

Similar yet different: A comparative case study between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

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I. Introduction.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's the former Communist-bloc crumbled. The Berlin Wall fell, communist Yugoslavia was torn apart in ethnic violence, and Gorbachev gave the Warsaw pact states the liberty to go their own way. Then, the Soviet Union itself fell apart. This meant the birth of several new states. For some states among them, this meant their first experience as an independent entity. For all new states in Central-Asia, the fall of the Soviet Union meant statehood and independency from empire, whether the great Turco-Mongol empires, the Russian empire, or the Soviet Union. The newcomers in this area, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan, all became independent, shortly after each other, in 1991. Although they came to stand on their own feet separately, they still bare numerous institutional resemblances as a legacy of Soviet times (Lewis, 2011, p. 178). A quick look at the area shows autocracies, repressive governments, clientelism, and corruption (Omelicheva, 2015, p. 3). But looking more closely, there are some important differences in development between them, especially in their place on the Human Development Index (HDI). This list measures development through education, life expectancy, and gross domestic income (GDI). Kazakhstan is ranked 56th, while the rest of Central-Asia is only between 105th and 129th place on the index (HDR, UNDP, 2016). This essay is about two regional cases, post-Soviet Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and their most important difference in development, measured through their place on the HDI. Crucial in explaining this difference are theories about development. In this essay, two theories, being the technocratic/liberal theory by Sachs and the institutional theory of Acemoglu & Robinson, will be used to test the cases. Therefore, the research question is which of the theories can explain the difference in development, measured through the HDI, best? This question is answered in a thematic way, firstly the approach of Sachs for underdevelopment and development will be applied to the cases of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, followed by the institutional theory for development and underdevelopment by Acemoglu and Robinson. I will analyse to which extent the theories are applicable to the cases, and which gives a more comprehensive explanation for the difference in HDI.

As mentioned shortly above, for this essay I have picked theories of scholars with, at first sight, opposed theories: Jeffrey Sachs (2005) on the one hand, and Acemoglu & Robinson (2012) on the other hand. Their approaches to development will be tested on the cases of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. In *The End of Poverty* (2005) Sachs underlines the importance of geography, liberalisation and a technocratic idea of development. He explains underdevelopment in terms of states geography and everything that comes with it (being landlocked, (tropical) diseases, climate). To develop states need a liberal, technocratic approach. He is in favour of radical economic liberalisations like shock therapy, in which a state transforms its economy radically through privatizations, full opening of its market, and cuts in domestic spending (Sachs, 2005, pp. 1-3). Acemoglu & Robinson, on the other hand, explain the difference between weak and strong states by their political and economic institutions in *Why Nations Fail* (2012). Inclusive institutions make strong, developed states, extractive institutions make weak, underdeveloped states. Economic policies are not enough to

develop states, for these policies have to be carried out by reliable institutions. These Institutions only change very slowly due to their historic path dependency. Only in the case of an major disruption, or a critical juncture, institutions can change quickly. The fall of the Soviet Union is a critical juncture, while former Soviet institutions, organized from Moscow, became irrelevant to the new nation states in 1991 (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, pp. 74, 75, 81). Extractive institutions, in this paper, are defined as institutions relying on patrimonial links. Patrimonialism halts economic and political reform, undermines states institutions and the rule of law, which is crucial for economic growth, and weakens social services (Markowitz, 2012, p. 389). In his influential article ‘Personal Rulership, Patrimonialism, and Empire-Building in New States’, Guenther Roth describes patrimonialism as a type of rule where people follow a certain ruler, not because of his democratic legitimacy, or unique qualities or charisma, but because of the monetary, material, or immaterial reward (political influence, votes, media attention) they get out of it (Roth, 1968, p. 196).

II. Research design and method.

This study is a qualitative study, using both primary sources (reports by NGO’s, World Bank data) and secondary sources by academics specialized in the region to make a comparative case-study. As stated above, the cases of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan share several comparable variables. Yet, they differ on a very important one: their human development, measured via HDI. The list is divided between ‘very high’, ‘high’, ‘medium’, and ‘low’ human development. The indicators this index uses for development are more broad than just economic development, or GDP per capita and therefore more complete in measuring development. In this paper, ‘development’ and ‘underdevelopment’ are measured through HDI, unless stated otherwise. The indicators the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) uses are health (‘life expectancy at birth’), knowledge (‘expected years of schooling’ and ‘mean years of schooling’) and standard of living (‘GNI (GNI = GDP + earnings of foreign residents in the country – income generated by non-residents in a country) per capita’). Although both countries are not even close to development by Western-European standards (every Western-European state, except Portugal, west of the Iron Curtain is in the HDI top 30), there is a considerable difference between the Central-Asian states. Kazakhstan, ranked 56th, is a high developed country, leading the list for ‘high developed countries’. Uzbekistan is closing this list, at place 105. The country is just ahead of ‘medium developed countries’ like Moldova, Gabon, and Botswana (HDR, UNDP 2016).

Using the most-similar systems design, my aim is to look more closely at the comparative case-study of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and their major difference on the HDI ranking. The most-similar systems design is based on the similarities between most variables in both cases. Both cases only differ in one crucial variable that explains the difference between them (Mill, 1843 (2008), p. 421). Analysing this different variable is interesting for theory testing about the development of both countries, because both theories differ in their view on the causes of this difference in HDI. The

examples for this comparative case-study were selected on basis of several important variables for development, so the one differing variable can't be attributed to these other variables. I have made the decision of choosing two cases in Central-Asia based upon their basic resemblance. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan could all have been used, yet in the next paragraph I will explain why I have picked Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan for my comparative case-study.

