further analysis on what different "alternatives" would mean and additional comparisons would have deepened the analysis. Another factor that deserves attention is how information asymmetries about access and knowledge have played a role in identifying and capitalizing on alternatives.

McMann presents her evidence on bribery, favoritism, and clientelism from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in the third chapter. This analysis is based on field interviews and a regional large-scale survey. Her data illustrate that most citizens consider the state primarily as an arena for competition. They seek the assistance of state officials at different levels of administration, especially at

4 Timur Kuran, *Private Truths, Public Lies: The Social Consequences of Preference Falsification* (Cambridge ma: Harvard University Press, 1995).

the local level. Without market-enhancing institutions, individuals secure favoritism through connections and bribery. Chapter four examines how the weaknesses of market actors and market-enhancing institutions emerge as an unrealized alternative. The two countries went through extensive market liberalization through privatization, deregulation, and broader integration into world markets without having fully established market-enhancing institutions such as well functioning competition laws, regulatory institutions, and financial systems. In this economic context, McMann argues, neither market actors nor governments have been able to produce services and goods to meet everyone's basic needs, so citizens resort to multiple channels of access to obtain them. The contrasting case is Uzbekistan, a non-reformer, where individuals receive basic state provision without competing and, McMann suggests, there is less corruption. Most citizens surveyed see the state as the guarantor of goods and services. This is a highly confusing conclusion that I will address further below.

The following two chapters examine the role of Islamic institutions and secular charities and the uneven effect of market reform on families. These sections provide less rigorous data or fieldwork evidence on the degree of sup- port these institutions provide. The dramatic rise in the number of mosques points out the gradual emergence of a new political and social space that has to be taken seriously in institutional analysis of alternative markets. Business interests get short shrift here. Further analysis on enterprising activities by families would have helped to put corruption in a context of different patron- age and exchange regimes and would have enriched McMann's arguments in relation to market players and alternative institutions.

The final section on policy recommendations to reduce corruption rests on the assumption that providing citizens with alternatives to corruption can be an effective anti-corruption strategy. I agree with McMann's dismissal of those who suggest downsizing the state can reduce the amount of resources con- trolled by officials and thus would cut back corruption opportunities. However, her notion of increasing alternatives rests on implicit assumptions of having a benevolent state, abundant resource endowments (unless captured elsewhere through expansionist policies), and a non-Hobbesian society. On this pessimistic note I turn to more substantive matters.

While recognizing the original contribution of the book on corruption in Central Asia, I would like to highlight a few disagreements I have with McMann's analysis. At the theoretical level, I find seeking a relationship be- tween corruption and marketization and liberalization is problematic. I tend to agree that market liberalization opens wider possibilities for corruption; there is much evidence from China in this respect. However, the analysis can

be more meaningful when corrupt practices are measured in relation to scale, form, and different institutions of clientelism. That is to say, corruption under single-party authoritarian rules, communist regimes, and weak democracies all have different structural patterns and institutional trajectories. Absence of alternatives may only be a conceptual framework for petty corruption, but what are its implications for a broader corruption analysis? Abundance of market provisions may be curtailing other forms of large-scale corruption. For example, how does the absence of alternatives apply to lobbying activities of corporations at government level for policy changes? How about the lucrative procurements grabbed by politically connected firms in mature capitalist economies? Second, corruption analysis in the context of the state and/or a specific geographical unit needs further questioning in relation to allocation and distribution regimes in multiple zones of space and time. The recent special issue of *Central Asian Survey* on "Offshore Central Asia" illustrates that the region's economic assets and natural resources are increasingly integrated into global value networks.5 Offshore accounts and money transactions show a complex interplay among multiple actors involving the region's ruling elites, new business classes, and Western financial and legal institutions across multiple geographical domains.

My final reservation is about the timing and the use of data. McMann argues that Uzbekistan's continued provision of state goods and services and its citizens' less severe problems with money and unemployment underscore that market reform reduced government assistance and exacerbated economic challenges in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. I think this finding does not hold for what many researchers, including myself, have observed in Uzbekistan. My enterprise survey shows very high dissatisfaction levels with all major institutions in the country.6 One explanation may be that McMann's data is relatively old and not fully updated to support her claims today. The late 1990s and the early 2000s coincided with a period of relative tranquility in Uzbekistan, when Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were suffering from market transition turbulence. This changed from the mid-2000s. I observed deep stress in the Uzbek economy when I visited the country during that period and subsequently. Falsifications and corrupt practices were everywhere. Many lived on the income brought by seasonal jobs in Russia, Kazakhstan, and elsewhere. Businesses were stifled by oligarchic rule and a Soviet style-banking regime. Kazakhstan, on the other

5 John Heathershaw and Alexander Cooley, "Offshore Central Asia: An Introduction," *Central Asian Survey*, 34, no. 1 (2015): 1–10.

