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ABSTRACT

AUTHORITARIAN LANDSCAPES:
STATE DECENTRALIZATION, POPULAR MOBILIZATION, AND THE INSTITUTIONAL SOURCES OF RESILIENCE IN NONDEMOCRACIES

by Stephen Hess

Beginning with the insight that highly-centralized state structures have historically provided a unifying target and fulcrum for the mobilization of contentious nationwide social movements, this dissertation investigates the hypothesis that decentralized state structures in authoritarian regimes impede the development of forms of popular contention sustained and coordinated on a national scale. As defined in this work, in a decentralized state, local officials assume greater discretionary control over public expenditures, authority over the implementation of government policies, and latitude in managing outbreaks of social unrest within their jurisdictions. As a result, they become the direct targets of most protests aimed at the state and the primary mediators of actions directed at third-party, non-state actors. A decentralized state therefore presents not one but a multitude of loci for protests, diminishing claimants' ability to use the central state as a unifying target and fulcrum for organizing national contentious movements. For this reason, decentralized autocracies are expected to face more fragmented popular oppositions and exhibit higher levels of durability than their more centralized counterparts.

To examine this claim, I conduct four comparative case studies, organized into pairs of autocracies that share a common regime type but vary in terms of state decentralization. These include the single-party autocracies of Taiwan (1949-1996) and China (1949-present) and the personalist autocracies of the Philippines (1972-1986) and Kazakhstan (1991-present). This dissertation compares streams of contention in each of these sites, examining how state structures facilitate and/or impede the shift from localized and particularized forms of contention into nation-level social movements. These divergent outcomes are expected to have a powerful impact on the resilience of individual autocratic states and their likelihood of experiencing regime breakdown.

AUTHORITARIAN LANDSCAPES: STATE DECENTRALIZATION, POPULAR MOBILIZATION, AND THE INSTITUTIONAL SOURCES OF RESILIENCE IN NONDEMOCRACIES

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

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Chapter One: Introduction

This work is a study of popular mobilization in non-democratic settings, aimed at charting the institutional sources of authoritarian breakdown and resilience. After the third "wave" of democracy took root the latter 20th century (Huntington 1991a), the number of democracies in the world has expanded from 44 countries (29% of the world's states) in 1973 to 89 (46%) in 2009 (Freedom House 2010). However, nearly two decades after Francis Fukuyama (1992) declared that liberalism, encapsulated in free market capitalism and political democracy, had supplanted all of its remaining ideological rivals, bringing about the "end of history," authoritarianism has persisted in some states and reemerged in other post-transitional states. While this expansion of global democracy has assuredly been an impressive development, 58 "party-free" and 47 "not free" countries remain to the present day (Freedom House 2010). Moreover, as noted by Thomas Carothers (2002), it is not necessarily safe to make the teleological assumption that the world is moving *away* from despotism and *towards* democracy (6). There is some reason to suspect that the third wave has come to an end and may in fact be threatened by an autocratic counter-wave. Carother's skepticism is supported by Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell's discovery that "from 1972 to 2003, 77 percent of transitions from authoritarian government [have] resulted in another authoritarian regime. Only 23 percent of such transitions led to democracy" (2007, 152). For this reason, there is a clear need to explore why many nascent democracies of the third wave have reverted to authoritarianism, and secondly, why certain autocracies have bucked global trends and maintained their grip on political power at the end of the 20th century. This project will explore the latter question, which asks why certain autocracies have persisted for decades where others collapsed or transitioned towards other forms of government.

In recent decades, students of authoritarianism have paid particular attention to the characteristics of autocracies that increase or decrease their longevity and propensity to collapse in the face of various internal or external challenges. These identified factors include the presence of an effective internal security apparatus, high level economic performance, discretionary control over economic resources, effective formal political institutions, and a country's insulation from external pressures for regime change. In addition to these elements, scholars have taken strides in disaggregating authoritarian cases into regime types and exploring the different strengths and vulnerabilities presented by particular forms of autocracy. Despite this veritable cottage industry of explanations for authoritarian resilience, students of authoritarianism have not often given sufficient attention to protest dynamics, explaining how or why popular mobilization tends to occur within particular authoritarian settings. As highlighted by the central role of popular contention in bringing about the collapse of autocracies in the third wave and more recently, color revolutions in the former Soviet Union, it has become increasingly important to understand authoritarian resilience and breakdown through a lens that incorporates the agency of protest actors. This dissertation aims to take a step towards bringing studies of authoritarianism into greater constructive dialogue with a second field, contentious politics, which is centrally-focused on protest dynamics. It seeks to highlight how features of authoritarian institutional structures can alternatively facilitate or constrain popular actors' ability to organize sustained, nationwide protest movements - an outcome that plays a crucial role in the generation of authoritarian breakdown.

1.1. Sources of Authoritarian Resilience

As noted by Lucan Way (2008), one instrument that clearly increases the resilience of an authoritarian regime is "an extensive, cohesive, well-funded, and experienced coercive apparatus that can reliably harass opposition and put down protest" (63). Without security agents capable of and willing to suppress dissent, autocratic rulers are vulnerable to the kind of popular uprisings that might spiral out of control and bring about the collapse of the regime (Skocpol 1979, 32; Bellin 2004, 144). In the view of Way, an effective security apparatus is well-funded, trained and equipped and usually has usually been hardened through experience in a major conflict (2008, 63). When confronted with large protests, these forces are ready and willing to use intimidation and violence to restore order when ordered to do so by the state elite.

The presence of this kind of effective internal security force is central to a regime's "coercive capacity" – its ability to "either prevent or crack down on opposition protest" (Levitsky and Way 2010, 57). These authors further break down coercive capacity into two distinctive modes of coercion. The first involves "high-intensity" coercion, which refers to highly-public acts such as dispersing large crowds as well as the harassing, arresting, and imprisoning of opponents (58). The second is "low-intensity" coercion - the monitoring and "low-profile" intimidation of potential opponents, such as the denial of licenses or basic social services, extension of special taxes, and attacks by non-uniformed thugs (58). Coercive capacity can also be assessed on the dimensions of "scope" the width of its reach into society and across a country's territory and "cohesion" – the "level of compliance within the state apparatus" (58-9). These distinguishing characteristics determine how well a security apparatus can prevent the outbreak of public opposition and secondly, how effectively it can reactively quickly suppress incidents of popular contention that do occur. According to Nathan (2003), the cohesion of an internal security force is enhanced if the organization is characterized by merit-based standards for the promotion of officers that center on technical competency and professionalism (12). This procedure-based personnel management encourages security agents to see their interests as being in line with the survival of the regime, which promises them a path to future professional achievement and certain long-term material rewards. When push comes to shove, they will rally around the national leadership rather than defect to the opposition. In short, having a well-trained and equipped internal security apparatus that can be expected to effectively monitor, harass and, when needed, repress opponents is predicted to serve as an essential ingredient of a long-lived authoritarian rule.

Scholars have also found that sustained economic growth is critical to the resilience of authoritarian regimes. To begin with, economic resources are needed to fund the kind of aforementioned well-equipped and well-paid internal security force that can be wielded against challengers to the regime (Skocpol 1982; Clark 1997). Economic performance can also contribute significantly to a regime maintaining popular support. As noted by Samuel Huntington (1991b), non-democratic systems lack the kind of "procedural" legitimacy that is generated when voters have the ability to freely choose and reject leaders through elections (50). This lack of procedural legitimacy makes autocracies heavily reliant on "performance" legitimacy – their ability to deliver high-level economic growth and improve the living standards of most citizens (50). In other words, because autocrats cannot make the credible case that their right to rule has been granted and reaffirmed through regular, free and unfettered competitive

elections, they must make a convincing case that they can act as agents of modernization and continually provide material benefits to the general population. This finding is supported by Przeworski and Limongi's (1997) well-known observation that authoritarian regimes which can regularly deliver high per capita incomes tend to be remarkably durable, such as the long-lived dictatorships of Singapore, Taiwan and Spain (160). Thus, by sustaining economic growth in the long term, an authoritarian regime increases its resilience by making a credible claim that it can improve the lives of the general population.

However, as noted long ago by Gurr (1968), even long-term economic performance is no certain recipe for lasting social and political stability. As citizens' standards of living increase, so do their expectations. Citizens' satisfaction is gauged on what they hope to have in the present, not relative to their material condition decades earlier. Consequently, if they cannot attain the goods and comforts they have come to expect in the short-term, citizens feel materially-deprived, view the regime as being a failing economic performer, and are prone to demand a change in the country's political course (1110). In autocracies, where individuals cannot voice these demands and bring about change at the ballot box, citizens are likely to take their grievances into the streets and take extralegal actions to make demands on the regime. Thus, the past successes of an economically-developing autocracy can actually burden it in the present, as growth generates not only greater resources for the regime but also greater demands in the form of rising public expectations. This means that even in regimes with a long track record of economic success, sudden economic crises and result in political collapse, as occurred in Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Brazil in the wake of the oil shocks of the 1970s (Huntington 1991b, 51). Conversely, protracted but gradual economic stagnation does not necessarily produce the immediate collapse of authoritarian regimes, as communist regimes in Eastern Europe, for example, managed to limp along for decades in spite of their weak economic performance in absolute terms and in relation to their neighbors in Western Europe (54). This economic decline certainly eroded the resources and credibility of these regimes in the long-term but did not in itself bring about authoritarian breakdown. This suggests that sudden short-term losses in a country's economic standing present a serious threat to the resilience of autocracies, while gradual, long-term declines seem to offer a challenge more is manageable at least in the short term.

The relationship between economic performance and authoritarian resilience is also complicated by the effects economic growth has on the social landscape. While it may secure popular support in the short term through economic performance, high-level economic growth may also fundamentally alter the socioeconomic landscape of given society, eroding a regime's political base and/or weakening its ability to use its traditional levers of power to maintain social and political control. As noted by advocates of conventional modernization theory, such as Lipset (1959) and Rostow (1960), economic development produces an increasingly complex society, unleashing new social forces that cannot be managed through traditional forms of political control. These emerging groups, particularly the commercial middle class, are likely to demand their new economic power is translated into political inputs, necessitating the establishment of democratic rule. This reveals the challenge of maintaining autocratic rule over a changing society. According to Barry Naughton (2008), one of the lessons drawn from the Soviet collapse is that after consolidating their power, ruling authoritarian regimes enter a state of "atrophy," in which their proven mechanisms for control, such as "propaganda, coercion, and [traditional forms of] organization" see diminishing returns (3). This means that to survive, autocratic

regimes must adapt to changing circumstances and develop a new set of instruments for maintaining political control and winning the consent of the public (3-4). Thus, scholars have revealed that autocrats face a paradox in their approach to economic development: while their performance legitimacy is improved through economic achievement, the social change created through economic development may erode authoritarian regimes' traditional capacity for maintaining social and political control. Autocrats that successfully promote socioeconomic change in their societies must also be prepared to adapt and respond to the potential challenges it is likely to produce.

While economic growth and the revenues it produces are in general important elements of maintaining authoritarian control, different modes of economic growth present autocratic rulers with divergent arrangements of challenges and opportunities. As argued by a number of scholars supporting the notion of a "resource curse," the possession of energy resources, particularly oil, and its development into an export commodity, is directly related to the longevity of autocratic rule. These resources can transform a society into a "rentier state," in which political elites, usually with the assistance of foreign investors and technical experts, extract revenue from energy exportation and redistribute those funds in order to maintain control over the population (Belawi and Luciani 1987; van de Walle 1998). A large volume of wealth is created and delivered to state elites largely without the involvement of the general population, presenting a situation in which citizens are almost entirely dependent on the ruling regime for their economic welfare. As noted by Lucan Way (2008), the presence of an energy export-dominated economy facilitates high "state discretionary control over the economy" (60). This extraction of profitable, yet easily controlled, energy resources strengthens the hand of autocratic regimes by providing them with a convenient source of financing that depends on little public consent. Incumbent leaders can use these economic resources to provide rents to loyalists, buy off potential rivals, and also starve opposition parties (64-5). The presence of a lucrative energy export industry in autocracies, such as in the former Soviet Union and Persian Gulf region, has meant there has been relatively little need for rulers to "extract" wealth from the public. According to Charles Tilly (1985, 183-4) and Samuel Huntington (1991b, 65), the extraction of wealth from the public plays a central role in driving populations to challenge despotic regimes. When rulers seek to extract increasing levels of wealth from the general population, it generates widespread popular dissension and strains their ability to maintain social and political control. Rulers of resource-rich countries are as a result largely relieved of the burden of forcibly extracting wealth from the populace.

As noted by Way (2008), autocrats of states with limited stocks of natural resources can also maximize their discretionary control over economic resources by maintaining state ownership over the most productive sectors of the economy. This reduces the risk that private economic interests might provide much needed financial support to potential regime opponents (64-5). However, as reflected in the ultimate, if delayed, collapse of communism in the late-1980s, direct state-ownership over economic resources is typically a losing formula for a country seeking to maintain international competitiveness and produce sustained economic performance. This suggests that such a strategy might buy short-term stability but will have diminishing returns in the long-term. By maintaining discretionary control of the economy, through either resource extraction or state ownership over the economy, rulers do not need to make extensive material demands upon the public or appease a contentious public with political concessions, creating a

situation of "no taxation, no representation." Without having to make politically unpopular demands on the population, autocrats in control of their economic resources can strategically distribute rents to loyal supporters, buy-off potential opponents, and put in place economic populist policies that can curry genuine popular support for despotic regimes (Dimitrov 2009, 79). As noted in Scott Radnitz's (2010) recent investigation of mass mobilization in post-communist Central Asia, autocratic regimes that undertake more extensive economic reform and relax their discretionary control over the economy, such as Kyrgyzstan, are more vulnerable to popular resistance than their less-reformed, more statist counterparts in countries such as Uzbekistan and Belarus. Loosening the state's grip over economic resources enables wealthy political outsiders to create their own informal patronage networks and build up social bases independent of the regime in a form of "subversive clientelism" (4-6). This outcome can ultimately provide elite regime outsiders to rapidly and seemingly spontaneously mobilize popular support against a regime and bring about its collapse. Thus, having state ownership over the economy and readily extractible natural resources, present an autocratic regime with the opportunity to generate revenues without creating new sectors of society that have a material interest in challenging the regime.

Another element that enhances the durability of authoritarian regimes is the presence of a powerful, highly-institutionalized political party (Geddes 1999,135, 2003, 78; Brownlee 2007, 42-3; Way 2008, 62; Magaloni 2008). As it operates as the "only game in town," a hegemonic party stands as the single vehicle for accessing state rents, political positions, and the privileges associated with loyalty to the ruling regime (Magaloni 2008, 725). Holding the lion's share of educational and professional resources and the power to appoint individuals to government posts, a political party attracts many of the most ambitious and upwardly-mobile citizens, increasing the quality of its own personnel as well as denying outside opponents the opportunity to tap many talented individuals as leaders and organizers (Geddes 1999, 134). The simple extension of short-term patronage, however, is not sufficient to win the long-term loyalty of cadres. Individual officials always might gain more from conspiring with potential opponents of the national leadership and seizing the reins of ultimate power themselves than remaining loyal to the incumbent. The ruler, after all, decides how rents should be distributed to rank-and-file members, tends to privilege those close to him, and has ultimate say over the policy agenda (Magaloni 2008, 723). Thus, while the personal risks of plotting to challenge the leader are substantial, an individual always has some incentive to consider seizing the top of the state hierarchy.

A highly-institutionalized party, however, enables a regime to go far beyond the distribution of short-term rents in securing the loyalty of its political supporters. For Way (2008), a powerful party apparatus that can propagate an all-encompassing ideology, has successfully brought together cadres through a long "history of violent struggle," and has an established record of electoral dominance can attract the loyalty of cadres to a degree beyond that of short-term material interest (63). Nathan (2003) finds that securing cadres' lasting loyalty means establishing a norm for regular, merit-based promotions within the party hierarchy so that individual party members perceive that they will be rewarded in the long-term for their loyalty and the advancement of other cadres is based on some measure of basic fairness (9-11). In a similar vein, Magaloni (2008) argues that the long-term loyalty of high-ranking cadres is dependent upon a leader being "able to credibly promise to them a sizable share of power over

the long run" (723). This involves the autocrat handing over to the party apparatus significant authority over decisions over promotions, policymaking and the distribution of rents and other favors. Additionally, the leader must use restraint when he considers purging potentially disloyal regime insiders (723-4). This reduces rank-and-file cadres' fear that they might one day suffer a similar fate and discourages them from considering challenging the party leadership. Establishing a highly-institutionalized party apparatus with some degree of autonomy from the ruler thus makes a credible commitment to cadres that remaining loyal to the status quo regime will serve their long-term interests. This mechanism can bring new social actors in the ruling coalition, mediate disputes between competing elite insiders, and ensure the long-term cohesion of the regime (Brownlee 2007, 37-40). The party reduces the benefits of defecting to the opposition, reducing the likelihood that regime insiders will conspire to challenge the ruling elite. As a result, the ruling elite will be less likely to fragment in the face of public opposition or reveal visible divisions that might be exploited by outsiders.

Institutionalized parties can also help mitigate the threat of elite fragmentation that can occur during leadership succession crises. As noted by Bratton and van de Walle (1997), Geddes (1999), and Hale (2005), in personalist regimes, a leader amasses a large concentration of political power based not only in the formal authority derived from his/her office but also the informal patron-client relations he/she has with influential individuals within the formal apparatus of government and powerful social and economic institutions. In normal times, the long-term interests of individual officeholders are firmly linked to their having positive relations with the national leader, making defection a risky and unappealing proposition (Hale 2005, 139). However, when the leader becomes vulnerable through illness, a military defeat, an economic crisis, or an expressed intention to leave office, the calculations of elites fundamentally change. Facing a now uncertain political future, previously loyal cadres conspire against the center, forge new coalitions, and even consider defecting to the opposition, resulting in the fragmentation of the ruling elite (139-40). These divisions provide an opportunity for a political opposition to mobilize, appeal to potential allies within the state and security forces, and bring about the collapse of a now weakened regime. Additionally, a fractured regime no longer can deploy its coercive capacity to its maximum potential, limiting its ability to quell popular challenges. As noted by Nathan (2003, 7-9) and Hess (2010, 37), the establishment of norm-bound procedures for leadership succession and the careful grooming of successors by incumbents leaving office can reduce the likelihood of regime fragmentation occurring as power passes from one leader to another. Such moves reduce the uncertainty surrounding leadership successions. They also pour cold water on the hopes of aspiring contenders within the regime who otherwise might perceive an opportunity to seize power during a moment of vulnerability. Thus, if a leader institutionalizes succession and promotion procedures within a formal political party apparatus, he/she makes a credible commitment to share some degree of power with others within the political elite (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010, 127). This lowers the stakes in a leadership succession. Because the party presents an informal institutional check on the office of the leader, the losers in the political elite who are not selected for the top post are more likely to perceive that they will not lose their positions, benefits, or lives when the outgoing leader retires and their rival takes the reins of ultimate power.

In addition to a hegemonic political party, scholars have in recent years noted that authoritarian rulers often establish nominally-democratic political institutions as a means of increasing the

durability of their regimes. As noted by Jennifer Gandhi (2008), these formally democratic institutions, which often include legislatures, courts, opposition political parties, and even elections, have conventionally been dismissed as mere "window dressing" – facades designed to impress or deceive outside observers – or as predecessors to genuine democracy (xvii-xxi). This is because informal processes or "socioeconomic structural variables" (Snyder and Mahoney 1999, 103) and not formal institutions have typically been considered to be the driving force behind authoritarian politics. More recently, however, a growing number of scholars have appreciated the importance of formal institutions within non-democratic regimes. Scholars of this perspective find that nominally democratic institutions serve practical functions aside from simply impressing outsiders. These include increasing the popular legitimacy of the regime (Schmitter 1978), dividing and weakening the opposition (Linz 1978), identifying critics of the regime (Way 2006), providing forums for forging compromises with and extending rents to potential challengers (Lust 2009, 122; Gandhi 2008, xviii- xix), reducing official corruption and malfeasance (Nathan 2003), increasing government responsiveness (Manion 1996), and giving dictators a chance for a non-violent exit from power (Schedler 2009b, 298-9).

Scholars have noted that the regime-sustaining function of these institutions is so significant that the holding of formal multiparty elections presents no clear division between autocracies and democracies. The establishment of nominally competitive elections, in other words, represents no step "towards" democracy, as these institutions can play democratizing or autocratizing purposes. Diamond (2002), Levitsky and Way (2002), and Schedler (2002) have identified a number of "hybrid regimes" as cases of "competitive authoritarianism" or "electoral authoritarianism." In such regimes, autocratic rulers hold formal multiparty elections but manipulate them to varying degrees to maintain if not enhance their grip on power. As shown in the empirical findings of Gandhi and Przeworski (2007), this strategy is often successful; all else being equal, autocrats who establish nominally democratic political institutions experience substantially greater longevity in office than those who do not (1290). Thus, in the view of these scholars, autocratic rulers' establishment of formal institutions is directed less towards simply creating a façade of democracy for an outside audience and more to enhancing their grip on power and ensuring their political and personal survival.

A number of scholars have also noted that the resilience of authoritarian regimes cannot be attributed only to domestic factors but also must be understood within a particular international context. Breaking with a trend in the study of regime transitions that has treated the breakdown of authoritarianism and the appearance of democracy as a primarily domestically-driven processes, scholars such as Huntington (1991b, 100), Starr and Lindborg (2003), Kopstein and Reilly (2003, 132-140), Brinks and Coppedge (2006, 463), and Gleditsch and Ward (2006, 924-6) have found that transitions away from authoritarianism cluster both spatially and temporally. Furthermore, a country's proximity to democratic neighbors is a stronger predictor of it democratizing than any particular social requisites (Brinks and Coppedge 2006, 479-80; Gleditsch and Ward 2006, 924-6). The implication of these findings of direct relevance to this study is that authoritarian regimes tend to be substantially more resilient when they have a larger proportion of non-democratic neighbors (Gleditsch and Ward 2006, 924-5). A range of causal mechanisms have been offered in an attempt to explain why the absence of democratic neighbors usually has a stabilizing impact on authoritarian regimes.

Democratic countries, such as the United States, international and regional organizations, such as the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), non-government organizations focusing on democracy and human rights promotion, such as Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, or the Open Society Institute, and religious organizations like the Catholic Church can play a role in empowering the popular challengers of autocratic regimes. These actors deploy election monitors, give financial support to civil society organizations and opposition movements, broadcast uncensored news coverage into closed regimes, and pressure autocratic incumbents to refrain from harassing opposition activists and journalists or rigging elections (Huntington 1991b, 86; Vachudova 2005, 178-9; Bunce and Wolchik 2006, 12-14). These outside influences have the effect of weakening the hand of autocrats and inspiring the opposition to take greater risks and bolder actions.

Huntington (1991b) has suggested that the establishment of democracy in one country also has a powerful demonstration effect on its neighbors, revealing the possibility of democratization in their own country, inspiring the morale of the opposition and also exposing the kinds of mobilization tactics dissidents might use to challenge and overthrow a regime (101-2). Seeking to integrate greater agency into a typically structure-centered literature on authoritarianism, Bunce and Wolchik (2006) have highlighted the role diffusion dynamics played in electoral revolutions in the post-communist region. In their view, the "graduates" of opposition movements that have effectively toppled autocratic regimes through mobilization tactics in their own countries often travel abroad to expose their counterparts in other countries to the "ideas, strategies, and precedents for change" that eventually bring about electoral revolutions (11-12). Linkages with international actors interested in the promotion of democracy and opposition activists' ability to learn from earlier successful revolutions in neighboring countries thus help dually weaken autocrats and strengthen their popular challengers, leveling an otherwise uneven playing field between a well-resourced ruling regime and its ill-equipped opponents.

However, some scholars have been somewhat more critical of the role of diffusion dynamics play in bringing about popular revolutions. They have noted that these factors do not necessarily explain regime breakdown, as high levels of popular mobilization and the usage of proven models for electoral challenges have often proven unable to bring down regimes, as occurred in Armenia (2003, 2004, 2008), Azerbaijan (2003, 2005) and Belarus (2006) (Way 2008, 57-8). Furthermore, the demonstration effect of successful revolutions in other states does not always work in favor of opposition activists, as they can alternatively strengthen the hand of attentive despots. As noted by Way (2005), much of the strength of autocratic regimes has a non-material basis, namely their "know-how" or ability to draw on experiences at home and observed abroad to strengthen their regime in the present (236-7). This has enabled them to find methods for "manipulating and surviving" nominally competitive elections while minimizing international scrutiny (236). Carothers (2006) has suggested that dictatorial regimes, such as Russia, Uzbekistan, China, and Zimbabwe, observed the role of the foreign media as well as domestic and international human rights NGOs in the color revolutions of the early-to-mid 2000s. They then responded by severely restricting the activities of such actors within their own territory (56-9). Observing this trend in a number of post-Soviet dictatorships, Vitali Silitski (2006) has coined a useful term, "preemptive authoritarianism," to describe the phenomenon of autocratic regimes learning from popular revolutions in other countries and strategically adapting their tactics and political structures to diminish the prospects of democratic contagion within their

own borders (5-6). Thus, by learning from the collapse of other regimes and observing the tactics used by opposition activists to bring about their downfall, authoritarian regimes can refine their methods of political control and make preparations to make sure that such patterns are not repeated in their own countries.

In addition to diffusion effects, international forces can also serve a direct stabilizing role in authoritarian regimes. In a trend Silitski (2006) labels as the "authoritarian international," autocrats often link arms across borders, pooling their resources and expertise or taking direct actions to mitigate the threat of democratic contagion (6). The threat of Soviet intervention in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, for example, clearly contributed substantially to the long-term survival of communist dictatorships in the region. This fact was revealed with these states' rapid collapse after Soviet officials announced the "Sinatra doctrine" – the assertion that they would not intervene militarily to prop up client governments (Huntington 1991b, 86). In the post-Cold War era, the regime-sustaining support of authoritarian allies most often does not come in forms as explicit as direct military intervention. First, as noted by Way (2005), the presence of authoritarian friends and neighbors means that these regimes can offer diplomatic support and reduce the international pressure to abide by democratic or international human rights norms. This backing grants autocrats facing popular challenges more latitude to apply the full and unconstrained scope of their coercive capacity against domestic opponents, both in terms of attacking and arresting activists, censoring critical media coverage and/or rigging elections (234-5). In areas where international democracy assistance has contributed to regime change, such as the post-Soviet region, autocratic rulers have often circled the wagons, coming together to condemn such activities as unacceptable foreign interference in another country's affairs (Carothers 2006, 58; Gat 2007; Ambrosio 2009, 3).

Secondly, Burnell (2006) has noted that powerful authoritarian countries, such as China and Russia, also actively engage in "anti-assistance" and "counter-promotion" activities, providing technical support, arms, technology and funding to non-democratic regimes that enhances their ability to more successfully monitor and suppress domestic challengers (7). This support from powerful autocratic allies provides an alternative source of support and aid that weaker authoritarian regimes can tap, reducing the leverage of traditional donors that might demand political reform, such as international financial institutions and Western countries (Way 2005, 235-6). Importantly, Burnell (2005) notes that it is not only authoritarian powers who help prop up struggling dictators but democratic regimes, who in pursuit of economic opportunities, strategic resources or allies, often also send critical funding and support to dictators, in either overt or covert forms (7). The United States, for example, has notoriously assisted despotic allies in Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia with military aid, material and training as well as political support. Thus, while the international community has in many respects become much less hospitable to authoritarian governments at the turn of the century; non-democratic regimes have nevertheless often been able to find both material and diplomatic support from powerful autocracies both in their immediate neighborhoods and beyond.

While analysts have noted the general internal and external factors that can affect the resilience of autocracies, they have also noted that autocratic regimes vary substantially in their regime type, a consideration that has great impact on their durability. These scholars have taken important steps in working to disaggregate the ambiguous category of "authoritarianism" – a

catch-all designation that simply indicates a regime is non-democratic. Analyzing the sources of authoritarian resilience and breakdown thus requires disaggregating authoritarianism into more conceptually meaningful subcategories. As noted by Barbara Geddes (1999), "One of the reasons regime transitions have proved so theoretically intractable is that different kinds of authoritarianism differ from each other as much as they differ from democracy" (121). These variations, furthermore, make them vulnerable to particular kinds of popular challenges (Ulfelder 2005, 315). Noting the distinguishable features exhibited by different non-democratic regimes, students of authoritarianism for over a half-century have proposed a number of categorization schemes aimed at capturing the differences and similarities among particular regimes (Arendt [1951]1966; Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965, Linz [1975]2000; O'Donnell 1979). In 1996, Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan's path-breaking *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* synthesizes earlier findings into a typology of five ideal types for political regimes: "democratic, totalitarian, post-totalitarian, authoritarian and sultanistic" (42). These types can be distinguished according to the dimensions of "pluralism, ideology, leadership, and mobilization" (41-2). Among the non-democratic states, their ideal type is predicted to have an important causal impact on the transitional paths taken by regimes during the stages of democratization and consolidation (41-2).

In her study of 163 historical political transitions in authoritarian regimes from 1945 to 1994, Geddes (1999) builds upon Linz and Stepan by introducing the typology of military, single-party and personalist authoritarian regimes. Her classification scheme proves particularly effective in that she identifies distinctive modes of factionalism and competition within each regime type, characterized by a precise game theoretical logic. Additionally, Geddes' applies her typology in a large-N empirical study of regime transitions, finding that various types of autocracies exhibit distinctive patterns of longevity In this study, Geddes finds that military regimes are particularly susceptible to breakdowns generating from splits between factions within the ruling clique that culminate in elite turnovers, resulting in remarkably short average tenures of 9 years (122, 131). Personalist regimes tend to manage splits in the regime more effectively but are vulnerable when a leader is leaves office because of death or sickness. On average, they last 19 years (132). Single-party regimes are the most resilient, lasting an average of 35 years, and can handle successions from one ruler to another much more effectively than personalist regimes (132). More recently, Brownlee (2007) has updated and expanded Geddes' dataset, finding that her threefold regime typology continues to have explanatory power in the period 1975-2000. Single-party autocracies remained the most long-lived, followed by personalist and military regimes in descending order (32). These empirical findings strongly support the notion that military, personalist, and single-party can and should be acknowledged as distinctive variants of authoritarianism that inform meaningful comparisons in political analyses.

These three regime types also have exhibited varying degrees of vulnerability to breakdown when faced with particular forms of endogenous and exogenous threats. In terms of mode of breakdown, violent overthrows most significantly impact personalist regimes. Gradual economic downturns erode the resilience of military regimes, while only sudden economic shocks tend to bring down personalist regimes (Geddes 1999, 135-6). Single-party regimes prove particularly resilient, even in the face of steep economic declines (139). Building upon these insights, Ulfelder (2005) considers the proposition that "contentious collective action has different effects on the risk and outcome of regime breakdown in different forms of authoritarianism" (314).

Beginning with Geddes' argument that different modes of elite competition and cooperation characterize particular types of authoritarian regimes, Ulfelder finds that these differences make autocracies more or less susceptible to breakdown in the face of popular contention. In his large-N empirical study, the author finds that personalist regimes are less vulnerable to challenges from contentious collective actions (314). Elites in these regimes are more concerned with intra-elite negotiations and less so with maintaining popular support. This makes these regimes vulnerable to popular contestation only when such challenges reach revolutionary proportions (314). On the other hand, single-party and military regimes are concerned with maintaining their popular legitimacy, an effort that is fundamentally challenged by recurrent or widespread incidents of popular contention. Ulfelder's research finds that both military and single-party regimes are susceptible to nonviolent popular contestation from below (314, 318). Military regimes, which usually initially intervened in politics in the interest of maintaining public order, tend to close ranks and exert unified repression when contestation involves violence or rioting, making them highly resilient in such a situation (319).

On the basis of these findings, regimes differentiated according to type clearly diverge significantly in the way they respond to popular and internal challenges and the likelihood of these threats producing authoritarian breakdown. Furthermore, as noted above, a range of general structural factors are predicted to reinforce the resilience of autocracies, including a regime's coercive capacity, economic performance, discretionary control of the economy, creation and maintenance of a well-institutionalized party apparatus, effective utilization of nominally-democratic political institutions, and insulation from destabilizing international forces. While suggesting that these factors increase or diminish the vulnerability of autocracies to popular challenges, such studies have paid relatively little attention to how popular mobilization actually takes place or how the forms it may take can be disaggregated. Much literature on authoritarian resilience has assumed that destabilizing popular contention emerges as a symptom of the weakness and flaws of particular authoritarian state structures (McGlinchey 2009, 124-5). This leaves powerful protest movements more as a dependent variable, depriving them of independent agency and leaving them underexplored in many analyses. This has left scholars of authoritarianism troubled by the puzzle of how widespread popular contention can and does break out in contexts heavily constrained by expansive autocratic power. As noted by a number of scholars, popular protests and even revolutions can break out in spite of the presence of strong state apparatuses that apply extensive repression and are capable of tightly closing the opportunities for collective action available to popular challengers (Francisco 1995; Goodwin 2001, 177; Almeida 2003). To begin to address this issue and enhance existing theories of authoritarian resilience, the following subsection surveys literature in the area of contentious politics, an approach that pays explicit attention to the dynamics of popular mobilization and gives protest actors central agency in explaining political outcomes. This will set the stage for the integrative purpose of this dissertation, namely bridging studies of authoritarianism and contentious politics by highlighting how structural factors highlighted in the former can enable or impede the kind of popular mobilization studied by the latter.

1.2. Contentious Politics

Popular revolutions in the global "third wave" of democracy (Huntington 1991a, 1991b) at the end of the 20th century have challenged the presumed relationship between the structurally-

defined strength of authoritarian regimes and their propensity to breakdown. Highly-mobilized publics have brought down regimes with high coercive capacities in countries as diverse as Iran, Taiwan, and the Soviet Union. In these cases, the presence of highly-trained and well-funded internal security forces as notoriously intimidating and effective as SAVAK, the Taiwan Garrison Command, or the KGB proved unable to sustain the regimes they aimed to protect from popular challenges. In addition to these, high-level economic performers, such as South Korea, Greece, and Spain have fallen to popular challenges. Regimes with highly-institutionalized party apparatuses in the former communist bloc and Taiwan proved unable to prevent the appearance of powerful social oppositions. At the time of writing, spontaneous outbreaks of popular contestation have challenged the grip of long-lived dictatorships in Tunisia and Egypt - countries few would have imagined were vulnerable to such popular challenges. These realities suggest the limitations of structural explanations for authoritarian resilience, particularly those analyses that overlook the way in which protest organizers act as agents of popular mobilization. As noted by McGlinchey (2009), "The existing literature, perhaps understandably given its focus on institutional weakness, overemphasized state variables while underemphasizing the causal role of social opposition movements" (125). Sharing a similar sentiment, Bunce and Wolchik (2009) have been "extremely skeptical that structural factors alone" can explain popular revolutions and emphasize the need for an integrated approach that appreciates the causal role of popular opposition as agents of authoritarian breakdown: "Put simply, structure, agency, and process are all important" (70).

Somewhat ironically, in scholarly debate over a decade earlier, Valerie Bunce (1995) had contended that the leading paradigm for analyzing political transitions, "transitology," might be committing the "transgression" of emphasizing a "particularistic and voluntaristic understanding of social reality over one which [was] more general and structural" (124). This structure-agency debate of the early 1990s, however, was fundamentally different than the one currently emerging in the study of authoritarianism. The agents targeted by transitologists were elite actors, while the current agents often in question now are mass-mobilized popular oppositions. Political scientists of the transitions paradigm have often warned that political transitions, at least those of interest – which culminate in stable democracies, are processes best left to the elite – not the mass-mobilized public. As noted by scholars Guillermo O'Donnell and Karl Schmitter (1986), effective democratic transitions typically resulted from the of bargaining between elite, "often highly oligarchical," groups of autocratic regime insiders and leaders of the democratic opposition over the political "rules of the game" (38). Sharing this view, Terry Karl (1990) argued, "To date, however, no stable political democracy has resulted from regime transitions in which mass actors have gained control, even momentarily, over traditional ruling classes" (8). In the view of these authors of the "transitology" perspective, mass mobilization, particularly if it appeared in a violent form or threatened the property and position of the status quo regime, invited the violent repression of regime hardliners (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 27). If it did produce revolutionary outcomes, this typically led not to political democracy but alternative forms of authoritarian rule or unstable democratic regimes (Karl 1990, 8). Therefore, while opposition elites might threaten to mobilize the public as a method of leveraging themselves in their negotiations with regime insiders, democratization was not causally propelled by popular contention or initiated by it. Instead, democratization was a process centrally driven by elite negotiations.

While agent-centered approaches to political transitions of the 1980s and 90s gave careful attention to elite actors, highly-mobilized popular oppositions were playing a critical, if not central role in toppling dictatorships. Nancy Bermeo (1997) noted that while high levels of popular mobilization had ended political negotiations and prompted intense state repression in Argentina (1981) and Chile (1983), in a number of other cases, political transitions had proceeded successfully in spite of high levels of often radical and/or violent popular mobilization. These included Spain, Portugal, South Korea, the Philippines and Peru (307-314). In Bermeo's view, popular mobilization could raise the cost of suppression and lower the price of toleration as perceived by regime elites. If these "pivotal" elites believed that they could no longer endure the costs of maintaining political order or would themselves win any future elections, they would press ahead with the extension of major political reforms in spite of the presence of a radical challenges or a highly-mobilized public (315-9). Nicolas van de Walle and Michael Bratton (1997) found that in African political transitions, popular protests were instrumental in bringing authoritarian leaders to the bargaining table (3). Collier and Mahoney (1997) found that protest actions in Latin American and southern Europe, specifically incidents of labor activism, played a critical role in destabilizing authoritarian regimes and putting political transitions in motion or sustaining transitional projects already in place (286-7). Bunce and Wolchik (2006, 2010) reported that mass protests before and after rigged elections had brought down autocratic regimes throughout much of Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia and initiated political transformations (2006, 5). These authors, in short, found that popular mobilization could be essential to destabilizing autocratic regimes, initiating negotiations between elites and opponents, and keeping political liberalization from going off track.

However, many scholars' emphasis on the strategic machinations of negotiating elites, which reigned during the 1980s and early-1990s peak of transitology, has meant that *the* critical agents of many political transitions, popular opposition movements, have not taken center stage in analyses of authoritarian breakdown. Literature on authoritarianism, which has added a much-needed emphasis on differentiating the structural elements of various non-democratic regimes, as lamented by Bunce and Wolchik (2009), has not adequately integrated popular opposition agents into its conceptual framework. As noted by McGlinchey (2009), in a field dominated by studies of structural causes for authoritarian resilience and emphasizing the coercive or political capacity of autocratic regimes, the appearance of powerful social opposition is largely treated as a symptom of "institutional weakness" as opposed to an independent causal factor in its own right (125). Consequently, literature on authoritarian resilience requires a deepened understanding of how, why and when forms of popular contention may appear in non-democratic settings and how distinct modes of contention can contribute to authoritarian breakdown.

In stream of scholarly literature that has developed in relative isolation from studies of political transitions and authoritarianism, scholars of the "contentious politics" approach have developed a sophisticated conceptual toolkit aimed at explaining how waves of popular contention develop and have meaningful political impacts on their respective societies. Led by thinkers such as Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and Doug McAdam, this group has pressed political science scholarship to look beyond institutionalized politics and widen its analytical lens to incorporate informal collective actions into its scope of inquiry. Reconciling previously divergent strains of literature on revolutions and social movements, contentious politics refers to:

> Public, collective, episodic interactions among makers of claims when a) at least some of the interaction adopts noninstitutional forms, b) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims, and c) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants. (Tarrow 2001, 7)

Such incidents can conceivably involve collective actions as diverse and unconventional as grain seizures, mutinies, riots, parades, demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, petitioning, or the destruction of property. Scholars of contentious politics have noted that in particular the study of "transgressive contention" – actions that challenge the boundaries of prescribed and tolerated forms of political behavior – has often been of critical significance in producing important political and social changes (Tarrow 2001, 7). Various "mechanisms" such as the diffusion of claim-making performances from one site to another and the activation of boundaries between various political actors can combine together into larger "processes" such as democratization that produce major political changes (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 214-217). Importantly, by challenging the bounds of accepted political behavior, collective actors demonstrate the effectiveness of various tactics, reveal the vulnerabilities of an authoritarian regime, and inspire the actions of previously-unconnected social groups with different sets of grievances. These emerging waves of popular contention develop their own kind of momentum that can defy the institutional strength of a regime, creating opportunities for protest that did not exist before and contributing to major political outcomes, such as the weakening or collapse of regimes previously thought to be unassailable.

The most direct analytical predecessor of contentious politics has been the sociological study of social movements. Over the half-century evolution of this subfield, students of social movements forged the now-dominant political process approach to contentious politics as well as its critical conceptual toolkit – political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures, and collective action frames. In early studies of social movements, scholars of the "collective behavior" line of thought, such as Kornhauser (1959), identified protest movements as distinct from conventional political actors. Unlike organized groups within formal political systems, which were thought to mobilize resources, rationally calculate their strategies, and push deliberately towards identifiable goals, social movements were irrational, psychologically-driven episodes of collective outrage that were a product of social stress and disorganization, phenomena distinct from the terrain of purposeful politics (Gamson 1975, 130). When later research centering on the antiwar movement revealed participants were not afflicted by psychological dysfunction or ideological zealotry but rather tended to be well-adjusted rational individuals (Keniston 1968), scholars such as Levy (1970), began focusing on the material deprivation or commonly-held ideologies of groups involved in protest activity (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1214).

In the early 1970s, a number of works, such as Snyder and Tilly's (1972) time-series analysis of collective violence in 19th and 20th century France, and Muller's (1972) survey-based study of social disorder in Waterloo, Iowa, found little relationship between material deprivation and collective action or social unrest. Studies such as Marx (1970) challenged the presence of generalized beliefs and ideology in motivating collective action. In his 1965 *Logic of Collective Action*, Mancur Olson suggested protestors were rational actors that mobilized in the interest of winning collective benefits. Logically, it made sense for groups that shared interests to work together in home of pursuing common goals. However, Olson suggested that collective action was persistently troubled by the "free rider" problem, where individuals sought to maximize the

collective gains they would enjoy while minimizing the personal costs they would have to incur (21). Building upon Olson's findings, scholars of the resource mobilization school (Zald and Ash 1966; Freeman 1975) sought to explain how social movements were able to overcome the problem of collective action, a task typically accomplished by applying coercive or positive inducements to individuals through effective forms of organization. Resource mobilization theory, while further revealing protest's function as a purposeful political instrument and providing useful organizational explanations for the success or failure of social movements, often struggled to explain why protests occurred and were successful in certain contexts but not in others (Meyer 2004, 127).

In a seminal work that has provided much of the foundations of the "political opportunity" or "political process" school of thought, Peter Eisinger conducted a 1973 study of urban riots in the United States. He explained that the occurrence of disruptive protest activities was greatly influenced by the political environment in which they were located. The components of this context contributed to a "structure of political opportunities" that create certain "constraints or open avenues" for different kinds of individual and group political actions, greatly influencing the manner of their political behavior (11-12). Much subsequent research (Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi *et* al 1992; Tarrow 1994, 85-89) has further specified which elements can contribute to opening or closing political opportunity structures, a consideration which has become a central consideration in the currently-leading "political process" approach to contentious politics (O'Brien and Stern 2008, 15). Taking stock of previous findings, Tilly and Tarrow (2007) have suggested that political opportunity structures are influenced by "the multiplicity of independent centers of power within it, its openness to new actors, the instability of current political alignments, the availability influential allies or supporters for challengers, [and] the extent to which the regime represses or facilitates collective claim making" (57). Changes in these structures, which open or constrain the opportunities available for effective popular claim-making, determine what forms of contention are effective in achieving desired political goals (57). Within these evolving opportunity structures, McAdam (1983) has found that collective action involves an evolving interplay between challenging and ruling groups, in which each group innovates its methods and respond to the other's evolving actions, a process he identified as "tactical interaction" (736). These findings highlight the role played by protest entrepreneurs in developing new, attention-drawing methods of contention, which must be continually adapted to remain effective in changing sociopolitical environments.

Scholars of social movements have also identified how "repertoires of contention" (Tilly 1993, 266) have varied across regimes. In states categorized as high or low-capacity and democratic or undemocratic, repertoires have varied from the "clandestine oppositions and brief confrontations" that characterize high-capacity non-democracies to the often ethnically or religiously charged violent struggles that take place in low-capacity democracies (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 56-57). Based on its origins in studies of social movements in Western democracies, to the present, relatively few studies on contentious politics have examined the distinctive political opportunity structures presented by more closed authoritarian regimes (Tarrow 2008, 8-9). In some studies, scholars have supplemented or adapted existing conceptualizations of political opportunity structures derived from democracies to the set of constraints and opportunities presented by authoritarian regimes. In one such work, Osa and Corduneanu-Huci's (2003) empirical study of 24 cases of social mobilization in 15 non-

democratic states has found that having media access, which can be used to appeal to potential allies, is central feature of the political opportunities available in an authoritarian context (606). Yang (2009) finds that the advance of Internet communications can present enterprising citizens with the opportunity to conduct online activism and organize offline acts of popular contention (3). Considering the wide latitude autocratic regimes have in deciding how to deal with popular challengers, Schock (2005) finds that state responses are themselves also a major determinant of political opportunities (30). Adopting Piven and Cloward's (1979) framework for authorities' possible responses to non-institutional challenges, namely to "ignore, conciliate, reform or repress" (27-30), he finds that the state's specific actions in dealing with one act of contention enable or inhibit the ability of subsequent claimants' to organize collective action (Schock 2005, 30-33). These findings reveal that effective mobilization in non-democratic contexts requires that popular claimants capitalize upon the limited access points available in a constrained media environment to publicly voice their grievances and capitalize upon the opportunities presented by state responses to early bouts of protest.

Since the early 1980s, scholars have noted the role that preexisting social bonds have played bringing individuals together into collective action. While Olson (1965) and subsequent scholars of the resource mobilization school understood collective action as the effective organizing of individual interest, McAdam's (1986) study of the 1964 Freedom Summer project has suggested that individuals' engagement in high-risk acts of contention is primarily a social activity, driven by their preexisting social ties to other participants (77-82). As noted by Tarrow (1994), "The mobilization of preexisting social networks lowers the social transaction costs of mounting demonstrations, and holds participants together even after the enthusiasm of the peak of confrontation is over" (22). Collective action is thus foremost a community activity, requiring both social entrepreneurs capable of innovating effective tactics and participants bound together through interpersonal social bonds able to maintain the sustained action of individuals.

With this realization, students of contentious politics have brought "mobilizing structures" into their analyses as a central concept. These involve "those collective vehicles, both formal and informal, through which people come together and engage in collective action" (McAdam *et al* 1997, 155). In non-democratic contexts where state repression presents a constant risk and the ability of individuals to form formal organizations is highly circumscribed, scholars have found that informal social networks are a critical factor in enabling social movements to mobilize and sustain collective action in an authoritarian context (Osa and Corduneanu-Huci 2003, 606). Similarly, Schock (2005) argues that the leaders of centralized, hierarchical organizations can be readily targeted by coercive state forces, meaning that surviving repression in a non-democratic setting requires that popular challengers be linked through decentralized, network-oriented mobilizing structures, where there is no metaphorical head for autocrats to cut off (50). As noted by O'Brien and Stern (2008), in addition to sustaining collective solidarity, personal connections between participants also increase interpersonal trust, helping the group overcome the fear that the group might be "infiltrat[ed] by state agents" (18). Thus, in more closed authoritarian environments, effective and sustained collective action is typically oriented around the preexisting social ties of participants and involves the forging of organizational structures taking the form of loose, decentralized networks.

In addition to political opportunity structures and mobilizing structures, scholars of contentious politics have paid special attention to the activity of framing. This concept, the frame, refers to a "schemata of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large. By rendering events or occurrences meaningful, frames function to organize experience and guide action, whether individual or collective" (Snow *et al* 1986, 464). To be effective in mobilizing collective action, these frames need to hold meaning within the targeted population and be linked to a specific course of action. Instead of constructing frames out of whole cloth, protest entrepreneurs must appropriate culturally-resonant material and adapt these ideas to demonstrate the seriousness of their claims and illustrate the unfairness of their situation vis-à-vis their opponents (Tarrow 1994, 122-3). In other words, when attempting to highlight the injustice of their plights and inspire bystanders to action, social entrepreneurs must develop repertoires of contention that hold meaning within a particular cultural context (Tilly 1995, 43-45).

In the circumscribed media environment of authoritarian regimes, the task of framing is often a daunting challenging, as claimants cannot conveniently voice the nature of their plight in the public square. Consequently, individuals in such settings may engage in "everyday forms of resistance," voicing their discontent through less conspicuous means such as gossiping or criticizing local injustices (Scott 1985, 310). In a symbolic struggle with more powerful social groups, they "work incessantly at maintaining, strengthening, and sanctioning a particular view of who is rich, who is poor, and how they should behave toward one another" (310). Additionally, aggrieved citizens might voice their demands by using the strategy of "institutional conversion," (Thelen 2003, 226) converting official rhetoric or institutions to serve their own interests (O'Brien and Li 2006; Lee 2007, 11-12; Xi Chen 2008, 56-7). They might also draw upon preexisting shared notions of reality, namely the "structurally-rooted collective life experience" within their communities, applying what Hurst (2008) has billed "mass frames" to shape their collective actions and demands (71). In short, popular contention in authoritarian contexts autocracies typically appears in forms closely resembling acts tolerated or even prescribed by a regime. To minimize the likelihood that they will motivate state repression, claimants carry out "transgressive acts" that toe the boundary between acceptable and forbidden activities (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 60-1). Moreover, because constraints on their freedom of expression limit their ability to construct effective frames, claimants typically depend upon familiar, preexisting language and symbols within their communities.

A growing literature on contentious politics thus provides an important conceptual framework for explaining what Sidney Tarrow (1994) has termed "cycles of protest," how individual acts of contention lead to the rapid diffusion of collective action to other actors, quick bursts of tactical innovation, the appearance of new collective action frames, and culminate in "intensified interaction between challengers and authorities which can end in reform, repression and sometimes revolution" (153). Of specific relevance to this study, the approach explores how limited acts of popular contention can spread widely across authoritarian societies, leading to the kind of massive-scale protest actions that can bring an autocratic regime to the bargaining table or overload its political capacity and bring about its total collapse. However, while students of contentious politics have contributed mightily to revealing the various mechanisms that can put important political processes such as popular mobilization in motion, they have paid less attention to how these dynamics might interact with the kind of structural variations highlighted

by scholars of authoritarianism. Some incipient efforts have been made in this direct, such as Tilly and Tarrow's (2007) effort to disaggregate regimes according to the dimensions of high/low capacity and democratic/non-democratic, and describe how these regime types experience specific prevailing forms of popular contention (56-7). As admitted by the authors, this is a fairly "crude" typology (56) and assuredly falls quite far from the highly-developed categorization schemes and structural variables advanced and explored in the study of authoritarianism. Presumably, these major institutional variations exhibited by different autocratic regimes have a critical impact on the political opportunities for popular mobilization in various societies. This dissertation begins at this intersection of literatures on authoritarianism and contentious politics and presses forward, looking at how the institutional structures of autocracies may facilitate the appearance of more or less threatening modes of popular contention.

1.3. The Research Question

As revealed by students of authoritarianism, autocratic leaders are primarily concerned with threats posed from within as well as from popular pressures below the regime. To manage these threats, autocrats construct or adapt various institutional mechanisms for maintaining the loyalty of cadres and/or mitigating challenges likely to be posed by the general population. The creation of such institutions, such as hegemonic political parties, legislatures, or managed multiparty elections, is intended to enhance the durability of the regime. Such changes, however, transform the political shape of the regime, closing certain opportunities for internal or popular challengers while possibly opening others.

In recent decades, one of area of growing intellectual concern has been identifying the various political and economic outcomes states are likely to experience when a significant degree of policymaking authority and control over public resources is transferred from central to subnational authorities through decentralization, a process that will be discussed at some length in Chapter 2. In some analyses, this kind of decentralized state structure has often been linked to institutional weakness in autocracies, whereas centralization has contributed to the enhancement of regime durability. In this view, a regime's power and sustainability is closely linked to the central leadership's direct control of economic, coercive, and political resources (Levi 1988, 11-12). By concentrating state resources in the center, a leader can distribute these assets as spoils, rewarding supporters for their loyalty while also starving opponents (Díaz Cayeros *et al* 2003, 4-5; Weingast 2009, 288-9). Conversely, by decentralizing, a leader may enable local elites to amass their own autonomous bases of power, resulting in debilitating in-regime divisions and/or the mobilization of regionally-based counter-coalitions against the central leadership (Ochoa-Reza 2004, 256-7). However, a number of recent studies have also highlighted that decentralization can also enhance an authoritarian regime's resilience, improving economic performance without necessarily eroding the regime's political control (Montinola, Qian, and Weingast 1996; Landry 2008). As a result of these findings, both the centralization and decentralization of the state can be understood as strategies undertaken by autocratic rulers to strengthen their power vis-à-vis potential internal and external opponents (Schedler 2009a).

Of central interest in this dissertation, the degree of state (de)centralization in authoritarian regimes appears to have a powerful impact on the structuring of political opportunities available

to organizers of popular contention. Specifically, this dissertation investigates the hypothesis that decentralized state structures in authoritarian regimes impede the development of forms of popular contention sustained and coordinated on a national scale. Conversely, when autocratic rulers centralize their regimes, often with the intention of asserting their power over internal rivals or horizontal threats, they often unexpectedly enable popular challenges to rapidly mobilize into national-scale protest movements that present regime-endangering vertical threats. Following this logic, acts of popular contention in more decentralized authoritarian settings are expected to emerge in a recurrently fragmented and localized form, failing to undergo the process of "upward scale shift" into national protest movements (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 95). According to terminology applied by Tarrow (1994), this limited mode of protest does not diffuse a general, "modular repertoire" of contention throughout a national society. Additionally, it lacks broad, coordinated coalitions of social actors who are based in diverse societal and economic sectors and geographic localities (6-7). Central to this proposition is the observation that highly-centralized state structures have historically provided a unifying "target" and "fulcrum" (Tarrow 1994, 72) for the mobilization of contentious nationwide social movements. Presumably, the process of decentralization significantly reshapes the state as a target for popular contention, facilitating localized modes of protest while impeding sustained collective action on a national scale.

A structural barrier to upward scale shift is created in a decentralized autocracy because it presents not one but a multitude of loci for protests, diminishing claimants' ability to use the central state as a unifying target and fulcrum for organizing national contentious movements. As observed in country-specific research on Chinese contention (O'Brien and Li 2006; Lee 2007; Cai 2008), in a decentralized authoritarian regime, local agents of the state step to the fore, replacing the center as the prevailing target of popular contention. When they assume greater discretionary control over public expenditures, authority over the implementation of government policies, and latitude in managing outbreaks of social unrest within their jurisdictions, subnational authorities can act as the primary arbiters of collective action. As citizens begin to perceive subnational cadres' increasing authority over local issues, these officials become the leading direct targets of protests aimed at the state and the primary mediators of actions directed at third-party, non-state actors. As popular claimants orient themselves around particular, locality or social group specific issues and direct their collective actions at local targets, popular contention evolves in a fragmented, uncoordinated, and parochial form. In such a structure, popular claim-makers can often achieve their aims and see their grievances addressed through limited collective actions, an outcome that discourages individuals from taking the substantial risks involved in establishing organizational linkages with similarly-aggrieved groups in other localities or segments of society. Moreover, when local enforcers engage in acts of official malfeasance or apply unpopular coercive means against protestors that result in powerful public backlashes, the center can scapegoat local officials, arguing they and not the national government is responsible for unpopular actions. Central state elites can punish local cadres through demotions, pay cuts, or firings or simply transferring unpopular cadres to another part of the country. The center can also provide token concessions to protestors, only using its own coercive resources in the few situations where an outbreak of unrest overwhelms local and regional coercive capabilities. This state-of-affairs encourages claimants to appeal to the center for support rather than organizing themselves or framing their struggle in a revolutionary fashion seeking to overturn the entire political system. The center, in other words, is distanced from the

particular local grievances of protesting groups, appearing as a beacon of last hope rather than a target of blame.

For these reasons, popular contention in decentralized authoritarian states is expected to appear a fragmented, localized form, whereas highly-centralized autocracies are more likely to see collective actions transition into sustained, nationwide protest movements. From the vantage point of an authoritarian leadership, popular contention that appears in a localized and particularized form is eminently more manageable than waves of contention coordinated on a national scale. As a result, this theorized relationship between decentralization and patterns of popular mobilization has an important policy implication: relative to their more centralized counterparts, decentralized regimes are expected to exhibit higher levels of durability in the face of popular challenges.

To examine these claims, this dissertation will examine four comparative case studies, namely the autocracies of Taiwan (1949-1996), China (1949-present), the Philippines (1972-1986) and Kazakhstan (1991-present). The selection of these cases is determined with consideration for the previous findings of students of authoritarianism. To account for the findings of Geddes (1999), Ulfelder (2005) and Brownlee (2007) that single-party, personalist and military regimes vary significantly in their vulnerability to various kinds of popular and internal challenges cases are situated in pairings organized according to regime type. The first pairing, Taiwan and China, draws comparisons between two single-party regimes, while the second examines the personalist autocracies of the Philippines and Kazakhstan. In this study, less attention is paid to military regimes, as according to much empirical research (Geddes 1999; Ulfelder 2005) these types of autocracies are remarkably fragile to begin with. Even the most decentralized of military autocracies, such as Brazil (1964-1985), have seen the rapid mobilization of oppositional social forces and experienced authoritarian breakdown. Presumably, the high level of elite divisions exhibited by this kind of regime leave popular claimants with a ready-made political opening that can be exploited in organizing popular contention on a nationwide scale, regardless of the regime's high level of decentralization. By holding regime type constant, I can ensure that like-units are being compared and gain a better vantage point of the impact of centralized/decentralized state structures on patterns of popular mobilization in authoritarian contexts.

Additionally, by separating single-party and personalist regimes into specific pairings: the highly-developed CCP and KMT party-states of China and Taiwan and the more loosely-institutionalized, highly personality-centered Nazarbayev and Marcos regimes in Kazakhstan and the Philippines, I can hold the presence/absence of a highly-institutionalized party apparatus constant. A range of recent studies (Brownlee 2007, 42-3; Way 2008, 62; Magaloni 2008) have confirmed Geddes' (1999) suggestion that variation on this factor alone can greatly explain the resilience or weakness of an authoritarian regime. This method cleanly separates the variable of centralized/decentralized state structure from the particularly important factor of regime type, enabling the observer to better witness its impact in isolation. Additionally, by observing parallel pairings organized according to regime type, one can observe how the impact of state structure may vary in manner or degree in different kinds of autocracy. To appreciate further structural explanations for authoritarian resilience, each pairing also features discussion of each

case's economic characteristics and performance, its geographic and historical context, and its political and coercive capacities.

Secondly, the cases in each pairing differ substantially on the primary explanatory variable of state centralization/decentralization. Assessing the degree of centralization in a state, however, is no straightforward task. As a result, discussion on this issue is given great attention in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. As lamented by Daniel Treisman (2002), "scholarship is littered with so many different usages of [centralization and decentralization] that it is often unclear just what they mean, if indeed they still mean anything at all" (2). In his view, centralization/decentralization fundamentally refers to the degree to which the following powers are distributed between national and subnational tiers of government: "decision-making authority, appointment authority, elections, fiscal resources, and government personnel" (5). In this work, decentralization is defined as "the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies to the lower levels of government" (Work 2002, 5).

Willis *et al* (1999) group these various powers into two general categories. The first of these, "political" decentralization, refers to the "establishment or reestablishment of elected autonomous subnational governments capable of making binding decisions in at least some policy areas" (8). The latter, "functional decentralization," involves "the transfer of policy responsibilities and expenditure and revenue-raising powers" from central to subnational tiers of government (8). In this work, I will add a third category, the "decentralization of coercion," to refer to the degree to which authority over locally-based internal security forces, the monitoring of potential opponents to the regime, and decisions over the suppression of popular challengers are transferred from central to subnational state officials. Because this dissertation looks exclusively at formally unitary non-democratic regimes where subnational governments have limited autonomous power granted through elections, references to decentralization will refer to functional decentralization and the decentralization of coercion, not political decentralization, which is more closely-linked to the notion of federalism in a democracy.

Importantly, the decentralization of functional and coercive state power are linked to the two state responses to popular challenges most typically applied in authoritarian regimes, "conciliation" and "repression" (Schock 2005, 30-33). The former, functional decentralization, relates to the activity of conciliation - the use of symbolic gestures, redirection of popular contention into institutionalized channels, or co-optation of protest leaders with targeted concessions to quiet contentious collective action (31). The latter, the decentralization of coercion is associated directly with repression, the efforts of the state to silence popular challengers to regime with negative sanctions, such as state violence, censorship or the regime's active or tacit support for third-party assailants against protestors (31-33). The delegation of these functional and coercive powers from the state center to the periphery, in other words, provides subnational authorities with both the carrots and sticks they can use to autonomously manage incidents of popular contention within their respective territorial jurisdictions.

In this study, I approach the challenge of assessing the degree of centralization/decentralization in each national case by applying a combination of quantitative measures and qualitative observations. Concerning quantitative measures, I begin by following a frequently-used measure

for fiscal and administrative decentralization (Triesman 2002; Landry 2008) - the World Bank's (2010) data on subnational expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures and subnational revenues as a proportion of all revenues, which is derived from the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Government Finance Statistics (GFS). For Taiwan, comparable data is derived from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China (1991, 1998). These measures alone, however, have admitted limitations. Willis *et al* (1999) note that even when subnational governments formally command a large share of government expenditures, central authorities may still impose rigid conditions on how subnational officials can spend those funds, limiting their practical autonomy (16). If subnational governments' budgets are not derived from independent sources of funding but dependent on transfers provided at the discretion of the center, national authorities may be able to exert significant leverage over local officials - rewarding or starving regions based on their compliance with orders issued from the top (Weingast 2009, 283). This severely limits any autonomy local governments might otherwise enjoy. Moreover, as noted by Jones Luong (2004), de facto decentralization can trump formal decentralization in autocracies. Subnational authorities may have much more or less autonomy in practice than suggested by formal law or standard budgetary figures (182). While measures for fiscal and administrative decentralization provide a solid base for the initial assessment of cases, these challenges have required that I go beyond formal quantitative measures and survey country-specific reports on each individual case to gain a more accurate determination of subnational authorities' actual autonomous authority vis-à-vis the center. To further illustrate the impact of my explanatory variable, I have also taken care to select paired cases that vary substantially on quantitative measures as well as qualitative assessments of their degree of de facto centralization/decentralization.

To determine the impact of centralized/decentralized state structures on the patterning of distinctive modes of popular contention, observations in this study center on focused comparative case studies of what Tilly and Tarrow (2007) have termed "streams of contention" (204). These refer to "sequences of collective claim [making] at or across those sites singled out for explanation" (203). The sites of contention featured in this research are authoritarian regimes that experienced high levels of popular contention at various points throughout the third wave of democracy, stretching to the present day. The particular streams of contention selected for analysis in this dissertation are particularly contentious episodes that, based in their high level of intensity and participants involved, have demonstrated a relatively strong possibility of undergoing the central outcome examined in this research - a process Tilly and Tarrow (2007) have termed as upward scale shift. This refers to the "coordination of collective action at a higher level (whether regional, national, or even international) than its initiation" (95). In this process, contentious episodes or "bounded sequences of continuous interaction" (203) associated with a single social group, locality, or particular grievance widen and expand to a national level. Determining whether or not such a transformation has taken place in a particular national context will involve observing one of the two primary mechanisms of upward scale shift. The first of these, "direct diffusion," refers to the way in which participants of collective action connect to other groups and venues through preexisting personal connections (95). In a second mode of upward scale shift, a "mediated route," participants in collective action act as "brokers" who actively seek out previously unconnected groups and recruit them to the cause (95). Through both of these routes, early contentious performances are "emulated" by new social groups in new

localities, resulting in "new coordination" at a national level (95-6). During this shift, collective action is changed not only in degree but also manner.

Differentiating between localized, particularized forms of contention and social movements coordinated on a nationwide scale requires close examination of the symptoms of upward scale shift. First, actions restricted to a particular geographic location are emulated in other previously unconnected areas (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 31). Actors in other areas of the country and those with different occupational or social identities adopt the tactics and strategies of other groups. Second, instead of framing their demands in social-sector or locality-specific terms, claimants adopt wider, more inclusive frames that incorporate previously unconnected actors. Instead of focusing particular local governments or officials, claimants "upload" their targeting to national-level authorities. Third, as disparate social actors adopt the central state as a common target; "new coordination" takes place, in which previously detached groups translate their mutual challenges against the regime into synchronized collective action (31). In this process, challenging groups forge organizational linkages capable of maintaining sustained pressure on the state. In constricted non-democratic settings, these links might initially manifest as informal or personal linkages based on preexisting social connections between participants, eventually giving way to structured associations more similar to the kind of civil society organizations seen in more open democratic contexts. Fourth, as frames are widened to include new social actors, new boundaries are activated and new identities are forged (34). A previously disparate body of actors with particular grievances begins to see itself as a coherent "we" or "the opposition" challenging "them" – the (national) state and its social allies. Once methods or repertoires of contention have diffused to new social groups and localities, collective actions have developed new coordination on a nationwide, and claimants have embraced non-exclusive frames and political identities, the observer can infer that upward scale shift has been accomplished.

The appearance of new coordination on a national level presents a vertical threat to an autocratic regime (Schedler 2009a, 4) and can produce a second political outcome, namely authoritarian breakdown resulting in either a political transition towards democracy or a regime turnover in which a new authoritarian leadership consolidates political control. Whether or not this form of mobilization will have a democratizing impact is a highly contingent outcome. According to Charles Tilly (1994), "the proliferation of social movements only promotes democracy…when movements organize around a wide variety of claims including explicit demands for democracy and the state gains capacity to realize such claims at least as fast as the claims increase" (22). Contentious movements, in the process of widening their claims to national level, may or may not adopt inclusive frames centering on the expansion of individual political liberties. If they do so, a national movement may transform into an umbrella democratic opposition and become a direct agent for democratization. John Glenn (2003) finds that popular mobilization may contribute to democratization by propelling new political actors into the elite bargaining process over the political rules of the game, improving the bargaining position of social movement leaders, and playing an agenda-setting role in elite negotiations (104). Glenn reveals that studies of contentious politics and elite-centered paradigms for democratization need not be mutually exclusive. Popular mobilization can both affect and be effected by elite-level bargaining, the two processes interacting to produce the outcome of democratization. While these concerns for democratization lay in the backdrop of this particular project, this is not its central subject of inquiry. Mobilization on a national level, the primary political outcome discussed here,

however, does critically change the nature of state-society relations, elevates new players to the political stage, and can contribute substantially to the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and/or national shifts towards democracy. As featured in this research, carving out institutional landscapes that inhibit such levels of national popular mobilization alternatively may well serve to sustain resilient autocratic regimes.

In sum, this work expects that regimes with different kinds of state structures present distinctive configurations of threats and opportunities that encourage or inhibit the appearance of particular patterns of popular contention. More specifically, decentralized authoritarian states that have delegated substantial levels of authority to sub-national governments will be more likely to experience localized, particularized and highly-fragmented waves of popular contention. All else being equal, centralized regimes are more likely to see localized and limited protests bridge social and geographic boundaries and develop into coordinated, nationwide social movements. These national movements pose a substantially greater vertical threat to authoritarian regimes and are more likely to culminate in regime breakdowns, elite turnovers, or transitions towards democracy. The impact of state structure, however, is likely to be of substantially greater significance in certain types of regimes than others. Military regimes, for example, are remarkably fragile to begin with and effective institutional landscaping, such as decentralizing the state, may not be enough to preserve the regime. In single-party and personalist regimes, however, decentralization may enhance their existing durability and enable them to survive where their more centralized counterparts do not. By combining authoritarian regime type and centralized/decentralized state structures and drawing comparisons between cases of a common regime type, I will explore the way in which decentralization impacts patterns of social mobilization within various authoritarian regimes.

1.4. Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 of the dissertation provides a more extensive discussion of the proposed theoretical connection between state decentralization and the constraints on localized acts of popular contention undergoing upward scale shift into protest movements coordinated on a national scale. Drawing on Schedler's (2009a) writing on "institutional landscaping" within authoritarian regimes (6), I suggest that the centralization or decentralization of state structures is connected to autocratic rulers' desire to leverage themselves against potential internal or popular threats and ultimately, prolong their tenures in power. In this chapter, I survey a growing literature on decentralization, outlining a number of proposed costs and benefits associated with it. Next, a discussion follows on how the drive to centralize or decentralize authoritarian state structures fundamentally alters the political opportunities available to claimants seeking to voice their grievances through organized acts of popular contention. Intentionally or unintentionally, autocratic regimes that centralize their regimes, a process often undertaken in the interest of asserting the center's control over internal challengers, may increase their vulnerability to popular challengers. Shifts in the direction of greater centralization enable localized forms of protest to coalesce around their common targeting of an all-encompassing central state and undergo upward scale shift and transform into protest movements organized on a national scale. Conversely, their more decentralized counterparts present the state as a multitude of targets of contention, resulting in incoherence and fragmentation among various protest sectors.

The third, fourth and fifth chapters of this work compare the single-party regimes of Taiwan and China as sites of contention. Particular attention is given to how both regimes developed comparable Leninist-style single-party political structures at the conclusion of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, but then diverged in terms of state centralization in the latter 20th century. This chapter charts the diverging patterns of popular mobilization that have characterized the protest landscapes of China's more decentralized and Taiwan's more centralized state structures. In the former case, a short-lived outbreak of nationwide mobilization centering on the Tiananmen protests broke out during 1989 but following its collapse, contention in China has been characterized by localized, fragmented and uncoordinated waves of protest contagion that have not experienced upward scale shift into sustained nationwide movements. On the other hand, in Taiwan, popular mobilization rapidly accelerated and underwent rapid upward scale shift in the 1980s coalescing behind the Democratic People's Party (DPP) and pressuring the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) into lifting martial law and allowing genuine multiparty political competition. This shift in popular mobilization in the 1980s brought a resilient, highly-institutional, and strong economically-performing to a state of vulnerability that compelled it to undertake substantial political reforms.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 compare the personalist regimes of the Philippines (1972-1986) and Kazakhstan (1991-present). After declaring martial law in 1972, Ferdinand Marcos consolidated power over a tightly-knit and highly-centralized neopatrimonial dictatorship (Schock 2005, 69). However, by the early 1980s, a previously fragmented body of social groups divided into reformist, revolutionary, progressive, and clerical-based elements transformed into a highly-mobilized and well-coordinated anti-Marcos opposition after the 1983 killing of opposition figure, Benigno Aquino (69-73). Frequent and intense nationwide protests broke out in the following years, culminating in the fragmentation of the ruling elite following 1985 elections and subsequent Marcos flight out of the country (73-9). In Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, emerging as the predominant political figure in Kazakhstan in the last years of the Soviet era, sustained his grip on power after his victory in uncontested 1991 post-independence elections. He has subsequently consolidated his personalist grip on political power over the last two decades, facing only fragmented popular resistance to his rule. Relative to the Philippines and historical personalist autocracies, such as Spain or the Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan has been highly decentralized, with more than a third of fiscal expenditures spent at the subnational level (World Bank 2010). As noted by Jones Luong (2004), in practice, de facto decentralization has exceeded formal institutional designs and propelled the revision of de jure intergovernmental relations between the center and subnational units (182). This chapter explores how the substantial variance in state centralization may have facilitated upward scale shift in the Philippines but not in Kazakhstan, contributing to the collapse of the former regime and the sustained resilience of the latter.

