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GOVERNANCE AND ACCUMULATION AROUND THE CASPIAN:

A New Analytic Approach to Petroleum-Fueled Postsocialist Development*

This article builds a conceptual framework for interpreting economic and social development in the petroleum-rich post-Soviet states surrounding the Caspian Sea. Circum-Caspian states have undergone rapid economic development enabled by petroleum revenues since the 1990s, with material consequences evident in major cities such as Baku, Astana, and Almaty. However, very little has been investigated about the systemic effects of massive-scale hydrocarbon-fueled development on those societies. The article constitutes a programmatic statement of how research addressing those questions should be framed in order to uncover the emerging shape of petroleum-driven development in the post-Soviet Caspian region. It synthesizes separate bodies of scholarship to generate new approaches and inquiries, especially the economic and geopolitical literature about the oil and gas industries in those Caspian republics, and the critical development literature in anthropology and geography concerning energy and society. The focus is on Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, the two states addressed in

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most published studies on Caspian energy, though the framework aspires to apply to the entire region.

I seek to contribute to knowledge about post-Soviet development by articulating a new analytical approach to oil-driven Caspian society transformation that promises to reveal dynamics and effects that existing studies tend to neglect. The conceptual rethinking is a response to an unwarranted assumption prevalent in Caspian studies that the state always dominates the course and outcomes of development within national borders. However, considering the entire field of political order shaped by sociopolitical transformations after Soviet socialism and the sudden engagement of multinational entities with the 1990s oil boom, one recognizes a range of new nonstate actors whose activities in the region have a bearing on socioeconomic development – especially private corporations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).[1] The questions are: How does a wider spectrum of players, operating in parallel, collusion, or interference with the state, contribute to the shape of development in these petroleum-producing countries, and how should scholars approach this more plural and heterogeneous political field?

Posing these questions in the former Soviet Union promises to yield insights with implications beyond the ex-Soviet space concerning the relation of modernization with capitalism. Soviet rule brought to its "periphery" – those regions seen from Moscow as particularly needing socioeconomic development, including Central Asia and the Caucasus – seven decades of particular forms of modernist development that differed in important respects from twentieth-century initiatives undertaken globally outside of the "Second World" of state socialisms, including from most other petroleum-producing regions globally. The ex-Soviet periphery underwent "development-without-capitalism," a series of modernizing transformations through the twentieth century that were distinct in ideology, politics, and process.[2] By the time of the Union's collapse in 1991, the results were evidenced widely and deeply in Central Asia and the Caucasus: generally high education and literacy levels, scientific knowledge and institutions,[3]

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[1] "Corporation" is used in this article more in its modern legal sense than in a broader sense of economic, social, cultural, and political collectivity. See David A. Westbrook. Between Citizen and State: An Introduction to the Corporation. Boulder, 2007; Douglas Rogers. The Depths of Russia: Oil, Power, and Culture after Socialism. Ithaca, 2015.

[2] Deniz Kandiyoti. Modernization without the Market? The Case of the "Soviet East" // Economy and Society. 1996. Vol. 25. Pp. 529–542.

[3] Sarah Amsler. The Politics of Knowledge in Central Asia: Science between Marx and the Market. London, New York, 2007.

highly developed state bureaucracies and practices,[4] urban and rural infrastructure,[5] and decades of other modernization efforts that *preceded* large energy revenues, notably unlike in the Middle East.[6] Thanks to the Soviet state, which left the Caspian's hydrocarbons underexploited until the 1980s and had focused more on its Siberian fields,[7] Central Asia and the Caucasus underwent development (largely) without oil as well as without capitalism. The ex-Soviet Caspian presents relevant sites for thinking about the relation of energy, modern development, capital, and political power in light of a specific legacy that allowed development before exposure to capitalist flows and interests. The region forms a distinct conjuncture of ideologies, processes, and timing of efforts to improve society that can be compared with other cases of hydrocarbon-driven development elsewhere in the modern world.[8]

A framework for examining Caspian development within post-Soviet political orders is progressively advanced in the following sections. I begin by reviewing recent research on Caspian energy to show that it tends to assume the centrality of the state for societal development. Next, I expand the scope of inquiry on post-Soviet development beyond the state to include NGOs and transnational corporations in particular, whose activities can take on state-like functions in providing social services, sometimes with almost "biopolitical" concern for populations. The last section outlines an approach to addressing the series of analytical problems raised once one recognizes an expanded political field. One problem is to understand how these actors interact with and adapt to each other. Another problem is that development actors must be analyzed not as unitary entities but as themselves composed of networks of personnel, functions, resources, funding, and motivations.

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[4] Pauline Jones Luong. The Transformation of Central Asia: States and Societies from Soviet Rule to Independence. Ithaca, 2004.

[5] Catherine Alexander, Victor Buchli and Caroline Humphrey (Eds.). Urban Life in Post-Soviet Asia. London, New York, 2007. See also for Russia, Stephen J. Collier. Post-Soviet Social: Neoliberalism, Social Modernity, Biopolitics. Princeton, 2011.

[6] See Brenda Shaffer. Energy and Natural Resource Exports and the Islamic Future of Central Asia and Azerbaijan // T. W. Simons (Ed.). Islam in Eurasia: A Policy Volume. Cambridge, MA, 2015. P. 42.

[7] Rogers. The Depths of Russia.

[8] It is this sort of synoptic scholarship bridging Cold War knowledges of the "Third" and the "Second" worlds that Sharad Chari and Katherine Verdery advocate in their influential programmatic statement: Thinking between the Posts: Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography after the Cold War // Comparative Studies in Society and History. 2009. Vol. 51. No. 1. Pp. 6–34.

Tracing the different kinds of connections between people, things, and ideas can benefit from the conceptual tools of "assemblages" and "energopolitical regimes" to better conceptualize a complex, emergent field of power that functions as more than the sum of the individual actors. As research on NGOs, corporations, and state in Kazakhstan reveals, those networks interpenetrate so that boundaries between the actors can be blurred. Close-up ethnographic views of state, corporation, and NGO boundaries can reveal the artifice of regarding organizations as unitary entities with unambiguous interests and intentions – which has led some scholars to view them as *enacted* – brought into being and maintained as if unitary and coherent by specific practices, even though they in fact are not so.

The literature considered for building the framework in this way is published in English. Scholarship on post-Soviet Caspian energy and development in Russian and other languages merits its own treatment, but it does not add to the conceptual toolbox being synthesized in this article, which draws from recent trends in English-language theorizing in the social sciences of development.

If we follow that line of theorizing, and grant for a moment that corporations, states, and organizations are enactments rather than entities, new questions are raised. One asks what principles or mission statements guide their development activities in the post-Soviet Caspian? I suggest that the overlapping "logics" of *governance* and *accumulation* (the drive to control political structures and outcomes and the drive to secure streams of revenue from resource exploitation) constitute fundamental modes of their enactment. Those logics provide purpose and function to organizations, giving them citable justification for their actions and stabilizing them as entities, for example, "maximizing shareholder value" or "serving the people." At the same time, ethnography can show that the logics are partial, mutating, multiply authored, and not fully determinate, and that they circulate between organizations across the field of political order. To focus on logics is to shift away from organizational entities as the primary units of analysis and toward the vectors of interactions and effects on a complex field of power. By following the circulation of logics and interests that crisscross state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, interstate organizations, private companies, citizens, and others, the analysis becomes open to novel formations of power beyond the familiar set of authoritarian state and troubled "civil society."

State Strategies of Alliance and Rule

Published research on post-Soviet Caspian oil and gas has been valuable in documenting the economic and political changes surrounding the rise of petroleum production in the region, but much of it assumes the decisive, even exclusive, importance of the state. The limitations of a state-centered approach are described below, after a brief review here of academic writing about the post-Soviet Caspian petroleum industry. This literature presents natural resources as instrumental to state strategies of alliance and rule, looking at geopolitical and domestic-political calculations about foreign joint ventures, pipeline routes, sale contracts, and domestic use of revenues. Some are focused on geopolitics, namely, the strategic alliances made to produce and distribute oil and gas, and others on the politics concerning the domestic use of energy revenues. To be sure, these state-centered analyses of the region offer crucial information about the course of petroleum-fueled development, given that the state exerts great control over hydrocarbon revenues and policies on spending them on social and economic outcomes. This literature reveals how petroleum plays a key role in Caspian states' strategies of alliance and rule.

