The Patterns of Authoritarian Legitimation in Post-Soviet Autocracies: The Cases of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan

Aram Terzyan

Abstract

This article focuses on different patterns of authoritarian legitimation in post-Soviet countries, by analyzing the cases of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan during Ilham Aliyev's (2003-present) and Islam Karimov's (1991-2016) presidencies, respectively. While the construction of external threats and enemy images has been critical to Azerbaijani regime's authoritarian legitimation, Karimov's discourse has focused chiefly on the 'Ideology of National Independence' with the view to promoting the vision of prosperous, powerful and peaceful Uzbekistan. What is common in both Presidents' discourses is the tendency to frequently appeal to domestic challenges and external threats, accompanied by a heightened emphasis on the necessity of strong presidential power, with "strongmen," who are capable of addressing complex issues. Not surprisingly, one of the core similarities between the two regimes was their unstoppable drive towards monarchical presidencies.

Introduction

This article focuses on different patterns of authoritarian legitimation, by analyzing the cases of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan during Ilham Aliyev's (2003-present) and Islam Karimov's (1991-2016) presidencies respectively. The two cases were selected to ensure variance along relevant dimensions of analysis, to examine the differences between post-Soviet authoritarian regimes when it comes to their legitimation strategies.

We have selected two post-communist countries, the transition of which has been marred by a series of authoritarian malpractices, ranging from centralization and personalization of power to extensive crackdown on civil liberties and political freedoms. The Freedom House data set classifies both countries as 'not free' and authoritarian (Freedom House, 2019).

One of the core similarities between the two regimes is their unstoppable drive towards monarchical presidencies with hyper-presidents or "strongmen" that would be largely treated as autocratic and even sultanistic (Fish, 2017; Guliyev, 2005, 2013). The article contributes to the bulk of literature that treats legitimation of authoritarian rule as regime survival strategy (Shakrai, 2015).

Based on these observations, this article seeks to address the question: how have dissimilar authoritarian regimes sought to engender domestic legitimacy?

Building on constructivist scholarship, the study follows John Gerard Ruggie in accepting that "constructivism is about human consciousness and its role in human life" (Ruggie, 1998: 856). Broadly speaking, constructivism is an approach to social analysis based on the following basic

assumptions: (a) human interaction is not shaped by material factors, but primarily by ideational ones; (b) the most significant ideational factors in this context are "intersubjective" beliefs as shared collective understanding; and (c) these beliefs construct the actors' identities and interests (Jung, 2019: 2). Elites are viewed as the key agents in constructing new identities, leading to the demarcation between the self and other (Stråth, 2008: 21). Political elites compete with one another to have their preferred national self-image become the national identity and define the state's interests (Clunan, 2009: 14). In doing so, they seek to enhance national self-esteem, which entails using value rationality to uphold or create a legitimate social order that institutionalizes values, norms, beliefs, and procedures that give them a positive self-image of their country (Clunan, 2009:14). It follows that political discourse is not only an expression of collective identity; It is also a process of constructing and reconstructing the self and the other, as well as identifying respective levels of difference and danger from others (Minesashvili, 2016:11-12).

Understanding legitimation strategies and enemy images in authoritarian regimes

Legitimacy is often associated with regime survival because it functions as an alternative resource of support for authorities in times of crisis (Mazepus, Veenendaal, McCarthy-Jones and Trak Vásquez 2016: 352).

Our starting point is Weber's classic conceptualization of legitimacy as the citizens' belief in the ruler's right to govern. From this perspective, any system's survival depends on the continual support from its subjects and, more specifically, their perception that the system is "worthy" of voluntary compliance (Ihlen and Fredriksson, 2009).

Lipset (1959) later established a similar definition of legitimacy as the "the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate and proper ones for the society" (Lipset, 1959: 86). In the popular legitimacy literature Lipset suggests that legitimacy, in and of itself, may be associated with many forms of political organization, including oppressive ones (du Boulay–Omarova, 2019).

While these definitions highlight the subjective belief of the individual citizen, i.e. her/his attitude towards the authorities, some observers argue, however, that it is not sufficient for scholars to just focus on the belief of the people (Thyen and Gerschewski, 2018: 6). Instead, all kinds of rulers – be they democratic or autocratic – need to justify their rule as well. The people's legitimacy belief is only one side of the coin. The other side is the legitimacy claim of the ruler: "A

given power relation is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be justified in terms of their beliefs" (Thyen and Gerschewski, 2018:6-7).

