Ideology as a Legitimation Tool for Authoritarian Regimes

Quantitative Evidence from Turkey and Beyond

by

Mehmet Yavuz

Submitted to
The Doctoral School of Political Science,
Public Policy, and International Relations
Central European University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisor:
Professor Levente Littvay

Vienna, Austria
2024

Copyright notice

Author: Mehmet Yavuz
Title: Ideology as a Legitimation Tool for Authoritarian Regimes: Quantitative Evidence from Turkey and Beyond
Degree: Ph.D.
Date: October 25, 2024
Place of Submission: Vienna

Signature

Abstract

In this dissertation, I examine the role of ideology in authoritarian regimes, focusing on how autocrats' use of ideological legitimation claims and policies influence regime stability, adapt during crises, and shape public support. The three empirical papers collectively contribute to understanding the broader significance of ideologies—such as nationalism, communism, and politicized religion—in contemporary autocratic politics. With this dissertation, I demonstrate that ideologies are consequential for the stability and dynamism of autocracies.

In Paper 1, I analyze whether authoritarian regimes that rely heavily on ideological claims are more likely to survive. While existing research highlights variations in how autocracies use ideologies like socialism or nationalism, little evidence links ideological reliance to regime stability. I combine data from the Varieties of Democracy Institute's Regime Legitimation Expert Survey with coding of regime survival and collapses from 1900 to 2023 (n = 8,727) to address this gap. Using two-way fixed effect models, I show that regimes more reliant on ideological claims are more likely to survive and tend to be more repressive. I propose that these effects occur through five theoretical mechanisms—antagonism, legitimacy substitution, indoctrination, marginalization, and elite incentivization. The findings suggest that ideological claims are not merely rhetorical but play a crucial role in stabilizing authoritarian regimes.

In Paper 2, I investigate how crises impact the intensity and usage of ideological claims in authoritarian regimes. While much has been written about the importance of ideological legitimation for authoritarian consolidation, less attention has been paid to how regimes adjust their ideological claims during and after crises. I focus on the competitive authoritarian regime of Turkey before and after the July 2016 coup attempt. I assess the changes in the ideological claims of the regime, leveraging a novel dataset of President Erdoğan's speeches (2014-2021, n = 1,181), and I use word embeddings, dictionary-based measures, and topic modeling in combination with an interrupted time series analysis. The results show that the coup attempt led to a short-term increase in ideological intensity and a long-term shift in how regime outsiders were framed in Erdoğan's speeches. These findings suggest that crises reshape ideological claims, making them more salient and adaptable tools for regime survival.

In Paper 3, I explore how religious legitimation strategies affect public support in authoritarian regimes. Despite extensive research on how autocrats use religion for ideological legitimation, little is known about its effects on citizens' attitudes. I argue that religious legitimation increases regime support among citizens whose political views are shaped by religious beliefs, while having no effect on those without a religious ideology. Focusing on the case of Turkey, I use repeated cross-sectional survey data (2013-2021, n = 7,175) and examine two key events in July 2020: the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque and the regime-driven public debate on withdrawing from the Istanbul

Convention. The findings indicate that religious legitimation significantly boosted support for the ruling AKP among both religious and non-religious conservatives.

Acknowledgments

Writing this thesis was one of the hardest things I have done in my life. Yet, I was surrounded by many great people who made this journey much easier than it would have been. I am grateful to all of them.

Above everyone, I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Levi Littvay, who believed in me from the beginning when almost no one else did. Levi's encouragement, critical and detailed comments, and emotional support made this journey possible. He taught me how to write more clearly, ask better research questions, and work with data. Besides, he was always supportive and caring. I not only learned how to be a good academic but also how to become a better person, knowing him. I was so lucky to work with him, and I am glad to know him as a person.

I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the members of my supervisory panel, Anıl Duman and Inna Melnykovska. I am grateful to Anıl for her constant genuine support and encouragement. I would also like to thank her for scrutinizing many details in the earlier drafts of this dissertation; without her pointing out some of the mistakes, I would never have noticed them. I would like to thank Inna for her positive attitude throughout my journey. Furthermore, her comments helped me a lot in thinking about the "big picture" questions of autocratic politics and how to connect my findings to them. I would also like to collectively thank Levi, Inna, and Anıl for being the best thesis committee members I could have ever imagined.