The first similar variable is geography. Both countries are located in Central-Asia. Central-Asia, as in this paper defined, are the former Soviet Republics mentioned above. Both countries are landlocked and have comparable climates, which is according to many development scholars an important variable in development (Sachs, 2005, pp. 57, 104; Carmignani, 2015, p. 1594). Although Kazakhstan borders the Caspian Sea, it is an inland body of water. Uzbekistan is one of only two double landlocked countries in the world. Also, given that both countries are neighbouring each other, they have a continental climate. This variable by itself is not enough for the argument, since all of the Central-Asian states are landlocked and have comparable climates.

Second, both countries were new states, former parts of empires. The territories, nowadays the independent states of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, were former Mongol steppe imperia. After Mongol rule decayed, the territories fluctuated in form, size, and rule. Until the Russian Empire came for the territories in the 18th century, there were almost no lasting centralized empires or states in the region. From 1838 and 1868, respectively, modern day Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were part of the Russian Empire. Both were made into modern nation states (within Soviet borders) by Stalin in the twenties and thirties of the 20th century, and were granted some autonomy from Moscow like all other Soviet Republics (Golden, 2011, pp. 132-135). After Soviet rule decayed both countries became independent, months apart, in 1991. The variable resemblances in history is used here, because of the importance of history to a state's development. Institutions are shaped by history, their path dependency, and therefore this variable is important in this essay (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. p. 110). Yet again, a resembling history until 1991 is the case for all Central-Asian states.

Third, both countries have a similar political regime. Both countries are presidential republics with a bicameral system. Although they are both ruled with in strictly authoritarian fashion since their independence, there are, to some extent, elections and there is controlled opposition. Politics of the other Central-Asian states are different from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and therefore not valid for this argument, since politics are of great importance to development (Leftwich, 2000, p. 4). This because state politics shapes economies, development, and developmental programmes, and are crucial as I will show in the respectable chapters on both the countries (Lefwich, 2000, pp. 4, 5). Turkmenistan, for example, is not a republic, had no (presidential) elections till the death of president Niazov in 2006, or opposition (*Freedomhouse*, 2017). Although the case of Turkmenistan differs slightly from the heavily controlled and harassed opposition in the other two countries, it shows that political security in Turkmenistan is even lower than in Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan (Index Mundi, 2017). The difference in this important variable between Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and

Kazakhstan makes Turkmenistan a less valid comparison. Kyrgyzstan, on the other hand, has made some democratic changes after political revolutions in 2005 and 2010, which never happened in Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan (*Freedomhouse*, 2017). Tajikistan has had civil war in the 1990's and is therefore the only case in the region with large scale political violence. Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have had oppressive institutions, riddled with clientelism, since Soviet times, which continued undisrupted under, respectively, president Karimov, and after his death in 2016 Mirziyoyev, and president Nazarbayev (Lewis, 2011, p. 33).

Fourth, Uzbekistan's and Kazakhstan's economies are fairly comparable in Central-Asia since they are the region's largest economic powers measured in GDP. While both Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan have immense oil-reserves, which contributes significantly to their GDP, and oil is in less supply in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan only has 1/4th the GDP of Kazakhstan, and less than half of Uzbekistan's (*Index Mundi* 2017). Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are even further away, they are at only 1/10th of Uzbekistan's GDP and 1/20th of Kazakhstan's (*Index Mundi*, 2017). The fifth important variable is the one in which both cases differ so much. Looking at the HDI, four of the five countries are in relative proximity to each other, with Kazakhstan being an outlier. Uzbekistan, at place 105 is only 24 places away from the lowest ranking Central-Asian state, Tajikistan.

III. The technocratic solution to underdevelopment: Jeffrey Sachs's explanation for the cases of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

Sachs argues that underdevelopment is a 'technical' problem, meaning there are technical solutions (Sachs, 2005, pp. 1-3). According to him underdevelopment is caused by 'the poverty trap'. This trap sets the vicious circle of poverty in motion: once you are poor, you cannot save money to invest in yourself, your firm, or your children, so there is no escape from poverty (Sachs, 2005, p. 56). On a more macro-level, the poverty trap is caused by a states' geography. Sachs underlines the problems geography causes, especially landlocked states, states with a very humid or very dry climate, soil degradation, mountainous states and altitude, states that lack natural resources, and states where the population is exposed to tropical illnesses. These factors contribute to the inescapability of the poverty trap (Sachs, 2005, p. 58). Other factors that cause poverty in states are a lack of innovation, lack of natural resources, geopolitics, failure of governance, and demographics (Sachs, 2005, pp. 59, 60). Underdevelopment can be fixed by what Sachs calls 'clinical economics' (Sachs, 2005, p. 74). He compares economic development to clinical medicine, where following precise steps will fix the problem. This clinical medicine approach means a careful diagnosis per case, a monitoring, and professionals to carry out the mission (Sachs, 2005, p. 78). Key agents in this process are good governance, international trade, liberalisations (privatisations, opening the domestic market for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)), and the help of international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Sachs, 2005, p. 366).