Authoritarian legitimacy is of relevance. It is broadly viewed as a combination of strategies used to cultivate legitimacy of a ruling regime with limited political pluralism and mobilization, guiding ideology, and often a personalistic leadership (du Boulay–Omarova, 2019). Legitimacy is something that autocracies attempt to acquire or develop through their legitimation claims, symbols, narratives and/or procedures (Dukalskis and Gerschewski, 2017: 253).

Huntington (1991), frames the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes as "performance legitimacy", as it depends heavily on their successful economic performance, that is, their output (Huntington, 1991, p. 13).

Western democratic systems are less dependent on performance legitimacy than authoritarian systems because failure is blamed on the incumbents instead of the system, and the ouster and replacement of the incumbents help to renew the system (Huntington, 1991: 27).

Moreover, the rulers in authoritarian regimes tend to rely heavily on external dimensions of legitimation, not least through appealing to the external threats and enemy images and broadly speaking "accusing outside forces of causing every problem that arises on the domestic front" (Shakrai, 2015: 33). Middens notes that 'the threat of enemies justifies actions that might otherwise be unacceptable or illegal... Enemies serve as a focus for aggression and as a means of diverting attention from complex and pressing internal problems or domestic conflicts'(Middens, 1990).

This study shares the widespread treatment of legitimation strategies as authorities' attempts to promote their vision of what is right for the country and, in principle, are aimed at producing voluntary transfer of power to the authorities (Mazepus, et al., 2016: 354). Legitimization strategies deserve special attention in political discourse because it is from this speech event that political leaders justify their political agenda to maintain or alter the direction of a whole nation (Reyes, 2011:783).

Sustaining power through external threats: The strategies of authoritarian legitimation in Aliyev's Azerbaijan

As a typical authoritarian state, Azerbaijan's political system is characterized by centralization of power and personalistic leadership, as well as weak opposition and massive crackdown on civil liberties and political freedoms (Freedom House, 2019b). Meanwhile, the

existence of the external enemy helps President Ilham Aliyev further consolidate his power and justify his undemocratic practices. The long-standing Nagorno Karabakh conflict has been pivotal in targeting Armenia as Azerbaijan's clearly identifiable enemy in Azerbaijani political thinking and public consciousness.

One of the most salient features of Azerbaijani President's discourse on Armenia, is the latter's demonization and "evilization." Some of the adjectives that Aliyev has used in describing the enemy image of Armenia are "barbarian," "vandal," "aggressor," and even a "fascist state": "Armenia is a fascist state. Their national ideology is fascism, discrimination and nationalism" (Azatutyun 2014).

An integral part of Armenia's "evilization" has been its representation as bellicose, belligerent and destructive, which is liable for "freezing" Nagorno Karabakh conflict resolution and causing instability. "The main threat to regional security is posed by the aggressive policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan" (Aliyev 2014).

Nevertheless, the enemy has been framed as "weak" and "inferior," that was able to "occupy" "Azerbaijani lands because of foreign intervention" (Elibegova et. al 2018, 7).

Moreover, the assertion that Armenia is supported by Russia tends to get invoked as a justification for not wiping "weak," "immoral," "fascist," enemy off the face of the earth (Elibegova et. al 2018).

To mobilize the Azerbaijani society against the "evil" enemy and thus legitimate his power, the Azerbaijani President has portrayed Armenia as a "fake state" built on historical Azerbaijani lands. Such claims have called for unity and patriotism in order to overpower the "occupant" enemy and restore "historical justice": "Azerbaijanis will return to Nagorno Karabakh, to other occupied lands and to all the historical Azerbaijani lands" (Massispost 2014).

Consistent with authoritarian rulers' rhetoric, Aliyev has placed a heightened emphasis on military power, thus preparing ground for large-scale militarization. Aliyev's discourse suggests that Azerbaijan's military superiority will be critical to overpowering Armenia. "We will continue to build up our military capabilities. The weaponry and ammunition we have acquired in recent years suggest that we can accomplish any task" (Azernews 2014). Such a rhetoric is typical of personalistic regimes, in which the rules strive to build a "strongman" image through exaggerating external threats and simultaneously emphasizing their personal characteristics that make them more likely to use military force against the dangerous enemy (Weeks 2012, 326).