Many members of the faculty of Political Science (and IR, and PP) at CEU supported me throughout my journey. I would like to thank Erin Jenne for co-authoring multiple works with me and always being very supportive of me. I would also like to thank Zsolt Enyedi for recruiting me for the AUTHLIB project, for his positive nature, and for our very insightful conversations. I am grateful to András Bozóki for supervising my MA thesis when I first came to CEU; I learned a lot from our discussions and it was always great to talk to him. I would also like to thank Mariyana Angelova, especially for our random conversations in the departmental kitchen. The ideas she casually shared were always immensely helpful and she was always great to talk to. I am indebted to Mihaly Fazekas for planting the initial ideas for one of my dissertation papers. I would also like to thank Gábor Simonovits and Carsten Q. Schneider for mentoring me in the early stages of this project. Their comments on the early drafts of the project were very helpful in making the final product a better one.

I am grateful to the friends and colleagues I met in Berlin during my research visit at the Free University of Berlin. Firstly, I was privileged to meet Johannes Gerschewski. Johannes' comments and mentorship profoundly helped me make the second paper of this dissertation a great piece of work. His friendly and positive attitude was remarkable, and I am glad to know him. I would also like to thank Seraphine F. Maerz and Sebastian Hellmeier for reading the drafts of this dissertation and for their encouragement. I am

glad to have met Federico Salvati and Adriana Cuppuleri during my research visit.

I feel incredibly lucky to have met so many amazing people at CEU. First and foremost, I would like to thank Liliia Sablina for everything she did and for simply making my life better. She not only read countless versions of this dissertation but was also my biggest emotional support throughout this journey. I genuinely do not know how I can thank her enough, but I will always remember everything she has done for me. I am also grateful to Galina R. for being there for me. I would like to thank Vika Poltoratskaya and Misha Komin (and their dog Mr. Churchill) for their constant support, great sense of humor, and much more. I would also like to thank Dániel Kovarek for his friendship and support. He was not only at the core of many great memories in Istanbul, Budapest, Berlin, and Vienna but was also a great source of academic support. He is so close to my heart to the extent that I do not know how to single out one thing about him but I am sure he would understand my intention. I would like to thank Natalia Dziadyk, David Smrček, and Dominik Sipinski for their genuine and caring nature and for the many unforgettable existential conversations we had. I am thankful to have met Franziska Wagner and Alex Olivares; they were an immense source of emotional academic and life support. With Ceren Çetinkaya and Ekin Güner we organized together the Turkish nights and shared a lot of random jokes in Turkish, they were great to have around. Dominik Brenner and Connor Mullin were great friends to exchange thoughts with and talk about life struggles. Cloud Lab was a reason to wake up and go to the office: I would like to thank Freya Cumberlidge and Monika Kubová for their positivity and friendship, Ihor Moshenets for many great football conversations, Giancarlo Grignaschi, Toma Laffitte, and Albert Didriksen for deep conversations about life, Hong Do and Sunna Kokkonen for their friendship and expanding my knowledge of fish (literally), Barbora Valík for her supportive, honest, positive, and friendly nature, and Elisabetta Mannoni for always being a supportive friend. I would like to thank Giacomo Salvarani for the amazing year we spent together at CEU when he was a visiting fellow, and I want him to know he is a very special friend. I am grateful to Bence Hamrák not only for being a great friend to talk to but also for our deep conversations about causality. I am also grateful to Zdravko Veljanov and Guido Panzano for their friendship, and patience with my inability to meet deadlines. I am grateful to Dean Schafer for always being patient with my pace of doing these and for his sense of humor. Last but not least, I would like to thank the amazing coordinators of DSPS, Monica Lafaire, and Ingy Kassem, for their supportive, professional, and friendly attitude. They became my friends over this journey, and I am glad to call them that.

I would not be who I am today without the great people I grew up with in Turkey. I would like to thank Cevdet, Hakan, Furkan, and Ahmet for being friends I can always count on. I also thank Ecem for her support in the early stages of this project.