Both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan meet some of the qualifications for underdevelopment and poverty as stated by Sachs. Both countries are landlocked, and thousands of kilometres apart from open coasts, making broad international trade difficult. Also, both countries are experiencing soil degradation and water problems for decades. Droughts, poor water management, and defective irrigation have caused problems for the production of important agricultural products like cotton and wheat (Sievers, 2003, p. 31; Index Mundi, 2017). Another factor holding back development according to Sachs is demography. His argument consists of two parts. In the first part he argues that underdevelopment is caused by overpopulation. People in poor countries choose to have many children, which slows down economic growth because the parents can't invest in all the children (Sachs, 2005, pp. 65, 66). Although both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan experience above average population growth, it still falls short compared to many low developed, mostly African, countries. Therefore, in explaining their cases, it is more interesting to look at the other part of his argument, namely demographics in relation to population density. Economic development was, and is, much harder for states with low population density. According to Sachs technology and innovation spreads less quickly because of harder roads it has to travel. Next to that, production costs are much higher (Sachs, 2012, p. 145). Economic development is therefore much more expensive in countries like Kazakhstan than countries with high population density like India. Last factor on underdevelopment in both countries is failure of (good) governance. Sachs notes that governments need an orientation or drive towards development. This implies spending on public goods, fighting corruption, creating an levelled playing field, and maintain fair judicial systems (Sachs, 2005, pp. 59, 60). On this factor, both countries mostly have a bad record. Both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan rely heavily on clientelist relations (Lewis, 2011, p. 191). Having existed even before the Soviets came, the patron-client relationships survived the Soviet era and became crucial maintaining political and economic power (Lewis, 2011, pp. 191, 192). Much of the money made in the agricultural and energy sector is being channelled into patronage networks and the bureaucracy to keep the radars in the system running (Rustemova, 2011, p. 31). This combined with strict authoritarianism at the top made that corruption was not fought but institutionalized, and instead of a levelled playing field there was a more vertical playing field (Lewis, 2011, p. 192).

Although the states bare many resemblances on a political level, there is a major difference in economic development between the two countries. After independence Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, like twenty other countries, had to transit their economies from the communist plan economy towards a free market economy. As 'victors' of the Cold War, Western states were keen to implement Western-style economic policies. In the transition to a liberal free market, economists like Sachs stressed the importance of international trade and institutions like the IMF, privatisation, transparency, social inclusion, accountability, and investment (Sachs, 2005, p. 129; Aminova & Jegers, 2011, p. 580). Although both countries kept an authoritarian political system, there was no option but to reform their economies. Uzbek president Karimov took a very conservative, gradual path towards economic

reform and entering the global market. Kazakh president Nazarbayev, on the other hand, took the path of very radical liberalisation (Alam & Banerji, 2000, p. 1). Kazakhstan allowed multiple FDI's, mostly in the energy sector, whereas Uzbekistan kept their economy more closed of (Alam & Banerji, 2000, p. 8). President Karimov saw radical market reforms as a trigger for radical social reforms and was therefore anxious. On the other hand, president Nazarbayev saw market reform not necessarily as a threat to his autocratic rule and saw the development of liberal economic policy and unfree political institutions as separate (Alam & Banerji, 2000, p. 18). He argued that a strong state was a necessary requisite for a strong economy, especially in case of economic crisis (Kubicek, 1998, p. 35). To execute their liberalisation, the Kazakhstani government viewed economic reform as a technical issue, on which the best technocrats needed to work on. They had to come up with a step-by-step program to transit the country's economy from plan to market (Rustemova, 2011, p. 32). At first, Uzbekistan's gradualism seemed to be the right way to adapt to the new conditions. The transitions impacted the Central-Asian states strongly and in the first decade after independence, Uzbekistan had the highest GDI of all former Soviet states in Central-Asia (Pomfret, 2010, p. 452). From the late 1990's Kazakhstan, rich in oil, stabilized, connected with the international market, and began to export on large scale, set in a rising trend in GDI (Ostrowski, 2011, p. 294). Uzbekistan, on the other hand, although rich in cotton and gas, lagged behind partially due to geography (high transport costs because of its double landlocked location) and the government prudence that kept the country out of the economic difficulties mid-1990's (Rustemova, 2011, pp. 33, 34).

GDI is not the only indicator for the HDI ranking. The other indicators, life expectancy and education, also need explaining. Again, the Kazakhstani government took a technocratic approach. Alongside the economic development, there were structured plans to invest the money newly made to educate the Kazakhs and to increase life expectancy (Nyussupova & Rodionova, 2011, pp. 79-81). In contrast, Uzbekistan reformed their educational system so that every child could follow elementary school, but in secondary and higher education there is a shortage of qualified teachers (Omilov & Fayzulaev, 2014, p. 231). Spending on healthcare are extremely unevenly distributed between cities and countryside and wages are so low that even doctors ask side payments for (extra) treatment or medicine (Markowitz, 2012, p. 406).

The difference in HDI ranking is almost directly as in Sachs's theory. Kazakhstan followed the clinical approach with a government willing to reform, technocrats to perform the policies, and a thorough liberalisation and internationalisation of the economy. Uzbekistan, hindered by their geography and economic prudence, lagged behind in GDI. On education and healthcare, Kazakhstan took a same technocratic approach that payed off. Despite a rough start, Kazakhstan grew while Uzbekistan stayed behind.