Many studies focus on the calculative and competitive aspects of Caspian development, premised on the state as the key actor in the political order. Powerful consumer states (notably China, Russia, and the United States) jockey furiously for access and control of Caspian energy, while producing states maintain a delicate geopolitical balancing act.[9] A "New Great Game" or "Caspian Derby" is under way and converging on places like Baku, Azerbaijan, characterized, we are told, by the collisions, collusions, confusions, and cacophony of various powerful players surrounding who will produce and get to market Caspian oil and natural gas.[10] The game metaphor extends to storied exploits of the high-stakes oilmen – savvy and enterprising pioneer types, who made their grand deals with the governments

[9] Paul Kubicek. Energy Politics and Geopolitical Competition in the Caspian Basin // Journal of Eurasian Studies. 2013. Vol. 4. Pp. 171–180; Thomas Stephan Eder. China-Russia Relations in Central Asia: Energy Policy, Beijing's New Assertiveness and 21st Century Geopolitics. Wiesbaden, 2013; Marlène Laruelle and Sébastien Peyrouse. Globalizing Central Asia: Geopolitics and the Challenges of Economic Development. Armonk, NY, 2013. Pp. 172–182; Cynthia Croissant. Azerbaijan, Oil and Geopolitics. Commack, NY, 1998.

[10] See Daniel Yergin. The Quest: Energy, Security and the Remaking of the Modern World. New York, 2011. P. 46.

in the early post-Soviet years,[11] – and to state strategies whereby the control of energy flows becomes a means to further a state's foreign policy objectives, as Russia has done.[12] The producing littoral states compete on multiple fronts, including disputes about the legal status of the Caspian subterranean and thus ownership of hydrocarbon resources that span those countries,[13] which defy easy solution despite progress made as recently as August 2018. Consumer states, meanwhile, attempt to coordinate their energy interests with each other and with the producers through a multilateral mechanism like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).[14]

The tricky, tangled nature of Caspian energy politics takes material form in pipeline planning and routing. Not only are pipelines costly and time-consuming to build, it is difficult to find a route to satisfy all concerned states, which have great interests regarding where a pipe goes and where it avoids going.[15] When it comes to getting energy, particularly gas, to market out of the region, states like Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan need to cultivate direct and long-term relationships with consumer parties via pipelines.[16] Material tubes necessitate commitment and balance with various powers, which can have a stabilizing effect on regional international relations. One key example is the Azeri–Georgian–Turkish alliance that enabled the construction of the 1,800-kilometer Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) crude oil pipeline, which became fully operational in 2006.[17] However, if the BTC appears to be a win-

[11] Steve LeVine. The Oil and the Glory: The Pursuit of Empire and Fortune on the Caspian Sea. New York, 2007.

[12] Margarita Mercedes Balmaceda. Energy Dependency, Politics and Corruption in the Former Soviet Union: Russia's Power, Oligarchs' Profits and Ukraine's Missing Energy Policy, 1995–2006. London, New York, 2008.

[13] Cynthia M. Croissant and Michael P. Croissant. The Legal Status of the Caspian Sea: Conflict and Compromise. Westport, CT, 2000.

[14] Khalid Rahman. Central Asia, Energy Security and Shanghai Cooperation Organization // Policy Perspectives. 2011. Vol. 8. Pp. 65–76; Marc Lanteigne. China, Energy Security and Central Asian Diplomacy // I. Øverland, et al. (Eds.). Caspian Energy Politics: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. London, New York, 2010. Pp. 101–115.

[15] Jennifer DeLay. The Caspian Oil Pipeline Tangle: A Steel Web of Confusion. Westport, CT, 2000. Pp. 206–210; Rob Johnson. Oil, Islam and Conflict: Central Asia since 1945. London, 2007.

[16] Brenda Shaffer. Permanent Factors in Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy // A. Petersen and F. Ismailzade. Azerbaijan in Global Politics: Crafting Foreign Policy. Baku, 2009. Pp. 67–96.

[17] Novruz Mammadov. Azerbaijan's Relations with the Islamic World and the Countries of Asia // Petersen and Ismailzade (Eds.). Azerbaijan in Global Politics. Pp. 149–172; Terry Adams. Baku Oil Diplomacy and "Early Oil" 1994–1998: An External Perspective // Ibid. Pp. 225–256.

win-win project from the economic and political viewpoints of these states, the actual dimensions of its impact on local populations along the route (and beyond to other affected publics) are more complex and mixed.[18] Moreover, the decisive mover that enabled the BTC to go forward was the United States: President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright realized that it was a strategic advantage for Caspian oil to bypass both Iran and Russia.[19]

Central Asian pipeline geopolitics is also embedded in the competitive relation between China and post-Soviet Russia. Russia attempts to maintain influence in the region, seeking to keep energy producers in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan reliant on Russian transport corridors.[20] Its central position in the Central Asian energy sector, however, has been eroded progressively by China since the early 2000s.[21] China sees Central Asia as a vital secondary energy source bypassing the less secure maritime routes from the Middle East, and Kazakhstan has been the region's principal beneficiary of China's growing energy voracity.[22] Rapid Chinese building of pipelines from Kazakhstan occurred at the same time that China expanded both its investment in Kazakh petroleum and its regional influence starting in the early 2000s.[23] The Sino-Kazakh oil pipeline, completed in 2009, which begins in Atyrau, Kazakhstan, on the Caspian, makes Kazakhstan one of China's top four crude oil suppliers.[24] China has sought to avoid

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[18] Andrew Barry. Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline. Chichester, West Sussex, 2013.

[19] See Svante E. Cornell. Azerbaijan since Independence. Armonk, NY, 2011. P. 216; Yergin. The Quest. P. 60.

[20] See Carolyn Kissane. The Quest for Energy Security in the Central Asian "Neighborhood" // D. Denoon (Ed.). China, the United States, and the Future of Central Asia: U.S–China Relations, Vol. 1. New York, 2015. Pp. 378–379.

[21] Thomas Stephan Eder. China-Russia Relations in Central Asia: Energy Policy, Beijing's New Assertiveness and 21st Century Geopolitics. Wiesbaden, 2013. Pp. 127–128.

[22] Marc Lanteigne. China, Energy Security and Central Asian Diplomacy // I. Øverland, et al. (Eds.). Caspian Energy Politics. Pp. 101–115.

[23] Daniel C. O'Neill. Risky Business: The Political Economy of Chinese Investment in Kazakhstan // Journal of Eurasian Studies. 2014. Vol. 5. Pp. 145–156; Thomas Stephan Eder. China-Russia Relations in Central Asia: Energy Policy, Beijing's New Assertiveness and 21st Century Geopolitics. Wiesbaden, 2013.

[24] See Richard W. T. Pomfret. Alternative Futures for Central Asia: How Far Will Integration and Cooperation Proceed? // Denoon (Ed.). China, the United States, and the Future of Central Asia. P. 332; Eder. China-Russia Relations in Central Asia; Elizabeth Wishnick. Russia, China, and the United States in Central Asia: Prospects for Great Power Competition and Cooperation in the Shadow of the Georgian Crisis. Carlisle Barracks, PA, 2009. P. 35.

overt competition with its neighbors and the west, declaring a "peaceful development" and using both the SCO and direct state-to-state negotiation to secure oil and gas supplies.[25] Still, China's pipeline routes that bypass Russia are its "worst nightmare," reducing its leverage in the region and curtailing its ambition to be a global energy superpower.[26]

Beyond geopolitical calculations of states, the Caspian petroleum literature also considers what states do with their hydrocarbon wealth, particularly regarding how domestic development works as a strategy of legitimation and rule. Caspian states have to maintain a precarious balance between spending on long-term public goods and economic development, on one hand, and short-term securing of their own power via buying off elite consent on the other.[27] Most often, ruling elite interests shape the course of actual development more than does any ideal of national commonweal.[28] At the same time, these states do attempt to distribute revenue more broadly across the social strata and geographical regions of the country, but with unimpressive results. For example, household survey data reveal that Kazakhstan's oil wealth is concentrated, unsurprisingly, in major urban areas (notably Astana and Almaty) and little of this wealth flows to the oil-producing areas in the west.[29] While Kazakhstan generally provides generous social services to

[25] Marc Lanteigne. China, Energy Security and Central Asian Diplomacy // I. Øverland, et al. (Eds.). Caspian Energy Politics. Pp. 101–115; Kissane. The Quest for Energy Security in the Central Asian "Neighborhood". P. 378.

[26] See Elizabeth Wishnick. Russia, China, and the United States in Central Asia: Prospects for Great Power Competition and Cooperation in the Shadow of the Georgian Crisis. Carlisle Barracks, PA, 2009. P. 32.