Chapter 9 takes stock of the findings revealed in the four case studies explored in the preceding chapters. The impact of decentralized/centralized state structures on patterns of popular mobilization in various sites of contention is assessed, with special attention given to how decentralization may have had varying impact in manner or degree in different regime types. Additionally, this chapter revisits the existing literature on regime change and discusses how an understanding of how the impact of institutional structures on authoritarian regimes' resilience or vulnerability may inform these schools of thought.

Chapter Two: Authoritarian Landscapes

The first basic assumption of this project is that the autocrat is and foremost concerned with his personal well-being and the preservation of his power and position. These concerns are closely linked to his personal safety and that of his close allies. Additionally, by holding onto power, the autocrat is guaranteed the long-term payoffs in wealth and prestige associated with the control of a national leadership. While the autocrat appears to be in a position of uncontestable power and confidence, his/her position is never permanent or assured and can be preserved only through constant vigilance and action. For this reason, scholars have long sought to identify the methods and maneuvers autocrats can and must take to maintain their tenuous grip on power and ensure their personal wellbeing. Niccolò Machiavelli [1515] 2007), for example, famously remarked that a dictator must act as a half-man, half-beast, "centaur," carefully blending tolerance and coercion in order to win both the love and fear of the populace (72). While fear is assuredly critical tool of sustaining authoritarian rule, it alone is insufficient. The autocrat must also win a substantial measure of consent in order to maintain his rule.

This suggestion leads to a second assumption: long-lasting regimes are effective at identifying potential internal and external challenges and preempting or responding to those threats. These activities are essential because even the most powerful of autocratic leaders faces recurrent threats approaching from many directions. These challenges come from both within the ruling regime and from the general population. The first kind of threats, those from inside the regime, can be labeled as "horizontal threats" (Schedler 2009a, 4). According to Barbara Geddes (1999), "As virtually all close observers of authoritarian governments have noted, politics in such regimes, as in all others, involves factionalism, competition, and struggle" (121). Dictators and ruling factions are always threatened to some degree by a minority faction that could improve its position and better achieve its interests by seizing the top leadership. Moreover, as noted by George Klay Kieh (2004), despite the spontaneity and drama associated with them, *coups d'état* are historically a fairly common phenomenon. In Africa alone, 85 coups took place from the 1950s to the 90s (44). Autocratic leaderships therefore must always be cognizant of the possibility that their erstwhile allies might attempt to seize power through force or political maneuvering if given the opportunity and act proactively to prevent such an outcome.

Additionally, authoritarian regimes face the threat of popular challenges posed by the general population. Schedler (2009a) labels these "vertical" threats - those presented by popular contestation from below (4). As noted by Kurt Schock (2005), social groups in a non-democratic state may perceive their situations as unjust based on any number grievances and respond through three particular forms of action. These include "exit[ing] the situation" or attempting to emigrate from the country in question (14). Secondly, they can engage in what James Scott (1985) identifies as "everyday forms of resistance." By this, he means citizens carry out daily social acts, such as gossiping or avoiding tax payments, in a kind of symbolic struggle in which they seek to frame community-wide social relations in a manner congruent with their material self-interests (Scott 1985, 310). Citizens have thus not been driven to a state of total acquiescence but challenge the status quo in less explicit forms of resistance. While these first two actions may in aggregate terms have an eroding effect on a non-democratic regime, they are largely manageable in the short-term. A third variant of grassroots political activity represents a more significant vertical threat to the regime. Particularly in authoritarian contexts, where

institutionalized political access is severely curtailed, individuals often participate in "non-institutional political action" (Schock 2005, 15). This involves contentious acts "not prescribed by any… [established] procedure, practice or norm" that gain power and influence through their "indeterminateness and disruptiveness" (15). Such collective actions, which can take violent or non-violent forms, have often culminated in revolutionary situations in which authoritarian regimes have collapsed, as in Iran in 1979 or throughout much of Eastern Europe in 1989, or been pressured into opening institutionalized forms of political access, as in Taiwan during the 1980s.

To complicate the situation even further, horizontal and vertical threats often interact with one another to weaken an autocrat's grip on power. As noted by Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow (2007), when there is a serious degree of factional division within a ruling regime, political alignments become unstable. This provides challenging groups from below with potential allies within the regime (56-7). If challengers can capitalize on these divisions and form coalitions with segments of the ruling regime, the ruler's position is weakened while his rivals' are improved. Moreover, in such situations, the incumbent's movement becomes constricted, and the regime must rely on more limited, time-tested courses of action. Simultaneously, the opposition has greater flexibility and can invent or adapt effective repertoires of contention (58). Thus, when elite-level fragmentation occurs, vertical and horizontal threats can combine, creating a situation where the ruler's position erodes and the regime reaches a point of collapse. At this point, the incumbent may explore exit options, such as fleeing the country. An autocrat may also come to the bargaining table to meet with popular opponents and agree to major, unprecedented political reforms, possibly initiating elections that enable a safe, institutionalized exit from power. This latter option represents a gamble aimed at preserving the existing regime but may also inadvertently open a window of opportunity for the political opposition to seize power or make genuine multiparty electoral competition into a reality. An autocrat can also fall back on coercive means, which in a situation of high social mobilization, may only inflame the public's ire and bring about a revolutionary situation.

These horizontal, vertical, and combined threats mean that as noted by Andreas Schedler (2009a), the overarching prerogative of the autocrat is the "task of multilateral threat management" (4). In carrying out this responsibility, authoritarian rulers have great latitude in creating or transforming political institutions in order to stack the odds in their favor vis-à-vis potential challengers. Schedler labels this activity "institutional landscaping" (6). This project enables a ruler to create mechanisms for sustaining the loyalty of supporters or co-opt emerging opponents. Through institutional landscaping, a ruler can also create institutional roadblocks that inhibit the initial efforts of potential opponents to mount serious challenges even before they appear as serious threats to the regime. As discussed above, scholars have identified nominally-democratic institutions, such as elections and legislatures (Schmitter 1978; Linz 1978; Way 2006; Gandhi 2008; Lust 2009) or improved legal systems (Pan 2003; Peerenboom 2007), as sources of political stability under autocratic regimes. In addition, students of authoritarianism have found highly-institutionalized ruling parties to serve a wide range of functions that bolster the durability of non-democratic states (Nathan 2003; Brownlee 2007; Magaloni 2008; Way 2008). As discussed in the following section, autocrats refashion their regimes by delegating greater authority to subnational territorial units or concentrate state power at the political center by reasserting their control over local agents and constricting their movement.

2.1. Defining Decentralization

Altering the division of power and resources between the center and subnational territorial units within authoritarian regimes is the central strategy of institutional landscaping explored in this dissertation. This process can be encompassed in the concepts of "centralization" and "decentralization. As Tocqueville once lamented in *Democracy in America* [1840] 2003), "Centralization is a word endlessly repeated nowadays whose meaning no one, in general, seeks to define" (103). Sharing this sentiment, scholars (Conyers 1984; Hutchcroft 2001; Triesman 2002; Work 2002) have written a growing number of reviews of the literature, aimed at bringing order to an expansive body of research featuring highly-interrelated terms such as decentralization, deconcentration, delegation, devolution, and federalism. The problem of determining a common understanding for these concepts has been further highlighted by the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) 1999 publication of a 40-page working paper featuring an extensive "sampling of definitions" used to describe decentralization in a range of publications released by the UNDP as well as other international agencies. In spite of the wide array of scholarly research on the subject, scholarship has long struggled to place the ideas of centralization and decentralization into a conceptually-meaningful and commonly-adopted terminology.

To restate the definition applied in this work, which effectively captures the essence of the concept, Robert Work (2002) describes decentralization as "the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies to the lower levels of government" (5). In practice, this transfer results in the diffusion of state power and resources from national to subnational authorities. Alternatively, centralization involves the opposite - the transfer of state authority and resources from subnational governments to the national level. The concepts of centralization and decentralization should also be clearly differentiated from a number of similar, sometimes overlapping terms. Fessha and Kirkby (2008) identify "deconcentration, delegation, and devolution" as forms of decentralization. The first, deconcentration, refers to "the mere physical relocation of executing agencies and offices to regions outside the center, with decision-making power remaining at the center" (249). The second, delegation, is "more extensive" and involves "the central government delegate[ing] subnational jurisdictions certain legislative or executive competencies" (249). The third and "most radical form" of decentralization is devolution, under which "the central government transfers political, administrative, and fiscal responsibilities to autonomous subnational jurisdictions that elect their own representatives and raise their own, usually limited, revenues" (249). Work (2002) adds a fourth form of decentralization, divestment, which occurs "when planning and administrative responsibility or other public functions are transferred from government to voluntary, private or non-governmental institutions" (7). Fessha and Kirkby distinguish federalism from other forms of decentralization in that under federalism, the arranged sharing of governmental power between central and subnational authorities is constitutionally guaranteed and cannot be unilaterally readjusted or centralized by the national government (249).

In this work, references to decentralization focus on the variants of deconcentration and delegation, where subnational government agents are physically located away from the seat of national government and granted extensive powers of government as well as a significant share

of public resources. Decentralization in this study does not refer to devolution, as in the four cases explored in this study, central authorities have the power to appoint regional or provincial leaders. Moreover, the cases examined are all unitary states, where the formal powers granted to subnational authorities are not constitutionally guaranteed. As a result, the central leadership may eliminate or redraw subnational territorial units at its discretion. For this reason, the term "federalism," which provides legal guarantees to subnational units, is not applied. While subnational authorities in the two decentralized cases explored in this study control a substantial share of state resources and responsibility within their respective regimes, this allocation of state power is neither derived from the constitutional design of these countries nor is sanctioned through subnational elections. Finally, the references to decentralization in this work refer exclusively to the distribution of resources and responsibilities *within* the state rather than between the state and private actors. Consequently, the term "divestment" is not used.

2.2. Functional Decentralization

Willis *et al* (1999) also separate "political" and "functional" types of decentralization (8). Political decentralization, which is closely linked to the idea of devolution, refers to the creation of elected subnational governments that are granted the power to make binding decisions over a range of policy issues (Willis *et al* 1999, 8; Work 2002, 6). According to Work (2002), the process of political decentralization does not result in the outcome of devolution until the "full transfer" of responsibilities to subnational governments is completed and these localities become "autonomous and fully independent of the devolving authority" (6). Fessha and Kirkby (2008) suggest that once these subnational entities and the powers granted to them receive constitutional guarantees and cannot be rescinded by the center, the system can be termed "federal" (249). As mentioned above, in this work, subnational authorities are appointed by the center and national authorities may legally readjust the powers of the localities or even abolish or redraw the boundaries of these units at their discretion.

Even formally unitary autocratic systems such as China or Kazakhstan, however, may be functionally decentralized, meaning a substantial "transfer of policy responsibilities and expenditure and revenue-raising powers" from the center to the localities has taken place (Willis *et al* 1999, 8). As noted by Jones Luong (2004), the actual de facto level of decentralization can greatly exceed the official limitation on subnational autonomy suggested by a country's status as a unitary state (183). This kind of functional decentralization, which she labels "economic" decentralization, involves three basic areas of governing authority. The first, "fiscal" decentralization, refers to the "the degree of subnational discretion over revenue generation and collection" (188). The second, "administrative" decentralization occurs "when either the main locus of state expenditures is at the subnational rather than the national level or when the national and subnational governments have comparable levels of expenditure" (194-5). Finally, "regulatory" decentralization "describes a situation in which subnational officials exercise greater authority over setting and enforcing regulations in practice than they are empowered to do on paper" (198).

Measurement on the fiscal and administrative elements of functional decentralization is relatively straightforward. World Bank (2010) data offers the most comprehensive standardized collection of statistics capable of assessing countries' levels of fiscal and administrative

decentralization. This dataset includes data for 46 of the 149 total countries participating in GFS for 1996. Additionally, this set of data has a uniquely expansive historical range, stretching for three decades, from the year 1972 to 2000. For Taiwan, comparable data is derived from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China (1991, 1998). Together, these statistics cover the third wave of democracy and include a sampling of authoritarian cases that have broken down and either transitioned to democracy or experienced regime turnovers. Each of the paired cases compared in this investigation vary substantially on standard measures for both fiscal and administrative decentralization. As far as the single-party autocracies investigated in this study, China's subnational revenues represented an average of 51.48% of all government revenues and 54.84% of expenditures (1995-1998), whereas Taiwan's subnational governments were responsible for 24.8% for revenues and 27.7% of expenditures in 1984, several years before the pivotal years of 1986 and 1987, when the opposition DPP was formed and martial law lifted (World Bank 2010; Ministry of Finance 1991, 1998). In the personalist autocracies of Kazakhstan and the Philippines, Kazakh subnational authorities were responsible for 28.77% of all government revenues and 31.43% of all expenditures (1997-1998), while subnational governments in the Philippines controlled 7.89 % of revenues and 11.83 % of expenditures (1978-1986) (World Bank 2010). Therefore, on basic measures of both fiscal and administrative decentralization, China nearly doubled those of Taiwan, while Kazakhstan roughly tripled measures of decentralization in the Philippines. Of course, systems of intergovernmental transfer and taxation can enable the center to exert influence over local governments, requiring the researcher to go beyond regime's stated distribution of revenues and expenditures for assessing the genuine level of subnational fiscal and administrative autonomy in each case.

As for assessing the degree of regulatory decentralization in a case, Jones Luong (2004) suggests examining three central concerns. First, one should consider how regularly or irregularly regulations issued from the national level are enforced by subnational officials (198-9). Secondly, the researcher should look at whether or not local officials have the discretion to independently issue or deny licenses and permits to businesses operating within their jurisdiction (199). Finally, an observer should determine whether or not "regulatory authorities [are] dually subordinated to central and subnational authorities" (199). Having these kinds of autonomous regulatory powers enables subnational officials to exert influence over foreign and domestic investors and even to extract additional funds from them. In such a system, the central government can issue laws and regulations from the top-down, but local administrators will have the latitude to choose which procedures to enforce and how to do so.

2.3. Decentralization of Coercion

In addition to functional decentralization, which includes fiscal, administrative, and regulatory variants, I also refer to the decentralization of a state's coercive resources and the discretion over suppressing popular opponents. As noted in Chapter 1, a number of scholars (Skocpol 1979; Way 2008; Levitsky and Way 2010, 56-61) have found that the presence of an effective internal security apparatus is central to the resilience of authoritarian regimes. This institution is indispensable to an autocrat, enabling him/her to "monitor, co-opt, intimidate, and repress potential opponents, both within and outside the regime" (Levitsky and Way 2010, 57). The mere existence of a well-equipped, battle-hardened, and highly-disciplined security apparatus, however, does not guarantee that it will remain loyal to the regime leadership when called upon.

As noted by Thompson (2001), the divergent political trajectories in Eastern Europe and China in 1989, for example, were heavily determined by security agents' decision "to shoot or not to shoot" into crowds of demonstrators when ordered to do so (63-64). In his view, the strong internal legitimacy of the "early post-totalitarian" CCP, as opposed to the "frozen post-totalitarian" state of Iron Curtain regimes, can explain the application of effective repression in the PRC but not Eastern Europe in late-1989 (77). Slater (2003) has suggested that the effectiveness of institutions of repression in sustaining authoritarian regimes depends on whether or not leaders "personalize" their decision-making control over such mechanisms. They can accomplish this by packing them with loyalists, rigging their procedures for promotion to deny potential rivals access to important posts, and using extra-institutional channels to divert power and resources to loyalists and away from rivals (87-91). These strategies enable a leader can manipulate the coercive apparatus of the state and ensure that when he/she orders the application of repression against internal rivals or popular challengers, members of these institutions will act accordingly.

A central concern of this dissertation involves the "decentralization of coercion" - the degree to which control of the state's internal security apparatus and responsibility for monitoring, silencing, harassing and even eliminating popular and internal opponents is transferred from central to subnational authorities. Following Levitsky and Way's (2010) terminology, such coercive activities may involve "high-intensity" coercive acts, such as firing on crowds and arresting or assassinating activists, or "low-intensity" coercion, involving spying on potential opponents, harassing or intimidating them, vandalizing or seizing their property, or denying them licenses or permits to conduct their affairs (57-58). An element of the coercive capacity of authoritarian states that has received scant attention outside the research of area specialists on China (O'Brien and Li 2006; Lee 2007b; Cai 2008b) concerns the degree to which central authorities delegate primary responsibility for maintaining social stability and suppressing popular challengers to local officials. In a state with a decentralized coercive apparatus such as China, subnational authorities have relatively a free hand to decide how to respond to acts of popular contention within their territorial jurisdictions, ultimately making the decision to unleash local security forces against demonstrators, harass protest leaders, or use other strategies to silence popular challengers. However, as noted by Cai (2008a), this autonomy is "conditional." If local agents fail to effectively silence popular challenges, higher-ranking authorities may intervene, take control of the situation and fire, demote or admonish the responsible local official - both to punish the cadre for his/her poor performance and also to placate popular claimants (412-3). In a more centralized system, the coercive apparatus of the regime acts more as a direct appendage of the center and circumvents the bottom rungs of the state hierarchy in carrying out its operations. Following the orders of the center, it can intimidate, arrest and/or eliminate regime opponents and suppress popular challenges without the guidance or supervision of subnational authorities.

As mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, the two forms of decentralization addressed in this dissertation: functional and coercive, relate directly to Piven and Cloward's (1979) typology of possible state responses to popular challenges: ignore, conciliate, reform, or repress (27-30). As noted by Shock (2005), while ignoring acts of popular contention is possible in democracies, this is an extraordinarily dangerous course of action for an autocracy, where persistent challenges can have a corrosive impact on the regime's legitimacy (30-31). The regime must in some fashion

respond to serious popular challenges; it cannot simply ignore them. One active response, making concrete reforms in direct response to popular contention, is also highly unappealing to autocrats, as it may make the regime appear weak and encourage greater protest (31). These considerations leave conciliation through co-optation or symbolic gesturing and repression as the preferred tools of autocracies in addressing popular contention (31). With functional decentralization, subnational authorities have greater discretion over local taxation, the issuing or denial of licenses and permits, and the allocation of public services. Control over these resources gives local authorities the ability to co-opt the leaders or targeted segments of challenging groups by offering them perks such as lucrative government contracts or subsidies, official appointments, the speedy issuance of needed licenses and permits, official posts, special exemptions from taxation, and/or privileged access to educational institutions for their children. If these measures fail, local authorities empowered through functional decentralization may also respond to the demands of protesters, offering token or more concrete concessions to claimants. Conversely, subnational officials can also deny access to these benefits to troublesome, noncompliant individuals who organize or participate in popular challenges. Furthermore, local cadres can punish these targets through acts of low-intensity coercion, cutting off basic services such as electricity and plumbing, subjecting them to disruptive government inspections, and imposing special taxes on them. Subnational authorities in systems with decentralized coercion enjoy an enhanced degree of decision-making power within their localities and can autonomously craft repressive responses to popular challenges, deploying police or thugs to break up demonstrations, and harass or eliminate organizers. Thus, the decentralization of functional and coercive powers in non-democracies provides subnational authorities with a large menu of responses – both carrots and sticks - they can choose from in deciding how to addressing outbreaks of popular contention. Conversely, in a more centralized system, the repression or conciliation of local protests is ordered directly from the political center and not determined through the autonomous action of local cadres, who are left as functionaries of the national leadership.

2.4. Decentralization: Causes and Outcomes

Scholarship on decentralization and centralization has provided a wide array of explanations for the forces that motivate such policies and the effects that they create. While these concerns relate to the "distribution and division of governmental power" and have been noted as fundamental issues in political science dating back to the time of Aristotle (Maass 1959, 9), scholarly interest in the subject has historically been defined by ebbs and flows, gaining substantial attention in some times while sliding to the margins of academic discourse in others (Conyers 1984, 188). From the mid-1950s to the 1960s, scholarship examined how British and French colonial administrations gradually transferred governing authority to subnational governments in preparation for these countries' political independence (Conyers 1984, 188; Work 2002, 5). Important early works such as Hicks (1961), Maddick (1963) as well as number of UN publications on the topic focused on the way in which decentralization could facilitate greater public participation in government, increase the political efficacy of citizens in developing countries, and lessen the burden on central governments to provide public services (Conyers 1983, 98-99). These policy-oriented first generation pieces tended to focus on the positive role decentralization could play in improving governance and democracy in changing societies. This mid-century optimism over decentralization was subsequently challenged by a

shift towards state centralization in the developing world. In a more recent shift, the allure of centralization has been challenged by a more complex second generation of studies on decentralization, which focuses both on the driving forces behind decentralization and the positive and negative outcomes it produces.

The early optimism over decentralization in the mid-20th century among leaders of developing countries, international organizations, and academics, in a pendulum-like fashion, was soon replaced by a general cynicism towards this approach and a turn back towards centralizing the state (Conyers 1983, 98). Scholars such as Alexander Gerschenkron (1962) noted that the unique challenges faced by late-developers, namely needing to overcome developmental backwardness and compete in an international environment already dominated by industrialized countries, required a strong centralized state to invest in technology, push unskilled agrarian workers into industry, and concentrate a society's stock of talent, technology and resources into large-scale industrial projects (13-20). Leaders of developing countries, such as Egypt, Turkey, and Argentina, noted the example of the Soviet Union, and initiated "revolutions from above" in their own states, using the centralized powers of government to forcefully restructure society and drive it towards rapid industrialization (Huntington 1968, 195; O'Donnell [1973]1988, 2, 31-2; Trimberger 1978). During this process, governments concentrated revenues and expenditures in the center, stripped the autonomy of subnational layers of the state, and developed far-reaching bureaucratic apparatuses that could execute central decrees at the furthest corners of a country (Samuels and Mainwaring 2004, 92-4).

By the late-1970s, however, decentralization was again becoming the "latest fashion" in scholarship, international organizations, and the rulers of many developing countries (Conyers 1983, 97). This second wave of decentralization has affected countries throughout the developing world but much research has tended to concentrate on Latin America, the region that experienced the "most radical changes due to decentralization," seeing a doubling in the proportion of government revenues gathered and expenditures spent at the subnational level from 1980 to 2000 (Falleti 2010, 6-7). While some disagreement exists on the forces driving this trend towards decentralization, explanations have typically centered on two major global trends affecting the region: a shift from state-led developmentalism to neoliberal economic development and the transition from authoritarian to democratic forms of government throughout much of the region (Gibson 2004, 9).

After economic setbacks in the 1970s, such as the oil crises and the failure of import-substitution strategies to generate sustained growth, leaders of developing countries began to challenge the role of the central state as the driver of national economic development (Gibson 2004, 10; Payne and Phillips 2010, 88). During the same time period, political elites and economic thinkers in the industrialized North increasingly embraced the logic of neoliberalism, which demanded the dramatic reduction of the state's scope of involvement in society and the economy in order to unleash market forces and drive countries' economic performance (Wilson 2000, 235). These ideas were actively promoted through international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF, which used policy instruments associated with the "Washington consensus" (Williamson 1990), to pressure developing countries into devolving centralized state power to subnational governments as well as civil society and private economic actors (Schuurman 1997, 151). Scholars also argued that in a more globalized world, states were increasingly incapable of

asserting centralized control over their economies, resulting in the "leak[ing] away" of central state authority "upwards, sideways, and downwards" to non-governmental actors, multinational corporations and subnational authorities (Strange 1995, 56). In short, global pressures as well as general thinking on economic strategy were shifting by the end of the 1970s, compelling national leaders to transfer a growing share of state authority and resources from the center to the periphery in the interest of maintaining economic competitiveness.

Secondly, scholars have also attributed increasing decentralization throughout much of the world as a result of the "third wave" of democracy beginning in the 1970s (Huntington 1991a, 1991b). This causal relationship is derived from both an assumed link between federalism and democracy in conventional political thought and observations made by researchers studying the consolidation of third wave democracies. Building on classical thinkers such as Plato, who famously argued the ideal population for a democracy was 5,040, as well as the Enlightenment political philosophers of Rousseau and Montesquieu, Dahl and Tufte (1974) have identified the many advantages of small polities in sustaining functioning democracy (4-8). Namely, in communities with small populations, citizens had a higher level of familiarity and trust with one another and could more readily participate in political decision-making, enhancing the responsiveness and efficiency of government (5). As described in the *Federalist Papers*, Madison made the case that by dividing political power between national and state-level authorities, a large federal state could enjoy the responsiveness of a small direct democracy while also enjoying the benefits of territorially-large polity (10-11). Building on these insights, Larry Diamond (1999) has drawn a close link between the democratizing and decentralizing trends of the latter 20th century. In his view, in democratizing societies, decentralization enables citizens to develop political efficacy by participating in local politics, improves the accountability and responsiveness of government services, makes the political process more accessible to peripheral groups, provides a check and balance on the national government, and gives minority political parties the ability to exert a degree of political power (121-2). From this perspective, decentralization stabilizes and enhances the quality of nascent democracies and is also an effect of the growing demands of citizens for political inclusion in societies transitioning away from autocracy.

More recently, a growing body of research on third wave democracies in Latin America has cautioned against "celebratory" assertions of any intimate, mutually-enforcing link between democratization and decentralization (Gibson 2004, 12). In the view of these authors, decentralization is related to third wave decentralization but there is no straightforward causal linkage between the two processes. As noted by Gibson (2004, 9-12) and Ochoa-Reza (2004), post-democratization decentralization has taken place because electoral reforms initiated during periods of democratization resulted in the "activating [of] once-dormant federal institutions," wherein previously quiescent subnational offices were empowered and began to demand the transfer of a growing share of central resources to the periphery (Ochoa-Reza 2004, 257). O'Neil (2003), noting the divergent trajectories of decentralization in transitional democracies in Latin America, has found that national leaders only support decentralization when their parties enjoy higher levels of electoral support at the subnational level than in national elections. The decision to decentralize, in other words, has been motivated by elites' interest in expanding their political power, not their or the citizenry's interest in improving democracy *per se*. Falleti (2010) has found that when reforms in a country begin with one particular form of

decentralization (administrative, fiscal, or political), this alters the balance of power between national and subnational interests, shifting the nature of governing coalitions and determining how subsequent decentralizing reforms will proceed (13). Further complicating the relationship between democratization and decentralization, Eaton and Dickovick (2004) have examined how Latin American presidents in the 1990s have applied political powers within well-established democracies to "re-centralize" fiscal powers with varying degrees of success. Thus, while these scholars see democratic change as relevant to the determination of a country's decision to decentralize, there is not clear causal link between democracy and decentralization. Rather, decentralization is an outcome driven by the cynical calculations and distribution of political power among competing self-interested elites.

Second generation studies have also given close attention to the positive and negative effects of the process of decentralization. Scholars have argued that decentralization can improve the efficiency and responsiveness of government (Tiebout 1956; Shah 1998), improve public participation in political decision-making (Manor 1999; Crook 2003), politically accommodate minority groups in diverse societies (Selassie 2003), promote economic development (Weingast 1995; Jin *et al* 2005), and increase government transparency and reduce corruption (Huther and Shah 1998; Fisman and Gatti 2002; Arikan 2004; Gurgur and Shah 2005). Others have been more critical of decentralization, finding that such reforms can create coordination problems between various levels of government (De Mello 2000), exacerbate inequalities in economic prosperity and the quality of government services among regions (West and Wong 1995; Manor 1999; Prud'homme 1995, 202-5), increase corruption (Prud'homme 1995, 211-13; Tanzi 1996), and threaten macroeconomic stability (Prud'homme 1995, 205; Dabla-Norris 2006).

Regardless of the supposed merits and deficiencies of such reforms, it is a basic reality that in the latter half of the 20th century, propelled by advances in global democratization, the rise of neoliberal development policies, and the promotion of international financial institutions, decentralization has rapidly transformed the shape of governments throughout the world. As noted by Work (2002) and Falleti (2010), data from the IMF's Government Finance Statistics project reveals that between 1980 and 1998, countries have reported substantial overall increases in the share of revenues and expenditures commanded at the subnational level. In terms of regional patterns, developed countries, followed by former communist bloc and Latin American currently have the highest proportion of subnational expenditures, while the most dramatic changes in decentralization from 1975 to 1995 have occurred in developed countries, Asia, Latin America and Africa (Arzaghi and Henderson 2005, 1160). Among the 72 developing and transitional countries participating in the GFS program with populations over 5 million, 63 have reported they are currently implementing decentralization reforms (Work 2002, 10). Based on these developments, Tulia Falleti (2010) has suggested, "In no period since the formation and consolidation of the nation-states in the nineteenth century have subnational actors, politicians, and interests been as important as they have been since the enactment of decentralization reforms in the last quarter of the twentieth century" (3).

2.5. Decentralization, Institutional Landscaping, and Popular Mobilization

Returning to a central theme of this dissertation, the transfer of state resources and decision-making power from central to subnational authorities may also have an important impact on

authoritarian resilience. Like the establishment, modification, or transformation of nominally-democratic political institutions or ruling political parties, decentralization represents a form of institutional landscaping that autocrats carry out in the interest of mitigating the threats posed by internal and popular challengers (Schedler 2009a, 6). As noted by Schedler (2009a), when considering how to organize intergovernmental relations between the center and subnational units, autocratic regimes must consider several questions: "Shall rulers strive to monopolize decision-making in the capital city or shall they permit subnational units to exercise bounded political autonomy?" Secondly, "Shall they strive to steer local politics in a immediate fashion, or shall they introduce immediate layers of government between the center and the localities" (6)? As reflected in GFS data on subnational governments' proportion of state revenues and expenditures, Landry (2008) finds that in most cases, autocracies are reluctant decentralizers, at least in comparison to democracies (6). He finds that from 1972 to 2000, the average subnational share of expenditures and revenues in autocracies were 17.76% and 14.05%, while these figures were 25.48% and 18.92% in democracies (6). In fact, he finds only eleven historical autocracies whose proportion of subnational expenditures exceeded 30% (7). Landry (2008) cites the general reluctance of central authorities to transfer political power to subnational units as being grounded in the fear that local cadres might develop a countervailing source of power to the national leadership (10). These empowered local officials might use this power to challenge the central leadership, posing a horizontal threat to the regime, or join with a popular opposition, enabling a destabilizing vertical threat from the bottom up.

A number of scholars have noted the way in which despotic leaders adjust the distribution of state authority and resources between the center and subnational territorial units in the interest of tightening their grip on power. In step with authoritarian leaders' expected preference for centralization, which enables them to concentrate state authority and assert the center's power over potential, regionally-based rivals, scholars have noted centralizing trends in a number of authoritarian cases. In post-Soviet Russia, for example, scholars (Bahry 2005; Konitzer and Wegren 2006; Sharafutdinova 2010) have discussed how a shift towards decentralization implemented in the 1990s under the Yeltsin administration has rapidly been reversed under a Putin regime in the 2000s, which rapidly asserted centralized authority over regional powerbrokers, stripping them of many their previously-held autonomous power.

Alternatively, in step with broader global trends affecting both non-democracies and democracies, a number of notable authoritarian governments have overcome any concerns with regional rivals and begun to decentralize to a significant degree. As noted by Landry (2008, 2) as well as Oi (1992), Montinola *et al* (1995), Xia (2000), and Jin *et al* (2005), decentralization in China, the second case examined in this dissertation, has contributed mightily to the country's impressive economic performance since the early 1980s. By transferring substantial control over economic policy to subnational authorities, China has exemplified what Weingast (1995) has termed "market-preserving federalism" (22). In limiting their grip over economic policy in the provinces, China's national leaders enabled subnational authorities to competitively experiment with economic reform, support and protect local markets, and draw investment into their territories (27). In fact, these provincially-held state powers have become so well-entrenched that central authorities have in certain instances proved incapable of re-centralizing state authority when they have attempted to do so (23). In another authoritarian case examined in this study, Kazakhstan has decentralized to a large degree. In this case, the center has formally

recognized the autonomy of regional *akims* but only after these authorities informally captured a serious share of state power, using their regulatory, fiscal and administrative powers to build up bases of regional support (Jones Luong 2004, 184).

Breaking some new ground in cross-national comparative analysis, this study seeks to explore the proposition that by decentralizing state power, either as the result of top-down decree or the pulling force of regional authorities, authoritarian regimes can increase their resilience against popular challenges. Specifically, the granting of conditional autonomy to subnational territorial units creates a structural barrier between popular claimants and central authorities, which in turn encourages challenges to the regime to take the form of localized, as opposed to nationalized, forms. When subnational authorities possess a significant share of the state's resources and decision-making authority, local protest entrepreneurs are likely to perceive that their particular grievances can be effectively addressed by carrying out limited, community-specific collective actions. Consequently, when choosing tactics and framing their claims, organizers are more likely to take limited, issue-specific actions that resonate specifically with local residents (rather than more generally with the national public), orient claims in an "us-versus-them" fashion between locality or social sector-specific groups and subnational authorities (rather than the general public or nation as a whole against the regime), and focus on geographically-limited, often material grievances rather than political issues that bring the totality of the sociopolitical power structure into question. Instead of taking the greater personal risks associated with constructing an organizational infrastructure that forges links across social sectors and communities, protest entrepreneurs can achieve repeated successes, influencing subnational authorities or local private actors by focusing on safer and more readily-attainable limited goals. In a parallel of Madisonian predictions of the benefits of a federal republic, not only democracies but also authoritarian regimes may also prove more responsive to their constituents if they empower local governments to determine public policies within their own territorial jurisdictions. However, instead of influencing local government at the ballot box, citizens in authoritarian polities may use extralegal collective action to signal subnational authorities and demand for desired concessions or policy changes. In a twist to the more upbeat predictions of decentralizing optimists, the transfer of political power and authority from the center to the periphery may actually improve overall government responsiveness while *also* preserving and sustaining authoritarian rule and impeding popular demands for democratic change. In this sense, decentralization may improve autocracies' performance in governing, which consequently makes citizens more comfortable with the authoritarian status quo. In short, a system in which authority and state resources are diffused to subnational governments promotes authoritarian resilience in several ways. It is creates a perceived structural opening for localized forms of protest, encourages citizens to target their own local governments in collective actions and discourages social entrepreneurs from linking arms across locality, economic sector, and social class in seeking to challenge the status quo authoritarian order.

Central to this hypothesis is the notion that the degree of centralization in an authoritarian state's structure plays a critical role in shaping the pattern of protest that emerges within a given national context. This idea is not new but has rather distinguished historical roots. As noted by Alexis de Tocqueville [1856] 1955) over 150 years ago, the extraordinary centralization of successive governments proved critical in bringing about the revolutionary upheavals that shook France during the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

> Most qualified observers, so far as I can judge, concur in the opinion that chief among the reasons for the collapse of all the various governments that have arisen in France during the past forty years are the administrative centralization and the absolute predominance of Paris. (Alexis de Tocqueville [1856] 1955, 76)

In his view, the "administrative centralization" and "absolute predominance" of the center in French regimes seemed to simultaneously expand the reach and power of the regime while also making it increasingly vulnerable to popular challenges from below (76-77). In the eyes of Tocqueville, under the Old Regime, the centralization of the French state had progressed dramatically and was only sustained by subsequent leaderships. This concentration of power in Paris vis-à-vis the regions had progressed so far that local officials reported, "Nothing could be done without consulting the central authority, which had decided views on everything" (46). The state, in other words, was transformed from a multilevel entity that delegated power, decision-making, and discretionary use of public funds from traditional local aristocratic power-brokers to a centralized structure in which the center assumed responsibility over the smallest of government decisions.

This kind of expansive bureaucratic state, capable of exerting political control across extended national territories According to leading social scientists, the appearance of this new form of political organization was a watershed moment in human history. Max Weber [1922] 1978) wrote that this kind of bureaucratic state, "from a purely technical point of view, [was] capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency and is in this sense, [was] formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings" (223). This kind of state power was clearly unmatched by any other existing mode of political organization. Critical theorist, Immanuel Wallerstein, went so far as to argue that these "strong state mechanisms," more than any other particular advantage, were instrumental in enabling the nations of northwest Europe to establish their predominance over the global system by the 17th century (1979, 18). However, by consolidating its power over local actors and a growing body of public activities, the national state began to present itself as a single target that served to unify previously fragmented collective actions into single, sustained social movements.

Later scholars of contentious politics have argued that the appearance of this novel form of political organization – the modern nation-state – has been intimately linked to the appearance of nationwide movements of popular contention. According to Sidney Tarrow (1994):

> As the activities of national states expanded and penetrated society, they also caused the targets of collective action to shift from private and local actors to national centers of decision-making. The national state not only centralized the targets of collective action; it involuntarily provided a fulcrum for…standard forms of collective action. (Tarrow 1994, 72)

Instead of taking parochial, particular and bifurcated actions that were restricted to local targets, involved direct actions, and were carried out by specific social groups, contentious repertoires evolved into genuine social movements (Tarrow 1994, 6; Tilly 1993a, 272). These collective actions involved interests and issues that were "national" in scope. Forms of protests were "modular" or could be applied in the same form by different groups, interests, and in different contexts. They were also "autonomous" actions that were initiated by independent groups without direction from central authorities or activists (Tilly 1993a, 272). Thus, the birth of the modern national state created a political paradox. While this mode of political organization

provided the machinery a single absolute ruler needed to assert control over large populations and expansive territories, it also enabled the appearance of the modern social movement – a vehicle that average citizens could use to check state power and assert their own individual political and economic rights.

As suggested in the writing of Landry (2008) and Schedler (2009a), the institutional structure of authoritarian states has not been uniform. While the national leadership of a non-democratic state holds ultimate power, central principals can and do, in the interest of economic performance or government effectiveness, relax their direct control over local agents and grant them a significant measure of authority over local budgets and the implementation of policies and directives issued from the center. In this work, I hypothesize that the granting of a large degree of autonomy to local agents fundamentally changes the way in which claimants can use the state as a fulcrum and target of popular contention. More specifically, I expect that all else being equal, in highly-centralized states, authoritarian regimes are more likely to experience vertical challenges from highly-organized, national scale popular protest movements than their more decentralized counterparts.

Returning to the aforementioned claim of contentious politics scholar, Sidney Tarrow, that the state often serves as a "target" and "fulcrum" of collective action (1994, 72), the revelation that modern authoritarian cases might be disaggregated into centralized and decentralized types is critically important. States with differently-shaped institutional structures may serve as targets and fulcrums that are more or less amenable to the outbreak of sustained, nationwide movements of collective action. The institutional makeup of autocratic states, which I am categorizing in terms of regime type and state centralization, might well alter what students of contentious politics labeled as "structures of political opportunities" (Eisinger 1973, 1, 25). In more recent formulations, these political opportunity structures have been expanded to incorporate not only opportunities, the "probability that social protest actions will lead to success in achieving a desired outcome" but also threats, the "costs that a social group will incur from protest, or it expect[ed] to suffer if it [did] not take action" (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 182-183). In considering non-democracies, where the individual rights of assembly and expression are severely limited, realizing how threats may motivate action is particularly important. The balance between the threats and opportunities presented by a given context dictates whether or not a social group will calculate that it is worth incurring the potential costs of protesting and the likelihood that any action will be likely to achieve its desired goals. By changing the shape of the state through decentralization, an autocratic regime can presumably alter the balance of threats and opportunities citizens perceive when they consider organizing or participating in collective actions. This in turn may encourage the appearance of particular modes of protest while dissuading the development of others.

In the case of the Old Regime in France, Tocqueville [1856] 1955) found that the extraordinary level of state centralization was closely linked to its collapse and those of subsequent governments. This logic of this pattern was repeated in the experience of 1989-1991, when popular protest movements rapidly mobilized and rallied against tightly-centralized communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, ultimately bringing these systems to collapse. In such systems, where central authorities' established near total control over national and local-level politics, society and the economy, the central state could reasonably be blamed for any

number of specific grievances. As a result, when perceived opportunities for contention appeared previously disparate and quiescent societies could rapidly rise up in movement and bring down seemingly impregnable regimes.

More recently, regional scholars in China have found evidence to support the notion that popular mobilization may take place in a fundamentally different way in national settings where the state is highly decentralized. Based on observations of protests in China, the state's decentralized structure appears to present particular sets of threats and opportunities that encourage claimants to engage in limited forms of collective action aimed at specific, local or social-sector specific targets. This mode of particularized protest is clearly much more manageable than nationwide protest movements. Aside from the domestic turmoil associated with the events at Tiananmen in 1989, China has not seen the kind of sustained popular challenges that have helped bring down regimes elsewhere in the communist bloc during the late-1980s and in third wave democratic transitions such as the Philippines or Taiwan.

In the contemporary PRC, protest actions have been frequent and often highly-contentious, increasing in number from 10,000 "mass incidents" in 1994 to 87,000 in 2005 (Kahn 2005). They are, however, typically limited to specific groups of claimants, such as state-owned enterprise (SOE) factory workers, taxi drivers, rural farmers, or urban homeowners. Moreover, as noted by Ching Kwan Lee (2007), protest actions, with special reference made to labor activism in her research, are typically highly-fragmented, restricted to particular localities and work units (913). Collective actions only infrequently extend beyond factory divisions or geographic areas. In those cases, in which the protest actions have broken out of localities and been replicated elsewhere, they have not diffused to other social sectors or transformed into genuine national social movements. Social movements, defined by Sidney Tarrow (1994) as "collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities" (4) have effectively been absent from China's social landscape. Thus, while the decentralized structure of the Chinese state has certainly not precluded widespread protest altogether, it has encouraged existing protest patterns to emerge in localized, particularized and more manageable forms that pose less of an existential threat to the party-state.

In addition to denying local claimants a unifying target, a decentralized structure seems to advantage the state vis-à-vis popular claimants in five additional ways. First, as noted by Yongshun Cai (2008a), by granting local officials greater authority within their jurisdiction, the center avoids blame for local authorities' official misdeeds and their use of repression (415). This reality grants the center a degree of plausible deniability when acts of state violence occur at the local level - helping the national state preserve its legitimacy even when coercion is used against protestors. According to Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li (2006), protestors typically direct their anger against local officials but hold remarkably higher levels of trust and loyalty towards the center (42-43). In the view of many claimants, the center has good policies and intentions but is unaware of the incompetence or cruelty of local cadres or is simply unable to control them (43). Citizens thus might perceive that their problems are specific to their region or a particular local cadre, not the entire system or regime. This discourages them from framing their challenges in anti-systemic terms and broadening their claims to be inclusive of other claimants.

Secondly, by having "conditional autonomy" to deal with popular challengers, local officials have wide discretion to deal with protests but understand that they will be disciplined by the center if they extend too many concessions or apply excessive repression (Cai 2008a, 415). Being too generous in terms of granting concessions to claimants can reduce public funds as well as make the state appear weak in the face of popular contention, thus encouraging subsequent challenges. Applying excessive or poorly-targeted repression that affects groups or individuals not directly involved in contention can encourage outside parties to sympathize with or actively join the initial claimants, widening the scope of protests. A local cadre who over or underplays his/her hand is likely to be sanctioned by the center or removed from office. This state-of-affairs encourages local officials to address protest through methods that minimize political cost and are less likely to prompt intervention from the center. Because they are left entirely responsible for managing unrest, cadres' professional advancement is dependent upon them being extraordinarily vigilant about developments in their jurisdiction, finding effective ways to deter protests from taking place and dealing with them quietly and efficiently if they do break out.

Thirdly, the decentralized structure of the state reduces the number of incidents that the center will have to deal with directly (Cai 2008a, 415). In most cases, the center can ignore popular challenges, allowing local cadres to resolve them alone. This reduces the frequency of times it will need to strike the careful balance between repression and concessions, minimizing the risk of under or overreacting to challenges. By delegating authority to local cadres, the center leaves them with the burden of selecting the appropriate course of action. If they fail to act appropriately, the center can intervene and place personal blame upon the individual cadre and punish him/her.

Fourth, a decentralized structure also compels local officials to first attempt to deal with collective actions through their own initiative before the center will intervene. This gives the center more time to carefully inspect the situation and plan its strategy accordingly (Cai 2008a, 415-6). By delegating power to local officials, the center politically distances itself as a target of protest. Since it leaves local authorities with the responsibility to deal with protests firsthand, the center can then intervene as an outside, third-party player if collective actions spiral beyond the control of local cadres. The center is thus able to intervene more accurately and appropriately, having learned from the failures of the local leader.

Finally, as noted by O'Brien and Li (2006), gaps between the center and local authorities in the Chinese state provide a "structural opening" that local claimants can capitalize upon in launching collective actions aimed at addressing their grievances (27). By framing their protests against local cadres as defending the laws and regulations promulgated by the center, these "rightful resisters" can seek allies within the state or in the wider public, such as media outlets, and avoid the accusation that they are anti-state or unpatriotic (2-3). However, by framing their contention in such a way, claimants develop repertoires of contention and bases of support that are conducive to local and particularized but not national, anti-system modes of action. As noted by Tilly and Tarrow (2007), effective social movement campaigns require a "social movement base." This refers to "movement organizations, networks, participants, and the accumulated cultural artifacts, memories, and traditions that contribute to social movement campaigns" (114). In a decentralized state structure, where localized acts of contention often prove effective and

more broadly-coordinated efforts are extraordinarily risky to the participants involved, claimants tend to construct bases oriented around particular and specific, not national and inclusive, concerns.

Moreover, if the trend of rightful resistance travels outside of China into other decentralized states, claimants may couch their claims within official rhetoric rather than forging a "counterhegemonic" discourse or set of institutions that might sustain a concerted challenge to the state (Gramsci 1971, 229-31). This would result in a pattern of limited mobilization in which claimants may challenge particular aspects of the state structure but do not repeatedly coordinate their actions with other aggrieved segments of society or develop a frame of collective action aimed at fundamentally challenging the state or demanding it undergo significant political reform. As noted by Scott (1985), even "everyday forms of resistance" can have an important corrosive impact on a regime. However, as reflected in the sudden collapse of autocracies, such as the Pahlavi Dynasty in Iran in 1979, the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines in 1986, and in a large number of communist regimes in the late-1980s, rapid and sustained social mobilization on a nationwide scale has often proven critical in overloading the coercive capabilities of powerful regimes and bring about systemic change. Authoritarian regimes facing localized and limited forms of resistance, on the hand, could persist in maintaining their monopoly on political power for decades. The decentralized state, in short, provides a structural opening amenable to localized and particularized protests while simultaneously closing opportunities to mobilize on a wider and more coordinated scale.

For these reasons, I hypothesize that a decentralized authoritarian state offers an arrangement of threats and opportunities that tends to encourage the development of particularized modes of protest rather than sustained, highly-coordinated social movements. In a decentralized state, local officials assume the central place in determining whether or not individual actions of contention will succeed in achieving their achieving their desired goals. As a result, they become the direct targets of most protests aimed at the state and the primary mediators of actions directed at third-party, non-state actors. Therefore, a decentralized state presents not one but a multitude of loci for protests, diminishing claimants' ability to use the central state as a unifying target and fulcrum around which they can organize national movements. Instead of framing their grievances on a national scope or in a fashion that transcends sectors of society, protest entrepreneurs tend to orient themselves around local or social sector-specific claims, resulting in uncoordinated and sporadic collective actions. According to this logic, highly centralized state structures may serve as intervening variables that facilitate the emergence of nationwide waves of social mobilization when popular claimants perceive a political opportunity. On the other hand, a decentralized structure would inhibit the development of nationwide protest movements and encourage acts of contention to center on local or social sector-specific issues and appear as highly fragmented waves of protest. This would ultimately increase the durability of autocratic regimes.

Chapter Three: Single-Party Regimes

The year 1949 witnessed the establishment of the both the People's Republic of China on mainland China and after the Kuomintang's (KMT) flight, the reconstitution of the Republic of China (ROC) on the island sanctuary of Taiwan. In both the PRC and the pre-transitional ROC (hereafter referred to as "Taiwan"), highly-institutionalized autocracies were constructed that could be categorized as single-party regimes. As discussed in greater depth in this chapter, in addition to their shared regime type, the two authoritarian cases both derived from a common Chinese nation and cultural tradition, and both underwent rapid economic "miracles" that produced dramatic transformations to society, unleashed new and contentious social forces and led to a rise in the frequency and intensity of popular protests. In both cases, this challenged established modes of authoritarian political control. However, despite these commonalities, the two cases diverged substantially along the critical variable of the degree of state centralization and ultimately, the durability of single-party autocratic rule in their respective societies. Whereas KMT-dominated Taiwan maintained a high degree of functional centralization and a highly-centralized coercive apparatus into the 1980s, subnational authorities in the post-Maoist PRC grasped a growing share of state power, soon emerging as important wielders of functional and coercive power.

As argued in the following chapter, this divergence on the variable of state centralization has contributed to important outcomes in terms of the mode of popular protest in each case, if not the frequency or intensity of protests *per se.* In Taiwan, by the early 1980s, popular claimants adopted the national center of the government as a common unifying target, developed an inclusive frame of contention built upon a notion of Taiwanese (versus mainlander) identity, and forged organizational linkages across regions and social sectors capable of coordinating and sustaining acts of popular contention on a national scale. In decentralized China, on the other hand, waves of popular contention have frequently appeared on the country's social landscape but these have been predominantly localized actions oriented around specific, material grievances, targeted at subnational layers of the state and involved exclusive, and involved limited frames of collective action. As a consequence, they have not been coordinated across regions or social groups and been unable to maintain sustained interaction with the state. To demonstrate how real and perceived state centralization contributed to divergent modes of protest in Taiwan and China, the following chapter investigates two important protest issue areas that appeared in both cases and ultimately produced major and frequent acts of popular contention: environmental and labor protests. It moreover looks at how the centralized state in Taiwan provided popular claimants with structural openings that encouraged the upward scale shift of localized to national forms of contention. In China, meanwhile, the decentralized state has inhibited upward scale shift, deterring protests on the national stage while providing claimants with a structural opening at the subnational level. At this level, localized protests interact primarily with particular local authorities empowered with the autonomous discretion to respond to collective actions with a designated combination of concessions and coercion.

This divergence in mode of protest has had a critical impact on political outcomes. In Taiwan, an authoritarian KMT regime backed down in the face of political oppositionists backed by a diverse body of national social movements, culminating in the creation of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the lifting of martial law, and a transition towards

multiparty democracy. In the PRC, political dissidents and oppositionists have lacked such a popular base of support and operated in general isolation from everyday resisters. As a consequence, they have faced recurrent repression from a regime that faces no vertical threat from powerful protest movements coordinated on a national level. In China but not pre-transitional Taiwan, the autocratic regime has faced little prospect of facing a popular backlash from repressing its most persistent political opponents. This has enabled it to harass, abuse and silence individuals promoting an alternative, anti-regime political vision while incurring little cost. Ultimately, this divergence has contributed to authoritarian resilience in China, where an otherwise durable, high capacity KMT regime displayed fragility in the face of a society mobilized on a national scale.

3.1. Cases in Comparison

The intertwined history of communist China and non-communist Taiwan has longed invited comparisons between the two countries, which share an unusually large number of cultural, economic, and historical common features. Writing in 1978, Bruce Jacobs argued that Taiwan offered researchers a nearly ideal prism for observing mainland China. The PRC, first and foremost, was largely inaccessible to foreign scholars seeking to conduct fieldwork, particularly during the turbulent years of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 70s (239). Taiwan, on the other hand, granted a much higher level of access to foreign researchers to both its substantial archives and its population (239). Thus, during the Maoist era, when the Chinese mainland was largely off-limits to most scholarship, researchers made use of Taiwan as a culturally-Chinese national case that might serve as a basis for understanding the PRC. As a result, scholars such as Jacobs and Richard Solomon (1971) conducted field work in localities such as Taiwan as well as Hong Kong in order to conduct "armchair" analyses of the Chinese mainland (Jacobs 1978, 239).

By the 1980s and 90s, after the PRC relaxed its control over society to a significant degree, both China and Taiwan became sites where social scientists could conduct in-depth empirical field research. At this point, Taiwan lost some of its appeal as an access point for conducting "armchair" studies of China. The country's transition away from single-party authoritarianism during the 1980s and 90s did, however, present a compelling opportunity for comparative analysis. If Taiwan, a Chinese polity, could break away from autocratic rule and establish a liberal democracy, was this outcome possible on the mainland? If not, what factors drove these divergent outcomes? Following this line of inquiry, scholars in the last several decades have produced a number of studies drawing important comparisons between the two cases. They have examined subjects as varied as political culture (Weller [1999] 2001; Shi 2001), student protest movements (Wright 2001), elite transformation (Li and White 1990), and party adaptation (Dickson 1997). A number of high-quality edited works have also explored what specific lessons on Chinese future political trajectory can be gleaned from Taiwan's recent experience with democratization (Tsang and Tien 1999; Gilley and Diamond 2008). Moreover, as noted by Bruce Gilley (2008), the lessons of Taiwan have also been of intense interest within political and academic circles within China. In this sense, Taiwan serves as a "negative example," the case having resulted in "the ruling party's losing power, a rise in social discord, worsened ethnic divisions, and slower economic development, they believe" (15). This observation is particularly telling. Many analysts concerned with preserving one-party CCP rule see the loss of the KMT's monopoly on political power as case to study for lessons on what *not* to do in their own regime.

The frequency of comparative studies featuring China and Taiwan has been a reflection of the substantial number of important commonalities held between the cases, which enable scholars to conveniently isolate particular explanatory variables for explaining the two countries' divergent political outcomes. Robert Weller [1999] 2001), in fact, argued that "a comparison of China and Taiwan [was] as close to a natural experiment as the social sciences [could] come" (11). Scholars could, in other words, explore these two similar cases to neatly parse out their dramatically different political outcomes and dig out important underlying processes. The divided Chinese nation, in other words, presents an opportunity for comparative research that can not only inform predictions on the future political fate of mainland China but also advance general theories in social science scholarship.

In much scholarship, China and other East Asian states have often been treated as culturally-distinct, their Confucian or Asian heritage and values precluding comparisons with states outside the region. In a tradition dating back to Max Weber's *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism* [1915] 1951, scholars have argued that the Confucian or Asian values exhibited by Chinese and other East Asian societies are antithetical with various aspects of modernity. In the view of Lucian Pye (1985), Western-style democracy has had little appeal among Asian societies. Citizens in these countries are presumably disinclined to openly challenge authority figures, afraid of fracturing the community by engaging in open political contestation, and have been concerned that by violating of hierarchically-oriented notions of decorum, they would be shunned within the social order (341). Lee Kwan Yew, longtime Prime Minister of Singapore, argued that East Asian societies, based on their cultural orientation, emphasized the collective values of order and authority to individual political freedoms. Consequently, instead of liberal, Western democracy, they prefer a kind of "soft" authoritarianism that generates social stability and order, a high standard of living and rapid economic growth (Zakaria and Lee 1994, 109-10). In a similar vein, Huntington (1991a) has written, "Almost no scholarly disagreement exists regarding the proposition that traditional Confucianism was either undemocratic or antidemocratic" (24). Confucian culture presumably has diminished citizens' sense of individual rights, the preferred values of consensus and social order made disagreement and competition seem distasteful, and little space existed in society for the creation of autonomous social institutions (24). By looking at comparatively at Taiwan and the PRC, two halves of a Chinese nation divided in 1949, scholars can hold the variable of Confucian culture largely constant and avoid the accusation that the distinctive political trends observed in either China or Taiwan are driven by their distinctive political culture.

In another strain of research, scholars associated with the modernization paradigm long have asserted that industrialization and the social developments associated with it have profound implications for societies' political structures. In a trend that few would miss, both Taiwan and China experienced meteoric economic rises in the latter half of the 20th century, the former preceding the latter by several decades. Both saw successive decades of two-digit annual economic growth and produced vibrant commercial middle classes, conventionally thought to be the essential historical agent of democracy (Moore 1966, 418). In the Taiwanese case, many leading scholars argued that the country's democratic transition provided strong real-world support for the convention that the middle class is the historical agent of democracy (Huntington 1991b, Fukuyama 1995). This group, which came to make up nearly a third of Taiwan's total adult population by the early 1980s, was often considered the leading social force behind the

country's growing social activism during the transitional period (Tien1992, 36). Thus, as China's middle classes expand, scholars following this logic could expect that it will ultimately follow Taiwan's democratizing trajectory. In both China and Taiwan, however, the democratizing proclivities of the middle class have come under scrutiny. In the view of a number of regional scholars, the role of the middle class in promoting Taiwan's democratization in the 1980s and 90s has been either mixed or highly situational (Hsiao 2005, 4; Yang 2007, 536). Likewise, in contemporary China, the survey-based findings of researchers found little support for the notion that this group embraced either political attitudes supportive of democracy or a general interest in challenging the status quo political regime (Tsai 2007, Chen and Dickson 2010). These two cases have thus presented an opportunity to examine whether or not the notion that the middle class, in fact, serves as a social agent for democratization has relevance in late-industrializing, culturally Confucian East Asian countries such as China and Taiwan.

Comparisons between China and Taiwan have also been particularly compelling since while the developmental trajectories of the two cases largely parallel, they have been staggered historically. This has presented the opportunity to critically examine the popular notion in political science dating back to Seymour Lipset (1959) that a country's level of economic development is closely correlated with its propensity to embrace political democracy. In other words, as countries developed economically, political liberalization is expected to follow (Burkhart and Lewis-Beck 1994). Clearly, a comparative study of these two cases could not be timelier. Various democratic "thresholds" have been proposed to predict when autocracies are most likely to give way to democracy. Such thresholds have been set by scholars such as Robert Dahl (1971) at an annual per capita income of $700-800 in 1957 dollars (67-8) and Samuel Huntington (1991b) for a "zone of transition" at $1,000-3,000 in 1960 dollars (62-3). If such a per capita income threshold for expected democratization exists, China is currently approaching it – following Taiwan by roughly three decades. While the PRC has made impressive economic gains in the last three decades, it remains a generally poor country on a per capita basis. In terms of its level of development, contemporary China greatly resembles Taiwan's condition in the late 1970s and early 80s – a reality that invites meaningful comparisons. When looking at the two cases, Bruce Gilley (2008) notes that China's 2003 GDP per capita was equivalent to Taiwan's level in 1977, roughly when the first inklings of a democratic opposition began to emerge (6-7). These commonalities in culture, economic development, and social makeup suggest that it is now a critical time to inspect whether or not and in what fashion patterns in China are beginning to repeat those appearing in Taiwan during the 1970s and 80s.

In addition to these aforementioned commonalities, authoritarian regimes in Taiwan (1949-1996) and China (1949-present) have also exhibited substantial similarities in the basic organization of their political structures as well as the nature of the nature of their internal politics. Both pre-transition Taiwan and post-Maoist China can be accurately categorized as single-party authoritarian regimes. As noted by Samuel Huntington (1970), in this type of regime, pragmatism outweighs ideology in determining decision-making, and the leadership is institutionalized and bureaucratic rather than personalistic or charismatic (40-1). "The source of [government] initiative" is located in the "party apparat" rather than the elite leadership, and special interests exist within the system but are mediated by this institution (40-1). Intellectuals criticize but do not rule the regime, restricted intra-party elections are primary vehicle of popular participation, and as a society modernizes and becomes more complex and autonomous, the

regime focuses on depoliticizing social and economic actors rather than controlling them directly (40-41).

In this theoretical understanding of single-party regimes, such states are closely linked to Weberian notions of rational-legal authority. This refers to a form of domination that "rests on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands" (Weber [1922] 1978, 215). Political power within this kind of regime is not subject purely to the arbitrary whims of a particular charismatic leader but is mediated through a complex, highly-institutionalized state bureaucracy. Moreover, succession and promotion in this type of regime are associated with some standard set of rules associated with some sense of merit, not one's personal or familial connections to a ruler. Barbara Geddes' (1999) formulation of the ideal single-party regime closely follows these ideas. In her view, in such autocracies, "A party organization exercises some power over the leader at least part of the time, controls the career paths of officials, organizes the distribution of benefits to supporters, and mobilizes citizens to vote and show support for party leaders in other ways" (124). An institutionalized political party, in other words, presents a potential limit on the political authority of the leader and also exerts substantial influence over society. In the view of students of authoritarianism such as Brownlee (2007), Way (2008), Magaloni (2008), Magaloni and Ruth Kricheli (2010), and Levitsky and Way (2010), autocracies organized around a single hegemonic political party are substantially more resilient than regimes without them. Since pre-transition Taiwan and post-Maoist China have both exhibited the fundamental characteristics of a single-party autocracy, their regimes oriented around highly-institutionalized party apparatuses, they can in many important respects be treated as like-units and be expected to face comparable institutional vulnerabilities in the face of vertical and horizontal threats.

The appearance of parallel single-party autocracies in both China and Taiwan has been a product of these two polities' highly-intertwined and contentious origins. In 1924, Sun Yat-sen organized the KMT along Leninist guidelines, consciously modeling the party after the Bolsheviks (Tien 1989, 66; Jiang and Wu 1992, 77). Having established itself as the leading party of the newly-established Republic of China, the KMT battled foes including regional warlords, the Japanese imperial army, and the CCP. Ultimately, the CCP defeated the KMT and drove it to the island of Taiwan. The KMT's organization and membership in disarray, President Chiang Kai-shek formed a committee of party leaders to outline a plan for restructuring and reinvigorating it (Tien 1989, 66-67). During this 1950-52 reorganization, Chiang and other KMT elites sought to eliminate the debilitating factionalism that had weakened the party and in their view, enabled the communist victory on the mainland (Dickson 1996, 45). Somewhat ironically, seeing the source of the CCP's power as rooted in its "organizational strength," the KMT consciously reorganized itself in the pattern of the communists. This task was oriented around the hope of achieving the central KMT imperatives of consolidating control over the native Taiwanese population and preparing to eventually recapture the mainland (45-6). The KMT therefore established "a network of party organizations in the government and military; created cadre system, a cadre school, and several training organizations; and made the cell the basic work and training unit of the party" (Dickson 1996, 45). Organizing itself around the principle of democratic centralism, with top-down decision-making emanating from a politburo-like Central Standing Committee through a tightly-interconnected party structure into the state and society, the KMT emerged as a highly "Leninist-type party" (Meaney 1992, 95). As noted

by Tien (1989), the KMT "established a network of party organizations that permeate[d] society and [might] be second to none in the noncommunist world in its horizontal and vertical penetration" (251).

Despite their similar organizational structures, the KMT party-state did diverge from the CCP in a number of important respects. First, the KMT adopted an anti-communist ideological orientation. As noted by Meaney (1992), this had important political significance in that the KMT has not held the kind of strong aversion to "bourgeois" democracy or unyielding commitment to state economic planning seen in normal Leninist states (96). While this is assuredly accurate in a general sense, it must also be noted that in spite of the ideological hurdle to capitalist economics, communist states have certainly found methods of incorporating market-oriented reforms into existing Leninist structures - China being the most notable example.

Secondly, the pre-transition KMT allowed a degree of genuine electoral competition to occur for local offices of government in which party-backed candidates could be defeated by non-party opponents (Jacobs 1978, 243). Local-level electoral politics, however, centered on factional competition and were instrumentalized by the KMT to put on a "democratic face" to impress its Western allies, distribute patronage to local clients, co-opt local elites, and maintain the fragmentation and division of the Taiwanese population (Cheng 1989, 478; Bosco 1994, 135). Local elections, particularly at the village level, have also taken place in mainland China since the early 1980s, and have served a similar politically-stabilizing function to those under authoritarian Taiwan. Based on the findings of Manion (1996) and Shi (1997), Nathan (2003) has suggested that local elections in China have served to increase the resilience of the CCP party-state. These elections have served as effective "input institutions" wherein citizens can more readily access their local governments, voice their concerns, and to some degree, help select cadres from their communities whose interests and viewpoints are more congruent with their own (Nathan 2003, 14). As suggested by scholars such as Schmitter (1978), Gandhi (2008), and Lust (2009), these highly-constricted elections might well serve to improve the popular legitimacy of the regime, reduce corruption, raise the state's overall responsiveness to public concerns, and/or draw talented individuals into the party apparatus. However, if an increasingly well-organized popular opposition were to emerge, as occurred in Taiwan, it could use these institutions as access points for candidates independent of the ruling party to gain a foothold in the mode of the *tangwai*/DPP.

Thirdly, Taiwan's political and social structure became segmented along social/ethnic lines in a highly distinctive pattern. These divisions played a critical role in the mobilization of Taiwanese society in the 1980s. Particularly during the initial decades after the KMT's flight from the mainland, the central levels of the party-state were controlled by individuals who came to be known as "mainlanders" or Chinese who had arrived in Taiwan since the Second World War. Local offices, however, were primarily occupied by "Taiwanese" or Chinese who had arrived in Taiwan before the close of World War II (Copper 1981a, 341). In the 1980s, opposition activists associated with the *tangwai*/DPP have worked to "explicitly link…the goal of democratization directly to the issue of Taiwanese identity and the principle of self-determination" (Hu and Chu 1992, 181). To great effect, oppositionists were able to tap into subethnic cleavages to reframe the anti-KMT struggle as contest between "we" – the ethnic, indigenous Taiwanese – and "them"

– the foreign mainlanders who had come from outside the island, branding the battle for democracy as akin to an anti-colonial struggle.

This outcome might suggest that the KMT's status as an émigré regime dominated by outsiders made mobilization against the regime by indigenous Taiwanese a foregone conclusion. The reality, however, is quite a bit more complicated. Taiwanese nationalists and independence advocates might suggest that the Taiwanese sense of nationhood has an almost primordial coherence and distinctiveness that distinguishes it from a greater Chinese nation and the mainlanders residing on the island. This would mean that the popular push against KMT/mainlander rule in the 1980s was an *a priori* conclusion – an effectively inevitable rejection of an alien regime that had never established genuine legitimacy among the native population. However, in historical reality, there has neither been a clearly-cut Taiwanese identity "as fully *distinct* from China" (Schubert 2004, 537) nor a Taiwanese polity fully independent from Chinese, Japanese or European occupiers. Rather, as in other cases of national identity formation, any perceived Taiwanese nation-community required a kind of imagining, invention and construction (Anderson 1983, 6). Any sense of an entirely-distinct Taiwanese identity that has claimed to exclude the mainlanders living in Taiwan and the "foreign" authoritarian KMT regime associated with them has involved a constructive political project requiring "the creation of a nation that never existed" (Wachman 1994, 26).

In fact, a dichotomous mainlander-Taiwanese categorization of Taiwan's residents is "imprecise," even "sloppy," as there are few clear cut identifiers that distinguish members of these categories, and there are also many residents of Taiwan who do not fit well into either label (16). First, the wide majority of the island's inhabitants, including both Taiwanese and mainlanders are Han Chinese and share common linguistic, cultural and ethnic characteristics. Along these lines, many mainlanders and Taiwanese, such as those sharing ancestral origins in Fujian Province, might have much more in common than other groups within their own mainlander/Taiwanese category. Second, there has been a great deal of diversity among the 85% of the population who identify as "native" Taiwanese inhabitants and not mainlanders (14%) (17). While the majority of self-identified "Taiwanese" are Han Chinese who migrated from the mainland in the 17th century, the island is also inhabited by aboriginal groups who preceded the other natives by as many as 8,000 years and now make up roughly 1% of the population. Moreover, the Hakka people, who arrived in large numbers both with the Han migrants (now "Taiwanese") in the 17th century and with the 1940s-50s Han migrants (now "mainlanders") are a non-Han minority making up about 12% of the population who have maintained their own ethnic distinctiveness from both groups (Wachman 1994, 15-17; Dittmer 2004, 476). While many Hakka and all aborigines lived in Taiwan before the 1940s, they have defied the conventional categorization schemes of Taiwanese/mainlander, both of which groups are dominated by Han Chinese cultural and ethnic markers of identity. Furthermore, when national-level popular mobilization gained momentum in the 1980s, aborigine and Hakka rights movements took shape independently from both KMT-DPP and mainlander-Taiwanese conflicts (Hsiao 1992, 61-2, 69). The category of mainlander, moreover, contains Chinese with diverse provincial origins and socioeconomic backgrounds. Those arriving in the 1940s included not only well-educated, high status officials and business elites linked to the KMT but also poorly, uneducated rank-and-file soldiers and their families (Wachman 1994, 59-60). These realities meant the uniform terms "mainlander" and "Taiwanese" hid a great deal of diversity within

them. Thirdly, while intermarriage between mainlanders and Taiwanese was taboo in the early years of the KMT regime in Taiwan, it became an increasingly common phenomenon over time, resulting in a significant group of citizens with parents of different categories (Gates 1981, 265-6). Had a mainlander/Taiwanese cleavage not been activated by political and social activists in the 1980s, it would have likely lost salience over time.

Finally, while opposition activists in the 1980s used a frame of Taiwanese consciousness/identity with great effect to bring coherence to a diverse collection of social actors challenging the KMT regime, a policy of "Taiwanization" put in place by Chiang Ching-kuo had substantially transformed the party-state. After large numbers of Taiwanese were recruited into the KMT and elevated to positions of political importance during the 1970s and 80s, by 1985, 70% of KMT members were Taiwanese (Tien 1989, 85). In 1984, 12 of the 31 members of the KMT Standing Committee were Taiwanese, including 11 of the 13 who were 69 years old or younger in 1986 (77). These contradictions within the KMT-opposition, mainlander/Taiwanese categories do not mean these interrelated forms of identity are not meaningful to residents of Taiwan or lack political importance, which is clearly not the case. Rather, they highlight that in waging their ideological battle with the KMT, opposition activists engaged in a project of reconciling often incompatible segments of collectively-held beliefs into a coherent frame of meaning that linked a broadly-inclusive frame of Taiwanese identity to the anti-KMT struggle. The success of popular challenges against the KMT that compelled political reform, in other words, was not predetermined by a set mainlander/Taiwanese ethnic cleavage. Instead, social entrepreneurs had to effectively tap in an existing, if incoherent and contradictory, mainlander/Taiwanese cleavage and cultivate this boundary at the expense of other potential markers of identity.