As shown above, explaining why, certainly on a macro-level, both countries are not 'very highly developed' is possible using Sachs' theory and same goes for their difference in HDI. Yet, there are possibly many flaws in the explanation for the difference in HDI. Two major problems with

Sachs's analysis of development and underdevelopment surface regarding the cases of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The first one lies in the demonstrable deviations in different cases compared to the ones used in this paper. Also, for both cases, many of Sachs's explanations for underdevelopment are not very well in line with the reality in both states. Although the different critiques by them self are not enough to negate Sachs's ideas, together they are too much to ignore. Second, there are critiques to the evidence on which Sachs's ideas about development are based. Especially in the case of Kazakhstan, these critiques are applicable and they tackle Kazakhstan's success story.

First, according to Sachs, their geography should make development much more difficult. As both countries are landlocked, they should do worse than Central-Asian states bordering open seas. Because in this case-study it is about HDI, it will be used in this argument as well. Iran and Pakistan are in the Central-Asian region, were part of the same empires till the Russian Empire came for the Uzbek and Kazakh territories, knew oppressive rulers, have natural resources, but both border a sea. Given their resemblances, but different geography, Iran and Pakistan should do equal or better on a HDI scale. Yet, Kazakhstan still outperforms both on this list, and Uzbekistan outperforms Pakistan easily (HDR, UNDP 2016). Also, according to Sachs, a lack of natural resources is a factor in explaining underdevelopment. Again, there is the problem with the economic performance of other Central-Asian states. Turkmenistan, for example, is much richer in raw materials than Uzbekistan (Index Mundi, 2017). It has very large oil and gas reserves, and rich agricultural lands where cash crops like wheat and cotton are farmed. Uzbekistan has a larger cotton industry, but far less gas and oil (Index Mundi, 2017). According to Sachs's theory, Turkmenistan should be more prosperous than Uzbekistan. Yet, Uzbekistan has a much larger economy than Turkmenistan, and is ahead of the country at the HDI. Also, between the two states there are problematic outcomes. For example, Uzbekistan is much more densely populated than Kazakhstan, one of the most desolate countries in the world. Yet, Kazakhstan is much more technologically and economically advanced. But, more problematic than the explanations for underdevelopment, is the explanation for Kazakhstan's higher development.

As mentioned above, Kazakhstan fits Sachs's technocratic approach to development. Accordingly, Kazakhstan experienced economic growth and increasing human development. The Kazakh government was able to move seventeen places in the period from 2000-2016 (HDR, UNDP 2000). But is it only because of their technocratic resolution? Sachs's empirical evidence of the success of 'shock therapy' comes from his own experience as a financial advisor of the Polish and post-Soviet Russian governments. Shock therapy is an economic policy measure in which drastic economic reform is set in motion directly. These liberalisations include, among other things, privatizations, the abolition of price control, and the elimination of trade barriers (Sachs, 2005, 122). Sachs presents these cases as a relative success story (Poland) and a pitiful mistake, but lesson to be learnt (Russia) (Sachs, 2005, pp. 128-130,147). Yet, other authors have a less positive view on Sachs' advices, experiences, and the way he puts them forward in his book. For example Henwood (2006)

criticizes Sachs sharply. He calls Poland's 'success' an unclear fact, given the rise in unemployment, relatively low wages, and political discontent to this day. The Russian experience, according to Henwood, was an outright disaster where the economy imploded, population dropped, and large scale violence was miraculously avoided (Henwood, 2006, p. 199). Kazakhstan, also a transition economy, experienced a similar process. After the collapse of the Soviet Union Kazakhstan's GDP shrank enormously, and recovered only very slow. By 1999 Kazakhstan's economy had shrank by 9% and their GDP was at only 63% of what it was before the collapse of the Soviet Union (Alam & Banerji, 2000, pp. 3,4). Social unrest was common during the 1990's. Mass discontent with the liberalisations, capitalism, and unemployment stirred unrest among the Kazakhstani (Nazpary, 2002, p. 3). As in Russia, political violence was luckily avoided. Reasons for this were president Nazarbayev's authoritarian grip on politics and society and the horrors of civil war in Chechenia and Tajikistan (Nazpary, 2002, p. 180). Kazakhstan's economy only came back to strength because the world energy prices rose after 2000 (Alam & Banerji, 2000, p. 4). This recovery made Kazakhstani elite very rich, but meant very uneven economic development. Kazakhstan became a rentier state, almost solely relying on its gas and oil reserves (Nazpary, 2002, p. 10; Ostrowski, 2011, p. 282). The elite enjoyed the new situation of trade liberalisations and privatizations greatly because they profited on unprecedented scale (Nazpary, 2002, p. 176). Also, for education and healthcare, the other pillars of HDI, the case is more complicated than it looks at first glance. The health of the average Kazakhstani declined for more than ten years, due to stress, the abuse of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol (Grebneva, 2006, p. 820). Also, the quality of education declined. During the mid-1990's, 111 of 165 higher educational institutions were non-public. Also, from 1999 tuition fees for higher education went up. Therefore, higher education was hardly accessible to the average Kazakhstani (Hartley et al., 2016, pp. 280-282). After the crisis of the 1990's was over, healthcare was improved, life expectancy rose again, and educational reforms to improve the quality and accessibility were made (Hartley et al., 2016, p. 282). Yet, for the discrepancies pointed out above there is no answer in Sachs's theory. The shock therapy 'worked', for the few, and only because Kazakhstan was lucky to have enormous amounts of oil for sale when the market picked up again. Uzbekistan gradual reforms held the country stable, and had the pre-Soviet GDP back for 96% in 1999 (Alam & Banerji, 2000, p. 3, 4). But when oil prices rose, Kazakhstan's economy came ahead, they invested, among others, in healthcare and education, making their HDI grow away from Uzbekistan's.