I am forever grateful to my family for supporting every life decision I made. I would like to thank my older brother, Uğur Yavuz, and my sister-in-law, Meltem Damla Yavuz, for always being supportive and for all their advice and encouragement. I would like to thank my twin brother, Ali Yavuz, for being there for me unconditionally. I am so proud to have him as my twin brother, and I have no doubt that he will be successful in his entrepreneurial journey. Though he can't read, I would like to thank our family's cat, Muslera, for his presence. Finally, I would like to thank my father, Süleyman Yavuz, and my mother, Zahide Tuncay Yavuz, for literally everything. I owe many of the good qualities I have to them, and I am extremely lucky to have been raised by them. This dissertation is dedicated to them: Annecim ve babacım, bu tezi size armağan ediyorum.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 Authoritarian Regimes and Ideology: An Introduction

1.1 Role of Ideology in Authoritarian Regimes

Do ideologies—a set of ideas such as nationalism, communism, politicized religion, and conservatism (Tannenberg et al., 2021)—help authoritarian regimes survive? If they do, does the autocratic elite increase the use of ideological claims during turbulent times? Furthermore, does the use of these ideologies help authoritarian regimes shape public opinion in their favor? In this dissertation, I address these questions to establish the importance of ideologies in authoritarian regimes.

My main motivation in this dissertation is to understand if scholars of authoritarian politics should take ideology as part of the autocrat's "menu of manipulation" (Schedler, 2002) that help them remain in power, or alternatively, treat ideologies as inconsequential "cheap talk" (Farrell & Rabin, 1996) that should only be considered when studying historical cases, such as the communist ideocracies of the 20th century (Backes & Kailitz, 2016; Guriev & Treisman, 2022). With this motivation, I structure this cumulative dissertation around three empirical papers that focus on testing whether authoritarian regimes' use of ideologies makes them more likely to survive (Chapter 2), adapt to regime-threatening challenges like crises (Chapter 3), and helps them increase their public popularity (Chapter 4).[1]

In this dissertation, I understand ideology as an umbrella term that encompasses both

[1]This dissertation is cumulative, consisting of three distinct empirical papers. However, I refer to these papers as chapters to present them as a coherent whole, along with the introduction and conclusion.

codified, "thick" doctrines, such as communism, as well as uncodified, "thin" and discursive ideational tools like nationalism, conservatism, and politicized religion (Laclau, 1996; Tannenberg et al., 2021; Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017).[2] I consider authoritarian regimes use of ideology as a legitimation strategy (Gerschewski, 2013, 2018b). I define legitimation strategies as autocrats' use of written and verbal claims and public policies to seek the public's "active support" or "passive obedience" to their rule (Gerschewski, 2013, p. 18). Consequently, I conceptualize ideological legitimation strategies as the autocratic elites use of ideologically infused written and verbal public claims, such as nationalist, religious, and socialist claims. Furthermore, I understand policies that explicitly invoke these ideas through framing or symbolically represent them as ideological legitimation strategies. In Chapters 2 and 3 of the dissertation, I study ideological claims, and in Chapter 4, I study policies that symbolically represent ideologies, in particular religious ideologies.

Descriptively, studies show that ideological legitimation strategies, whether codified or not, are utilized by some autocracies—if not all—to varying degrees (Schlumberger, 2010; Tannenberg et al., 2021; Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). Examples include the post-Soviet Central Asian autocracies of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, which sporadically invoke nationalism and religion to enhance the sense of belonging and unity among citizens (Omelicheva, 2016a, 2016b); Maduro's Venezuela, which regularly invokes populist arguments to distinguish between the true Bolivarian socialist people and the imperialist elites (Peterssen, 2022; Sagarzazu & Thies, 2019); Theocratic regime of Iran, which politicizes religious values to discursively distinguish between pious patriotic insider political elites and Western-minded outsider elites (Selvik, 2018); and the Magufuli regime in Tanzania, which centers its public discourse on a localized developmental nationalism to shape society's policy expectations (Paget, 2020).

Ideological legitimation strategies are assumed to have causal effects on the stability of autocracies. Theoretically, ideological claims are hypothesized to contribute to regime stability and public approval because they create a sense of in-group belonging among

[2]This understanding of ideology differs from that in political behavior and psychology research, which mostly conceptualizes ideology in terms of right-left placement of citizens, politicians, and parties (Knight, 2006; Maynard, 2013).

citizens in autocracies (Gerschewski, 2023b, p. 69) and help authoritarian regimes shape the way citizens interpret political developments (Dukalskis, 2017, p. 5). Furthermore, it is argued that ideological claims provide a "diffuse" source of legitimacy, which is long-lasting, solid, and independent of the material benefits citizens receive (Easton, 1975; Gerschewski, 2018b). On the other hand, anecdotal evidence suggests that ideological claims are dynamic and adapt to pressures such as foreign policy crises and public discontent (von Soest & Grauvogel, 2016, pp. 35–39).