[27] Andrea Kendall-Taylor. Introduction: Domestic Balancing Acts in the Caspian Petro-States // I. Øverland, et al. (Eds.). Caspian Energy Politics. Pp. 15–19. An example from Belarus is President Aleksandr Lukashenko's use of energy rents derived from its close relationship with Russia to ensure continuing support of the Belarusian nomenklatura and electorate. See Margarita Mercedes Balmaceda. Living the High Life in Minsk: Russian Energy Rents, Domestic Populism and Belarus' Impending Crisis. Budapest, 2014. However, some economic analysis has shed serious doubts regarding the efficacy and long-term benefit of hydrocarbon-fueled development in the Caspian region. See Jean-François Seznec. Oil and Gas: Fuel for Caspian's Economic Development // Hooshang Amirahmadi (Ed.). The Caspian Region at a Crossroad: Challenges of a New Frontier of Energy and Development. New York, 2000. Pp. 105–120.

[28] See Laruelle and Peyrouse. Globalizing Central Asia. Pp. 165–189.

[29] Boris Najman, Richard W. T. Pomfret, Gaël Raballand and Patricia Sourdin. Redistribution of Oil Revenue in Kazakhstan // B. Najman, et al. (Eds.). The Economics and Politics of Oil in the Caspian Basin: The Redistribution of Oil Revenues in Azerbaijan and Central Asia. London, New York, 2008. Pp. 111–131.

its citizens compared with other Central Asian countries, and the western region does have among the country's highest mean incomes, only a small proportion of the population works for the oil sector, and only a small proportion of oil company capital expenditure goes to local infrastructure, which is insufficient to meet public needs there.[30] A similar pattern is found in Azerbaijan outside of Baku: the Sangachal oil terminal area remains an area with low mean income and underdeveloped infrastructure, despite BP's efforts to offer local jobs and public services, and despite the state's higher tax receipts from there, which were still insufficient to fund improvements.[31] Azerbaijan is rather unique in that its hydrocarbons are located at or near its main city, so that most of its energy production and benefits are located in Baku, with increasing inequality in other regions, again despite programs to shift some revenues to poorer regions and to vulnerable populations within the country.[32] One reason was that monies were allocated into ineffective projects, so that Azerbaijan's 100 percent increase in annual public investment between 2005 and 2007 (the largest increase in any former Soviet state), to US$2.3 billion, led to dismal growth in the nonpetroleum economy.[33] Moreover, the country's most vulnerable population, 600,000 Azeri refugees internally displaced since the 1990s from the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict with Armenia, remain unintegrated and in limbo within Azerbaijan, having benefited relatively little from social spending funded by oil revenues.[34] The brief post-Soviet record documents the difficulty states have in turning petroleum revenues into broad benefit to their societies.

In sum, analyses of the geopolitics of energy alliances and the domestic politics of revenue redistribution focus on state interests and their consequences. The literature, however, omits consideration of nonstate actors whose projects in social and economic development have been impacting the Caspian region since the 1990s. The significance of NGOs and private

[30] Richard Auty. Improving the Beneficial Socio-Economic Impact of Hydrocarbon Extraction on Local/Regional Development in Caspian Economies // B. Najman, et al. (Eds.). The Economics and Politics of Oil in the Caspian Basin. Pp. 159–175.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Matthias Luecke and Natalia Trofimenko. Whither Oil Money?: Redistribution of Oil Revenue in Azerbaijan. London, New York, 2008; John Schoeberlein and Alisher Ilkhamov. The Lands and Peoples of the Caspian Region // Amirahmadi (Ed.). The Caspian Region at a Crossroad. Pp. 29–53.
[33] Ramil Maharramov. Petroleum-Fuelled Public Investment in Azerbaijan // I. Øverland, et al. (Eds.). Caspian Energy Politics. Pp. 38–59.
[34] Heidi Kjærnet. Displacement in a Booming Economy: Idps in Azerbaijan // Ibid. Pp. 60–77.

companies has increased to the point where one must consider the implications that "fields and dynamics of … post-Soviet power … are not exclusively, or even primarily, about 'the state.'"[35] I now consider this wider field of post-Soviet Caspian political order.

Political Order beyond the State

How do we best make sense of a political order in which the state does not always occupy the center? The fields of political power in the Caspian region have become more "pluralistic" since the Soviet collapse, with more players of consequence compared with the relative dominance of the Soviet-era state. Nongovernmental organizations, foundations (like those of George Soros and the Aga Khan), intergovernmental agencies (e.g., the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and United Nations agencies), foreign governmental development agencies (such as USAID), multinational corporations, and other entities, all operate in relation to the national state. This section considers studies on the conjuncture of NGOs, corporations, and states – in Kazakhstan particularly, given existing research – in rethinking development and governance beyond the state in the post-Soviet Caspian region.

The fact that multiple actors take on state-like functions in providing social services to the post-Soviet Caspian region should not be surprising, for two main reasons. First, looking geographically across the "developing" world since the mid-twentieth century, varieties of organizations have taken on state-like functions in hunger relief, poverty alleviation, medical work, public health, education resources, media, entrepreneurial training, legal consultation, technical expertise, and so on.[36] "This new apparatus does not *replace* the older system of nation-states," writes James Ferguson, "but overlays it and coexists with it. … Think of the new organizations … not as challengers pressing up against the state from below but as horizontal contemporaries of the organs of the state – sometimes rivals, sometimes

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[35] See Douglas Rogers. Energopolitical Russia: Corporation, State, and the Rise of Social and Cultural Projects // Anthropological Quarterly. 2014. Vol. 87. P. 435, which regards Putin's Russia, but applies here as well.

[36] "Humanitarian aid and the basic model of the NGO have multiplied so greatly that today, this kind of organization deals with all fields of social life. The NGO has become, in Marcel Mauss' meaning, a kind of 'total social fact' of the contemporary world." Boris-Mathieu Pétric and Giorgio Blundo. Introduction: Good Governance and Democracy Promotion: Empirical Perspectives on Transnational Powers // B.-M. Pétric (Eds.). Democracy at Large: NGOs, Political Foundations, Think Tanks and International Organizations. New York, 2012. Pp. 1–23.

servants, sometimes watchdogs, sometimes parasites, but in every case operating on the same level and in the same global space."[37] Nongovernmental organizations, notably, are not always so nongovernmental, because they can participate integrally in governance.[38] "In common understanding, the NGO is an independent, free institution, outside the political or ideological field. Yet, it is an object that is well and truly a part of the field of power, even if sometimes a counterpower. The NGO must be examined ... as institutions interacting with the political reality of the countries studied."[39]

Second, looking at history and at companies, the Soviet state shared responsibility with state enterprises for funding and managing the social provision infrastructure. While Soviet enterprises were neither private nor ultimately independent in action from the party-state, they were formally separate from governmental structures and held great sway in decision making regarding the often considerable resources under their command. The social infrastructure managed by state enterprises provided social services to more than half the working population by the end of the Soviet period in Russia, with 32 million living in enterprise-owned housing (constituting 65 percent of total housing stock in Russia), 30 million using enterprise-owned polyclinics and hospitals, 10 million enjoying enterprise-owned culture and sports facilities, and 5 million schooled in enterprise-owned kindergartens; and provisions from industry were considered superior in quality and availability to those qualified (in theory, employees of those enterprises) when compared with provisions from municipalities.[40] Local officials were especially dependent on managers of major heavy-industry plants, whose industrial plans enjoyed priority for regional party organs and funded most of the local housing and services.[41] Given the extent to which Soviet urban life was defined by perennial struggles over apartments (their size, quality,

[37] See James Ferguson. Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order. Durham, NC, 2006. P. 103. See also Giorgio Blundo. Glocal Integrity: Good Governance Brokers and the Appropriation of Transnational Anticorruption Policies in Senegal // B.-M. Pétric (Ed.). Democracy at Large. Pp. 25–48.

[38] The nonindependent character of many NGOs is evidenced by the rather curious varieties that have been named: DONGOs (Donor-organized NGOs), BONGOs (bank-organized), and even GONGOs (government-organized). Ferguson. Global Shadows.

[39] See Boris-Mathieu Pétric and Giorgio Blundo. Introduction. P. 5.

[40] See Nigel M. Healey, Vladimir Leksin and Aleksandr Svetsov. The Municipalization of Enterprise-Owned "Social Assets" in Russia // Post-Soviet Affairs. 1999. Vol. 15. Pp. 266–267.