As opposed to the KMT in Taiwan, it would be effectively impossible for popular claimants in China to label the CCP as a foreign, émigré regime. Unlike almost all of the former communist regimes of Eastern Europe, the CCP emerged as the victor of a violent political struggle, operated entirely independently from the Soviet Union and was in no way reliant upon foreign troops or other assistance for its basic survival. Consequently, the framing of any nationwide form of popular contention in mainland China would have to capitalize upon different societal cleavages and generate new "we versus them" identities in different manner than in Taiwan. However, while recognizing that as reflected in a range of historical revolutions and anti-colonial liberation struggles, national identity is a particularly potent driver of mass political action, the absence of a readily exploitable insider/outsider nationalist frame alone does not preclude the emergence of popular mobilization on a national scale in China. In a range of historical cases, indigenous regimes, such as Nepal (1990), Bangladesh (1991), Thailand (1992), Indonesia (1998), Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), Kyrgyzstan (2005, 2010), Tunisia (2011), and Egypt (2011) have fallen in the face of popular movements.

In historical China, even historical regimes with indigenous origins, as opposed to Mongol and Manchu-established Yuan and Qing dynasties, have struggled with popular rebellions and revolutions. Concerning China, Elizabeth Perry (2001) has noted that the country has an "impressive record of rebellion and revolution" that has been closely linked to the traditional political-cultural understanding of the Mandate of Heaven, which has "bestow[ed]…instant legitimacy upon successful rebel leaders" (163). In fact, religion, anti-foreign nationalism, social class, ethnicity, and political ideology have all played important roles in bringing China's diverse

social groups and geographic regions together into popular movements that have successfully toppled a succession of historical dynasties. For this reason, CCP leaders have actively sought to suppress any social or religious movements that might bridge the divisions in China's population and enable a cross-societal popular challenge to the regime. For example, the historical memory of revolutionary religious sects such as the Yellow Turbans, White Lotus movement, and Taiping rebels and the fear that a heterodox sect might pull together diverse discontented social groups prompted the CCP's unusually harsh, even panicked suppression of Falun Gong in 1999 (Perry 2001, 174). Somewhat ironically, Maoist ideology – the official legitimizing ideology of the CCP - has emerged as a common frame of contention among many working class sectors of society, particularly industrial workers, unemployed workers and pensioners. Comparing their current difficult and precarious economic position to a perceived "Maoist golden era," aggrieved workers, particularly in the northeast industrial rustbelt, have carried out massive strike actions against economic restructuring and the loss of their socialist era social welfare provisions (Lee 2007; Hurst 2008, 75-76; Feng Chen 2008). In a society characterized by growing inequality and economic insecurity, a class-based frame could conceivably be applied to unite diverse, underprivileged populations to challenge an authoritarian regime that has put in place economic reforms that have clearly benefited certain segments of society over others. A potential frame that cuts even more broadly across society involves what Merle Goldman (2005) has referred to as a growing sense of "rights consciousness" among China's citizens in the post-Maoist era (2). Various segments of Chinese society, including *weiquan* (rights defending) lawyers, intellectuals, rural peasants, industrial workers, and urban homeowners have carried out acts of contention oriented around the defense of rights guaranteed under official laws and regulations that have been violated by more powerful individuals connected to the regime or regime officials themselves (Goldman 2005, 2-3; O'Brien and Li 2006; Pils 2007; Lee 2007; Hess 2010b). Moreover, as noted by Susan Shirk (2007), the CCP's status as an indigenous, authentically Chinese regime does not necessarily protect it from a popular challenge that unites the country's variously aggrieved citizens behind a banner of nationalist outrage. The regime has seen powerful outbreaks of grassroots-generated nationalistic fervor in reaction to varied incidents such as Japanese politicians' visits to Yasukuni Shrine, the publishing of Japanese textbooks that whitewashed the infamous Rape of Nanking, the accidental U.S. bombing of China's embassy in Belgrade, a collision of American and Chinese military planes near Hainan, and a number of incidents involving sensitive issues such as Taiwanese and Tibetan separatism. According to Shirk (2007), if the CCP leadership were to respond insufficiently to perceived indignities against the Chinese nation, it could face the kind of regime-destabilizing nationalistic wave that helped bring about the end of the Republic of China and the Qing Dynasty before it (7). Thus, while the CCP cannot readily be labeled as foreign or émigré regime, nationalism could be nevertheless be used as a frame of collective action against the state if it failed to defend the country against perceived humiliations taking place in the international arena. Without exhausting the various frames that have been (or could be) applied in post-Maoist China to carry out mass cross-regional and cross-social sector collective action, it is clear that despite the divergent societal cleavages exhibited in Taiwan and China, the latter country nevertheless has an ample body of culturally-resonant material that could be applied by social entrepreneurs to challenge the regime.

An additional, obvious difference between Taiwan and China is size, both in terms of population and territory. China is massive on both measures, with a population of over 1.3 billion people

and a territory of 9.5 million square kilometers. Taiwan, on the other hand, is comparably tiny. It has a population of about 23 million and a total territory of 35,980 square kilometers (CIA World Factbook 2011). Importantly, size is a variable that can conceivably affect both a regime's likelihood to decentralize and also influence the difficulty or ease with which popular claimants can coordinate collective action on a national scale. Concerning the first issue, one could theorize that large countries would be more likely to decentralize than small ones, reflecting the logistical difficulty of managing a large territory and population from a single national capital. Conversely, a large country might also face a greater threat of territorial fragmentation, compelling the center to concentrate power in order to redistribute public resources across economically unequal regions and/or act more directly to limit the growing power of possibly separatism-inclined regional actors. According to recent IMF figures on fiscal decentralization, large countries such as the United States, Canada, China and India have been the most decentralized, whereas tiny microstates such as the Maldives, San Marino, Seychelles, Singapore, and St. Kitts and Nevis are among the most centralized (Dziobek et al 2011, 9-10). However, beyond this general pattern, exceptions emerge. Small countries such as Denmark and Switzerland are highly decentralized, whereas larger countries such as Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran and Egypt have exhibited high levels of fiscal centralization (Dziobek et al 2011, 12; World Bank 2010a). These trends parallel those observed by Landry (2008), who characterized autocracies as being generally reluctant to decentralize (9-10). The four observations of large centralized countries mentioned here were all heavily influenced by long periods of autocratic rule, namely the former dictatorships of Suharto, Mobutu, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (and later the Islamic Republic), and Hosni Mubarak, making the decentralized autocracies of Kazakhstan and China discussed in this study particularly unique. In short, territorial and population size alone is an incomplete determinant of a state's degree of decentralization.

Secondly, does the size of a country's territory and population affect the propensity of streams of popular contention to undergo upward scale shift and transform from localized to national forms of collective action? Conceivably, large size could clearly present logistical difficulties for popular claimants seeking to coordinate localized actions and challenge a central government. Additionally, it could create regional economic variations and inequities that would create incongruence among the grievances and interests of popular claimants. For example, an aggrieved social group in a wealthy, industrialized region might have demands very different from those that motivate collective action in a poorer, agricultural area, impeding cross-regional coordination. As argued by Hurst (2008), highly differentiated regional political economies within a large country play a major role in shaping the way in which local claimants and local populations frame their grievances and organize collective (74). However, as revealed in the breakdown of populous and territorially-large autocracies, such as France (1789), Russia (1917), China (1949), Iran (1979), Brazil (1985), the Soviet Union (1991), Indonesia (1998), and Egypt (2011) in the face of popular uprisings, size and/or territorial differentiation alone do not preclude the upward scale shift of popular contention. Popular claimants in diverse contexts have proven adept at stitching together seemingly incompatible material and non-material grievances into wider frames of collective action that resonate with diverse populations. In fact, much of the importance of centralized versus decentralized state structures relates to the proposition that in centralized states, regional movement leaders can credibly attribute blame for a broad array of popular, if community-specific, grievances to a single central state. In other

words, if geographical factors complicate the linking up of regionalized or limited acts of contention, a regime's centralized or decentralized structure plays an even more critical role in enabling or inhibiting the process of upward scale shift from occurring.

Finally, as discussed at more length in the following section, Taiwan's pre-transition Leninist political structure remained highly-centralized before it underwent authoritarian breakdown and eventual democratization in the 1980s and 90s. China, on the other hand, delegated substantially higher levels of discretionary power to local authorities throughout the Reform Era (late-1970s to present). This final divergence likely played a critical role in facilitating the upward scale shift of particularized to national modes of contention in Taiwan, where no similar transformation has yet taken place in the PRC.

Chapter Four: Taiwan

According to Hung-mao Tien (1989), "From 1949 to 1986, the ruling KMT had a virtual monopoly of power on the island" (64). Through an expansive network of political commissars, members, party cells, and informants extending into all levels of the government administration, military, police forces, schools, mass organizations, and the media, the KMT established firm political control over society and the state (68, 71-72). Similar to other Leninist-style regimes, real political decision-making power in the pre-transition ROC was heavily concentrated in the Standing Committee of the Central Committee of the KMT, whose orders were transmitted through a complex hierarchy of committees and chairmen extending from the national to grassroots level (Copper 1981b, 365; Tien 1989, 73). The KMT party apparatus "parallel[ed] or shadow[ed] governmental organization at all levels" (Copper 1981b, 365). The regime followed the central organizational patterns exhibited by Leninist party-states of the communist bloc and at every level of the state, the party penetrated and interlocked with the formal government administration. Until the rapid acceleration of social mobilization during the early-to-mid-1980s, this single-party authoritarian structure proved particularly robust, adept at effectively identifying and crushing or marginalizing sources of opposition to the regime.

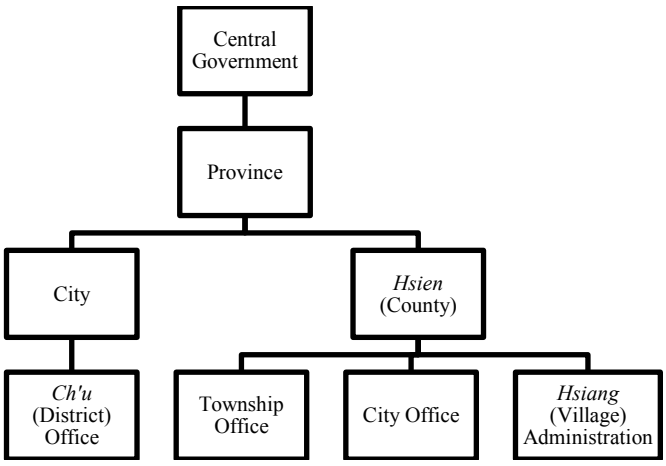
4.1. Functional Centralization

In terms of functional centralization, Taiwan's governmental organization was notable for its cumbersome top-heaviness, which impeded the ability of subnational state actors to assert authority and decision-making autonomously from the center. This structure was particularly distinctive in that it consisted of largely redundant, overlapping national and provincial governments (Tien 1989, 105). Since the ROC leadership claimed sovereign control over the entirety of Chinese territory, it maintained a national government structure for the entire Republic of China based on the constitution passed on mainland in 1947. It also formed a provincial government for the province of Taiwan, which in most respects had overlapping jurisdiction with the national government (106-107). Both, however, were oriented around a single, central locus of power. During single-party rule, real power rested with the national government, which was dominated by the office of the President (Copper 1981b, 362). The 1947 constitution formally established a unitary government for the Republic of China and made "provincial and local governments…subject to the direct administrative control and supervision of the central government" (Tien 1989, 107). The governor of Taiwan, the executive of the provincial government, moreover, was directly appointed by the President of the ROC (129). Hung-mao Tien (1989) noted that while the national government held exclusive control over the military, foreign policy, intelligence services and the judiciary, it shared other administrative responsibilities with the provincial government. This created a situation in which the authority of national and provincial governments was highly "obscur[ed]" (130). The center, in short, held direct administrative control over the provincial government, and even in areas where the provincial government held some responsibility, the specific source of power was often difficult to ascertain, based in the substantial and unclear overlap between the two blurred levels of authority.

The formal authority of the president was also formally expanded even further through the "Provisional Amendments for the Period of Mobilization of the Suppression of Communist

Rebellion" or the "temporary provisions" passed in 1948 on the mainland (108). These measures granted the president unlimited discretion to act beyond constitutional limits on his power and enabled him to legally suspend citizens' freedom of religion, speech and assembly (111). The temporary provisions were constantly in effect until they were lifted in 1987 (112). Based in the 1947 constitution, the central government of Taiwan had extensive power over subnational levels of government, and this was only expanded through the unchecked emergency presidential powers granted under the temporary provisions. Moreover, while the ROC formally delegated some limited powers to the provincial government of Taiwan, the two governments operated over nearly identical jurisdictions and performed many similar functions, clouding the division of authority between the two. This reality inhibited the ability of the provincial government to act as an alternative locus of authority from the center.

Figure 4.1. Organizational Structure of the Government, Republic of China



Source: Hung-mao Tien. 1989. *The Great Transition: Political and Social Change in the Republic of China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 118.

As reflected in standard measures of administrative decentralization, subnational governments in the ROC had very little discretionary control over government budgets. This reality is particularly notable when compared to the extraordinary level of decentralization in the contemporary PRC discussed later in this chapter. From 1980 to 1987, when martial law was lifted, the central government of the ROC controlled an average of 57.6% of total government expenditures, with the overlapping provincial administration controlling another 14.7% (Ministry of Finance 1991, 1998). These figures combined for a total of 72.4% of all government spending, leaving a total of 27.6% for the municipalities of Taipei and Kaohsiung as well as county, city and town administrations.

These low-levels of expenditures reflected a reality that subnational governments were almost chronically underfunded. This problem, most visible at the lowest levels of government, was closely linked to the sources of revenue available to each level of government and how rapid economic development affected these revenues and added to the demands on various layers of government. According to Hung-mao Tien (1989), as Taiwan began to experience economic take off during the 1960s and 70s, cash-strapped local governments were unable to keep pace with the increasing demands of a rapidly developing society and became "financially starved"

(131, 137). While growing and modernizing communities had growing needs for more and better roads, schools, medical facilities, waste disposal units, and other public services, the budgets and staffs of local governments changed little (131). Reflecting the high level of fiscal centralization in the country, the subcounty, county and city, and municipal governments of Taipei and Kaohsiung collected 24.8% of state revenues in 1984, while the polity-wide central and provincial governments collected the remaining 75.2% (Ministry of Finance 1991, 1998). Subnational authorities' smallish share of state revenues originated in their limited latitude in taxation, county and sub-county governments extracting funds only from limited miscellaneous taxes, sources that increased only marginally during economic take-off (Tien 1989, 132-3).

Table 4.1. Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Government Expenditures (1980-1987)

Fiscal Year	Central Government	Taiwan Province	Taipei	Kaohsiung	Counties and Cities	Towns
1980	59.4	13.7	8.4	2.4	12.5	3.6
1981	55.1	17.4	8.4	2.5	13.2	3.4
1982	56.2	16.0	8.7	2.9	12.9	3.3
1983	58.3	13.9	8.9	2.8	12.7	3.4
1984	56.3	16.0	8.6	2.6	13.0	3.5
1985	58.0	13.2	9.1	2.8	13.4	3.5
1986	59.1	13.8	8.9	2.8	12.3	3.1
1987	58.6	13.9	9.0	2.7	12.5	3.2

Source: Ministry of Finance, Republic of China 1991, 1998.

The central government, on the other hand, derived revenues from income taxes, customs, duties and the profits of public corporations and monopolies. During Taiwan's economic rapid development, these sources of revenue became increasing lucrative and the national government had a budget surplus in every year from 1964 to 1987 (133). To cover their remaining budget shortfall, local authorities depended upon subsidies from the provincial and national governments, which amounted to 52.3% of their total budgets (132). As a result, local authorities were hard-pressed to simply furnish the wages of their employees and consequently lacked the ability to put discretionary local projects in place as they saw fit (Winkler 1981, 22). This financial dependence on the national and provincial governments provided central authorities with a powerful lever to exert control over local administrators (Tien 1989, 132). Based on their revenue shortfalls, local authorities lacked the resources to autonomously provide the public services demanded by their constituents. They were instead dependent upon the graces of the center to supply needed funding. In terms of government budgeting, increasing socioeconomic development actually contributed to the overall centralization of political power. While the burdens of local governments increased, their incomes remained static, making them more dependent on the central government, which received the lion's share of surpluses created through Taiwan's rapid economic development.

The division of public funds, however, presented only a partial picture of the practical level of authority local officials had over budgets and the implementation of policies. Researchers familiar with Taiwan, however, have confirmed that the autonomy of local officials in the state was in practice certainly heavily constrained and their flexibility in implementing policies was tightly controlled by the center. According to Tun-jen Cheng (1989), local authorities had only "extremely limited budget-approving power and negligible regulatory power" (478). As mentioned above, cash-strapped low-level authorities had little surplus funding to allocate to local projects. Moreover, when development projects did take place within their localities, they were usually directly overseen not by the local officials themselves but by functionaries directly responsible to the national or provincial government. As noted by Winkler (1981), while these technical personnel were formally subordinate to local officials, they were appointed by higher-levels of government and in conducting their affairs, did not defer to local authorities but bypassed them entirely and reported directly to the center (22). As a result, one common feature of local politics in Taiwan was the effort of local officials to find ways "to make local government more responsive to the needs of the locality" (22) within the tight budgetary constraints imposed by the financial structure of the administrative system and the intrusive involvement of higher levels of government in local affairs.

While local-level officials were heavily constrained in terms of their discretionary control over government expenditures and their latitude in managing local affairs, these positions were more than mere facades for local government, evidenced by the energetic contestation between local factions for elected offices. Since 1950, the KMT put direct elections in place for county, township and village offices (Cheng 1989, 477-8). These elections had a dual purpose: they allowed Taiwan to present itself to the outside world as the "free" China and secondly served the domestic function of enabling the mainlander-dominated KMT to recruit local elites and establish a connection to a Taiwanese society in which it had few deep roots (Cheng 1989, 478; Bosco 1994, 135). Thus, while elections were suspended at the national level, leaving real political power in the hands of a KMT party, at the local-level, a limited degree of electoral competition took place on a regular basis.

In these contests, "managers," usually local KMT party chairmen directly responsible to the center of the party hierarchy, "umpire[d] political conflict" and threw KMT support behind particular candidates, almost always guaranteeing their victory (Winkler 1981, 50-1; Bosco 1994, 133). Meanwhile, "contenders" or prominent members of local factions would repeatedly run for elected office in the interest of seeking the attention and patronage of higher-up officials and/or using their public offices to distribute jobs and special business privileges to their own network of political clients (Winkler 1981, 51; Bosco 1994, 122). Winning these public offices, however, provided "little power for independent public policy initiative" (Winkler 1981, 51). For the elected officials, local offices were vehicles for patronage or a means to step higher into the party-state hierarchy. For the KMT, these elections served the function of co-opting local Taiwanese powerbrokers and dividing and ruling local communities, as any factional connections that extended beyond the county-level were "ruthlessly suppressed" (Bosco 1994, 122, 134). For the first three decades of KMT rule in Taiwan, this strategy proved highly effective in maintaining divisions between potential challengers and central authorities' firm grip over political dissent and the localities.

4.2. Centralization of Coercion

Of critical importance in this study, the responsibility for dealing with outbreaks of social unrest was highly concentrated within the KMT party-state center, revealing a highly centralized state coercive apparatus. Making use of the emergency powers granted him under the temporary provisions, Chiang Kai-shek entrusted the Taiwan Garrison Command (TGC), an institution directly under the Ministry of Defense, with authority over "approving meetings and rallies, reviewing and sanctioning books and periodicals, and maintaining social order" (Tien 1989, 110). These powers were expanded with a 1970 decree that granted the TGC the ability to restrict the "right to publish, privacy of correspondence, the right to practice religion, free speech, free assembly, and the right to petition and to give academic lectures" (111). The TGC, moreover, controlled an expansive body of military tribunals, which it used to convict as many as 10,000 civilian defendants between 1950 and 1986 for a wide range of criminal offenses (111). During the period of martial law, the Garrison Command operated as an internal security apparatus with sweeping extra-constitutional powers that made it directly responsible only to the President (111). This institution was responsible for monitoring citizens, determining which publications to censor, using coercive measures to suppress protests, and even seeing through the trials and convictions of dissidents. As noted by Gold in 1986, the TGC was "the body most civilians come into contact with under [martial law]. It enjoys a reputation for arbitrariness and ruthlessness. It opens mail, censors and shuts down publications, and generally intimidates dissenters" (63). Therefore, when major incidents of social unrest broke out, such as the 1979 Kaohsiung Incident, the TGC – the internal security arm of the central government – was the primary instrument of silencing protest and publicly trying and convicting the accused ringleaders of the demonstration.

The state structure of the KMT party-state in Taiwan, in short, heavily concentrated decision-making power over local policies, discretionary control over state funds, and the power to decide whether to use coercion or concessions against popular claimants in the center, leaving local officials without the resources or authority to address the demands of collective actors. For this reason, once popular challengers perceived opportunities to make popular claims on the state, they rapidly uploaded their local claims to national-level, concentrating their efforts on central authorities and overwhelmed the regime's ability to maintain control through repression.

4.3. Patterns of Popular Contention

The first major outbreak of social unrest in ROC-occupied Taiwan occurred in 1947, before the KMT's flight at the close of the Chinese Civil War. One year and a half earlier, a nationalist force had taken possession of the island from Japanese forces defeated in the Second World War. The early KMT occupiers seized property from and often mistreated Taiwanese residents, resulting in the deterioration of relations between occupation authorities and the local population. These tensions erupted into mass violence in 1947 when a dispute between nationalist security officers and a local woman illegally selling cigarettes drew angry crowds and culminated in rioting and the destruction of the Taipei police station (Rubinstein 1994, 4). After receiving reinforcements from the mainland, KMT authorities applied violent repression against the local population, killing an estimated 20,000 people and eliminating Taiwanese business and political elites (4). The infamous "2-28 Incident," which became a banned subject in public discourse,

left a long-standing feeling of bitterness towards the regime. Public dissent against the KMT, however, remained almost entirely muted until the late 1970s.

During the 1950s and 60s, the KMT maintained firm political control through its interlocking party-state hierarchy, an extensive monitoring network of party agents and informers, its near total control over the media and educational institutions, martial law restrictions over individuals' ability to assemble and organize, and a powerful internal security apparatus capable of silencing opponents. As discussed above, local elites were linked to the regime through patron-client relationships and managed local elections contested between factions. Moreover, shortly after its occupation of Taiwan, the KMT demobilized preexisting forms of social organization. It subsequently filled this vacuum with an extensive body of state-dominated social associations, ranging from business and professional organizations to labor unions and student organizations (Chu 1994, 101-2). The KMT, moreover, rapidly expanded its party membership, which came to include 14.3% of the total adult population in 1970-71 and 19.5% in 1976-77 (Jacobs 1978, 242). These figures were impressive, even in comparison with hegemonic single-party states in the communist bloc of the mid-1970s, where countries such as China (7.8%) and the Soviet Union (9.3%) had proportionally much lower membership numbers (242). As a result of these factors, direct opposition to the regime at any level was extraordinarily rare, leading Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao (1992) to bill the period immediately after the KMT's retreat to Taiwan as one of "political forces in absolute command" (57).

During this period, the KMT carefully delineated the limits of tolerated political opposition, allowing only the two loyal opposition parties, the Young China Party and the Democratic Socialist Party, to exist as formal political organizations (Tien 1989, 91). When individuals attempted to independently organize political organizations, they faced harsh state repression. In 1960, Lei Chen, a mainland-origin intellectual, joined with local Taiwanese politicians in an effort to form the China Democratic Party as a formal opposition party. This attempt was brought to an abrupt end when Lei Chen was arrested on trumped-up charges of conspiring with communist agents (94). The China Democratic Party, which lacked significant popular support, was quickly suppressed. In 1964, a university professor named Peng Ming-min and two of his students were arrested for release anti-KMT materials (94). These two incidents revealed the narrow limits of tolerated opposition to the KMT, which allowed non-KMT candidates to run in local and provincial elections but would harshly repress any attempt to coordinate these efforts and create an alternative political organization. Notably, when the KMT applied coercion against political activists who exceeded its tolerated limits for opposition activity, the cost of repression was relatively low and inspired little if any popular backlash. Early opposition activists had little mass support, and society was largely demobilized. This meant the regime had no effective disincentive to prevent it from applying repression against opponents.

By the 1970s, however, domestic and international conditions were beginning to challenge the KMT's traditional dominance over Taiwanese society. First, Taiwan was undergoing a rapid socioeconomic transformation. In the immediate years after its occupation of Taiwan in 1947, the KMT was focused on winning the Chinese Civil War and after its retreat, on defending the island against an imminent attack from the mainland. By the early 1950s, Taiwan received much-need financial support from the United States and was able to redirect attention from purely military preparations to stabilizing the economy and rebuilding Taiwan's infrastructure

(Wan 1981, 131). During 1953-62, the KMT implemented an import-substitution industrialization (ISI) strategy, which produced steady if not impressive average annual growth rates of 3% in per capita real income and importantly redirected much of the economy from agricultural to industrial production, laying the foundation for later growth (131). From 1963 to 1973, the KMT transitioned the economy from an ISI strategy towards export-oriented industrialization. This yielded sustained high-level economic growth, the country achieving average annual GNP growth rates of 10.1% from 1965 to 1972 (Yeh 1981, 134). As noted by Hung-mao Tien (1992), this economic growth cultivated increasing affluence, rising education levels, a widening middle class, an "increasingly complex and differentiated" society, and a related growth in associational membership (35-7). While the KMT continued to assert effective dominance over society into the 1970s, Taiwanese society was gaining increasing organizational capacity. This was rooted in its rising level of education, growing access to communications technology, experience with (state-controlled) social organizations, and the appearance of economic sectors of the economy autonomous from the party-state.

Secondly, the KMT experienced a number of losses in its legitimacy from a number of important diplomatic setbacks during the 1970s. In 1971, the ROC was expelled from the United Nations, its seat on the Security Council transferred to the PRC (Tien and Shiau 1992, 58). In 1972, U.S. President Richard Nixon visited the PRC, initiating a series of diplomatic exchanges that would culminate in the normalization of Sino-American relations in January 1979 (Chang 1983, 38). These developments resulted in Taiwan's increasing isolation in the international community. According to Tien and Shiau (1992), this loss of international legitimacy motivated the regime to expand political participation and widen the scope of elections for government offices in the interest of building greater domestic legitimacy (58-9). Closely linked to the party's goal of strengthening its domestic legitimacy was the policy of the "Taiwanization" of the KMT, initiated during the 1970s. Seeking to escape its identification as a colonizing, mainlander-dominated organization, the KMT increasingly began to bring party members with a Taiwanese subethnic identification into the higher reaches of the party-state apparatus (Mengin 1999, 119). Thus, facing growing international isolation, the KMT attempted to adapt by broadening its popular base of support and forging closer personal links to the local Taiwanese population.

These international and socioeconomic developments were closely linked to initial outbreaks of popular dissent during the 1970s. In 1977, local and provincial elections were held, the KMT winning 76.5% of all contests, slightly above previous years, although non-KMT *tangwai* candidates did win a number of important victories, particularly in the Provincial Assembly (McBeath 1978, 26; Tien 1989, 186-189; Domes 1981, 1012). According to Shelley Rigger (2001), these *tangwai* victories represented a "major breakthrough" for the opposition, as more than two dozen candidates had coordinated their campaigns under the *tangwai* label, capitalizing upon voter disenchantment with the KMT to win some important seats (18-19). Bruce Dickson (1996) suggested the results "were the worst ever for the KMT to that point" (61). Others, however, offered a more muted assessment of the opposition's achievement. Jacobs (1981) noted the *tangwai* did only "moderately well" in relation to non-KMT candidates' performances in previous elections (32). This was particularly true if one considered that many non-partisan victors were "false" candidates who had no affiliation with the *tangwai* and sometimes were directly opposed to it (34). While scholarship disagreed over the significance of the results of

the 1977 elections, the event was critically important in producing an important benchmark in the development of protest activity in Taiwan – the Chungli Incident.

In the city of Chungli in Taoyuan County, citizens accused local officials of tampering with ballots, many suspecting that the KMT was attempting to prevent a *tangwai,* ex-KMT candidate named Hsu Hsin-liang from winning a seat as county executive (Rigger 2001, 19). Violent riots involving as many as 10,000 people soon broke out, with angry residents smashing windows of the polling station, overturning cars, and attacking and setting afire the local police station (McBeath 1978, 27; Copper 1981b, 370). The police, who were under instructions to use minimal force, eventually fired tear gas in an attempt to save the station. The fire began to spread to neighboring buildings, and the rioters eventually dispersed in order to save their homes from the flames (McBeath 1978, 27). While the KMT's attempt to suppress news of the riot was limited by rumor-spreading, the Chungli Incident remained largely isolated and did not inspire mass incidents in other areas (28). At the time of the event, most commentators believed Chiang Ching-kuo and the KMT to be firmly in control of developments in Taiwan. Gerald McBeath (1978), for example, suggested that the Chungli Incident seemed "unlikely to occupy an important place in the history of modern Taiwan" (17). This revealed the marginal position opposition activists continued to occupy in the late-1970s and highlighted how remarkably the situation would change only a decade later.

After Chungli, which at the time represented the first major confrontation between the state and popular claimants since 1947, *tangwai* activists diverged over their subsequent tactics. More moderate, older activists led by Kang Ning-hsiang and centering on the opposition political magazine, *The Eighties*, believed that such public mass confrontations would give the regime a justification to use repression against them. These *tangwai* moderates believed they could more effectively achieve their goals by contesting elections and working with, rather than directly against, the existing political system (Rigger 2001, 17-20). Opposing this view were younger and more radical *tangwai* activists who argued that mass public demonstrations would be an effective mechanism for drawing public attention to the cause, appealing to potential allies, and ratcheting up pressure on the KMT leadership (19-21). Developments in the international area would soon alter the balance of power within the *tangwai* towards the younger, more activist faction.

In the run-up to elections scheduled for December 23, 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter announced his decision to normalize relations with the PRC. At this point, the KMT leadership feared an impending crisis and quickly cancelled the upcoming elections, postponing them until December 1980 (Jacobs 1981, 27). In response to the elections' cancellation, moderate leader, Kang Ning-hsiang urged *tangwai* candidates to end their campaigns and cooperate with the KMT in defending the country against a possible PRC intervention. This call, however, was substantially out of step with most opposition activists, and Kang soon found himself edged out as the central figure of the opposition (Rigger 2001, 20). Emerging leaders, such as Huang Hsin-chieh, advocated a more radical, mass-based strategy. They founded *Formosa* magazine and established an associated network of offices across Taiwan capable of coordinating a nation-level opposition campaign (20-21). According to its participants, this "campaign organization" functioned as a "political party in all but name" (Jacobs 1981, 38; Kaplan 1981, 14). The cancellation of 1978 elections had the effect of empowering more radical, activist participants

within the *tangwai*, who in turn drove the opposition to push the movement to a plan of action and level of organization well beyond officially-tolerated limits of political behavior.

Seeking to maintain the movement's momentum after the cancelled December 1978 elections, the *Formosa* faction of the *tangwai* organized a series of rallies and demonstrations during 1979. KMT officials were unable to agree on a coherent response to *Formosa* activities and the most serious harassment of opposition activities came from right-wing groups tacitly supported by the regime (Kaplan 1981, 15). When opposition rallies were organized, public officials typically threatened to intervene but backed off at the last moment – an outcome which only encouraged greater activism (15). This came to a head when on December 10, 1979, the Kaohsiung office of *Formosa* held a rally to commemorate International Human Rights Day (Jacobs 1981, 38). At the designated time, 10,000 to 30,000 demonstrators gathered around the local *Formosa* office (Copper 1981c, 53). As police approached the group, violent rioting suddenly broke out, leading to a number of injuries. Government sources reported that *Formosa* organizers encouraged the crowd to attack the police, resulting in the injury of 183 policemen who had been given orders not to use force (Kaplan 1981, 17). Supporters of the defendants, however, claimed that violence was started by pro-KMT provocateurs planted among the demonstrators, and the number of police officers injured was heavily exaggerated by the government (International Committee for Human Rights in Taiwan (ICHRT) 1980, 8; Kaplan 1981, 17-18).

Following the Kaohsiung Incident, the central government made use of its expansive coercive capacity, carrying out a country-wide coordinated campaign to silence *Formosa* activists. Official media outlets released a series of news reports blaming the riot on the leaders of *Formosa.* Security forces rounded up over 100 individuals linked to the organization. Most of those arrested were released, but 33 were sentenced in civilian courts and eight were charged with sedition in TGC military tribunals for "using the masses of the people – rallies, parades, demonstrations – to escalate the level of violence and quickly overthrow the government" (Quoted in Kaplan 1981, 19). The 33 tried in civilian court were given lighter sentences, while the eight tried in military court such as prominent *tangwai* figures like Huang Hsin-chieh were subjected to a highly-public six-day military trial and given heavy sentences ranging from twelve years to life (Tien 1989, 97). Casting the organizers of the Kaohsiung demonstration as subversive elements who threatened public security, KMT officials used the incident as an excuse to crack down on public dissent. Drawing comparisons between the *Formosa* organization and Lei Chen's 1960 ill-fated attempt to form the China Democratic Party, Jacobs (1981) suggested that the KMT clearly would "not permit the existence of any opposition which show[ed] even the potential of attempting to replace them in government" (39). The crackdown, therefore, could be expected. *Formosa* organizers had crossed an established norm for tolerated political dissent, and the KMT had responded predictably. The crackdown of 1979 and 80 and consistent strong electoral majorities for the KMT revealed that in spite of a perceived shift towards political pluralism in the 1970s and the challenges posed by the regime's loss of international recognition, Premier Chiang Ching-kuo and the KMT continued to "hold…the reins" of power (McBeath 1978), carefully managing elections and maintaining a tight grip over society. Only after society rapidly mobilized during the 1980s would the regime be pressured into accepting serious competition from an organized opposition party.

Immediately following the Kaohsiung Incident, it appeared that any liberalizing trends in the ROC had ground to a sudden halt. The more radical leaders of the *tangwai* were arrested and the leading opposition journals were banned (Domes 1981, 1013). However, more moderate *tangwai* organizers, such as Kang Ning-hsiang, worked to regroup candidates to compete in the rescheduled elections in 1980 (Tien 1989, 98). With supplemental seats in the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan at stake, the KMT received a solid 72.2% majority of votes versus 26.8% cast for *tangwai* candidates (Domes 1981, 1014). However, in a special rebuke against KMT's actions surrounding the Kaohsiung Incident, a number of the wives and attorneys of the *Formosa* defendants who entered the campaign as candidates were leading vote-getters in their districts (Rigger 2001, 21-22). Nevertheless, at this point, the KMT remained a "hegemonic party" - supported by a "mixture of genuine popularity and resolute manipulation," it was "expected to keep winning and winning big in future elections" (Schedler 2009b, 294). When faced with a political challenge from a well-coordinated opposition, the regime proved capable of suppressing *Formosa*, arresting its leadership, and deconstructing its organization without generating a serious popular backlash.

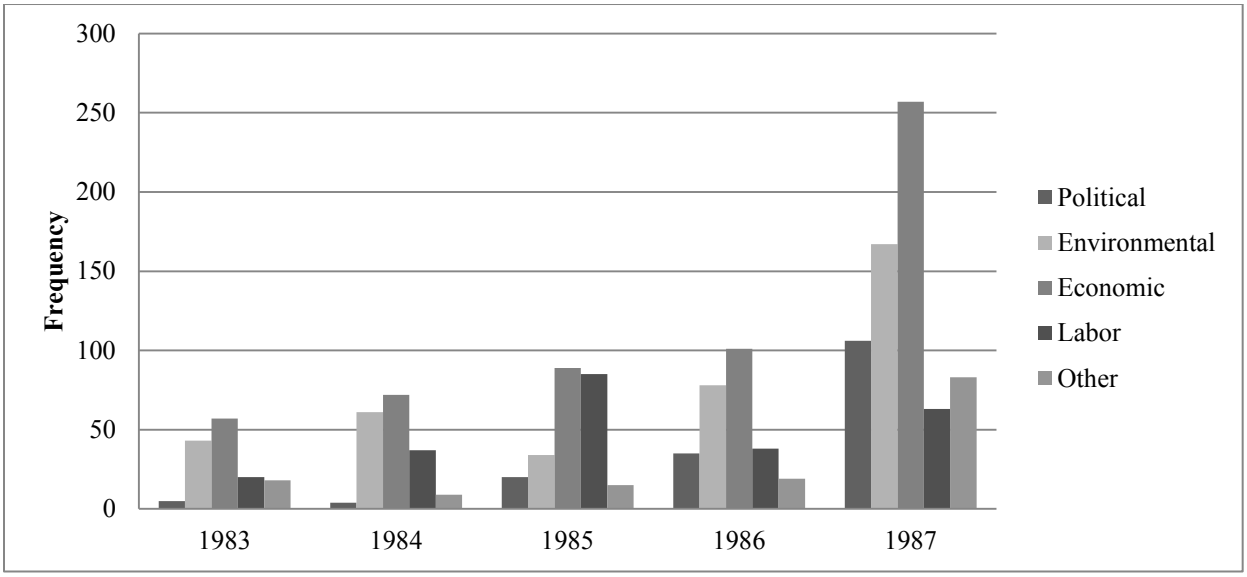
Heading into the 1980s, however, the KMT's ability to maintain its tight control over political and social realms would increasingly become challenged. The Kaohsiung Incident had represented not an end to sociopolitical activism but the beginning of a new phase of modern Taiwanese history identified by Hsiao (1992) as a time of "social forces in mobilization" (58). By the mid-1980s, Taiwan saw a rapid acceleration of social mobilization. This included sudden increases in not only political but also environmental, economic, labor and other protest sectors. The total frequency of all social protests increased from 143 in 1983 to 676 in 1987 (Chu 1994, 100). These protest activities, which had coalesced into at least 18 distinct social movements by 1989, were critical to Taiwan's liberalization in the mid-1980s and the initiation of its democratic transition by the late-1980s (Hsiao 1992, 59). In the 1970s, "civil society had not yet been mobilized to challenge the power of the authoritarian state directly, although the political opposition had gained wider support from the populace" (58). Society at this time remained divided along cleavages of locality, occupational category and faction, meaning the regime was able to maintain its political control through a strategy of divide and rule, pitting local groups against one another and buying-off or co-opting emerging powerbrokers into the existing system. The rapid mobilization of social forces in the mid-1980s, however, very quickly eroded and overwhelmed the KMT's levers of control over society, helped forge autonomous spheres of social activity, and substantially raised the cost the regime would incur when applying repression. An increasingly mobilized and contentious Taiwanese society would dissuade national rulers from suppressing the political opposition when the DPP, in the mode of Lei Chen or the *Formosa* activists, began to construct a new nationwide organization capable of competing with the KMT in elections.

To the present, few students of Taiwan's democratic transition have explored how the KMT's authoritarian state structure directly facilitated the rapid mobilization of society in the 1980s. Yun-han Chu (1994) has been one exception. He argued the "cumbersome multilayer state administrative system" made the government less responsive to grassroots-level demands (106). It additionally meant that power and resources were heavily concentrated in the central government, leaving local authorities unable to meet the needs of their constituent communities (106). Moreover, the centralized state coercive apparatus meant that when suppression was

applied against dissidents, as in the 1979 *Formosa* incident, the security arm of the central government, the TGC, served as the central agent in silencing the media, rounding up suspected collaborators, and putting them on public trials. The centralized state structure of Taiwan, in other words, demanded that the central government act as the direct agent of applying coercion and/or extending concessions in the resolution of outbreaks of protest.

In agreement with Chu, Hsing-huang Michael Hsiao (1992) also noted that the state played an important role in facilitating protest actions. While collective action in Taiwan involved a diverse body of social groups involving particular grievances and interests, for these actors, "the common target [was] the state" (58). This insight closely segued with Tarrow's (1994) later notion of the state serving as a "target" and "fulcrum" of popular contention (72). The highly-centralized state structure of the KMT party-state provided a unifying target for mobilization, which protest entrepreneurs could use to develop modes of organizations and repertoires of contention capable of overcoming state-supported divisions within society and sustaining challenges against the regime. These various structural vulnerabilities also meant that popular grievances could accumulate for some time without being addressed by state authorities, resulting in sudden explosions of social unrest directed against the state. The opportunities presented by the ROC's state structure, which existed for some time, were not realized until initial popular challenges exposed them in the early 1980s, resulting in a snowballing effect that culminated in a rapid, nationwide outbreak of social protest.

Figure 4.2: Reported Frequencies of Social Protest Incidence in Taiwan by Type of Issue, 1983-1987



Source: Yun-han Chu (1994), "Social Protests and Political Democratization in Taiwan." In *The Other Taiwan: 1945 to Present,* ed. Murray Rubinstein. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 100.

Following the Kaohsiung Incident, protests focusing on a range of issues broke out, such as the rights of consumers, women, students, workers, farmers, teachers, the disabled, veterans, and indigenous peoples, as well as environmental protection and the threat of nuclear power (Hsiao 1992, 59-69). By 1989, at least 18 distinct social movements had appeared in Taiwan (59). The

sudden appearance of such a highly-mobilized and contentious civil society fundamentally altered state-society relations and eroded the KMT's ability to maintain its grip over the public through its conventional methods of cooptation and coercion. By placing increasing pressure on the KMT, these social movements raised the cost the party-state would incur for applying repression against apolitical popular challengers or an increasingly well-organized *tangwai*/DPP opposition. By the mid-1980s, this changing state-of-affairs compelled the regime to agree to previously unacceptable levels of political opposition, ultimately driving Chiang's decision to accept the 1986 formation of the DPP and carry out the 1987 lifting of martial law. As discussed below, the KMT's highly-centralized state structure unexpectedly proved to be an effective facilitator for the rapid development of popular contention. This highly-concentrated political structure, in which central authorities had extensive power over local levels of government, created opportunities for popular challengers with diverse grievances and social backgrounds to suddenly come together and present a sustained simultaneous challenge to the state.

4.4. Environmental Contention and the 1986 Lukang Rebellion

One of the earliest popular challenges to KMT came from environmental protesters outraged by the growing problems associated with industrial pollution in their local areas. The central state's close connection with polluting industries in local communities, however, limited local authorities' ability to respond to the demands of local claimants. The center's powerful influence over local affairs led protest leaders to rapidly shift the locus of their protests from local to national venues and raise the stakes of their claims by targeting Taipei directly. This outcome meant that a diverse body of localized challenges underwent upward scale shift and began to concentrate efforts on pressuring the national government, meaning the vertical threat posed by environmental claimants on the center was rapidly amplified and became increasingly difficult to manage with traditional methods of suppression.

According to Chu's (1994) dataset derived from the content analysis of stories in Taiwanese newspapers about social protests, the number of environmental protests – those "events precipitated by pollution or the perceived possibility of pollution" – increased from 43 in 1983 to 167 in 1987 (100,111). The origin of these protests lay with the "darker side" of the Taiwanese economic miracle since the 1950s. While the KMT directed the national economy around growth-oriented policies, it largely ignored environmental considerations. This often provided locally or foreign-owned businesses with a comparative advantage vis-à-vis companies located in the developed world as they enjoyed a degree of freedom from environmental regulations in Taiwan that was not often available elsewhere (Chi 1994, 25). Such a lack of environmental regulation, coupled with Taiwan's growing population, already limited natural resources and physical space, and increasing consumer demands, was driving the country towards an environmental crisis by the 1980s. Taiwan was struggling with deteriorating water quality, air pollution, acid rain, inadequate solid waste disposal, deforestation, soil erosion, noise pollution, wildlife destruction and hazards presented by nuclear power plants (Chan 1993, 35-58; Chi 1994, 25-35). Thus, while most citizens experienced improvements in their economic well-being during the Taiwan miracle, a growing number were beginning to realize the serious costs to the environment and people's quality of life associated with these gains.

These declining conditions prompted a series of antipollution protests in the early 1980s. Initially, collective actions were highly localized and aimed at specific sources of pollution, such as factories, power plants, or garbage dumps within local communities (Hsiao 1992, 60; Tang and Tang 1997, 283-4). Such protests often started with the petitioning of local governments but eventually gave way to coercive or disruptive tactics when local authorities proved unable to meet their demands (Hsiao 1992, 60). In these early cases, local not central authorities were the central target or mediator of environmental protests (Tang and Tang 1997, 284; Kim 2000, 292-3). This parochial form of popular contention, however, rapidly underwent upward scale shift in the mid-1980s, transforming fragmented, localized protests into a nationwide movement.

According to scholars (Chen 1994, 261; Williams 1994, 247; Tang and Tang 1997, 284), the "Lukang rebellion" of June 1986, a protest aimed at stopping the construction of a proposed Du Pont titanium dioxide plant, marked the key watershed moment in transforming localized antipollution protests into a national movement. Led by a charismatic leader, Li Tung-liang, residents of Lukang Township in Changhua County initiated a campaign to resist the planned project. Understanding that the central government had predominant authority over economic policies, directly owned industrial zones and had the right to sell or lease them at its discretion, Li and his allies gathered 16,000 signatures and delivered copies of a petition voicing local opposition to the Du Pont plant directly to the Executive Yuan, Legislative Yuan and KMT party headquarters in Taipei (Reardon-Anderson1992, 25-33). After this tactic proved ineffective, as many as 1,000 citizens, several hundred wearing matching shirts bearing the slogan, "I love Lukang, don't want Du Pont," defied martial law-imposed bans on unauthorized public gatherings and marched through the streets of Lukang on June 24 (40-47). The demonstration was deliberately aimed at the "goal of attracting island-wide attention." Journalists from Taipei were invited to film to event, and the choreographed march began upon their arrival on-site, participants then quickly dispersing after the filming was completed (45-6). The event received nationwide attention, marking the largest public protest action since the Kaohsiung incident of 1979. In response to the June 24 march, Premier Yu Kuo-hwa issued a statement postponing the planned Du Pont project until an environmental impact assessment could be completed and the "concerns" of Lukang citizens were "resolved" (52-53).

To keep their momentum after their temporary and clearly tenuous victory, protest organizers carried out a series of public events. On one such event, an organized trip to visit industrially-polluted rice fields in Tao-yuan County, demonstrators were intercepted and delayed by security forces led by the local army garrison commander for six hours (63). Security officials objected to the group's new slogan on their matching T-shirts, which now read, "I love Taiwan, don't want Du Pont," rather than the previous "I love Lukang" (63). As understood by the protest organizers and the security officers on-site, the aim of this slogan adjustment was to broaden the appeal of the Lukang protest to citizens outside the community and reframe the issue as a national, rather than local, concern (63). This explained the heated confrontation between security forces and demonstrators. Public demonstrations continued for months, despite the harassment of the police and detainment of hundreds of participants. Protest actions near Lukang in central Taiwan proved ineffective and by December, 400 Lukang citizens brought their protest to Taipei, making claims directly on the central government (Chen 1994, 261; Tang and Tang 1997, 284). Bused in by caravan to the capital, with the stated purpose of attending a human rights conference, protestors suddenly changed route and formed a mass protest directly

in front of the Presidential Office while Li and other leaders publicly delivered a signed petition to the national administration (Reardon-Anderson 1992, 66). This was a bold action indeed, representing the first time a public protestors had demonstrated in front of the national government since its relocation to Taipei in 1949 (66).

After they redirected their popular claim-making towards the central government, the tide turned in favor of the Lukang petitioners. Du Pont gave into public pressure and withdrew its proposal to build the chemical factory in Lukang (Chen 1994, 261). The lesson of the incident was clear: appeals made to local officials were ineffective; affecting change in Taiwan's centralized political structure required uploading grievances and carrying out sustained campaigns directly targeted at national officials in Taipei. As noted by Li Tung-liang and other organizers, "Before the anti-Du Pont movement, Taiwan had no true environmental movement...So we went forward, one step at a time, raising the level of the protest just a bit with each step" (Reardon-Anderson 1992, 45). The anti-Du Pont movement had a substantial impact on subsequent environmental activism and protest actions in other areas, which soon learned from the Lukang incident and adopted its confrontational targeting of the national government as a template. According to Lukang activist, Nien Hsi-Lin, after the victory of the anti-Du Pont movement, "other environmental movements sprang up around the island. In addition, Lukang set an example for the labor movement, the farmer's movement, and other social movements in Taiwan. As I have said, Lukang was a watershed for politics in Taiwan as a whole" (Reardon-Anderson 1992, 84-85). The incident, in short, revealed both the possibilities for winning demanded concessions from confrontational interactions with the state and also the tactical need to bypass subnational authorities and bring pressure directly to bear on the more powerful central government.

Surely enough, from 1980 to 1987, environmental protests took place at a rate of 13.75 per year, but after Lukang and the lifting of martial law in 1987, this rate increased to 31.33 per year between 1988 and 1990 (Tang and Tang 1997, 284-285). These protest actions led many residents to question the government's commitment to environmental protection and increased the public's awareness of environmental issues. Moreover, the demonstration effect of the anti-Du Pont movement contributed to the construction of an organizational infrastructure capable of sustained organized nationwide campaigns targeting the central government. This came in the form of local and nationwide environmental associations such as the Taiwan Green Peace Environmental Workshop and the Taiwan Environmental Alliance and independent environment-focused publications (Hsiao 1992, 60-61; Reardon-Anderson 1992, 84; Chen 1994, 261). This social activity contributed to transforming an issue area that was largely unknown to most Taiwanese citizens in the 1970s and limited to highly-localized opposition to pollution into a major national protest sector by the mid-1980s.

The centralized structure of the state likely contributed substantially to the accelerating rate of protests and the upward scale shift from local to nationwide forms of contention. Tang and Tang (1997) suggested, "As the owner or promoter of many heavily polluting industries, the regime [became] the target of increasing numbers of environmental protests" (283). In the case of Lukang, the center's predominance clearly contributed to anti-DuPont activists' to undertake the personally risky and largely unprecedented effort to relentlessly press their local issue onto the national stage and draw the attention of the central government. Protest organizers were acutely aware that the proposed DuPont project had the support of powerful ministries within the

central government. The center's backing of the DuPont petrochemical plant was reflective of its more general involvement in nationwide economic planning. National-level technocrats from the Council for Economic Planning and Development (CEPD), the Finance Ministry, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and the Central Bank played a central role in economic planning, directing finances to public and private enterprises, and approving major construction projects (Tien 1989, 126). The central government's direct authority over the titanium dioxide plant was clear to the staff of DuPont and other foreign corporations. A anonymous source in the company quoted in James Reardon-Anderson's (1992) study of the Lukang rebellion reported, "The history of Taiwan had been that if you got the support of the central government, things would happen very quickly, and we could be fairly confident that we could build in a timely fashion" (4). The view that deals made with the central government "would hold throughout the island" was held by both state officials and corporations (4-5), and this largely explains why attempts by Lukang residents to appeal to their local officials were entirely ineffectual. The center's prominent involvement in the Du Pont project meant that even an effective contentious performance aimed at or mediated by local officials could not lead to the addressing of their grievances – local leaders simply lacked the financial resources and authority to stop a major industrial project backed by the center. Claimants' awareness of this reality motivated them to take their collective actions to Taipei (284).

Lukang activists' success in blocking the project's construction set a precedent that claims made on the government concerning environmental issues would need to be targeted at the center not the local-level to draw the attention of authorities capable of intervening on behalf of claimants. By 1987 and 1988, the number of environmental issues addressed through popular protest, the level of coordination among local environmental activists, and the organizational resources of environmentalists had grown substantially, enabling these claimants to "exert constant pressure [on the state] to strengthen environmental policy" (Hsiao 1992, 61). The learning process associated with the demonstration effect of the Lukang rebellion and the rapid diffusion of protest activities was remarkable. While organized environmental contention was largely absent prior to 1986, after claimants' effective targeting of the central government and victory in halting Du Pont's construction plans, a nationwide environmental movement soon appeared, coordinating the lobbying of green NGOs, local claimants, and sometimes the democratic opposition.

4.5. Labor Contention and Working Class Activism

Relative to comparable political transitions in countries such as South Korea, where organized labor clearly served as a leading agent of democratization (Bellin 2000, 1999), the role of industrial workers and labor activism in challenging the autocratic state was much less salient in Taiwan and remains a point of scholarly contention to the present. While the frequency of labor protests increased during the 1980s, scholars diverged over the relevance of working class activism in contesting the state. As argued by Frederic Deyo (1989), "There were no major recorded strikes in Taiwan during the long period of martial law from 1949 to 1987" (3). In Taiwan, as in neighboring polities such as Hong Kong and Singapore, organized labor was weak in relation to managers and the state, work stoppages were few, and labor had little input in economic decision-making (3-4). Because of the more sporadic and less salient nature of labor activism, scholars (Chou and Nathan 1987, 280, 296; Cheng 1989, 483; Lee 2002, 833) often

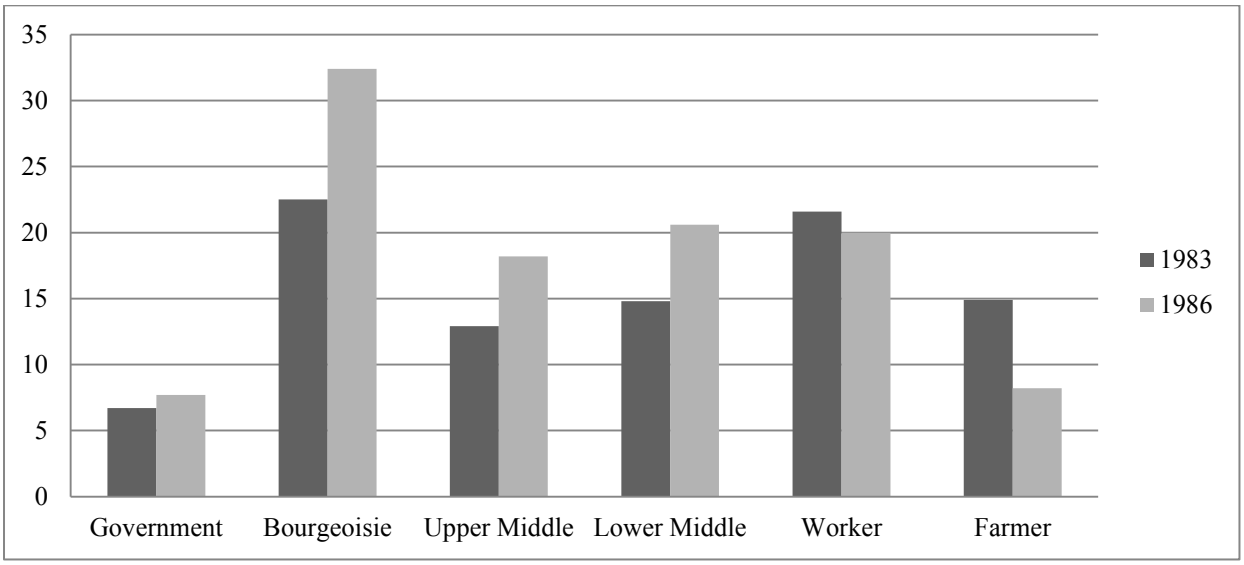
came to the conclusion that class and/or labor-oriented protest played no significant role in challenging the KMT during the critical years leading up to 1987. Instead, these researchers shared the conventional wisdom of Lipset (1959) and Moore (1966) that the middle classes and bourgeoisie served as the primary historical agents of democracy and the "main locomotive" of protest and popular demands for democracy (Lee 2002, 833). Excluded from access to mainlander/KMT-dominated state resources, the Taiwanese owners of small and medium-sized businesses became active supporters and financiers of the democratic opposition (Cheng 1989, 474; Solinger 2008, 95, 109). Thus, if one were to ascribe social agency to Taiwan's 1980s-90s democratization, the transition was driven not by working class labor activists but rather an assertive, well-educated middle class backed and funded by business interests. More recently, however, scholars such as Yang (2007) have attributed much greater importance to the role of industrial workers in challenging the pre-transition regime during the turbulent 1980s. Of particularly importance, the central state's extensive involvement in industrial policy and active repression of organized labor activism made shopfloor grievances fundamentally political issues, driving many workers to redirect their energies into support for gradually-forming political opposition.

The perceived quiescence of industrial workers has been linked to the basic fact that Taiwan's protest landscape was largely bereft of major labor actions organized by formal unions. According to most accounts, the politically inactive state of labor was driven by three main features of Taiwan's sociopolitical landscape. First, in consolidating its power in Taiwan, the KMT carefully demobilized preexisting social organizations and established a corporatist structure in which formal associations such as trade unions, operated as "Leninist transmission belts: they transmit[ed] messages, mobilize[d] public support, and help[ed] implement policies for the ruling party and government" (Tien 1989, 45). In a similar vein to contemporary China, formal unions were, in other words, tightly-controlled and subsidized by the state, serving as mechanisms for sustaining the KMT's control of the workforce. They did not act as vehicles for workers to forcefully challenge management in pursuit of their interests (50). Autonomous trade unions, moreover, did not appear until the lifting of martial law in 1987 (Hsiao 1992, 63). Second, drawing another parallel to the PRC, many workers had rural, conservative backgrounds and embraced Confucian values emphasizing social hierarchy, harmony and conformity, contributing to an outlook that dissuaded individuals from participating in contentious labor actions (Hsiao 1992, 63; Deyo 1989, 5). Third, Taiwan's economic take-off in the 1960s-80s had not contributed to the kind of widening wealth gap that characterized many newly-industrializing countries, such as transitional South Korea or China today. As noted by Chou and Nathan (1987), "The total income of the richest fifth of the population was only 4.4 times that of the poorest fifth" and by the mid-1980s, 30-50% of the population could be considered middle class (280). Thus, Taiwan's industrial workers lacked the organizational capacity, the political values, and the kind of socioeconomic inequity needed to motivate their social activism.

Despite these impediments to labor activism, a number of researchers have found evidence of growing popular contention in the 1980s centered on work-related grievances. According to Chu's (1994) data, reported incidents of labor-oriented social unrest increased from 20 in 1983 to 85 in 1985. However, this figure dipped to 38 in 1986, only to rise again to 63 incidents during the turbulent year of 1987, when martial law was lifted (100). The unusual drop in labor unrest during the critical year of 1986 stood in contrast to political, environmental, and economic-

oriented protests, which all saw fairly consistent rises from the early 1980s to 1987 (100). Official ROC figures also indicated a general increase in the number of reported labor "disputes" and workers involved in disputes during the 1980s. In 1980, there were 700 recorded labor disputes involving 6,000 workers, which increased to 1,622 disputes involving 16,000 in 1985. After this peak, disputes declined to 1,458 incidents involving 11,000 workers in 1986 (Deyo 1989, 59). Referring to the mid-1980s, Hung-mao Tien (1989) reported an increasing number of "work stoppages, sit-ins, and even demonstrations by workers" and the appearance of a "grassroots labor movement" as early as the spring of 1987, shortly before the lifting of martial law (50-51). These conventional numbers suggested that in spite of their typical depiction as quiescent and dominated by management and the state, Taiwanese workers, like many other segments of society were becoming actively involved a highly-mobilized society by the mid-1980s.

Figure 4.3: Percentage of Votes Cast for Opposition Candidates



Source: Electoral Survey on the 1983 Taiwan Parliamentary Elections; Electoral Survey on the 1986 Taiwan Parliamentary Elections. Cited in David Yang (2007), "Classing Ethnicity: Class, Ethnicity and the Mass Politics of Taiwan's Democratic Transition," *World Politics* 59: 520.

In an important recent article that reconciles many of the conflicting observations presented in previous scholarly literature on Taiwanese labor politics, David Yang has argued that most conventional interpretations of Taiwan's democratic transition tended to miss the substantial contributions of the working class because of their near exclusive focus on the activities of formal trade unions (2007, 507). As highlighted in Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens' well-known 1992 work, *Capitalist Development and Democracy,* based in sheer material self-interest, popular classes are logically the group in any given society that has the most to gain from full democracy. They would represent the majority at the ballot box and could conceivably use that position to enact materially-beneficial redistributive policies (57-8). There is therefore clear cause to suspect that working classes had a basic, material interest in expanding public participation in governance in any given polity. However, as noted by Yang (2007), in the case of Taiwan, where the KMT established firm control over formal labor unions and other social organizations through its corporatist strategy, researchers need to look for working class activism

in areas besides conventional measures of labor union strength, such as the number of union members, strikes carried out, or working days lost to work stoppages.

Applying a social clustering technique to Academia Sinica's 1991 and 1992 *Basic Survey of Social Transformation in Taiwan*, Yang (2007) used occupational categories and demographic data to group Taiwan's population into the class categories of "bourgeoisie, upper middle class, lower middle class, working classes, farmers [and] government personnel" (514). Comparing this class categorization scheme to respondents' voting records in 1982 and 1986 legislative elections, he found that the core based of support for the *tangwai*/DPP came from the working class and farmers, not the professional upper middle class or lower middle class of clerical and technical employees (520). When looking at only self-identified "Taiwanese" as opposed to "mainlander" respondents, Yang found that these trends remained constant (520). This supported his main thesis that the opposition's platform, centering on Taiwanese ethnic identity and self-determination, masked a political struggle, which in reality was fundamentally class-based (507-8). In other words, Taiwan's factory workers, like other members of the popular classes, did not quietly sit on the sidelines of the country's transition but were, if anything, *the* social impetus behind the opposition's popular challenge to the KMT and the country's ultimate move towards democratization.

While bringing a provocative and much-needed challenge to much of the conventional wisdom surrounding Taiwan's political transition, Yang's (2007) analysis left some questions unanswered. As reflected in the Academia Sinica voting data cited in his study, the popular classes, workers and farmers, exhibited strong levels of Taiwanese ethnic self-identification and particularly high levels of support for the democratic opposition in the 1983 and 1986 elections. Support for the opposition likely exceeded the percentages illustrated in figure 4.3, as an unusually large number of workers and farmers gave "no response" answers to interviewers, suggesting they were "disguising" their support for the opposition (Yang 2007, 520). However, in addition to these popular classes, the bourgeoisie (business owners with more than three employees) also overwhelmingly self-identified as ethnically Taiwanese and were highly supportive of the democratic opposition in both the 1983 and 1986 elections, outpacing farmers and workers in their proportion of votes cast for the opposition in 1983 and 1986 elections (519). This supported the conventional idea that well-educated and prosperous Taiwanese were typically at the center of popular challenges to the regime. The bourgeoisie's high level of support for the opposition clearly indicated that class orientation *per se*, whether one was a proletarian or a capitalist, was not the primary determinant of one's support or opposition to the regime. Rather, both workers and members of the bourgeoisie tended to rally behind the opposition and a broad cross-section of Taiwanese society mobilized against the state during the mid-1980s.

Yang's (2007) analysis did importantly reveal that the opposition was not purely a middle-class affair but also relied heavily on the political action of working class individuals. It also suggested that workers' labor-oriented grievances, instead of being entirely suppressed by the state's corporatist control of unions, were likely transferred horizontally and upward in support of the *tangwai*/DPP's nationwide political challenge to the state. These "black hands" performed a critical role as opposition campaign workers and were at the forefront of street demonstrations carried out in defiance of martial law. According to police records, blue-collar workers were

those most frequently arrested for participating in such illegal protest activities (Yang 2007, 522). Thus, in many respects, where labor activism was reportedly muted by the KMT's corporatist control over formal trade unionism, workers often pursued their interests by working alongside many members of the bourgeoisie and aligning with the political opposition. This effectively shifted labor demands into political opposition activities. Of course, even in terms of some conventional measures of labor activism, scholars such as Tien (1989) and Chu (1994) reported a marked increase in labor protests and disputes before the lifting of martial law in 1987, an outcome that was particularly notable since "before 1980, street demonstrations by workers expressing their complaints and demands were completely alien" (Chu 2001, 456).

The highly-centralized structure of the Taiwanese state likely played a critical role in promoting labor discontent to spill over from localized, enterprise specific grievances into workers' mass nationwide participation in contentious political action. First, in a similar vein to environmental issues, the central state was an important direct player in much of the island's economic operations. By 1987, a full 21% of central government revenues were derived from the large public corporations and monopolies it managed (Tien 1989, 133). Additionally, technocrats directly responsible to central ministries wielded great influence over economic planning and management (125-6). These realities diminished the ability of local officials to effectively mediate labor disputes within their jurisdictions, as central authorities and their functionaries effectively controlled the power and resources needed to address the grievance of claimants with work-related grievances. Second, the center maintained tight top-down control over labor organizations, meaning the KMT was closely embedded within the ranks of unions at every level of their administrations, and these bodies proved ineffective in enabling workers to confront or make demands on management or the state. Rather than pursuing their demands through these formal channels or organized limited protests aimed only at local officials or the management of specific enterprises, workers were compelled to address their grievances through autonomous activities or by throwing their support behind opposition activities.

Third, the centralized structure of the KMT party-state required that official responses to growing labor unrest be ordered from the center by fiat rather than managed on a case-by-case basis on the local level. In 1984, for instance, Chiang Ching-kuo became concerned that the opposition might mobilize growing labor unrest into a force for confronting the state. In an action "initiated from above, out of strategic calculations not only to restore but also to strengthen the KMT's paternalistic people-centered image," the government passed the Labor Standards Law (LSL) (Chu 1993, 183). The law stipulated the provision of severance, retirement, overtime and bonus payments (184). However, the sudden and top-down manner with which the regulations were written and legislated meant that employers, particularly in small and medium-sized industries, were entirely unprepared to provide such services. Once martial law was lifted in 1987, the LSL and the entitlements it stipulated became a rapid source of mobilization for worker protest, contributing to the explosion of worker unrest seen that year (184). The center thus emerged as a primary player in the extension of concessions and through the TGC, the entity that decided which means would be used to suppress dissent. This encouraged labor activists and working class discontents to shift their gaze upward to authorities in Taipei and concentrate their resources on challenging the political center in pursuit of their interests. Finally, in connection with the three other points, the central state's direct, top-down control of many public enterprises and monopolies, formal labor organizations, the determination

over labor policy, and the coercive apparatus responsible for repressing labor contention made even local or enterprise-specific occupation-based grievances fundamentally political issues that could only be channeled into anti-regime activities. As opposed to the decentralized system in contemporary China, where labor issues are handled through state-society interactions at the subnational level, in Taiwan, labor activists had little choice but to align with bourgeois allies and throw their weight behind the political opposition.

The KMT party-state's centralized state structure, in short, limited the capacity of the state to address labor disputes at the local level and formal labor associations to represent workers' interests. This meant that the center could rely only on cumbersome, top-down methods to address workers' grievances. Moreover, instead of only directing their claims at their enterprises' management or under-resourced local officials, workers often directed their claims at the central state, generally doing so by actively participating in opposition political activities or voting in support of its candidates. Labor unrest, which had been largely absent from Taiwan's protest landscape for most of the ROC's occupation, was assuredly on the rise by the mid-1980s, both in the form of rising labor disputes and the political mobilization of much of the country's working classes. A groundswell of labor unrest within Taiwan was revealed with the lifting of martial law and the official ban on strike activity in 1987. Immediately thereafter, independent unions quickly began to emerge and two formal labor-oriented political parties, the Labor Party and Workers' Party, were established, although both had limited electoral importance (Chu 1993, 181).

4.6. 1986: A Political Breakthrough

By the mid-1980s, Taiwan's social landscape had fundamentally transformed from only a decade earlier. While the *tangwai* candidates continued to contest elections, even coordinating their electoral efforts with campaign assistance organizations, the movement struggled mightily with factional divisions (Rigger 2001, 22-23). Moderates following Kang Ning-hsiang continued to emphasize electoral competition, but a new radical wing of the *tangwai*, centering on *New Tide Magazine*, considered more contentious tactics to be a central element for challenging the regime (24). As early as 1984, these more radical and activist opposition activists "organized mass rallies, staged street demonstrations, and engaged in other confrontational strategies to undermine the political support for the KMT" (Chu 1994, 103). Yun-han Chu (1994) found that by defiantly challenging the regime, these political activists created a "perceived structural opening" that other social actors were quick to exploit in asserting their own claims in the public arena (107). Surely enough, as claimants ranging from environmental activists to labor organizers began challenging the state, these protest actions soon developed into full-fledged social movements with the capability of asserting sustained collective challenges to more powerful opponents.

As noted by Hsing-huang Michael Hsiao (1992), while this diverse body of protest sectors emerged nearly simultaneously with an increasingly assertive political opposition, these various movements did not necessarily always coordinate their actions with the *tangwai*/DPP. In fact, "most of the emerging social movements…adopted an apolitical strategy by avoiding any obvious connection with the political opposition" (70). This was not to say that *tangwai* activists did not attempt to win support from various emerging protest sectors, which certainly was the

case. *New Tide* activists, for example, released publications and held conferences and seminars aimed at encouraging independent labor activism (Chu 1993, 179). Opposition activists also eagerly supported environmental protest actions as a method to criticize the regime, which often owned and directly operated polluting industries (Tang and Tang 1997, 285; Kim 2000, 294). More importantly, opposition activists, who were overwhelmingly of Taiwanese origin and often spoke in public in Taiwanese dialect, helped mobilize social actors around the idea of "Taiwan consciousness," which served as "the basis for political opposition framed in terms of a distinct national identity and aimed at ending the KMT's monopoly of power" (Wachman 1994, 139). This frame proved able of incorporating a diverse group of social actors with different class origins, occupations, localities, grievances, and interests into a common opposition against the mainlander-dominant institutions of the KMT party-state. Despite being unified in their targeting of the state, these contentious movements, which eventually numbered at least eighteen by the late-1980s, tended to develop and operate with a high degree of autonomy from one another (Hsiao 1992, 59, 70).

The highly centralized structure of the state, which held direct controls manifested in the management of state-run enterprises, contracts it negotiated with foreign corporations, control of formal trade unions and labor policy, and the direction of the internal security apparatus, enabled popular claimants to adopt the national leadership as a common target of contention and facilitated the rapid upward scale shift of local protests into national movements. Instead of targeting individual local officials or third-party opponents, claimants such as students, conservationists, religious adherents, and consumer rights activists rapidly developed tactics and organizational bases aimed at influencing the central government. Learning from the successes of prior protests, such as the Lukang rebellion, organizers realized that the center, which held the lion's share of state resources and direct authority over a wide span of state policies, needed to be challenged through confrontational, nationally-coordinated collective action. By the mid-1980s, the KMT leadership faced a substantial body of highly-mobilized but loosely coordinated popular challengers concentrating their efforts at the center both as a target and mediator of their claims. In many ways, the various popular challengers emerging in Taiwan during the 1980s drew on "network-oriented mobilizing structures," which Schock (2005) found were particularly effective at surviving repression and eroding the state power of non-democratic regimes (49-50). As opposed to a centralized organization, this network was capable of rapidly innovating tactics of contention and adapting to a rapidly changing political environment. Moreover, the KMT could not effectively deploy coercion against social elites or seek to buy them off, as there was no central organizational leadership that controlled this diverse body of social forces (Schock 2005, 50-51). Instead, the state's conventional means of social and political control were fundamentally challenged in attempting to rein in these increasingly assertive social forces.