6 Gül Berna Özcan, *Building States and Markets: Enterprise Development in Central Asia* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

hand, looked totally different, more confident, less suspicious and oppressive than Uzbekistan. These diverging economic paths and political choices reflect on starkly different living standards and well-being in the region today.

Despite these critical comments, the book has many good qualities and I recommend it to any scholar of Central Asia, transition economics, and corruption studies.

Explaining Corruption: Author's Response

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Much of the scholarly work on corruption has attributed the problem to government officials' incentives and capacity as shaped by broad economic, political, and societal influences, such as market reform, lack of democracy, and culture. *Corruption as a Last Resort*, as Igor Logvinenko and Johan Engvall note, shifts the focus to average citizens, the overlooked party in illicit exchanges. Moreover, unlike many other works, this book not only identifies a broad influ-ence – market reform – but also traces the causal mechanisms that link the broad influence to individuals' decisions to engage in corruption. Specifically,

> Market reform can undermine the ability of markets, societal groups, and families to provide essential goods and services when two conditions are present: (1) states have previously exerted significant economic control and 2) reforms failed to create institutions to strengthen markets, such as credit registries, judicial systems, and anti-monopoly policies. When market reforms are introduced under these two conditions, market actors and societal groups start from scratch with few resources and limited opportunities to increase them. At the same time, market reform reduces many families' resources: price liberalization results in higher prices that drain families' savings, and economic restructuring closes or downsizes inefficient enterprises that once employed family members. Under this set of circumstances, essential goods and services are not readily available from markets, societal actors, and extended family. Simultaneously, market reform, regardless of the two conditions, eliminates formal government programs, so the state provides fewer needed goods and services. Unable to readily obtain essential goods and services from markets, societal actors, extended family, or formal government

> programs, most citizens try to acquire them illicitly from government officials. (2–3)

The argument that petty corruption is attributable to market reform under these two conditions is preferable to simply ascribing it to "failed market reform," as Logvinenko proposes. Failed market reform does not offer a causal explanation. By contrast, my argument specifies in what way the reforms "failed" – by not creating market-enhancing institutions. It also acknowledges where this is most detrimental – in countries with a legacy of significant state economic intervention. The book demonstrates how market reform under these conditions limits the availability of non-state goods and services and thus encourages citizens to offer bribes, use personal connections, and promise political support to try to obtain basic necessities.

Failed market reform also cannot explain why some individuals rarely or never engage in corruption even in countries where illicit exchanges are com- mon. Failed market reform is a countrywide phenomenon, so it is not evident how it can account for variation within a country. The book's focus on alternatives to corruption, in this case family, shows how some individuals avoid illicit exchanges by relying on relatives for assistance. Some individuals have relatives who have benefited from market reform, so they can depend on assistance from them. "Market reform under the two conditions accounts for both resource scarcity in a country and some individuals' greater access to those resources that do exist" (3).

The conceptualization of failed market reform is also debatable from a policy objective perspective: "The version of market reform championed in the 1980s and 1990s emphasized the reduction of states' economic roles rather than the creation of support institutions to ensure market competition" (3). Market reform reduced the states' economic roles in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz- stan, so in that sense the policy was a success, not a failure.

A different type of failure, failure of democracy, is an alternative explanation for greater petty corruption, according to Logvinenko's thought-provoking review. Yet, democracy had "failed" in all three countries –in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where corruption for basic necessities was common, and in Uzbekistan, where it was rare.

The relationship between regime type and corruption is more complicated than simply failed democracy resulting in corruption. Gül Berna Özcan sug- gests that corruption varies depending on the specific regime type. Similarly, global statistical analyses, by scholars such as Hung-Eng Sung and Daniel Treisman, show that political liberalization seems to increase corruption in authoritarian regimes but consolidation of democracy dramatically reduces it.

Hanna Bäck and Axel Hadenius offer an explanation: they argue that political liberalization reduces authoritarian controls, but democratic controls, such as a free press and electoral accountability, take longer to emerge. Government officials can thus more easily engage in corruption following political liberalization. Yet, "Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan all experienced political liberalization in the late Soviet and early independence periods. Social and political organizations and media unaffiliated with the Communist Party were allowed, multicandidate elections were held, and restrictions on personal freedoms including speech and travel were reduced" (86). Consequently, political liberalization does not seem to account for variation among the countries. Future research could, however, examine whether the top leadership in Uzbekistan was able to recreate, after the period of liberalization, authoritarian controls that effectively discouraged officials from engaging in corruption. This seems unlikely. Keep in mind that the hypothesis about political liberalization comes from work on grand corruption, which focuses on high-ranking officials rather than the low-level ones engaged in the petty corruption that is described in this book. The most popular officials from whom average citizens in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan seek everyday assistance are, in fact, the lowest – village leaders and *raion* bureaucrats. It seems unlikely that the top leadership in Uzbekistan (re)established such effective control over low-level officials throughout the country that they are unable to engage in corruption. It is more likely, as this book argues, that the goods and services the state was able to provide to citizens in Uzbekistan at the time of my survey research made it less likely that they sought assistance illicitly from local authorities.