[41] Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod. How the Soviet Union Is Governed. Cambridge, MA, 1979. P. 506.

location, and time spent on the housing queue), it was significant that entire swaths of city-built housing were earmarked for enterprises and ministries in Moscow and that consumer services were "detoured" through the workplace as a supplement or alternative to wages in the form of nurseries, schools, Pioneer camps, sports stadiums, houses of culture, sanatoriums, resorts (in warmer climes), hospitals, swimming pools, libraries, concert halls, and company stores for the nomenklatura.[42] Enterprises were so influential in local social provisioning for the many cities built or rebuilt around one or two dominant industries that the cities could be considered company towns (*goroda pri zavode*), where central industrial ministries built and oversaw housing and services, and city governments mostly ratified industrial actions.[43] A preeminent example is Magnitogorsk, the self-proclaimed first newly constructed socialist planned city, where the metallurgy complex determined the city's layout, density, growth, transportation network, housing, shops, and municipal maintenance.[44] Likewise, the small industrial city of Belaya Kalitva, near Rostov-on-Don in southern Russia, shows an "enterprise-centric" pattern of Soviet urban development around its metals factory, which assumed the dominant role in housing and infrastructure, such as the city's central heating system.[45] In fact, Stephen Collier argues that industrial production and social welfare should be understood as two inextricable elements of Soviet urban administration, captured by the term *khoziaistvo*, meaning the substantive economy encompassing the whole complex of daily life, which was planned with industrial needs as a baseline, and much of which was built and run by enterprises.[46]

The collapse of state socialism entailed a disentanglement of production from social welfare as former Soviet enterprises became bankrupt, privatized, or reconfigured – even as municipalities assumed these new social liabilities while facing resource deficits. Dissolving the social-industrial complex raises the equally political and ethical question: Who or what will be concerned with the conditions of existence for the population? The answer will be

[42] Timothy J. Colton. Moscow: Governing the Socialist Metropolis. Cambridge, MA, 1995. Pp. 500–501, 524–529.
[43] William Taubman. Governing Soviet Cities: Bureaucratic Politics and Urban Development in the U.S.S.R. New York, 1973. Pp. 54–72.
[44] See Stephen Kotkin. Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization. Berkeley, 1995. Pp. 149–155; William Taubman. Governing Soviet Cities: Bureaucratic Politics and Urban Development in the U.S.S.R. New York, 1973. P. 60.
[45] See Stephen J. Collier. Post-Soviet Social: Neoliberalism, Social Modernity, Biopolitics. Princeton, 2011. Pp. 95–102.
[46] Ibid. Pp. 81, 119–122.

complex for the post-Soviet Caspian region, but the Soviet experience in social provisioning could help explain the shape of the emerging political order. As neoliberal pressures on post-Soviet states to offload responsibilities in the social sectors produce uneven municipal reforms in the new political economy,[47] the practice of local governments in sharing citizen provisioning with private companies today has parallels with Soviet-era practice, even though Soviet enterprises differed from modern corporations, and the arrangements for sharing responsibility with the state differed, as will be seen below. What is similar across time is the idea connecting production with provision, overlapping with the state's social role. Foreign companies operating in the region since the 1990s represent a reconfiguration of that connection that collapsed in 1991. Interestingly, nongovernmental organizations – that is, neither state nor industry – do not easily fit into this schema of sharing social responsibility. In addition to the presence of any western transformational agendas, that fact could contribute to the wariness that post-Soviet states tend to have about their motives and activities, leading to attempts by the governments to monitor, control, or co-opt NGOs. Let us start, indeed, with the relations between state and NGO in the Caspian region (and in Central Asia).

An emerging literature attests to the conjuncture between state agencies and nongovernmental organizations. NGO-state dependencies have been especially close in Kazakhstan since the end of the 1990s (the start of oil-underwritten economic growth and increased social spending), and range from organizations partnering with government organs for social development to those almost entirely state-controlled and regulated. Many so-called nongovernmental organizations in Kazakhstan work as outsourced state functions concerning the environment, children, youth, women, health, culture, arts, science, education, human rights, social welfare, or community development[48] – a "para-civil service,"[49] and likewise for Kyrgyzstan and elsewhere.[50] Shifting public service delivery to NGOs allows the government

[47] Ibid. Pp. 129–244.

[48] Colin Knox and Sholpan Yessimova. State-Society Relations: NGOs in Kazakhstan // Journal of Civil Society. 2015. Vol. 11. Pp. 300–316.

[49] See Ruth Mandel. Seeding Civil Society // C. M. Hann (Ed.). Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia. London, New York, 2002. P. 292.

[50] Boris-Mathieu Pétric (Ed.). Democracy at Large: NGOs, Political Foundations, Think Tanks and International Organizations. New York, 2012; Boris-Mathieu Pétric. Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan or the Birth of a Globalized Protectorate // Central Asian Survey. 2005. Vol. 24. Pp. 319–332.

to shift blame when provisions fall short in expected quality or quantity (often due to inadequate government funding), and increase the country's NGO count for international observers, bolstering Kazakhstan's public image of a growing "civil society." Still, service delivery has become a crucial function of NGOs with local government ties, particularly to support marginalized or vulnerable populations, such as those displaced by the 2010 interethnic violence in Osh and Jalalabat, Kyrgyzstan.[51] Even when NGOs are not state run, as Colin Knox and Sholpan Yessimova found, their leaders and staff see their primary role not as critics or counterweights to the Kazakhstani state, but as unequal partners, whose opinions are potentially accepted by what they perceive as an opaque and impervious state. The cooperation over the contested orientation is reinforced by the fact that few of the country's NGOs enjoy strong support from the constituencies that they serve, due to low public awareness of their activities and their inadequate identification and addressing of communal needs.[52] More broadly across Central Asia, civic organizations tend to avoid confrontation with the state, not least because few can sustain themselves without state backing in regard to permissions, incentives, and finances, while those supported by international donors are closely monitored.[53]

The interests driving the above literature clearly involve the promotion of "civil society" as a site of state accountability and independent innovation as preconditions for democratic development.[54] That agenda was problematic in conception (post-Soviet Central Asia fit neither 1960s development theories nor post–Cold War ideologies linking democratization and marketization) and implementation (i.e., it benefited few and fulfilled exogenous political agendas) during the 1990s.[55] Even after the NGO landscape shifted in Kazakhstan with the arrival of state-funded organizations, terms employed by the literature reveal value judgments about desirable socioeconomic and political formations versus those deemed maladaptive, corrupt, inefficient,

[51] Charles Buxton. In Good Times and Hard Times: Civil Society Roles in Kyrgyzstan Today // C. E. Ziegler (Ed.). Civil Society and Politics in Central Asia. Lexington, KY, 2015. Pp. 223–248.

[52] See Knox and Yessimova. State-Society Relations. Pp. 306, 311–313.

[53] See Charles E. Ziegler. Introduction // Ziegler (Ed.). Civil Society and Politics in Central Asia. Pp. 6, 10; Charles E. Ziegler. Civil Society, Political Stability, and State Power in Central Asia: Cooperation and Contestation // Democratization. 2010. Vol. 17. Pp. 795–825; Aliya Kabdiyeva. Collaboration of NGOs and Business in Kazakhstan // European Journal of Business of Social Sciences. 2013. Vol. 2. P. 102.

[54] M. Holt Ruffin and Daniel Clarke Waugh. Civil Society in Central Asia. Seattle, 1999.

[55] Ruth Mandel. Seeding Civil Society. Pp. 279–296.

or unjust; these terms include "uncivil society," "systemic distortions," "negative path dependencies," or "negative social values."[56] The implicitly antagonistic relationship between state and civil society is informed by a suspicion of strong states, coming broadly from western liberalism, while on the other hand, post-Soviet leaders view nonstate organizations as potential challengers.[57]

Value-driven frames have analytical consequences: they lead to certain ways of seeing and not seeing. Central Asians' apparent disinterest in democratization in their engagement with NGOs, for example, has been interpreted as a form of false consciousness or lack of proper civic education. However, such cases may reveal not a deficiency but a viable alternative way of understanding the role of states.[58] Marlene Laruelle found that Central Asians generally want "more state," not less, and that they value NGOs only in the absence of a functioning welfare state. "If the state did 'its work,' then they would not be involved in the associative domain,"[59] which accords with my past work regarding ideals about the steward-like duty of states to care for populations.[60] Starting with western liberal expectations about civil society and state tends to lead a scholar to miss local cultural articulations about the political.