These developments came to a head in the years of 1986 and 1987. After a faction-divided *tangwai* suffered electoral setbacks in 1983, activists from moderate and radical factions saw the need to better coordinate their efforts. Clearly testing the bounds of political opposition tolerated by the KMT, *tangwai* leaders established a campaign assistance organization with local branches across the country, and having agreed on a set list of nominees, performed well in 1985 elections (Cheng 1989, 488-89; Rigger 2001, 24). During this period, the KMT leadership balked at suppressing the organization, which was moving close if not beyond the limits established by *Formosa* in the late-1970s. Finally, in September 1986, opposition candidates broke truly new

ground when they suddenly declared the establishment of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). Diverging dramatically with earlier precedents, the KMT did not crack down on the new party but instead declared in October its intention to lift martial law in the coming year. In December, the KMT and DPP peacefully contested the 1986 elections, and the government finally lifted martial law in July 1987, setting the stage for formal multiparty political competition (Seymour 1988, 74-5; Cheng and Haggard 1992, 15).

Students of Taiwan's transition have disagreed in their explanations for the sudden democratic breakthrough of 1986. Clearly, from 1985 to 1986, as they constructed a nationwide organizational structure for contesting elections as a quasi-political party and assuredly when they formally declared the establishment of the DPP, opposition activists had pressed beyond the regime's established tolerance for political opposition. This left the question: "Why did the KMT not use its coercive resources to immediately repress the increasingly assertive opposition and deconstruct its organization, as had occurred in the 1960 Lei Chen or 1979 *Formosa* incidents?" As noted by a number of scholars, the announced formation of the DPP revealed divisions within the KMT leadership. Hardliners demanded that the opposition party needed to be immediately repressed through coercion, but were overruled by Chiang Ching-kuo, who used his personal authority to halt such actions (Cheng and Haggard 1992, 15-16; Tien and Shiau 1992, 59-60). High-level KMT officials, such as Premier Yu Kuo-hwa, and admirers of Chiang argued that the leader and his coterie had deliberately decided to democratize the state for over a decade (Tien 1992, 39). Scholars have also attributed the 1986 breakthrough to Taiwan's growing international isolation in the wake of American de-recognition. These developments led a number of KMT elites to believe that democratization might be necessary to preserve the state and draw the ROC closer to the United States, which would be less inclined to allow a democratic polity be absorbed by the PRC than a human rights-abusing dictatorship (Cheng 1989, 493). In these views, pressures from the outside had encouraged Chiang to consciously democratize the regime via a reform from above.

These interpretations, however, underemphasize the game-changing nature of Taiwan's highly-mobilized society in the 1980s. While developments in the international arena likely challenged the KMT's grip on power, the regime had weathered the initial storm of de-recognition in 1978, when it postponed elections and subsequently stamped out an increasingly assertive political opposition during the events surrounding the Kaohsiung Incident. The crackdown against *Formosa's* leaders and its associated organization had not generated a powerful public backlash, revealing the regime clearly maintained the ability to apply coercion against its opponents at a relatively low cost. Moreover, as noted by Robert Scalapino (1996), "Chiang Ching-kuo was no democrat," and his actions "were designed to protect his power and that of the party to which he was fully committed" (xi). This basic reality demanded that scholars examine the pressures that compelled Chiang, a leader with a half-century of experience in single-party authoritarian governance, to calculate that extending the substantial concession of allowing organized political opposition rather than applying repression against it was in the interest of sustaining the regime.

The rapid appearance of protest activity and upward scale shift into national movements in the 1980s fundamentally altered what Goldstone and Tilly (2001) described as the state's estimated costs of applying concessions and repression in the face of popular challenges (186-7). In the late 1970s, when society was only partially mobilized, the regime had been able to stamp out an

isolated political opposition with targeted repression without producing further protests across society. The leaders of *Formosa* could be rounded up and their organization suppressed without motivating any popular third-party social actors to take to the streets. By 1986, however, the regime faced a political opposition backed by diverse, decentralized but highly-mobilized social actors, meaning targeted repression of protest leaders and the extension of token concessions had very little potential effectiveness. Within only seven short years, social entrepreneurs orientated around a range of issue areas had found ways to bridge the divisions that had divided a demobilized Taiwanese society and maintain sustained challenges to the state on a national scale. The diversity of these new protest movements meant there was not a single unified leadership to target or an efficient way of addressing each group's demands with token concessions.

Chiang was left with two unappealing alternatives. The first involved applying severe repression against the *tangwai*/DPP, which would likely lead to greater and possibly violent protests across society as well as weakening the regime's legitimacy. The second, which he ultimately selected, consisted of extending serious political concessions, which would force the KMT to accept formal political competition. While Chiang's decision to overrule his more hard-line allies call for suppression was essential, highly-mobilized social forces, which had effectively exploited the opportunities presented by Taiwan's highly-centralized state, were critical to limiting his options. They raised the cost of repression and made the extension of major political concessions to the opposition the least costly course of action the regime could take. This analysis suggests that while exogenous shocks, such as Taiwan's diplomatic setbacks in the 1970s, and the country's rapid socioeconomic transformation, may have initiated early popular challenges, the centralized structure of the regime enabled these protests to rapidly snowball, transform into national movements, and ultimately bring the KMT leadership to the bargaining table.

Chapter Five: China

Following Liberation in 1949, the CCP consolidated its control over all of China, with the exceptions of Taiwan and the tiny European concessions of Hong Kong and Macau. It subsequently established a political and economic structure that included all the trappings of a conventional single-party Leninst state. These included the party's formal claim to a monopoly on political power, its dominance over the administrative state, organization in accordance to the principle of democratic centralism, control of society through mass line organizations, and defining adherence to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought (Burns 1999, 580-1). Economic policies operated according to state-planning and were oriented towards modernizing the country through heavy industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture, all in the interest of constructing a socialist society on Chinese soil.

After the initiation of Reform and Opening Up policies at the close of the 1970s, the CCP relaxed its controls over the state socialist economy, allowed private entrepreneurs to operate profit-making enterprises, permitted individual families to farm their own plots of land, opened up special economic zones for foreign investment, and incrementally deconstructed and privatized state-owned enterprises (Xia 2000; Huang 2008). These measures and subsequent reforms led to successive decades of rapid economic growth from the 1980s to the present and produced a dramatic transformation of China's socioeconomic landscape in only thirty short years. However, while radical changes were in play in the social and economic arenas, the CCP's Leninist single-party political system underwent no similar sweeping changes but rather remained resilient in its existing form. Seeing this strategy of *perestroika* without *glasnost* as an untenable situation, many commentators argued such accelerating social and economic developments could not be contained within a frozen, unreformed political structure. As noted by Merle Goldman (1990), the "present system… [was] thoroughly outmoded; it [ran] counter to the needs and aspirations of China's increasingly dynamic society" (17). Sharing the view that an unreformed Leninist single-party dictatorship could not keep pace with a rapidly developing China, a number of scholars and observers made predictions of the coming breakdown of the current regime, envisioning scenarios in which the system would either collapse entirely amidst a sudden eruption or the CCP would be forced to cede its political monopoly and share power with other political parties (Goldstone 1995, 43; Brzezinski 1998, 4-5; Nathan 1998, 60-64; Chang 2001; Gilley 2004). The CCP, however, has defied expectations and has clung steadfastly to power to the present day.

Scholars have offered a range of explanations for the CCP's resilience, often centering on the impact of China's economic transformation on various segments of society. Tsai (2007), Solinger (2008), and Chen and Dickson (2010) noted that the emerging social forces expected to challenge the regime's grip on power, namely an increasingly politically-assertive bourgeoisie, achieved their material economic gains in concert with the status quo political regime and consequently demonstrated a remarkably high level of support for it. Lau, Qian and Roland (2000) argued that the gradual, dual-track economic reforms of China, which introduced market reforms while also maintaining many state socialist economic institutions, ensured that reform could take place "without losers" who might destabilize the political system. Gallagher (2002) found that while "losers" certainly appeared amidst reform, the CCP's decision to initiate economic reform with the geographically-limited liberalization of foreign direct investment

(FDI) had enabled the party to adopt a nationalistic mantra and shift the blame for the social costs of reform from itself to international actors (344-5). These interpretations for the resilience of China's authoritarian regime thus found that the nature of the CCP's coordination of economic reform away from state socialism and towards the free market had enabled it to contain the social forces produced through such a transformation and ensured that they did not adopt a confrontational stance against the regime.

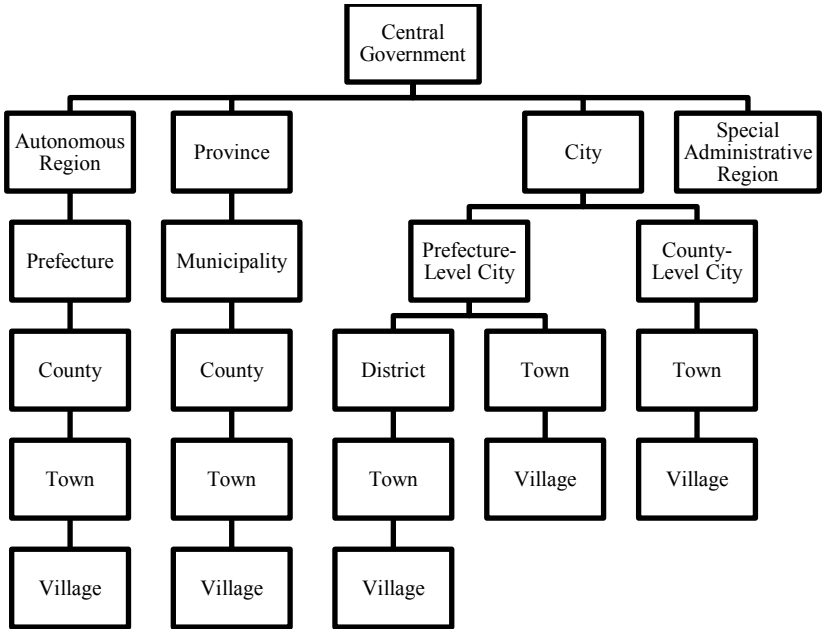
Others have attributed the CCP's resilience to elements of its institutional structure that stabilized its grip on power amidst sweeping economic and social transitions. As noted by Nathan (2003), the CCP's ongoing resilience was fundamentally rooted in its growing degree of "institutionalization," which made the political structure highly adaptable and durable in the face of emerging challenges (6-7). One element of this institutionalization was the regime's efforts to separate institutions of governance from the party's total dominance and entrust them greater authority with specific functions, including legislative bodies, judicial institutions, and the police (Peerenboom 2002, 6; Nathan 2003, 11-13). Another feature involved the increasingly norm-bound process for cadre retirement. During the Reform Era, standard procedures were put in place to ensure that elderly officials would leave office once they reached designated age limits (Manion 1992). While senior post-retirement age leaders continued to cling onto power at the very top of the party hierarchy into the 1990s, Nathan (2003) noted that the transition of power from the third generation CCP leadership of Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao's fourth generation was the most "orderly" and "peaceful" leadership change in China's modern history (7). Additionally, Huang (1996) and Landry (2008) found that reforms in the management of cadres in the mid-1980s had shortened the tenures of officials and standardized measures for job performance, to ensure that cadres were promoted on the basis of criteria set by the center and that local-level cadres were dissuaded from engaging in cronyism and banding together in regional factions that might challenge the center. These reforms ensured that the center could continue to effectively assert its authority over all levels of the party-state hierarchy and, individual cadres' long-term interests could be best served by loyally adhering to the prerogatives of the state.

5.1. Functional Decentralization

These adaptations to the existing political structure of the PRC enabled the CCP's central leadership to delegate increasing levels of fiscal and administrative powers to provincial and local-level authorities without weakening the cohesion and unity of the regime or risking the appearance of crippling regionalism. While some scholars (Hao and Lin 1994; Wang and Hu 2001) argued that such functional decentralization was weakening the central state's capacity for maintaining control over its local agents, others found that this was certainly not the case (Edin 2003; Landry 2008). As argued by Montinola, Qian, and Weingast (1995), the central government's delegation of power to subnational levels of the state as well as the CCP's abandonment of ideological dogmatism in favor of a market-orientated logic had simultaneously enhanced its ability to achieve its primary goals of economic development and fundamentally transformed the political system. For Montinola *et al,* these changes were substantial enough to suggest that the PRC had adopted a "new political system" (52). In spite of the persistence of a unitary Leninist single-party structure where no political competitor to the ruling CCP existed, the continued penetration of the ruling party apparatus into the administrative government and

society, and the lack of any revolutionary event or any alteration of power between political groups, the political system had nevertheless been overturned through gradual changes within the edifice of the existing structure.

Figure 5.1. Organizational Structure of the Government, People's Republic of China



Source: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). 2011. "Local Government in Asia and the Pacific: A Comparative Study."

Montinola *et al* (1995) suggested the new system was best labeled as "federalism, Chinese-style" (52). In this state, authority was divided between central and local levels of government, the former maintaining most of its existing functions but the latter importantly assuming "primary control over economic matters within their jurisdictions" (53-54). These authors, as well as Oi (1992), Xia (2000), and Landry (2008), found that this decentralization of power within the Chinese state played a critical role in bringing about the country's exceptional economic performance during the Reform Era. By assuming greater authority over economic policy, subnational governments were able to allocate resources more efficiently, deliver public services more effectively, be more responsive to local communities, and perform a developmental role, throwing state resources and support behind the most profitable of local industries. As reflected in these studies, in the last three decades, local officials gained substantial levels of authority in executing economic policies within their jurisdictions. This was a change that was particularly impressive considering the extremely high concentration of economic planning authority typically accrued by central governments in state socialist systems.

The degree of decentralization exhibited by post-Maoist China was from a comparative perspective, extremely remarkable. As noted by Landry (2008), from 1972 to 2000, non-democracies' average subnational share of state expenditures was 17.76%, whereas their share of revenues was 14.05% (6). In China, on the other hand, an average of 54.84% of fiscal expenditures were spent and 51.48% of revenues were gathered at the subnational level from

1995 to 1998 (World Bank 2010). The country, in other words, was three times as decentralized as the average authoritarian regime. This stood in marked contrast to the substantially more centralized structure witnessed in pre-Transition Taiwan, which fell much closer to the mean for authoritarian cases. As mentioned above, in the ROC, from 1980 to 1987, 27.6% of fiscal expenditures took place at levels of government below the overlapping national and provincial authorities (Ministry of Finance 1991, 1998). In 1984, 24.8% of revenues gathered were gathered at the subnational level (Tien 1989, 133). Therefore, in comparison to Taiwan, which fell closer to the non-democratic average for measures of fiscal and administrative decentralization, China's political structure was twice as decentralized. This reflected a basic reality that in China's "dual developmental" structure many state functions, particularly in the economic realm, were delegated to China's subnational governments (Xia 2000). Conversely, in Taiwan, control of economic planning and state development was substantially more greatly concentrated in Taipei.

5.2. Decentralization of Coercion

The CCP party-state has also significantly decentralized control over its coercive, internal security apparatus. In addition to performing expanded developmental functions, officials in the subnational governments of the PRC have gained increasing levels of autonomy over managing social unrest within their jurisdictions during the Reform Era. In terms of formal institutions, there is some comparability between PRC and ROC internal security apparatuses. The PRC central government has commanded an international security apparatus centering on the People's Armed Police (PAP), which on the surface mirrors the Taiwan Garrison Command in the ROC. Established in 1983 in its current form, the PAP is jointly operated by the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and in the post-Tiananmen period and has been entrusted with the primary task of "quelling of sudden incidents" of social unrest (Cheung 1996, 527). In a number of respects, the PAP parallels the Taiwan Garrison Command in that it centers on internal rather than external threats to the regime and is formally responsible to officials at the highest levels of the party-state hierarchy.

However, the operation of the PAP has evolved during the Reform Era, and the institution has been expanded in size, become increasingly well-trained and equipped, and importantly, command of its forces has been distributed downward, with these units integrated within local police forces and working under the direction of subnational authorities. The social unrest of 1989 has driven much of the retooling and reform of the Chinese internal security apparatus. After proving unable to manage the disorder associated with the Tiananmen protests and having to cede control of the situation over to the PLA, the PAP's leadership was replaced entirely and its capabilities were substantially increased, its budget increased 45% from 1989 to 1992 and its manpower expanded to 1.1 million (Sun and Wu 2009, 115). Since these reforms in the 1990s, the PAP has emerged as a particularly effective mechanism for controlling and containing social unrest. PAP units are currently deployed at provincial and local-levels of government and conduct joint patrols with civilian police officers, but because of their special training and equipment for pacifying riots, assume a leading position when major incidents of social unrest break out (118, 124). Importantly, despite the PAP's formal subordination to the central government and the top PLA leadership, its funds are derived jointly from central and local authorities, as well as business enterprises controlled by local PAP units. Also, in their day-to-

day operations, local units of the PAP collaborate closely with local security forces and are overseen by local security bureaus (Cheung 1996, 534-5; Sun and Wu 2009, 116). As opposed to the Taiwan Garrison Command, the PAP has acted less as a direct arm of the central government and more as an enhancer of local security forces that is closely embedded with normal civilian police, coming to the fore only when needed to manage outbreaks of social disorder. The immersion of PAP units into local police forces makes distinguishing these forces from local police problematic and likely masks the role of the central government in even the most-volatile of situations in which Beijing does take a more direct role in coordinating the state response to unrest. The localized integration of internal security units in China stands in contrast to the Taiwan, where the TGC took a high-profile role in censoring publications, arresting dissidents, putting them on public trials, and playing a central role in crowd dispersion.

Supporting this view of China having a decentralized coercive apparatus, area specialists studying the country's system for maintaining social stability have found local officials are entrusted with primary responsibility for quelling disturbances within their jurisdictions. In fact, according to Edin (2003) some of the most important standard measures for assessing local cadres' job performance include the frequency of large-scale demonstrations (more than 50 participants) and outbreaks of violence within their locality (40). Local officials are thus entrusted with addressing social unrest through the extension of concessions or application of suppression. They are also rewarded through promotions and bonuses or punished through demotions based in large part on how well they performed this function. As noted by O'Brien and Li (2006) and Cai (2008b, 2008c), however, popular claimants do often appeal to higher-level officials for assistance, which is a route they perceived as the most effective method for achieving their demands. Nevertheless, appeals to the center, which claimants view as the more trustworthy level of government, are aimed at pressuring and influencing *local* authorities, who are the "prime targets" of contention (O'Brien and Li 2006, 34, 42). As noted by Cai (2008c), claimants are more successful in local acts of contention if they can motivate an intervention from higher levels of the government, which is more likely to occur if acts of contention involve casualties, attract media attention and/or include large numbers of participants (168). As noted in his study of 74 reported cases of disruptive action in China, Cai finds that 59 involved only local-level interventions, while provincial-level officials were involved in ten and central authorities in five others (168).

These studies suggest that in addition to controlling a relatively large share of government funds and level of authority over the implementation of local policies, local authorities are also the primary mediators of incidents popular contention that appear within their jurisdiction. Moreover, they are punished or rewarded by higher authorities based on how well they are able to manage and/or deter outbreaks of social unrest. As noted by Tong and Lei (2010), in 8% of the 248 observed incidents of social unrest that involved 500 or more participants from 2003 to 2009, the responsible local cadre was fired by higher-ranking state authorities (502). Aware of this and the basic reality that local cadres have been delegated wide-ranging functional and coercive powers, popular claimants often craft contentious performances in a manner that maximizes the level of pressure placed upon local officials, both from above and below. Meanwhile, local cadres labor work actively to suppress news of social disturbances, even to their own superiors. As discussed below, forms of contention that emerge in this arrangement of political threats and opportunities tend to be localized and social sector-specific, meaning that

even frequent and intense waves of contention are unlikely to undergo upward scale shift and see sustained coordination and interaction with the state on a national level.

5.3. Patterns of Popular Contention

In many respects, the PRC has provided fertile ground for an outgrowth of popular contention over the last thirty years. China's Reform Era economic boom, which has generated high rates of GDP growth, has also eliminated the social safety net Chinese citizens enjoyed during the Maoist era, driven up the cost of living, and produced growing economic insecurity and inequality. With a widening gulf between eastern and western provinces, urban and rural residents, and rich and poor citizens, China has within recent memory transformed from a poor but egalitarian society to a wealthy but incredibly unequal one. In fact, as noted by scholars such as Wang Shaoguang (2006) and Huang Yasheng (2008), the poorest segments of Chinese society have actually begun to see not only relative but absolute losses in their material wellbeing during the "deep reform" of the 1990s. The poverty experienced by many Chinese is transposed against the growing and often highly-conspicuous wealth of the upwardly mobile, contributing to a growing sense of injustice within the citizenry. In a recent survey, well over two-thirds of Chinese respondents reported that they consider the country's current level of inequality to be too large (Han and Whyte 2009, 200). The palpable tensions generated by China's inequality have been observed at the highest levels of the Chinese leadership, prompting policies aimed at redirecting state funds towards the PRC's underdeveloped central and western provinces with the Jiang Zemin's Open up the West campaign and towards the poor in general with Hu Jintao's Harmonious Society initiative (Goodman 2004, 3; Han 2008, 13-14). These observable inequality-centered social tensions, which in most respects outpace the relative equity of economic wealth in pre-transitional Taiwan, threaten to produce widespread unrest and destabilize the country's social and political stability.

As anticipated, these socioeconomic inequities paired with the growing demands of Chinese workers and consumers have prompted a quantitative increase in social unrest during the 1990s and 2000s. This is reflected in the often-quoted number of annual "mass incidents" reported by China's Public Security Ministry, which has risen steadily from 10,000 in 1994 to 87,000 in 2005 (Kahn 2006). As noted by Feng Chen (2000), many protest actions are directly driven by the "subsistence crises" produced during economic reform, with many citizens taking to streets in reaction to real declines in standards of living often associated with catalysts such as employers' non-payment or under-payment of their wages (42). Among the early "losers" of reform have been state-owned enterprise (SOE) workers, who enjoyed a solid social position during the Maoist era but then faced mass lay-offs and uncertain employment prospects as reform deepened and larger SOEs experienced privatization and bankruptcy (Lee 2007; Hurst 2008, 2009). Another early source of popular contention has come from rural farmers resisting excessive taxation and the seizure of their land (Bernstein and Li 2000; Guo 2001). While these groups first appeared as leading protest sectors, they have since been joined by a diverse body of social actors emanating from a wide cross-section of society. As reflected in Chih-jou Jay Chen's (2009) dataset of protest incidents reported in Chinese newspapers, displaced city residents, foreign-direct investment (FDI) firm employees, white-collar workers, and students have engaged in contentious collective activities in growing numbers (91). These emerging protest groups are motivated by a range of grievances including cadre corruption and

malfeasance, excessive taxation and fees, illegal or undercompensated land seizures, environmental pollution, irregularities in local elections, and issues related to ethnic and religious rights (Jing 2000, 143; O'Brien 2003, 54; Tanner 2004; Cai 2007, 176). Similar to the experience in Taiwan, decades of rapid modernization have greatly transformed Chinese society and culminated in the outbreak of frequent and intense waves of popular contention emanating from a wide range of social sectors.

However, in China, amidst this increasing volume of contentious activity, no genuine social movements have appeared that can operate on national scope and maintain a sustained interaction with the state. While social entrepreneurs in Taiwan were able to oversee the upward scale shift of localized protests into not one but at least eighteen social movements, contention in post-Maoist China has taken place frequently but been "limited in size, scale, and scope. With few exceptions, the social composition, territorial reach, and endurance of individual protests have all been highly circumscribed" (Perry 2008, 206). Looking at the fragmented, localized nature of Chinese protest, scholars have offered a range of explanations. With specific reference to laid-off SOE workers, Solinger (2002) has found that individuals are often dissuaded from participating in contentious activity by the prevailing need to meet day-to-day survival needs and expend their energies seeking employment elsewhere. Taking a Gramscian approach, Blecher (2002) argues that workers' absorption of the hegemonic values of the free market means that they consider their material losses amidst reform to be acceptable and largely inevitable, deterring them from participating in collective action (288). Hurst (2008) suggests that the uneven opportunities and challenges presented by China's various regional political economies means they apply different "mass frames" when making popular claims (74-5), an outcome that can inhibit workers across regions from coordinating their actions. Peter Ho (2001, 2007) finds that by carefully alternating in its toleration and restriction of the activities of green NGOs, the regime has encouraged environmentalists to engage in activism that addresses the problem of environmental degradation but is largely non-confrontational in its relations with the state and even pursued positive engagement with it. To expand this to other areas, this suggests that by loosening its corporatist control over civic associations, the state has been able to encourage the development of civic activism within a restricted space that does not directly challenge the state's authority. O'Brien and Li's (2006) "rightful resisters," who quite contentiously challenge local officials, also appeal to the center and adopt official rhetoric supportive of the regime in framing these actions. Thus, these authors have found that for a wide array of reasons, China's popular claimants have proven unable or unwilling to develop frames or mobilizing structures that both directly challenge the state and transcend the cleavages that divide China by location, ethnicity, place of origin, occupational status, and place of employment.

While some of these commentators, Solinger (2002), Blecher (2002), and Ho (2001, 2007) have noted factors that dissuade citizens from confronting the state, others such as O'Brien and Li (2006), Lee (2007), and Cai (2008a, 2008b) have noted the high number and occasional intensity and violence of popular contention. This latter view provides a much better fitting portrayal of the paradoxical reality of popular protest in China today – citizens from across the country and the social spectrum often resort to extreme, attention-grabbing, and often confrontation acts of contention, but these acts never transform into sustained actions organized across localities and social groups. In other words, there is not a lack of confrontation in China *per se* but rather of contention sustained and coordinated on a national level. Following one particularly promising

stream of literature, some scholars have attributed this paradoxical growth of localized protest but non-appearance of national-level social movements to particular aspects of the decentralized structure of the Chinese state. The construction of the state, in which local agents assume a predominant role in maintaining social order within their jurisdictions, provides greater opportunities for popular challengers to apply non-inclusive mobilizing structures and frames that were specific to a particular locality, social group or issue. In a mode of contention Ching Kwan Lee (2007) describes as "cellular activism," claimants have focused on particular material demands specific to their group, forged solidarity with co-participants specifically within their immediate group or work unit, and in targeting specific local officials or managers, framed their protests using the rhetoric and pronunciation of the center as "ammunition" (112-3). This kind of activism can often prove effective, particularly if central authorities are made aware of the incident and motivated to place pressure on their local agents to resolve the issue (Cai 2008c, 166). While these circumstances often contribute to claimants' victory, they also provide a disincentive for claimants to reach beyond their specific group or grievance, as such efforts might prompt severe state repression, particularly against protest leaders themselves (Chen 2008, 105). By effectively lowering the price of localized contention while simultaneous raising the cost of cross-sector organization, this decentralized state structure discourages individual claimants from taking the substantial risks needed to form organizational ties or personal linkages to groups outside of their geographic area, social sector, or issue area and mount coordinated challenges against the state.

The decentralized state's manifestation as a more complex multidimensional target reinforces the existing tendency of activists in non-democratic states to mitigate personal risk by collaborating only with persons they know personally and trust. This typically restricts them to preexisting familial and personal networks and individual places of work or residence. Looking at autocracies in general, Osa and Corduneanu-Huci (2003) find that since information flows and the ability of individuals to freely assemble and associate are heavily constrained through censorship, preexisting social ties between participants are particularly critical in mobilizing effective popular contention (622). In Iron Curtain regimes where even communication between individuals could be dangerous behavior, for example, interpersonal trust and preexisting social bonds between participants were critical to eroding the imposed barriers between groups and individuals (Johnston and Mueller 2001, 361). Therefore, by providing a window of opportunity for making claims at the local level while raising the stakes of expanding contentious claims to the national-level, the decentralized Chinese state produces a kind of equilibrium in which protests have been frequent and intense but localized, inhibiting upward scale shift and mitigating the threat posed by vertical challenges to the regime. Rather than transforming contention downward to the local level, this state-of-affairs simply encourages and reinforces citizens' normal tendency to take risky collective actions only with colleagues they know personally and trust.

Critically, China's decentralized state structure has maintained a continued fragmentation of protest actions even in an environment where ongoing economic development has brought about the diffusion of technology throughout much of society and a substantial opening in communication between the country's provinces and local communities. As discussed below, popular challengers have taken advantage of opportunities for enhanced communication presented by the appearance of cellular and Internet technologies and a more open media

environment, leading to the diffusion of protest tactics and spread of limited modes of contention across regions. In spite of this protest contagion, upward scale shift has not taken place, resulting in the continued absence of social movements in China. Rather, even when cross-regional waves of protest have taken place, they have not established lasting organizational linkages, involved the coordination of actions between groups from different social sectors or with divergent grievances, or embraced inclusive collective action frames that might incorporate other protest actors into a concerted challenge against the regime. This suggests that the threats and opportunities presented by the PRC's decentralized state structure continues to direct popular claimants towards social sector-specific and particularized modes of protest rather than movements coordinated on a national scale – an outcome that has contributed mightily to the sustained resilience of the CCP party-state.

5.4. Labor Contention

Among those who suffered the greatest losses during the early years of reform were workers in state-owned enterprises. These workers had once been the pride of a Maoist state that emphasized the virtues of the urban proletariat and placed heavy industrialization at the center of its development strategy. During this time, they made great gains in their social status and wages relative to other sectors of society and enjoyed a high level of security in terms of their employment and relative welfare (Lee 2003, 72). As the Reform Era proceeded during the 1980s, however, the condition of SOE workers has not kept pace with China's overall national economic growth. While the country's GDP has surged with rates of increase averaging over 10% per year, the real wages of urban workers has grown at an average annual rate of only 4.4% (73). Prices for consumer goods have increased, the loosening of state controls over migration have exposed urban workers to competition from a rapid influx of rural-based laborers, and many workers have seen state guarantees for their employment, social welfare, and pensions in old age reduced and eventually eliminated entirely (74). Consequently, many of the gains made by workers have not kept pace with their losses in social entitlements or an inflating cost of living. The deteriorating prospects for SOE workers have accelerated with the deepening of reform in the 1990s, when large SOEs that had survived earlier moves towards the privatization of industry the Reform Era have seen an end to the state's propping up of their budgets and were forced to cut their workforces to achieve profitability. This culminated in the loss of 73 million jobs between 1993 and 2005 (Hurst 2009, 16). As a result of these developments, waves of protests led by laid-off SOE workers have broken out across the country with increasingly frequency and intensity (Cai 2002, 327; Lee 2007, 8-9; Chen 2008, 88). In recent years, however, worker contention has diversified to include not only workers associated with SOEs but also those in private-owned and foreign invested enterprises as well as non-industrial service workers, such as teachers, nurses or taxi drivers. Tong and Lei's (2010) data on mass incidents involving over 500 participants from 2003 to 2009 finds that labor protests constitute 45% of all cases observed in China, far exceeding any other protest sector in frequency (490).

While labor-based protest has grown in scope and intensity and diversified to include a greater number of social groups, cross-sector coordination between economic sectors and protest sites has been a rarity. One constraint on such efforts has been the regime's tight control over formal associations and its intolerance for organizations independent of the party-state structure. In a similar vein to pre-transition Taiwan, the CCP in China has established state corporatist control

over unions and other social organizations in the early years of the regime. As in many other Leninist systems, the CCP established a body of officially-sanctioned social organizations that acted as "transmission belts," which were designed to draw "information and opinions from the bottom" and articulate them into functional interests while also mobilizing social sectors in support of directives issued from the top of the party-state (Chirot 1980, 371). These organizations acted as the regime's instruments of social control, leading Ho (2001) to term them, "the state's outposts in society" (901-2). This system of social organization was aimed at enabling individual sectors of society to direct their interests through the vertical channel of official social organizations while preventing these groups from forging horizontal linkages across society that might challenge the party's hegemonic grip on power (Chan 1993, 36). Outside of associations formed and sponsored by the party, no independent organizations were tolerated and were targeted with state repression (Dickson 2003, 64-5). Thus, through state-controlled social organizations, the regime could encourage the fragmentation of society along lines of occupation and other categories, while allowing for feedback of use to the top leadership and mobilizing various sectors of society behind center-directed mass campaigns.

In line with this state corporatist strategy for social control, the state-sponsored All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) was established as the only legal labor union in the PRC. While often understood as an organization entirely subordinate to the party-state elite, Anita Chan (1996) has noted that official unions pursuing their particular bureaucratic interests did, to varying degree, participate in and even lead worker uprisings during moments of state vulnerability, such as immediately after Liberation, in 1956-57, 1966-69, 1976, and 1989 (33-4). This participation, however, typically prompted the fierce state suppression of official unions, culminating in the total disappearance of the ACFTU during the early 1970s. In the early-1980s, the organization was reorganized and given some latitude to represent workers' interests, but its freedom of movement was still limited largely to its conventional function as a transmission belt of the party-state (38). Moreover, in 1982, when the CCP became concerned with the rise of Solidarity in Poland, it removed workers' formal right to strike from the Chinese Constitution (Lee 2007, 59). Workers have thus found themselves represented by a largely toothless formal union that is unable to effectively leverage vis-à-vis management or the state. Furthermore, efforts to independently organize unions have faced "relentless suppression" by the state, as demonstrated by the particularly brutal crackdown on workers (as opposed to students) in the wake of Tiananmen – after they attempted to form the Beijing Workers' Autonomous Federation in 1989 (Lee 2003, 85; 2007, 58). Such suppression of drives to establish independent unions has persisted into the 1990s and 2000s (Lee 2003, 86-7, *China Labor Bulletin* 2009, 30-31), reflecting the contemporary regime's concern that the "Polish disease" of a Solidarity-like organization may still "infect" China's workforce and threaten the survival of the party-state. As in pre-transitional Taiwan, these restrictions on labor organizing have meant that workers must operate outside of formal unions in carrying out collective actions to address their commonly-held grievances.

Another limitation of cross-sector protest is rooted in the manner with which CCP officials and managers of enterprises have applied divide and rule tactics to maintain the fragmentation of the Chinese workforce. The cleavages that have divided workers have been defined by place of local origin, generation, rural versus urban household registration status, gender, kinship group, ethnicity and job specialization (Pun 2001, 103–116; Lee 2003, 87-88; Hess 2009, 412-14). As

noted by Lee (2007), government officials and managers often deliberately treat workers unevenly, differentiating between workers with urban and rural household registrations. The former are accorded higher status and receive better treatment from cadres, security officers, managers, and even labor officials, while the latter, rural migrants, exist as "second-class" citizens, enduring greater abuse and exploitation (198-9). Since urban-based workers enjoy some access to social services, better legal protection in the courts, and are subject to less abuse by managers and police officers, these practices help reinforce existing divisions among workers (202). Ngai Pun (2001) finds that divisions among workers imposed by managers and state agents go far beyond the cleavage of urban versus rural place of origin. In fact, workers are placed into a carefully-managed, complex hierarchy of skilled to unskilled workers, with not only place of origin but also gender and family connections playing a critical role in determining one's job position and his/her wages (110-15). Hess (2009) suggests that state-sponsored "labor export" programs that have brought Uyghur workers from the most remote corners of Xinjiang Province to Han-dominated factories in Guangdong might have even been designed to encourage such shop-floor divisions within the industrial workforce (412-14). These cleavages reinforced within the workforces of tightly-controlled Taylorite factories are aimed at creating situations in which various groupings of workers have mutually-incompatible, zero-sum interests. The demands made by one group can be perceived as coming at the expense of others, resulting in the erosion of labor solidarity and the diminishment of workers' collective bargaining position. These circumstances often prevent potential labor leaders from forging class-based alliances that transcend work units and shop-floor divisions, contributing to the "cellular" (Lee 2007, 5) nature of worker activism. While this divide-and-rule strategy provides an impediment to labor activism, it has not proven insurmountable.

Despite state-imposed constraints on independent unions and the managed fragmentation of the workforce, a number of coordinated labor actions have broken out, although this has been the exception rather than the rule. This kind of coordinated cross-factory action broke out in the massive Liaoyang strikes of 2002, which involved tens of thousands of participants from a number of factories, but was stamped out through state repression (Lee 2007, 101-11; Chen 2008, 105). This action, which emerged out of the painful restructuring of large SOEs in the industrial northeast "rustbelt," represented the "most radical episode in labor activism in more than two decades of reform," garnering international media attention and an involving an unusual case of sustained cross-factory contention against the state (Lee 2007, 101-2). Ching Kwan Lee (2007) noted that in the suppression of the Liaoying demonstrations, state authorities made effective use of the divisions among the workers, punishing particular corrupt officials, extending back wages and other material benefits to some but not all of the workers involved, and issued harsh prison sentences to a number of strike leaders but not rank-and-file participants (110-11). Thus, the divide and rule strategy of Chinese authorities proved effective both in preempting the outbreak of coordinated popular contention and quietly suffocating such outbreaks in the rare occasions they did occur. In this occasion, however, workers across factories were willing and able to take the personally-risky move of coordinating their actions outside of state-sponsored unions to place greater leverage on the state and management.

In recent years, however, despite constraints on workers' ability to mobilize acts of popular contention beyond or even across their places of employment, labor contention has in a number of instances transcended the geographic bounds of individual acts of popular contention. Lee's

(2007) characterization of labor protests as incidents of "cellular activism" has continued to capture the limited work unit or social network-specific mobilizing structures and enterprise or locality-specific claim-making of activists. However, despite the absence of nationwide organizational structures that might enable the sustained coordination of labor contention, the more open media climate within China and the diffusion of cellular and web-based communications technology has brought about the advent of episodic protest "contagion" across China's territory. This has appeared both in specific labor sectors and other particular segments of society. According to Tarrow (1994), this kind of contagion can be distinguished from diffusion in that the latter involves more than just the imitation of protest actions across sites by comparable actors; it means that "groups make gains that invite others to seek similar outcomes" (24). In other words, once the collective actions of one group reveals the vulnerability of authorities, the "spread of a form of contention, an issue, or a way of framing" is adopted by other social actors at a different site (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 31). If this diffusion leads to the coordination of action between previously unconnected collective actors against a common target, upward scale shift has taken place, transforming disparate, localized actions into national-scale ones. As illustrated below, in China, acts of popular contention have not remained entirely restricted to particular sites but have been emulated by parallel social actors in other areas of the country. This contagion, however, has neither produced coordinated action between geographically-separated actors nor contributed to new linkages between different sectors of society. While episodic outbursts of popular contention have become national in scope, these protest waves have not produced genuine social movements but have remained fragmented: targeted at local issues and official, typically involving specific material grievances, and exhibited little if any cross-site coordination.

5.5. November 2008 Taxi Driver Strikes

One visible example of protest occasion broke out in late-2008, when a spontaneous strike of taxi drivers in southwestern Chongqing broke out and was soon emulated by drivers throughout China within only a matter of days. The entire protest sequence appeared and disappeared within a month, revealing how rapidly protest contagion could spread in China's new media environment but how outbreaks targeting specific local grievances and lacking organizational support typically evaporate in rapid fashion. On November 3, the 9,000 registered taxicab drivers of Chongqing Municipality, a sprawling urban district in China's hinterland, began a sudden unannounced strike. The drivers insisted that they would not resume work until a long list of grievances were addressed, including excessive operating fees, rising prices for compressed natural gas, high and often arbitrarily-assigned traffic fines, unfairly low taxi fares, and a growing problem of competition from unregistered taxis. State media reported that the drivers had gone on a "rampage" and were attacking taxis that continued to operate and even vandalizing police cars (*China Daily* 2008a). The sudden, spontaneous work stoppage quickly brought the city to a halt, and local officials considered how to craft an effective response to the highly-charged situation.

The Chongqing incident demonstrates the intimate role of local authorities in managing major incidents of social unrest within their territorial jurisdictions, as during the course of a month, the municipality's cadres in sequential fashion devised an evolving course of action aimed at resolving the crisis. The initial response of local authorities was to offer limited concessions,

such as reducing the operating fees the management of taxi companies could charge drivers, releasing a greater volume of fuel that would be available to drivers, and promising to increase police enforcement against the illegal operation of unregistered taxis. This effort, however, proved ineffective, and less than half of the striking drivers returned to work the following day. The drivers were unsatisfied with the government offer and demanded other issues, such as the excessive traffic fines and low taxi fares that tapped into their earnings, also be addressed (*China Daily* 2008b). A subsequent report found that many of the strikers who had supposedly returned to work were not regular drivers but managers of taxi companies as well as their friends and relatives and reserve drivers (Wang and Zhu 2008). This demonstrated that the strikers had held quite firmly in their defiance to the first-day concession offers, and the local authorities were clearly struggling to end the strike, which continued on into the week. At this early stage, local cadres on site in Chongqing offered readily available concessions they could autonomously extend to the drivers. They also allowed taxi management companies to apply the stick of low-level coercion, using strike-breakers to apply pressure on the drivers participating in the work stoppage.

On the fourth day of the crisis, the deteriorating situation compelled the highest authorities within the municipality to directly engage the strikers. Politburo member and CCP Party Secretary of Chongqing, Bo Xilai, arrived in the city and met with representatives of the striking cab drivers for three hours on live public television. During the session, Bo outlined the main grievances of the drivers and pledged to organize a crackdown on unregistered cab drivers, expressed his sympathy for their plight, and outlined a plan to establish formal labor organizations for drivers in each taxi management company that might maintain a regular dialogue with the Municipality Government (Wang 2008). A meeting with a high-profile leader such as Bo appeared to make an impression on the drivers and their representatives, as they resumed work the following day. In subsequent weeks, the state-sponsored Chongqing Federation of Trade Unions (CFTU) issued a directive demanding the establishment of drivers' unions to represent workers in all of the municipality's 155 companies (*China Labor Bulletin* 2008). The creation of state-sponsored unions did not represent a concession to workers; as such organizations typically lacked sufficient autonomy to pressure management or the state in pursuit of workers' interests. However, these organs proved instrumental later in November when the CFTU ironed out a deal between the new unions and their respective taxi-operating companies, securing a reduction in the fees charged to drivers (Zhang 2008). Shortly after the November 6 public hearing, the Chongqing Municipal Government initiated a 3-month crackdown on illegally-driven cabs (*China Daily* 2008c). Thus, by taking the lead on coordinated action involving state agencies and private taxi management companies, the Chongqing Municipal Government was able to effectively address the primary concerns of the striking drivers and bring the work stoppage to an end through generally non-coercive means.

The November 2008 Chongqing taxi driver dispute was illustrative for two particular reasons. First, the taxi drivers in this case deliberately targeted the local government in an effort to win concessions. Secondly, the local government was the primary actor in determining the state response to the collective action, with Chongqing party boss, Bo Xilai, meeting directly with strike representatives and outlining the coordinated response to the work stoppage. Thirdly, Chongqing municipality's response revealed the expansive menu of policy options available to one provincial-level government. The city was able to promise a crackdown on illegal cabs,

initiate the renegotiation of working conditions between drivers and their management companies, and construct new organizations aimed at normalizing future negotiations between cab drivers, their managers, and the local government. While it remains unclear how much was gained or lost by the various parties involved in the crisis, the incident is reflective of the wide latitude and expansive policy toolkit local cadres often have available to them in resolving outbreaks of social unrest.

Finally, the appearance of such a high-profile incident of labor activism in national headlines led to a cross-regional outbreak of protest contagion throughout China. This more open coverage of protest activity, which broke with state's normal imposition of media blackouts on "mass events" (Zhao and Sun 2007, 304), was an outcome of China's more open media environment, and the CCP's developing approach to state-led media framing. David Bandurski (2008) has noted that in the aftermath of riots in Tibet in March, in which Chinese officials attempted to carry out a media blackout, foreign media outlets were able to take the initiative in framing ongoing developments in the region. The state leadership has since decided to reconfigure its coordinated media response to major emergencies. In this new strategy, state media has been instructed to carry out "rapid but selective news coverage" that can "set the agenda" on the event in a manner more congruent with regime interests, rather than allowing private or foreign media to seize the initiative and write the incident's narrative. As a result of these directives, Xinhua state media had produced a press release on the strike the same day it started, which was subsequently picked up by 100 commercial and state-run newspapers within the next 24 hours (Bandurski 2008). Thus, while state media set the tone of news coverage on developments in Chongqing, a nationwide audience became quickly aware of the basic facts of the labor action and the concessions won by the drivers.

An outcome of news coverage of the Chongqing strike was the sudden appearance of nearly spontaneous outbreaks of parallel labor activism throughout the country. In the days and weeks after the Chongqing incident, similar strikes and protests broke out all over China, including areas far from the southwestern municipality. An investigation of state media reports in November and December of 2008 revealed that within a week after Chongqing's work stoppage was announced, taxi drivers in southeastern Sanya, Hainan (November 10) and northwestern Gansu Province (November 10) had initiated their own strikes (*China Daily* 2008d). In the following weeks, taxi drivers also struck in the cities of Jieyang City (November 24), Shantou City and Chaozhou City (November 24) in southeastern Guangdong Province and Hongjiang City (November 24) and Foshan City (December 3) in central Hunan Province (*China Daily* 2008e, 2008f). Importantly, these strikes represented an outbreak of protest contagion, as opposed to diffusion, as popular claimants were all from the same occupational group, taxi drivers. Also, they employed similar tactics, namely locally-coordinated work stoppages. Finally, they made parallel demands, such as the lowering of taxi fees, improved regulation of unregistered taxis, lowed fuel prices, increases in the rates drivers could charge customers, and a reduction in fines charges to drivers for traffic violations. There was, however, no evidence that these acts of contention were connected either through the brokerage of individual activists or mediating organizations. In other words, they were largely spontaneous and isolated acts organized by unlinked, local community organizers inspired by events taking place elsewhere.

Of note, in these various outbreaks of contention, the local government appeared to be the main target of contention and the leading state agent in responding to collective action. In many cases, local officials learned from the earliest incident and mimicked the response of Chongqing Municipality, first initiating dialogue with strike leaders then offering packages of immediate concessions. By the end of this protest sequence, most of these spontaneous work stoppages were brought to an end within 1-3 days of their initiation. Repression in these cases was limited in scope and targeted primarily at those participants who damaged police cars or taxis operating in defiance of the strike. In addition to these cases were local-level governments that took preventative actions to avert the outbreak of work stoppages in their jurisdictions. The governments of Guangzhou (December 1), Beijing (November 13), Shenyang (November 8), and Shanghai announced new city-wide campaigns aimed at cracking down on illegal cabs, with Shanghai highlighting its ongoing crackdown by publicly crushing 21 confiscated illegal cabs with a compactor as "a warning to others" and declaring that it had already seized 18,000 illegal cabs in 2008 (Zhan 2008; Lan and Huang 2008). The government of Guangzhou City announced that it would implement new policies aimed at addressing the grievances of cab drivers in late November, ranging from lowered operating fees charged to drivers to a crackdown on unlicensed cabbies. These efforts apparently proved effective, as agitators organized a demonstration at a public building and sent out text messages to their fellow drivers, but their calls for a strike were largely ignored (Zhan 2008). Thus acting in both responsive and preventative roles, local officials emerged as the face of the Chinese state, organizing public responses to a rapid spread of labor unrest.

Importantly, the central government was largely absent in interactions between popular claimants and the state, leaving local officials to shoulder the burden of dealing with taxi driver work stoppages. While central authorities were assuredly aware of the labor strikes taking place throughout China, any actions or preparations they may have carried out took place well outside the public view. For these reasons, local governments were the primary target of popular contention. Despite the extensive commonalities in their collective actions and the demands they were pursuing, these simultaneous strikers across China never underwent upward scale shift or achieved new coordination on a level higher than specific, geographically-circumscribed localities. No new cross-regional organizations were formed, protests remained fragmented, and within several months, the wave of tax driver strikes had largely subsided. This outcome was centrally rooted in the reality that in each case, these incidents were limited interactions aimed achieving specific material gains within a particular locality. Because local governments served as the state agents that dispensed both concessions and coercion, claimants likely saw little need in taking the serious risks associated with cross-regional organizing.

5.6. Summer 2010 Factory Protests

In the manufacturing sector, workers have seen their labor conditions change dramatically since the Maoist period. In a 2010 retrospective on Chinese labor in the Reform Era, Friedman and Lee found that two parallel processes have transformed the situation of workers over the last three decades. First, the process of "commodification" meant that life-long tenured job positions, accompanied by the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed social services and pensions, have been replaced with a contract system, in which professional relations are short-term and involve few benefits and no guarantee of long-term employment (508-9). Secondly, through the process

of "casualization," a growing number of workers have signed no formal contract with management, have worked under temporary or provisional status, and in many sectors of the economic have no affiliation even with the state-sponsored ACFTU (510-12). Despite the regime's passage of laws, such as the 2008 Labor Contract Law, which has stipulated improvements in working conditions and the payment of minimum wages and severance packages, the plight of Chinese workers has continued to erode (*New York Times* 2008; Friedman and Lee 2010, 513-14). Economic decentralization has encouraged local officials to collude with business interests within their jurisdictions to attract investment, stifling the implementation of labor protections, while workers, unable to organize autonomously from ACFTU, have experienced a laundry list of workplace abuses. These include "long hours, low pay, employer failure to pay overtime and social insurance, wage arrears, lack of proper health and safety precautions, discrimination (ethnic, gender, etc.), illegal firings, and severe fines for common workplace errors" (Friedman and Lee 2010, 515; see Chan 2001). Such conditions have motivated a growing number of workers to initiate formal labor disputes with management through legal channels. According to the figures of China's Ministry of Labor and Social Security, this number has increased from 19,098 cases involving 77,794 workers in 1994 to 500,000 involving 650,000 in 2007 (Friedman and Lee 2010, 517). However, lacking the bargaining position provided by autonomous labor organizations, these efforts have often not proven effective in deterring employer abuses, propelling workers to take extralegal and often disruptive collective actions.

During 2010, a recent chain of events revealed growing strains within China's industrial workforce. First, at a pair of factories in Shenzhen operated by Foxconn Technology, a supplier of electronics for companies such as Apple, Dell and Hewlett-Packard, a spate of nine worker suicides took place between January and May (Barboza 2010a, 2010b). These suicides were driven by the draconian Taylorite working conditions at the factories, where workers were forced to stand for entire 10-hour shifts, were forbidden from speaking to one another, were fined for small infractions, and were subject to intense, constant, and sometimes abusive pressure from their supervisors, who timed every movement workers made on the assembly line in order to drive them to maximum efficiency (Barboza 2010b; Chung 2010). In response to the suicides, which received great attention in domestic and international media outlets, Foxconn's management offered counseling services, including a suicide hotline, offered amenities to help the workers relax, raised factory wages by 20%, and even installed walls and netting around the factory dormitories to prevent individuals from leaping to their deaths (Barboza 2010b; Watts 2010). In June, Foxconn announced that it would increase the workers' pay to 33% above the original wages (Barboza 2010e).

Second, around the time of the announcement of the wage hike at Foxconn, a strike broke out at Honda's transmission and engine parts factory in Foshan, Guangdong. On May 17, 1,900 workers walked out, demanding their wages be increased to achieve parity with workers in Honda's Chinese assembly plants (Bradsher 2010a; *China Daily* 2010a). After temporarily returning to the factory, the workers again walked out on May 21, initiating what would become a highly-publicized two week-long strike (*China Daily* 2010a). Without the parts from the Foshan factory, the company was forced to close four assembly plants, immediately crippling Honda's auto production in China within only a few days (Bradsher 2010a). With the mediation of the ACFTU and the local government, Honda's representatives immediately entered

negotiations with the strikers (*China Daily* 2010a; Barboza 2010c). Officials, however, also attempted to silence growing media coverage of the strike and avoid the outbreak of subsequent copycat strikes. After the first several days of the strike were reported extensively in the Chinese media, this coverage immediately stopped (Bradsher and Barboza 2010). The story, however, soon reappeared in Chinese media (Han 2010), the blackout undermined by the substantial amount of attention the situation was receiving in international news headlines. The work stoppage dragged on for two weeks, with a number of clashes between strikers and police breaking out (Barboza 2010c). According to Honda representatives, the negotiations proved ineffective as the strikers had no representatives who would publicly step forward and effectively speak for all the participants (Shirouzu 2010a). The reluctance of leaders to step forward could be attributed to organizers' fear of being targeted for punishment for their role in the labor actions. Striking workers interviewed by the foreign press reported that particular groups of workers would return to work after receiving promises of substantial wage increases, only to abandon the assembly line when they learned the raises were smaller than expected (Barboza 2010c). Ultimately, after Honda agreed to grant an increase in factory wages of 24 to 32% as well as a number of other benefits, a substantial gain but far short of the 75% increase the workers initially demanded, the 1,900 workers returned to the factory (Barboza 2010d). A number of strike leaders, however, were fired from their jobs during the course of the strike, although Honda officials insisted this was unrelated to their participation in the walkout (Shirouzu 2010b).

The peace achieved with the resolution of the strike, however, represented only the beginning of a long summer of labor unrest. On June 7, only days after the transmission factory had resumed operation, workers at Honda's exhaust-system factory, also in Foshan City, Guangdong, went on strike, resulting in the shutdown of one of the company's four assembly plants that had only recently resumed work (Barboza and Tabuchi 2010). They were soon followed by workers who went on strike at another factory in Foshan, a supplier of exhaust pipes for Honda (Zheng 2010). Labor contention then spread to a factory several hundred miles away in Zhongshan, Guangdong making locks, side mirrors and other simple components for Honda vehicles, where workers demanding higher wages went on a week-long strike (Bradsher 2010b). On June 16 and 17, workers at two different factories in northeastern Tianjin Municipality supplying auto parts to Toyota conducted short strikes (Tabuchi 2010a). Thereafter, on June 21, 1,100 workers at Denso Guangzhou Nansha, an affiliate manufacturing sensors and electronic control components for Toyota, organized a week-long strike in which they won an across-the-board pay raise (Tabuchi 2010b; *Reuters* 2010). The wave of strikes pressed on in June and July, with strikes breaking out at both an auto parts factory and a machinery producer in Jiangsu, a sporting goods manufacturer in Jiangxi, and a sewing machine factory in northwestern Xi'an (*China Daily* 2010b). According to state media, between May 25 and July 12, Guangdong alone had experienced 36 strikes where workers demanded higher pay and better working conditions (Li 2010).

In a similar vein to the 2008 taxi cab strikes, the industrial strikes of 2010 were managed almost exclusively at the local or enterprise level and revealed the expansive coercive and concessionary tools available to subnational governments in resolving incidents of local unrest. First, in situations where violence between strikers and the authorities broke out, news reports referred to local police forces, suggesting the security forces involved were local police or PAP integrated into local police detachments (Richburg 2010; *Straits Times* 2010). Secondly, local-level

governments often facilitated negotiations between foreign-owned corporations, the ACFTU, and the striking workers (*China Daily* 2010a; Barboza 2010c). Thirdly, subnational authorities, particularly the Guangdong Provincial Government, the area most affected by strikes, used their policymaking powers and resources to propose new laws for regulating labor relations, improving the working conditions in factories, and raising the minimum wages within their territory (*China Labor Bulletin* 2010a, 2010b).

The summer 2010 strike wave produced varying outcomes for the workers involved, some winning serious concessions, others returning to the shop-floor with few victories to claim. In similar fashion to the 2008 taxi strikes, labor unrest spread rapidly across the country, involved the replication of tactics – namely organized work stoppages followed by negotiations, and received substantial domestic and foreign media attention. As in the earlier case, protest contagion in summer 2010 did not culminate in the upward scale shift of popular contention. Collective actions remained restricted to one occupationally-defined social sector, manufacturing workers, concentrated on specific, material goals, and involved no observable coordination between strike actions. The gains won by workers were secured at the local or enterprise-level. Also of note, in situations where workers failed to have their grievances addressed, there were no reported attempts of strikers attempting to improve their bargaining position by forming organizational linkages with claimants in other areas or uploading their campaigns to the national level and carrying out protests at national ministries in Beijing, as occurred with environmental protesters in Taiwan during the Lukang rebellion. Instead, the sudden spate of labor activism in 2010 was characterized by isolated actions won or lost through interactions with subnational officials. In China, these repeated reciprocal interactions between local claimants and subnational authorities had apparently demonstrated that protestors did not need to achieve new coordination at a higher, national-level to win important victories. Rather, with regularity, local claimants appeared to give almost no consideration to the possibility of coordinating actions at the national level to bring pressure to bear on the central government. Parochial forms of protest remained the prevailing form of popular contention.

5.7. Environmental Contention

Much like its counterpart in Taiwan, the PRC has long been troubled by the environmental side-effects of its economic miracle. As noted by Goldstone (1995), Chinese dynasties throughout history have seen the population and its material demands grow beyond the limited capacity of the country's arable land and environmental resources during times of prosperity, resulting in famine, rebellion, regional disunity, and the collapse of regimes. Much the same today, decades of economic expansion have only compounded a long list of environmental problems originating in the Maoist era, including flooding, desertification, erosion, water scarcity, and shrinking forest resources (Economy 2004, 9-10). Even more troubling, the population control measures initiated under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping have slowed but not yet reversed the growth China's population, which according to official projections is expected to hit a peak total of 1.5 billion in the 2030s before entering a slow decline (Liu 2006). As a result, Goldstone (1995) has warned that the growing demands of China's increasingly-affluent population have pushed well beyond the point of sustainability accorded by the country's natural resources, suggesting that in a repeat of history, the current CCP regime will face growing social instability and rebellion that pushes it to the point of collapse.

Certainly, environmental issues have become an increasing area of concern for many Chinese citizens. As reflected by a 2008 survey conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project, water and air pollution represent two of the top five biggest problems reported by Chinese citizens. Pollsters have found that among Chinese respondents, 74% consider air pollution and 66% water pollution to be a "very big" or "moderately big" problem (2). Concerns with the environment have cultivated two distinct but not entirely unconnected modes of environmental activity: environmental activism pursued through green NGOs and a wave of contentious, "not in my backyard" (NIMBY) style protests. Both variants have received an increasing degree of scholarly attention. On environmental NGOs, scholars (Ho 2001, 897-8; Sun and Zhao 2008, 157-8; Tang and Zhan 2008) have noted that in the Reform Era, China's top state leadership has tolerated, even promoted, the development of a large body of green social organizations that can help mobilize society behind state efforts to address the country's most serious environmental problems. According to Ho (2001), the regime's increasing consciousness of environmental issues or "greening," coupled with its "alternating politics of tolerance and strict control of civil organizations" has meant that China's ever-growing number of environmental organizations have taken a mild, non-confrontational stance towards the state, "court[ing] government approval in policy-making" rather than directly challenging its authority (897-8). More recently, Tong (2005, 181), Sun and Zhao (2008) and Mertha (2009) have emphasized the need to break down conventional notions of the state and society. They have pointed out that in resisting polluting industries or proposed construction projects that harm nature, activists often align with certain state agencies, particularly those entrusted with environmental protection, in coalitions. These alliances are posed against counter-coalitions of private interests and other elements of the state that support such environmentally-harmful modes of economic development (Sun and Zhao 2008, 160-2). These findings reveal the complexity of state-society relations in contemporary China and challenge the conventional assumption that an increasingly assertive civil society stands in opposition to an encroaching and monolithic authoritarian state.

Other scholars have paid greater attention to the growing number of highly-contentious protests carried out by citizens lashing out against the economic and health costs associated with China's deteriorating environment. As reflected Chih-jou Chen's (2009) news database of mass incidents reported from 1997 to 2007, protests related to the environment and other issues of "community well-being in the locality" are steadily emerging as an important driving force behind contentious actions in the PRC (101). Tong and Lei (2010) have similarly reported a rapid rise of pollution-motivated mass incidents involving over 500 participants from zero cases in 2003 to 5 in 2009 (491). As noted by Tong (2005), both in Taiwan and China, environmental protest has accelerated in step with poorly-regulated economic development. In her view, these economic changes have fostered the creation of a worldly, upwardly mobile, and educated middle class that is concerned with educating the public about environmental issues and influencing government policies through participation in the aforementioned largely non-confrontational environmental organizations (183). Secondly, the kind of growth-centered economic development practiced in both Taiwan and China has driven lower class, often rural-based citizens to organize highly-confrontational acts of popular contention aimed at stopping or preventing immediate threats to the health and well-being of their communities (183). The former variant of activism has more developed organization, a more national scope but is less confrontational with the state, while the latter grassroots protests are very contentious but more localized and reliant on preexisting interpersonal connections between the participants (183).

Chih-jou Chen's more recent writing, however, has suggested that middle class individuals in China typically associated with a more cooperative stance towards the state (Tsai 2007; Chen and Dickson 2010) have become increasingly active in confrontational protest actions related to immediate threats to their communities, such as in the massive 2007 demonstrations against a chemical plant in Xiamen (Chen 2009, 102). Of important note, despite the growing frequency, size, and social diversity of environmental protests, such incidents have remained distinctively localized and restricted to individual localities. They have not, in other words, undergone upward scale shift and transformed into sustained, national scale protest movements.

The sustained fragmentation of environmental protests in China stands in contrast to Taiwan, where pivotal events such as the anti-DuPont movement inspired not only subsequent environmental protests elsewhere but also the coordination of contentious environmental activism on a national scale. This divergence in outcomes can in many respects be attributed to important variations in the degree of state (de)centralization exhibited in Taiwan and China. In pre-transitional Taiwan, the central government and the leadership of the KMT were direct owners of many polluting industries, central ministries such as CEPD approved the construction of industrial projects, and the government, both at central and subnational levels, lacked a powerful agency capable of addressing environmental problems (Tien 1989, 126, 137; Reardon-Anderson 1992, 4; Tang and Tang 1997, 283). In contemporary China, subnational leaders have been delegated substantial power over the coordination of economic affairs (Oi 1992; Montinola *et al* 1995; Xia 2000; Landry 2008) and are rewarded with promotions for their ability to deliver high-level economic performance within their jurisdictions (Landry 2008, 261). Consequently, subnational officials work extensively to attract investors into their territories and cater to the needs of businesses already in operation, and are often themselves investors in local enterprises (Tsai 2007).

This decentralization over economic affairs also extends into environmental regulation. The central government has also been active in drafting legislation, creating bureaucratic agencies and initiating mass campaigns aimed at addressing environmental problems. However, as noted by Economy (2004), the actual enforcement of environmental protection measures is delegated to local authorities, who are primarily responsible for funding local environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) and have extensive leverage over these authorities (90, 108, 117). Thus, while the central government actively promotes environmental causes, subnational authorities are the overseers of economic policies in their areas, an interested party in promoting economic development and job creation, and the agents responsible for seeing that these activities conform to state environmental standards. This state-of-affairs is not only highly-problematic for ensuring an effective state response to environmental problems but also gives subnational officials deciding authority over the fate of polluting industries and the citizens affected by them.

As in the case of labor protests, acts of environmental contention in China have not overcome the institutional barrier imposed by state decentralization and achieved upward scale shift. In step with Taiwan during the 1980s, China has seen green protests become more frequent and involve more and more participants. This is revealed by measures such as the 29% increase in environmental mass incidents in 2005 alone noted by Pan Yue, the country's Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs, and the rise in environmental letters and complaints issued to the government from 369,712 cases in 2001 to 616,122 cases in 2006 (Ma 2009, 33-5). China has

also seen high-profile and large-scale incidents of environmental contention that have won national and international attention that have paralleled Taiwan's 1986 Lukang rebellion. Unlike in Taiwan, however, the growth in environmental consciousness among many Chinese citizens, increasing number of protests, and the demonstration effects of well-publicized, sometimes successful acts of popular contention have not led to the appearance of a sustained, contentious environmental movement coordinated on a national level. As discussed below in a brief discussion of one recent notable case of environmental contention, the massive 2007 protest against the proposed construction of a petrochemical plant in Xiamen, subnational authorities have emerged as the leading targets for particular issues of popular contention, with claimants appealing to national and international support to bring pressure against local officials.

In 2006, a Taiwanese company, Xianglu Chemical Fibers, in collaboration with the municipal government of Xiamen, a large island city in Fujian Province, began work in the Haicang Chemical Industrial Zone to construct a paraxylene (PX) chemical plant (Zhu 2007). Party Secretary, He Lifeng, the highest ranking official in Xiamen, emerged as an aggressive backer of the construction project, believing that the PX plant would almost double the city's GDP to $26 billion (Cody 2007). As early as March 2007, a chemistry professor at Xiamen University named Zhao Yufen, with over 100 other delegates to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), submitted a petition warning of the health risks associated with placing the chemical factory so close to a highly-populated urban area (Zhu 2007; Ma 2009, 36). Local officials actively sought to suppress news of Zhao's objections and used their influence over local media outlets to emphasizing the economic benefits the plant would provide to the community (Cody 2007). This local blackout of negative reports, however, was broken in May when independent news commentators posted warnings of the negative health effects of PX throughout Xiamen on Internet blogs and drew the national and international media's attention to the issue of the Xianglu plant (Cody 2007). Soon SMS messages circulated rumors within Xiamen that ominously warned, "If this highly toxic chemical product is ever manufactured, it would be like setting off an atomic bomb in all of Xiamen. The people of Xiamen will live with leukemia and deformed babies" (Zhu 2007). The public outcry voiced by residents, particularly those who lived the nearest to the proposed construction site and the growing media attention motivated an intervention from above by Fujian provincial authorities. He and a number of high-ranking public officials from Xiamen were brought to a meeting with provincial leaders in the capital city of Fuzhou on May 29 to discuss the issue including a review construction plans and their likely environmental impact (Cody 2007). The day after the meeting, He paid an official visit to the construction site, and Vice-mayor Ding Guoya announced a temporary stop to the construction project (Cody 2007; Zhu 2007).

Unsatisfied with the local government's promise to at least delay the building of the plant, protestors used Internet postings and text-messaging technology to rapidly organized mass demonstrations against the project. Many wearing yellow ribbons and medical masks and holding banners that read slogans such as, "reject pollution, protect Xiamen!" and "no postponement! It must be stopped," participants flooded the streets and began a peaceful march across the city (Kennedy 2007). Overcoming state blackouts of media reports on the protest and the shutting down of popular Twitter-style blogging websites by using alternative websites, demonstrators posted a wide number of photos, reports, and videos of the march (see Kennedy 2007). The march, reportedly including as many as 20,000 residents, involved little violence by

the police or the demonstrators, although the crowds pushed through and broke police lines on several occasions (Lim 2007; Kennedy 2007). In the days after the march, the construction project remained postponed, but the Xiamen municipal government announced that its fate would be decided when environmental ministries and scientists completed an environmental impact study (Ma 2009, 36). In December, the local government held a public hearing with a sample of residents after the release of the report. In the meeting, 80% of citizens declared their opposition to the project. Subsequently, reports in the media announced that the provincial government of Fujian had ordered the cancellation of construction of the PX factory at the site near Xiamen (36). However, the project was not stopped entirely but relocated to Zhangzhou, a more rural community far from Xiamen, prompting riots in this less-populated community in February 2008 that descended into violent clashes with the police. These incidents were, however, largely unreported in Chinese and international media (36).

The Xiamen march of 2007 is illustrative for a number of reasons. First, it clearly highlights the predominant role played by subnational governments in both promoting and, when sufficiently pressured by popular claimants and higher authorities, halting projects that pose a perceived threat to local communities. This case reveals the role played by municipal government officials as drivers of economic development, courting outside investors and facilitating the construction of new industries within their jurisdictions. When academics warned of the environmental dangers associated with the PX plant, the local government was central in silencing these reports from leaking out and seeking to frame discussions of project around the economic benefits it would deliver to the community. When Internet-savvy popular claimants drew international and national attention to the issue in Xiamen, provincial officials in Fujian intervened to pressure municipal authorities to adjust their firm position in support the PX plant. Notably, even in an unusually large demonstration involving 20,000 persons, authorities in Beijing played a particularly small part in the resolution of the incident, leaving provincial and municipal level officials to deal with the issue.

Secondly, popular claimants framed their protest in highly-localized terms. Instead of situating their protest in political terms that might be linked to other injustices of the regime, such as corruption, socioeconomic inequality, or citizens' lack of political rights, demonstrators focused primarily on the preservation of the natural beauty of Xiamen and the protection of community health. The most inflammatory remarks voiced by local bloggers in Xiamen focused on the person of Party Secretary He Lifang, calling for his firing (Kennedy 2007), and made no reference to the national government or the CCP party-state. Most tellingly, demonstrators in Xiamen tended to view cancellation of the polluting PX plant in their community as victory, despite its ultimate relocation to another area of the province further from their city. The outbreak of one of the largest environmental demonstrations in Chinese history, in other words, which involved massive, Internet-savvy mobilization techniques and appeals to national and international audiences, was nevertheless at its core, a localized protest of the NIMBY-variety, aimed at stopping a specific polluter in a particular place. The growing environmental consciousness of many Chinese citizens and the ability of citizens to carry out well-organized collective actions that can turn back harmful projects supported by powerful official backers have changed the scope and scale of protest but not its particularized and fragmented nature. Protests such as Xiamen have unlike the Lukang rebellion in Taiwan neither produced nationwide social movements nor inspired activists to reach across social and geographic

boundaries to organize a sustained challenge to the regime. In a decentralized autocracy, claimants tend to orient themselves around local issues and against local state antagonists, leaving protest in a fragmented and fundamentally more manageable condition.

5.8. Localized Protest and Authoritarian Resilience

The predominantly fragmented and localized nature of popular contention in China does not mean that the CCP party-state has not seen explicitly political challenges. Much like their counterparts in pre-transitional Taiwan, brave and idealistic individuals in China have stood up to outline an alternative vision of Chinese politics to the CCP's monopoly on political power. Dissidents from Wei Jingsheng to Liu Xiaobo have demanded that the regime, to varying degrees, better respect the civil and political rights of its citizens and replace or reform the current single-party political structure to embrace a participatory and more democratic political order. As noted by Minxin Pei (2003), in the more open social and economic environment of post-Maoist China, political dissidents from largely intellectual circles have repeatedly challenged the regime, giving abstract support for democracy and more recently, promoting popular causes such as infringements on the rights of workers, corruption, and environmental problems (31). With origins dating back to the 1978-80 Democracy Wall movement, student pro-democracy demonstrations in 1986-87, and 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, China's political dissidents have provided a critical voice that highlights the shortcomings and injustices of the regime and issues demands for political reform (Pei 2003; Cunningham and Wasserstrom 2011, 14). However, the dissident community, which frames its concerns in more explicitly political terms than the more common localized and issue-specific orientation of most protestors, has largely been restricted to the elite level. As opposed to its *tangwai*/DPP counterparts in Taiwan, networks of political dissidents in the PRC have continued to lack mass support. These individuals have not effectively been "able to forge direct links with ordinary resisters to develop a stronger and broader political base" (Pei 2003, 43) or channel these acts of popular contention into a coherent popular opposition movement.