Was the government in Tasjkent only busy enriching itself and locking up opponents? Of course, the Uzbek government invested in education and healthcare, and social services too, even more than the Kazakhstani, but they didn't make the progress in HDI (Rustemova, 2011, p. 34). If not for the theory Sachs lays out, what does make the differences? Why is Uzbekistan not ahead of Kazakhstan, or at least at a same level, although they made a much better start after independence, spent more money on social services and healthcare, and they are seventh largest cotton exporters in the world? It is because there institutions are more extractive than Kazakhstan's. Institutions are the

agents that executes the clinical economic plans, that employs the technocrats working on economic development, and crucial to growth (Unwin, 2007, p. 931).

IV. Institutions shape states and therefore their development: Acemoglu & Robinson on the differences between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

Sachs's theory gives no clear indication of when a state can be considered 'developed'. His clinical approach to development has neither an explicit ending, nor guidance for states that are on the brink of being 'developed'. Acemoglu & Robinson (2012) on the other hand have a very different view on development and underdevelopment. They argue that not geographical problems, and everything that comes with them, clinical economics, or international financial institutions are deeply imbedded in development and underdevelopment, but domestic institutions. Of course, skilled technocrats and well-thought plans are needed, but Acemoglu and Robinson add an important extra feature, namely that their failure or success depends on a states' institutions. They distinguish between inclusive and extractive political and economic institutions. Inclusive economic institutions are institutions that create incentives for people to participate in the market, provide public services, guarantee an open levelled playing field, respect property rights, and uphold the rule of law (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, pp. 74, 75). Inclusive political institutions are institutions that are centralized and do justice to the plurality of society, they don't favour a certain ethnic, religious, or cultural group within society (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 81). Extractive economic institutions on the other hand are institutions that do not give people the incentive to participate in the market because their job security depends on their ethnicity, culture, or religion, or the states violates businessowners' property rights to enrich themselves (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 81). Extractive political institutions are institutions that favour certain ethnic, cultural, or religious groups and/or are based upon client-patron (patrimonial) relations. In these institutions, individuals withdraw money or resources from the national or local economy to maintain their power (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 81). Institutions don't change easily because of their path dependency. Their historical patterns keeps institutional drift very slow and can only change very quickly in case of a major disruption, a critical juncture (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, pp. 108-110). Institutional drift can cause gradual worsening, the vicious circle, where extractive political institutions make economic institutions more extractive, or a gradual bettering, where economic institutions make political institutions more inclusive or vice versa (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p 343).

As stated in the introduction, extractive institutions are defined as institutions relying on patrimonial links. This because of two reasons. First, although in both countries clientelism is a widespread problem, there are differences. Kazakhstan has very high levels of petty corruption, the obtaining of basic needs through government officials (McMann, 2014, p. 8). This due to the radical liberalisations and state withdrawal from basic provisions (McMann, 2014, p. 8). Yet, this differs from patrimonialism and clientelism because corruption can be a non-politicized redistribution of means

because of lacking state-enforced property rights while patrimonialism and clientelism always have a hierarchical political legitimacy (Laruelle, 2012, p. 305). Second, this difference also shows in the definition, given in the introduction by Roth (1968), who stated that patrimonial loyalty was based upon the exchange of favours, material but also immaterial. This difference is important because it shows the different forms of undermining of state institutions. Where petty corruption just has an economic component, patrimonialism also has an political component, making it more comprehensive. According to Roth almost every less developed country (countries with that are not 'very high developed' according to the HDI, place 52-188 on the list) knows forms of patrimonialism, meaning both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are no exception (Theobald, 1982, p. 549). Patrimonialism halts economic and political reform, undermines states institutions and the rule of law, and weakens social services, all crucial indicators to a high HDI score (Markowitz, 2012, p. 389).

Both states have known autocracy and extractive institutions since the Russian Empire. The Central Asian states were used as profitable periphery, where many raw materials were available for extraction. To keep this process going, local elites were empowered to set up extractive institutions, and enrich themselves, to keep the flow of resources to the centre (Moscow, Russian industrial areas) stable (Pomfret, 2010, p. 450). First set up by the Russian Czars at the end of the nineteenth century, they survived Soviet times and still 'flourish' today (Golden, 2011 pp. 135-137; Lieven, 2011, p. 33). The fall of the Soviet Union, an enormous critical juncture, thus meant no significant institutional change. Especially the Uzbek cotton industry is a prime example of an highly extractive institution that survived almost untouched for decades (Markowitz, 2012, p. 401). Kazakhstan, after its economic liberalisations and privatisations, still struggles with clientelism, but not to the same extent as Uzbek (Transparency International, 2017). In Uzbekistan, patron-client relations are deeply rooted in every layer of both national and local government (Markowitz, 2012, 388). Patrimonialism affects all three of the HDI indicators.