It is noteworthy, that conspiracy narratives have been strongly associated with the representation of the enemy image of Armenia. The Azerbaijani leadership has strived to create an image of an anti-Azerbaijani, evil and aggressive Armenian lobby, which allegedly conspires to damage or undermine the Azerbaijani statehood: "Our political weight and economic power are growing. […] Still, there are ill-wishing forces who do not love us. They can be divided into several groups. First, our main enemies are the Armenians from all over the world and the hypocritical, corrupt and bribe-taker politicians who are under their influence" (President.az 2012).

Furthermore, the "externalization" of domestic problems and exaggeration of the enemy image in Aliyev's discourse reached a point, where he accused the Armenian lobby, the scope of whose influence he said "is quite broad" of the continuing international criticism of Azerbaijan's abysmal human rights record: "An information war is waged against us … The Armenian lobby is especially active in that information war. Attempts to badmouth Azerbaijan, to deny Azerbaijan's realities, to present Azerbaijan to the outside world as a backward and undemocratic country primarily result from dirty deeds of the Armenian lobby" (Asbarez 2012). It follows that the Armenian lobby is the reason why international watchdog groups, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch condemn severe human right violations in Azerbaijan.

Clearly, the target audience of such statements is the Azerbaijani population, while the core message is that even if the enemy is "weak" and "inferior," the Armenian lobby still poses acute threats to Azerbaijan.

Even the 2018 "Velvet Revolution" that would be largely framed as a major democratic milestone in Armenia, left the Azerbaijani leadership's hardline stances on the enemy intact. Overall, the "evilization" and demonization of the enemy is consistent with an authoritarian regime's efforts at mobilizing society and sustaining their power through external threats and the enemy image. The latter, as noted earlier, helps divert attention from domestic socio-economic and political problems and scapegoat the enemy for all troubles.

Furthermore, the necessity of standing up to the external enemy serves as a convenient pretext to suppress dissent and pluralism across the country by labelling opposition activists as "spies", "traitors" who are involved in the enemy's conspiracies (Terzyan 2016, 71-72).

Frequent appeals to the external threats have been accompanied by a strong emphasis on the necessity of strong, presidential power, with a "strongman", capable of withstanding enemy's "conspiracies."

Unsurprisingly, the referendum held in Azerbaijan in 2009 resulted in abolishing of presidential term limits. Freedom House reports point to widespread suppression of pluralism and a strong tendency of curbing the freedom of speech and controlling the media narrative on politically sensitive issues across the country (Freedom House 2019b). Namely, the legal amendments passed in 2017 tightened government's grip on online media, allowing blocking of websites without a court order if deemed to contain content posing a danger to the state or society (Freedom House 2019b).

Overall, Azerbaijan has been evolving into a petrostate (countries immensely reliant on oil revenues), which often maintain domestic stability by using petrodollars to fund social programs and a strong state security apparatus (Demkiv 2012). Some observers note that petroleum has already made the incumbent authorities rich and powerful enough to address any challenge to their hold on power (Guliyev 2009).

Studies show that oil and gas account for about 75% of state revenue and around 35% of the gross domestic product (GDP) (Reuters 2019). Oil revenues have become a crucial factor in sustaining Aliyev's regime - based on a system that distributes rents from oil exports through a patronage network to ensure unwavering support of allies and major clientelist groups (Guliyev 2009).

Nevertheless, oil - addicted Azerbaijan is highly vulnerable to the fluctuations of international oil prices and tends to find itself in a complete economic disarray as the oil prices drop. Unsurprisingly, the Azerbaijani economy got damaged severely in the face of tumbling oil prices in 2016, when prices fell below $30 a barrel. This sparked huge economic discontent with rising food prices and deteriorating economic conditions in Azerbaijan because of oil price spikes. Along with violently crushing the protests, the Azerbaijani authorities would pull out the "enemy card" to distract attention from pressing internal problems (BBC 2016). The situation came to a head in April, 2016, resulting in the outbreak of heavy fighting between Azerbaijani and Armenian and Armenian armed forces, now known as the "April War" or "Four-Day War," in which at least 200 died (Jardine 2018). The "April war" was well predicted by a well-informed observer, suggesting that the persisting turmoil might well prompt the authorities to "play the Karabakh card" by starting either large or small operation as a recipe for downplaying the economic hardships and rallying Azerbaijanis around the flag (De Waal 2016).