Many commentators have suggested that 1989 represented a unique moment in the history of the PRC where political dissidents came together with a mass-mobilized public to threaten the survival of the regime. In the wake of Tiananmen, some scholars (Calhoun 1989; Walder and Gong 1993) found evidence of the popular support of the student protest movement in the participation of workers in the demonstrations of 1989. This was particularly evident in relation to the newly-organized Beijing Workers' Autonomous Union (BWAU), which criticized the material inequities associated with economic reform and advocated workers' right to form independent unions. The appearance of a worker-led and worker-supported organization suggested that in addition to educated students and intellectuals, the resistance exhibited at Tiananmen also had deep roots in the popular classes of society. More recently, however, Zhao (2001) has challenged the independent role of workers in the 1989 movement. According to his findings, students rather than workers played a leading role in organizing the BWAU, provided it with funding, held important positions within the organization, and were centrally involved in crafting its message (173-4). Moreover, the workers organized under the BWAU numbered only 150 activists, whereas the students associated with hundreds of autonomous organizations numbered in the tens of thousands (Wright 2008, 47). The worker activists involved at Tiananmen were latecomers in the protest, small in number, and not representative of the bulk of

China's working classes. Consequently, the well-known 1989 student demonstrations likely lacked the wide popular base implied by the frequently-reported autonomous participation of working class Chinese in the movement. Like the contemporary political dissident community, even during the peak of social mobilization during the summer of 1989, the protests at Tiananmen were an effort largely organized by the educated elite and lacked strong links to the popular masses.

In fact, while post-Maoist China has seen recurrent political dissidence and a continual rise in acts of popular contention, these two developments have been largely mutually-exclusive, running independently from one another rather than working in collaboration. In the post-Tiananmen decades, Pei (2003) has noted that "dissident" and "ordinary" resistance can be treated as distinctive modes of contention in contemporary China. Ordinary resisters tend to focus on specific, local, and often material issues, such the corruption of local officials, the abuse of citizens within the community, the seizure of residents' land or property, or NIMBY-type environmental protests (28-29). The tactics used are confrontational and disruptive, such as blocking roads, carrying out strikes, or the destruction of government property (29). Acts of ordinary resistance, like the various mass incidents, such as the 2010 Honda strikes or 2007 Xiamen incident, are frequent occurrences and sometimes involve hundreds or thousands of participants from various sectors of society. Dissidents, on the other hand, typically focus on more overtly political issues including the defense of individual rights and the advocacy of greater democratic reforms (Pei 2003, 30-31). Their tactics are much less confrontational and usually involve public petitions, legal actions and letter-writing campaigns (30). While dissidents have sought to forge links with average Chinese citizens by advocating popular causes, such as workers' rights and official corruption, they are nevertheless still a predominantly intellectual group involving scholars, teachers, and students and tend to act in smaller, if often well-connected groups usually numbering fewer than 50 (29-31). As noted by Cunningham and Wasserstrom (2011), the regime's response to dissident and normal modes of contention has varied dramatically, regularly harassing and imprisoning the former, while exhibiting a much higher degree of tolerance for patience (14). As suggested in the cases examined in this research, the regime's response can be further delineated by level of government: the central government has taken a more direct and forceful hand in silencing political dissidents while delegating more discretion to subnational agents in attending to more frequent localized protests.

Thus, in contemporary China, as opposed to pre-transitional Taiwan, political activists have not had popularly-based nationwide social movements to support their cause or at least raise the cost the state would incur for applying overt repression against its challengers, and consequently have had to act largely in isolation from mass society. This has left dissidents in a vulnerable position where the regime can overtly use the full force of its coercive apparatus to silence and harass them without generating a popular backlash. Instead of coalescing into national social movements capable of maintaining a sustained and well-organized challenge to the state, as occurred under the KMT in Taiwan, under China's decentralized state structure, the tens of thousands of ordinary acts of popular contention that break out on an annual basis have remained targeted primarily at subnational layers of the party-state. They have deliberately avoided politically-oppositional rhetoric and have instead "normally frame[d] their claims with reference to protections implied in the ideologies or conferred by policy makers" (O'Brien and Li 2006, 3).

Everyday resisters, in other words, have found that they can best pursue their particular interests by positioning themselves as loyal supporters of the regime and actively distancing themselves from the politically-sensitive issues discussed by dissidents. Thus, while nationally-mobilized social movements of Taiwan provided at least tenuous allies for the democratic opposition, the localized everyday resisters in contemporary China have operated in effective isolation from political dissidents.

The difference between Taiwan's national level popular mobilization and China's predominantly fragmented and localized mode of contention has had important political consequences. On one hand, the KMT was dissuaded from using its proven tools of repression to silence *tangwai*/DPP activists by a highly-mobilized society involving more than a dozen nationwide social movements by the mid-to-late-1980s. To do so would have risked a powerful popular backlash and threatened the regime with a serious political crisis. These circumstances ultimately compelled the KMT leadership to extend the serious political concession of accepting the DPP as a legitimate political opponent in 1986 and lifting martial law in 1987. On the other hand, in the PRC, the CCP's central leadership has been able to manage most acts of popular contention through subnational proxies, only intervening in exceptionally large and volatile cases of social unrest that spiral out of control and often doing so by punishing and effectively scapegoating local officials for their misconduct. This has preserved the reputation of the center and the overarching political order by leaving specific local cadres as targets of blame. It has also enabled the regime to deploy the fullest extent of its coercive capacity against political dissidents with little political cost.

One clear example of this reality came in 1998, when a number of political dissidents in China, many of whom were inspired by the creation of the DPP in Taiwan a decade earlier, decided to test the political waters by creating an alternative political party to the CCP named the China Democracy Party (CDP) (Wright 2002, 907). Organizers throughout much of the country established over a dozen local "preparatory committees" of the CDP, built a membership of around 200 individuals, and drew a good deal of international attention (Pei 2003, 31). However, after activists made reference to the CDP as a national party and made efforts to coordinate their activities across localities, a line was crossed. Security forces quickly rounded up and jailed the leadership of the organization, meting out long sentences to many of them (Wright 2002, 914). From 1999 to 2000 the regime continued to arrest other members of the CDP, although a number of activists were able to escape into exile overseas (915). In another recent case, a number of dissidents including famed Tiananmen activist and now Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo signed the document, "Charter 08" that called for democracy and human rights in China (*Journal of Democracy* 2011, 152). After the document was circulated on the Internet and signed by at least 8,000 citizens, Liu was arrested by security forces, convicted for "inciting subversion of state power," and sentenced to 11 years in prison (Cunningham and Wasserstrom 2011, 14). The incident drew great international attention, particularly after Liu was nominated for and awarded a Nobel Prize. Despite the substantial level of negative attention and criticism the regime has received from foreign countries and the international press, it has not budged on the issue of Liu's imprisonment.

Thus, much like the KMT in the 1960 Lei Chen case and 1979 Kaohsiung incident, the contemporary CCP has proven able to apply coercion against political opponents without

generating a serious popular backlash. Unlike Taiwan in the mid-1980s, China has not seen isolated acts of population contention undergo upward scale shift and transition into social movements coordinated on the national level. In a society where popular protests, such as those labor and environmental protests discussed in this work, are aimed at predominately at local or social group-specific issues, the central government has been able to concentrate its resources on cracking down on targets it deems the most threatening. These have included political dissidents involved in the formation of the CDP and the Charter 08 petition drive as well as Falun Gong, a religious sect singled out for its effort to develop an autonomous nationwide organizational structure and even dare to directly confront the central government at its Zhongnanhai headquarters in April 1999 (Thornton 2003, 259-260). These centrally-coordinated campaigns of targeted repression have inspired relatively little popular backlash, as likely would have occurred if more coercive measures were taken in Taiwan in 1986, when *tangwai* activists formed the DPP. In these two cases, China and Taiwan, variation in state centralization appears to have driven alternative patterns of popular contention – the former seeing fragmented and localized protests, the latter seeing the appearance of social movements coordinated on a national scale. These divergent modes of protest likely have likely contributed to the CCP's continued ability to manage growing levels of social unrest and on occasion apply coercion against political opponents, where the KMT in the pivotal mid-1980s, was compelled to extended unprecedented political concessions, namely accepting competition from a formally-organized opposition political party.

Chapter Six: Personalist Regimes

On February 22, a week after Ferdinand Marcos declared his victory in heavily-rigged presidential elections, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Lt. General Fidel Ramos announced their resignations in support of a planned coup to replace the Philippine president with a military government (Boudreau 2004, 184). Pursued by Marcos' security forces, the two officers fled to the Constabulary Headquarters alongside strategic Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) cutting across downtown Manila. With assistance from Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin and an appeal sent out on the Catholic Church's Radio Veritas, as well as the organized efforts of the political opposition campaign of Corazon Aquino, as many as two million anti-regime protestors filled EDSA to support the defecting generals and call for Marcos' removal from office (Overholt 1986, 1163-3; Boudreau 2004, 184-5). To break up the protest, Marcos unleashed troops armed with tanks, mortars and helicopters. After a number of military detachments refused to fire on the crowds or defected to the opposition, Marcos fled the country on an American helicopter on February 27 (Overholt 1986, 1163-3; Boudreau 2004, 184-5). His flight brought a sudden end to his two-decade-long personalist authoritarian rule over the Philippines.

The drama of the EDSA or "people power" revolution in 1986 represented a pivotal moment in what Samuel Huntington (1991a) billed the "third wave" of democracy - a dramatic historical current taking place throughout much of the world, wherein at least 30 countries saw the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and transitions towards democratic forms of government (12). This wave began in southern Europe and spread throughout much of Latin America before the toppling of the Marcos regime in the Philippines. By the time Huntington published *The Third Wave* (1991b), this movement had begun to take root in the communist bloc, manifesting in the rapid succession of revolutions in central and Eastern Europe in 1989 and soon thereafter spread to the Soviet Union, which collapsed in 1991. According to Larry Diamond (1996), the end of the Soviet regime and the establishment of nominal democracies in its successor states likely represented "high-water mark for freedom in the world" (28). Following this peak, a number of third wave countries that implemented nominally-democratic multiparty elections saw political competition decline as contests were rigged by incumbent rulers, growing abuses of individual human rights and the steady corrosion of political and judicial institutions through corruption. Consequently, Diamond observed that these electoral regimes had become "increasingly hollow and uncompetitive, a thin disguise for the authoritarian hegemony of despots and ruling parties" (30). As noted by Diamond and others in subsequent writing, the multiparty elections put in place in many transitional states during the third wave have actually often served as tools of autocrats in "hybrid regimes" to sustain their grip on power - not steps towards democratic consolidation (Diamond 2002; McFaul 2002; Lindberg 2009).

The third wave thus produced not only a number of democracies but also a new body of reconstituted autocracies, such as Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, which joined authoritarian regimes that survived any popular pressures for democracy, such as China and Cuba. In fact, as Hadenius and Teorell (2007) observed, looking back at regime transitions between 1972 and 2003, three-fourths of these cases produced new forms of authoritarianism, not democracy (152). Of interest in this study, a number of "transitional" countries associated with the third wave have transformed into highly-resilient autocracies and overcame any elite

and grassroots challenges. This occurred while autocracies in neighboring countries collapsed amidst popular revolutions, such as Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. As noted by McGlinchey (2009), these divergent outcomes, specifically across cases in the post-communist region, invite researchers to explore the institutional elements that make certain regimes stronger than others. Furthermore, in an essential if understudied area, scholars can investigate the characteristics that make "some social opposition movements more coherent and capable of effecting political change than others" (125).

One notable case of a highly-resilient regime that has emerged in the post-Soviet era is Kazakhstan, where a former communist party apparatchik, Nursultan Nazarbayev has created a durable, highly-personalistic authoritarian state. According to Martha Brill Olcott (2002), while the ruling elites of Kazakhstan "flirted with the idea of democracy" in the first years after independence, the country soon shifted back towards autocracy, and has since functioned more as a "family-run state" (2). Unlike a number of post-Soviet countries, where popular uprisings have toppled incumbent officeholders (Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005, 2010) or the survival of the regime required the nationwide suppression of organized political opposition groups (Armenia 2004, 2008; Belarus 2006, 2010), popular protests in Kazakhstan have remained largely scattered and fragmented, "rarely…target[ing] the Kazakh president" (McGlinchey 2009, 130). This is in spite of the high-level of corruption in the country, a number of high-profile scandals related to Nazarbayev and collaborators, the rigging of repeated national-level elections, and the widespread public dissatisfaction with the government in general (130-1).

The sustained fragmentation of popular protest in Nazarbayev's Kazakhstan has stood in contrast to the Philippines, where a gradual rise of social unrest culminated in the sudden fall of strongman Ferdinand Marcos in the face of an emergent, nationwide people power movement in 1986. As discussed below, these two cases have shared a number of important commonalities, including political economies characterized by wide-ranging corruption, the experience of sudden economic shocks and drops in the average standard of living, populations with extensive ethnic and linguistic diversity, and regimes defined by cronyism where the power and position of cadres are derived from personal connections to the national leader and other high-ranking officials. The two cases have, however, differed dramatically in terms of state centralization, Marcos having dramatically accelerated the expansion of and centralization of state authority in the Philippines from the 1960s to 80s while Nazarbayev has granted, perhaps somewhat reluctantly, a much greater level of authority to subnational governments.

As demonstrated in the following chapters, centralization has proven to be a central determining factor in the divergent political outcomes of the Philippines and Kazakhstan. In the former case, Marcos displaced a traditional landed elite as he constructed a highly centralized state apparatus, including powerful national bureaucracies staffed by functionaries appointed from Manila that were responsible for carrying out centrally-determined development programs. In addition, a previously decentralized security force was reorganized and placed under the direct command of the national armed forces, packed with regime loyalists and locals from Marcos' home province of Ilocos, and placed under the leadership of Fabian Ver, a close associate and relative of the president. By centralizing the functional and coercive powers of the state, Marcos took direct credit for early improvements in national security and economic growth in the early days of

martial law. However, when the economy began to deteriorate in the early 1980s, and the public became increasingly disenchanted with a corrupt and abusive internal security force, Marcos was directly attributed with the blame. In challenging the state for a myriad of specific reasons, ranging from the implementation of restrictive employment standards at a Manila distillery to the abusive and exploitation of sugar workers in Negros, the centralized structure of the Marcos regime was decisive in altering the prevailing mode of popular contention. Through interactions with state agents, popular claimants quickly learned that subnational officials lacked the authority or resources to address their needs or reign in an abusive, centrally-led security apparatus. This realization gradually led to a shift in tactics that began as early as the mid-1970s. Locally-oriented challengers to the state increasingly pressed their claims towards national-level level targets, made a relentless push to coordinate their localized claims with similarly-aggrieved allies across the social spectrum, and developed a powerful organizational infrastructure and tactical repertoire capable of placing sustained pressure on national targets. After rigged elections in 1986, the world watched with amazement as the streets of Manila and across the Philippines suddenly and seemingly spontaneously filled with millions of participants, inciting elite fragmentation within the regime and ultimately forcing Marcos to flee the country.

In Kazakhstan, President Nazarbayev has recurrently weathered the storm of popular challenges in large part because these have come in the form of fragmented, localized acts of contention and have not been sustained and coordinated on a national scale. After securing independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the president increasingly established his personal power over the national-level government. However, in contrast to the Philippines, at the subnational level, regional *akims* were able to assume a substantial share of authority over their respective governments and win a significant degree of *de facto* autonomy from the center. Using their more direct access to tax agents and regulators, *akims* have ensured that regional taxes and regulations take precedence over national ones. With the power to directly appoint members of the local bureaucracy and security forces, influence the local budgets and selectively distribute public goods and licenses, these subnational authorities have in practice amassed impressive levels of coercive and functional state powers.

As a consequence, when citizens have organized acts of popular contention aimed at addressing specific grievances, such as shady privatization schemes, mistreatment at the hands of security forces, or the increasing price of consumer goods, they have found subnational authorities to be important players in any interaction with the state. For example, when aggrieved populations such as the Karaganda coal miners of the mid-1990s carried out major collective actions to demand unpaid wages, they found subnational authorities were critical decision-makers in the allocation of limited concessions and application of coercion against challengers. As protestors in this and other episodes learned the important lesson that limited concessions could be won at the subnational level, it eroded any potential interest in shifting the scale of protest to the national level. Subnational authorities developed reputations as important and powerful players within their respective territorial jurisdictions, making them perceivably responsible for specific issues that have emerged. Claimants did not move beyond localized actions targeted at specific, material grievances or seek to forge organizational links with similarly-aggrieved populations in other communities. On the national level, protests remained scattered and lacked any meaningful coherence or unity. And interestingly, while many Kazakhs have grown increasingly frustrated with their living conditions and the growing problems of inequality and official

corruption, their skepticism has been oriented more directly at specific, often local actors, rather than Nazarbayev himself or the regime in general. As a consequence, the president has harassed, marginalized and silenced his formal political opponents and other dissidents with almost complete impunity, receiving criticism from foreign observers but almost none from the general public. In this way, the decentralized structure of Nazarbayev's regime has contributed significantly to the non-appearance of national-level popular contention and the ongoing resilience of authoritarian rule in Kazakhstan.

The following two chapters will explore the diverging centralizing/decentralizing trajectories of these two personalist autocracies and consider how these structural differences have contributed to different prevailing modes of popular protest and the diverging degree of authoritarian resilience exhibited by them.

6.1. Cases in Comparison

The regimes of Ferdinand Marcos (1965-1986) and Nursultan Nazarbayev (1991) involve a number of important differences. However, as discussed below, these do not preclude the drawing of meaningful comparisons between the two cases. To begin with basic geography, the Philippines are a densely-populated archipelago of over 7,000 islands in Southeast Asia whereas Kazakhstan is a massive, sparsely-populated landlocked territorial mass in the heart of Central Eurasia. As noted by scholars such as Brinks and Coppedge (2006) and Gleditsch and Ward (2006), geography can be a powerful predictor for the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and the establishment of democracy. Looking at the post-communist region, for example, Kopstein and Reilly (2003) have found that countries' geographic proximity to the West has had a strong positive impact on their likely political (democratic) performance and conversely the resilience or fragility of non-democratic regimes (140). Democratic friends and neighbors might either simply inspire opposition activists through demonstration effects or actively support political opposition groups with funding, training, open media broadcasts, and the deployment of election observers, weakening the grip of autocrats (Huntington 1991b, 86; Vachudova 2005, 178-9; Bunce and Wolchik 2006, 12-14). The implication of these findings might be that Kazakhstan's greater isolation from pro-democratizing international pressures might enhance its authoritarian resilience relative to that of the Philippines.

However, pure geography-based explanations have some limitations in explaining divergent outcomes in these two cases. Looking at Kazakhstan, from 1991 to 2010 its neighbors (Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan) averaged combined civil liberties and political rights Freedom House scores of a highly "unfree" 5.86.[1] For the Philippines, its nearest neighbors, Taiwan, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia averaged a combined Freedom House score of 5.44 from 1975 to 1985, the last decade of the Marcos dictatorship (Freedom House 2010). Thus, while Kazakhstan is clearly among the world's dictatorships most well-insulated from democratizing international pressures, the Marcos regime of the 1970s to mid-1980s also operated in a considerably authoritarian neighborhood in Southeast Asia. In addition to these neighbors, the regime was also closely politically and economically linked to the United States, a liberal democracy. However, during the late Cold War, the United States was no steadfast promoter of the democratization or human rights in the Philippines but rather tended

[1] In Freedom House ratings, 1 represents the "most free" score and 7 the "least free."

to back Marcos up to the end of his regime in the interest of national stability and American regional security interest. This fact was most clearly evident in the Reagan administration's close and steadfast support for Marcos, culminating in the dictator's ultimate escape from the Philippines aboard an American military helicopter.

Scholars have also noted economic performance as a source of authoritarian resilience, since generated revenues can be invested in an effective coercive apparatus (Skocpol 1982; Clark 1997), used distribute rents to loyalists and buy-off opponents (Way 2008, 60), and provide the regime with a kind of performance legitimacy that diminishes popular discontent (Huntington 1991b, 50). In a number of respects, the economy of the Philippines during the Marcos era and Nazarbayev's Kazakhstan have varied significantly. As it entered its final years, the Marcos regime saw the country's economy corroded by mismanagement, cronyism and massive debts (Overholt 1986, 1153-57). With a solid annual GDP growth rate of 5.1% in 1980, the Philippine economy slowed to 1.9% by 1983 and nosedived into a negative growth rate of -7.3% in 1984 and 1985 (World Bank 2010b).

While economic performance figures might help explain the end of the Marcos dictatorship (Huntington 1991b, 51), they offer relatively little explanatory support for the resilience of Nazarbayev. Despite the country's endowment of natural resources, including large oil and gas reserves, the painful post-socialist restructuring of the Kazakh economy brought about an economic slide more severe and protracted than anything experienced in the Philippines. From independence in 1991 to 1995, Kazakhstan's economy declined at an average annual rate of -9.26%, before leveling out from 1996 to 1999, and taking off from 2000 to 2007 with energy export-driven annual growth rates averaging 10.16% (World Bank 2010b). As suggested by Geddes' (1999) findings (135-6), the rapid economic slide of Kazakhstan in the early 1990s might well have provided the kind of exogenous shock that brings personalist regimes to the brink of collapse. Nazarbayev's survival during this difficult period suggests that authoritarian resilience of Kazakhstan cannot be attributed entirely to the regime's economic performance alone (Way 2008, 64-5). The substantial benefits of these resources did not manifest until the 2000s, requiring Nazarbayev to survive a decade of economic crisis, with poverty rates reaching as high as 39% by 1998 (Agrawal 2008, 90), before he could see the advantages typically enjoyed by autocrats of resource-rich countries.

In fact, experts on Kazakhstan, such as Pauline Jones Luong, warned in the late-1990s that Nazarbayev's overreliance on and excessive optimism over the short term gains to be netted from energy exports (which resulted on the neglect of other areas of the economy) might in fact lead to extreme social and political instability (1999, 53). These economic shocks of the early 1990s and stagnation at the end of the decade also clearly produced a high level of dissatisfaction with the regime. As noted by McGlinchey (2009), in a 1999 USAID-sponsored survey, when asked if they were satisfied with the governance in their country, 70.3% of Kazakhs responded "no," 19.9% "to some extent" and only 6.1% "yes" (131). Thus, in maintaining his regime, Nazarbayev overcame a serious economic shock immediately after independence as well as a subsequent period of stagnation. Marcos, on the other hand, saw his government collapse in the face of popular protest after a comparably short economic crisis. These complexities indicate the need to go beyond economic indicators in explaining the divergent political outcomes in these two states.

In terms of historical context, the Marcos regime collapsed in the middle of the third wave in 1986, whereas Kazakhstan only came into existence as an independent political entity in 1991. Based on these differences, an observer might infer that in the Philippines in 1986, the decision of protest organizers and participants to take to the streets *en masse* was related to earlier political transitions in southern Europe and Latin America and their getting caught up in the democratic *zeitgeist* of the third wave. Kazakhstan's emergence as a political entity came as an effect of the turbulent 1980s and 90s, suggesting its autocratic regime has operated in a global context more amenable to authoritarianism with weaker pressures to democratize. According to Freedom House (2010), in 1974, 46% of the countries in the world were non-democracies, a figure that dwindled to 21% by 1992. Subsequently, the number of non-democracies in the world has settled into the range of 22-29% between 1993 and 2011. Thus, the Philippines' transition was in step with a more general trend of authoritarian breakdown and transitions to democracy during the 1970s-90s, where no such broader current has appeared in the mid-to-late 1990s and 2000s.

However, upon closer inspection, the 1986 collapse of the Marcos regime was more of a trigger for subsequent transitions rather than an outcome generated by "snowballing" in other countries. As noted by Huntington (1991b), like Poland, Spain, Portugal, and Argentina, the breakdown of authoritarian rule in the Philippines was driven mostly by domestic conditions and subsequently inspired other developments abroad (104-5). In agreement with this observation, Mark Thompson (2004) has identified the people power revolution in the Philippines as having a "strong demonstration effect on other democratic revolutions," inspiring opposition activists in Bangladesh, Burma, China, Indonesia, Pakistan and South Korea (3). In other words, the defeat of Marcos can be better placed as a cause of the wave-like collapse of autocracies, not an outcome of such a transnational movement. In spite of Kazakhstan's post-third wave standing, the regime has seen authoritarian breakdowns take place in neighboring countries, which given different domestic conditions, could have inspired serious popular unrest within its borders. Bunce and Wolchik (2006) have noted the role of diffusion dynamics in bringing about post-third wave regime collapses in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. The toppling of two Kyrgyz regimes in 2005 and 2010 amidst popular demonstrations and Tajikistan's descent into bloody civil war from 1992 to 1997 suggest that authoritarian strength and stability in Kazakhstan has certainly not been dictated simply by the subsiding of third wave pressures on authoritarian regimes or the country's placement in autocrat-friendly Central Asia. Rather, in a number of respects, the Kazakh regime has endured in a regional and historical context much more challenging to sustained dictatorial rule than the one faced by Marcos in the early-to-mid-1980s.

Another variation of potential importance involves that of institutional legacies. Upon its independence in the early 1990s, Kazakh society had been heavily imprinted by the experience of over seven decades of Soviet rule. As noted by Marc Morje Howard (2002), organizational life under communist regimes was highly distinctive from that under other forms of non-democratic rule; whereas "authoritarian regimes tolerate[d] membership in many groups, communist regimes not only sought to repress all forms of autonomous non-state activity but also supplanted and subverted such activity by forcing their citizens to join and participate in mandatory, state-controlled organizations" (159-60). This apparent void in independent organizational activity in Kazakhstan has stood in contrast to non-communist authoritarian cases such as the Philippines under Marcos. In the latter case, the Catholic Church and formal

opposition parties operated with some autonomy – albeit under regime-imposed constraints, and the country had a prior historical memory of competitive politics before Marcos. Howard's (2002) research has indicated that Leninist legacies have had a lasting impact on the organizational life of societies across the former Eastern Bloc. Compared to other types of authoritarian regimes, individuals in these societies have demonstrated an unusually high level of distrust towards fellow citizens outside their most intimate friendship circles and also proven particularly unwilling to join civil society organizations (161-2). Such a difference could clearly be of great consequence; whereas Philippine society had a substantial organizational infrastructure for mounting powerful anti-regime collective actions, Kazakhstan, like other post-communist states, began largely with a *tabula rasa* on which popular claimants had to develop methods of organization from scratch (Ester *et al* 1998).

However, while scholars initially warned that many Leninist legacies would have an influential and generally detrimental impact on the prospects for democratization on the post-communist region as a whole, leaving it plagued by ethnic division and violence, ineffective legal structures, and flawed and unstable political institutions (Jowitt 1992, 284-305), outcomes have not been uniform but have varied quite dramatically. By the early 2000s, the post-communist region was characterized by an extraordinary level of "regime diversity;" during the early 1990s, certain countries taking strides in moving towards democracy, others rapidly evolving into consolidated autocracies, and a third category of states falling into a less certain transitional or hybrid state (Kitschelt 2003, 49-50; McFaul 2002). And more centrally to the point of this dissertation, scholars have not noted that historical legacies have necessarily made post-communist autocracies more resilient than other non-democratic regimes. Rather, these legacies have created various problems for democratic *consolidation,* such as low levels of civic engagement (Howard 2002), electoral volatility (Innes 2002; Epperly 2011), low levels of trust in government institutions (Mishler and Rose 1997) and low or unstable levels of party identification (Rose and Mishler 1998). While such problems have a negative impact on the survival and health of democratizing countries, they have not prevented authoritarian breakdown from occurring in the first place. Rather, the post-communist region has had regime collapses in spades. In fact, judging by trends in the region over the last two decades, post-communist societies have an impressive record for mobilizing against autocracy, even providing models for revolutions elsewhere in the world, but have a mixed and much more uncertain record for sustaining vibrant competitive democracies. Color revolutions involving nationally-coordinated popular protests have toppled autocrats in Serbia in 2000, Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004, and Kyrgyzstan in 2005 and 2010. While it is difficult to predict how successful these regime turnovers will be in producing lasting or healthy democracy, it is clear that the presence of Leninst legacies *per se* does not preclude the outbreak of mass popular protest in Kazakhstan as opposed to the Philippines.

A critical commonality shared by contemporary Kazakhstan and the pre-transitional Philippines appears is their authoritarian regime type. As opposed to the highly-institutionalized single-party regimes in Taiwan and China explored in Chapters 4 and 5, these two autocracies can be defined as "personalist," or "neo-patrimonial." As explained by Max Weber [1922] 1978), in a patrimonial regime, domination or "the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons" is derived from "traditional" authority (212). This kind of authority, in his words, "rests on an established belief in the sanctity of

immemorial relations and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them" (215). Instead of acting as a modern, rational-legal bureaucracy, where officeholders secure their positions on the basis of a standardized metric for merit and act within the formally-prescribed roles of their offices, in a patrimonial system, individual cadres act out of a sense of "personal loyalty" and connection to their superiors (231-2). In a patrimonial system, the bureaucracy and the security apparatus act not as servants to the public or the regime itself but rather as "purely personal instruments of the master" (231-2).

During the mid-20th century, scholars Guenther Roth (1968) and Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (1973) noted that patrimonialism, despite its association with traditional societies, has characterized a number of developing countries, even those with modern bureaucratic institutions and led by modernizing nationalist elites. As noted by Juan Linz [1975] 2000), these modern variants of patrimonial states can be distinguished from earlier forms in that in these contemporary regimes, there is a "lack of constraint derived from tradition and from continuing traditional legitimacy" (151). The work of Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle (1994, 1997) has further developed the concept of "neo-patrimonialism" to describe modern personalist dictatorships. In agreement with Linz [1975] 2000), Weber [1922]1978) and other scholars, the authors have suggested in a neopatrimonial system, the national leader maintains control through "personal patronage rather than through ideology or law" (Bratton and van de Walle 1994, 458). The personal connections of an officeholder to the chief executive, in other words, are substantially more important than the formal functions of the office itself.

The novelty of Bratton and van de Walle's (1994) conceptualization, however, comes with the realization that neopatrimonial regimes represent something of a hybrid of the Weberian ideal types of rational-legal and traditional authority. In this system, "relationships of loyalty and dependence pervade a formal political and administrative system and leaders occupy bureaucratic offices less to perform a public service than to acquire personal wealth and status" (458). The rational-legal components of such a system are not meaningless but rather assume functions that differ significantly from their formally-delineated roles. In a neopatrimonial system, officeholders mobilize support for the leader and defer to his personal authority and receive the prestige of office and title and the rents associated with it in exchange. In the regimes of Marcos and Nazarbayev, modern institutions involving formal multiparty elections, expansive modern bureaucracies, a constitutionally-derived body of law, and expansive security apparatuses all were created or incorporated into the political order undergirding the power of these leaders. These institutions, however, have been occupied by individuals with personal, often familial, connections to the ruler and are manipulated to serve their will. In both countries, it is widely-known that informal patron-client links to the president and his elite coterie, not the formally-prescribed authorities of offices secure access to the state and the resources it commanded (Hutchcroft 1991; Schatz 2004, 98). Thus, in both contemporary Kazakhstan and the Philippines under Marcos, "the leader himself maintains a near monopoly over policy and personnel decisions despite having founded a support party," fulfilling what Geddes (1999) identified as the primary determinant of a regime being a personalist, not single-party, autocracy (124).

The pervasive personalism of these regimes is a critical consideration when considering how they contribute to the shaping of prevailing forms of popular contention within their respective

societies. It also consequently impacts their susceptibility to breakdown in the face of popular protests. As noted by Geddes (1999), Ulfelder (2005), and Brownlee (2007), personalist dictatorships are relatively resilient, falling behind single-party regimes but far ahead of military autocracies in their average tenures. They also differ in their vulnerability to various kinds of internal (horizontal or vertical) and external challenges (Geddes 1999; Ulfelder 2005). Much of the research on authoritarianism reviewed so far in this work has centered on the stabilizing role of well-institutionalized hegemonic parties and the resilience of single-party regimes – the most durable of autocracies (Brownlee 2007; Way 2008; Magaloni 2008; Magaloni and Ruth Kricheli 2010; Levitsky and Way 2010). These states, such as the earlier cases of Taiwan and China, place an institutional check on individual despots, effectively distribute benefits across factions, and encourage cadres to link their long-term interests with the survival of the regime, dissuading them from defecting during crises.

However, as noted by Bratton and van de Walle (1997), Geddes (1999), and Hale (2006), even though personalist systems lack these kinds of constraining and well-institutionalized party structures, they also have an extensive repertoire of instruments for sustaining their regimes and weakening potential opponents. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) suggest that neopatrimonial leaders can tap into preexisting personal networks to draw cadres into the system, reward them with material rewards, make them complicit partners in the system's pervasive corruption, and ensure that their well being is entirely dependent upon the survival of the regime (86). Thus, as suggested by Geddes (1999), personalist autocracies resemble their single-party counterparts in that "the benefits of cooperation are sufficiently large to insure continued support from all factions" within the regime and to dissuade defection to the opposition (131).

Hale (2006) describes the wide array of levers personalist autocrats can use to strengthen their position vis-à-vis potential rivals. In a neopatrimonial system, the national leader's patron-client networks extend deeply into the furthest corners of society and the economy. This means individuals seeking to carry out basic tasks, such as securing business licenses or permission to run for public office, can see their efforts blocked by personal allies of the president (307). Moreover, those individuals who agree to comply with the regime are rewarded with pay-offs, whereas the more adversarial may be harassed or blackmailed by security forces (307-8). These instruments of personalist power mean that while the constraining power of institutionalized parties and other political institutions may enhance the durability of regimes, neopatrimonial leaders nevertheless command an impressive assortment of tools to ensure that their foes will face a difficult and uphill battle in confronting them and seeking to rally popular support behind their cause.

In short, Kazakhstan and the pre-transitional Philippines differ in a number of significant respects, including their political, economic, and social composition and their spatial and historical contexts, which must be given some consideration in this comparative analysis. However, these particularities do not preclude meaningful comparisons, as both regimes have faced potentially regime-threatening shocks, including sharp economic declines, the public exposure of recurrent scandals and incidents of official corruption, and growing socioeconomically and ethnically-defined divisions. Most importantly, in the consolidation of their regimes, Ferdinand Marcos and Nursultan Nazarbayev both sought to assert their political dominance by eroding the divisions between public and private spheres and converting the state

and its resources in vehicles of personal patronage. In other words, these two personalist dictatorships can be treated as like-units in terms of mode of authoritarian governance, characterized by similar processes for promoting and recruiting cadres, and methods for dealing with internal and popular challenges.

However, as discussed in the following chapters, these two cases have diverged substantially on the variable of state centralization. Whereas Marcos worked aggressively and successfully during his tenure to eliminate the power and resources of regional powerbrokers and subnational authorities (Doronila 1985, 99-100; Hutchcroft 1991, 415-6), Nazarbayev proved unable to achieve a similar outcome. As noted by Jones Luong (2004), subnational officials in Kazakhstan seized a substantial share of state power in the post-independence period that only expanded during the mid-1990s, this subnational authority eventually receiving formal sanction in 1999 (187-8). In Chapters 7 and 8, I will explore the proposition that the divergence on this variable, state centralization played a critical role in facilitating the upward scale shift from localized to national-level forms of popular contention in the Philippines while inhibiting such a transformation in Kazakhstan. In short, the weakness of Nazarbayev's central state apparatus may have ironically provided a regime-preserving function in denying popular challengers a single target of contention to mobilize around and preventing the appearance of protest movements coordinated on a national scale.

Chapter Seven: The Philippines

In 1972, President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines faced a dilemma. Having been elected to this position as a candidate of the Nacionalista Party through competitive elections in 1965, he approached the end of his second term in office. According to established constitutional rules, this would mark the close of his tenure as president. If he were to step down, Marcos faced the likely prospect that his archrival Benigno Aquino would win upcoming elections, an outcome that threatened the extraordinary level of personal power and wealth he had accumulated during his first two terms in office. As a result, Marcos plotted to extend his presidency through extra-constitutional means (Overholt 1986, 1139). Taking a nationalist posture, he demanded an end to the American-imposed constitution and called a constitutional convention to consider revisions. When legislators did not proceed at a sufficiently rapid pace, Marcos stepped up the pressure and declared that there was a growing security threat to the nation. Pointing to an in fact much-diminished communist insurgency, now numbering in hundreds, the president and his colleagues used this supposed menace to the state to justify a seizure of power. To make this point, Marcos went to the trouble of having security forces shoot holes in a national official's empty car in an "assassination attempt" and set off explosives around Manila to highlight the threat post by communist guerrillas (1140).

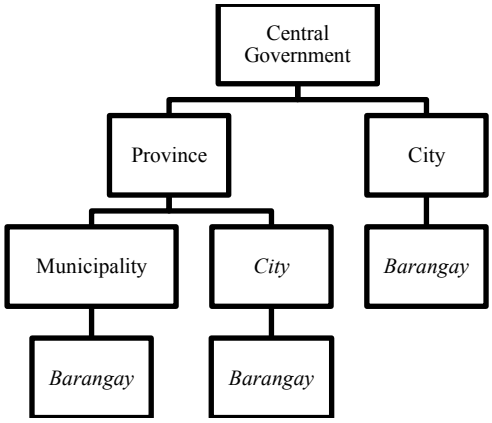
He thereafter declared martial law in 1972, effectively ending decades of competitive if flawed democratic politics in the country. Enjoying the acquiescence of a population tired of electoral politics dominated by competing coalitions of wealthy-landowners and perceivably corrupt clientelistic machine politics and concerned with the growing instability and poverty in the country, Marcos faced relatively muted resistance when he seized power (1140). After eliminating Congress, closing opposition media outlets, and arresting thousands in the first months of martial law, the Marcos regime saw its traditional opposition from the Liberal Party dissolve, most politicians either courting the new administration for favors or leaving politics altogether (Thompson 1995, 57-61). In short order, Marcos rapidly silenced his leading critics and consolidated his personalist control over the Philippine state. During the martial law period, Marcos would dually centralize and personalize the state structure, concentrating power into his hands at a scale unprecedented in the history of the Philippines. This would all come to an end in 1986 amidst the people power movement, in which Filipinos suddenly mobilized against the dictator in the millions, bringing about the fragmentation and collapse of the regime.

7.1. Functional Centralization

In rapid fashion after declaring martial law, Marcos substantially transformed center-periphery relations within in the Philippine state. He reshaped the state from a preexisting decentralized order to an extraordinarily centralized one with power heavily concentrated in Manila. In preceding centuries, an aristocratic landowning class with origins dating back to the Spanish colonial period had established regionalized bases of political and economic power independent from the central leadership in Manila (Hutchcroft 1998, 24-5). When the United States assumed political control over the Philippines at the close of the Spanish-American War, it constructed a system of representative political bodies and a modern bureaucracy led by American technocrats (25). These new institutions, however, reinforced rather than reversed the power of landowning oligarchs. The American-led bureaucracy was rapidly handed over to established Filipino

officials and the property requirements and other voting qualifications of the early years of American rules ensured that landed regional elites from the previous era dominated the new order (Hutchcroft 1998, 25; Doronila 1985, 101). In the 1950s and 60s, following the interruption of the Japanese occupation, Philippine electoral competition evolved into a fairly regular rotation between the Nacionalista and Liberal Parties. In spite of normal leadership turnovers and heated interparty contests, as noted by Doronila (1985), the two parties were "in essence ideologically homogeneous groupings with a conservative outlook;" they both predominantly represented the interests of the landed elite and relied on the mobilization of local patron-client networks to achieve victory (101-2). Individuals who won the presidency would distribute state resources and positions to their closest allies through a spoils system, excluding more peripheral political elites who would in a cyclical pattern defect to the opposition, tipping the balance in its favor and ensure leadership turnovers (Hutchcroft 1998, 25-29). Critical to the sustained competitiveness of the political system was the existence of bases of regional power independent from the central state, which landowning elites could use to keep the opposition party afloat while it prepared and regrouped to contest upcoming, money-driven elections (Thompson 1995, 20-1).

Figure 7.1. Organizational Structure of the Government, the Philippines



Source: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). 2011. "Local Government in Asia and the Pacific: A Comparative Study."

Heading into the 1960s and 70s, the traditional patron-client system and the economic bases of traditional regional powerbrokers began to reveal signs of breakdown (Wurfel 1988, 17). In the postwar era, the Philippines pursued an import substitution industrialization strategy, enabling a number of entrepreneurs from outside the landed elite to generate new wealth from manufacturing and finance operations (Boudreau 2004, 69). The state, moreover, had expanded rapidly, from 29,420 public employees in 1930 to 361,310 in 1960 and 500,000 in 1972 (Wurfel 1988, 13). The government budget expanded from 78 million pesos in 1930 to 1.33 billion in 1960 and 4.04 billion in 1972 (13). The growing number of state bureaucrats and urban-based businessmen created a new urban class that served as an alternative source of power and wealth to the traditional landed oligarchs. For this group, access to the national state rather than localized patron-client relations served as the mechanism for acquiring economic and political power (Hutchcroft 1991, 422-3). The growing "urban wealth enclaves" centering in Manila

created by these groups tipped the balance of economic and political power within the country and began to change the rules of the political game. They enabled elected politicians to bypass traditional patron-client connections in local communities when mobilizing rural supporters and rally new financial resources to appeal directly to voters (Doronila 1985, 106-7).

Marcos, a politician with well-established personal and professional connections to the new urban Filipino society, proved particularly adept at this practice. In his 1969 reelection bid, he overwhelmed and greatly outspent his opponents in a contest in which the candidates' pilfered a quarter of the national budget to finance their campaigns (Hutchcroft 1998, 112). In addition to introducing a "Marcos-style" of campaigning featuring the "dispensing [of] cash directly to local officials" in budget-breaking amounts that bypassed traditional patronage networks, the president also deployed newly-formed paramilitary forces to terrorize local opposition activists on an unprecedented scale (Thompson 1995, 35-6). With these developments, the countervailing power of regional elites to the central state rapidly eroded. By the time Marcos declared martial law in 1972, power and resources had begun to concentrate in Manila and the political center to such an extent that the president was able to effectively buy-off or intimidate his rivals with only minimal resistance.

His power now effectively unchecked with the declaration of martial law, Marcos initiated a push towards centralizing political power in the Philippines on a scale that was unprecedented in the country's history. In terms of functional centralization, the central government asserted growing power and authority over subnational governments. As noted by de Guzman *et al* (1988), local governments in the Philippines, including the barangay, municipality, city, provincial, and regional levels, typically lacked sufficient sources of revenue to cover their expenditures (228). While a number of government provisions enabled subnational governments to retain a portion of their revenues and levy taxes on real estate, licenses, and other items, these rarely proved sufficient for the budgetary needs of local authorities (228). The leading impediment to local-level revenue generation was that many taxable sources of income were controlled by cronies of the Marcos family, enabling them either to win formal tax exemptions or simply use their connections to evade tax collection efforts (230). As Manila-based favorites of Marcos extended their control over economic resources into the deepest corners of the Philippine state, revenue generation became a serious issue.

One well-known development of the Marcos era was the seizure of economic power by the president, his wife, Imelda, and the family and close associates of the couple. Commanding the machinery of the state, the president "tame[d] selected oligarchs most threatening to his regime" while "a new oligarchy [of Marcos and his relatives and cronies] achieved dominance within many economic sectors," using these positions to rapidly accumulate wealth (Hutchcroft 1998, 115). Marcos thus established personal control over the economy that usually involved "a kind of subcontracting to his close friends of important areas of the economy for plundering" (Thompson 1995, 53). Family and associates of Marcos, such as Roberto Benedicto, Eduardo Cojuangco, Herminio Disini, and Ricardo Silverio, for example, each became the respective "kings" of the Philippine sugar, coconut, tobacco, and auto-parts industries (53-4). As of 1975, thirty-one of the thirty-five richest and most politically influential individuals in the Philippines had close personal connections to Marcos (54).

As cronies of Marcos asserted their dominance over a broad swath of the country's economy, the traditional base of regional elites was eroded and the subnational governments traditionally associated with them found themselves unable to extract revenue from the most profitable sectors of local economies. This lack of revenues at the subnational level left local governments indebted to Manila, with 60-65% of their funds coming from external or national sources (230). In terms of their share of the overall government budget, subnational governments in the Philippines from 1978 to 1986 commanded only an average of 7.89% of all revenues, falling short of the 11.83% spent on expenditures (World Bank 2010). Even within their limited budgets, local governments faced top-down constraints on how these resources could be distributed. As noted by de Guzman *et al* (1988), the national government asserted the right to detail how subnational budgets could be spent, how revenues could be generated, and how many resources to should be set aside to meet other obligations (231). As suggested by these findings, subnational authorities lacked fiscal and administrative autonomy, controlling only a marginal share of the government budget.

In a bid to initiate modernization and concentrate his personal power, Marcos also established developmental policies that contributed to the centralization of functional state power. An important component of this process involved Marcos' effectiveness in currying favor with international donors to attract foreign aid and investment funds into the Philippines, which could then be allocated from Manila in a top-down fashion. Realizing the strategic importance of the American bases hosted by his country, particularly in terms of supporting war efforts in Vietnam, Marcos used this leverage to win large increases in grants and loans from the United States (Hutchcroft 1998, 113). In addition, the president deployed a world-class group of technocrats to develop close ties at the IMF and World Bank, which helped secure a steady stream of loans and development assistance into the Philippines (Overholt 1986, 1141; Hutchcroft 1998, 113-4). Situating himself at the center of inflowing foreign funds, Marcos rapidly expanded the center's reach into the periphery. Building on his pre-martial law development programs, Marcos used an influx of foreign aid funds as well as profits gleaned from the rising price of commodity exports to fund the construction of new infrastructure, including schools, roads, and irrigation projects (Doronila 1985, 111-12).

Agencies of the central government, such as the new Department of Local Government and Community Development and the Ministry of Human Settlements (MHS) greatly enhanced the president's authority vis-à-vis the local governments. The former department, reorganized local governments into barangay, which "became the basis of a personal, nationwide political machine" under the president and during performance "audits" of local officials, replaced 31 mayors and governors and 400 city or municipal councilors with Marcos' appointees (Wurfel 1988, 138). The latter agency, the MHS, was led by the president's wife, Imelda, and provided the top-down direction of development programs and the provision of basic social services in all 1600 towns and cities of the Philippines (Machado 1979, 136). To limit the involvement of local powerbrokers in the program, military personnel and bureaucrats personally loyal to Marcos and Imelda were employed to directly oversee these projects (136).

Through the MHS, the couple was able to ensure agents appointed from the center replaced locally-based holdovers from the old order. In the late 1970s alone, nearly 3,000 local officials were either replaced under the program or faced the likely prospect of being replaced (Machado

1979, 136). Commanding over $1 billion government funds, the MHS operated as "the largest patronage machine in the country" selectively handing out infrastructure contracts and projects to favorites of the regime, (Thompson 1995, 52). These and other agencies of the central government helped ensure "central direction [over] the planning and implementation of development programs and projects" and "supervision over different aspects of local affairs" (de Guzman *et al* 1988, 216). Thus, during the martial law period, the central government and its growing bureaucracy rapidly assumed a growing degree of direct power and authority over policies in the regions. Moreover, with cronies of the Marcos' assuming controlling share of the Philippine economy across sectors, subnational authorities proved increasingly unable to extract much-needed revenue from the country's most lucrative industries and grew ever more dependent upon transfers from the center to maintain their budgets.

7.2. Centralization of Coercion

As early as his pre-martial law presidency, Marcos had begun to centralize the coercive apparatus, absorbing locally-based security units into a single national force and establishing personal control over it. In an effort to weaken the grip of traditional leaders over the security forces, he implemented a major restructuring program, replacing a more decentralized security structure where stationed police forces were responsible to elected mayors in local governments with new Regional Unified Commands directly responsible to the central government (Machado 1979, 135; Noble 1986, 75; Boudreau 2004, 71). Building on these changes, the Marcos administration asserted its direct authority over the security forces by bringing police units into a unified national security force under the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), establishing an anti-riot unit for Manila, enlarging the Presidential Security Force to 15,000 men, and establishing a new National Intelligence and Security Authority (NISA) aimed at coordinating efforts to monitor, harass, and eliminate internal opponents to the regime (Lande 1986, 135-6; Boudreau 2004, 71).

Through these reforms, the security forces were reoriented away from ensuring general national security towards protecting Marcos and his inner circle and silencing opposition to the president. Additionally, to reduce the power of localized paramilitary organizations, some 145 private armies of regional elites were forcibly disbanded and their stocks arms and ammunition seized (Thompson 1995, 58-9). Further enhancing his top-down control over state coercion, Marcos asserted the right to dismiss any judge for any reason and also transferred a large number of cases to newly-established special military tribunals (Thompson 1995, 55). Through these reforms, Marcos effectively diminished regional leaders' coercive capabilities, transferring them and decision-making authority over the monitoring, arrest and prosecution of political opponents to the central government and high-ranking officials close to the president.

This coercive centralization also extended to the top-down personalization of security personnel. Existing officers connected to local leaders were retired and replaced with a new corps of officers loyal to Marcos himself (Machado 1979, 135; Boudreau 2004, 71). At the top of the security forces, Marcos placed his relative and former driver, Fabian Ver, in charge of the new anti-riot unit of Manila and the Presidential Security Force, and ultimately the entire AFP (Boudreau 2004, 71). Making a direct appeal to rank-and-file military officers, shortly after the initiation of martial law, Marcos gave across-the-board promotions to the Philippine officer

corps and increased their salaries and benefits (Thompson 1995, 54-55). Subsequent promotions and raises, however, were contingent upon officers swearing their loyalty to him and demonstrating this faithfulness in practice (55).

Pumping more resources into the security apparatus, the president also expanded its overall size and funding. Citing the threat posed by insurgents, Marcos rapidly increased the number of troops in the military from 58,000 in 1972 to 115,000 in 1978 (Machado 1979, 135). By 1980, these numbers had grown to 156,000 (Thompson 1995, 55). This expansion in the size of the security apparatus granted Marcos and his allies ample opportunities to stock the force with loyal individuals and rapidly advance them through the ranks (Boudreau 2004, 71). Building on his base of support in his home region of Ilocos, Marcos gave clear preference to officers from this area in hiring and promotions. This contributed to the rapid "Ilocanization" of the officer corps in the martial law period, a trend that was particularly significant in the strategically-important Manila-centered intelligence and security forces (Lande 1986, 136).

In terms of the effectiveness of the security apparatus, Marcos' reforms had produced a number of negative outcomes. As noted by Thompson (1995), the increased size and budget of the military was met a rapid decline in the professionalism of the force, as loyalty and connections to the Marcos family rapidly supplanted the conventional values of discipline and performance as the means for promotion. The security forces subsequently became rife with corruption and the abuse of power by officers, eroding their overall effectiveness as a fighting force (55). Like other institutions under the regime, the military soon transformed another vessel of patronage and plunder for the friends and family of Marcos. The mission of the security forces, moreover, shifted from one centered on national security to ensuring the personal safety of Marcos himself as well as his coterie. By staffing the security apparatus with cronies, establishing loyalty to the president as the primary means of professional advancement, and integrating local units into a single national force (de Guzman *et al* 1988, 216), Marcos constructed a highly-centralized security apparatus. Decisions over the application of force as well as the monitoring, harassing, and arresting of regime opponents came from the national leadership in Manila and/or his direct functionaries.

7.3. Patterns of Popular Contention

Shortly after declaring martial law, Marcos began the process of consolidating his personal power by constructing a powerful patrimonial political order. In a trend that has become increasingly common in a contemporary era of "electoral autocracies" (Schedler 2009b, 299-300), Marcos cemented his power over the state through two intertwined processes: first, manipulating formal elections and political institutions and secondly, using his access to political resources to construct a supportive network of patronage within the state and society. As opposed to Kazakhstan, discussed in the following chapter, Marcos' construction of a patrimonial authoritarian order involved not only establishing personal power in the central government vis-à-vis his national-level rivals but also increasingly projecting the power of the central government into the periphery, accumulating economic and political power in Manila and using national bureaucratic agencies to assert direct central control over subnational authorities. While this centralizing strategy proved initially effective in asserting Marcos' personal power and mitigating the horizontal threats posed by elite-level rivals, by the early-to-mid 1980s, this

highly-centralized state structure would ultimately provide a critical unifying target around which the diverse segments of society participating in the 1986 people power movement could mobilize and deliver a fatal blow to the Marcos regime.

The early martial law period began with Marcos' concerted effort to disassemble the traditional opposition. This involved dissolving Congress, banning independent media, and arresting opposition elites ranging from communists to leaders of the Liberal Party (Thompson 1995, 57-60). The president also targeted the economic bases of support for wealthy political opponents, seizing their assets directly or through crony proxies (59). In addition to eliminating many high-profile opposition leaders, Marcos and his supporters appealed to mid-level and regional leaders of the Liberal Party. Attracted to the promise of positions and other favors under the new regime, the rank-and-file of the traditional opposition defected *en masse* to Marcos, joining his personal political party, the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (KBL, New Society Movement) upon its formation in 1978 (60-1). A similarly well-crafted blend of coercion and concessions was used to suppress a growing Muslim insurgency centered in Mindanao and Sulu. As casualties produced in a government crackdown approached 100,000 in the mid-1970s, the regime negotiated an internationally-brokered ceasefire, granted government patronage and benefits to Muslim elites, and secured relative peace in the region by the end of the 1970s (61-63). On another front, the communist insurgency represented only a much-diminished threat to the regime in the early years of martial law. At the time of the declaration, communist fighters likely numbered no more than 800 and lacked any wide-ranging public support (Overholt 1986, 1140). Consequently, in the early years of the martial law regime, Marcos faced limited direct elite or popular opposition. He moreover proved particularly adept at fragmenting and co-opting substantial numbers of moderate and radical strains of the opposition. As he began to construct of personalist authoritarian rule in the mid-to-late 1970s, the president enjoyed considerable popular support and faced relatively little serious opposition to his grip on power.

In these early years of martial law, the Marcos regime was bolstered by a range of factors. First, the cancellation of competitive elections ended a trend of increasingly expensive campaign cycles that featured the distribution of state funds into pork barrel projects and local patron-client networks (Hutchcroft 1991, 428-9; Thompson 1995, 34-35). With the suspension of electoral politics, these resources could be reallocated to the central government or invested in legitimacy-enhancing public works programs. Second, Marcos secured funds and technical support from the outside world, enjoying the good fortune of rising global commodity prices and adeptly cultivating and capitalizing upon relations with the United States and international financial institutions to secure development aid (Hutchcroft 1991, 429). Third, the president effectively won support for his autocratic rule by successfully tapping into domestic and international concerns over the instability and developmental fecklessness of the Philippines. Presenting himself as a law-and-order, modernization-oriented technocrat in the mode of Park Chung-hee in South Korea, Marcos promised to crack down on crime, corruption, and unruly leftist agitators and transform the country into a export-oriented East Asian developmental state (Overholt 1986, 1139-40; Noble 1986, 84-6). Consequently, while pockets of dissent emerged and called for a return to democratic rule, the vast majority of Filipinos either supported Marcos and his national agenda or adopted a cautious "wait and see" approach, carefully observing the outcomes of the president's policies before taking a firm stance (Overholt 1986, 1142; Noble 1986, 87-8).

Towards the end of the 1970s, the early martial law era support for the Marcos administration began to wane. This growing disenchantment with the president was rooted in a number of central causes. To begin with, the revival of the Philippine economy after the president's seizure of power was demonstrating signs of reversal. The rising price of commodity exports in the international market, which had propelled the martial law economic resurgence, dropped in the mid-1970s. Moreover, the oil shock of 1979 led to a rapid increase in domestic petroleum prices, a recession in international export markets, and a rising interest rates on funds borrowed from abroad (Lande 1986, 117; Villegas 1986, 145). The growing foreign debt of the country expanded by 19 percent each year from 1969 to 1982, its total foreign debt equaling the Philippines' total GNP by 1984 (Villegas 1986, 145, 168-9). These problems came to a head in 1982 as Marcos, lacking a clear successor, began to demonstrate the first signs of deteriorating health and in 1983 after the assassination of opposition leader, Senator Benigno Aquino. These events encouraged foreign investors to fear emerging political instability in the country and led to rapid capital flight from the country (Overholt 1986, 1153-4). At this point, previously mixed signals over the economy began to point in a decidedly negative direction. GDP growth in the Philippines had peaked at a rate of nearly 7% in 1979, slowed to 5.1% in 1980, 3.4% in 1981, 3.6% in 1982, and 1.9% in 1983, before spiraling into a negative growth rate of -7.3% in 1984 (World Bank 2010b; Scipes 1996, 29). In 1984 alone, inflation grew by 50%, and underemployment reached 36.5% of the workforce (Villegas 1986, 145). These developments led to a rapid rise in the price of consumer goods, straining the already difficult living conditions of many working class Filipinos, whose real wages had declined by an estimated one third to one half under the martial law regime (Scipes 1996, 30).

By the early 1980s, Marcos' attempt to legitimize the martial law regime according to performance criteria was struggling to keep pace with a number of clear signs that country was floundering economically. The high level of functional centralization, in which the national government had taken an increasingly direct role in coordinating national economic policies, established large bureaucratic agencies, such as the MHS, and controlled the lion's share of government funds, made Marcos and the central government the authorities directly responsible for the country's economic performance and the living conditions experienced by Filipinos in their everyday lives. While this had benefited the regime's reputation among materially successful segments of society, namely the affluent business class, it also made Marcos and his national government, as opposed to subnational authorities, the specific target of blame for the Philippines economic misfortunes heading into the 1980s.

Secondly, the economic slowing and eventual backsliding of the Philippines exacerbated the public's growing disenchantment with Marcos and his cronies' extensive plundering of the state and the country's resources. Aside from disfavored oligarchs Marcos perceived as enemies, many economic elites outside of the president's cronies had largely been left alone and managed to stay afloat under martial law. However, when the economy began to sour in the late 1970s and early 80s, these business elites began to increasingly resent the privileges accorded to those close to the first couple and question Marcos' ability to maintain a stable and hospitable business environment (Wurfel 1988, 239). These concerns were clearly substantiated in 1981 when Dewey Dee, a Filipino Chinese businessman, fled the country leaving behind over $85 million in debt and a number of financial institutions on the verge of collapse (Wurfel 1988, 238; Hutchcroft 1991, 445). Showing a clear preference for banks closely connected to the Marcos

circle, the government rapidly stepped in and bailed out failed crony banks (Hutchcroft 1991, 445).

In addition, the extravagant spending of members of the president's inner circle, particularly Imelda Marcos, contributed a serious blow to the regime's legitimacy. While many Filipinos were experiencing difficult economic times and living in poverty, and the country was facing a growing balance of payments problem, Imelda pilfered public monies to go on overseas shopping sprees and diverted development funds into questionable projects, such as a chain of luxury hotels in Manila opposed by many government technocrats (Noble 1986, 101-2; Villegas 1986, 161). These various instances of regime favoritism and corruption fed many citizens' feeling that the regime was "morally bankrupt" - sentiments that were only compounded by revelations of its brutality, punctuated in no small part by the Aquino assassination of 1983 (Overholt 1986, 1154).

Distinguishing itself from the more institutionalized single-party KMT regime in Taiwan, the personalist Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines was closely associated with a tight network of close acquaintances personally connected to the president. This high level of personalization pervaded the state structure, an outcome that seemingly only amplified the effect of a highly centralized state. Not only were decision-making authority and state resources concentrated in the national government, but these powers were also being manipulated to facilitate the plundering of national wealth by Marcos' friends and family (Thompson 1995, 52-3). Thus, when economic conditions began to deteriorate, Marcos could be targeted not only as a poor or ineffective manager of the economy, but also as a dishonest broker who continued to loot and pillage the country even during hard economic times, only exacerbating its existing problems.

Finally, many populist policies in the early martial law period aimed at improving the lives of the Philippines' poorest citizens became increasingly ineffective. One month after the declaration of martial law, Marcos had declared land reform to be a linchpin of the Philippine "New Society." Seeking to undermine the appeal of Muslim and communist insurgents in the countryside and reduce popular unrest, Marcos issued a president decree outlining a formal land transfer mechanism enabling tenant farmers to gradually achieve ownership over the land they tilled (Wurfel 1988, 168). To supplement land redistribution, Marcos established agricultural cooperatives and low-interest loan programs (171). Relative to previous land reform efforts in the Philippines, these programs accomplished a great deal, placing at least 110,000 tenant farmers on a path to land ownership. However, the Marcos administration failed to provide the funding and bureaucratic support needed to overcome the resistance of landed oligarchs, and many tenant farmers were left disenchanted as their dreams of land ownership failed to come to fruition (169). By the 1980s, Marcos' public calls for land reform were being reversed in practice. In 1974, the president threw his support behind corporate farming, enabling large agribusinesses in sugar, bananas, coconuts and other crops to evict small scale landowners and tenant farmers, often with the use of coercion (174-5). These perceived injustices began to fuel a growing sense of frustration and dissension against the regime among the ranks of the landless poor.

In a functionally centralized state, the president's office took the lead in ordering land reform by decree. Responsibility for carrying out these policies was not delegated to subnational

authorities or local powerbrokers but rather directly implemented by national bureaucratic agencies. Consequently, as rural farm workers' hopes of owning their own plots of land were dashed, this disillusionment could not be directed towards weak and under-resourced local governments. Rather, Marcos and Marcos alone could be held responsible for the declining economic position of rural laborers and the frequent mistreatment they received at the hands of plantation owners, many of whom were personal associates of the president, or the security forces, who increasingly were also the president's clients or individuals recruited from his home province.

Clearly, a decade into authoritarian rule, Marcos' justifications for his seizure of power - namely to restore law and order, effectively develop the economy and eliminate destabilizing state corruption, were convincing a diminishing share of the Philippine public and leading to growing groundswell of popular opposition to the regime across diverse sectors of society. Various grievances against the Marcos administration were setting the stage for a number of distinct strains of popular opposition. Wurfel (1988) identified three types: the "reformist" opposition including elites from the pre-martial law political order, the mixed "religious" opposition presented by the Catholic Church and other religious organizations, and the "revolutionary" opposition involving a number of armed communist insurgents aimed at regime overthrow (204-32). More recently, Schock (2005) has identified a fourth category, the "progressive" opposition. Situated between the more moderate reformist and the more radical revolutionary camps and forging linkages with more activist members of the Catholic clergy, the progressives focused on "the development of a network of sectoral organizations concerned with issues relating to specific social aggregates, such as workers, peasants, women, students, and the urban poor" (72). Into the early 1980s, most traditional politicians from the pre-martial law order, along with their middle and business class base of supporters, by and large tolerated if not supported Marcos' rule. Moreover, even those reformists who sought to challenge the regime were divided along factional lines (Youngblood 1983, 208-9). The progressive and revolutionary challengers resisted the regime, albeit in general isolation from one another. The progressives focused more on mobilizing marginalized groups around sectoral-specific grievances. The revolutionaries, centrally-organized around the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA), meanwhile engaged in a protracted and expanding guerrilla war against the regime (Schock 2005, 70-72).

At this point, oppositionists across the political and social spectrum were largely fragmented and carried out isolated acts of contention that were limited in scope, issue framing, and lacked coordination that transcended geographic location and social sector. Desiring to leverage himself against elite and mass-level opponents, Marcos proved effective in exploiting divisions among his potential rivals, drawing many traditional opposition politicians into the ruling KBL and its associated patronage networks, limiting the regime's expropriation of wealth and assets to his most serious opponents, such as the Aquinos and the Lopez brothers, and largely directing repression towards these traditional enemies as well as militant insurgents (Thompson 1995, 59-2). Even within the committed anti-Marcos opposition, reformist and revolutionary activists disagreed over tactics and goals. Moreover, leaders and supporters of these groups typically held one another in mutual suspicion, severely hindering their ability to forge a coherent anti-Marcos coalition (106-7). While diverse social groups were becoming disenfranchised with the Marcos regime and translating these frustrations into collective actions against the state, the

commonalities between these various protest sectors had not yet been actualized and resulted in the forging of cross-sectoral linkages, new inclusive forms of organizational infrastructure, or a common, and unifying frame of collective action. This meant while nascent protest actors were becoming increasingly disillusioned with Marcos, they remained fragmented and could not yet challenge the regime with sustained, national forms of collective action.

Consequently, when Marcos initiated the first nominally competitive legislative elections under martial law in 1978, a number of leading opposition politicians from the old order, such as Gerardo Roxas and Jovita Salonga, boycotted while Benigno Aquino campaigned from prison alongside the Manila branch of the communist party under the *Lakas ng Bayan* (LABAN, Power of the People) banner (74-5). Ultimately, Aquino's communist allies eventually abandoned the campaign under orders from the country's central committee, which preferred to boycott the elections (78). At this point, the communists remained focused on class struggles and exhibited a high degree of ambivalence over backing a business class landowner, such as Aquino, in contesting the regime through elections rather than rural-based insurgency. Despite this setback, Aquino's supporters developed some innovative protest tactics, organizing a "noise barrage" involving a day of honking horns, pot banging and shouting throughout Manila on the day before voting. After Marcos deployed the fullest extent of vote-rigging, using "prestuffed ballot boxes, phony registration, 'flying voters' (voters who cast several ballots), manipulated electoral returns, and vote buying" and declared a clean and highly improbable 21-0 KBL sweep in Manila, opposition activists organized mock funerals for democracy including actual coffins (78-9).

Thus, despite a concerted effort by many oppositionists to challenge Marcos at the polls and apply new mobilization tactics, the president was nevertheless able to capitalize on the fragmentation of the opposition to use fraud or cash to secure a sweeping electoral victory. As various social forces rapidly began to mobilize in the early 1980s and achieve a level of coordination on a national scale, these circumstances would begin to change. With an established base of "movement organizations, networks, participants and the accumulated cultural artifacts, memories and traditions" prepared to rapidly mobilize society against the dictator on a national scale (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 114), Marcos' decision to steal an election in 1986 would propel an unprecedentedly large, nonviolent, and cross-sectoral "people power revolution" that result in the fragmentation and collapse of his regime. As discussed in the following section, the extreme centralization of state power under Marcos would contribute to the upward scale shift of localized and fragmented forms of popular contention into national-scope forms of protest that would deny the president the ability to use time-tested methods of electoral manipulation and repression to sustain his grip on power.

7.4. Labor Protests

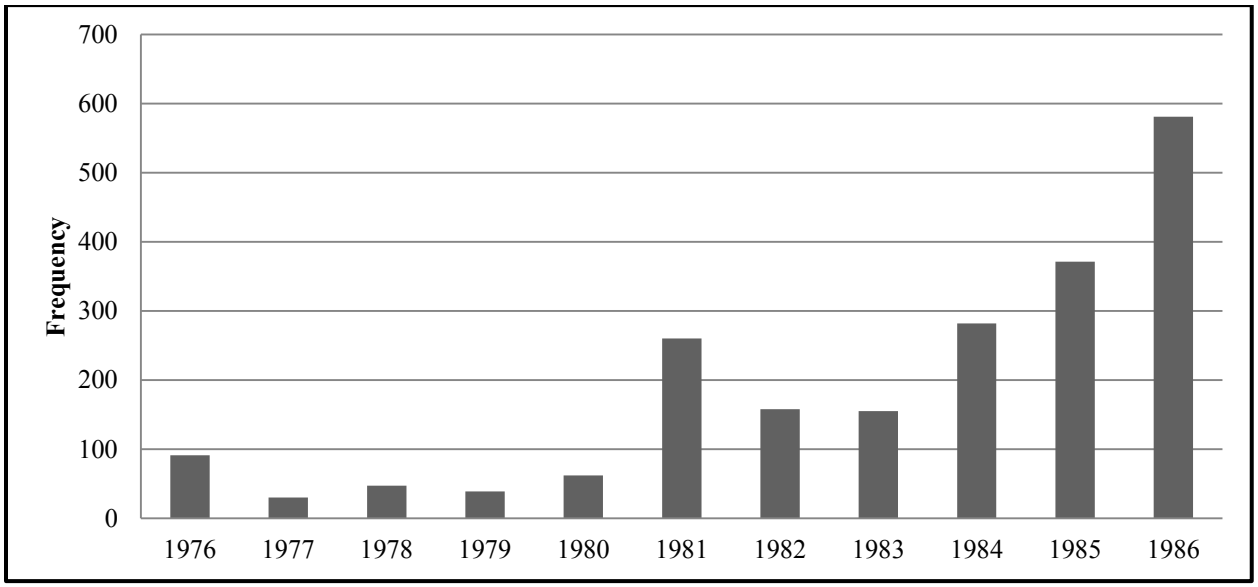
The martial law period in the Philippines left working class citizens with a laundry list of grievances capable of motivating resistance to the regime. Despite positive growth in GDP throughout the 1970s, these gains were distributed inequitably. According to figures from the National Census and Statistics Office (NCSO) of the Philippines, while the poorest 60% of the country's population received a 25% share of the national income in 1971, this proportion dropped to 22.5% by 1979 (Arce and Abad 1986, 58). At the top of the income distribution, the

top 10% of income-earners received 37% of the national income in 1971 and 42% in 1979 (58). In addition to these relative losses, working class Filipinos also saw declines in their absolute living conditions. Seeking to ensure the competitiveness of the Philippines as a site for foreign investment, Marcos implemented labor and monetary policies aimed at deliberately depressing the wages of workers (West 1997, 29). Consequently, wages for skilled workers in Manila declined by 23.8% from 1972 to 1978. For unskilled workers, wages fell 31.6% during this period (29). Central Bank data on monthly real wages suggest that on a national level, the pay of workers declined from 1972 to 1980 (Arce and Abad 1986, 58). Declining wages, moreover, were exacerbated by growing unemployment and underemployment, which from 1978 to 1983 grew from 5.2% to 5.9% and 10.2% to 29.0% respectively (58).

In addition to their difficult economic situation, workers often struggled with poor labor conditions. As noted by Scipes (1996), fewer than 20% of workers in Metro Manila were paid the minimum wage guaranteed by law. Moreover, among factory workers, there was little job security, little chance for career advancement, a great deal of sexual abuse of female workers, a gender-based bias against women in terms of pay, few safety devices to protect employees, and frequent exposure to hazardous materials and chemicals (30). In 1985 alone, official sources reported 46 work-related deaths, 560 injuries, and 3,869 workers who were handicapped by accidents on the job (30). The conditions of rural laborers in cash crop industries, such as sugarcane, were even direr. Sugar workers in Negros, for example, labored from their pre-teenage years to the grave, carrying out backbreaking labor for shifts often lasting well over 10 hours, received wages averaging $0.50 to 1.00 US per day, and suffered high levels of malnutrition (133-8). Thus, even before the economic backsliding of the mid-1980s, workers in both urban and rural segments of the Philippine population faced harsh economic conditions in both relative and absolute terms.