Meanwhile, transnational private corporations, particularly in the oil and gas industries, chase profit, access, positioning, and influence in the post-Soviet Caspian region. Their role in development (beyond taxes paid and jobs provided) is perhaps surprising because, answering ultimately to their shareholders, they pursue goals that do not generally coincide with the interests of states or the "public good."[61] However, following a global trend since at least the early 2000s, their basic profit mission has been compounded by so-called corporate social responsibility (CSR), whereby (often token) efforts are made to ameliorate the socioeconomic conditions of local

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[56] Andrey A. Kazantsev. Social Capital and Development of Civil Society in Central Asia: A Path Dependency Perspective // Ziegler (Ed.). Civil Society and Politics in Central Asia. Pp. 21–56.

[57] See Charles E. Ziegler. Introduction. P. 4.

[58] See Mariya Y. Omelicheva. Democracy in Central Asia: Competing Perspectives and Alternative Strategies. Lexington, KY, 2015. Pp. 73–92.

[59] See Marlene Laruelle. Negotiating Social Activism: National Minority Associations in Kazakhstan, or the Other Face of "Civil Society" // C. E. Ziegler (Ed.). Civil Society and Politics in Central Asia. Pp. 113–114.

[60] See Morgan Y. Liu. Under Solomon's Throne: Uzbek Visions of Renewal in Osh. Pittsburgh, 2012. Pp. 148–184.

[61] Westbrook. Between Citizen and State.

populations,[62] so that globally, extractive industries fund community development programs, involving infrastructure, health care, charities, schools, and technical training. Across the Caspian region, foreign oil companies vary in their engagement with a social mission, from the strong commitment of those operating in Azerbaijan, to weak commitment in Kazakhstan through the 2000s.[63]

But how do corporate efforts in development work with respect to state and NGO actors? At the very least, companies operate in the post-Soviet Caspian region with permission and coordination with the states, initiated by formal contracts and informal deals.[64] Moreover, the Soviet-era history of state-owned enterprises that provide many, if not the best, social services offers a precedent for post-Soviet states to collaborate with private companies in that endeavor. Indeed, when the Russian state was consolidating its power under Putin during the 2000s, the regional oil company Lukoil-Perm and the local government agencies were intertwined on multiple fronts in projects ranging from health to ecology to sports to culture, operating as an "interlaced state-corporate field" to remake the sociocultural order of the Perm region.[65] Governments, petroleum companies, and NGOs have collaborated in establishing energy-industry standards. In Azerbaijan, BP has worked with the Open Society Institute (George Soros's NGO network, now called the Open Society Foundations) on monitoring and auditing the BTC pipeline construction, covering issues of environment, cultural heritage, human rights, and social impacts. In Kazakhstan, Tengizchevroil (a consortium between a national oil company and a multinational company), Coca-Cola, Mobil, Shell, and Kazaktelekom (majority state-owned telecommunications company) fund professional training centers and the Special Olympics Kazakhstan.[66]

More recently in this field of political order, social-impact collaborations have become more multilateral. The post-Soviet Caspian NGO–business nexus began as philanthropy – cash donations to NGOs for their existing work – but has evolved since the early 2000s to a more strategic mutual engagement, whereby NGOs get financial resources and network access,

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[62] Dinah Rajak. In Good Company: An Anatomy of Corporate Social Responsibility. Stanford, 2011.

[63] See Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal. Oil Is Not a Curse: Ownership Structure and Institutions in Soviet Successor States. New York, 2010. P. 295.

[64] Steve LeVine. The Oil and the Glory: The Pursuit of Empire and Fortune on the Caspian Sea. New York, 2007; Yergin. The Quest. Pp. 43–82.

[65] Rogers. The Depths of Russia. Pp. 11–14.

[66] Kabdiyeva. Collaboration of NGOs and Business in Kazakhstan. Pp. 104–106.

and businesses get community relations, local knowledge, and elevated reputations. Companies are now more active in the formulation and implementation of joint projects with NGOs and other entities; for example, Chevron and USAID (governmental agency) share practices to improve oil field management.[67] The Kazakhstani state has been promoting CSR awareness and practices among the country's businesses since 2008 (when President Nazarbayev attended a forum on the topic), appealing for them to "give back to society."[68] Interestingly, Kazakhstani managers and employees view CSR primarily in terms of employee interests (labor conditions, benefits, training) and secondarily in terms of broader societal interests (helping vulnerable groups; providing scholarships; improving infrastructure in health, education, science, culture, and sports), according to Azhar Baisakalova's questionnaire research.[69] They also saw the leading role of the state in fostering CSR among businesses, and considered NGOs to be the least significant resources for societal impact.[70] Multinational oil companies operating in Kazakhstan differ from the smaller businesses studied in Baisakalova's survey, but both are aware of the public relations benefits of taking on some corporate social responsibility.

Though actual impact is sometimes minimal, oil company CSR and other players' activities entail some concern with managing the conditions, views, and sentiments of populations, with a view toward possibly shaping their opinions and desires. Corporations are at times quite successful in projecting a beneficent public image. "The foreign oil and gas companies are popular among the local population because they are seen as solving acute economic and social problems in the present rather than creating potential environmental ones in the future,"[71] because they channel substantial funds and infrastructure improvements to Kazakhstani regions of operation. Again, however, the investment of oil companies in those regions, such as Chevron in Atyrau Province on the Caspian, translates not into long-term benefits to the local economy, but rather into a dysfunctional relation between company, labor, and the state.[72]

[67] Ibid. P. 104.
[68] See Azhar Baisakalova. Survey on Corporate Social Responsibility in Kazakhstan // Journal of Global Management. 2012. Vol. 4. P. 85.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid. P. 88.
[71] See Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal. The NGO Paradox: Democratic Goals and Non-Democratic Outcomes in Kazakhstan // Europe-Asia Studies. 1999. Vol. 51. P. 1279.
[72] Saulesh Yessenova. Tengiz Crude: A View from Below // B. Najman, et al. (Eds.). The Economics and Politics of Oil in the Caspian Basin. Pp. 176–198.

Interestingly, nongovernmental and foreign development agencies harbor an obsession with managing knowledge, both within their bureaucracies and in their encounters with their project subjects. For them, development often involves turning social, economic, and political problems into technical ones, so that the power they seek to exert over people is recast as power over ideas, such as of open societies, democracy, transparency, rule of law, free markets, individual initiative, and so on.[73] Corporations can thus assume, on a small scale with limited mission, quasi-state-like functions that a Foucauldian would recognize as approaching the biopolitical: a modern conjuncture of state power to manage and provide for populations, and the forms of knowledge to enable those functions. The distinctive feature of biopolitics is the control of people through the production and manipulation of knowledge about them, expressed as concern about their welfare. But the state does not hold a monopoly on this technique of rule. Douglas Rogers argues that petroleum companies are exercising a kind of biopolitical concern over the welfare and culture of the oil-producing Perm region of Siberia in Russia.[74] Michael Watts shows that oil companies generate an "oil complex" in Nigeria that delineates a zone within the nation-state where it exercises "parcelized sovereignty."[75] There is, of course, a longer history worldwide of company rule over territories, which includes the British East India Company and mineral mining towns in the United States, whereby private companies manage their labor populations by sometimes providing (with varying degrees of adequacy) housing, consumer goods, education, churches, and entertainment – services that are now often assumed to be the responsibility of states. Robert Vitalis shows that the people-management strategies of American mining towns, including its racialized hierarchies, became templates for the Saudi-American oil company ARAMCO starting in the mid-twentieth century.[76] And like states, oil companies can have intense interests in managing knowledge, such as commissioning histories about themselves,[77] or producing "fossil knowledge" – favorable public representations of energy industries that result from mobilizing university

[73] See David Mosse. International Policy, Development Expertise, and Anthropology // Focaal. 2008. Vol. 2008. P. 120.
[74] Rogers. Energopolitical Russia.
[75] Michael Watts. Blood Oil: The Anatomy of a Petro-Insurgency in the Niger Delta // Focaal. 2008. Vol. 2008. Pp. 18–38.
[76] Robert Vitalis. America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier. Stanford, California, 2007.
[77] Ibid. Pp. 11–12.

partnerships and industry-friendly academics.[78] The academic-industrial complex of "experts," indeed, can be activated to sow public doubt about the adverse environmental effects of hydrocarbon extraction, processing, and consumption.[79] Peter Benson and Stuart Kirsch thus advocate that scholars reorient their the study of power toward corporations' strategies to manage their various publics in the pursuit of profit and legitimacy, rather than focusing exclusively on the state and governmentality.[80] Resourceful corporations under certain enabling circumstances (that appear related to deals made with the state and the state's capacities or deficits) can come to exert power in limited domains that resemble aspects of "stateliness."[81] Like states, private companies are concerned with producing not only commodities, services, and profits but also *subjectivities*, *sentiments*, and *imaginaries*. Corporate biopolitical behavior surely has a significant bearing on the course of socioeconomic development in this region.