Yet, these theoretical arguments and anecdotal evidence are not tested systematically in a generalizable way in existing research. While a few studies show that ideological legitimation claims help autocracies survive and influence public opinion, these studies are limited in scope as they focus on codified and well-developed ideologies such as communism and fascism (Kailitz, 2013; Kailitz & Stockemer, 2017), and on closed authoritarian regimes— authoritarian regimes without multiparty competition (Dukalskis, 2017; Kao, 2021). Consequently, we do not know if ideological legitimation claims contribute to the stability of authoritarian regimes regardless of whether they are codified or not and regardless of the institutional structure of autocracies.[3] While a few studies examine the role of legitimation in the stability of autocracies, these studies do not analyze ideological legitimation as a distinct variable (Maerz, 2020; Schneider & Maerz, 2017). Furthermore, we do not know if the public opinion effects of ideological legitimation extend beyond regimes with codified ideologies. Similarly, some studies show that ideologies in authoritarian regimes change over time to adapt to external realities, such as shifts in international systems, but these studies only provide evidence from closed authoritarian regimes, such as China and Cuba (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2020), and Syria (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021b). Thus, I identify the effects and adaptiveness of ideological legitimation in autocracies as a gap. I study these issues using the above-discussed theoretical arguments and empirical evidence as a starting point.

[3]In this dissertation I use the terms "autocracy" and "authoritarian regime" interchangeably.

1.1.1 Empirical Focus of the Dissertation

In this cumulative dissertation, I analyze authoritarian regimes' use of ideology as a legitimation tool through three distinct empirical papers. These papers approach the role of ideology in authoritarian regimes from three angles that complement each other: as a cause of regime survival (Chapter 2), as an adaptive strategic communication tool that intensifies after crises (Chapter 3), and as a cause of shifts in public opinion in the regime's favor (Chapter 4).

In Chapter 2, I analyze whether the use of ideological claims directly and indirectly contributes to the survival of authoritarian regimes. To do this, I focus on all authoritarian regimes globally and conduct a time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) analysis of autocracies from 1900 to 2023, using the Varieties of Democracy Institute's (V-Dem) Regime Legitimation Expert Survey (RLES). With this paper, I aim to identify whether, and to what extent, ideologies matter for the most important outcome of autocracies on average: their survival or collapse.

In Chapter 3, I analyze whether regime-threatening crises change the intensity and functions of ideological claims in autocracies. To achieve this, I focus on the case of Turkey, a competitive authoritarian regime, and analyze President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's speeches before and after the coup attempt against the regime in July 2016. With this paper, I try to assess if the ideological claims of autocracies are adaptive and reactive to external challenges.

In Chapter 4, I focus on religion as an ideological legitimation tool and analyze whether policies framed with ideological legitimation increase the popularity of autocracies among citizens. To achieve this, I analyze the support for ruling party among the voting population in Turkey using a repeated cross-sectional dataset and compare the support for ruling party among citizens before and after the regime's two religious legitimation strategies the regime engaged in July 2020 (see Chapter 3 for details). With this paper, I aim to assess if ideological legitimation strategies help autocrats shape the way citizens interpret politics, as hypothesized in the theoretical works discussed above.

Collectively, with the papers of this dissertation, I aim to show the effects of ideological legitimation strategies at the citizen level and regime level and highlight the role of ideological change in autocracies. This way, I study ideological legitimation both as a cause and outcome to provide a comprehensive picture of the ideological legitimation process in autocracies. I identify the average global effect of ideological legitimation claims on the stability of autocracies in Chapter 2. I provide an in-depth, within-regime investigation of ideological legitimation claims in Turkey focusing on ideological change, in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, I asses ideological legitimation strategies' effects at the micro-level, focusing on the citizens of Turkey.