These difficult economic conditions were met with growing frequency in the number of incidents of labor contention. As noted in International Labor Organization statistics, the number of strikes and lockouts in the Philippines dipped from a total of 157 in 1971, the year before Marcos declared martial law and banned all strikes and demonstrations, to 30 in 1977. Thereafter, the number increased to 260 in 1981, falling to 158 and 155 in 1982 and 1983 respectively, and eventually rose to a record 581 in the turbulent year of 1986 (ILO 2010). These collective actions, while most frequent in the manufacturing sector (between 60-70% of all recorded incidents in each year between 1980 and 1986), were also common in the service and agricultural sectors (ILO 2010). As noted by Noble (1986), contention carried out by segments of working class society, including "ethnic groups, agricultural laborers, urban workers, squatters, and their sympathizers" involved either resistance to unpopular industries and projects, such as tribal resistance to dam construction in Luzon, or demonstrations (95). Aggrieved groups might also channel their frustrations into support for insurgent groups, such as Muslim separatists or communist revolutionaries (95, 105). However, aside from guerilla activities coordinated by groups such as the communist New People's Army, non-elite acts of popular contention were typically brief and fragmented and demonstrated "little evidence of sustained political organization and action" (106). Rather, protest actions by underprivileged sectors of society were typically aimed at particular, group-specific grievances (106) and lacked cross-locality and cross-sectoral coordination.

Figure 7.2: Total Number of Reported Strikes and Lockouts, 1976-1986



Source: International Labor Organization (2010), "LABORSTA: An International Labor Office Database on Labor Statistics." http://laborsta.ilo.org (April 10, 2011).

Much like his authoritarian counterparts discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 in Taiwan and China, Marcos proved initially capable of maintaining effective political and social control through a strategic blend of targeted repression, the extension of concessions, and a state corporatist strategy for co-opting various sectors of society. While Marcos arrested suspected opponents of the regime in the tens of thousands, most of the arrested were released within a matter of weeks. Harsh repression was typically directed towards suspected communists whereas most members of the traditional opposition, aside from Aquino and other leading rivals to the president were co-opted with offers of patronage in the ruling regime (Thompson 1995, 59-61).

In dealing with labor activists, Marcos constructed a corporatist institutional structure aimed at asserting state and management control over labor relations, encouraging labor peace/quiescence and promoting national economic development. In the early years of martial law, strikes were banned, labor leaders from the old order were arrested, and legislation restricting the rights of workers to independently organize was introduced (West 1997, 97). To provide workers with a controlled channel to air their grievances and provide feedback over state policies and to mobilize workers behind the regime's economic policies, Marcos established the conservative Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP). This was an organization that greatly paralleled to the Leninist "transmission belt" social organizations in composition and function previously discussed in Taiwan and China (Scipes 1996, 23; West 1997, 97). Under the dictatorship, the TUCP served as the only official labor center for Filipino workers and stood as their sole representative tripartite state-management-union negotiations over wages and labor regulations (West 1997, 98-99). With the establishment of a "one-industry, one-union organizational principle," only one union certified by the government could legally operate in a particular enterprise, and all other labor federations were banned from attempting to organize in it (Dejillas 1994, 29-30). To qualify as registered unions, organizations needed to submit lists of officers, minutes of meetings, and the names of all members in attendance to employers, which

made organizers and participants vulnerable to harassment and intimidation by management. They also required approval from employers in order to serve as the exclusive representative for workers in collective bargaining in that enterprise (29). The effect of these provisions was to curtail independent union organizing, prevent workers from engaging in economically-disruptive work stoppages, and channel worker activism into union affiliates of the "yellow" state-sponsored TUCP, which favored collaboration with management and the Marcos dictatorship (Scipes 1996, 8). The implementation of this state corporatist system led to a marked decline in the number of officially-recognized unions, which peaked at 7,015 in 1973 but dropped rapidly to 1,414 in 1978 after a mass de-certification of unions by the Labor Department in 1977 and a decline in the number of newly-established unions during the 1970s (Dejillas 1994, 32-33).

Despite these restrictions on labor activism and organizing, early outbreaks of worker unrest did begin to take place in the mid-1970s. As noted by Scipes (1996, 24) and Margold (1995, 21), a 1975 strike at *La Tondena* distillery in Manila represented the first major labor action to directly challenge Marcos' 1972 ban on strikes and demonstrations. Since the early 1970s, workers at the distillery had sent a series of petitions to the Department of Labor, National Labor Relations Commission and the president to complain about the poor working conditions at the enterprise (Franco 2001, 141-2). These efforts were largely ignored by both government agencies and the management of the distillery. Conditions for workers became even more precarious in October 1975 when the management of *La Tondena* issued a new "criteria for employment" requiring that all workers needed to receive an official security clearance from state agencies and pass a standardized IQ test to maintain their positions. This was in spite of the fact that most workers' jobs involved menial tasks such as washing bottles (Pimentel 1989, 149). These requirements and other adjustments to the company's employment standards enabled bosses at the distillery to more readily fire "uncooperative" workers and also lay off and rehire long-term employees, keeping them at a lower-paid temporary status (Franco 2001, 141; Pimentel 1989, 149).

In response to these perceived injustices, 400 permanent and 100 temporary status workers sat down at the plant and refused to work on October 24, acting under the banner of an independent trade union, the *Kaisahang Malayang Manggagawa sa La Tondena* (Unity of Free Workers at La Tondena) (West 1997, 135). Demanding that the company elevate casual workers to permanent status, provide female workers with maternity leave, grant workers' compensation, and end illegal firings, the workers conducted a 44-hour sit-down strike action (135). Aware of the legally-precarious and politically dangerous position they were taking by carrying out a banned, confrontational labor action under the martial law regime, strike organizers sought to broaden their base of support and appealed for support from potential allies in the Catholic Church, the Communist Party of Philippines, and the local community (Franco 2001, 142). Concerned priests and nuns residents played an instrumental role in the protest, standing guard at the gates of the distillery and temporarily delaying the military as it considered moving in and arresting the workers (West 1989, 135). Members of the clergy also issued a letter of support for the strikers directly to the Marcos administration (Franco 2001, 142). Driven underground in the early years of martial law, CPP activists were initially hesitant to offer support for an independent labor action but eventually gave some behind the scenes "tactical advice and logistical support" to the workers and also voiced their endorsement of the effort (142). The strike at *La Tondena* ended abruptly when state security forces forced their way into the factory and arrested the workers involved. The effort, however, ultimately ended in triumph. The

arrested employees were released the next day, and while their independent union was dissolved, the company's owner came to the plant, granted permanent status to 300 long-term casual workers, canceled many of the new employment requirements, and promised to review the cases of workers who had been laid off under the regulations (Franco 2001, 142-3; Scipes 1996, 25).

Despite being an action organized locally and aimed at enterprise-specific grievances, the increasingly centralized state structure of the Marcos martial law regime elevated the *La Tondena* strike of 1975 to an event that would eventually be of great national and historical consequence. As noted by to Jennifer Conroy Franco (2001), the incident was known in the Philippines as the "*unang putok*" or "first explosion" because "it was widely considered the first open protest action to break through the authoritarian wall of silence under martial law, provoking a chain of reactions in its wake" (142). Following the sit-down strike in Manila, the number of labor strikes surged from *zero* reported incidents in 1974 to peaks of 260 in 1981 and later 581 in 1986 (ILO 2010). Of critical importance, the event helped inspire the creation of new movement organizations, such as the independent trade union center, the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement), the innovation of new and powerfully effective repertoires of contention involving tactics such as the famous *welgang bayan* (people's strike), and helped encourage the development of national, cross-sectoral networks of activists that would eventually undergird the anti-Marcos people power revolution in 1986.

Even within the limited context of the *La Tondena* incident, the first symptoms of upward scale shift and the role of the state's centralized structure in motivating these trends were evident. First, the national government, as opposed to various subnational authorities, served as the level of the state primarily targeted in the collective action. Even before the initiation of the 1975 strike, employees' petitions over working conditions were issued directly to the president's office (Franco 2001, 141). During the action, a petition of solidarity signed by clergy members of the Catholic Church was directed towards Marcos (142). Moreover, in a similar vein to contemporary rightful resisters in China (O'Brien and Li 2006), workers at the distillery attempted to legitimize their action by placing it in a national legal framework, noting that their industry was not the kind of "vital industry" in which demonstrations and strikes were technically banned (Franco 2001, 142). In terms of location, the strike and associated demonstration took place at the distillery, not at a site linked to the national government. However, in subsequent protest actions, most notably an 8,000-strong protest in the Philippines in Manila upon the arrival of U.S. President Gerald Ford in the country a few months after *La Tondena*, and a march of 3,000 workers directly to the Malacanang Palace, the presidential home of Marcos, in May 1976, protestors were rapidly making their particular claims on a national stage (West 1997, 135; Franco 2001, 143).

Second, even during a highly-localized protest, the strikers at *La Tondena* were aware of the linkage of their particular grievances to national policies aimed at restricting the independent organization of workers. As a consequence, they sought to forge connections with broader segments of society, such as the Church, university students and the CPP, and were largely successful in this effort (Franco 2001, 142). Moreover, needing to improve their bargaining position vis-a-vis the central government's coercive apparatus, the workers took the risky but seemingly necessary step of attempting to organize an illegal, independent union for the distillery (142). While both of these initiatives were likely to create red flags that might draw the ire of the

national government, the claimants seemed aware that collective actions targeted at local targets and involving the distillery workforce alone would not be adequate in achieving their goals.

Third, policy changes associated with the official response to the distillery strike were designed and directed by the president and not delegated to subnational authorities – an outcome much more likely to occur in decentralized state system. Responding to *La Tondena* strikers' claim that their action, in a "non-vital" industry was permissible (or at least not explicitly forbidden) under the law, Marcos issued Presidential Decrees 823 and 849, specifically banning strikes in vital *and* non-vital enterprises (Franco 2001, 143; West 1997, 135). Moreover, reacting to the participation of Catholic clergy in supporting the strikers, Marcos included wording in the decree aimed at forbidding religious authorities from extending help of any sort to workers engaged in labor activism (Franco 2001, 143). This kind of direct top-down action by the central state to respond to a localized act of contention paralleled efforts in Taiwan by Premier Yu Kuo-hwa to address the 1986 Lukang rebellion against DuPont (Reardon-Anderson1992, 52-53) and Chiang Ching-kuo's reform of national labor standards in response to a 1984 wave of labor unrest (Chu 1993, 183). Both Taiwan and the Philippines stand in contrast to the decentralized state structure in China, where subnational governments are the leading targets of contention (O'Brien and Li 2006, 34, 42) and have instituted bold legislative initiatives in response to growing unrest, as in the Guangdong Provincial Government's passing of new labor regulations in response to a wave of industrial strikes in 2010 (*China Labor Bulletin.* 2010a). The coordination of state responses to popular unrest at the national versus the subnational thus represents an important difference between centralized and decentralized systems respectively.

The decision of Marcos to use the office of the president to take direct and heavy-handed action and make sweeping national-level legislative changes to respond to a largely localized incident contributed greatly to widening the scope of collective action, bringing otherwise unconnected workers with distinct interests from the *La Tondena* workers into interaction with one another (as allies) and the central state (as a target of contention). Consequently, despite their illegality, the number of strikes began to increase during the mid-1970s, including a reported 150 protest actions involving 150,000 workers in the aftermath of *La Tondena.* During this time, a number of labor-related collective actions began to directly target symbols of the national government, such as the 1976 march at Malacanang. Additionally, coordination across social lines, including groups such as factory workers, urban squatters, students, and clergy members became more common (Franco 2001, 143-5).

The *La Tondena* strike action had no observable short-term impact on the resilience of the Marcos administration. Even after the subsequent burst of strikes and demonstrations in 1976, which declined by half in 1977 (West 1997, 137), the coercive actions of Marcos' security forces seemed capable of keeping simmering labor discontent under control (Wurfel 1977, 16). Assessing the situation of the Marcos regime in 1977, Wurfel suggested, "Aside from the Catholic hierarchy, no other non-governmental civilian elite group today has a substantial mass following, or any communication network to build one" (20). Consequently, only a minority of perhaps 15% of the population, including "politically aware peasants, workers, students, clergy, middle-class professionals, and landlords," were willing to discuss their opposition to the regime in public with others (13). An even smaller segment of this group actively took the risky move of participating in organized anti-Marcos demonstrations (13). As a result, Marcos' popular

challengers remained highly fragmented, and the president faced no serious threat from organized mass discontent (24-7).

Outside of Manila, workers operating in different economic sectors and island locations were also beginning to make headway in organizing broader collective action in defense of work-related issues. On the island of Negros, this relentless effort to organize reflected both the declining conditions of workers and the intimate and direct role of the Marcos administration in backing a lucrative sugar industry. From 1974 to 1983, Roberto Benedicto, a fraternity brother of the president, and his National Sugar Trading Corporation received a monopoly over sugar exports from the Philippines after a special presidential decree was issued to that effect (Thompson 1995, 53). This exclusive access to the international market netted Marcos' associate roughly 1.7 to 2.3 billion U.S. dollars during this period (53). With these privileges, Benedicto and small group of large plantation owners in Negros earned record profits and enjoyed luxurious lifestyles. Meanwhile, sugar workers often labored for 10 hours or more a day, carried out backbreaking work under hot and difficult conditions, lived in dilapidated company-provided housing and typically were paid well below the legal minimum wage (Scipes 1996, 135-37). In an effort to erode the popular base of support for the communist NPA insurgency, Marcos had made land reform and rural development hallmarks of his administration. From the onset of martial law, Marcos issued a 1972 presidential decree to distribute 731,000 hectares of land to 396,000 peasants and declared a nationwide rural development program aimed at providing credit and technical support to these new landholding small-scale farmers (Lara and Morales 1990, 146). These programs, however, fell far from reality on the ground in Negros and elsewhere in the Philippine countryside, as only 2,353 peasants received titles to 1,903 hectares by 1982, and the efforts of national government at rural development benefited large-scale plantation owners and Marcos' cronies, such as, Benedicto (146).

In response to declining work conditions, a number of labor activists worked to organize workers throughout the island under the banner of the independent trade union, National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW). Founded in 1971, the year before the declaration of martial law, the organization's leadership was arrested in Marcos' initial crackdown against independent civil society organizations (141). Despite facing the daunting obstacle of organizing in an economic sector dominated by state-controlled unions and the harsh brutality of state security forces, particularly the Philippine Constabulary, which resorted to arrests, torture, rape, and summary executions or "salvaging" to intimidate activists and their sympathizers, the semi-underground NFSW continued to expand throughout the martial law period and into the 1980s (Hawes 1990, 283-4; Scipes 1996, 143). The organization continued to grow in terms of its membership numbers, from 6,400 in 1974 to 45,000 in 1982, and in terms of its geographical reach, from its founding location in Negros to Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, and Mindanao (Scipes 1996, 141). In seeking to improve the conditions of sugar workers, the NFSW filed complaints on behalf of workers, initiated an innovative "farm lot" program where workers would collectively farm unused land on plantations to provide needed food supplies, and even forcibly seized and occupied plantation facilities, often appealing to the communist NPA for protection from landlords' private guards and/or state security agents (West 1997, 26-7; Scipes 1996, 141). Unable to address their grievances by effectively contesting plantation owners or local official through isolated, issue-specific forms of contention, sugar workers turned towards the NFSW for

organizational support and advice in the development of aid programs, such as farm lot projects and in carrying out acts of contention that could help them achieve their goals. As a consequence, workers in Negros developed stronger horizontal linkages to their similarly aggrieved allies in sugar industry who also were also disillusioned with Marcos' rural development and land reform policies and the harsh treatment they endured from the state's coercive apparatus and the president's cronies. They also linked up with sympathetic allies in the Catholic Church and communist organizations.

Under martial law, the labor activism of urban workers in Manila and sugar workers in Negros was mirrored by a number of notable collective actions throughout the Philippines, including a an 11-day strike at the Pan Oriental Match Company in Cebu in February 1976, and 52-week-long strike by manufacturing workers at a Ford plant in the Bataan Export Processing Zone (BEPZ) in 1979 (Scipes 1996, 112, 164). This activity was most critical in its contribution to forging a social movement base of increasingly sophisticated tactics, organizations, interpersonal networks and experiences opponents of the regime could draw upon in conducting mass acts of contention that transcended social groups and geographic locations.

For the emerging labor movement, an important step in its organizational development came with the foundation of the KMU in 1980. This trade union center brought together seven to nine labor federations into a unified organizational structure (West 1997, 44; Scipes 1996, 11). As noted by Scipes (1996), the KMU was organized "vertically" around federations, such as the NFSW or the Genuine Labor Organization of Workers in the Hotel, Restaurant, and Allied Industries, which focused on several particular industries. Additionally, it was organized "horizontally" into coalitions of workers from various labor organizations and enterprises based on "geography, industry or company ownership" (11-13). Within this organizational structure, the KMU delegated as much authority as possible to geographically limited region or island-specific groupings and grassroots organizations (12-13).

This kind of decentralized structure provided a number of significant advantages for the KMU. It enabled the organization to survive state efforts to incapacitate it by arresting or eliminating its top leadership, as occurred in 1982, when Marcos' security forces arrested 69 top KMU leaders (Scipes 1996, 12-13). Additionally, it allowed for local KMU affiliates to both forge links to local allies across sectoral lines as well as invent new and effective tactics that could be replicated by other affiliates or uploaded to the national arena. The most well-known example of this process occurred in 1984 when worker activists in Davao City, Mindanao coordinated their industrial strike with employees from other economic sectors, including public transit operators, shopkeepers, and other community members, to carry out a *welga ng bayan* (people's strike) that brought the entire local economy to a complete standstill for days (17). According to a KMU-Mindanao organizer, activists from various economic sectors realized their collective actions were highly ineffectual in achieving their demands when carried out in isolation and after a number of discussions, agreed to coordinate a large cross-sectoral mass action (18). The tactic was later applied with great success not only several times in Mindanao but also in a well-known people's strike against a Westinghouse nuclear power plant construction project in Bataan in 1985. This was a broad action involving 140,000 workers from 187 trade unions against the killing of labor activists in February 1985, and in a labor-inspired action across the Bataan Exporting Zone in 1986 (Scipes 1996, 18; West 1997, 144; Schock 2005, 76). Thus, by the mid-

1980s, the KMU acted as a semi-underground organization that proved highly resistant to state repression and acted as an effective broker of collective action, disseminating forms of contention to new sites and forging new linked between previously isolated acts of contention.

The highly political agenda of the KMU also represented an important widening in the framing of labor contention. Whereas many labor actions had previously leaned towards "rice and fish" unionism, where activism was concentrated on material grievances, such as enterprise-specific pay or working conditions, the KMU considered itself to be a "genuine and political labor movement" that sought to carry out broader and more radical change to Philippine society and the economy (West 1997, 3). As noted by Scipes (1992) and West (1997, 3), the KMU represented a particular kind of labor activism described as "social movement unionism" where "struggles for control over workers' daily work life, pay and conditions [were] intimately connected with and [could] not be separated from the national socio-political-economic situation" (Scipes 1992, 86). Consequently, in a development symptomatic of upward scale shift – the widening of frames to incorporate previously unconnected aggrieved groups - workers and trade unions associated with the KMU were introduced to a wider political message that not only challenged exploitation in a specific workplace or targeted particular enterprises or managers. Rather, like their counterparts in militant labor movements in Poland and South Africa, KMU unions and their supporters also came to see that the only lasting solution to their material problems would come with major political changes, forced upon the status quo regime.

The appearance and wide acceptance of such an agenda was likely linked to the high level of state centralization in the Philippines. Like labor activists in centralized Taiwan and unlike those in a more decentralized China, Filipino organizers were not able to win critical concessions by targeting individual local officials or enterprise owners in isolated protest actions. Consequently, such isolated actions were viewed as having only limited impacts, which created a demand for collective actions that could be coordinated and sustained on a national level. This demand meant that Filipino workers were rapidly drawn towards a frame of action that promised to bring about wider and more radical social, economic and political change. Realizing their mutual struggle against Marcos' state, diverse groups of workers, such as the sugar workers in Negros to the industrial workers in Manila were soon forging cross-sectoral alliances in collaboration with umbrella organizations such as the KMU.

The development of the KMU and other organizations, the innovation of new tactics of collective action, and the increasing adoption of a general anti-Marcos oppositional frame contributed to a growing social movement base during the martial law period, which would eventually play a critical role in the pivotal people power movement of 1986. This outcome was closely linked to the centralized structure of the Philippine state under Marcos in a number of respects. First, in the centralized Marcos regime, the state's policy responses to important acts of popular contention came directly from the dictator himself, typically in the form of presidential decrees. Dealing with a localized *La Tondena* strike, for example, was not left to the discretion of local officials, but rather inspired Marcos to respond with a national-level tightening of restrictions on labor organizing (Franco 2001, 143; West 1997, 135). This policy change drove workers in other enterprises as well as students, urban squatters and clergy to initiate their own acts of contention – not only in pursuit of their own social sector-specific grievances but in reaction to Marcos' new labor restrictions (Franco 2001, 143-5). As in Taiwan, this top-down

intervention from above highlighted the center's prevailing authority in dealing with outbreaks of unrest and also inspired previously-unconnected social groups to take an interest in the protest activities of other societal actors.

Second, Marcos established centrally-controlled national agencies that asserted Manila's direct control over and responsibility for critical economic policies, such as land reform, labor policies, and rural development. For example, in an attempt to win over an increasingly contentious rural peasantry and erode popular support for the NPA, Marcos created the Ministry of Human Settlements, appointed his wife, Imelda, as head, and authorized this agency, with its own bureaucratic functionaries, to assume direct control over rural development projects in the furthest territorial reaches of the Philippines (Machado 1979, 136). This top-down control over important social and economic policies meant important concessions demanded by workers could not be provided by under-resourced subnational governments and instead required the involvement of national decision-makers. This stands in contrast to more decentralized China and Kazakhstan, the cases discussed in Chapters 5 and 8, where subnational authorities played a much more prominent role in strategically distributing concessions in order to resolve outbursts of social unrest within their respective localities.

Third, as a result of a centralized crony capitalist political economic order, the personal coterie of the Marcos family assumed an expansive share of national wealth and being backed by the president, was able to act largely with impunity throughout the territory of the Philippines. In an infamous, corruption-ridden deal, Philippine National Power Corporation (NPC) in 1973 granted the American corporation, Westinghouse, a contract to construct a nuclear power plant in Bataan on the side of a dormant volcano and in an earthquake zone. Central to the deal was businessman Herminio Disini, a Marcos favorite and a relative of Imelda, who reportedly received $35 million in commission fees for organizing the deal (Machado 1979, 136-7; Thompson 1995, 53). In a similar vein to the DuPont project in Taiwan, which backed by the central government was largely immune to regulation by local officials (Reardon-Anderson 1992, 4), the Westinghouse program was backed by a well-known crony of the president, which in the personalist regime of Marcos, meant only the leader himself could likely stop or delay its construction. On the other hand, in the more functionally decentralized personalist autocracy of Kazakhstan, Jones Luong (2004) reported that foreign investors consistently prioritized the views of regional leaders over that of the more distant and disconnected central government (200). The greater degree of functional centralization in the Philippines made a local issue such as the public health threats posed by the Westinghouse project a matter of national politics. Because of this direct link between the nuclear plant, the president and a state-backed power development corporation (the NPC), public resistance to the project assumed a national-level orientation and involved participants from across various social sectors and geographic locations. This culminated in major mass action coordination among diverse social actors - a massive 1985 *welga ng bayan.* Preceding the regime-toppling people power movement by a year, this broad-based people's strike against Westinghouse demonstrated how the center's prevailing authority over regional development policies enabled organizers to link locality-specific issues into a broader national political agenda.

Finally, from his election as president into the martial law period, Marcos worked to personalize and centralize the armed forces and internal security apparatus. He elevated individuals

personally loyal to him to the highest offices of the Philippine security forces and stocked the officer corps with individuals from his home province of Ilocos. A previously decentralized security apparatus, which involved the direction of police and paramilitary forces by local officials, was replaced by a reformed command structure, where local units were integrated into a unified national security force directly responsible to Manila. Conversely, in the more decentralized regime of Kazakhstan, regional leaders have asserted a greater role in staffing and funding the security apparatus with their own clients and familial relations. This greater coercive centralization in the Philippines meant that the president, rather than more autonomous subnational authorities, assumed a greater degree of blame for the extensive human rights abuses carried out by his security forces. Unlike an autocrat in a more decentralized system, he could not credibly claim a kind of plausible deniability for controversial public incidents of state violence.

These elements, which constituted a state with highly-centralized functional and coercive power, helped make Marcos the unifying target for otherwise disparate protest actors. Like their counterparts in Taiwan, Filipino protest entrepreneurs rapidly discovered the ineffectiveness of directing particular claims toward local authorities in isolation. They consequently made a relentless push to reach across social and geographic divides to seek out new allies and coordinate their collective actions with similarly-aggrieved populations. In the area of labor activism, "rice and fish" unionism was replaced with militant unionism in the mode of the KMU, and limited enterprise-focused labor actions were replaced with socially-inclusive *welga ng bayan*. This culminated in the development of an extensive social movement base, including cross-sectoral organizations such as the KMU and the United Nationalist Democratic Opposition (UNIDO), an effective repertoire of contentious tactics ranging from *welga ng bayan* to mechanisms for observing elections and exposing voter fraud, and a single-unifying anti-Marcos frame, which enabled a diverse collection social actors with specific grievances to come together as a single popular opposition people power movement which briefly would come together against Marcos, bringing about the collapse of the regime in 1986. In the more decentralized regimes explored in this work, China and Kazakhstan, protest actors have discovered greater opportunities in carrying out limited, community-specific collective actions, discouraging them from assuming the substantial risks involved in attempting to widen the scope of contention to the national level or even considering nationally-oriented modes of protest.

7.5. Political Breakthrough

On January 17, 1981, Ferdinand Marcos assembled a group of 1,500 journalists, government officials and delegates from foreign countries at the Malacanang Palace and officially declared the lifting of martial law (Youngblood 1982, 226). The president proclaimed that the success of the New Society, which he asserted had brought stability, peace and prosperity to the Philippines, had ended the need for martial law (226). Members of the opposition Light-a-Fire Movement, which had carried out a series of bombings against the Marcos regime in the late 1970s and early 1980s, claimed their efforts had forced the president's hand (Thompson 1995, 92). A more likely cause, cited by most analysts, was that Marcos sought to give the dictatorship a more impressive democratic veneer, to impress international observers and investors, in particular the incoming Reagan administration in the United States and Pope John Paul II, who was to visit the Philippines in February (Youngblood 1982, 226; Abueva 1988, 65). Critically,

Marcos appeared to have a high level of confidence in his grip on power, having used his well-financed and well-organized KBL to handily defeat his extremely fragmented political opponents in fraudulent 1978 and 1980 elections (Neher 1981, 262). In other words, Marcos likely perceived little threat that his elite or popular challengers might be able to pose as the result of the cessation of martial law. In practical terms, he was still free to unilaterally issue presidential decrees, meaning Marcos' "vast power remained virtually unchanged" (Youngblood 1982, 226). This view was largely confirmed in 1981 when the president won reelection with 88% of the vote in elections with 85% voter turnout despite the efforts of a coalition of opposition organizations and activists to lead a boycott (Youngblood 1982, 228; Abueva 1988, 65; Thompson 1995, 104-105).

While Marcos' ability to repeatedly win rigged elections without inciting a major popular backlash appeared to confirm his firm grip on power, a diverse and loosely-coordinated anti-regime popular opposition was beginning to take shape. Labor organizations such as the KMU capitalized on the Philippines lagging economy and persistently poor wages and working conditions and contributed to the growing politicization and activism of a burgeoning labor movement. This was marked by a 419% increase in reported strikes from 62 in 1980 to 260 in 1981 and a rise in the number of workers involved from 20,902 in 1980 to 98,585 (ILO 2010). The increase in strike frequency and the number of participants involved reflected not only the deteriorating economic climate in the Philippines but also the ability of a growing network of labor activists and organizations to translate enterprise-level grievances into collective action coordinated on the national level.

In addition to labor activism, clergy of the Catholic Church became increasingly critical of the gross socioeconomic inequalities in the Philippines and voiced their opposition to human rights abuses carried out by Marcos' security forces (Wurfel 1988, 261). At the grassroots level, priests and nuns in the late-1970s and early 80s entered the country's poorest rural communities and urban slums and organized village-level BCCs (basic Christian communities). These groups not only encouraged religious observance but also linked the Catholic faith to the cause of social justice and directed attention to the sources of the everyday material grievances facing their communities – exploitative corporations, powerful crony capitalists, and abusive security forces (261-262). All of the these sources of perceived mistreatment were to some degree linked to Marcos and the national government, encouraging a growing number of Catholic clergy and marginalized citizens to direct their moral outrage direct the president and the exploitative political economic system associated with it.

Traditional opposition politicians, moreover, worked to overcome their debilitating divisions and coordinate their various collective actions with one another and with the Left. In 1980, Jose and Salvador Laurel, brothers who had previously served in Marcos' KBL under the martial law regime, founded UNIDO to organize opposition efforts in upcoming elections (Thompson 1995, 103-5). The organization reached out to traditional oppositionists, incorporating 12 moderate opposition groups into a "grand coalition" (Youngblood 1982, 209). It also forged some tenuous links with the Left, collaborating with another communist-initiated united front organization, the People's Movement for Independence, Nationalism, and Democracy (MIND) in the election boycotts of the early 1980s (Thompson 1995, 100-5). The organizers of UNIDO saw the need to expand the popular base of the opposition and voiced support for the communists' "mass

politics" – "as opposed to [their] elite, electoral politics" (105). The moderate-Left alliance, however, was repeatedly plagued by disagreements over the utility of challenging Marcos through armed struggle, the Left's continued backing of strikes in enterprises owned by business class oppositionists, and the desirability of maintaining positive relations with the United States, billed an imperialist exploiter by the radicals and an important business partner by the moderates (106-109).

In the early 1980s, activists associated with labor organizations, the Catholic Church, the traditional opposition, and the radical Left were becoming increasingly well-organized, developing new tactics of popular contention, and becoming more assertive in challenging the Marcos regime. Revealing early symptoms of upward scale shift, contentious collective actions, such as the people's strike, were being emulated in diverse geographic areas across the Philippines, and protests were beginning to transcend social cleavages. Importantly, frames applied by popular claimants were becoming increasingly political, centering on the political transformation of the regime, rather than exclusively on specific material grievances, as was often the case in the early martial law period. As noted by Boudreau (2004), "by the early 1980s…movement centers were *not* separated: organizational webs linked underground and open groups together, and movements with moderate and radical political visions no longer stuck exclusively to tactics that were correspondingly moderate or radical" (149). Where oppositional movements had operated in relative isolation from one another throughout the martial law period, this began to shift as "ideologically diverse coalitions around common programs of actions proliferated in the early 1980s" (Boudreau 2004, 149). Despite these major advances, Marcos' challengers continued to struggle with internal divisions, the conflicting economic interests that divided business and working class resisters, and the regime's ability to use its coercive apparatus to intimidate and repress popular challengers.

Protest activity underwent another important shift in 1983 that was triggered by the assassination of Benigno Aquino on August 21. Planning on leading the moderate opposition as it prepared to compete in 1984 legislative elections and increasing the degree of pressure on Marcos, Aquino made the fateful decision to return from exile in the United States to the Philippines (Thompson 1995, 110). As he stepped off his airplane in Manila, Aquino was gunned down while escorted by government security forces. Marcos immediately blamed communist insurgents for the killing, arguing that a hired shooter had carried out the attack and subsequently been killed by the armed guard charged with protecting Aquino (Silliman 1984, 154; Wurfel 1988, 277). The public, however, was widely skeptical of Marcos' claims, and rumors quickly circulated that witnesses had actually seen government troops shoot Aquino. Closely associated with the high level of centralization and personalization of the coercive apparatus in the Philippines, most Filipinos believed that the President and/or his closest associates, Imelda Marcos and Fabian Ver, were undoubtedly directly responsible for the assassination (Silliman 1984, 154; Wurfel 1988, 276). As noted by Thompson (1995), most available evidence gathered since the assassination confirms the suspicion that Imelda and Ver were responsible for the killing, possibly under Marcos' orders (114-5). In short, in fact and as perceived by the Philippine public, in a system where the President had amassed personal control over the security apparatus for over a decade, Marcos could make no credible claim of plausible deniability in relation to the Aquino killing and faced the entirety of the public blowback associated with it.

The Aquino assassination shocked and horrified Filipinos from all walks of life and prompted the country's largest public demonstrations since the initiation of martial law (Silliman 1984, 154). In the days after the shooting, citizens numbering in the hundreds of thousands visited Aquino's open coffin, and as many as two million citizens came together to see the funeral procession (Schock 2005, 73). In the month after Aquino's killing, the Philippine government estimates that 165 public demonstrations took place and from October 1983 to February 1984, another 100 were organized (Thompson 1995, 115-6). Despite their unprecedented size and frequency, the post-assassination protests did not immediately destabilize the Marcos regime and lead to its breakdown. By the early months of 1984, the demonstrations "had waned," and Marcos restored his grip on power (Malin 1985, 199).

However, despite surviving the challenges associated with the death of Benigno Aquino, Marcos began to face an increasingly well-organized popular opposition capable of carrying mass collective action coordinated on a national scale. The killing of Aquino had contributed a mighty blow to the legitimacy of Marcos and his regime, contributing to the rapid acceleration of the upward scale shift of Philippine popular contention. After 1983, strains of resistance and new organizations associated with the labor movement, Catholic Church, and traditional oppositionists had developed in relative isolation from one another. Since as early as the *La Tondena* strike in the first few years of martial law, activists had made efforts to bridge the divisions between these various groups but the sustained coordination of collective actions had proved elusive. The Church remained reluctant to directly defy the regime, the middle class stood on the sidelines, and despite their high level of activity, trade unionists focused on material, class-centered frames of contention that alienated other sectors of society. This began to change after the death of Aquino.

The Catholic Church, which had shifted between collaboration and contestation with the regime over human rights and social justice issues, its ranks divided between reformist and moderate clergy members, came out in firm defiance against the regime. Outraged at the regime's use of violence against a leading opposition politician, Manila Archbishop Jaime Sin openly supported the anti-Marcos demonstrations in the aftermath of the assassination and presided over the funeral ceremony. In February and November 1983, official pastoral letters released by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issued harsh condemnations of the regime's use of political violence, its extensive corruption, and its denial of basic human rights to Philippine citizens, and called for free and fair elections (Wurfel 1988, 279-80). Additionally, with Sin's support, the Catholic Church's national communications network and Catholic-led social and political organizations were put into action to provide critical institutional support to the moderate opposition (Wurfel 1988, 280; Schock 2005, 74).

Middle and business class citizens, many of whom were previously reluctant to challenge the regime, began to participate actively in an emerging popular opposition movement. In the early years of martial law, the business community at large had provided support for or at least acceptance of Marcos, who promised an end to political instability, aggressively solicited an influx of foreign capital, and used a firm hand to limit labor unrest (Thompson 1995, 118). However, as the years progressed, Marcos' favoritism for his inner circle of cronies left many business leaders out in the cold. The country's GNP declined by 0.9% in 1981 and 0.6% in 1982 before collapsing by 9.1% in 1983 amidst the turbulence surrounding the Aquino assassination.

Anti-regime collective action and social stability were on the rise, prompting a rapid flight of foreign capital and bringing the national economy to a standstill, and Philippine capitalists were becoming increasingly assured that Marcos' dictatorial rule was no longer good for business (Thompson 1995, 118-9; West 1997, 136). Encouraging this shift, the Catholic leadership began to recruit support on behalf of the moderate opposition among a number of leading business executives (Thompson 1995, 118). The efforts of the Catholic Church in no small part helped provide a non-communist alternative for disenchanted businessmen to engage in anti-regime political activities. The killing of Aquino, a high-profile member of the business community, shattered affluent Filipinos' sense of "class immunity" wherein the regime's most brutal acts of violence had previously been targeted as workers, peasants and other lower class groups (120). Now it seemed all citizens of the Philippines outside of Marcos' inner circle were vulnerable.

This growing defection of the Philippine business class to the opposition became starkly apparent on September 14, 1983 when 100,000 white-collar workers marched through affluent Makati business district in Manila in an anti-Marcos demonstration. The Makati protests became a weekly occurrence in subsequent years, and middle class Filipinos played increasingly important roles as organizers and participants of major acts of popular contention, including a 120-kilometer long "Tarlac to Tarmac" march of 500,000 from Aquino's home province to the site of his murder in February 1984 (Thompson 1995, 115-121; Schock 2005, 74). In addition to their growing involvement in anti-regime protest activities, business class Filipinos contributed funds to traditional opposition candidates and organizations such as UNIDO and PDP-LABAN as they contested the 1984 legislative elections (Schock 2005, 74). Business leaders backed by the Catholic Church also lent important support to moderate opposition candidates by organizing an extensive network of election observers known as the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL). This organization, chaired by Jose Concepcion, a flour mill owner, deployed tens of thousands of volunteers to oversee the registration, voting, and vote-counting processes of elections to serve as a check on the state-controlled Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and deter regime supporters from engaging in electoral fraud (Wurfel 1988, 284-5; Schock 2005, 74-5).

The increasingly defiant activism of the business class and the Catholic Church transformed the nature of popular contention in the Philippines. Much pre-1983 contention drew on a popular base of peasants, urban squatters and industrial workers, took aim at material, often industry-specific grievances, and applied leftist class-based rhetoric that excluded the business class and alienated much of the Catholic establishment. During this period, traditional oppositionists repeatedly contested rigged elections. However, operating in general isolation from the radical Left and a growing network of independent trade unions, they lacked a mass base that could rapidly mobilize against the regime in the event of electoral fraud.

After the killing of Aquino, the organizational composition of the opposition rapidly shifted. In 1984 and 1985, broad-based coalitions such as Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA), Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NAJFD), and the Coalition of Organizations for the Realization of Democracy (CORD), forged links between progressive clergy members, traditional oppositionists, and organizations associated with labor and the radical Left (Wurfel 1988, 281-5). In 1985, leftist activists led by former Senator Tanada established *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (New Patriotic Alliance, BAYAN), which sought to

reach out across the socioeconomic spectrum and coordinate mass actions carried out by a diverse array of social organizations, such as the militant labor center, KMU (Wurfel 1988, 293; Scipes 1996, 34-5). These broad-based coalitions struggled on issues of tactics, as many moderate oppositionists affiliated with UNIDO and PDP-LABAN directly contested elections in 1984 and 1986, while groups such as JAJA, CORD and later BAYAN opted for mass boycotting campaigns (Thompson 1995, 121-132). However, despite these divisions, these organizations collectively developed a range of effective tactics for contesting Marcos' administration. Members of the popular opposition carried out mass demonstrations in the streets. They organized sustained campaigns of noncooperation that included a number of successful *welgang bayan* that contributed to further crippling the country's deteriorating economy. By deploying thousands of poll-watchers associated with NAMFREL, oppositionists were able to expose the regime's use of mass fraud in winning elections against opposition candidates (Schock 2005, 75-6). Most critically, these various actions were all to some degree oriented around Marcos and his central government as their common target. In carrying out repeated acts of popular contention aimed at the president, the identities of disparate protest actors from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and geographic localities were gradually transformed in to a coherent popular opposition unified in its rejection of the regime.

In November 1985, Marcos declared on an American national television program that snap presidential elections would be held on February 7, more than a year and a half earlier than scheduled (Thompson 1995, 140-1). Marcos' decision to hold the elections was at the urging of a friendly Reagan administration in the United States, which believed that elections would help institutionalize the succession of the regime's leadership, steady the economy, and bolster the regime's legitimacy (141). Critically, Marcos was extremely confident of his ability to win elections with relatively little difficulty. His political party, KBL, pervaded the country from a national committee to 68,000 precinct-level chapters and had a budget of over $500 million to distribute to voters (Thompson 1995, 141-2). To censor his opponents, Marcos had nearly complete control of national television and radio stations as well as newspapers (Schock 2005, 77). Moreover, Marcos made preparations to unleash security forces and party loyalists under the command of Fabian Ver to terrorize the opposition, and deploy COMELEC to disenfranchise opposition voters in the event of a competitive election (Thompson 1995, 142). In a similar vein to more recent elections in Kazakhstan, victory for the incumbent was typically well-assured, and the more heavy-handed elements of this strategy for electoral fraud were largely precautions. In previous elections, the fragmented opposition had never entirely agreed to participate in elections or been able to unify behind a single candidate. As the December registration deadline approached, it again seemed unlikely that such an outcome would take place (Wurfel 1988, 296). However, the high level of nationwide mobilization in the Philippines, which had gained momentum since the Aquino assassination, was a game-changing factor that would make the 1986 elections dramatically different from previous electoral contests.

At the last moment, Corazon Aquino, the widow of Benigno, joined with a prominent traditional politician, Salvador Laurel, to form a grand coalition of opposition parties under the banner of UNIDO (Schock 2005, 76). The moderate opposition and its business class supporters closed ranks behind Aquino, the Catholic Church gave vocal support for the duo and provided its Radio Station, *Veritas*, and affiliated newspapers to publicize the campaign, and the election monitoring organization, NAMFREL, coordinated a nationwide effort to ensure free and fair

elections (77). At this critical juncture, however, the leadership of leftist organizations, such as the NDF, KMU and BAYAN were convinced Marcos would rig the elections, making contesting the elections pointless, and were suspicious of Aquino's commitment to serious social and economic reforms that might improve the lot of working class Filipinos. Consequently, they broke with moderate opposition and organized a boycott of the election (Wurfel 1988, 298; West 1997, 104). This decision, however, represented a tactical mistake on the part of the leadership. As noted by West (1997), high-level leaders had "los[t] touch" with the rank-and-file of their organizations. According to her survey of KMU activists, 83% of KMU leaders, 62.5% of federation leaders, and 55% of local union leaders agreed with the decision to boycott, while only 38.5% of rank-and-file members agreed, a solid 61.5% voicing their disagreement (220).

As noted by Wurfel (1988), a number of chapters of BAYAN openly defied the boycott and campaigned for Aquino, former senator Tanada, the president of the organization briefly left BAYAN to work for the Aquino campaign, and a large number of leftists, including many communists, formed a Nationalist Bloc to support Corazon (298). Clearly, to the surprise of both Marcos and many leaders of the radical Left, previous dividing lines within a popular opposition fragmented along lines of class, moderate/communist organizations, and secular/religious lines had begun to evaporate. Instead of pursuing group-specific issues, Filipino citizens from all sectors of society were uniting under an anti-Marcos banner, developing a common identity as a popular opposition, and throwing the weight of their support behind Corazon Aquino. Based on the mass defection of the previously acquiescent business class from Marcos and the working class rank-and-file of leftist organizations from their own leadership, the anti-Marcos frame at this moment had an appeal that surpassed particular allegiances to class or organizational affiliation.

In her campaign, Aquino carefully avoided taking firm positions on controversial issues that might fracture the diverse anti-Marcos popular opposition. Hoping to keep from alienating either her business or working class supporters, she refused to specifically address the contentious issue of land reform, even when Marcos deliberately attempted to exploit this cleavage by seizing her family's sugar plantation and redistributing it to agricultural laborers (Thompson 1995, 145). Aquino also kept her distance from discussions over the status of American military bases or U.S.-Philippine relations, an issue over which business class and leftist followers vehemently disagreed (145). Instead, she appealed generally to "the moral outrage that Marcos' long rule had generated" (144) clearly positioning herself as the anti-Marcos and embracing a broadly inclusive frame that pitted "the people" against a much-demonized Marcos. According to Sandra Burton (1989), Marcos himself noted that Aquino depicted him as a "combination of Darth Vader, Machiavelli, Nero, Stalin, Pol Pot, and maybe even Satan himself" (312). In her brief campaign running up to the snap presidential elections, Corazon repeatedly and effectively applied the broad anti-Marcos frame in carrying out what Overholt (1986) described "heroic unifying of the democratic opposition," which had been plagued by divisive fractions for years (1161).

In seeking to overcome Marcos' extensive efforts to silence and intimidate the opposition, Aquino's campaign broadcast her message through some alternative newspapers not controlled by the state, primarily the Catholic Church's *Veritas* radio network (Thompson 1995, 146). Members of NAMFREL aggressively monitored polling stations and tallied their own vote count

in an effort to avert vote-rigging, while Aquino and other opposition leaders organized mass rallies across the country, where participants numbered as many as 355,000 (147-8). As vote counts began to come in the day after elections, the state-controlled COMELEC and NAMFREL began to immediately diverge in their reporting of the electoral outcome. The former ultimately declared Marcos the victor with more than 53% of the vote, while the latter declared Aquino the winner with 52% (Schock 2005, 77). In spite of the opposition's aggressive campaigning, growing international scrutiny of the elections, and NAMFREL's exposure of official electoral fraud, on February 15, the national legislature certified COMELEC's numbers and declared Marcos the winner (77).

Marcos expected that the opposition, as in the past, would ultimately have to accept even a rigged election result. He even received U.S. President Reagan's public support, who endorsed the result and blithely stated that "there was cheating on both sides" (Thompson 1995, 149-153). However, neither Aquino nor the leadership of the Catholic Church would recognize Marcos' declaration of victory. Standing in front of a mass demonstration of as many as two million supporters on February 16 in Manila, Aquino announced her own victory and denounced the regime (Wurfel 1988, 300; Thompson 1995, 154). In addition, she put these words into action by declaring a national campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience that would not subside until Marcos accepted her victory. This included a boycott of newspapers controlled by the state and the banks and commercial enterprises of Marcos' cronies. In addition, a number of high-profile business leaders refused to pay any further taxes, and supporters of Aquino led nightly "noise barrages" and a series of demonstrations (Wurfel 1988, 300-301; Schock 2005, 78). Even the KMU leadership, which had been reluctant to support Aquino during her campaign, officially threw its support behind the opposition when KMU head Rolando Olalia, along with the NDF and BAYAN, declared the initiation of a nationwide general strike to begin on February 26 if Marcos refused to step down (Wurfel 1988, 301; Scipes 1996, 35-6; Schock 2005, 78). The campaign of resistance, which drew upon an extensive cross-sectoral organizational infrastructure and diverse repertoire of contentious tactics developed by various protest actors under the dictatorship, had an immediate effect on the regime. The stock market began to suffer, there were a number of runs on crony-owned banks, and purchasers soon began to cancel orders of goods from crony businesses (Thompson 1995, 154).

By far the most significant impact of the mass demonstrations came at the end of February when amidst this growing wave of popular contention, elite fragmentation began to occur within the military leadership. Military commanders, Fidel Ramos and Juan Ponce Enrile, who led members of the Reform Army Movement (RAM) faction, a group alienated by Marcos loyalists in the armed forces and the growing prominence of Fabian Ver in particular, saw an opportunity to strike at and depose Marcos during a moment of vulnerability. They organized a coup attempt aimed at storming the Malacanang Palace with two battalions of soldiers and establishing a military junta. However, the plan was discovered and the duo and their armed supporters fled to a pair of military bases outside the capital (Wurfel 1988, 302; Schock 2005, 78). At Camp Aguinaldo, the now-exposed officers adjusted their plans to establish a military government and instead threw their support behind Corazon Aquino, stating in a live broadcast on Radio *Veritas*, "We can no longer support Marcos as our Commander-in-Chief because…Mrs. Aquino was duly elected President of the Philippines" (Wurfel 1988, 302). On the same radio network, Cardinal Sin soon began calling supporters of Aquino to assemble around the two military camps to

provide them with supplies and support. While "deeply suspicious" of the generals, who had long served the Marcos administration and previously collaborated in suppressing the opposition, Aquino forged an agreement where Enrile would serve as defense minister in her cabinet (Wurfel 1988, 302-3). Filipinos numbering in the hundreds of thousands and ultimately, millions, began to assemble around the military camps and on the EDSA, the main road running through Manila (Thompson 1995, 158-9).

In the face of this growing popular challenge, which developed over a period of four days, Marcos was indignant. Holding a press conference, he declared, "I don't intend to step down as President. Never, never" (Wurfel 1988, 303)! In an effort to end the pro-opposition Radio *Veritas* broadcasts, Marcos ordered troops to smash its main transmitter. After the station went silent, opposition activists found backup transmitters, and a new station named "Radio Bandido" was established and continued to direct people to the protest site in Manila (Thompson 1995, 159). Taking a hard line against this challenge, Marcos sent two tank battalions to crush the demonstrations and seize the rebel generals, but as they approached the camps, unarmed protestors, led by nuns and priests, encircled and blocked the tanks. Trained activists in the crowd, aware of the emotional impact nuns would have on the military forces, encouraged them to step to the forefront, while organizers instructed protestors to use only nonviolent tactics and approach the soldiers in a friendly, non-confrontational fashion (Thompson 1995, 159; Schock 2005, 78). These tactics proved effective; when confronted by throngs of civilians kneeling in prayer and offering them flowers, the tanks stopped and reversed (Wurfel 1988, 303). Symbols also played a critical role in encouraging the unity and cohesion of the crowd. Pre-dating the "color" revolutions by over a decade, opposition supporters adopted the color yellow to demonstrate their solidarity with Aquino and defiance against Marcos, and the EDSA was soon filled with throngs of individuals wearing yellow clothing and ribbons (Thompson 1995, 159). As soldiers continued to defy their orders to break through the crowds and seize the opposition, and loyalist forces began to defect across the country, Marcos was faced with the stark realization that his position had become untenable. On February 25, the American government quietly communicated to Marcos that his time was up and he should "cut, and cut cleanly" (Wurfel 1988, 302-3; Schock 2005, 78-9). A disappointed Marco acquiesced, and he was taken away on an American helicopter and evacuated to Hawaii. Amidst a nationwide outpouring of celebration, Aquino was formally installed as President of the Philippines, bringing an end to over a decade of personalist dictatorship (Shock 2005, 79).

Looking back from Marcos' initial seizure of power with the declaration of martial law in 1972 to the collapse of the regime, the growing centralization of functional and coercive state power played a critical role in producing the ultimate breakdown of autocratic rule in 1986. First, Marcos declared sweeping social and economic reforms early in the martial law period ranging from infrastructure development to land reform in the aim of modernizing the country and appealing to potential social bases of political support in the business class and rural peasantry. The functional centralization of the regime made national bureaucratic agencies rather than subnational governments the primary agents of these reforms, enabling Marcos to claim the early economic successes enjoyed under his rule but also exposing him and the central government to blame for the country's flagging economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s. As discussed in the following chapter, whereas Marcos was often deemed personally responsible for the country's deteriorating economic conditions in the Philippines, citizens in more decentralized Kazakhstan

had extremely cynical views towards their country's economic performance but large majorities of the citizenry nevertheless had moderate or high levels of confidence in President Nazarbayev (Brif 1997, 173).

Secondly, the functional centralization of the regime meant that subnational authorities had only a minimal degree of discretionary control over state resources and limited amount of autonomous decision-making authority. For aggrieved populations across the Philippines, ranging from manufacturing workers to laborers on sugar plantations, collective actions organized at the enterprise-level and aimed at local targets were largely ineffective in winning significant concessions from powerbrokers within their communities. Consequently, in a critical shift, as protest actors realized that subnational state actors were incapable of addressing their demands, a learning process began to take place. As in Taiwan, local claimants adjusted their tactics and increasingly began to direct their claims at the national state, which unlike subnational governments had the power, authority and resources to allocate goods and services in the most peripheral corners of the country. This growing realization that popular claimants could best challenge the state and achieve their desired goals by interacting with it in a national not subnational forum created a demand for cross-sectoral forms of collective action. In fulfilling this demand modes of contention emerged that were capable of transcending locality and social group and involved both wider and inclusive frames of contention and of new forms of organizational infrastructure capable of coordinating and sustaining such actions. In the Philippines, this translated into innovative forms of organization that transcended social and economic groups, such as the KMU labor federation and the basic Christian communities organized by low-level Catholic clergy. The emergence of these variants of organizational infrastructure ultimately proved critical in the 1986 people power movement.

In comparison, the more decentralized regimes of China and Kazakhstan produced patterns of collective action that remained restricted to specific social groups and their particular material demands, such as taxi cab drivers and auto manufacturing workers in the former and contentious coalminers in the latter. Unlike in the Philippines, popular claimants in these more decentralized polities have often scored important but usually material or issue-specific victories through limited, geographically-isolated collective actions targeting subnational governments. Content with these limited victories, protest actors have perceived little reason to assume the substantial personal risks involved in coordinating cross-sectoral collective actions, instead falling into a pattern of carrying out only limited, parochial protests. In these decentralized autocracies, popular claimants have learned a different lesson than their Taiwanese and Philippine counterparts - that a pressing grievance can usually be addressed by confronting and challenging local authorities.

Third, the centralization of coercion in the Philippines meant that violent crackdowns, often including targeted assassinations against popular claimants could not be blamed on local decision-makers. Rather, fearing his own security apparatus, Marcos worked incessantly to ensure that local units were directly under his control, disbanding local paramilitary forces, replacing local commanders with those directly loyal to him and/or from his home province of Ilocos, and incorporating local forces into integrated national armed forces command structures. Thus, when unpopular incidents of state violence took place, Marcos and his closest associates, such as Fabian Ver, could not make claims of plausibility deniability. In the most glaring

incidents of violence, the public killing of Benigno Aquino being the most well-known example, the public instinctively knew Marcos or his coterie *had* to be responsible. Like Taiwan, but unlike China and Kazakhstan, the brutal actions of the security forces were readily attributable to the President, whereas in the more decentralized cases, the responsible party for these acts was less certain, and government actors below the national leadership played a much more prominent role in staffing and supervising the local security apparatuses within their respective territorial jurisdictions (Makhmutova 2001, 426-7, 434, 458-9; Cai 2008c, 168). Whereas this effective subcontracting of coercion to subnational actors enabled national leaders to claim a kind of plausible deniability from official abuses at the local level, Marcos was blamed directly for the behavior of the state security apparatus.

Finally, the personalistic character of the Marcos regime seemed to only exacerbate the vulnerability to popular challenges presented by the state's high degree of centralization. Marcos and his closest cronies repeatedly made use of the government and its assets to secure personal material gains and direct personalistic power over the state apparatus. This growing centralization of state power can be understood as Marcos' engagement in the activity of institutional landscaping - reshaping the structure of the state in an effort to minimize the threats posed by well-resourced potential elite challengers within and outside the regime (Schedler 2009a, 4). As suggested by Ulfelder (2005), this is a fairly common phenomenon within this type of neopatrimonial regime. In general, personalist rulers have tended to focus less on maintaining popular legitimacy among the masses and more on managing intra-elite conflict and defending against horizontal threats (314).

In the case of the Philippines, Marcos' concern for the internal threats posed by the security forces and regional political power brokers, which inspired a shift towards centralizing and personalizing the state and its coercive apparatus, inadvertently exposed him to a growing vertical threat from his popular, grassroots challengers manifesting in the 1986 people power revolution. Looting the state coffers and using state agencies and security forces to harass and seize the assets of less well-connected capitalist rivals, Marcos and his cronies alienated business class supporters and positioned themselves as the targets of blame for the country's souring economic conditions and the governments extensive corruption and ineffectiveness. In this sense, it was not the Philippines declining economy or the pervasive corruption and incompetence of the government *per se* that exposed Marcos to popular challengers but rather the way in which citizens attributed blame for these problems to the national leader himself. Importantly, opinion surveys of citizens in the more decentralized cases of China and Kazakhstan also found that respondents considered government corruption to be pervasive and a serious threat to their countries' well being (Brif 1997, 155; Olcott 2002, 192; Pew Global Attitudes Project 2008). However, in these cases, blame for official malfeasance trended in a downward direction towards subnational not national authorities, reflected in the common view that corruption and official abusive was more pervasive and/or serious at the local level than in the national government (Jandosova *et al* 2003, 19; O'Brien and Li 2006).

In short, by amassing state power and resources in his personal coterie in Manila and marginalizing and excluding traditional powerbrokers in the localities, Marcos enabled popular claimants to conveniently attribute all manner of group or community-specific grievances and complaints to the president. This structural opening was essential to the development of the

1986 people power movement against Marcos. While sources of popular opposition that appeared from the ranks of the labor movement, the clergy, and the traditional opposition struggled to form lasting bonds that could overcome their diverging interests and preferred tactics, these forces ultimately coalesced around their common targeting of the national government, specifically Marcos himself. After effective tactics of collective action, wide and diverse networks of anti-regime activists, and a broadly inclusive anti-Marcos frame were developed, Filipinos from across all sectors of society came together in the millions seemingly out of nowhere in February 1986 and to the amazement of Marcos and the world, brought about the sudden collapse of his authoritarian regime.

Chapter Eight: Kazakhstan

In December 1991, amidst the disintegration of the USSR, the Kazakh Supreme Soviet followed the lead of the other Soviet republics and declared its independence. As noted by Martha Brill Olcott (2010), Kazakhstan's birth could be best described as "reluctantly accepting independence" (24). The new Kazakh leader, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was a holdover from the Soviet period and had only emerged as first secretary of the Kazakh Communist Party (CPK) in 1989 (Hiro 2009, 243). After ascending to power of a country that had become independent "by default" (Cummings 2004, 1), Nazarbayev was keen to both consolidate his power over Kazakhstan and preserve the country's independence and territorial integrity. In the course of the 1990s, he secured the presidency in an unopposed 1991 election, asserted growing executive power over an initially combative legislature, and applying his Soviet era contacts and familial and clan-based relationships, constructed a durable neopatrimonial authoritarian regime. Carefully managing ethnic and subethnic relations within Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev effectively isolated his potential political rivals, secured the loyalty of his in-regime clients, avoided the territorial fragmentation of the country, and consequently enabled his inner circle of friends and family to enrich themselves by plundering the extensive energy and mineral resources of the country.

However, as opposed to his earlier counterpart, Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines, Nazarbayev was unable to assert and maintain the central government's power over the peripheral segments of the state. Instead, using informal, clan-based patronage networks within their territories, their formal powers over the budget, taxation, personnel appointments, and the implementation of government policy at the local level, and their ability to extract wealth and concession from foreign investors, subnational authorities amassed substantial wealth and power vis-à-vis the center. In this chapter, I make the case that this failure to assert centralized state power over the periphery in fact provided a blessing in disguise to the Nazarbayev administration by creating a configuration of threats and opportunities that encouraged popular claimants to limit their protests to localized, parochial acts of contention rather than nationally-coordinated forms of contention that might have otherwise threatened the resilience of the regime.

As discussed in this chapter, this proposition was most evidently put to the test during the contentious mid-to-late 1990s. During this period, the sudden and painful collapse of Kazakhstan's economy led to rapid drops in relative and absolute living conditions, and citizens turned out in the streets *en masse* against a government perceived as corrupt and incompetent and demanded a resolution to their material suffering. Unlike acts of contention in the Philippines, which transformed into a collapse-inducing people power movement during a period of economic hardship in the early 1980s, Kazakh protests remained localized, fragmented, focused on specific, material grievances, and primarily involved interactions between mass actors and the lower levels of the state. Surprisingly and almost counter intuitively, President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the architect of the very state system citizens were challenging, remained largely above the fray, maintaining genuinely high approval ratings throughout the turbulent 1990s and into the present (Hill 2005; Kennedy 2006, 49). Instead of being treated as the source of blame for the eroding social and economic conditions of much of Kazakh populace, Nazarbayev was somehow viewed as separate and disconnected from the immense problems troubling citizens on a day-to-day basis. As indicated in this chapter, this situation has in large

part been driven by the decentralized structure of the Kazakh state. Much like their counterparts in contemporary China, subnational authorities in Kazakhstan accumulated a substantial degree of decision-making authority and control over the state's coercive and functional resources, a shift that presented the state as a multidimensional target. In a functional equivalent of the "think national, blame local" dynamic in China, "bad" local officials were often perceived as a leading source of state failure and average citizens' everyday livelihood struggles (Li 2006), motivating many aggrieved citizens to contest local authorities while appealing to the center for assistance. With subnational authorities having assumed a high degree of control over state resources and the local security apparatus and becoming the prevailing target of blame for state failings, protests became localized, limited affairs negotiated between local claimants and regional leaders, not between the national citizenry and the central government in a people power-type movement that might bring about regime collapse.

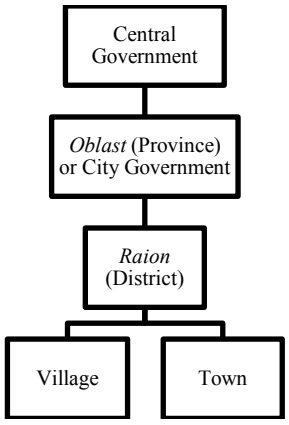
8.1. Functional Decentralization

In terms of functional (de)centralization, the post-independence Kazakh state has been defined by a formal multi-layered structure involving national, provincial and local layers of government. Within this framework, executive bodies, ranging from the national president to provincial and local-level *akims* have concentrated power vis-à-vis legislative and judicial bodies at each respective level. Moreover, in a mode sometimes described as the "executive vertical," formal state power has been delivered top-down with political responsibilities and the power of appointment emanating downward through the state hierarchy from the national executive to provincial and local administrations (Gurtovnik 2006). However, as suggested by Collins (2004), this formal apparatus has been pervaded by informal, clan-based networks of patronage, diminishing the ability of formal state structures alone to capture the on-the-ground nature of governance or distribution of state power in Kazakhstan (243-5). In reality, as suggested by the fieldwork of a number of regional scholars, in spite of the formal design of the unitary Kazakh state, the system is better characterized by extensive *de facto* decentralization, where substantial power and control of state resources have been wielded by subnational governments (Jones Luong 2004; Cummings 2005, 150).

The organization and administration of the provinces of Kazakhstan has dated back to the Soviet era. Initially after independence, the country had 19 provinces (*oblasts*) and one provincial level city, the original post-independence capital of Almaty (Cummings 2000, 8-9). Beneath the provincial level have been 160 regions and 79 region-status cities, as well as 200 villages and 2,150 village districts (Leschenko and Troschke 2006, 9). Each provincial government has been led by a nationally-appointed governor or *akim* and a locally-elected legislature or *maslikhat*. This form of organization is replicated in town and district governments, although *akims* at these levels have been appointed by provincial-level *akims* rather than directly by the center (12-13). In a 1997 reform labeled "regional optimization," the provinces, Taldykorgan, Semipalatinsk, Zhezkazgan, Kokshetau and Torgai were eliminated as territorial units and merged with neighboring provinces. The same year, Nazarbayev ordered the transfer of the national capital from Almaty to Astana. According to official accounts, the movement of the capital was motivated by fears of Almaty's exposure to earthquakes and its inability to expand, based on surrounding mountains (Cummings 2005, 33-34). A more likely explanation was Nazarbayev's desire to maintain better control over the Kazakhstan's restive and potentially secession-inclined,

heavily Russian northern provinces and also to encourage greater migration of ethnic Kazakhs from the south to the north of the country (34). After Astana became the national capital, the city was given province-level. In a concession to Almaty, the former capital maintained its province-level status, resulting in the shift from the old "19+1" system to a new "15+2" one (34).

Figure 8.1. Organizational Structure of the Government, Kazakhstan



Source:Meruert Makhmutova. 2001. "Local Government in Kazakhstan." In *Developing New Rules in the Old Environment, Local Governments in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia*, eds. Igor Munteanu and Victor Popa. Budapest, Hungary : Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, 414.

In spite of Kazakhstan's large number of subnational territorial units, the formal post-independence political system has been unitary and not federal, as reflected in the extensive center-imposed redrawing of provincial territories that took place in 1997. As noted by Olcott (2002), in the first years after independence, many Kazakhs, particularly from among the local Russian population, argued that the post-independence country should be a federative state with a large degree of formal, constitutionally-protected regional autonomy (82). Nazarbayev, however, has consistently opposed such an arrangement as it might present a threat to national unity and weaken the power of the central government (82). In a "vertically integrated executive system," the president has veto power over local and provincial political decisions and the power to abolish provinces (Cummings 2000, 11). While legislation on provincial and local self-governance was passed in 1991 and 1993, the constitutions of 1993 and 1995 both asserted the dominance of national over subnational laws (Cummings 2000, 11; Leschenko and Troschke 2006, 10). The laws on local self-governance failed to clearly delineate a division of powers and responsibilities between the center and the localities, and both constitutions were unclear in delineating the circumstances in which national laws were to supersede local legislation (Cummings 2000, 11; Leschenko and Troschke 2006, 10). In the view of some scholars, these factors left open a loophole central authorities could exploit to interfere in subnational affairs that was left largely unaddressed until 2001 (Leschenko and Troschke 2006, 10). In terms of personnel, provincial governors or *akims* were not selected locally but appointed directly by the president, while locally-elected legislatures were weak vis-à-vis these appointed local executives (Cummings 2000, 11). The president used this power of appointment to frequently rotate *akims* between various provinces or between national and provincial-level government. This activity

was aimed at ensuring that provincial elites did not develop local bases of power that might be used to challenge the center (Schatz 2004, 104; Cummings 2005, 49-51). In short, in the construction of Kazakhstan's political framework, the national leadership created a number of formal mechanisms for ensuring that subnational leaders were not able to build up large, autonomous bases of state power and political support that might be used to challenge the center. Importantly, however, as discussed at length in Landry's (2008) research on China, a great deal of subnational autonomy can operate within a formally top-down system of authoritarian government. Thus, a deeper exploration is required.

In terms of budgetary considerations, the degree of fiscal and administrative decentralization in Kazakhstan presented a mixed, sometimes contradictory picture. According to World Bank figures (2010), subnational governments in Kazakhstan collected 28.77% of all government revenues and also controlled 31.43% of all expenditures (1997-1998). Compared with the Philippines under Marcos, where subnational governments controlled a miniscule 7.89% of revenues and 11.83% of expenditures (1978-1986), these figures suggest Kazakhstan has operated as a considerably more fiscally and administratively decentralized state (World Bank 2010). As noted by Landry (2008), like China and only a handful of other authoritarian cases, Kazakhstan's degree of administrative decentralization has been historically unusual. Looking at available data on subnational governments' share of government expenditures from 1958-2002, Kazakhstan has been one of only eleven authoritarian regimes to have exceeded 30% on this measure. Among autocratic regimes today, the country has been surpassed in its degree of administrative decentralization only by China (7). Contrasting with the top-down structure of formal political authority within the Kazakh state, official figures of fiscal and administrative (de)centralization have suggested the state might have in fact been quite decentralized in practice.

However, if one looks beyond Kazakhstan's exceptional decentralization as indicated in official figures on subnational expenditures and revenues, new complications emerge. First, while legislation has ostensibly granted subnational governments a degree of autonomy in revenue collection and retention, this has not generally been honored in practice. National laws on local self-governance passed in 1991 and 1993 granted subnational governments the power to raise their own revenues and determine their own budgets, and forbade the national government from interfering in these decisions (Leschenko and Troschke 2006, 9). As noted above, the 1991 and 1993 laws were short on specificity, leaving a window open for the center to potentially involve itself in subnational affairs. Secondly, center-imposed budgetary transfer policies have constrained subnational governments' ability to manage their own budgets. Cummings (2000) finds that the central government has set revenue and expenditure levels for subnational governments, then collected tax revenues gathered at the subnational and redistributed these funds to the provinces (14). Through this mechanism, the national government has transferred extra funds from provinces with surplus revenues into its own coffers and/or provided additional funds to other revenue-deficient provinces to cover their budget deficits (14-5).

According to a number of scholars (Cummings 2000; George 2001; Leschenko and Troschke 2006), Kazakhstan's system of budgetary transfers, the national president's authority to appoint and dismiss *akims*, set subnational budgets and intervene in local decision-making, and the limited or unclear constitutional protections granted provincial and local governments to

determine their own affairs have meant any nominal control over local revenues and expenditures has not translated into genuine subnational autonomy. According to formal regulations and budgetary transfer policies, the central government has ultimate authority to collect tax revenues, set subnational budgets and tax rates, and redistribute state funds to various provinces as needed. It moreover has been able to set laws and regulations that have superseded local legislation and determined which spending priorities would be covered by national or subnational levels of governments. These procedures suggested that Kazakhstan, as presumed by many commentators, has been a centralized state characterized by a powerful central state that oversees top-down decision-making. Of course, in a loosely-institutionalized personalist regime such as Kazakhstan, formal structures alone have not often provided a complete or necessarily accurate portrayal of the actual distribution of state power.

As noted by Pauline Jones Luong (2004), the depiction of the country as a centralized state where subnational governments have been subordinate to the center may describe the nominal distribution of state power but does not accurately reflect the on-the-ground reality in Kazakhstan (183). In her words, the prevailing understanding of Kazakhstan as a centralized state has "present[ed] a view from above that relies on formal state institutions and overlooks the informal bargaining and tacit agreements that take place between central and regional leaders" (183). More recently indicating her agreement with Jones Luong's assessment, Sally Cummings (2005) has suggested that "the [Kazakh] polity is a *de jure* unitary state that has witnessed *de facto* decentralization" (37). The fieldwork of Pauline Jones Luong (2004) has contributed centrally to this deepened understanding of center-periphery relations within the Kazakh state. After interviewing both tax agents of the central government and provincial administrators and conducting a cross-provincial quantitative analysis of actual and planned subnational revenues and expenditures, she found a surprisingly high degree of *de facto* fiscal, administrative, and regulatory autonomy at the subnational level.

First, in regards to fiscal (de)centralization, Jones Luong (2004) found that tax agents formally employed by the central government were in fact dually subordinate to central and provincial authorities. Importantly, these agents most often followed the direction of the latter when the two came into conflict (189). As motivated both by "convenience and entitlement," tax administrators followed technically unauthorized directives from regional officials. As opposed to central authorities, these regional officials were in closer day-to-day interaction with tax agents, were more familiar with conditions on the ground, and controlled central tax agents' access to "key resources such as office space, telephones, and might even finance their activities" (189). Regardless of the formal tax code issued by the central government, subnational authorities would in "extremely arbitrary" fashion, extract taxes from foreign investors and other businesses and also "offer tax exemptions in exchange for 'donations' to the regional administration's discretionary funds" (190). This system provided subnational authorities with a large source of "extra-budgetary income" and as confirmed by Jones Luong's quantitative analysis, meant the reported tax revenue that actually reached the center was not strongly correlated with provinces' level of GDP or industrial production (190-1). Even more revealing, revenue from those relatively few taxes gathered and held directly by provincial governments, such as taxes on land, property, and vehicles, grew at a much higher rate than taxes that were transferred to the center (192-3). These indicators have suggested that in spite of formal fiscal centralization of the state, subnational authorities have been extraordinarily effective at resisting

central efforts to control their budgets and instead act quite independently in extracting revenue from local enterprises.