This all comes together in the cotton industry, an example of some of the world's most extractive economic and political institutions mix (Walk Free Foundation, 2016). Former president Karimov directly understood the importance of cotton for his newly independent state and took direct control of the cotton industries in Uzbekistan (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 391). Here, the Karimov government faced a paradox: the strongly centralized government in Tashkent versus the regional governors. These local elites understood their value and importance in the maintenance of the cotton industry. President Karimov chose for a continuation of Soviet policy in regards to the local elite. Some, he gave special privileges, some he purged or repressed (Ilkhamov, 2006, p. 161). This process of strengthening the central government's relations with some in the periphery on the one hand, and repressing others on the other hand, left out society as a whole (Ilkhamov, 2006, p. 162). Cotton comprises 45% of the Uzbek export, making it an invaluable resource for the Uzbek government (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 390). To make profits for the regional and central elite even larger, they mobilise the whole population to pick the cotton. Uzbek of all social groups and ages, even

doctors, teachers, and children, are obligated to work in the cotton industry during the important months, sowing in April/May and harvest in September. They work for ten hours a day, have to pay for their own expenses like food, water, transportation, and shelter, and can't work their own jobs during the cotton periods. With over more than one million forced labourers in the cotton industry, it makes Uzbekistan the third largest slave state in the world (*Walk Free Foundation, 2016; Uzbek – German Forum for Human Rights, 2015, p. 41*). Governors have cotton quota they have to live up to, so they mobilise as many of their civilians as possible. In this mobilisation, the rule of law is heavily compromised. People are threatened with violence and torture, the loss of their jobs, the security of their families, or imprisonment (*Uzbek – German Forum for Human Rights, 2016, pp. 38-41*). Although, according to government officials, every child in Uzbekistan goes to school, they are systematically abused and miss education during three months of the year (*Uzbek – German Forum for Human Rights, 2016, p. 33; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, 391*). Large amounts of the money made in the cotton harvest, stays in the pockets of the elite in Tashkent, who pay off governor, who, in their turn, pay off local strongmen, therefore less contributing to the general national economy. (Markowitz, 2012, p. 390).

While the cotton industry is the most poignant There are many more examples of how Uzbekistan is held back by its failing institutions. Uzbekistan's highly extractive institutions and strict authoritarian control on people's lives has brought it at the bottom of some of world's most important human rights NGO's lists. A short overview; the state ranks #157 (out of 176 states) at the Corruption Index, #3 at the Global Slavery Index, #152 (out of 180 states) at the Economic Freedom Index, #165 (out of 180 states) at the World Press Freedom Index (*Transparency International, 2017; Walk Free Foundation, 2017; The Heritage Foundation, 2017, Reporters Without Borders, 2018*). All these numbers indicate the weak institutional performances of the Uzbek state. As mentioned above, local healthcare facilities are of very low quality, doctors/ ask for side payments (chapter III), and doctors work obligatory in the cotton industry during the season. The exploitation of children is possible because the state also has strict control over educational institutions and these same institutions are forced to promote the Karimov family as benefactors and popular public figures (Azimbayeva, 2017, p. 12; Laruelle, 2012, p. 311). In upholding the rule of law and the importance property rights, there is the story of the American company *Interspan*, who grew tea, the second most profitable crop in Uzbekistan. The Karimov family noticed the money that could be made in the growing tea business. They bullied, threatened, bought off, and even tortured as many employees as needed to make the company sell their share for a price far below market value to president Karimov's daughter (Acemoglu, 2012, p. 394). Yet, the Uzbek cotton industry is most exemplary of how extractive political and economic institutions keep Uzbekistan underdeveloped.

When Kazakhstan became independent in 1991 Nursultan Nazarbayev took all executive power. He kept the old Soviet bureaucracies, but mixed them to some extent with more Western-like legal-rational institutions (Isaacs, 2010, p. 2). Because of the variety of ethnic groups in Kazakhstan,

and the spectre of ethnic groups fighting each other in Tajikistan, Nazarbayev gave in to a constitution and parliament and the promotion of Kazakhstani nationhood (Olcot, 1997, p. 215). Even though privatization meant general economic decline, it made a few Kazakhstani very rich. Because the business transactions of Kazakhstan's elite are, like Uzbekistan's elite, mostly very secretive and off the record it is unclear how the bidding for the former state enterprises went. However, it is assumed that Nazarbayev had a strong hand in the process and although there is a parliament and some opposition, most elite power comes from patrimonialism among high ranking state officials (Olcot, 1997, p. 217; Lewis, 2011, p. 178). On a smaller scale, the enrichment of the new elite also meant pauperization of the mass. Combined with the new privatization and state withdrawal from former government provided services, the country turned to petty corruption (Olcot, 1997, p. 218; McMann, 2014, p. 36).