Given these biopolitical intersections, hydrocarbon-funded Caspian development needs to be analyzed within a comprehensive political order that includes state, NGO, and corporation. While these three parties are not conceptualized together in the post-Soviet sphere, they also do not exhaust the potentially consequential players in a political order. Other actors are engaged with populations in quasi-biopolitical ways within narrow parameters and scales. A few will be mentioned here to suggest that other players merit investigation as part of a unified political field. Business associations pool capital, resources, personnel, information, and trust, sometimes offering services and social welfare. Environmental groups and academic or policy think tanks collect data and produce studies relevant to Caspian development.[82] Religious organizations, sometimes overlapping with business associations, promote piousness, services, and social goods by running shops,

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[78] Bret Gustafson. Fossil Knowledge Networks: Industry Strategy, Public Culture and the Challenge for Critical Research // John-Andrew McNeish and Owen Logan (Eds.). Flammable Societies: Studies on the Socio-Economics of Oil and Gas. London, 2012. Pp. 311–334.

[79] Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway. Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming. New York, 2011.

[80] Peter Benson and Stuart Kirsch. Capitalism and the Politics of Resignation // Current Anthropology. 2010. Vol. 51. Pp. 459–486.

[81] Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat. Introduction: States of Imagination // T. B. Hansen and F. Stepputat (Eds.). States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State. Durham, N.C., 2001. Pp. 1–38.

[82] Hormoz Goodarzy. Organizational Response to Caspian's Environmental Needs // Amirahmadi (Ed.). The Caspian Region at a Crossroad. Pp. 137–144.

kindergartens, and small enterprises. Criminal syndicates profit by meeting market demand, both legal and illegal. Initially inchoate social movements or online communities may also form in response to needs and conditions. While these other actors lie beyond the scope of this article, what remains within the scope is to ask: If the state is no longer the principal driver of post-Soviet Caspian development, how should the more diverse field of political order be analyzed? The answer proposed in the next section adopts and combines selected conceptual tools that open insight into the interactions of states, corporations, and others as they affect socioeconomic conditions, and into the very nature (ontology) of organizations, which illuminates the logics by which they function.

Investigating Hydrocarbon Development within Political Orders

A framework to better understand post-Soviet Caspian development starts with addressing how states, corporations, NGOs, and other players interact and adapt to each other in their endeavors to improve the welfare of populations. I briefly survey case studies above to motivate the need to more accurately theorize the close interactions and blurred boundaries between organizational actors. This leads to the realization that networks of people, things, techniques, and ideas crosscut organizational boundaries and can circulate across the political order, and produce emergent effects resulting from the dynamics of interaction rather than from the intentions of any of the actors. Moreover, states, corporations, and NGOs should be recognized not as unitary entities with coherent interests and intent, but rather as entities that are enacted multiply through practice and thus never fully coherent or unitary. I end with an approach that synthesizes all these conceptual strands to study this field of enmeshed actors. It involves tracing mobile logics that motivate or justify various measures within development programs across the networks that span the political order, and shifting focus away from state agencies or corporate divisions as the units of investigation. Turning attention to networks (and the logics of governance and accumulation that traverse them) as the interesting sites where entities and outcomes are enacted promises to yield more accurate analyses of Caspian socioeconomic transformations today.

Why is theoretical machinery necessary for understanding the post-Soviet Caspian region? Broadly speaking, this analytical move responds to the opening up of the region, especially Kazakhstan, to global capital and organizational practices. The activities of NGOs and oil companies in the

region, considered in the previous section, have followed global trends since the early 1990s. These include states that are offloading social provisioning to those other actors, NGOs that are driven by transnationally circulating ideologies and operating techniques, and corporations that are expanding their missions to include "social responsibility." But I noted how boundaries of actors can blur, concerning how state, NGO, and corporations share intertwining concerns for population welfare in Central Asia. All three face increasing pressures for greater accountability so that, for example, CSR has increased businesses' demands for NGO partnerships, while NGO donors demand efficient use of resources, which has led NGOs to adopt "corporate best practices."[83] As a result, both NGOs and state agencies begin to partake of a neoliberal "audit culture" of report and grant writing.[84] These snapshots of development activity in Kazakhstan and elsewhere reveal the *circulation of ideas, standards, practices, and actors across a political order*. What is needed is ethnographically based research to demonstrate how paradigms and practices are being adopted between state, NGO, and corporations in the region, as Rogers does for Siberian oil,[85] that would tell on-the-ground stories rendering new texture to our understanding of post-Soviet Caspian's globalization.

The sharing of best practices across the political order suggests that state, NGO, and company need to be seen as more radically networked, interpenetrating, and interdependent, rather than as clearly bounded, self-contained, and self-sufficient entities resembling colliding billiard balls. How do we effectively conceptualize the first view? One helpful framework is the assemblage[86] – the people, institutions, ideas, and materialities conceived as an interconnected ensemble. The conjuncture of players relevant here forms a particular kind of assemblage that has been called an "energopolitical regime," a multifold formation of power surrounding the exploration, securing, extraction, processing, exploitation, and distribution of energy resources; and the use of their revenues, including in socioeconomic development.[87]

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[83] Kabdiyeva. Collaboration of NGOs and Business in Kazakhstan. P. 103.
[84] Andrew B. Kipnis. Audit Cultures: Neoliberal Governmentality, Socialist Legacy, or Technologies of Governing? // American Ethnologist. 2008. Vol. 35. Pp. 275–289; Rogers. The Depths of Russia. Pp. 175–208.
[85] Rogers. The Depths of Russia.
[86] Manuel De Landa. A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity. London, New York, 2006; Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier. Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems. Malden, MA, 2005.
[87] Adapting and extending the framework from Rogers. Energopolitical Russia.

Treating development as an assemblage or energopolitical regime places a wide span of human and nonhuman actors[88] relevant to the political economy of energy and development into a single field of analysis, which can enable flexible approaches to and fresh insight on the societal effects of Caspian oil and gas today. Both the assemblage and energopolitical conceptual frames contextualize development in an expanded view of political order beyond the state that is sensitive to processes emergent from interactions in a variegated multiplayer field. This move is premised on the realization, taken from the critical development literature, that potentially everybody and everything could exercise agency, which Arturo Escobar terms "radical agentivity."[89] Drawing breath from Bruno Latour, this perspective attempts to identify actors from across the field whose actions may be consequential in some way. Actors could include those located in conventional centers of power, such as state agencies or corporate boards, but also those located elsewhere. The analysis then discerns what kinds of agency they exert and how they attempt to realize their goals. The idea is to open up the horizon of possibility regarding what counts as significant agency, and why and to whom it matters.

Adopting an assemblage or energopolitical frame also highlights everything as potentially connected to everything else, which is called "radical connectivity."[90] This again represents a Latourian move, because for him, connectivity is precisely what gives actors the capacity for agency, rather than any "inherent" qualities. Networks are investigated by asking how people and things are differently connected, and how they fulfill different functions in their networks. One becomes sensitive toward the heterogeneous ways in which actors maintain ties of obligation, influence, or affect. Connections can be in various degrees official, informal, legal, illicit, conditional, absolute, enduring, short-term, impersonal, or socially thick. They can be maintained through different institutional or business channels and can be freighted with different connotations of social prestige or opprobrium. All these qualities not only color the character of social life but also can have a bearing on the operation of networks, on how "successful" they are in securing favors, resources, or knowledge within the political economy.

[88] Some prefer "actants," a generalization of actor in an expanded view of agency: Bruno Latour. Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory. Oxford, New York, 2005.

[89] See Arturo Escobar. Development, Trans/Modernities, and the Politics of Theory // Focaal. 2008. Vol. 2008. P. 130.

[90] Ibid.