This is where the appeals to external threats and enemy images come into play to produce rally-around-the-flag effects, thus shielding the authorities from mounting public outrage caused by economic downturns.

Authoritarian Legitimation in Karimov's Discourse

The former president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, who had spent 27 years in president's office, consistently strived to develop a state ideology, aimed at legitimating his rule. He set forth 'Ideology of National Independence' as a substitute for Marxism-Leninism and thus opted for a secular nationalism.

In Karimov's words, the core objective of the state ideology is to 'unite the people in the name of the grand future' of Uzbekistan and building a prosperous, peaceful and a powerful state (Omelicheva 2016).

March (2010) notes that Karimov and his court intellectuals would seek to advance a conception of 'ideology' as the comprehensive pre-political consensus of the political community. Their concept of 'ideology' is used to advance a political logic whereby the nature of the political community, the purpose of the state, the unifying political telos and the present regime are fused into a single entity (March 2003).

Notably, Karimov would emphasize the uniqueness of the 'Uzbek path' with its five main principles: the rule of law, the state as the key reformer, a strong emphasis on social policy, free economic development, as well as gradualist approach to economic and political reforms (Omelicheva 2016). Some observers note that Karimov's gradualist approach was influenced by his prior experiences visiting China, the Republic of Korea, and elsewhere in south-east Asia, where "traditional values" of stability and hierarchy were upheld (Spechler 2008: 33).

Some observers have regarded the 'Uzbek path' as a form of 'sovereign democracy', aimed at validating increasingly undemocratic domestic policies while invoking the 'uniqueness' of the Uzbek path as a justification for authoritarian governance (Edel and Joshua 2018). While Karimov would frequently stress the necessity of building an independent democratic nation with a socially oriented market economy, there seemed to be a blurred line between state and society.

While Karimov would repeatedly extol the virtues of civil society, it has not been uncommon for Uzbek NGOs to operate under the conditions of mounting harassment by the government, while freedom of expression has been severely limited (Freedom House 2014).

To justify the uniqueness of the 'Uzbek path' to democracy, Karimov would refer to the Eastern conception of democratic culture, while stressing the vital role of a strong and wise ruler and the state as a guardian of social stability. "In a period of transition to market relations, the state must be the main reformer, which must work out and consistently implement transformation of all spheres of economics and social life" (Spechler 2008: 32).

Omelicheva (2016) notes that by linking the process of democratization to the principles of Uzbekistan's development, Islam Karimov was able to embrace democracy rhetorically but defer its full institutionalization to an indeterminate future. Development is both a goal and a process. There is always more development to attain, and more prosperity to build. Similarly, to development, democratization was presented as 'not a task that can be carried out in one or two years but is a long and continuous process that is not limited to a certain period of time. [...] (Omelicheva 2016). The most important thing is to further develop democracy,' explained the former Uzbek president (Ibid). In this way, the promise, and the vision of transforming into a democracy at some point in the future replaced the outcome – the institutionalization of democracy – in Karimov's rhetoric. While offering a plan of development in stages, Karimov would avoid pointing to a fixed time framework for moving from stage to stage.

To legitimate his rule, Karimov would consistently refer to country's economic growth. Notably, over the decade of the 1990s Uzbekistan was the best-performing of all Soviet successor states, despite its rejection of the rapid "shock therapy" reform recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and others (Tsereteli 2015: 15).

The fact that under Karimov's rule, Uzbekistan achieved an average annual growth rate of 5% in 1996-2016, which was particularly impressive (over 8%) in 2004-2016 was widely cited as the testament of the success of the 'Uzbek path' (Ruziev, 2020; Omelicheva 2016). Essentially, the regime's legitimacy considerably rested on its relatively successful management of shared conceptions and worldviews, ideological production, and consensual identity.