While there are links between the centre and periphery, and between elite all the way down to common people, the literature is unclear about the extent of the patronage pyramid in Kazakhstan. Meanwhile, on Uzbekistan there are numerous studies about the extent of the (estimated) extent of the patronage pyramid (Lewis 2011; Markowitz 2012; Aminova & Jegers, 2011). There could be different explanations for this seemingly difference in the extent of patrimonialism. First, Uzbekistan has a long history of regional governors in important positions in the cotton regions. Since Soviet times, local governors were key in maintaining the extractive cotton industry, and were therefore to be held in close patrimonial relationships (Markowitz, 2012, pp. 392-194). Kazakhstan on the other hand was for a long time the periphery of the Central-Asian periphery. Only in the mid 1960's, Brezhnev made efforts to mobilize the countries agriculture. The nomads of the sparsely populated region were forced into sedentary life. During this program, many Russian immigrants came to the Kazakh Soviet Republic, altering ethnic and societal relations (Olcot, 1997, p. 208). Here, local patronage existed, but not to the extent it was known in the highly profitable cotton regions of Uzbekistan (Olcot, 1997, p. 204). In comparison, in the densely populated Uzbek cotton region, farmer grew up and lived their lives in the patrimonial institutions established before they were born. The Uzbek governors themselves had more resources to distribute, especially compared to the far less wealthy and powerful Kazakh regional leaders (Markowitz, 2012, p. 407; McCann, 2014, p. 49). Besides agriculture, large state-owned oil enterprises, a nuclear testing site, and the Soviet space station were important features for Kazakhstan. When the Kazakhstani government loosened its grip on the economy, these patrimonial relations also became of less importance (Olcot, 1997, p. 205). Today agricultural share of the states' GDP is very low in contrast to Uzbekistan, making large patrimonial systems in this sector of less importance than their counterparts in Uzbekistan (Index Mundi, 2017). Kazakhstan's largest economic asset, oil, is too costly to pump, raffinate, and export to be exploited by patrimonial networks in the way the Uzbek cotton industry is. A second reason for the less extended patrimonialism in Kazakhstan may be the market reforms. Even though the countries economy fell deeply, the state stuck to its policy. When the energy market went up again, so did Kazakhstan's

economy. Economic reforms slowly brought political and institutional reforms towards more inclusivity (Pomfret, 2010, p. 458). There came little space for civil society and opposition. The creation of a civil society is important because it weakens patrimonial relations by giving civilians a voice of their own, in stead of maintaining dependence on a superior (Woods, 1992, p. 86). The liberalisations on the one hand, and the politicization of ethnicity and Kazakh statehood unintentionally caused a little democratization (Olcot, 1997, p. 218). In Uzbekistan, the economy is kept under strict government control, giving no space for liberalisations in both economy and society. The Uzbek government under Karimov, and his successor Mirziyoyev, have kept the economy centrally regulated from Tasjkent, kept the gradual approach towards economic openness, and cracked down on the little civil society there was (Junisbai, 2012, p. 895). The government in Tasjkent feared any interference that might affect their power or profitable client-patron relations (McMann, 2014, pp. 7,8).

While Kazakhstan seems to come out as a champion of Central Asian institutional modernity, there are a number of nuances to this image. As said above, petty corruption is a common feature of Kazakhstani society. In 2014 around 20% of the Kazakhstani turn to the government for ‘assistance’. This assistance comprised of resources they couldn’t get through the market, directly weakening market reform and the reduction of state reliance (McMann, 2014, pp. 43, 44). Also, oligarchs falling out of favour of the government lose their basic rights, properties or business’s, and are hunted down in (political) processes by president Nazarbayev and his closest cronies. Most notable example of a very high ranking official falling out is president Nazarbayev’s former son in law, Rakhat Aliyev (Gawrich et al., 2010, p. 16). After working himself to the top, Aliyev wanted to become president himself. He had become rich through state enterprises, and held political office as ambassador in Austria. President Nazarbayev, cracking down on oppositions from his own circle, accused him of large scale corruption, kidnapping, and murder of two important bankers, and ordered his arrest and conviction in 2007 (Barnes, 2007, p. 35). Aliyev was arrested in 2014 and died under suspicious circumstances in an Austrian prison in 2015. Aliyev was the most prominent example of political assassinations, but they were a common mean by the Kazakhstani government during the 2000’s to silence opponents or unwilling businessmen (Laruelle, 2012, p. 319). A more delicate way to silence opponents was to appoint them in high offices without any meaning. They became envoys with little tasks to foreign countries, were given shallow honorary titles, or awarded with academic titles of no importance (Laruelle, 2012, p. 320). In this way they were silenced without radical loss of social prestige and kept busy.

Although both states inevitably have extractive economic and political institutions, the situation in Kazakhstan is bettering, while Uzbekistan is hardly making progress. Economic liberalisations and growing political pluralism are the difference between the two states, but Kazakhstani state institutions make the difference (Junisbai, 2012, p. 895). Looking at the three main indicators for HDI, the Kazakhstani state has done much better with their oil money than the Uzbek

state with their cotton money. Concerning GDI, since the 2000's, the Kazakhstani government has made improvements in the guarantee of property rights, government integrity, business freedom, labour freedom, and financial freedom (intervention by the state in financial institutions) (The Heritage Foundation, 2018). In this same index, Uzbekistan scores very low on labour freedom, government integrity, and financial freedom (*The Heritage Foundation*, 2018). Also, compared to Uzbekistan, the state has made steps in education of its citizens. According to the United Nations Education Index, Kazakhstan is placed 38th with a score of 0.805 (just below high developed), Uzbekistan is placed 58th, with a score of 0.740. These numbers are based upon mean years of education, adult literacy, and expected years of schooling. A Kazakhstani adult has had an average of 15 years of schooling, compared to an average 12 years for an Uzbek adult (HDR UNDP, 2016). On the last indicator, healthcare, the investments made by the Kazakhstani government to improve healthcare and life expectancy, as mentioned in chapter III, have worked. According to reports by the World Health Organisation too little of the national budget goes to the Uzbek health care. Employees in the health care sector are underpaid by the state and bribes or side payments are common, causing corruption in this sector too. Also, distribution of medical resources and specialists between countryside and cities is very uneven, what makes it difficult to receive good care in the provinces, there is little to no openness about public opinion towards health care, and the quality of care is very low (Ahmedov et al., 2014, pp. 124, 125). Although Kazakhstan's health care faces challenges of its own, the large state enforced health care campaigns paid in off in improving health care (Katsaga et al., 2012, p. 144). The Uzbek state, riddled by patrimonialism, controls the health systems, making reform and allocations even harder, while Kazakhstan's health sector is much more privatised and therefore more open (Johnson, 2015, p. 144). As deliberately mentioned in the examples above, Uzbek institutional performance is much lower due to more widespread patrimonialism, than Kazakhstan's, which is most important for state performance according to the Acemoglu & Robinson's theory.