Focusing on agentive capacities of networks can reveal the relevance of contexts that do not seem consequential at first. Context may consist of more than the familiar hegemonic formations surrounding development (such as state interests, global capital, modernist imaginaries, or institutional inertias). Those formations shape motivations and justifications, but they do not completely determine them because residual spaces can always exist external to those overbearing structures of political interests and economic stakes, where new forms of imagination and agency could take form. Tracing the specific networks of radical connectivity and agentivity opens the analyst to otherwise dismissible aspects of context – perhaps small particularities of social life – that surprisingly can turn out to be significant. This openness to surprise extends to thinking about historical context. One needs to discern which development-related phenomena reiterate or combine what came before, and which reflect coalesced ideas, sentiments, discourses, movements, and actors that are genuinely emergent and unpredictable. Those may even be unreadable by existing experiences or categories and require new understandings and terms to make sense of them. It is a matter of being open to seeing states of affairs as having evolved from more than the sum of their parts, a hallmark of emergent phenomena. Escobar calls the preceding "radical contextuality" and "radical historicity."[91] That is, when multiple actors work in a field of endeavor such as improving aspects of people's lives, the total effect may have outcomes that cannot be reduced to the combination of each actor's actions. Rather, the particularities of interaction can yield novel consequences. This state of affairs belongs to a class of phenomena seen across many domains and identified as emergence.[92] Thinking about the post-Soviet Caspian as an emergent political order means being open to finding consequences in the lives of affected people that result from complex interactions between the development activities of the heterogeneous field of players, consequences that no one may have intended.

An assemblage approach opens up finer-grained analysis by refusing to treat the organizations as bounded, unitary entities. Rather, they themselves are composed of networks of personnel, assets, functions, practices, and motivations that operate both within and between these institutions. For example, informal arrangements of patronage and exchange of favors establish personal networks that crosscut institutional structures to enable,

[91] Ibid.

[92] Melanie Mitchell. Complexity: A Guided Tour. Oxford, New York, 2009; R. Keith Sawyer. Social Emergence: Societies as Complex Systems. New York, 2005.

divert, or subvert official functions, a globally attested phenomenon usually labeled corruption,[93] shaped by the history of "second economy" practice under state socialisms.[94] Cohorts of elites, for example, trained in Kazakhstan's oil company–funded technical institutes[95] or in the government's Bolashak scholarship program form networks that will root themselves in institutions across the country's energopolitical regime, whose activity will likely be shaped by informal communication and favor exchange. The close state dependence and lack of independent critique from most NGOs operating since the 2000s in Kazakhstan, noted above, could be traced in terms of personal ties and possibly rotating personnel between these institutions. The close coordination between multinational corporations and states noted above merits similar network-tracing research. National oil companies represent an interesting set of cases because, though owned by the state, they tend to operate separately from central state organs in some ways but not in others as they enter into consortium arrangements with multinational partners for joint petroleum exploration and exploitation.[96] Azerbaijan's SOCAR and Kazakhstan's KazMunaiGaz, both national oil companies, are run by family members and other clients of the presidents, who in fact control their operations despite formal management councils and governing boards, which results in hybrid commercial-governmental-personalistic entities.[97] Networks extend far beyond national borders, as Central Asian elites offshore wealth to the British Virgin Islands, employing lawyers in Cyprus,[98] buying apartments in London, and sending children to Boston for education. All these cases illustrate the fuzzy boundaries between sites of power that lend themselves to be unpacked into the fine-grained networks of influence that constitute their operations. Instead of conceiving each state agency, NGO, or company as necessarily the primary units of analysis,

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[93] Dieter Haller and Cris Shore. Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives. London, Ann Arbor, 2005.

[94] Katherine Verdery. What Was Socialism, and Why Did It Fall? // Verdery. What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next? Princeton, 1996. Pp. 19–38.

[95] Kabdiyeva. Collaboration of NGOs and Business in Kazakhstan. P. 104.

[96] Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal. Oil Is Not a Curse; Daniel Yergin. The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, & Power. New York, 2009.

[97] See Anja Franke and Andrea Gawrich. Autocratic Stability and Post-Soviet Rentierism – The Cases of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan // A. Gawrich, et al. (Eds.). Are Resources a Curse? Rentierism and Energy Policy in Post-Soviet States. Opladen, Farmington Hills, MI, 2011. Pp. 76–78.

[98] Alexander Cooley and John Heathershaw. Dictators without Borders: Power and Money in Central Asia. New Haven, London, 2017.

one traces the heterogeneous networks of people, practices, and ideas that constitute each of them, however they connect and wherever they lead.[99] This approach, in fact, leads some to regard corporations, states, and other organizations as *enactments* – brought into being and maintained as coherent unitary entities through particular practices. However, enacted entities are "inherently unstable, indeterminate, multiply authored, always in flux,"[100] and their interests and intentions are distributed and contextual, produced through interactions.

What exactly, then, should research track across the networks in the energopolitical regime through which entities are enacted and operate? About Kazakhstan, we noted earlier the circulation of ideas and practices over the political order. One promising focus is the *logics motivating or justifying activity* regarding energy and development, as they are variously articulated, circulated, modified, and practiced across the political order. Two interrelated motivations, for starters, warrant attention as fundamental modes of enacting states and corporations. *Governance* concerns the routine administrative control of society and economy (and thus energy resources), and its techniques (bureaucratic methods, technologies, ideologies, client networks, etc.). *Accumulation* concerns maintaining or building capacities for income or rent generation, which can be secured by organizing socio-political relations, especially over the *longue durée*, in ways that usually benefit the elite classes.[101] Those logics provide purpose and function to organizations, offering citable justification for their actions and stabilizing them as entities. However, well-known motivations such as "maximizing shareholder value" or "corporate social responsibility" for corporations, and "serving the people" or "making the nation great" for states, should not be taken as clear, consistently applied principles of organizational function. Ethnographic research shows that these logics are partial, mutating, multiply determined, ambiguous, and indeterminate.[102]

In particular, the ideas and techniques that enable the accumulation of wealth and the governing of populations need to be traced as they inter-

[99] Latour. Reassembling the Social.

[100] See Marina Welker. Enacting the Corporation: An American Mining Firm in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia. Berkeley, 2014. P. 4.

[101] Giovanni Arrighi and Jason W. Moore. Capitalist Development in World Historical Perspective // R. Albritton et al. (Eds.). Phases of Capitalist Development: Booms, Crises, and Globalizations. New York, 2001. Pp. xiii, 352.

[102] Marina Welker. Enacting the Corporation: An American Mining Firm in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia. Berkeley, 2014.

sect with junctures touching on people's lives. Concrete sites to examine include specific community development projects, commercial ventures, technical training schools, private security services, new health-care systems, and other possible novel conjunctures of state, NGO, and corporate activity. The cases reviewed above reveal not only that organizations are indeed concerned about efficient ways of both maximizing and expending petroleum receipts and other financial resources but also that they are *producing and disseminating knowledge* in order to manage perceptions and dispositions, competing or collaborating to shape how various publics interpret and feel about the development that they promote. Consider the limitations of converting oil and gas revenues into significant widespread development in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, noted above. There are clear political consequences for this inconvertibility because citizens harbor various conceptions linking a state's resource management with its sovereignty. A state's ability to develop and turn energy resources into socioeconomic development is often seen as a characteristic of an effective and legitimate state; conversely, bad management is often interpreted as a mark of a "weak" state. Oil-rich states often portray themselves to the populace as guardians of natural wealth who will somehow, "magically," bring about a prosperous and diversified modernity,[103] and forms of moving and converting oil wealth can be connected to imaginaries of political and economic order.[104] The ability to convert oil into the power to shape citizens' worldviews requires specific work on the part of the state, however, which Edward Schatz terms Kazakhstan's "soft authoritarian tool kit."[105] States that keep failing to redistribute petroleum revenues to the satisfaction of the populace risk dissent and rebellion.

An assemblage approach to tracing logics is sensitive to the fact that oil and development in the popular imagination are matters of more than bare economic interests because one's position within one's total circumstances are multiply determined. The human use of energy is understood and experienced through cultural frameworks that are implicated in social habits,

[103] Fernando Coronil. The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela. Chicago, 1997.

[104] Douglas Rogers. Petrobarter: Oil, Inequality, and the Political Imagination in and after the Cold War // Current Anthropology. 2014. Vol. 55. Pp. 131–153.