Islam Karimov also tried to ensure external validation of his government's actions. Uzbekistan distanced itself from all the major global players in an effort to protect its national sovereignty. Karimov relied on a different rhetorical strategy to defend his claims to international recognition. Yet, the choice of secular, multi-ethnic nationalism with strong centralized control was made in Tashkent with very little role for dissenting political actors or international agencies (Spechler 2008: 38).

Overall, Karimov consistently strived to mobilize the society around the vision of prosperous and powerful Uzbekistan, while keeping the hope of democratic transformation at some point in the future alight.

Conclusion

This article contributes to existing literature on the authoritarian legitimation, by examining the cases of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. While the construction of external threats and enemy images has been critical to Azerbaijani regime's authoritarian legitimation, Karimov's discourse has focused chiefly on the 'Ideology of National Independence' with the view to promoting the vision of prosperous, powerful and peaceful Uzbekistan.

Azerbaijan's clearly identifiable enemy Armenia has been framed as destructive, belligerent, and bellicose, that causes instability and devastation, by "freezing" the Nagorno Karabakh conflict resolution.

It is noteworthy that some of the adjectives that Aliyev has used in describing the enemy image of Armenia are "barbarian," "vandal," "occupant" and "aggressor," and even a "fascist state." The "evilization" and demonization of the enemy has rhetorically necessitated the use military force against "the evil." To mobilize the Azerbaijani society against the "evil" enemy and legitimate his power, the Azerbaijani President has portrayed Armenia as a "fake state" built on historical Azerbaijani lands. Such claims have called for unity and patriotism to overpower the "occupant" enemy and restore "historical justice." By contrast, Karimov would emphasize the uniqueness of 'Uzbek path' with its five main principles: the rule of law, the state as the key reformer, a strong emphasis on social policy, free economic development, as well as gradualist approach to economic and political reforms.

Essentially, 'Uzbek path' is a form of 'sovereign democracy', aimed at validating increasingly undemocratic domestic policies while invoking the 'uniqueness' of the Uzbek path as a justification for authoritarian governance.

What is common in both Presidents' discourses is the tendency to frequently appeal to domestic challenges and external threats, accompanied by a heightened emphasis on the necessity of strong presidential power, with "strongmen," who can address complex issues. Not surprisingly,

one of the core similarities between the two regimes was their unstoppable drive towards monarchical presidencies.

References

Aliyev, Ilham. 2014. Twitter Post. October 1, 2014. Accessed April 17, 2020. https://twitter.com/presidentaz/status/517274762351898625.

Asbarez. 2012. "Aliyev Blames Armenian Lobby for Azeri Human Rights Abuses." Accessed April 17, 2020. http://asbarez.com/102409/aliyev-blames-armenian-lobby-for-azeri-human-rights-abuses/ .

Azatutyun. 2014. "Armenia 'Fascist State,' Says Aliyev." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://www.azatutyun.am/a/25304315.html .

Azernews. 2014. "President Aliyev Says Azerbaijan Ready for Any Scenario." Accessed April 17, 2020. http://www.azernews.az/azerbaijan/69476.html.

BBC. 2016. "Azerbaijan Hit by Price Protests Amid Oil Slump." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35316359 .

De Waal, Thomas. 2016. "Azerbaijan's Perfect Storm." *Carnegie Europe.* Accessed April 17, 2020. http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/?fa=62501.

Demkiv, Anita. 2012. "Political Instability in Petrostates: The Myth or Reality of Oil Revenue as Petrostate Stabilizer." PhD diss., Rutgers University-Graduate School-Newark. Accessed April 17, 2020. https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/37303/ .

Dukalskis, Alexander, and Johannes Gerschewski. 2017. "What Autocracies Say (and What Citizens Hear): Proposing Four Mechanisms of Autocratic Legitimation." *Contemporary Politics* 23, no. 3: 251-268.

Edel, M. and Josua, M. (2018). How authoritarian rulers seek to legitimize repression: framing mass killings in Egypt and Uzbekistan. *Democratization*, *25*(5), 882-900.

Elibegova, Anzhela, Gevorgyan, Levon. and Kirakosyan, Yeghishe. 2018. "Armenophobia in Azerbaijan: Organized Hate Speech and Animosity Towards Armenians." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://ombudsmannkr.codics.solutions/ru/document/570 .