While I use a global TSCS dataset in Chapter 2, I focus on the case of Turkey under the rule of the Justice and Development Party - Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (AKP-Erdoğan) in Chapters 3 and 4. The Turkish case provides a clear scope condition, which helps me identify the generalizability of the findings of Chapters 3 and 4. The AKP-Erdoğan regime in Turkey is a competitive authoritarian regime that backslid to autocracy in the mid-2010s, that is, in the "third wave of autocratization" (Esen & Gumuscu, 2016; Lührmann & Lindberg, 2019; Somer, 2016). Furthermore, the regime's ideological claims consist of a combination of religious conservatism, nationalism, and populism and these claims are central to the regime's overall public communication (Bayulgen et al., 2018; Castaldo, 2018; Elçi, 2019; Günay, 2016; A. E. Öztürk, 2019; Yilmaz & Albayrak, 2021; Yilmaz et al., 2020). Additionally, the nationalist, religious conservative, religious, and populist attitudes are important predictors of political behavior of segments of Turkish society (Aytaç & Elçi, 2019; Çarkoğlu, 2019; Çarkoğlu & Elçi, 2023; Hazama, 2021; Kayaoğlu, 2017). Hence, my findings in this dissertation likely inform other cases that became competitive authoritarian regimes in the last decade, where religious conservatism, nationalism, and populism are central to regime legitimation and important to the public's political attitudes. These cases may include Hungary under the leadership of Viktor Orban (Ádám & Bozóki, 2016; Krekó & Enyedi, 2018), India under Narendra Modi (Rai, 2023; Rogenhofer & Panievsky, 2020), and the Philippines under Rodrigo Duterte and

Bongbong Marcos (Dulay et al., 2023; Juego, 2017; Thompson, 2022).[4]

1.2 Measurements and Methodologies of the Dissertation

In this dissertation, I use multiple quantitative data and methods to estimate the effects and dynamics of ideological legitimation. In this section, I briefly introduce these methods, their general usage in political science, and their specific advantages for the empirical analyses in my dissertation.

In Chapter 2, I use expert survey measures of legitimation claims, including ideological ones as well as expert measures of regime changes and patterns of repression around the world, utilizing the V-Dem expert survey (Coppedge, Gerring, Knutsen, Lindberg, Teorell, Altman, Angiolillo, Bernhard, Borella, Cornell, et al., 2024b; Tannenberg et al., 2021). Expert surveys are considered cost-effective tools in political science to quantify political variables cross-nationally when these variables are hard to directly observe (Benoit & Wiesehomeier, 2009). Indeed, despite concerns that experts (who are typically social scientists) might judge the same concepts differently depending on their country context (Silva & Littvay, 2019), expert surveys are widely used in social sciences for various tasks, such as measuring political parties' ideological positions (Hooghe et al., 2010) and the quality of governance across countries (Thomas, 2010). In Chapter 2, I use V-Dem expert measures because they allow me to determine the extent to which ideological legitimation claims are used by authoritarian regimes (166 countries) and time (1900-2023), maximizing the number of observations and scope of the inquiry. Furthermore, V-Dem data is one of the few expert surveys that explicitly accounts for expert biases (Pemstein et al., 2018).

I employ two sets of multivariate two-way fixed effects (TWFE) models to identify the effects of ideological legitimation claims on regime survival and repression using the V-Dem data in Chapter 2. TWFE models, and fixed effects models in general, are commonly used in political science research to remove group and time-level heterogeneity,

[4]However, I do not focus on populism in any of the empirical papers.

including country-specific and time-specific unobserved sources of heterogeneity (Beck, 2001; Clark & Linzer, 2015). These models enhance the validity of causal claims by identifying coefficients of estimates based on within-country and within-time comparisons of observations in TSCS data (Huntington-Klein, 2021; Xu, 2023).

I use TWFE modeling in Chapter 2 for a straightforward theoretical reason: based on existing research, I suggest that the extent to which authoritarian regimes can credibly use ideological legitimation claims is determined by their historical trajectories, including whether they experienced colonial struggles or had an imperial past (Nyseth Brehm, 2016). Furthermore, the nature and extent of these claims are likely determined by the regional or global popularity of different ideologies, as in the case of fascism in the early 20th century (Kallis, 2021). Given these theoretical concerns, by including country and year fixed effects, clustering their standard errors, and controlling for confounding factors between the degree of ideological claims and regime survival, I identify the average causal effects of ideological legitimation claims.