V. Conclusion: Technocrats versus institutionalism.

As stated in the introduction, at first sight both theories seem almost opposed to each other. Yet, both Sachs and Acemoglu and Robinson show how underdevelopment and development are caused and, to be cured in ways that do not necessarily contradict each other. Sachs's indicators for underdevelopment and development are applicable to a certain extent. On variables like Geography (both states are landlocked with an arid climate), population density (Kazakhstan), failing economic reforms (Uzbekistan), natural resources (why Kazakhstan is richer than Uzbekistan), and good governance (both states) it is possible to make a case for their (relative) underdevelopment. The cure for this underdevelopment, according to Sachs, is a clinical one: set a diagnosis and prescribe the appropriate cure. Kazakhstan let their technocrats work on programs for healthcare development and educational reform, contributing to its higher HDI, while the government in Tashkent was failing in these same areas. Yet, the theory is unable to give a comprehensive view on development in both

states. First, although both states are landlocked, they outperform other not landlocked states in the region. Second, Kazakhstan is richer than Uzbekistan while it's much less populated. Third, liberalisations didn't work out so well during the 1990's for Kazakhstan. The shock therapy, as advised by Sachs, was, and still is, a highly controversial radical form of liberalisations. In Russia and Poland, where Sachs worked, the shocks were extremely heavy, leading to mass unemployment, decline of life expectancy, and enormous inflation. In Kazakhstan these effects of shock therapy also occurred. Luckily, when the energy market boomed, Kazakhstan profited from its oil and gas and its government reinvested the money in societal programmes, instead of embezzling most of the money made in lucrative state business like in Uzbekistan.

As noted in the example of the allocation of oil money, it was the Kazakhstani government that not only made the plans, like the government in Uzbekistan did too, but also carried it out right. It were the states' institutions that made the difference between the two. As stated in the both the introduction and chapter IV, there is a connection between patrimonialism and the underdevelopment of some important indicators for a high HDI. The undermining of the rule of law, which is critical to economic development, is common in Uzbekistan, as shown in the examples of the slave labour in the cotton industry, the harassment of the *Interspan* employees, and the data by *The Heritage Foundation* on labour freedom and government integrity. Social services, like healthcare provision, are weakened by state policy, the underpayment of doctors, and the institutionalized corruption within the sector. Also, people of all kinds of professions, even well respected ones, are put to work two to three months a year in the cotton industry. Kids of all ages sow and pick cotton instead of going to school, while the government claims a 100% schooling rate and a very high literacy rate (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 394).

All of the Uzbek examples are related to the strong patrimonial relations, present in every layer of society, making it one chained extraction machine. Kazakhstan on the other hand also has problems regarding corruption and patrimonialism, but to a less extent than their neighbours. Patrimonialism doesn't dominate and define society like in Uzbekistan. While the literature is not clear about this, there are some explanations for this difference. First, the importance of agriculture and the strong, and old, patron-client relations surrounding it in Uzbekistan, is far less present in Kazakhstan. Second, the patrimonial relations in Uzbekistan are sometimes as old as Czarist Russia, leaving communities in the profitable cotton regions in many decades of patrimonial spheres. In Kazakhstan on the other hand, the sparsely populated areas available for agriculture had to be inhabited by foreign migrants and nomads only in the mid 1960's, creating a very different society and dynamic than in Uzbekistan. Third, the economic reforms made in Kazakhstan made the countries economy more open and liberal, therefore less vulnerable to closed patron-client relations.

As shown in the multiple examples that negate Sachs's theory, it weren't just the plans and technocrats that made success in Kazakhstan, nor were it unfavourable geography or lacking natural resources that held Uzbekistan back. Although Sachs's theory definitely explains some variables, it

falls short on crucial points, where Acemoglu & Robinson's institutional approach is more comprehensive. Where Sachs mentions 'good governance' and fighting corruption, his focus is not primarily on clinical economics and the implementation of meticulous technocrat plans, Acemoglu and Robinson stress the importance of the quality of the institutions in which these plans are formed and executed. Uzbekistan spent much more money on social services, is one of the greatest cotton exporters in the world, and has a much higher population density, yet it couldn't profit from its advantages, like Kazakhstan could. The states' institutions shape their socio-economic identities, influence their policies on social services, like healthcare and education, and define their economic policies and allocations of money (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012, p. 9). The use of Sachs's approach of underdevelopment and development can be defended in the case of Kazakhstan, it falls short to explain the case of Uzbekistan, or the reasons for their differences. The institutional approach is more comprehensive between the two states in HDI ranking is better for explaining the difference between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

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