France24. 2017. "As elections near, Putin says Russians will not stand for Ukraine-style coup." Accessed April 28, 2020. https://www.france24.com/en/20171214-putin-press-conference-us-provoked-north-korea.

Freedom House. 2014. Report on Uzbekistan. Accessed May 2, 2018 https://freedomhouse.org/country/uzbekistan/nations-transit/2015

Freedom House. 2019a. "Countries and Territories." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores .

Freedom House. 2019b. "Freedom in the World 2019: Azerbaijan." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://freedomhouse.org/country/azerbaijan/freedom-world/2019 .

Guliyev, Farid. 2009. "End of Term Limits: Monarchical Presidencies on the rise." *Harvard International Review*. Accessed April 17, 2020. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1417532

Guliyev, Farid. 2013. "Oil and Regime Stability in Azerbaijan." *Demokratizatsiya* 21, no. 1: 113-147.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1991. "Democracy's Third Wave." *Journal of democracy* 2, no. 2: 12-34.

Jardine, Bradley. 2018. "Armenians and Azerbaijanis Commemorate Two Years Since Breakout of "April War." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://eurasianet.org/armenians-and-azerbaijanis-commemorate-two-years-since-breakout-of-april-war .

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American political science review* 53, no. 1: 69-105.

March, A. F. 2003. State ideology and the legitimation of authoritarianism: The case of post-Soviet Uzbekistan 1. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *8*(2), 209-232.

Massispost. 2014. "Ilham Aliyev Wants Nagorno-Karabakh, to other Occupied Lands and "Hstorical Azerbaijani Lands." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://massispost.com/2014/03/ilham-aliyev-wants-nagorno-karabakh-and-historical-azerbaijani-lands-back/ .

Mazepus, Honorata, Wouter Veenendaal, Anthea McCarthy-Jones, and Juan Manuel Trak Vásquez. 2016. "A Comparative Study of Legitimation Strategies in Hybrid Regimes." *Policy Studies* 37, no. 4: 350-369.

Middens, Gerald J. 1990. "Psychological Perspectives on Enemy-Making." *Organization Development Journal*: 44-48.

Omelicheva, M. Y. 2016. Authoritarian legitimation: assessing discourses of legitimacy in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. *Central Asian Survey*, *35*(4), 481-500.

President.az. 2012. "Ilham Aliyev Attended a Conference on the Results of the Third Year into the "State Program on the Socioeconomic Development of Districts for 2009-2013." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://en.president.az/articles/4400 .

Reuters. 2019. "Azerbaijan's GDP Seen Up 2.4% in 2020, Oil Price $55 per Barrel -Budget Draft." Accessed April 17, 2020. https://www.reuters.com/article/azerbaijan-budget/azerbaijans-gdp-seen-up-24-in-2020-oil-price-55-per-barrel-budget-draft-idUSL5N2675FW .

Ruziev, K. 2020. Uzbekistan's Development Experiment: An Assessment of Karimov's Peculiar Economic Legacy. Accessed June 3, 2020. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341727474_Uzbekistan%27s_Development_Experiment_An_Assessment_of_Karimov%27s_Peculiar_Economic_Legacy.

Shakrai, I. 2015. "The Legitimization of Authoritarian Rule Through Constructed External Threats: Russian Propaganda During the Ukrainian Crisis." *East European Quarterly* 43, no. 1: 29-54.

Spechler, M. C. 2008. *The political economy of reform in Central Asia: Uzbekistan under authoritarianism* (Vol. 4). Routledge.

Szostek, Joanna, and S. Hutchings. 2015. "Dominant Narratives in Russian Political and Media Discourse During the Ukraine Crisis." *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*: 183-196.

Terzyan, Aram. 2016. "The Role of Beliefs in Armenia-Azerbaijan Confrontation: A Glance into Presidents' Discourse." *Armenian Journal of Poltical Science* no 1: 65-80

Tsereteli, M. 2018. The Economic Modernization of Uzbekistan. *Uzbekistan's New Face*, *82*. Accessed May 3, 2019. https://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/SilkRoadPapers/2018-04-Tsereteli-Uzbekistan.pdf.