[105] Edward Schatz and Elena Maltseva. Kazakhstan's Authoritarian "Persuasion" // Post-Soviet Affairs. 2012. Vol. 28. Pp. 45–65; Edward Schatz. The Soft Authoritarian Tool Kit: Agenda-Setting Power in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan // Comparative Politics. 2009. Vol. 41. Pp. 203–222.

life expectations, and social imaginaries.[106] The very notion of a natural resource is a cultural construction, and a recent one at that, riddled with human interests.[107] Natural resources exploration, exploitation, and control are "loaded with incendiary ideological and epistemological issues,"[108] even while the processes by which resources become socially and politically real are equally material in operation.[109] The everyday presence of hydrocarbon-driven development within a society can become constitutive of a citizenry's sense of itself as a modern and national people, and thus shape citizens' very experience of modernity and nation.[110] Conversely, chronic and severe inequality, poverty, underemployment, and disappointment can accordingly influence the shape of subjectivities and a populace's concepts of the future.[111]

The intimate connections between energy and society mean that *development in petroleum-rich nation-states is more than development that happens to be petroleum-funded*.[112] The impact of oil and gas on society involves more than the revenues that they generate, and that pay for new buildings, jobs, and geopolitical ambitions. The materiality of hydrocarbon exploration, extraction, processing, and distribution – and sometimes its smell, spillage, and stoppage in the form of strikes – can have deep entanglements with how local populations imagine, experience, and bring about socioeconomic development, modernity, and even democracy.[113] The proposed analytical

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[106] Sarah Strauss, Stephanie Rupp and Thomas F. Love. Cultures of Energy: Power, Practices, Technologies. Walnut Creek, CA, 2013; Laura Nader, Leticia Cesarino and Chris Hebdon. Introduction // L. Nader (Ed.). The Energy Reader. Chichester, West Sussex, UK and Malden, MA, 2010. Pp. 1–16.

[107] Elizabeth Emma Ferry and Mandana E. Limbert. Timely Assets: The Politics of Resources and Their Temporalities. Santa Fe, 2008; Escobar. Development, Trans/Modernities, and the Politics of Theory.

[108] See John-Andrew McNeish. Rethinking Responsibility and Governance in Resource Extraction // McNeish and Logan (Eds.). Flammable Societies. P. 12.

[109] Tanya Richardson and Gisa Weszkalnys. Resource Materialities // Anthropological Quarterly. 2014. Vol. 87. Pp. 5–30.

[110] See p. 11, Elizabeth Emma Ferry and Mandana E. Limbert. Timely Assets: The Politics of Resources and Their Temporalities. Santa Fe, 2008.

[111] Arjun Appadurai. The Future as Cultural Fact // Arjun Appadurai. The Future as Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition. London, New York, 2013. Pp. 285–300.

[112] The broader cultural dynamics helps explain why Caspian states engage in hydrocarbon-fueled development, even when the economic logic may not justify it in terms of long term diversification and growth. Cf. Jean-François Seznec. Oil and Gas: Fuel for Caspian's Economic Development // Amirahmadi (Ed.). The Caspian Region at a Crossroad. Pp. 105–120.

[113] Timothy Mitchell. Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil. London, New York, 2011.

focus on governance and accumulation as driving logics that circulate across the field of political order can have far-reaching consequences extending into financial, material, and imaginative dimensions. Investigation needs to trace the circulations, mutations, and effects of those logics across particular policies and projects. Given that petroleum-fueled development is implicated in questions of everyday practices and subjectivity, these phenomena must be studied bottom-up from the "ground level."[114] Synthesizing the above discussion, this includes employing an ethnographic approach that investigates a unified field of political order as an assemblage, open to flexible notions of agents and contexts. Scholarship looking at the practices, ideas, and dispositions being circulated through networks of influence promises to yield novel insight into emergent impacts of socioeconomic development on post-Soviet Caspian communities that a conventional view would miss, given its conception of states, NGOs, and corporations as unitary entities and actors.

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Much of the existing scholarly literature on petroleum and development in the post-Soviet Caspian region, mostly set in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, reveals state strategies concerning geopolitical alliances and state interests in regard to domestic rule. The literature also documents various activities by state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations (mostly oil companies) in promoting the health, education, culture, and social welfare of local populations. These studies share the assumption that the post-Soviet state acts as the primary driver of socioeconomic development in the region. However, putting together those cases of nonstate actors that make a difference on the ground, with evidence of studies elsewhere about the increasing social role of NGOs and corporations in the world, especially since the 1990s, this article argues for a conceptual reorientation in researching post-Soviet Caspian socioeconomic transformations.[115]

The new approach begins with a call to work on a broader canvas, thinking beyond the state (or even state–NGO or state–corporation interactions

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[114] Stephen Reyna and Andrea Behrends. The Crazy Curse and Crude Domination: Toward an Anthropology of Oil // Focaal. 2008. Vol. 2008. Pp. 3–17; John-Andrew McNeish and Owen Logan (Eds.). Flammable Societies: Studies on the Socio-Economics of Oil and Gas. London, 2012.

[115] This article has not addressed issues of how some of the ethnographically grounded research being proposed will actually be carried out, given questions of access to organizations. These challenges are being worked out across the growing field of the anthropology of the corporation and of the state.

alone), and to investigate Caspian development against a unified analytic field of political order that includes more actors in interpenetrating, complex interaction. This move also involves recognizing that states, NGOs, and corporations are themselves constituted by networks of people, material resources, knowledge, and practices, and that these networks crosscut the sometimes blurred organizational boundaries. Research focus thus shifts from states, NGOs, and corporations themselves as the primary units of investigation toward tracing the fine-grained connections between their "parts." The frameworks of assemblages, "energopolitical regimes," emergence, and enactment facilitate the paradigm shift. One promising avenue of inquiry concerns how techniques of governance and accumulation are circulated and recontextualized on these heterogeneous networks across the field of political order.

Attention should also be given to how hydrocarbon extraction, production, and distribution impact populations in multiple ways, tapping into recent scholarship on connections between energy and society and the materiality of petroleum's presence in producing regions. Going beyond considerations of environmental impacts, the idea here is that human relations with energy always occur through cultural frameworks and political contexts that inform everyday consumption practices and national narratives of development futures. It remains to be seen whether states like Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan will be able to convert oil and gas receipts into sufficient long-term social development on the ground and across the land, and how they will manage the political consequences of not doing so sufficiently.

Fresh eyes on the region's development can also uncover unexpected future macrotrends in Caspian politics and society. The interrogations of this article direct the researcher to follow agency and consequence of any kind, wherever the trail goes, however it crisscrosses in and out of conventional centers of power and across state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, interstate organizations, private companies, citizens, and others. Structures, interests, and motivations are seen not as fixed, but rather as stabilized, modulated, altered, and emergent from the sometimes unpredictable interaction between these players. This kind of radical openness to novelty and surprise promises to yield fresh ways of looking at societies in Central Asia and the Caucasus today, with an eye toward the seemingly inconsequential, invisible, or unexpected that can open insights beyond familiar tropes about oil-rich authoritarian regimes and their supposedly passive populations. Caspian governance and accumulation may yet take on new forms among new actors.

SUMMARY

This article builds a conceptual framework for interpreting economic and social development in the petroleum-rich post-Soviet states surrounding the Caspian Sea. Circum-Caspian states have undergone rapid economic development enabled by petroleum revenues since the 1990s, with material consequences evident in major cities such as Baku, Astana, and Almaty. The article constitutes a programmatic statement of how research addressing those questions should be framed in order to uncover the emerging shape of petroleum-driven development in the post-Soviet Caspian region. It synthesizes separate bodies of scholarship to generate new approaches and inquiries, especially the economic and geopolitical literature about the oil and gas industries in those Caspian republics, and the critical development literature in anthropology and geography concerning energy and society. The focus is on Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, the two states addressed in most published studies on Caspian energy, though the framework aspires to apply to the entire region.

Резюме

Статья предлагает концептуальную основу для интерпретации экономического и социального развития в богатых нефтью постсоветских государствах Прикаспийского региона. С начала 1990-х гг. они претерпели быстрое экономическое развитие, подпитывавшееся нефтяными доходами, результаты которого особенно заметны в таких крупных городах, как Баку, Астана и Алматы. Статья предлагает стратегию изучения этого вопроса, выявляющую специфическую форму нефтезависимого развития в постсоветском регионе Каспийского моря. Она синтезирует различные исследовательские направления для формулирования новых подходов – прежде всего, экономические и геополитические исследования нефтегазового сектора в регионе, а также критическую антропологическую и географическую литературу по проблеме развития энергетики и общества. Основное внимание уделяется Казахстану и Азербайджану, которым посвящено наибольшее количество публикаций по каспийской энергетике, хотя сделанные выводы претендуют на применимость в масштабах всего региона.