Secondly, while some scholars have been concerned that the unclear division of administrative powers between national and subnational governments has left the latter exposed to interference from the former (Leschenko and Troschke 2006, 10), subnational authorities have been equally if not more effective at exploiting this ambiguity over the distribution of responsibilities. Jones Luong (2004) has noted that the Kazakh central government has delegated a growing share of responsibilities to subnational authorities but has failed to supply funding that might keep pace with these growing demands (196-7). As noted by Cummings (2005), during its economic transition away from state socialism, the national regime would often encourage investment in debt-ridden state-owned enterprises by divesting them of burdensome social welfare responsibilities – a move that returned them to profitability. These responsibilities would subsequently be transferred to subnational governments without the provision of funding needed to actually cover these demands (150). Ironically, while this shift placed additional burdens on already strained subnational budgets, it granted these authorities wider practical decision-making latitude. Subnational leaders, aware that they would not be able to meet nationally-imposed expenditure targets, had great maneuverability in deciding how they would distribute their limited funds to various areas of public spending, such as law enforcement, public health, education or paying the salaries of public employees (Jones Luong 2004, 196-7). This trend was clearly evident in official budget figures, which demonstrated dramatic variation in the distribution of public spending among various Kazakh provinces (197). Moreover, particularly in areas with a high level of foreign investment and energy or mineral wealth, subnational officials proved extremely adept at extracting extra-budgetary revenues and redirecting these funds towards infrastructure development, an area nominally controlled by the central government (198). Kazakh offices had developed their political acumen in a Soviet state socialist system persistently plagued by scarce resources and unattainable production targets. As a result, Kazakh officials were experienced experts at the task of creatively manipulating formal budgets and limited funds in order to achieve their particular interests. Thus, despite the nominal constraints imposed by the center on subnational administrative powers and its efforts to set uniform expenditure goals for the provinces, regional leaders nevertheless found inventive ways to assert independent initiative in determining how to allocate scarce (often extra-budgetary) funding to spending priorities.

Third, in terms of regulatory (de)centralization, subnational authorities have regularly broken from the formal regulations and procedures assigned from the center in administrating their respective localities. Consistent with the prioritization of regional over national taxes, rules and regulations issued by subnational governments are consistently better enforced than national ones (Jones Luong 2004, 200). Regulators nominally subordinate to agencies of the central government have frequently deferred to subnational regulations over national ones in exchange for favors from regional governments, which generally have provided their housing, office, salary and other perks. Subnational governments have used their direct and indirect control over regulations and the issuing of permits, fines and fees to influence foreign and domestically-owned enterprises and extract payments from them (200-201). These factors indicate that in Kazakhstan, unlike the centralized cases of the Philippines and Taiwan, the decisions of subnational authorities have prevailing, practical influence over individuals' affairs within their

territorial jurisdictions - not the national government. As noted in Chapter 4, a foreign investor once commented that in Taiwan, "if you got the support of the central government, things would happen very quickly, and we could be fairly confident that we could build in a timely fashion" (Reardon-Anderson 1992, 4). State agents in Kazakhstan did not operate as direct functionaries of the center, complicating the national government's ability to dictate local policies in this manner. In the Kazakh Republic, "Many investors have found that it is worthwhile to resolve *oblast* concerns first before approaching the republican authorities for contracts" and "always give the *oblast* level the first opportunity to comment before sending applications to the central government" (Biddison 1999, 9). In their day-to-day interactions with the state, both Kazakh citizens and foreign investors were keenly aware that subnational officials, and not administrators located in the national capital, had determining influence over developments within their local communities and were the individuals with access to and authority over scare state resources.

Finally, even though Nazarbayev frequently used his power to appoint and dismiss regional *akims* in a strategy to circulate the elite and prevent the emergence of regional rivals for national power, these provincial leaders, while deemed to be loyal to the center, have nevertheless operated with a substantial degree of autonomy from the center. Certain *akims* who have enjoyed extensive personal popularity within their provinces, engaged in acts of disloyalty to the president, or as suggested below, inspired and/or failed to control social unrest within their territories, have quickly been removed from power. However, governors have not been viewed as threats to the president are largely granted a free hand in the administration of their provinces (Schatz 2004, 105). The power of *akims* has been grounded both in the formal structure of subnational governments and the informal, clan-based kinship networks that have helped defined Kazakhstan's neopatrimonial regime at all levels of government.

First, the dominance of executive power that defined politics at the national level is replicated at provincial and local levels of government. Provincial *akims* wield extensive, constitutionally-prescribed formal powers of administration, including "the development of a province's economic, social, and budgetary programs and their means of finance, the management of public property, and the appointment or dismissal of heads of lower-ranked executive bodies" (Cummings 2000, 13). Regional legislatures or *maslikhats*, on the other hand, have been relegated only to decisions "according to their competencies," typically leaving them with a limited role over determining the budget. This power, however, is subject to approval from the *akim* (13). Thus, upon their appointment by the center, formal rules dictate that regional *akims* have wide and largely unchecked freedom to administrate their territories and allocate state resources. Additionally, in another replication of national-level politics, at the provincial level, *akims* have unchecked authority to appoint or dismiss their subordinates within the provincial bureaucracy and appoint local-level *akims* for towns and districts within their territories (Schatz 2004, 105; Olcott 2002, 96). Whereas the president has been an effectively unchecked source of power at the national level, his subordinates at the subnational and local levels have similarly acted as absolute rulers, albeit within their own more territorially-limited fiefdoms.

These two formal powers, extensive administrative, fiscal, and regulatory authority and the ability to make unilateral personnel appointments, give provincial *akims* the ability to establish extensive informal power within the province and its government apparatus through often clan-

based networks of personal patronage. The regulatory powers of *akims* mean that they can extend rewards such as relief from taxes or regulations, privileged access to educational institutions, and support for or access to lucrative business ventures to loyal clients and kinsmen, while denying such perks to outsiders. The power to appoint offices is particularly important. As noted by Schatz (2004), an employee in a local government once reported that recently when a new *akim* had been appointed, he released around 50% of the existing staff in the administration and replaced them with his own supporters, most of who were from his clan grouping (107). Thus, in close agreement with Bratton and van de Walle's (1994) conceptualization of a neopatrimonial system, the rational-legal bureaucracy of Kazakhstan has effectively been pervaded by personalistic patron-client relations. The offices of government have been transformed into rewards granted for loyalty and used for the personal acquisition of wealth and status (458). Upon their arrival in office, subnational officials have quickly and effectively used their informal and formal authority to construct powerful personal bases of support within their respective jurisdictions. In other words, using a combination of the formal powers granted to their offices and informal social relations based in ethnic and subethnic identities, regional leaders in Kazakhstan proved adept at capturing *de facto* state power and resources from below, even in a context where national authorities proved resistant to the idea of genuine sharing power with the localities.

8.2. Decentralization of Coercion

If functional decentralization and the decentralization of coercion can be conceptualized respectively as the "carrots and sticks" autocrats and their subnational agents can utilize to diminish or defeat potential popular challengers, the Kazakh case has already presented a degree of overlap between the two categories. Regional executives have had sweeping powers to dismiss officials, exclude foreign investors and domestic entrepreneurs from business opportunities by revoking or denying licenses, refusing to provide basic social services and levy punitive taxes and financial penalties (Jones Luong 2004, 200-1; Schatz 2004, 105-7; Makhmutova 2001, 426). These powers provide "sticks" that can be used to harass or intimidate potential challengers, in mode of "low-intensity" coercion identified by Levitsky and Way (2010, 58). As opposed to neighboring Kyrgyzstan, where social and economic elites independent from the state have had the ability to use their resources to cultivate networks of supporters in a kind of "subversive clientelism" (Radnitz 2010, 19-21), in Kazakhstan, there has been a general absence of an autonomous business elite (Cummings 2005, 41). Rather, political elites at both the national and subnational level have succeeded at either incorporating post-independence business entrepreneurs into the state or financially-starving more recalcitrant individuals by denying them access to an economy that has become increasingly dependent on the sale of natural resources (Olcott 2002, 129). These circumstances have meant that the wealthiest individuals have typically been those most well-connected to the state (Olcott 1996, 77). Conversely, this has meant subnational authorities have had a powerful weapon with which to bludgeon their potential opponents – exclusion from the state *and* the market. These factors have indicated that subnational elites have enjoyed a diverse repertoire of instruments of low-intensity coercion that can be used to harass, exclude or starve their opponents.

In regards to "high-intensity" coercion, involving the usage of regular and irregular security forces to harass and intimidate opponents through the actual or threatened application of violence

(Levitsky and Way 2010, 57-8), subnational officials have had a high degree of discretion in using this instrument. The makeup of the security apparatus in Kazakhstan, like other FSU countries, has been heavily influenced by the historical institutional legacies of 74 years of policing under the Soviet regime (Shelley 1999, 76). During this period, the police force, typically referred to as "the militia," was standardized across the territory of the Soviet Union with little regard for the traditions or cultures of particular regions. After several reorganizations undertaken during the post-Stalin period, the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) was separated from the KGB secret police, and established as the central ministry with authority over the regular militia (Shelley 1990, 507). The police, however, operated under a system of "dual subordination" where they were responsible both to the MVD in Moscow and subnational authorities, who oversaw their actions at the local level (Shelley 1996, 68-9). Under this system, the police served the function not of simply enforcing laws in the interest of protecting the citizenry but rather acted as the primary agents who maintained a social and political order imposed from above. Police forces were entrusted with "forcing citizens to comply with the state's ideological objectives" and preventing them from organizing autonomous civil society institutions that might challenge the grip of the CPSU (Shelley 1996, xiii). In the Soviet period, militia units played an important role in deterring planned demonstrations by intimidating and threatening protest leaders and participants, monitoring and dispersing demonstrations and arresting and sometimes interrogating organizers (183-5).

Organizationally, the Soviet militia was subordinate to the Communist Party and had little operational autonomy from the political apparatus (Shelley 1999, 75-6). Shelley (1990) reported that by the 1980s, the Soviet militia was extensively pervaded by the influence of party apparatchiks at upper and lower levels of the CPSU hierarchy. Because local leaders frequently used their positions to staff the police force with personal clients, individual officers acted primarily as "tools of local politicians; they were not impartial and professional public servants" (511). In Central Asia and the Caucasus in particular, the militia was notorious for its prevalent "brutality and corruption" and general inability and disinterest in preventing crime or protecting the general public (511). Post-Brezhnev reforms initiated under Andropov took aim at reducing the corruption and cronyism of the militia. Many higher-level MVD personnel were retired and replaced with KGB officials. Meanwhile, in Central Asia and other areas of the Soviet periphery, a large number of police officers appointed by local strongmen, usually members of local titular nationalities such as Kazakh were replaced with predominantly Slavic cadres from other branches of the party-state (513-4). While this reform helped stem the pervasive cronyism in the local-level police force, the replacement of many Central Asian nationalities with Slavic officers created a disconnect between the militia and the communities they were entrusted with serving (514).

After Gorbachev's ascension to the national leadership, additional reforms were made to the MVD. The security force struggled to maintain law and order after the initiation of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, which unleashed a wave of protests, ethnic unrest and organized crime. To assist the normal militia in addressing these growing threats to social stability, special units, including private security forces and detective agencies, anti-organized crime divisions, and special patrol units were formed (Shelley 1996, 77-8). The latter units, Special Purpose Militia Detachments (OMON), had first been established in 1979 for the Moscow Olympics. They were reorganized and greatly expanded in 1987, entrusted with maintaining order during public demonstrations

and the special political function of quelling nationalist unrest in a number of Soviet republics (78). In addition, in 1989, a special militia unit, the Administration of Preventative Services, oversaw the creation and supervision of special detachments of workers and others citizens, which assisted the regular police in maintaining order in areas of substantial social unrest. These units were rapidly deployed at the *oblast*-level throughout much of the Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan (78). As social disorder continued to spread in the early 1990s, many local governments and firms in Central Asia and other regions of the Soviet Union took independent initiative and armed and organized groups of citizen militias to protect government facilities and conduct community law enforcement (80). Thus, by the late Soviet period, the coercive apparatus continued to center on the traditional agencies of the KGB and the MVD but now also had become increasingly diverse and complex, particularly at the subnational level. In an effort to bolster the traditional police force, special units, such as OMON, worker detachments, and locally-funded citizen militias had assumed a greater role in suppressing popular unrest and maintaining public order. Law and order was increasingly maintained by locally-maintained and staffed quasi-official security details.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and Kazakhstan's sudden emergence as an independent country, there was great continuity in the structure of the security apparatus. The Kazakh branch of the KGB was rebranded the National Security Committee, whereas even the labeling of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was left unchanged. The latter agency continued to assume control of both the police forces and the prison system, seeing its administrative reach expanded in 1995 when it assumed authority over the investigation of criminal acts, previously overseen by the Office of the Procurator General (Curtis 2003, 90-94). In addition to the conventional police forces, a number of the locally-generated special security detachments created to maintain order during the socially unstable period of *glasnost* and *perestroika* have reemerged in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. OMON units in particular have often been sighted working in tandem with local police forces in controlling and dispersing mass demonstrations (Ardayev 1992a; *Current Digest of the Russian Press* 1997; Kozlov 1998). As noted by Shelley (1996), the prerogative of the Kazakh militia has remained the same as that of conventional Soviet police forces, "emphasiz[ing] the supremacy of the state over the individual" (197). The militia has seen its legal powers expanded widely to include "twenty-four different types of operations, including secret entry to apartments, houses and offices of private enterprises" (197).

Continuity has also prevailed in terms of the officials in charge of the security apparatus. As noted by Cummings (2005), by 1995-96, almost two-thirds of the political elite in post-independence Kazakhstan were former members of the Soviet *nomenklatura*. In the security forces, former members of the KGB and the Ministry of Internal Affairs had often stayed in the reconstituted versions of these agencies in post-Soviet period (46-8). Like their counterparts in the security apparatus, regional leaders have mostly been holdovers from the Soviet era, most having served in same regional government during both the Soviet and post-independence periods. As shown by Cummings (2005), by the mid-1990s, "Three quarters of regional *akims* had served in their respective regions in the Soviet period' (48). This continuity in both the security apparatus and regional administrations has indicated that officials in these organizations have had close informal ties with one another and used these pre-independence linkages in the course of performing their official duties. According to a regional official interviewed by Cummings (2005) who served in both Soviet and post-Soviet administrations, "My experience as

head of this oblast in the eighties has served me well in my present job; I rely still almost exclusively on the contacts I had in that period" (48).

Linkages between regional leaders and the security forces have also been enhanced by the extensive formal budgetary, administrative and appointment powers of provincial *akims.* In terms of personnel appointment, *akims* have had the power to appoint and oversee the head of the oblast-level department of the Ministry of the Interior, which is responsible for maintaining public security and supervising the local police force. A provincial *akim,* moreover, has the power to select the local-level *akims* within his/her territorial jurisdiction. These local executives, in turn, have been responsible for staffing and overseeing their own departments of the Ministry of the Interior (Makhmutova 2001, 426-7, 434, 458-9).

In no small part a legacy of reforms put in place under Andropov, at the time of independence, the external and internal security forces of Kazakhstan had a predominantly Slavic officer corps (Clark 1993, 4). As many of these officers have left Kazakhstan, joining a massive outflow of ethnic Russians from the country, numbering between 1.1 and 1.5 million during the 1990s alone (Olcott 2002, 175), and/or been replaced through the process of Kazakhification, subnational authorities have had ample opportunity to replace them with clients and relations, frequently involving individuals sharing clan identities. Schatz (2004) has observed communities in Kazakhstan where informal patronage networks and common subethnic ties very publicly pervade subnational governments and police forces, blurring the lines between professional and personal life (107). In addition, the budgets of provincial and local-level police and civil defense units have been derived not from the national government but from their respective subnational governments (Makhmutova 2001, 466; Olcott 2002, 192). These powers over the staffing and budget of the local police force, as well as the well-entrenched personal links inherited from the Soviet era between officials in the Ministry of the Interior and the regional governments have enabled subnational authorities to assume a substantial degree of autonomous power vis-à-vis the center over the state's coercive apparatus.

Importantly, the security forces and the problems associated with them, such as their brutality, corruption – including collusion with organized crime and constant demanding of bribes from the population, and general inability to maintain law and order (Shelley 1996, 198) have been directed primarily at subnational levels of government, freeing the national government from blame. A 1996 study found 48% of Kazakhs blamed "corrupt" local administrators for the failings of local government, slightly edging the 44% who blamed "incompetent" local administrators (Olcott 2002, 192). A 1997 nationwide survey sponsored by the United States Information Agency (USIA) found that respondents most frequently blamed the nonpayment or late payment of wages and pensions on "local authorities" (35.65%), exceeding the responses "government as a whole" (29.32%), "leaders of enterprises" (7.29%), and "Nazarbayev" (5.91%) (Brif 1997, 155). A 2003 survey of officials in Kazakhstan found that more respondents believed corruption was higher in their own *oblasts* than the President's administration (Jandosova *et al* 2003, 19). These findings have suggested that local officials have enjoyed only a very low level of confidence among citizens within their territory and are often blamed for the shortcomings of the state in maintaining law and order or otherwise meeting the demands of the public. The national government has done little to remedy this situation and has in fact encouraged the shifting of blame from the national to subnational level. In an ongoing anti-

corruption campaign, national law enforcement agencies have publicly exposed a number of corruption and extortion scandals at the subnational level but have ignored national-level (and likely equally corrupt) figures more closely linked to the President (Olcott 2002, 193). Amidst this almost "theatrical" exposure of subnational-level corruption, the President has increasingly made *oblast*-level governments "personally responsible for law and order in their respective regions and cities" (193). In other words, while publicly decrying the incompetence and corruption of subnational officials, Nazarbayev quietly delegated an increasing level of authority to these individuals over the coercive and functional responsibilities of the state – although without necessarily providing the resources needed to meet these growing demands.

8.3. Patterns of Popular Contention

Compared to the other republics of the former Soviet Union, Kazakhstan has been conspicuous in the apparent weakness of both its formal and popular opposition. In a region noted both for recurrent color revolutions in countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine and the heavy-handed and harsh brand of authoritarianism practiced in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan's combination of comparatively "soft" authoritarianism and limited popular contention has been unusual. As discussed in the following sections, Kazakh society initially presented a diverse combination of potential challenges to Nazarbayev's grip on power. These came in the form of formal oppositionists, ethnic and clan-based identity groups, and materially-aggrieved popular protestors. In response to these challengers, the president deployed a wide range of tactics in effectively weakening the formal political opposition, using legislative maneuvers to strengthen the executive relative to the legislature and establish electoral rules that make effective campaigning for opposition candidates increasingly difficult. These have been supplemented by other activities such as media control, electoral fraud and the harassment, arrest and intimidation of the most persistent of Nazarbayev's opponents. Such efforts have replaced the fairly contentious political arena of the early-to-mid 1990s into an electoral autocracy where Nazarbayev and his allies enjoy effectively unchallenged dominance in all branches of government and ostensibly competitive elections are largely stage-managed.

Similarly, Nazarbayev has also eroded the potential for challenges to emerge from various segments of Kazakhstan's diverse society. While ethnic Russians organized scattered acts of popular contention to resist their growing marginalization in post-Soviet Kazakh society, they proved unable to slow the creeping Kazakhification of the state and economy, ultimately giving way to frustrated acceptance with their new position or joining a growing wave of co-ethnics emigrating from the country. In consolidating his power over the state, Nazarbayev has tapped into clan-based patronage networks, privileging his own Elder Umbrella Clan in distributing political offices and rents while still making sure to reserve a reduced share of rewards for the Middle and Younger Umbrella Clans. In this effort, Nazarbayev has enhanced his patrimonial control over the state while minimizing the risk of defection by minority factions.

However, these tactics have not eliminated popular contention in Kazakhstan entirely. Particularly during the period of painful post-socialist economic restructuring during the 1990s, the country saw a steep and sudden drop in the material well-being of its citizens. Their hardship transposed against the growing affluence of persons better connected to a perceivably corrupt regime, many workers and pensioners took to the streets. They carried out powerful cross-

regional strikes involving hundreds of thousands of participants originating in the Karaganda coal basin in the mid-1990s and at site such as Kentau and Zhanatas at the end of the decade. These large and heated protests, however, never transformed into movements sustained and coordinated on a national scale. In addition, they never linked up with formal oppositionists who attempted to challenge Nazarbayev's expanding grip over political power. In a similar vein to contemporary China, these political opponents and dissidents struggled in relative isolation, receiving essentially no popular support from everyday resisters. Rather, popular protests centered on material, issue or community-specific protests, while the dissidents who spoke in explicitly political anti-regime rhetoric faced the unrestrained harassment and silencing of the central leadership.

As suggested in the following sections, the decentralization of functional and coercive state power was crucial to this bifurcation between political dissent and everyday resistance and popular protestors continued focus on limited, material grievances and adherence to localized and uncoordinated modes of contention. This reality was most salient when protest reached a peak during the turbulent and economically-difficult 1990s. When labor protestors in Karaganda, Kentau and Zhanatas contested the state, they saw efforts at coordinating collective action beyond their respective localities and worksites failed to achieve their desired goals, driving home the important lesson that localized forms of contention were sufficient for achieving at least some material goals. As popular claimants have adapted their strategies to the realization that subnational authorities have expansive discretionary control over the application of coercion and distribution of concessions, popular protest in Kazakhstan has fallen into a pattern centered on limited, community-specific actions that are fragmented and uncoordinated on the national scale. While popular contention has not disappeared entirely from Kazakhstan's social landscape, it has operated in isolation from the formal political opposition, appeared in a localized, fragmented form and played little or no role in contesting the national leadership.

8.3.1. Formal Opposition

In 1991, Nursultan Nazarbayev was confirmed as president of post-independence Kazakhstan in an uncontested election where he won 98.7% of the vote. His only serious challenger, Khasen Kozha-Akhment, had gathered nearly all of the required signatures to become a formal candidate but saw the street-side yurt where his records were stored mysteriously ransacked shortly before the elections (Cummings 2005, 22). After assuming the presidency, Nazarbayev indicated his goal of establishing Kazakhstan as a "democratic, presidential republic" (24). However, he soon used his personal connections within the Kazakh state bureaucracy, his command of holdover political institutions and security forces, and "sleight of hand" tactics against his political rivals (Hiro 2009, 257), to rapidly amass uncontested power over the new state. The political trajectory of Kazakhstan quickly changed direction, and any hopes of the country becoming a nascent democracy were dashed. Instead, formal elections have become the kind of rigged and uncompetitive affairs characteristic of "hybrid, competitive authoritarian" or "electoral authoritarian" regimes (Diamond 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002; Schedler 2002). Behind the veil of electoral competition, Kazakhstan has developed into a personalist or neopatrimonial autocratic regime, where formal institutions have become pervaded with personal patron-client relations.

In the Kazakh state, while Nazarbayev has emerged as the ultimate authority and mediator of in-regime relations, state power has become bifurcated and decentralized. At the national level, access to Nazarbayev and his inner circle has been synonymous with the attainment of state offices and resources. Underneath the national elite, subnational leaders have made use of their own formal positions to staff public offices and the security forces with cronies and kinsmen, resulting in the creation of autonomous bases of state power and authority. To the present, Nazarbayev has skillfully managed these subnational powerbrokers, limiting their tenures in office by circulating them between offices and rewarding loyalists with higher offices and dismissing or manipulating the legal system to "expose" the crimes and corruption of those who have directly challenged his ultimate authority (Schatz 2004, 104). Like his counterparts in contemporary China, this strategy has enabled to Nazarbayev to simultaneously delegate the functions of government and the responsibility for managing unrest to subnational-level agents, while using the mechanism of elite circulation to minimize the threat posed by these individuals to his grip on national power. Of course, in a personalist regime as opposed to an institutionalized single-party state, any pretensions that promotions and demotions are tied to standard, agreed upon performance criteria have been abandoned. Instead, personal links to Nazarbayev and the president's opinion of one's value and loyalty alone determine an individual's professional success and elevation into Kazakhstan's highest offices.

This does not mean that Nazarbayev's grip on power has gone unopposed. Rather, from the earliest days of his presidency, he has been challenged by three primary sources. First, a body of formal political opponents, parliamentarians, journalists and political dissidents has resisted Nazarbayev through formal political channels, forged links with international supporters, and developed civil society organizations aimed at checking the expansion of unilateral executive power and pressuring the regime to respect basic political rights and curb its harassment of political opponents and censorship of the media.

Secondly, in seizing personal power over the national state, Nazarbayev has relied on a relatively narrow base of support among cronies and kinsmen. This network of loyalists has intersected with Kazakhstan's diverse array of ethnic and subethnic groupings, presenting the president with the challenge of distributing rewards and resources to his supporters without excluding outside groups to the degree that they present horizontal and vertical challenges to his rule. Potential opponents have included a large population of ethnic Russians concentrated in Kazakhstan's northernmost provinces that has pushed back against the threat that the group would be marginalized and excluded in post-independence Kazakh society and government. The group has formed formal political parties and organizations, led large demonstrations in the streets, and also appealed to the neighboring Russian Federation for assistance in the effort to preserve its position in the new country and resist policies that favor Kazakh identity, language and culture vis-à-vis the traditions of non-titular ethnicities.

Additionally, as shown by Edward Schatz (2004), Nazarbayev has faced potential opposition within the Kazakh community from other umbrella clan or horde groupings, requiring that he carefully balance, even limit, his support for his own cronies and clansmen. Finally, during the painful post-communist economic and social restructuring of the post-independence period, clear winners and losers were created. The winners were predominantly those well-connected to the former Soviet apparatus and especially those with links to Nazarbayev or subnational

powerbrokers. Many others, including those of both ethnic Kazakh and Russian heritage, saw rapidly declining living and working conditions amidst spiraling unemployment and inflation and the sudden loss of Soviet era social welfare benefits. As the economy plunged during the mid-1990s, discontented, materially-aggrieved groups took to the streets, organizing large protests against dubious efforts to privatize public enterprises, unpaid salaries and pensions, and the loss of state provisions for electricity, healthcare and other benefits.

In confronting his formal political opponents, Nazarbayev has initiated reforms of the formal political structure aimed at weakening the position of alternative sources of state power, namely the parliament, and engaged in electoral manipulation as well as harassment and intimidation to marginalize his most recalcitrant political opponents and dissidents. Importantly, these political opponents of the regime, much like their counterparts in contemporary China (Pei 2003, 43), have had neither a significant base of popular support nor effective links to everyday resisters in Kazakhstan who have organized collective actions in pursuit of material demands framed in less politicized terms. Consequently, Nazarbayev and other regime insiders have been able to harass political opponents with relative impunity without generating a powerful popular backlash. Nazarbayev's accumulation of personal political power has since the beginning of the post-independence period been couched in legalistic, constitutional arguments and justified as serving in the national interest of Kazakhstan. Insisting that he needed "strong presidential power…to overcome the problems of a transition period involving substantial and painful economic reform in a multiethnic state," Nazarbayev initiated a series of political reforms in the 1990s that led to the concentration of political power in the executive vis-à-vis the legislature and the marginalization of his political opponents (Cummings 2005, 24).

After originally enshrining a separation of powers between the executive, legislature, and judiciary in a constitution approved in 1993, Nazarbayev became increasingly impatient with an often contentious parliament that resisted his efforts to rapidly implement economic liberalization (25). In response, he "invited" the body to dissolve itself and ruled through presidential decree until elections for a new parliament could take place in 1994. The new legislature elected in 1994 also proved resistant to Nazarbayev, and at the president's urging, the Constitutional Court used a single candidate's complaint to overturn the entirety of 1994 elections, dissolve parliament and reinstate rule by presidential decree (26). After a 1995 referendum, the president's term was extended to 2000, bypassing scheduled 1996 elections. Nazarbayev now had the power to push through a new constitution that effectively lifted the president out of the executive branch, making him an "independent arbiter and the guarantor of the constitution and the state's territorial integrity" (Cummings 2000, 7). The unicameral Supreme Soviet, which had challenged Nazarbayev's will on several occasions, was replaced by a much-emasculated bicameral body that has been much more subordinate to the president (8). This reform eliminated any vestiges of a true constitutional separation of powers and made the president unaccountable to other institutions (Cummings 2000, 7; Cummings 2005, 26; Schatz 2004, 86). This recurrent reorganization of the political structure granted Nazarbayev the constitutional authority to exercise largely unchecked executive power.

During and since this period of political reorganization, the Kazakhstan saw a series of national-level formal elections. These contests, however, have increasingly served the interest of consolidating Nazarbayev's power and become extremely predictable, almost stage-managed

affairs that have attracting waning interest from the general public. In agreement with Schedler's (2009b) characterization of hegemonic electoral autocracies, the president and his supporters "always win and win big – and are expected to keep winning big in the foreseeable future…creat[ing] an equilibrium of dissuasion in which defection by either citizens or politicians seems not just cost-intensive, but simply futile" (294). These votes have included several popular referendums as well as elections for the presidency and parliament. In presidential elections, Nazarbayev received "only" 79% of the official vote in his 1999 reelection then improving to a 91% share of the vote in his successful 2005 reelection bid (Kennedy 2006, 49). Several popular referenda initiated by the president to secure requested changes to the constitution have been approved by roughly 90% of the vote (O'Beachain 2005, 762).

In 1994 legislative elections, the president's party, SNEK, received 40% of the vote, far ahead of the 17% received by two organizations linked to the Communist Party (itself banned from formal participation in this round of elections), the mostly Russian Socialist Party (15%), the People's Congress (13%), and some marginal votes received by Russian and Kazakh nationalist organizations (Olcott 2002, 102). After this parliament openly defied Nazarbayev and was ultimately dissolved, elections for the subsequent parliament have become decisively less competitive. In 1999 elections, pro-government political parties received 57% of the vote, netting them 80% of seats in the *Majlis* (Olcott 2002, 123). In 2004 and 2007, the margin of victory widened further. Pro-presidential parties received nearly 80% of the vote and all but one seat in 2004, and in 2007, the president's party *Nur-Otan* received over 88% of the vote, giving it all the seats in the *Majlis* (Freedom House 2010; Bowyer 2009, 47-50). In short, since the early 1990s, the only national elections to reflect a semblance of genuine competition were the legislative elections of 1994. These produced a brief period of presidential-parliamentary prompting Nazarbayev to use extra-constitutional means to dissolve the legislature. This initiated a succession of increasingly one-sided, predictable elections for all offices that always favor Nazarbayev and his supporters.

In achieving this level of near complete electoral dominance, Nazarbayev has used a broad range of tactics of electoral manipulation. Procedural requirements, such as bans on ethnic and religiously-based parties, required Kazakh language fluency tests for presidential candidates, a minimum number of 50,000 registered members for political parties, and fees for election participation have prevented a number of parties and candidates from participating in elections (O'Beachain 2005, 763; Kennedy 2006, 47-8). Additionally, the president has on several occasions suddenly ordered elections to take place far ahead of schedule, leaving opposition candidates as little as a month to collect the necessary signatures to stand in the elections and organize effective campaigns (Olcott 2002, 120). Secondly, a 7% voting threshold has been introduced for parties to receive seats in parliamentary elections (O'Beachain 2005, 764). This electoral rule has diminished opposition parties' prospects for winning offices or receiving a share of seats representative of their total votes received, as clearly reflected in opposition parties' total exclusion from the *Majlis* following 2007 elections.

Third, the regime has used its coercive apparatus, including the courts, security forces, and non-uniformed thugs to harass, intimidate, or eliminate opposition candidates seeking public office. Examples of this kind of activity have included the mysterious disappearance of Khasen Kozha-Akhment's list of signatures that disqualified him from participation in 1991 presidential

elections, former Prime Minister Akezhan Kazehegeldin's conviction for "participating in an unsanctioned election rally" that eliminated his presidential candidacy in 1999 (Olcott 2002, 119), and Zhamanbek Nurkadilov's death in 2005. Nurkadilov, a former mayor of Almaty and close ally of the president, had defected to the opposition in the run-up to the 2005 elections, was found dead in his apartment from what the Interior Ministry declared a suicide. This was a dubious claim indeed, considering he had been shot three times, including twice in the head (Kusainov 2005; Kennedy 2006, 51). In addition to these occurrences, grassroots campaign activists and canvassers for the opposition parties have repeatedly been intimidated and harassed by police forces as they attempt to promote their candidates (OSCE 1999, 3).

Fourth, as noted by international election observers and other commentators, both state-owned and private media overwhelming have presented a high-volume of positive coverage for Nazarbayev and pro-presidential parties, while devoting less time to opposition candidates and parties and tending to portray them in a highly-negative light. Moreover, in the run-up of elections, public buildings, billboards and streets have been littered with pro-Nazarbayev banners, posters, and print media, whereas pro-opposition activists have struggled to secure approval to post advertisements to publicize their candidates or find approved locations to hold public rallies or meetings (OSCE 2005, 9-10; Kennedy 2006, 51-2).

Finally, outright electoral fraud, including observed "instances of interference of unauthorized persons, multiple and proxy voting, ballot box stuffing, and pressure on students to vote" as well as the manipulation of vote counts has been reported by international observers (OSCE 1999, 5; OSCE 2005, 5). However, while fraud has certainly widened Nazarbayev's and pro-presidential parties' margins of victory, it has not likely determined major electoral outcomes, particularly in presidential races. As noted by Kennedy (2006), whereas Nazarbayev has typically won elections with a reported 90% of the vote, independent polls conducted by international groups have reported the president's approval rating as falling within a range of 70 to 83% (49). In other words, while electoral fraud has provided insurance to president, his general popularity has meant that extensive vote-rigging has not been required to deliver victory. Moreover, despite opposition parties' recurrent complaints about "harassment, surveillance, denial of access to the state-run media, and arbitrary banning from registering candidates" (Olcott 2002, 123), these charges have done little to stimulate widespread public outrage. Rather, political oppositionists have struggled to attract broad-based support for their cause from a population that despite being supportive of democracy on an abstract manner (Rose 2002, 106), dissatisfied with their country's governance in general (McGlinchey 2009, 131), and having become increasingly frustrated with declining material conditions (Olcott 2002, 124) has not connected such issues with formal opposition parties' struggles with Nazarbayev in the electoral arena or engaged in highly acts of popular contention aimed at the national government.

In addition to formal opposition parties and dissidents, Nazarbayev has faced a potential challenge from segments of the Kazakh population organized along ethnic and subethnic, clan-based identities. To begin with, the Kazakh regime has faced a serious potential challenge from the country's specific geographic placement at the center of Asia and its multi-ethnic composition. According to a 1989 Soviet census, ethnic Kazakhs made up only 39.7% of the republic's population, whereas 43% of citizens were of Slavic descent (Olcott 1996, 61; Aleksandrov 1999, 24; Hiro 2009, 248). In the post-communist world, these circumstances were

largely unique to Kazakhstan as most newly-independent countries had populations with clear majorities for the titular nationality. Importantly, Russians, the largest of Kazakhstan's Slavic groups and 37.8% of the population by as of 1989 were a particularly well-educated and highly-trained group. These citizens were needed to play an essential role in the country's economic future (Olcott 1996, 60). As a favored group during the Soviet era, Russians had come to be overrepresented in the Kazakh bureaucracy and formed the core of the military officer corps (Clark 1993, 4; Cummings 2005, 71). Consequently, the new Kazakh state could not, at least in the short-term, afford to have local Russians leave the country, as these individuals would be needed in filling a critical role in rebuilding the country's economy, military and social institutions.

The question of local Russians was also closely linked to the preservation of the territorial integrity of the new country. The group formed a majority in the republic's nine northern oblasts, lying along the border of the newly-formed Russian Federation (Olcott 1996, 60; Aleksandrov 1999, 24). Moreover, Tsarist then Soviet occupiers had established a permanent Russian presence in northern Kazakhstan since the late 18th century, meaning the nominal international border formed between Kazakhstan and Russia in 1991 was neither recognizable in terms of geography nor seen as real barrier in the minds of local Russians as well as some ethnic Kazakhs (Olcott 2010, 25). The new Russian Federation, which claimed the central core of the former Soviet Union, represented not only the leading regional military and political power in Central Asia but also the infrastructural link landlocked Kazakhstan would have to rely upon for access to the outside world. Most critically, Kazakhstan's abundant energy resources were entirely dependent on existing Soviet-constructed gas and oil pipelines for their transport to international export markets. This meant the country's economic well being, at least the short and medium term, required cooperation and positive relations with Russia (Nygren 2008, 172). Aware of these circumstances, local Russians who feared being marginalized in the new Kazakh state hoped to appeal to the powerful Russian Federation as "an advocate of their interests" in Kazakh domestic politics (Olcott 1996, 61). Based on the large concentration of local Russians in the northern borderlands, their critical role in Kazakhstan's post-independence state/economy-building project, their bonds local with co-ethnics directly across Kazakhstan's northern border, and the imposing power of the Russian Federation, the prospect of a North-South partition seemed very possible, if not likely. As noted by Olcott (1996), "The threat of secession is so obvious that it does not need to be stated, and it is view as so calamitous that it no serious politician in Kazakhstan dares speak of it in public" (60). The new government of Kazakhstan was thus presented with an immediate threat to its territorial integrity that required appeasing and including a critical non-Kazakh nationality in constructing a new state and economy.

These geopolitical and demographic realities compelled Nazarbayev's new government to tread carefully in its efforts to construct a new state and foster a unifying sense of Kazakh nationhood. On one hand, Nazarbayev wanted to curry Kazakh nationalism to legitimize his regime and assert the country's independence from Russia. On the other hand, such measures risked alienating local Russians and provoking his much more powerful northern neighbor. Realizing these challenges, Nazarbayev deliberately attempted to embed Kazakhstan into cooperative multilateral arrangements among the former republics of the Soviet Union where all states were equals (Olcott 2010, 25). Such a move enabled the Kazakh leadership to assert the country's independence while still emphasizing close, cooperative relations with the Russian Federation.

Reluctant to see the disintegration of the Soviet Union to begin with, Nazarbayev negotiated with neighboring countries over continuing a "ruble zone" in the former Soviet Union, arranged a Kazakh-Russian agreement over the Baikonur and Plesetsk space facility, entered the Non-Proliferation Treaty and agreed to the dismantling of its inherited nuclear arsenal in Russia, and signed a bilateral treaty of friendship, cooperation and aid with Russia (Olcott 1996, 63; Hiro 2009, 250-1). Nazarbayev's multilateralism played a central role in a broader, pragmatic strategy he has termed "multi-vector" foreign policy. By this, he meant Kazakhstan's relations with the outside should present the country as "generous, peace-loving, secular, and Eurasian" (Cummings 2004, 140). It should emphasize its multi-ethnic and dual Asian and European national identity, avoid divisive issues that might inflame the passions of Kazakh and non-Kazakh ethnic groups, and pursue friendly relations with all countries, including not only Russia but also powers such as China and the United States, which might help counterbalance the influence of its northern neighbor.

While Nazarbayev lauded the multi-ethnic identity of Kazakhstan in the international arena, in domestic politics, he attempted to emphasize the Kazakh identity of the new state, giving only limited concessions to local Russians and other non-Kazakh ethnic groups. To begin with, after his election as president in 1991, Nazarbayev and the Supreme Kenges (Assembly), formerly the Supreme Soviet, declared Kazakhstan as "the national state of the Kazakhs" in a 1992 draft constitution (Hiro 2009, 251). Sustaining an earlier ruling by the Kazakh Supreme Soviet in 1990, Kazakh was maintained as the official language of the state and its administration, while others were "guaranteed free development;" Russian was proposed as the "language of interethnic communication" (245, 251). Moreover, the document demanded that all legal public associations be open to members of all religions and ethnicities (251). These measures for the inclusion of non-Kazakhs inflamed the ire of Kazakh nationalists, while Russians and other Slavs resisted the move to establish Kazakh as the language for state business, fearing it might lead to their exclusion from public life (252-3). In response to these demands, the approved 1993 constitution left Kazakh as the official language and Russia as the lingua franca but limited language requirements for fluency in Kazakh only to the presidency. This represented something of a partial compromise designed to appease both Russian settlers and Kazakh nationalists, as a non-Kazakh with a strong command of the language could still become national leader (254).

However, as noted by Schatz (2004), as a component of "a national-cultural revival," the national leadership actively promoted the usage of Kazakh as the language of instruction in primary and secondary schools as well as universities. From 1989-96, the number of Kazakh language only secondary schools increased by 28%, while Russian-only schools declined by 37% (79-80). Moreover, state subsidies supported a growth in the number of Kazakh language print and television media outlets (80-1). Finally, the Kazakh national government rejected one of the major demands of local Russians and the Russian Federation - that ethnic Russians be able to hold dual citizenship in both Russia and Kazakhstan (Hiro 2009, 254). In the first several years of independence, Nazarbayev made some early efforts at forging compromise with non-Kazakh ethnicities and maintaining multi-ethnic inclusiveness in the construction of the new state and its political institutions. However, particularly in areas associated with the promotion of Kazakh culture and language, the new government began show clear signs of its preference for ethnic Kazakhs and emphasized their special, leading role in the post-independence state and society.

Of immediate concern to citizens of non-Kazakh ethnicities, Nazarbayev's regime quickly began to oversee the "Kazakhification" of the state, social and economic elite, edging out Slavic officeholders and economic managers out of their positions in favor of Kazakhs. Clearly, an effort was underway to achieve "redress" for privileged position of Russians and other Slavs under Soviet rule and promote the standing of ethnic Kazakhs within the new social and political order (Schatz 2004, 78-80). According to Sally Cummings (2005), the percentage of ethnic Kazakhs in national and provincial offices increased from 76% in 1999 to 85% in 2000, while the proportion of Russians concurrently dropped from 18 to 12% (69). A panel of regional experts, moreover, reported that from 1995 to 2000, "no new Russians joined the ranks of the top elite," meaning those Russians remaining in office in 2000 were all holdovers from the early period (70). This shift was even more evident at the provincial level. Whereas 60% of provincial first secretaries in 1991 were ethnic Kazakhs, 70% of provincial leaders (now holding the office of *akim*) were Kazakhs in 1995 and 88% by 2000 (70).

In addition to political elites, Kazakhification also occurred in the economic realm. In the privatization of state-owned industries and collective farms, rather than transferring many privileges of ownership over to Soviet era and predominantly Russian managers, the government implemented a system where all citizens were given vouchers that could be used to purchase state enterprises sold at auctions (Olcott 1996, 77; Hiro 2009, 255). This meant that individuals associated with the Soviet era *nomenklatura* had access to the country's mineral wealth and informal trading networks and were able to use these connections and sources of wealth to quickly accumulate capital and buy out entire enterprises at bargain rates (Olcott 1996, 77). Finally, in a heavily-manipulated 1994 general election, representation in a new parliament tilted heavily and disproportionately in favor of ethnic Kazakhs, who took 60% of seats but made up 43% of the population, whereas Russians and other Slavs, who represented 42% of the population, received only 34% of seats (Hiro 2009, 255).

In response to these widely-perceived injustices and their eroding social and economic position, ethnic Russians became increasingly discontented and frustrated. A 1994 study found that 88% of Russians believed their lives were better under the Soviet system, while a 1997 poll found that only 14% and 13.6% trusted the local and national governments respectively (Olcott 2002, 81, 182). This discontent and distrust of the post-independence regime occasionally compelled local Russians to take to the streets *en masse*, leading to a number of major demonstrations in the early-to-mid 1990s, including a protest of 15,000 at Ust-Kamenogorsk in December 1992 (Hiro 2009, 254). Such actions, however, occurred only sporadically and in a fragmented fashion. As a consequence, ethnic Russians have proven incapable of turning the tide against creeping Kazakhification and have only seen their status in society erode. To borrow language from Albert Hirschman (1970), the failure of Russian expressions of "voice" to alter political and social developments in Kazakhstan has driven many to respond through "exit." During the course of the 1990s, 1.1 to 1.5 million ethnic Russians left Kazakhstan - most choosing to migrate to the Russian Federation (Olcott 2002, 175). This rapid outflow of ethnic Russians, combined with the higher birthrates of ethnic Kazakhs, resulted in the creation of a Kazakh majority within the country by 1997 (174). Thus, despite the fact that ethnic Russians formed a near majority at the time of independence and having a powerful international ally in the Russian Federation, they were not able to effectively challenge Nazarbayev's effort to both promote

markers of Kazakh identity within the state or prevent ethnic Russians from being pressed out of positions of economic and political importance in favor of the president's cronies and kinsmen, who were overwhelmingly ethnic Kazakhs.

The changing balance of power among ethnicities, however, presents only an incomplete picture of the transformation of the Kazakh state and society overseen by Nazarbayev. Much of Nazarbayev's construction of a personalist post-independence political order was based not only on ethnic but subethnic forms of identity. During the Soviet era, a preexisting marker of group identity, the horde or umbrella clan (*zhuz*) gained important new resonance (Schatz 2004, 17). In Soviet modernization policies, the clan was rejected as anachronistic and an impediment to building a new socialist society. Additionally, the Soviet command economy was marked by constant shortages of both public services and consumer goods. Clans, driven from the legitimate public square to the private realm by hostile state social policies, emerged to fulfill this demand for discrete informal links to needed products and services and acted "as access networks to goods in short supply" (19).

In the post-independence period, Nazarbayev skillfully managed clan-based networks to construct a powerful base of personal political power while marginalizing (but not entirely excluding) the position of potential rivals. As he gradually expanded the reach of presidential power and oversaw the de-nationalization of the economy, Nazarbayev distributed public offices and newly-privatized economic assets primarily to his family members and fellow members of the Elder Umbrella Clan (Schatz 2004, 99). In addition to this strategy of "clan clientelism," where he consolidated power by tapping into his own personal networks, Nazarbayev also took care to avoid alienating other important clans. Through "clan balancing," he also allowed the other major two clans, the Middle and Younger Umbrellas Clans, to secure a certain share of public offices, ensuring these groups were not entirely excluded from the power structure and enjoyed some access to positions and influence (111). As noted by Kathleen Collins (2004), this kind of "informal pact" between groups has helped, at least in the short-term, "foster regime stability" in a transitional state such as Kazakhstan, and have also diminished prospects for democratization (227). In short, by using his levers of power to promote his own clan-based networks of loyalists within the state and economic hierarchy, Nazarbayev was able to cultivate a loyal base of support within the elite. Additionally, the president was also carefully to ensure that other major clan-based factions were granted a sufficient, if lower, share of state resources and power to dissuade these groups from aligning against him. This form of informal arrangement became particularly effective in stabilizing the regime as when it intersected with the kind of decentralized neopatrimonialism that emerged within Kazakhstan during the 1990s; as subnational powerbrokers enjoyed a sufficient degree of autonomy in making personal appointments and distributing state resources to cultivate strong personal ties to supporters within their respective local communities, forming a critical link between the political elite and popular masses.

Despite facing a myriad of potential challenges in the mid-to-late 1990s from formal political opponents and dissidents as well as rival ethnic and subethnic groups, Nazarbayev's regime remained steady and resilient, avoiding the kind of civil war seen in Tajikistan as well as the "color" revolutions seen in Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Georgia. Moreover, relative to other resilient dictatorships in the region, such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the Kazakh society

has been comparably open and not required the high degree of repression, social control, and overt state brutality applied by autocrats such as the late Saparmurat Niyazov or Islam Karimov.

As suggested in this dissertation, the unique configuration of opportunities and threats presented by Kazakhstan's decentralized personalist state structure have encouraged a pattern of protest where local claimants carry out localized and social sector-specific forms of protest related to material, limited grievances, and targeted at subnational authorities. As noted by Cummings (2005), the decentralization of state authority during the course of the 1990s, namely the center's granting "regional leaders greater economic powers without concomitant finance" contributed to "delegitimizing regional elites both in the eyes of the central elite and the population more broadly" (150). This downward shift of responsibility from the center to the periphery had a similar impact to the one reported in post-Maoist China in Chapter 5. In Kazakhstan, it "absolv[ed] the center from blame" and shifted much of the burden for providing expected public goods to under-resourced subnational governments (150).

As a consequence, despite the appearance of periodic waves of unrest in Kazakhstan, such as a rash of major labor protests in the mid-to-late 1990s, collective action has never succeeded in undergoing upward scale shift. Acts of contention have remained geographically-isolated, framed around locality or social sector-specific issues, and uncoordinated and fragmented on the national scale. Moreover, despite citizens' extremely low level of satisfaction with the government, their perception of the state as corrupt and incompetent, and the relative and absolute declines in living standards for most citizens, these views have not typically translated into anti-regime, or more specifically, anti-Nazarbayev collective actions (McGlinchey 2009, 130-1; Olcott 2002, 197-206). Rather, those dissidents who have directly challenged Nazarbayev have been able to organize only small, isolated public demonstrations, enjoyed only very limited public support, and have not inspired popular backlashes against the regime when it harasses, detains, and imprisons these individuals (McGlinchey 2009, 130).

8.3.2. Popular Opposition and Labor Protests

Upon independence in 1991, Kazakhstan's economy was in dire straits. The country was well-endowed in terms of its relatively well-educated and skilled population, manufacturing capacity, agricultural production and extensive stocks of exploitable mineral and energy resources (Olcott 2002, 128-9). However, in the early years of Kazakh independence, the country's economy struggled with the legacy of a century of state socialism. All of its economic sectors were oriented not around meeting the demands of the market but rather fulfilling quotas set by central planners in Moscow (129). A common problem throughout the post-communist region, the legacies of socialism were particularly pronounced in Kazakhstan, a country that had been a leading exporter of raw materials, agricultural goods, and manufactured products within the Soviet Union. Now the country saw its export markets within the former Soviet Union (FSU) shrink but was left with highly-specialized industries that lacked self-sufficiency and were capable only of contributing to larger (Soviet) production cycles and a national infrastructure system that was unable to connect the country to export markets outside the FSU (129-131). Like other societies transitioning away from central-planning, Kazakhstan's economy suffered from the misallocation of labor and capital resources, distorted pricing mechanisms, a large stock of redundant and unprofitable industries, massive government debts and a lack of a reliable

financial infrastructure (De Broeck and Kostial 1998, 17-37). In Kazakhstan, these difficulties were especially challenging because at the time of independence, only 8% of the national economy was under the direct control of authorities within the republic, with the lion's share of the economy under the direct or partial control of Moscow (Olcott 2002, 131).

Much like many other post-communist rulers, Nazarbayev was faced with the need to oversee a painful "triple transition" (Grzymala-Busse and Jones Luong 2002, 529-39). This involved the simultaneous reconstruction of civil society, economic and political institutions on a scale akin to state-building (529-39). In approaching this task, Nazarbayev made the decision to gamble that with the assistance of foreign investors, the wealth extracted from Kazakhstan's energy resources could generate sufficient revenues to needed to sustain Soviet-era social welfare programs and cover other government obligations, stimulate economic growth, and improve living standards (Auty 1997, 4; Jones Luong 1999, 31). This influx of revenue would help cushion the pain of serious economic restructuring and help stabilize society as it underwent this transition. As noted by Jones Luong (1999) "overly-optimistic" officials in the Kazakh regime "expressly relied upon the promised wealth of Kazakhstan's immense oil and gas reserves as the solution to the most acute social and economic problems, and the key to future development" (29-30). Enthused by the prospect of the high volume of wealth that might be generated from the country's gas and oil resources, Nazarbayev in 1997 boldly stated, "I am convinced that by 2030 Kazakhstan will become a Central Asian snow leopard and will serve as an example to other developing states" (Quoted in Jones Luong 1999, 30).

As noted by a number of authors, this single-sighted emphasis on the extraction of energy resources was potentially disastrous for the country's economic prospects and its political and social stability (Auty 1997, 14; Jones Luong 1999; Pomfret 2005, 859). To begin with, Nazarbayev avoided and delayed currency reform until the last moment. He defied the advice of foreign advisors and Western-trained Kazakh economists who urged him to abandon the ruble and introduce a national currency. Instead, Nazarbayev kept Kazakhstan locked into the ruble zone until introducing the *tenge* in November 1993, a decision that resulted in a mass influx of rubles from other former Soviet republics that were quickly abandoning the currency (Koshanov 1995, 7; Olcott 2002, 132-3). This resulted in staggering inflation rates of 1,381, 1,662, and 1,892% in 1992 to 1994 (Pomfret 2005, 860), an outcome that completely devalued citizens' savings and led to the spiking cost of living expenses.

Additionally, the important economic sectors of agriculture and industry, which employed 22.1% and 19.7% of the workforce in 1990 (De Broeck and Kostial 1998, 28) were largely neglected. As the government's attention shifted to the extraction of energy resources, state funds invested in agriculture and industry dropped dramatically. By 1993, state investments in agriculture and industry were 18.0% and 35.1% of their respective 1991 totals in constant prices. By 1997, these investments had fallen to 0.2% and 1.6% of 1991 investment totals (Hansen *et al* 1998, 42). This inattention only exacerbated two economic sectors that were already in serious decline. By 1995, the total levels of agricultural and industrial output were 57.5% and 47.8% of their 1990 figures (De Broeck and Kostial 1998, 6).

The plight of the agricultural and industrial sectors and the nearly 40% of the Kazakh workforce they employed was further complicated with the initiation of a "three-stage" program of

privatization put in place to drive the country towards rapid economic liberalization. From 1991-1992, small-scale properties such as housing units and small enterprises were privatized. In a second (1993-1994) stage, a voucher program was used to privatize most enterprises with 200 or more employees and agricultural assets such as equipment and livestock but not land were also privatized. Finally, the third (1994-1997) stage involved the case-by-case privatization of Kazakhstan's largest and most profitable industries, including many mineral and petroleum resources and its largest factories, and often the transfer of these assets to foreign management and eventual foreign ownership (Cummings 2005, 29-33; Olcott 2002, 136-139).

The transfer of economic assets from the public to private realm, coupled with the government's neglect of struggling agricultural and industrial sectors culminated in the rapid decline in living standards of most Kazakh, in both relative and absolute terms. During privatization, individuals well-connected to the regime rapidly began to accumulate wealth and control over assets previously-owned by the state, particularly in energy resources, many of which were rumored to have been purchased in "closed auctions" (Olcott 2002, 138). Like their counterparts in many other countries in the former Soviet Union, the newly affluent made no secret of their wealth and ostentatiously displayed it with the purchase of expensive foreign-made luxury cars and construction of large mansions (138). This wealth stood in contrast to many Kazakh citizens who were struggling mightily in the mid-to-late 1990s, fueling a growing sense of disenchantment, frustration and moral outrage that was rapidly spreading among the populace (197).

If Nazarbayev's intention was to transfer wealth from lucrative energy exports to maintain or improve most citizens' standard of living and social welfare provisions, this was not the reality by the mid-to-late 1990s. First, the economy was not buoyed by energy sales as hoped. Global oil prices were low during the 1990s, and inadequate pipelines and other equipment issues delayed the extraction and delivery of energy resources to export markets, making government officials' assessment of the rapidity and volume of the wealth to be produced unrealistically optimistic (Jones Luong 1999, 39). This delay, paired with the collapse of economic output in other sectors, resulted in a massive collapse of the Kazakh economy in the mid-1990s, marked by declines in GDP of -11.0% (1991), -5.3 (1992), -9.2 (1993), -12.6 (1994), and -8.2 (1995) (World Bank 2010b). Second, even as the overall size of the economy shrank by nearly half during this period, Nazarbayev's regime took relatively little action to lessen the pain of most citizens. During this period, the number of wage employees in industry was cut by 36% from 2.3 million in 1991 to 1.3 million in 1996 amidst the liquidation or privatization of many factories, average real wages fell by 50% between 1991 and 1997, and nearly two-thirds of the country fell below the poverty line (Murthi 1998, 6-7; Olcott 2002, 201). Meanwhile, an extensive system of social security from the Soviet era, "which combined guaranteed employment with a generous system of pensions, sickness and maternity benefits and subsidies for food, fuel, transport and a range of consumer items" was cut quickly and dramatically (29). During a period of declining GDP, overall state spending on the social safety net as a proportion of GDP declined by over a third from 11.2% of GDP in 1992 to 6.6% in 1996 (40). In short, as the 1990s progressed, working class Kazakhs were faced with heavy cuts to their social welfare benefits, high unemployment, high inflation, and the indignity of seeing better-connected individuals enjoy unprecedented levels of luxury.

These declines in living standards contributed to a growing sense of frustration and anger among the growing ranks of impoverished, unemployed and increasingly marginalized segments of society. A 1997 nationwide survey sponsored by the United States Information Agency found a high level of frustration with the economic and social conditions within Kazakhstan, dissatisfaction with the government's performance, and pessimism about the prospects of the future. A majority of Kazakhs (76.82%) described the economy as either "fairly bad" or "very bad," (Brif 1997, 153). Nearly half (49.2%) reported the country was going in the "wrong direction," as opposed to the 31% who believed it was going in the "right direction," and revealing a high degree of nostalgia for the pre-independence era, a substantial majority (73.4%) disagreed with the statement, "It is a good thing the Soviet Union no longer exists" (152, 167). When asked to identify the single most serious problem facing Kazakhstan, respondents most frequently mentioned unemployment (25.96%), nonpayment problems (18.44%) and the country's economic situation (12.22%) (152). Showing a high level of dissatisfaction with the government's overall performance, majorities of respondents reported it had done either a "fairly" or "very" poor job at reducing inflation (52.61%), maintaining law and order (64.2), guaranteeing the payment of wages, salaries and pensions (86.6), and providing social protection for the unemployed, homeless and needy (83.9) (170-1).

In a reflection of the real and perceived decentralization of authority in Kazakhstan, subnational authorities were more likely to be blamed for the government's inability to address these important issues than their national-level counterparts. When asked about their level of confidence in the governments of local and provincial *akims*, 52.7% reported "no" or "not very much" confidence (171). Posed the same question about Nazarbayev, a significant majority (64.6%) reported "a great deal" or "a fair amount" of confidence in his performance (173). Thus, while most citizens were highly disenchanted with their government and the state-of-affairs in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, this growing sense of frustration tended to be targeted locally, at perceivably corrupt and/or incompetent regional officials.

As early as the late Soviet period, Kazakhstan's workers were among the first to translate their growing sense of disillusionment into forceful collective actions and carried out protests involving numbers of participants reaching the tens of thousands. In July 1989, coalminers from Karaganda Oblast, angered by their poor working conditions, low wages, inadequate safety measures and overpaid company managers, went on strike and filled the city squares of Saran, Abai and Shakhtinsk in mass demonstrations (Ardayev 1989, 12-13; *Moscow Times* 1995). Within a matter of several days, the strike action spread quickly throughout the region and soon brought a halt to production at all 26 mines in the Karaganda coal basin (Ardayev 1989, 12-13). Persisting into the last days of the Soviet Union, this and other strike actions periodically broke out in the oblast with great intensity, including a March 1991 strike that involved as many as 70,000 miners (Shogren 1991). As these events progressed in Karaganda Oblast, the striking coal miners began to develop an organizational infrastructure capable of sustaining and coordinating collective action across mines, which enabled them to exert greater pressure on the regional government and mine management.

By the fall of 1990, organizers began forming independent trade unions with elected representatives. Soon thereafter, they declared a founding congress for a new "Union of Working People of Karaganda Province" and by 1991 had entered negotiations with the

provincial administration (Stefashin 1990; Lisovenko 1990; Stefashin 1991a; Stefashin 1991b). As noted by Mark Beissinger (2002), this sudden burst of contentious labor activism in Kazakhstan in the late-1980s and early 1990s did not occur in isolation. Rather, it was but one component of a wider "mobilization" or "protest cycle" (Tarrow 1994, 153) taking place across the Soviet Union at the time. After the initiation of *glasnost* policies, which relaxed state controls over freedoms of expression and assembly, protest actors challenged the boundaries of tolerated collective action, opening new political opportunities and emboldening the efforts others (Beissinger 2002, 35). In addition to the coalminers of Kazakhstan and their equally contentious counterparts in Russia and Ukraine, this rising tide of mobilization involved protestors across the social and geographic spectrum of Soviet society mobilizing around nationalist, environmental, democratization, and class-oriented issues (30). In Kazakhstan, powerful movements that emerged during the late Soviet period included Nevada-Semipalatinsk, a powerful antinuclear mass movement that included extensive involvement by ethnic Kazakhs and Russians, as well as the Kazakh nationalist organizations named Alash, Azat, and Zheltoskan, the ethnic Russian group Vedinstvo, and the pro-Cossack Vozrozhdenie (Olcott 2002, 90). Critically, as documented by Beissinger (2002), this upsurge in mobilization, particularly nationalist mobilization, both empowered mass actors and encouraged the weakening of the Soviet coercive capacity, leading to the fragmentation of the regime and the ultimate disintegration of the USSR (36-7). Moreover, heading into the post-Soviet era, many citizens had gained experience participating in one or more of these diverse movements, and the new country had an extensive body of organizational networks that crisscrossed Kazakh society, and given a differently-shaped structure of political opportunities, might have contributed to the emergence of contentious, nationwide social movements in the post-independence period.

Of interest to this study, in the mass mobilization of Kazakh workers during the late-Soviet period did produce important reverberations well into the post-independence era and presented a powerful potential source of national-level mass mobilization. As suggested in the following section, however, at many important critical junctures, the decentralized structure of the new Kazakh state played an important role in impeding the upward scale shift of contention, leaving it in a fragmented and localized form that could be readily contained by the Nazarbayev regime. Among the more contentious of Kazakhstan's citizens, the miners of the Karaganda coal basin continued to carry out frequent and intense collective actions well into the 1990s. Organized around a network of trade unions, this nascent labor movement featured organizations such as the "Confederation of Free Trade Unions" and leading union organizers such as Leonid Solomin who had achieved notoriety on the national stage by the early-1990s (Olcott 2002, 200). As the country's economy began to spiral downward, the country's GDP shrinking by nearly half between 1990 and 1995 (World Bank 2010b), and economic restructuring deepened, the position of the coal miners became ever more precarious, soon prompting a post-independence wave of collective action in Karaganda. State subsidies to coal mines were cut, price controls that had inflated the value of coal were eliminated, and many mines struggled to maintain profitability (Matayev 1995, 28).

Despite their dismal prospects in the market economy, their growing debts, and the inaccessibility of affordable loans, the coal mines continued operations without interruption (Koshanov 1995, 7; Matayev 1995, 28). Local and regional governments continued to receive goods from suppliers such as the coal mines, promising to repay these debts when funds became

available. However, these governments struggled to extract tax revenue from local enterprises and also witnessed the slashing of the budget transfers they had previously received from the central government (Desai and Idson 2001, 5). Testifying to the state of confusion in Kazakhstan at the time, as of February 1995, the city government of Almaty had reportedly been receiving coal shipments as usual for six months without having made any payments to the coal mines. In the meantime, city officials had repeatedly and unsuccessfully pled with the national government for funding to cover their debts (Matayev 1995, 28). It soon became apparent that regional governments could not repay their suppliers or cover the costs of enterprises running high debts. As debt problems spread to failing steel mills, power plants, and other industries, these enterprises also began to default on their debts to the coal mines (28). This brought about an intensifying "nonpayments" crisis, in which the coal mines and other enterprises could neither pay off their mounting debts nor cover the wages and benefits owed to their workers (Koshanov 1995, 7). In spite of this growing uncertainty over how enterprises and local governments would cover their debts, workers had little choice but to remain on the job. Work persisted, and the mines kept shipping coal and filling the orders of local and regional governments and other customers. Speaking on the situation of the coal miners, Vladimir Karmakov, Kazakhstan's Minister of Power comments reflected the confusion of the time:

> "Of course the miners have a right to strike. Their families are going hungry, and they have no basic social support. On the other hand, why are they demanding their pay from the ministry and the government? I've repeatedly told them that they shouldn't give anybody coal without payment. But the mines continue to ship it" (Matayev 1995, 29).

As reported in Russian news dispatches and reflected in national survey data, the workers in Karaganda and across Kazakhstan were among the first to feel the pain of the growing debt crisis. At an accelerating pace, fewer and fewer workers were receiving their pay checks or pensions on time or at all (Matayev 1995, 28; Brif 1997, 155). Moreover, in an effort to restore failing enterprises to profitability and attract private or foreign investors, government-owned industries were often divested of the social welfare obligations owed to their workers and pensioners (Olcott 2002, 139). In rapid fashion, workers began to see their benefits eliminated and found themselves without wages and pension payments owed to them. Conditions became increasingly dire, and the workers responded by mobilizing *en masse.* Making use of the organizational infrastructure first constructed during the late Soviet period, they carried out frequent labor actions involving large numbers of participants.

Some of the earliest major protests in the post-independence era took place in January 1992 in the Karaganda coal basin. In these actions, miners stopped production to demand higher wages, greater worker ownership over the mines they worked in and the right to directly keep a share of the profits generated from coal sales (Kalinin 1992; Olcott 2002, 200, 297). In addition to these material demands, many frustrations of many miners and residents in Karaganda were initially directed personally at Ideal Musalimov, the oblast's leader held over from the Soviet era. While the surrounding community was descending into unprecedented levels of poverty and economic hardship, Musalimov was reportedly using his power to amass substantial wealth, surround himself with an affluent coterie of supporters, and enjoy a lavish lifestyle within his large private residence (Komarov 1992, 85-6). Since before the Soviet collapse, representatives of the coal miners had been making calls for the chairman's resignation (86). As the early 1992 strikes spread from their starting point in Tentek mine across Karaganda, they had an immediate

economic impact. Lacking fuel, the nearby Karaganda metallurgical combine was forced to shut down almost entirely and halt steel smelting and sheet metal production entirely. The coal stoppage also presented the danger that local residents would be unable to heat their homes during a harsh winter (*Moscow Radio Rossii Network* 1992). As work stoppages at the mines continued for a number of weeks and could not be resolved at the oblast or enterprise level, the economic shockwaves spread from Karaganda into the wider Kazakh economy. This prompted an intervention from above. On January 14, Prime Minister Sergey Tereshchenko visited Karaganda to meet with representatives of the striking miners (*Moscow Mayak Radio Network* 1992, 72). After days of negotiations, representatives of the government and the coal miners were able to forge a compromise solution granting the workers wage raises and the right to directly sell a share of the coal they extracted on the open market (*Moscow Radio Moscow World Service* 1992, 84; *Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network* 1992, 83). After as many as five weeks of work stoppages at some mines and loss in coal production of 130,000 tons, the strike was lifted and work gradually resumed (*Moscow Radio Moscow World Service* 1992, 84).

Another related development came several weeks later, when Nazarbayev appointed coal mine director, Petr Nefedov, as the new governor of Karaganda oblast. Nefedov's appointment, which came as the result of a presidential decree, represented something of a rebuke to the Karaganda regional elite gravitating around the person of Ideal Musalimov. This was a group which failed to contain the January worker unrest. As something of a concession frustrated miners and other local residents, who linked the local administration's corruption and incompetence to the deteriorating living conditions they were enduring (Komarov 1992, 85-6). As later observed by journalist Vladimir Ardayev (1992b), Nefedov's appointment stood out even after a major rearrangement of provincial administrations occurred later in the year on a national scale. While most first secretaries of provincial party organizations from the Soviet era were simply reappointed as governors in their respective oblasts, Nefedov was the exceptional outsider who displaced an established first secretary to become an oblast governor (73). The uniqueness of Nefedov's background among the first round of *akims* appointed in 1992 suggests that in a pattern reminiscent of contemporary China, his selection and the supplanting the established local powerbroker, Musalimov, represented something of top-down sanction against a regional administration that had struggled to address the problem of social stability.

The miners' January victory was short-lived. In May and June 1992, representatives of the workers claimed that they were not receiving the concessions promised by central government negotiators earlier in the year, namely their increased wages and right to sell a proportion of their respective mines' coal. In response, the independent unions initiated a work stoppage on May 7, organized a night-time march in Karaganda on June 4, and even threatened to mobilize city residents around the oblast administration building and place it under "a lengthy siege" (Stefashin 1992, 78; *Moscow Program Radio Odin Network* 1992, 57). Of note, labor organizers at this point appealed to the national government for assistance, demanding a meeting with the president and urging the national legislature to take action on their plight, but applied a repertoire of contention that more directly targeted and placed pressure on the oblast-level government. This unrest ultimately came to an end after a representative of the national parliament and a former member of the Karaganda labor movement came to the oblast, met with strike leaders and provided documentation suggesting the government's good faith in delivering its promised concessions (Stefashin 1992, 78-9).

A general strike of miners across Karaganda was also threatened in February 1994 (Akimov 1994, 57). This action, however, was cancelled after the miner's strike committee believed that their primary demands were met via short negotiations with government officials. Government officials would ensure the payment of the debts owed to the mines by their purchasers in other industries and the central bank would issue loans to make these payments possible. Despite this brief victory, the position of miners remained highly uncertain; at this time, the coal mines in Karaganda alone already owed their workers $16 million USD (180 million *tenge*) and had no clear way of paying these fees back (57). In May, a largely isolated and short-lived strike involving around 500 miners broke out in Karaganda, the workers demanding the payment of unpaid wages and better social security benefits, such as housing credit and medical insurance (*Moscow Interfax* 1994a, 70; *Moscow Interfax* 1994b, 58). In these early protests from 1992 to 1994 in the Karaganda coal basin, strikes were intermittent and sometimes won short victories for the miners. However, they were unable to ensure the long-term payment of workers' wages, which persisted as the result of Kazakhstan's rapidly declining economy and the regional debt crisis at the associated with it.

In the winter of 1995, deteriorating conditions inspired even more concerted action. By early January, the independent coal miner unions were again preparing for massive strikes in Karaganda. Receiving support from their counterparts in local metallurgy enterprises and fellow coal miners in Ekibastuz in northeastern Kazakhstan, the Karaganda miners demanded government funds be used to immediately cover wages owed to workers in both industries and regions and provide price subsidies to prop up the flagging coal industry (Galaktionova 1995, 27). While the trade unions made preparations and declared a "pre-strike situation," the regional government took legal actions intended to discourage their plans. A regional court ruled that the Independent Trade Union of Miners had led illegal strikes in the previous year. It ordered the union to pay 1 million *tenge* to a local coal company, Karagandaugol, and another 100,000 *tenge* to the public treasury and individually fined three strike organizers 1,200 *tenge* each (*Almaty Kazakh Radio Network* 1995a, 43).

This kind of intimidation was clearly not successful in dissuading the miners or their organizers. On January 13, after miners' voted to authorize a union central committee to declare a region-wide strike, 100,000 Karaganda miners, joined by metallurgical workers and miners outside the basin in Ekibastuz walked off their job sites and initiated an open-ended strike (Matayev 1995, 28; Galaktionova 1995, 27). The effect was immediate. All 23 mines in the Karaganda coal basin stopped completely, while mines in Ekibastuz also shut down operations, even to the extent of halting deliveries en route to local power plants (Galaktionova 1995a, 28). On January 16, the oblast governor of Karaganda, Petr Nefedov, flew to Almaty with a manager of Karagandaugol to meet with national officials about the escalating crisis. Rumors soon spread among the striking workers that major concessions were forthcoming (Kokhanova 1995, 54). That evening, alongside representatives from coal mining companies in Karaganda and Ekibastuz, both national and oblast-level government officials held a press conference and declared that they had reached a compromise settlement with the striking miners. This involved the government's issuing of credits to major consumers of coal with debts owed to the mines, a year-long grace period granted to the mines for their debts to the government, a policy change enabling the affected mines to pay some of their debts to state in coal shipments rather than cash, and the

partial payment of workers' unpaid wages for the month of November and partially for December (Kokhanova 1995, 54; *Almaty Kazakhstan Television Network* 1995, 64). According to government representatives, the striking miners in both Karaganda and Ekibastuz had accepted these terms and had begun to return to work (64). Almost immediately, union representatives refuted the claim that a settlement had been reached with the miners and work had resumed. Rather, as reported by Vyacheslav Sidorov, chairman of the coal miners' territorial committee, the work stoppages continued at full strength, and while the unions had requested direct talks with the national government, these were largely ignored (Pesnev 1995a, 52). Instead, national officials such as Vladimir Kormakov somewhat obtusely advised the union reps that they had been foolish to ship coal to consumers without any money to pay for it in the first place (52). In other words, the central government had no role to play in the resolution of coal miners' strike and the Karaganda miners needed to resolve their wage arrears issues with their local buyers on their own at the local or enterprise level.