Another possible explanation for the findings in Central Asia, according to Logvinenko, is "state socialist legacies." As Logvinenko notes and I agree, economic challenges and illicit coping mechanisms existed in the Soviet era, prior to market reform. Yet, all three Central Asian countries had these Soviet-era experiences, so state socialist legacies cannot account for why citizens in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were more likely to seek assistance from government officials than their counterparts in Uzbekistan. Rather, market reform under the two conditions created new economic challenges in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that their residents had not faced in the Soviet era and that their counterparts in Uzbekistan still did not face at the time of my survey research. Consequently, people in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan sought goods and services different from those that they sought in the Soviet era, and they approached authorities different from those they approached in the Soviet era (88–90). The corruption described in the book is not a continuation of Soviet-era practices.

This argument that petty corruption is attributable to market reform under these two conditions is applicable to not only Central Asia, but also to other regions of the world. A statistical analysis of 92 countries provides additional evidence for the argument. Both the in-depth analysis of the three Central Asian countries and the statistical analysis examine the book's main argument, contrary to Logvinenko's claim that the hypotheses are different. Where the approaches do differ is in which aspects of the argument they best test. The Central Asian analysis investigates variation only in market reform, but carefully traces how market reform and each of the two conditions led to the outcome of petty corruption. The global analysis examines variation in market-enhancing institutions, legacies of state economic intervention, and market reform; however, global datasets focus on grand, rather than petty, corruption, making it difficult to discern the impact of state economic intervention legacies, in particular. Future research can utilize new, more refined corruption indicators, such as those in the Varieties of Democracy dataset (https://v-dem.net), to better examine these relationships.

As the methodology indicates, the objective of the book is to offer a generalizable argument and provide evidence for it. The specific issue, raised by Engvall and Özcan, of whether the situation in Uzbekistan has changed since the survey data were collected is worth considering in this context. The causal argument indicates that a reduction in state goods and services, under the two conditions, encourages citizens to engage in corruption to meet basic needs. My focus is on market reform, but there could be other reasons for a reduction in state goods and services and subsequent petty corruption. "Market re- form is not the only factor that promotes petty corruption" (29). A government economic crisis, like the one Uzbekistan has faced in recent years, can shrink state assistance. Reports indicate that since the time of my survey research, Uzbekistanis no longer receive timely state salaries, adequate pensions from the government, and sufficient energy supplies (78). Considering that Uzbekistan has a legacy of significant state economic intervention and lacks market-enhancing institutions, I would expect that the decrease in state goods and ser- vices has encouraged petty corruption. Research in contemporary Uzbekistan can confirm or disconfirm this expectation about the current situation there.

The book's argument suggests a new approach to combatting corruption: anti-corruption efforts should encourage the development of market and societal goods and services as alternatives to state assistance. "Only once substitute resources are available to citizens should reform turn to decreasing resources available to officials, reducing their discretion, and increasing their account- ability" (166). I thus advocate this new approach in addition to current efforts focused on officials, not in place of current efforts, as Özcan suggests.

Private goods and services can, of course, also be subject to corrupt practices, including the illicit behavior of government officials. Engvall helpfully alludes to this in his discussion of the blurring of private and state sectors and the multitude of actors in a state. The porous private-state boundary is evident throughout the book, for example, from the accounts of *akims* (leaders) directing private charity to villagers they select. The variety of state actors is emphasized by the book's discussion of the different resources that village officials, *raion* and *oblast* bureaucrats, members of *oblast* representative bodies, and national parliamentary deputies have to meet citizens' requests for help.

Even given the multitude of different state actors and the illicit involvement of some of them in the private sector, the bolstering of market and societal sources of goods and services is a useful addition to anti-corruption efforts. Private sector corruption does not have the same negative political consequences as corruption in the state sector. Illicit exchanges with government officials decrease government legitimacy and effectiveness, whereas private sector corruption does not. In this respect, private sector corruption is less of a problem. Increasing market and societal goods and services can reduce citizens' need to engage in petty corruption. Only by directing anti-corruption efforts at both sides of illicit exchanges – citizens and government officials – are these efforts likely to be successful.