The situation became increasingly unclear as statements regarding the general strike made by mine managers and local-level officials increasingly contradicted those of union representatives, the former suggesting contented miners were returning to work and the latter indicating the workers were maintaining solidarity across enterprises and regions (Galaktionova 1995b, 86-7). In reality, the unity of the cross-regional strike movement was breaking down as many local-level officials and enterprise managers across Karaganda and Ekibastuz were partially repaying wages owed to worker to any miners willing to return to work. Without a formal agreement having been settled, by January 31, coal miners at the Shakhtinskaya site had accepted a partial payment of their wages and were back on the job (*Almaty Kazakh Radio Network* 1995b, 46). Similarly, at Tentekskaya mine, even a corps of workers described as "extremely rebellious" grudgingly agreed to return to work when offered even a fairly modest repayment of their wages (Pesnev 1995a, 58). By February 1, the Lenin mine and portions of the Kostenko mines in Karaganda were also operating as usual. In an exchange resolved at the local level, funds owed to the mines by a metallurgy plant were acquired and distributed to the workers for wage arrears (*Almaty KARAVAN-BLITS* 1995, 64). Using targeted concessions extended at the local or enterprise-level, subnational authorities were effectively resolving the labor dispute on a case-by-case basis, which quickly challenged the unity of the strikers across the region.

While generally effective, buying off workers at the local and enterprise level was not necessarily always a smooth process. At the Kostenko mine, local administrators had paid out wage debts to only one segment of the workforce, leaving the remainder with nothing. This led to a series of violent altercations at the worksite where unpaid, striking miners came to blows with those who had received wage payments and elected to return to work (64). Such actions began to divide and create discord within the workforce. These tactics ultimately frustrated the efforts of unionists to maintain the solidarity of the miners, and after on-site negotiations initiated by local government officials and mine managers, segments of the workforce gradually began to return to work. In an interview on January 31, Vyacheslav Sidorov, a union leader for the Karaganda miners reported that local government officials were applying other divide and rule tactics to break the solidarity of the strikers. While insisting the miners were committed by and large to the strike, Sidorov admitted that in Ekibastuz such tactics were effective. There, coal miners were presented with "official" documents showing that 400 railcars in Karaganda miners had been loaded with coal, demonstrating that miners in this other region had struck some

kind of bargain and broken the strike (Galaktionova 1995c, 28). In response to this information, the Ekibastuz miners ended their own work stoppage and resumed their work (28). The offer of scarce funds for workers by local officials and enterprise managers and the application of other tactics aimed at breaking the resolve and unity of the strikers quickly began to take its toll. By February 8, 18 mines in Karaganda had returned to operation and in those mines that were still nominally on strike, segments of the workforce had returned to work. In response to these developments, on February 9, the Karaganda Central Trade Union Committee of Workers in the Coal Industry called a plenum and after a vote of members in attendance, decided to officially call an end to the strike (Pesnev 1995b, 58; *Almaty Kazakh Radio Network* 1995c, 72).

Thus, one of the major labor actions of post-independence, the January 1995 Karaganda-Ekibastuz coal mining strike came to an end. Like earlier actions in 1992 and 1994, these collective actions were framed primarily around social sector-specific demands, primarily the wages owed to miners, and demonstrations and other acts of contention were geographically restricted within Karaganda Oblast. Moreover, to a greater extent than in 1992, the 1995 strikes were resolved at the subnational level. While strike organizers may have sought a national audience and direct negotiations with the national government, such a meeting apparently never actually took place, no national officials came to meet with union officials in Karaganda, and high level negotiations in Almaty involved mine managers and the government, excluding union representatives. Rather, after Karaganda governor Petr Nefedov met with national officials and secured concessions to help resolve the crisis, these resources were in turn used to strike local and enterprise-level bargains with miners, divide the workforce, and break the resolve of the strikers. Unlike 1992, in this case, any intervention from above was limited and subnational authorities took a leading role in breaking the strike. These episodes appeared to have a lasting impact on the miners of Kazakhstan's restive Karaganda coal basin. After subnational authorities took the lead in extending concessions to workers, typically in a piecemeal fashion, strike actions coordinated on a cross-regional scale became increasingly rare and eventually extinct. In an apparent learning process, the workers seeming ever more unwilling to engage in the kind of risky coordinated actions attempted in the mid-1990s. This left subsequent popular contention within the region as largely fragmented and localized affairs targeted at specific coal management companies or specific local governments.

As worker unrest threatened the stability of the northern Kazakhstan coal belt, the acceleration of economic restructuring during the mid-1990s encouraged similar trends in other parts of the country. Much the same as labor contention in the Karaganda basin, these actions demonstrated nascent efforts at upward scale shift that were ultimately aborted when subnational authorities emerged as the prevailing decision-makers for extending concessions or applying coercion in response to outbreaks of unrest. Consequently, protestors shifted their actions towards localized targets, abandoning efforts at wider coordination. Much like in the north, in the southern regions of Kazakhstan, national and subnational governments were increasingly unable to prop up unprofitable and heavily indebted mining and manufacturing enterprises. These authorities attempted to rapidly divest themselves of these properties through privatization, even when they lacked clear procedures for carrying out such a process (Olcott 2002, 199). Moreover, workers across industries and regions struggled with the slashing of their social benefits, their unpaid wages and pensions, and increasingly the loss of their jobs as restructured enterprises began to

shed social service obligations and employees to restore profitability and attract foreign and private investors.

One notable incident occurred in October 1997. After not being paid their wages for over 10 months, as many as 2,000 workers of the Achpolimetal ore-refining plan at Kentau in South Kazakhstan (Shymkent) Oblast rose up in protest (Akimov 1997; Jamestown Foundation 1997a; Olcott 2002, 199). Demanding the full payment of their unpaid wages, amounting to as much as $1.6 million USD and a government bailout of their struggling enterprise, the workers and their families embarked on a 1,000 kilometer "protest march" to Almaty to meet with President Nazarbayev "tell [him] about their miserable living conditions" and request assistance (Akimov 1997; Jamestown Foundation 1997a; Olcott 2002, 199). The marchers, however, had travelled only 23 kilometers in the direction of the capital when 700 security officers from local police forces and anti-riot OMON units assembled on a bridge over the Turkestan Canal and prevented the protestors from continuing on their journey (*Current Digest of the Russian Press* 1997, 18). Much like their counterparts in contemporary China, local Kazakh officials were keen to use their authority over regional coercive apparatuses keep the incident contained to their respective community and reduce the public profile of this outbreak of unrest as much as possible.

Their path blocked, the demonstrators constructed a large tent city near the banks of the canal (Akimov 1997). The government of South Kazakhstan Oblast then sent officials to the encampment and initiated negotiations with representatives the protestors. As these talks proceeded for weeks, the situation became increasingly volatile as many of the marchers resorted to extreme tactics, including a hunger strike and even made preparations to carry out an assault on the bridge (Akimov 1997). The protest pressed on into early November, eventually coming to an end after disease had begun to spread throughout the tent city, and representatives of the oblast administration agreed to a partial payment of the workers' unpaid wages (Akimov 1997; Olcott 2002, 199). As in Karaganda, the Kentau protestors negotiated the parameters of tolerated protest with subnational authorities. Efforts at pressing their claims to the national level with an Almaty-aimed protest march were rapidly quashed by force, while actions directed at oblast-authorities were resolved with the extension of partial concessions. The lesson expressed to popular claimants was that effective collective action was most likely to succeed if directed at the subnational level and not linked to broader national issues or targeted at the central government. This is a pattern that would repeat at other sites as well.

Immediately after the initiation of the Kentau march, workers at a phosphorus plant in Zhanatas, near Taras in Zhambyl Oblast organized a succession of protests from December 1997 to February 1998. Demanding the payment of over two years of unpaid wages, several hundred workers went on strike in December, their numbers soon increasing to 3,000 (Olcott 2002, 199). Seeking to draw attention to their plight, the strikers attempted to send delegates to Almaty to plead for help, but these individuals were stopped by police (199). Local officials also intimidated news reporters in an effort to prevent the story from getting out. When a Russian television crew attempted to meet with strikers and film the situation in Zhanatas, it was intercepted by security forces, its members were twice detained, and its videotapes were destroyed (Kuznetsov 1998, 18). After their initial efforts failed, the workers adopted more extreme tactics. 160 of the participants began a hunger strike in December, living in tents constructed around their company's administrative building in 24-hour demonstration;

eventually 50 hunger strikers had to be hospitalized and one died of a heart attack (Kuznetsov 1998, 18). Soon thereafter, a number of workers raised the stakes and threatened to set themselves on fire (18). In February, 290 frustrated workers blockaded a railway line outside of Taras, holding up 29 trains attempting to travel to Uzbekistan and elsewhere in Kazakhstan (*Itar-Tass Weekly News* 1998). After the blocking of the railroad, Zhambyl Oblast officials reacted harshly, unleashing over 1,000 policemen to break up the demonstrations, arresting the protest organizers and even charging them for the costs incurred during the disruption of the railway line (Olcott 2002, 199). Notably, in both the Kentau and Zhanatas incidents, oblast authorities in South Kazakhstan and Zhambyl took a leading role in using a blend of coercion and sometimes token concessions to quell social unrest within their territories, an outcome that in many respects paralleled the actions of Chongqing, Guangdong, and other Chinese subnational governments described in Chapter 5. At Zhanatas in particular, local authorities were particularly vigilant about preventing protestors from delivering their message to a national or international audience, both intercepting delegates sent by strikers to the national government and forcefully silencing reporters attempting to report on the incident.

During the years from 1995 to 1997, as waves of labor protests broke out across the country in Karaganda, Chimkent, and Zhanatas, Kazakhstan in many ways appeared to be a regime on the verge of collapse. In fact, such an outcome would soon occur in Serbia in 1999 and thereafter in a number of autocracies in the FSU. Workers across the country working in manufacturing, metallurgy, mining and other sectors were pushing back against advancing economic reforms and a mounting debt crisis that left them without their Soviet-style social welfare programs, rapidly-inflating consumer prices, months and years of unpaid wages and pensions, and the prospect of unemployment and poverty. The workers held similar grievances, organized enterprise-based independent unions, and adopted the general strike as a featured tactic of collective resistance as well as tactics of desperation ranging from blocking railroads to self-immolations. Moreover, particularly in the Karaganda coal basin, workers built upon the *glasnost* protest cycle of the late Soviet period in developing an advanced organizational structure featuring elected union representatives and networks of unions that linked enterprises across the region and beyond. Workers at smaller protests, such as Kentau, also made efforts to organize independent unions (Olcott 2002, 199). In addition, leading representatives of the independent trade unions, such as Madel Ismailov, chairman of the Workers' Movement of Kazakhstan, and Nazarbayev's formal opponents in the national parliament, attempted to politicize these protests and use them as stepping stones to mobilize the population around a formal opposition capable of challenging the president's growing power (Jamestown Foundation 1997b). These factors suggested that these various streams of labor contention might forge links across Kazakhstan's regions and establish a genuine nationwide labor movement capable of maintaining sustained interaction with the regime (Olcott 2002, 199) and even using this power to threaten the unchecked personal power of Nazarbayev.

Despite a number of factors that might have facilitated the emergence a national labor movement, no protest actors were able to sustain contention coordinated on a national scale. Labor activists proved capable of mobilizing as many as 100,000 workers during major strike actions, workers held common grievances centering on declines in living and working standards associated with economic restructuring, and President Nazarbayev provided a potential, unifying target who commanded sweeping political power at the national level, as he himself was linked

to high-profile corruption scandals (Olcott 2002, 20) and played a central determining role in the country's much-maligned economic reforms. However, even when massive strikes were organized such as the 1995 coal miners' strike in Karaganda, claimants continued to focus on specific material grievances, such unpaid wages to coal miners, did not adopt widened and more-inclusive frames that might incorporate citizens in other economic sectors into a common identity, and did not forge lasting cross-regional organizational linkages that might enable sustained contestation of the state. While desperate workers at Karaganda, Zhanatas, and Kentau considered pleading their case on a national stage, their actions did not expand beyond their region and/or industry-specific groups. At Zhanatas and Kentau, efforts to petition the national leadership were halted by local security forces and subsequent negotiations were handled by regional governments. Seeking to protect their own positions and reputations, these subnational authorities took every effort to minimize the scope and public profile of these outbreaks of unrest and manage them within their own territorial subunits.

Tellingly, even at the largest and geographically-extensive labor action discussed, the Karaganda episode, remained an overwhelmingly coal miner centered activity despite some ill-fated efforts to branch out more widely, and the fragmentation and collapse of the wider strike occurred as local officials and enterprise managers used tactics of deception, targeted concessions and coercion to divide the striking workers and break their resolve. In this instance, far-sighted organizers saw the need to challenge undesired economic restructuring at the national level but were nevertheless undermined by the reality that for the rank-and-file participants, the prevailing target of their contention was ultimately not the national regime itself but rather the enterprises and local administrations they depended on for wages and social welfare. In an environment with scare resources and declining economic conditions, popular claimants were ready and willing to accept concessions offered by local authorities, even if they fell far short of their original expectations. The fact that subnational officials had discretionary control of these resources enabled them to divide and control protestors within their territories.

In the decentralized Kazakh state, as in the case of post-Maoist China, once popular claimants learned that subnational authorities had the power and authority to partially meet their demands or unleash state coercion, their collective action ultimately tended to gravitate around local grievances, local concerns and local antagonists. When local claimants carried out collective actions targeted against subnational authorities, they often proved partially successful in achieving some small concessions from these officials. As these subnational entities responded by offering such scarce resources to any workers willing to return to work, efforts at coordinating a broader strike action began to crumble. Protest actors gradually learned the difficult lesson that there were few rewards to be won from sacrificing their locality and enterprise-specific short-term interests to participate in a cause beyond their own specific communities and worksites. Rather it seemed more beneficial to carry out isolated actions that pressured specific local officials and resulted in more certain, if modest benefits. Ultimately, through this protracted process of trial and error, parochial forms of protest became the prevailing mode of contention.

8.4. Localized Protest and Authoritarian Resilience

The resilience of the Nazarbayev regime in post-independence Kazakhstan provides evidence that widespread sentiments of "relative deprivation" alone cannot bring about outbreaks of

popular contention coordinated on a national scale (Gurr 1968). While deteriorating economic conditions contributed mightily to the collapse of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, a likely worse situation in Kazakhstan had no similar effect on the personalist Nazarbayev regime. During the early 1990s, Kazakh citizens saw Soviet-era social benefits, such as social welfare provisions and guaranteed unemployment eliminated, while their promised wages and pensions went unpaid and increasingly, their jobs vanished. The economy continued to rapidly decline into the late-1990s, while persons well-connected to the regime at the national and local levels used their access to accumulate unprecedented levels of wealth and luxury.

As outlined in this chapter, while such wide-ranging grievances motivated a rash of major protests during the mid-1990s, the Kazakh regime never came close to collapse. Instead, Kazakhstan's most well-known protests during this period, taking place at Karaganda, Zhanatas and Kentau, remained fundamentally localized, fragmented affairs focused on material, non-politicized issues. Despite the president's important role in overseeing national economic restructuring and his dominance at the highest levels of government, Nazarbayev was generally granted a kind of plausible deniability for the suffering endured by many Kazakhs in their day-to-day lives and the inability or unwillingness to correct these situations. As reflected in opinion surveys taken in the 1990s, Kazakhs polled across the country were keenly aware of the serious problems posed by unemployment, the nonpayments crisis and the country's struggling economy. They also cited their high-level of dissatisfaction with the government efforts in addressing these issues (Brif 1997, 152; 170-1). In this survey and others, the prevailing target for this dissatisfaction with the state, however, was targeted downward at the subnational levels of government. A number of polls in the 1990s found that respondents considered corruption higher at subnational than national levels of government (Jandosova *et al* 2003, 19) and reported lower confidence in their local governments than the president's administration (Brif 1997, 152, 170-1). Among those Kazakhs who identified a single level of government as responsible for the problem of nonpayments, an issue that drove much of the 1990s workers' unrest, six times as many respondents directed blame at local governments (35.65%) than Nazarbayev himself (5.91%) (Brif 1997, 155). In other words, while many Kazakhs could readily identify the wider national issues that were driving the relative and absolute deprivation within their families and communities and placed a great amount of blame for these problems with the government, this blame was concentrated on the subnational authorities within their respective localities, not the national government or the regime as a coherent whole.

This downward targeting of blame led to the sustained fragmentation and localization of protests in Kazakhstan. Even when leading union organizers, political dissidents and leaders of the formal political opposition sought to channel this high level of "ordinary" popular resistance (Pei 2003, 28-9) into a broader national political discourse, these efforts have been frustrated by the fundamentally, localized and issue-specific nature of such protests. Moreover, when Nazarbayev's regime used targeted coercion to eliminate its most recalcitrant of opponents and used electoral manipulation to weaken the position of opposition candidates and widen its margins of victory in national elections, these actions – in contrast to both Taiwan and the Philippines – were accomplished without any serious threat of stimulating a major popular backlash. The president and his supporters engaged in ballot-stuffing and other forms of electoral fraud to increase their vote counts in successive elections (OSCE 1999, 5; OSCE 2005, 5). Leading presidential challenger and former PM Akezhan Kazehegeldin was eliminated as a

candidate through legal machinations in 1999, opposition politician Zhamanbek Nurkadilov was likely murdered in 2005, and opposition campaigners have been regularly attacked and harassed by security forces in the run-up to elections (Olcott 2002, 119; Kusainov 2005; Kennedy 2006, 51; OSCE 1999, 3). These actions drew little interest from a public that had become increasingly disinterested and apathetic towards national electoral politics, viewing these affairs as disconnected from their everyday troubles and challenges (Brif 1997, 203, 208-220; Olcott 2002, 93-5).

Tellingly, even at the height of Kazakhstan's mid-1990s wave of labor unrest, Madel Ismailov, leader of the Kazakhstan Workers' Movement, was arrested in May 1997 and detained for three and a half months for "systematic involvement in organizing unauthorized rallies and protests" after participating in a public opposition rally in Almaty (Ardayev 1998, 20). During this detainment, he was allegedly beaten and mistreated by security forces and government officials (Amnesty International 1998). Again, in February 1998, Ismailov was arrested and held for a year for committing the crime of "impugning the honor and integrity of the country's president" after speaking at a rally in November 1997 commemorating the 80th anniversary of the October Revolution (Ardayev 1998, 20). Leonid Solomin, leader of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions, was charged with illegal financial activity and repeatedly harassed by Kazakh security forces (Olcott 2002, 200). Even the use of such heavy-handed tactics against leaders of the national trade unions at a time of high-level, if regionalized labor unrest was unable to provoke a major public backlash. The ability of the Nazarbayev regime to apply coercion against political opposition figures, including those formally linked to the trade union movement, without incurring any major political costs demonstrated the high degree of disconnect between formal political oppositionists on the national political stage and the powerful but localized waves of protest that have periodically wracked regions of Kazakhstan. Much like political dissidents in contemporary China, Taiwan in the 1950s-1970s and the Philippines in the 1970s and early 1980s (before these latter two cases underwent upward scale shift in their prevailing modes of popular contention), even the most well-known political opponents of Nazarbayev have operated in isolation and as a result suffered official harassment carried out with near absolute impunity.

From Kazakhstan's independence to the present, Nazarbayev's regime has faced little in the way of a vertical threat to its monopolistic grip on national political power. By delegating substantial control over state resources and authority to the subnational level and enabling regional leaders to amass a substantial degree of informal functional and coercive power, the Kazakh regime created a structural opening where popular claimants could direct their grievances and contest the subnational layers of the state, winning limited concessions at the discretion of local and oblast-level officials. Efforts to upload contention to the national stage, either by appealing to the national government or coordinating protests across the country, such as the unsuccessful October 1996 "nationwide day of protest" attempted by labor activists (Olcott 2002, 200), have been physically halted by local security forces or simply been ignored by claimants in other localities more concerned wither their own, community-specific issues. Eric McGlinchey has effectively captured the pattern of popular protest in post-independence Kazakhstan:

> A trend [has characterized] Kazakh mass demonstrations – although groups may mobilize around ethnic and economic issues and although they may protest against their local representatives, rarely do public protests directly target the Kazakh president in the way they do in Kyrgyzstan or Uzbekistan. Thus, while Kazakh citizens have demonstrated against, among other things, wage and pension arrears, rising gas

> prices, the declining social welfare state, language laws, fewer hours of Russian programming on television and the removal of the Lenin statue from the capital's central square, President Nazarbayev himself has thus far been little bothered by mass mobilization (McGlinchey 2009, 130).

Instead, much like the ordinary forms collective resistance displayed in China, popular claimants in Kazakhstan have concentrated on local, material issues within their respective localities and targeted subnational authorities. Unlike the centralized cases discussed in this study, Taiwan and the Philippines, Kazakhstan has not seen the persistence appearance of social movements coordinated and sustained on a national scale or faced the prospect of sudden outbursts of nationwide popular mobilization against the regime after rigged elections or the application of state repression against its leading opponents. This outcome suggests that much like in single-party autocracies such as China, the decentralized state structure of the personalist Nazarbayev regime has facilitated the appearance of pattern of popular resistance that focuses on local or social sector–specific issues, targets subnational levels of the state, and is organized around forms of collective action restricted to specific localized communities. It has also inhibited the upward scale shift of localized protests to the national stage, enabling the national leadership to enjoy a relatively high level of public support avoid the powerful vertical threat posed by people power movements or color revolutions that have brought down autocracies throughout much of the world over the last several decades.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the findings revealed in the four preceding cases, reflects upon the lessons learned from this exercises, and suggests how these insights might contribute to contemporary studies on contentious politics and authoritarianism. More specifically, it draws upon the political conditions and outcomes of Taiwan, China, the Philippines and Kazakhstan to suggest how differentiating autocracies on the variable of (de)centralization can enhance our collective understanding of how certain authoritarian cases witness the rise of popular contention sustained and coordinated on a national scope while others see only a persistent pattern of localized and fragmented forms of collective action. The former outcome, the appearance of nationalized contention, substantially raises the political cost an autocracy will incur from applying coercion against his/her popular challengers. This either compels a regime to extend real concessions to the political opposition and substantially widen the tolerated political space, often leading to a negotiated political transition. Alternatively, in the event that a regime openly defies a contentious, nationally-mobilized society by applying coercion against its challengers or stealing a hard-fought election, it can face a sudden, popular backlash that overwhelms its repressive capacity, leading to regime fragmentation and collapse. In the face of nationally-mobilized protest movements, the autocrat is faced with the unappealing alternatives of conceding - accepting and eventually legitimizing genuine political opposition, as occurred in Taiwan, or attempting to coerce and eliminate his/her opponents and facing the ire of mass society, leading to regime collapse and the risk of death or flight – this was the decision and outcome of Ferdinand Marcos. While it is beyond the scope of this project to suggest whether negotiated versus revolutionary outcomes are likely to lead to lasting democracy, it does support the view of scholars (Bermeo 1997; van de Walle and Bratton 1997; Bunce and Wolchik 2006, 2010) that popular protest is a critical element in bringing despots to the bargaining table if not driving their regimes to collapse entirely. In this analysis, it appears the choice of how the regime is to end remains in the hands of the dictator. Importantly, the sudden appearance of protest movements coordinated on a national scale appears to limit the available alternatives to the unpalatable choices of either negotiation or collapse.

Indeed, as suggested in this study, the situation has been quite different in decentralized autocracies. While frustrated citizens challenge the state repeatedly for myriad of reasons such as unpaid wages, the destruction of their livelihoods through unregulated pollution, or the repeated harassment and abuse of corrupt government officials, decentralized autocratic states present a difficult structural barrier to the upward scale shift of popular contention. In these systems, subnational authorities step to the fore as the prevailing wielders of much-sought concessions as well as the state's coercive apparatus. The national government, whether in Beijing or Astana, seems unaware or unable to deal with citizens' everyday problems, or the pain they suffer from incompetent or abusive subnational officials. This leads to patterns of contention in which claims, tactics and methods of framing remain material and community-specific, and organizers are reluctant to take the personal risk of coordinating their actions across locality or social sector. In many ways, localized protest becomes institutionalized. To borrow language from the sociological institutionalist strain of thought in political science, these kind of localized protests develop as "frameworks of programs or rules establishing identities and activity scripts for such identities" that eventually become so normal and mundane that they are largely "taken for granted" (Jepperson 1991, 147). In other words, claims and repertoires of

contention that are limited to specific communities emerge as the prevailing institutional forms for contesting the state, and organizers by and large do not even consider coordinating collective actions beyond socially or geographically-limited populations. This suggestion is supported by the reality that opposition to the state in the decentralized autocracies studied here is bifurcated. A clear division exists between everyday resisters and those few individuals, like Liu Xiaobo, Hu Jia and Madel Ismailov, who persistently challenge and criticize the state in more expressly political terms. However, because they are isolated from and often entirely unknown to the more numerous, highly-mobilized everyday resisters, these dissidents face the unconstrained wrath of state power. This bifurcation between political and apolitical opposition and the fragmented nature of popular contention leaves the vertical threats posed by mass actors manageable and well within the repressive means of an authoritarian regime and ultimately contributes to its prolonged resilience.

Beyond these general insights, this chapter summarizes other major findings from the dissertation and identifies the limits and opportunities of using the degree of centralization in state structures to explain the resilience of authoritarian regimes. To highlight the important role of this dissertation's findings on the relationship between state (de)centralization and the upward scale shift of popular contention as well as this relationship's impact on the resilience or vulnerability of authoritarian regimes, the chapter then briefly surveys a number of recent claims surrounding the causes of the 2011 Arab Spring and explanations for why resilience has conversely been experienced in autocracies such as China and Kazakhstan. This discussion suggests that despite allegations that scholarship failed to predict the revolutions of 2011 as well as early waves of mass unrest and other incidents of sudden authoritarian breakdown, scholars have in fact come quite far in their understandings of these seemingly spontaneous political events.

However, despite these advances, current interpretations of popular revolutions and authoritarian breakdown in popular and academic discourse, with Bunce's (1999) discussion of state structural variation and political outcomes in post-socialist countries standing as an important exception, have typically missed the important mediating role that centralized and decentralized state structures play in the shaping of popular contention in authoritarian contexts. Additionally, most analyses have failed to disaggregate limited, localized forms of popular contention from national protest movements sustained and coordinated on a national scale. These oversights have led commentators to understate the vulnerability of seemingly durable yet highly centralized autocratic regimes, which score well on measures of authoritarian "strength" or "capacity," such as the cases featured in this work: the Philippines under Marcos and pre-transitional Taiwan, and more recent cases such as Ben Ali's Tunisia and Mubarak's Egypt. Additionally, the under-appreciation of the variable of centralization has led some analysts to overstate the susceptibility of other autocratic regimes, such as China, to mass popular challengers based on observations of frequent and intense but still highly fragmented and localized forms of contention. This failure to disaggregate localized and nationalized forms of contention or consider the degree to with protests are sustained and coordinated on a national scale and tendency to measure social unrest only by counts of protest activities has led to repeated, premature pronouncements, such as that of China's "coming collapse" (Chang 2001). In this section, I will make the case that playing closer attention to the mediating effect of state centralization on the shaping of patterns of

popular contention in autocracies can help further refine an already impressive body of work on the study of authoritarian resilience and contentious politics.

9.1. Bringing the State Back In

The shape of the state – namely, the distribution of power, resources and responsibilities between the center and the periphery – and its impact in determining important political outcomes is a fundamental question in the discipline of political science. As noted by J.P. Nettl (1968) nearly a half-century ago, the state serves an extraordinarily, if often overlooked array of essential functions in society and consequently should be treated as a central conceptual variable in comparative political analysis. However, despite living in an era where autocratic regimes have repeatedly been toppled by popular challengers in nonviolent revolutions, students of authoritarianism have paid relatively little attention to the way in which variation on the measure of centralization has shaped the environment in which popular challengers are likely to contest and interact with the state. Looking at sequences of contention in the cases of Taiwan, China, the Philippines and Kazakhstan, this dissertation has taken a modest step in integrating a consideration for state structures into studies of authoritarian resilience and breakdown.

It has specifically provided support for the proposition that by decentralizing functional and coercive forms of state power, authoritarian regimes such as in China and Kazakhstan (often unwittingly) facilitate the development of modes of contention that remain fragmented, localized and oriented around subnational rather than national state targets. While this decentralized state structure does not prevent protest entirely, it does impede the process of upward scale shift seen in venues such as Taiwan and the Philippines. In these cases, highly-centralized autocratic states presented a structural opening for national-level popular mobilization. Localized popular claimants, ranging from the workers at Manila's *La Tondena* distillery to the anti-Du Pont protestors of Taiwan's Lukang rebellion perceived that subnational authorities lacked the autonomous power and authority to meet their demands and consequently uploaded their protests to the national stage, forging new organizational linkages with similarly-aggrieved populations in different communities and widening frames of contention to incorporate previously-unconnected protest actors. Once scale shift was accomplished, protest coordinated and sustained on a national scale brought these regimes to either to the point of collapse or to the bargaining table with the opposition.

To the present, much literature on the sources of authoritarian resilience has taken strides in disaggregating regimes by Weberian-inspired institutional types (Linz and Stepan 1996; Geddes 1999; Ulfelder 2005), typically finding that more highly-institutionalized single-party regimes are more resilient than their lesser-institutionalized personalist and military-run counterparts. However, by pairing cases according to single-party and personalist types (the first and second most resilient types), this study has found considering the degree of centralization in an autocratic regime can help mediate these differences *across* regime type and identify variation *within* regime types. In other words, while single-party regimes have assuredly been the most long-lived of dictatorships, centralized autocracies of this type, such as Taiwan, have been more susceptible to regime-threatening outbreaks of nationally-coordinated waves of popular contention than their less centralized counterparts, such as China. Moreover, even among personalist regimes, typically relatively more fragile than single-party autocracies (Geddes 1999,

132), more decentralized states such as Kazakhstan tend to cultivate more manageable modes of localized contention than their centralized counterparts, such as in the Philippines, which have seen the outbreak of national people power movements that have brought authoritarian regimes beyond the point of collapse. In short, while dividing non-democratic governments into regime types is assuredly a valuable enterprise in studying the sources of authoritarian resilience, disaggregating autocratic state structures according to their varying degrees of centralization can provide a tool for sharpening analyses of authoritarian cases.

This study has sought to take a modest step in the direction of bridging literatures on authoritarianism and contentious politics. It encourages scholars of authoritarianism to go beyond the simple causal assumption that mass outbreaks of popular protest are derived from state weakness or a lack of "capacity." Rather, as reflected in the revolutions of 1989 and the case of pre-transitional Taiwan, even highly-institutionalized regimes bound by rules and procedures, dominated by hegemonic single parties, characterized by high levels of state control over the economy, and backed by effective, well-trained coercive apparatuses can see the sudden outbreak of massive waves of regime-crippling mass protests. Moreover, as noted by McGlinchey (2009), apparently low-capacity regimes, such as Kazakhstan, have also exhibited high levels of resilience and seen relatively little in the way of popular challenges. In other words, there is no straightforward negative relationship between a high degree of authoritarian capacity and the likelihood of substantial outbreaks of popular protest. As a result, the treatment of popular protest as simply a residual outcome derived from authoritarian weakness should be modified by the adding of a focused appreciation for how popular protests appear and the contexts in which they encounter opportunities for greater mobilization.

Following the pioneers of the study of contentious politics, such as Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, scholars of authoritarianism would be well-advised to disaggregate parochial and national forms of contention, consider the mechanisms that enable the shift from the former to the latter, and view the state not simply as an entity that can be characterized as having high or low "strength" or "capacity" but also as a structure of political threats and opportunities that can impede or facilitate various modes of protest (Goldstone and Tilly 2001). As suggested in this dissertation, both low-capacity regimes like Kazakhstan and high-capacity ones like China can be resilient. Conversely, both high-capacity autocracies like pre-transitional Taiwan and lower-capacity regimes like the Philippines can be vulnerable to popular challenges from below. Explaining the variation in outcome among these four cases has required going being capacity-centered analyses and treating autocracies not only as top-down managers of elite divisions but also "bringing the state back in"[2] as a political environment that can either impede or facilitate the appearance of protest movements coordinated on a national scale.

Scholars of contentious politics, on the other hand, should tap into the findings of students of authoritarianism to better explore the way in which popular contention varies across regime type. To the present, studies that have compared contention across political regimes have often disaggregated cases simply by their degree of democracy, typically associating democracies and non-democracies with more open versus more closed political opportunity structures (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 56-7). However, scholars of authoritarianism have found that judging cases by

[2] My thanks to Gulnaz Sharafutdinova for summoning the classic work of Theda Skocpol (1985) in her comments on this manuscript.

their degree of democracy has become increasingly problematic in a political world populated by hybrid regimes (Diamond 2002), where elections often contribute to the increased longevity of authoritarian rule rather than meaningful steps towards democracy (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007). This problem is only amplified in one-party authoritarian regimes that do not hold multiparty elections of any sort. Moreover, because autocracies are characterized by different logics of factional competition, strategies for applying cooptation/coercion against popular challengers, and making important government decisions (Geddes 1999, 121), categorizing authoritarian regimes simply for their degree of democracy and/or political opportunities is highly problematic. By disaggregating autocracies by both authoritarian regime type *and* degree of state centralization as well as exploring how these structural/institutional differences alter popular claimants' interactions with the state and their patterns for mobilizing acts of contention, the dissertation has taken a modest step in bringing these literatures into a constructive dialogue.

9.2. Revolutions from "Out of Nowhere"

This work has sought to bring greater clarity to revolutions - the study of sudden, seemingly spontaneous outbursts of popular contention that have repeatedly brought down authoritarian regimes throughout the modern era. During the course of writing this dissertation, the sudden collapse of regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and appearance of popular protest across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region surprised scholars and casual observers alike. However, in the following sections, I will provide a cursory introduction to these recent events and provide some preliminary insights as to how an appreciation for centralized and decentralized state structures might have assisted scholars in forecasting these largely unforeseen instances of authoritarian breakdown.

Predicting revolutions and authoritarian collapse with precision is an inherently challenging task. Writing in 1979, Theda Skocpol set out to find the causal factors behind social revolutions, which she described as "rare but momentous occurrences in modern world history" (3). The rarity and spontaneity of regime-crippling popular uprisings has always made forecasting these critically-important events a difficult task. Ten years after the release of Skocpol's seminal work and after a succession of political transitions associated with the third wave of democracy, scholars had still seemingly established few firm conclusions about when these rare and momentous changes were likely to likely occur. As lamented by Padraic Kenney (2002), many scholars, including regional experts and students of revolutions, have seemed to accept the conclusion that the revolutions of 1989 had simply "appear[ed] out of nowhere" (3). These events and the subsequent color revolutions of the post-communist region, which also caught many observers off-guard, have garnered much scholarly attention and research in the 1990s and 2000s. Yet again in 2011, scholarship again seemed to be surprised by the Arab Spring, which involved the sudden outbreak of popular uprisings that quickly toppled authoritarian leaders in Tunisia and Egypt and soon kicked off waves of protest that continue to challenge dictatorships in Syria, Libya, Bahrain and Yemen to the present.

The sudden and unforeseen outbreak of regime-toppling protest in a region long known for its durable forms of authoritarianism led many critics to question social science's ability to understand and forecast popular revolutions entirely. In the view of Francis Fukuyama, "No social scientist or intelligence analyst predicted the specific timing or spread of the Arab

uprising" (2011). Taking a similar stance, Blake Hounshell (2011) asked in *Foreign Policy,* "Why didn't anyone predict the Arab revolutions?" He suggested that the scholars most closely linked to the activity of predicting popular uprisings, such as researchers participating in the CIA-funded Political Instability Task Force (PITF), were often guilty of a "hindsight bias;" they constructed complex, quantitatively-driven models derived from past events, which almost inevitably failed to predict "inherently unpredictable" revolutions in the present. Mass popular uprisings could be sparked by all sorts of seemingly random and otherwise inconspicuous phenomena, ranging from rigged elections in the Philippines in 1986 to the self-immolation of a street vendor in Tunisia in late 2010. This reality left students of popular contention hard-pressed to predict future revolutionary events.

Table 9.1: Countries with the Highest Risk of Onset of Nonviolent Rebellion in 2011

1	China	11	Cuba	21	Kazakhstan
2	Iran	12	Azerbaijan	22	Laos
3	Morocco	13	Belarus	23	Libya
4	Egypt	14	Russia	24	Iraq
5	Vietnam	15	Bosnia	25	Saudi Arabia
6	Syria	16	Myanmar	26	Tunisia
7	Uzbekistan	17	Tanzania	27	Togo
8	North Korea	18	Uganda	28	Kuwait
9	Pakistan	19	Somalia	29	DRC
10	Venezuela	20	Sudan	30	Ivory Coast

Source: Ulfelder (2011b)

In his response to Hounshell, political scientist Jay Ulfelder (2011a) argued that the author's assessment of social science's failure to predict the Arab Spring (and most other previous popular revolutions) was greatly overstated. While predicting specific triggering incidents for mass popular uprisings was inherently problematic, statistical models generated from PITF data actually fared quite well in identifying the countries that were the most likely to experience regime-destabilizing nonviolent rebellions during the present year (Ulfelder 2011a). To demonstrate this assertion, Ulfelder applied a Bayesian model averaging (BMA) technique to Stephan and Chenoweth's (2008) Nonviolent and Violent Conflict Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset to create estimated probabilities for nonviolent uprisings across the 163 countries with populations over 500,000 included in the sample. Of the 17 variables applied in the model, only nine, primarily population size, democracy score, literacy, reported uprisings in a country's region, and civil liberties rating, significantly affected Ulfelder's forecasts for nonviolent rebellions (Ulfelder 2011b). Importantly, as illustrated in Table 9.1, a number of the countries primarily involved in the Arab Spring of 2011, including Egypt, Syria, Libya, Tunisia as well as Yemen (ranked 31st) ranked among the cases rated as having the highest risk of nonviolent rebellion in 2011. While the now protest-ridden country of Bahrain is absent from the list,

Ulfelder's work nevertheless makes a strong case that statistical analyses encompassing the various propositions of scholars of authoritarianism can provide a useful if still incomplete tool for forecasting rare outbreaks of political instability. If scholarship was surprised by the specific timing of revolutions in the MENA region, it was not by the general prospect of social and political instability.

Of particular note to this study, Ulfelder's rankings revealed that China placed first and Kazakhstan twenty-second in terms of their expected risk for experiencing nonviolent rebellion. As noted by a range of commentators, China did share a number of important characteristics that motivated the regime-destabilizing protests in the Middle East. It was marked by pervasive state corruption, growing socioeconomic inequality, a generation of frustrated youth who struggled to find quality employment opportunities, and a closed authoritarian political system that denied its educated middle class a voice in their own government (Swartz 2011, 2-4; Fukuyama 2011; Kurlantzick 2011; Xia 2011). Specifically noting the PRC's vulnerability, Ulfelder (2011a) noted, "China reportedly experiences tens of thousands of scattered protests, riots, and strikes each year, but many observers of that country's politics dismiss those events as background noise in an otherwise well-managed political system." Citing recent riots and protests in Guangdong and Inner Mongolia, he suggested the PRC might be "riper for nonviolent rebellion than many China watchers believe" (Ulfelder 2011a).

Additional developments in China appeared to support the warnings of Ulfelder and others that the country might be primed for regime-threatening social unrest. Shortly after the initiation of the Arab Spring, political dissidents in the PRC were encouraged by events in the Middle East and declared the initiation of a Jasmine Revolution in China. Mimicking some of the tactics used in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries, they made use of Internet and social media technology to circumvent Chinese government censors to organize a series of rallies throughout the country (Xia 2011). These grassroots efforts clearly concerned the leadership in Beijing, which in a repeat of its response to the color revolutions of the post-communist region during the 2000s, initiated a campaign of media censorship and a crackdown on domestic dissent (Carothers 2006, 56; Chen 2010). Seeking to frame the protests of the Middle East in a negative light, Chinese official media outlets described the Arab Spring protest wave as a violent and "self-delusional ruckus" that was not only engineered by foreign media and Western governments but also wildly unpopular among Arab citizens (Ouping 2011; Fukuyama 2011). The regime, moreover, unleashed its coercive apparatus in an almost panicked response that was "swift and overwhelming," arresting dissidents, harassing reporters and tightening its media and Internet controls (Swartz 2011, 1). Clearly, from the vantage point of the national leadership in Beijing, there was some serious cause for concern.

Kazakhstan, ranking twenty-second in terms of its expected risk for the onset of nonviolent rebellion (Ulfelder 2011), also drew some comparisons to the Arab Spring cases among the community of activists, journalists and scholars who follow political developments in Central Asia (Kramer and Walker 2011; Walker 2011; Tahir 2011). Like China, Kazakhstan was marked by some of the underlying motivating factors of the Arab Spring, ranging from high levels of government corruption to inequality and a lack of opportunities for discontented youth. In addition, in common with Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen but not China, Kazakhstan had an aging, long-serving president, "lack[ed] established succession mechanisms and lean[ed] heavily

on informal, personality-based patronage networks" (Kramer and Walker 2011). As suggested by earlier research, this uncertainty surrounding the leadership succession could lead to internal division among government insiders jockeying for power and make the regime vulnerable to popular challenges (Hale 2005, 139). According to these various observable factors, both Kazakhstan and China appeared to be among those countries most likely to see regime-threatening waves of protest in the not so distant future. In the following section, I will discuss how integrating an appreciation for the variable of state centralization might have highlighted the underlying vulnerability of seemingly-durable autocracies that have broken down in the face of the popular uprisings of the Arab Spring.

9.3. Decentralization and Scale Shift: The Missing Variables

Of course, to the present, the Arab Spring, much like the color revolutions in the former Soviet Union, has not led to revolutionary contagion in China or Kazakhstan. Despite the high degree of media excitement surrounding China's "Jasmine Revolution," the social media-organized gatherings never transformed into large demonstrations. While repeated calls were circulated online for citizens to carry out protests at predetermined meeting places, they received little public attention and involved very few participants (Swartz 2011, 2). The so-called Jasmine Revolution seemingly vanished before it had even started. Any Arab Spring-inspired unrest in Kazakhstan was even more limited. In fact, even after the fall of Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt, Nazarbayev called snap presidential elections on April 3. While some analysts believed that the sudden elections were designed to clarify any succession questions and protect the regime from Arab Spring contagion (Kramer and Patten 2011), one could also see an inherent risk in this strategy. As noted by Bunce and Wolchik (2006), in post-communist color revolutions, opposition activists had often successfully used rigged elections as opportunities to mobilize mass anti-regime popular support and bring about political change (5). Nazarbayev's confidence, however, appeared to be well-placed. The election ended predictably and "colorlessly," with the incumbent winning with over 95% of the vote and seeing almost no public protest against the outcome (OSCE 2011, 29). In short, in spite of the initially upbeat expectations of democracy activists and political dissidents at home as well as an array of quantitative indicators that these authoritarian regimes might be vulnerable to destabilizing political unrest, neither China nor Kazakhstan faced a serious popular challenge.

In explaining the non-incidence of broad-based popular contention and regime collapse in these two cases during the wake of the Arab Spring and their ongoing resilience, analysts have provided a diverse range of causal factors. These generally centered on the quality, robustness and/or flexibility of the institutional composition of the surviving regimes and secondly, on the greater degree of societal quiescence, particularly among members of the middle class, in the more resilient autocracies. However, as discussed below, the regimes that collapsed during the early stages of the Arab Spring, especially Egypt, were prior to 2011 noted for both their exceptional institutional durability as well as the generally ambivalent and/or loyalist political stance of their respective business and middle classes. Based on these findings, current explanations for the ongoing resilience of authoritarianism in Kazakhstan and China during this most recent wave of popular revolutions can to be sharpened by incorporating an appreciation for the mediating of decentralized state structures and their impact on the scale shift of protest movements discussed in this dissertation.

The first factor many commentators have attributed to the ongoing resilience of autocracies in Kazakhstan and China amidst the revolutions of 2011 is closely linked to the strength and adaptability of regime institutions. Relative to Middle Eastern autocracies such as Egypt, Fukuyama (2011) argued that China had a "higher quality" of authoritarianism. The regime was more responsive to outbursts of social unrest and the specific issues that motivated them, had institutionalized procedures for leadership succession, had a hegemonic political party that did not allow any single leader to amass excessive wealth and power and was more diligent in monitoring or silencing attempts to organize organized political resistance via social media (Nathan 2003; Fukuyama 2011; Kurlantzick 2011). Generally sharing the view of many leading students of authoritarianism (Geddes 1999; Way 2008; Magaloni 2008), these commentators determined that the regime was bolstered primarily by its highly-institutionalized party and an effective, well-funded coercive apparatus. Conversely, in the case of the personalist autocracy of Kazakhstan, institutionalization was not typically cited as source of authoritarian resilience. In fact, many observers looking for possible signs of post-Arab Spring vulnerability in Kazakhstan noted the lack of institutionalized leadership succession procedures as a cause for concern (LeVine 2011; Barry 2011; STRATFOR 2011). Barry (2011), on the other hand, referenced the high degree of civilian control over the security apparatus in Kazakhstan. In her view, this meant unlike Egypt, Kazakhstan lacked independent military officials and the related elite-level divisions that might make the regime vulnerable to popular uprisings. Thus, in China and to a lesser extent in Kazakhstan, many analysts suggested that institutional factors had contributed to deterring major outbreaks of social unrest and preserving the ruling regimes.

Secondly, in both China and Kazakhstan, many observers argued that extensive economic growth in preceding years had provided serious material benefits to the rising middle class, winning the loyalty of this critically-important social sector (Fukuyama 2011; Rutland and Lewis 2011; Kurlantzick 2011; Barry 2011; Tahir 2011). As opposed to the teetering autocracies in the Middle East, in Kazakhstan, economic progress and optimism over the future had discouraged mass dissent. According to Ellen Barry (2011), in Kazakhstan, "there [was] no restless young elite that want[ed] to take over the government." Similarly, as long reported by analysts of China, the middle class generally saw the ruling CCP, which catered to business interests and provided much-needed social and political stability, as the best guarantor of its future material prospects (Tsai 2007; Chen and Dickson 2010). In short, whereas "the majority of Arab youth" typically held "a bleak view of their life-chances" (Rutland and Lewis 2011), this was presumably not the case for the young and upwardly-mobile of either China or Kazakhstan.

These explanations for the non-occurrence of mass popular uprising in China and Kazakhstan, however, have in many ways been incomplete. In fact, a cursory look at the hypothesized sources of authoritarian resilience in the regimes of Tunisia and Egypt reveals that up to the last moments of Ben Ali and Mubarak's respective rules, similar explanations had been given for *these* regimes' near immunity to such popular challenges. As Tarek Masoud (2011) recently noted, in reference to Egypt:

> Those of us who study the region not only failed to predict the regime's collapse, we actually saw it as an exemplar of something we called 'durable authoritarianism'—a new breed of modern dictatorship that had figured out how to tame the political, economic, and social forces that routinely did in autocracy's lesser variants. (Masoud 2011, 21)

In fact, so much faith was placed in the Mubarak regime's resilience that even after Ben Ali's fall in Tunisia, "predictions of stability on the banks of the Nile continued to roll in" (22). Recent research, such as Brownlee (2007), had argued that the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) in Egypt had helped mediate and contain intra-elite conflict and competition, helping preserve regime unity and prevent defections to the opposition (11-13). In a similar vein, Lust (2009) had argued that Egypt, Tunisia and other regimes in the Middle East and North Africa were bolstered by their use of legislative institutions and elections, which enabled them to engage in the activity of "competitive clientelism." In these circumstances, powerful local elites competed with one another to secure access to the regime via nominally democratic elections and used their securing of public office to distribute services and goods to local patron-client networks (122). More recently, Blaydes (2011) similarly found that elections in Mubarak's Egypt played a critical role in distributing rents, maintaining elite power-sharing arrangements and mitigating potentially-divisive intra-elite competition, contributing to the long-lasting resilience of the regime (2-5). Closely paralleling Fukuyama's (2011) later assessment of China's institutional strength, Kassem (2004) found that the "incredible" resilience of Mubarak's regime was rooted in the "adaptable and flexible nature of its personal authoritarian system of rule" (9-10). In addition, Bellin (2004) cited the exceptional "robustness" of the coercive apparatuses of Middle Eastern regimes. These institutions were not only well-funded and armed but also pervaded by patrimonial forms of corruption and clientelism that tightly bound the officer corps' personal interests to the survival of the ruling autocratic regime, a reality that made them unlikely to defect to the opposition and more than willing to violently disperse popular demonstrations (144-5). These varying kinds of formal institutions created an equilibrium in which local powerbrokers and the security forces had a long-term interest in cooperating with the regime, not colluding against it.

As a result, whereas many commentators suddenly discovered the low-quality authoritarianism and institutional weakness of authoritarianism many Middle East autocracies *after* the Arab Spring, those scholars who knew the region best had before 2011 noted the extraordinary institutional strength and durability of these regimes, with Egypt often cited as the exemplar. Like many conventional analyses of authoritarian resilience based in capacity-centered explanations, these studies were troubled by their almost exclusive attention to top-down factors, namely the way in which autocrats can ensure regime unity and cohesion through the management of internal factional divisions. Additionally, they embraced the implicit assumption that the appearance of destabilizing popular protest was originated in the weakness of regimes, giving scant attention to the dynamics of protest mobilization itself. As suggested in this dissertation, a comprehensive analysis of authoritarian resilience requires not only understanding how well autocrats can manage horizontal threats within their regime but how the structure of a given state might facilitate the emergence of national protest movements.

Additionally, while the growing ranks of the unemployed, discontented youth in the Middle East had long been noted by regional scholars as a potential source of political instability, many researchers believed that the loyal or at least acquiescent middle and business classes of the region were critical sources of stability. For example, Bellin (2002) found that in Tunisia, the policies of state-sponsored capitalist industrialization had created classes of not only capital but also organized labor that worked closely with the authoritarian government and were generally

averse to the idea of challenging the status quo regime (4). The regime, it seemed, had played such an intimate role in cultivating and supporting these critical social groups that they had little material interest in seeking to work against it. Whereas conventional modernization theorists expected growing business and middle classes to be a force for political change (Lipset 1959), many scholars of the Middle East found that statist development policies, the integration of capitalists into ruling regimes, and the participation of military and political elites in the private economic sector had made these groups quite comfortable with status quo authoritarian rule (Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004, 379; Bellin 2004, 139; Richards and Waterbury 1990, 437). Paralleling contemporary arguments of regime-sustaining role of the contented and loyal middle classes of Kazakhstan and China, many Middle East scholars had often questioned the democratizing and/or anti-regime proclivities of these important social groups. Rather, much like their Chinese and Kazakh counterparts, the educated and upwardly-mobile citizens of the Middle East seemed to have a material interest in sustaining the ruling regimes they thrived under. As opposed to the large number of highly disenchanted unemployed citizens, the affluent middle class was presumably politically loyal and quiescent. The Arab Spring, however, revealed the potential that the economically successful had for rapidly mobilizing powerful anti-regime collective actions. As noted by scholar Gregory Gause:

> It is supremely ironic that the face of the Egyptian revolt was Wael Ghonim, the Egyptian Google executive. He is exactly the kind of person who was poised to succeed in the Egypt of Mubarak--bilingual, educated at the American University of Cairo, and at home in the global business world. Yet he risked his future and life to organize the 'We are all Khaled Said' Facebook page, in memory of a man beaten to death by Egyptian police, which helped mobilize Egyptians against the regime (Gause 2011, 81-90).

In short, while many observed that mass discontent and anti-regime sentiments characterized the poor and underprivileged, filling the ranks of Islamist organizations such as Muslim Brotherhood (Naguib 2009, 165-6), it was something of a surprise to suddenly see affluent Egyptians and Tunisians in the mode of Wael Ghonim stand at the forefront of broad-based, society-spanning anti-regime activism. These middle and upper-class members of society had presumably been laregely co-opted by the regime through its expansive institutional apparatus and its targeted distribution of rents.

As suggested in this dissertation, had scholarship been more attentive to the structural vulnerabilities associated with highly-centralized authoritarian regimes, the underlying potential for sudden, mass popular protest underlying the exceptional durability of Mubarak's Egypt and Ben Ali's Tunisia might have been much more apparent. Rather, the few studies looking at the distribution of power between national and subnational levels of the government in Middle Eastern and North African were almost exclusively related to issues of development and governance (Tosun and Yilmaz 2008; Amin and Ebel 2006) and paid little attention to how this variable might structure the forms of popular contention likely to arise in these countries. This research, however, revealed an extraordinarily high level of centralization in many MENA countries including Egypt and Tunisia that dated back to the late Ottoman *Tanzimat* (Reorganization) reforms of the 19th century (Tosun and Yilmaz 2008, 6). Looking at available data on subnational shares of public expenditures and revenues as well as intergovernmental transfers and the distribution of authority over personnel management and internal security forces, researchers in the mid-to-late 2000s described the MENA region overall and the cases of Tunisia and Egypt as extraordinarily centralized in terms of functional and coercive state power

(UNDP-POGAR 2009; Amin and Ebel 2006; Tosun and Yilmaz 2008, 11-12; Boex 2011, 1). In fact, writing in 2006, Amin and Ebel specifically described Egypt as having "one of the most centralized public sector systems in the world" (9).

While a focused exploration of the still-unfolding cases of Arab Spring is premature and outside the scope of this dissertation, there is certainly cause to suspect that this extreme degree of centralized state power played a pivotal role in driving the rapid, national-scale mobilization of protest actors in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia that had previously been seen as paragons of authoritarian durability. Commenting on the rapid outburst of regime-toppling social unrest in the Middle East and North Africa, Jack Goldstone (2011) noted that popular claimants had suddenly accomplished what the wide majority of protest actors have not: the mobilization of a society-wide coalition linking previously divided and fragmented groups of citizens. In his view:

> In almost all cases, broad-based popular mobilization is difficult to achieve because it requires bridging the disparate interests of the urban and rural poor, the middle class, students, professionals, and different ethnic or religious groups. History is replete with student movements, workers' strikes, and peasant uprisings that were readily put down because they remained a revolt of one group, rather than of broad coalitions (Goldstone 2011, 8).

As illustrated in four cases explored in this dissertation, the accomplishment of the process of national scale popular mobilization, which in this work has generally been referred to as "upward scale shift" has often been encouraged by the centralized state structure of autocracies such as Taiwan and the Philippines. In much the same way, in Egypt and Tunisia, the previously-divergent interests of particular segments of society, including the seemingly incompatible business, middle and working classes as well as the secular advocates of democracy and Islamists, suddenly seemed to come together in waves of popular opposition to the personalist regimes of Mubarak and Ben Ali. In many respects, this development was closely-linked to the high concentration of power and authority held by the national leadership vis-à-vis the subnational layers of the state. One triggering mechanism, the self-immolation of a street vendor frustrated with his mistreatment by government officials in Tunisia publicized via international media and the Internet, sparked off protests across the region. This brought together a wide-range of diverse social groups with different, often incompatible perceived injustices such as limited employment opportunities, the abuse and corruption of government officials and security officers, state infringement and restrictions on the operation of businesses and the growing inequalities in society.

Working in concert, these groups mobilized in Tunisia and soon thereafter in Egypt around the common target of despotic national governments and made a relentless push for the removal of their respective dictators. The regimes and/or particular dictators were attributed blame for all manner of social and economic problems, providing a common target that various protest groups could organize around, forge new "we versus them" type identities, and overwhelm the repressive capacity of the state, bringing about regime fragmentation and collapse. As in Taiwan and the Philippines, the divide-and-rule tactics of autocrats could succeed in splitting and containing divergent sectors of society for quite some time. However, as the state presented itself as a centralized monolith, a large structural opening was created that previously-fragmented social actors could suddenly and seemingly spontaneously mobilize around and generate authoritarian breakdown. As in this dissertation, the events of the Arab Spring, and in

particular the historical cases of China, Kazakhstan, Taiwan and the Philippines, demonstrate the need to better investigate the critical relationship between centralized/decentralized state structures and the development of distinctive modes of localized and national popular contention if we are to more effectively grasp of the sources of authoritarian resilience and vulnerability.

9.4. The Limits and Possibilities of Decentralized Autocracy

To restate the central proposition of this project: across regime type, autocracies with decentralized state structures, such as China and Kazakhstan present potential popular challengers with a structural barrier to upward scale shift and prevent the appearance of popular contention coordinated and sustained on a national level. When subnational authorities have greater discretion in suppressing acts of popular contention within their respective territories, claimants can win important concessions from local officials and furthermore, are more likely to attribute blame for various grievances at these authorities rather than the center or the system as a coherent whole. Localized, limited actions become the prevailing mode of popular contention and on a national scale, protests are scattered and incoherent. From the vantage point of the national leadership, these localized actions are substantially more manageable and pose a much-diminished vertical threat to the survival of the regime.

Naturally, constructing a structural barrier to national-level protest would be an appealing strategy for any autocrat seeking to sustain his/her rule. However, a decentralizing strategy has some notable limitations, as evidenced by the basic fact that few autocrats have attempted it. As noted by Landry (2008), in his observation that among those countries that have contributed GFS data, only eleven authoritarian regimes since 1958, including China and Kazakhstan, have seen their share of public expenditures at the subnational level reach above 30% (6-7). The reason for this reluctance to decentralize is straightforward – autocrats are just as concerned with challengers inside the regime as those outside. Sustaining the long-term loyalty of cadres requires minimizing regime-weakening internal division and factional in-fighting. This requires transforming the state apparatus into a top-down mechanism of reward distribution that efficiently allocates rents and offices to cadres in exchange for their loyalty and performance. In minimizing such internal challenges, a centralized state has much to offer. The larger state apparatus can extract wealth and resources from society and deliver these goods to the central leadership, which in turn uses its proportionally-large share of wealth and resources to distribute offices and rents downward to cadres and cronies. With state resources and decision-making authority heavily concentrated around a single, locus of power, cadres have little choice but to directly follow the orders of central authorities. Operating more as functionaries of the center and lacking significant autonomy, subnational agents have limits on the resources or the decision-making powers they might need to build up the local bases of support and conspire with their subnational counterparts against the center.

In many respects, this very scenario brought about the end of long-lived single-party rule in Mexico (Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni and Weingast 2003). Looking at an even more extreme case, looking at the example of multinational Yugoslavia, the decentralization of power can enable subnational leaders to tap into nationalistic sentiments and demand regional independence, culminating in separatism and civil war (Landry 2008, 7; Bunce 1999). In addition to rent distribution, the dictator is also concerned with intimidating and silencing his/her most vocal

opponents and potential challengers. Having direct personal control over the coercive apparatus can be an obvious asset, as this improves the likelihood that internal security forces will carry out in-regime purges, attacking and eliminating cadres of suspect loyalty to the leader. As noted by Slater (2003), long-surviving dictators "personalize" their control over the security forces, staffing them with cronies and kinsmen to ensure that these troops are personally loyal to the leader him/herself. In this view, the centralization of coercion, where authority and control over the security forces are concentrated at the top, is an important asset for a dictator, as he/she can more readily monitor, intimidate and eliminate internal threats within the regime.

This dissertation has provided some further confirmation of Landry's (2008) argument that a centralizing strategy is closely linked to autocrats' concern with internal threats and division. In Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek perceived that his party's recent defeat to the communists on the mainland had been rooted centrally in the KMT's internal factional divisions. These divisions had weakened the party and made it vulnerable to defeat from a better organized, more centrally-controlled CCP adversary in the Chinese Civil War. As a result, Chiang reconstructed the KMT party-state on Taiwan as a top-heavy structure with state power and resources heavily centralized in Taipei and under the direct supervision of the office of the president (Dickson 1996, 45; Tien 1989, 66-67). The feared Taiwan Garrison Command, moreover, ensured that the president had a security force directly under his command with a wide-ranging capacity for monitoring and arresting all manner of internal challengers (Tien 1989, 111). Ferdinand Marcos was equally suspicious of internal threats. Concerned with the strength of leading capitalists, Marcos used his control of the state apparatus to help his cronies and kinsmen aggressively plunder the economic resources and enterprises of the country and its wealthiest citizens to form regime-friendly monopolies based in Manila (Hutchcroft 1998, 115; Thompson 1995, 53-4). To reduce the power of regional powerbrokers, Marcos reorganized the state by purging subnational governments of their existing staff. In addition, he also constructed large bureaucratic agencies responsible to the center that could directly carry out development programs in the periphery and appointed his friends and relatives to lead these organizations (Wurfel 1988, 138; Machado 1979, 136). Moreover, he expanded the internal security apparatus, placed it under the direct control of the armed forces, and appointed his friend and relative, Fabien Ver as its head. In both of these cases, this high degree of centralization over the functional and coercive powers of the state was in large part intended to help the national leadership mitigate internal divisions and weaken the position of minority factions within the regime.

However, as suggested in the preceding chapters, in centralizing their regimes, both the Marcos and KMT leaderships unwittingly created a structural opening for nationally-coordinated popular contention. In Taiwan, local activists in Lukang, well-aware of the local government's inability to halt centrally-approved development plans, took a community-specific issue, a proposed titanium dioxide plant likely to cause pollution, to the national arena. Directly petitioning the country's national leadership, framing their claims as a "Taiwan" rather than a "Lukang" issue, and even carrying out protest actions at the national president's office, the Lukang rebels effectively blocked the proposed chemical plant. More importantly, they provided a template for other protest groups making claims on labor, social and economic issues. The campaign demonstrated that contentious collective action was a powerful tool that could be applied to address important grievances – if claimants were able and willing to orient their claims around the powerful central government and place sustained pressure directly on it.

Similarly, in the Philippines, distillery workers at the *La Tondena* plant in Manila, in an effort to improve poor wages and working conditions and halt management's implementation of highly-restrictive employment requirements for workers, actively sought to broaden their claims and tactics beyond their worksite. Reaching out to the Catholic clergy and communist organizations, the *La Tondena* workers petitioned the national government, formed an independent trade union and carried out a prolonged sit-in at the distillery, eventually compelling management to carry out a major revision of employment policies. Suggesting their high-level awareness of the central government's prevailing role over labor disputes, the organized even made a case for their company's "non-vital" status as an argument for how their strike was in accordance with national law. In top-down fashion, the national government applied even more restrictive labor policies across the country, which in turn helped motivate similar acts of labor contention across the country, including an unprecedented wave of labor protests in Manila, including a large demonstration of 3,000 directly in front of the Presidential Palace.

In both Taiwan and the Philippines, specific localized protest actions demonstrated the potential for carrying out nationally-targeted campaigns of popular contention. Seeing the need to bypass weak and ineffectual subnational authorities, claimants in both countries constructed organizations, such as the Philippine KMU or the Taiwan Environmental Alliance, which provided the infrastructure needed to sustain and coordinate national campaigns aimed at specific issues. Critically, as national protest movements gained momentum in both cases, the governing regimes incurred a growing political cost when they attempted to suppress social organizers and political oppositionists. In Taiwan, the high-degree of independent popular mobilization in society and the threat posed by a possible popular backlash compelled Chiang Ching-kuo to take the unprecedented step of accepting the establishment of a formal opposition political party, the DPP. In the Philippines, Marcos chose repression over conciliation. After facing massive popular protests after rigged elections, he unleashed the security forces. But the coercive apparatus rapidly fragmented after the sudden defection of two high-ranking generals, and the refusal of Philippine soldiers to fire into unarmed crowds eventually compelled him to flee from the country. Judging from these two cases, the prevailing concern with internal, horizontal threats compelled these autocratic leaderships to adopt centralizing strategies, which made them vulnerable to popular challenges from below.

As reflected in the two resilient decentralized cases discussed in this dissertation, effective decentralization can occur without leaving a dictator vulnerable to internal challenges. However, achieving this outcome requires developing methods for carefully circulating elites within the regime. Based on the observation of the Chinese and Kazakh cases, if this activity can be accomplished alongside decentralization, autocrats can better manage both vertical and horizontal threats. They can enjoy the benefits of decentralization, including enhanced economic growth, improved government responsiveness and protection against popular challengers through the delegation of responsibility (and blame) to subnational leaders, while using methods of elite circulation to ensure these powerful local officials do not use these newly-acquired resources to challenge the national leadership. In more institutionalized China, procedural mechanisms for promoting and dismissing subnational cadres have been used to ensure these officials compete rather than conspire with one another in their pursuit of achieving standard performance criteria, such as delivering local economic growth and minimizing reported social unrest, to please the center and win the personal rewards of bonuses and promotions (Landry 2008, 258-9). In more

personalistic Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev has often rotated elites between positions, both elevating those with informal, often clan-based ties to him and granting a minimal share of power to outside clan groups. Through clan clientelism and balancing, as well as rapid and recurrent elite circulation, Nazarbayev has maintained personal control over regional elites, despite their having a substantial share of state power within their territorial jurisdictions (Schatz 2004, 111; Collins 2004, 227). In short, while decentralization presents certain risks to autocrats, it can present great rewards for those who succeed in developing effective formal or informal mechanisms for managing cadres within the regime.

Since state decentralization - paired with effective mechanisms for elite circulation - has provided the autocracies of China and Kazakhstan with an effective method for the "task of multilateral threat management" (Schedler 2009a, 4) against vertical and horizontal challenges, it seems very possible that other non-democratic cases two may seek to emulate this strategy. While autocrats have to the present been generally reluctant to decentralize relative to democracies, there is reason to believe that more authoritarian regimes may adopt decentralizing policies in the future. To begin with, many autocracies have consciously adopted new strategies for sustaining their rules by observing the best practices of their counterparts in other countries and perhaps even by studying the academic writing of students of authoritarianism. In the aftermath of color revolutions in the post-communist region, autocratic regimes such as Belarus, Russia, Tajikistan, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia aggressively cracked down on independent civil society organizations and instituted heavy legal restrictions on their ability to operate (Silitski 2006, 22-30; Carothers 2006). Observing the resilience of autocracies dominated by highly-institutionalized party apparatuses, such as China, Vietnam and Egypt (pre-2011), more personalistic regimes, such as Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, have deliberately constructed their own hegemonic political parties: United Russia, the Yeni Azerbaijan Party, and Nur Otan of Kazakhstan (Bader 2011). As suggested by works such as Brownlee (2007) and Magaloni (2008), this kind of conscious institution building could certainly help these regimes contain elite divisions and defections and consequently prolong their rule. The adoption of such practices reveals that many long-lived autocracies have in fact been active and deliberate institutional landscapers, monitoring developments abroad and reacting with major institutional adaptations at home. The perception that the resilience of autocracies such as Kazakhstan and China is connected to their decentralized state structures would almost certainly motivate attentive dictators to emulate these strategies within their own countries. In other words, a growing number of observant dictators might adopt a decentralizing strategy if it is perceived as a winning formula for enhancing regime longevity.

Additionally, a diverse array of international forces has actively promoted decentralization as a path to economic growth and improved governments. The hope of promoting wealth and prosperity within their respective countries could also motivate autocrats to embrace state decentralization. With growing intensity during the last several decades, international organizations, including the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund, have actively promoted decentralization in the developing world as a vehicle for greater economic prosperity, increased government effectiveness, and improved public participation in government (Gibson 2004, 12; Falleti 2010, 6-7). Importantly, while many countries of the global South have begun to scrutinize the activities of international financial institutions and their promotion of neoliberal "Washington Consensus" reforms, the supposed alternative mode of development offered by the

"Beijing Consensus" (Ramo 2004) or China model has also involved embracing the economic advantages of decentralization. As discussed in this dissertation, China's economic miracle has been closely associated with a project labeled "federalism, Chinese style" (Jin, Qian, and Weingast 2005) where subnational authorities assume prevailing direct authority over local development policies. While many countries have grown disenchanted with the Washington Consensus and may prefer to emulate countries such as China in their search for a winning development strategy, this alternative also places decentralization, albeit decentralization coupled with state-led capitalism and authoritarianism, at the forefront. Dictators whose grip on political power is not legitimized through free and fair competitive elections must stay keenly focused on their ability to excel on measures of performance criteria such as good governance and high-level economic development. When both developmental autocracies like China and the IMF are advertising the benefits of state decentralization, performance-minded autocrats are likely to eventually embrace the strategy.

This reality suggests that regardless of whether present-day authoritarian regimes look East or West in determining the direction of their national development policies, decentralization is likely to be a featured element of their strategies. Additionally, attentive autocrats may look to China or Kazakhstan to discover the resilience-generating benefits of a decentralized state structure, presenting decentralization as a path to both political stability and to high-level economic performance and governance. Such considerations can and have motivated many countries to experiment with decentralization within their own countries. Indeed, as noted by Work (2002), from 1980 and 1998, of the 72 developing countries participating in the IMF Government Finance Statistics program, 63 claimed to be undertaking decentralizing reforms (10). Concurrently, this cross-national dataset has reported a rapid rise in subnational governments' overall share of state expenditures and revenues during the 1980s and 90s, revealing the sizeable overall impact of these reforms on state budgets. According to a recent World Bank report, some countries that are currently participating in various decentralizing reforms include notable autocracies such as Vietnam, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Russia (Gopal 2008, 10).

While assessing the depth or impact of these particular programs is outside the scope of this particular study, there is nevertheless clearly a growing interest in decentralization among authoritarian leaders. Despite the common understanding that the prevailing and overarching goal of autocrats is to maintain the survival of their regime, the idea that dictators might be carrying out this substantial reshaping of their respective state structures as a function of preserving authoritarianism against potential threats has been largely overlooked in the literature on authoritarianism. A notable global decentralizing trend has occurred over the last several decades, in fact the largest and most sustained movement towards empowering subnational state authorities in modern history (Falleti 2010, 3); as a consequence, understanding how decentralization alters the structure of opportunities for political protest and impacts authoritarian regimes' resilience or fragility is an issue that certainly demands greater, and much more focused attention in academia. Such studies might even yield valuable insights on the contexts in which authoritarian regimes are most vulnerable and provide practicable advice to democracy promoters on where and how assistance resources can be promoted to more effectively assist opposition activists. Ideally, this dissertation presents one early step in this direction.

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