In Chapter 3, I use quantitative text analysis, commonly known as "text-as-data" (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013) techniques to measure the intensity and usage of ideological claims in Erdoğan's speeches. Specifically, I use dictionary methods (Hardeniya & Borikar, 2016), (unsupervised) topic models (Blei et al., 2003), and word embeddings (Mikolov et al., 2013). Text-as-data methods are increasingly popular for measuring ideologies, sentiments, and justifications in political texts (Grimmer et al., 2022). Among these, dictionary methods have been used to measure the intensity of ideational dimensions in texts, such as populism (Gründl, 2022), civilizationalism (Cerrone, 2023), and nationalism (Beaudonnet & Hoyo Prohuber, 2024) across sub-fields of political science. These methods help researchers count the (relative) frequency of a vector of words (dictionary) in each text of a corpus, which likely indicates the salience of these issues in the text (Grimmer et al., 2022, pp. 178–183). Scholars use topic models to inductively identify systematic co-occurrences of words within texts as themes or topics(Grimmer et al., 2022, pp. 237–243). For example, if the words "financial markets" "employment" and "businesses" systematically co-occur across texts in a corpus, these co-occurrences could be labeled as the topic of

economy (Koltsova & Koltcov, 2013). Both topic models and dictionary measures use the "bag-of-words" (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013, p. 272) approach, meaning they disregard the order of words within texts. On the other hand, word embeddings analyze the words within the context they occur and identify the levels of semantic association between each word in a text corpus (Rodriguez et al., 2023). For example, if the words "immigration" and "border" co-occur within the same word window frequently across texts in a corpus, the word embedding algorithm would consider these words highly semantically similar.

By using dictionary methods, topic models, and word embeddings, I quantify the intensity and framing usage of ideological claims in Erdoğan's speeches in a systematic and reproducible way. In Chapter 3, I build a novel dictionary and identify the relative frequency of ideological legitimation terms in Erdoğan's speeches. I use LDA-based topic models to assess the reliability of my dictionary measures inductively. Using both techniques, I identify the relevance of ideological claims in Erdoğan's discourse over time. Additionally, I use word embeddings to identify the semantic association of ideological claims with domestic and international enemies of the Turkish regime before and after the coup attempt in July 2016, which I treat as an exogenous shock. In doing so, I assess how the usage of ideological legitimation claims in framing political outsiders changes before and after crises.

I use interrupted time series (ITS) analysis to assess the changes in the intensity of ideological legitimation claims in Erdoğan's speeches before and after the coup attempt of July 2016 in Chapter 3. ITS models are commonly used to identify the effects of political interventions, such as public health measures (Bernal et al., 2017), legislative changes (Collie et al., 2020), as well as exogenous political crises (Venetoklis, 2021). Based on an ITS model, by comparing the predicted values of independent variables just before and after the interventions, researchers can identify their effects (Huntington-Klein, 2021). I use ITS models in a similar fashion: by comparing the intensity of ideological legitimation claims before and after the coup attempt, I identify if the coup attempt increased the relative frequency of ideological claims in Erdoğan's speeches.

In Chapter 4, I use a repeated cross-sectional (RCS) public opinion survey from Turkey

(KONDA Barometer 2013-2021) to identify the effects of ideological legitimation strategies on public opinion, focusing on religious legitimation strategies. While inferior to panel data in terms of internal validity, RCS data structures and designs are used in public opinion research to analyze shifts in political attitudes over time (Brady & Johnston, 2015; Lebo & Weber, 2015), such as shifts in attitudes toward immigrants (Pepinsky et al., 2022) and changes in approval ratings of political executives (Clarke et al., 2005). When there is a substantive amount of repeated cross-sections, that is, (representative) samples of survey respondents answering identical survey questions across a time span, the "temporal granularity" (Brady & Johnston, 2015, p. 13) of the data allows researchers to make causal inferences about the effects of events and policies.

In this dissertation, I use RCS public opinion data to assess changes in the level of support for the AKP among the voting population of Turkey after two simultaneous religious legitimation strategies in July 2020: the conversion of the Hagia Sophia museum, a historical artifact, into a mosque by the regime, and the regime-initiated public debate on withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention, a treaty that protects women against gender-based violence. I compare the change in regime support among people with a religious ideology, that is, people whose political worldviews are shaped by their religion, before and after these strategies. To do this, I build a TWFE model that accounts for demographic characteristics, the residence of citizens, and the survey wave (time) in which they were interviewed, and I estimate the interaction effect (Brambor et al., 2006) of having a religious ideology and being interviewed right after July 2020. Then, I compare the predicted probability of intention to vote for the AKP between people with and without a religious ideology. With this empirical strategy, I isolate the effect of the regime's religious legitimation strategies on public opinion.

In Chapter 4, I use the RCS data of the KONDA Barometer (2013-2021), which is based on quota sampling instead of probability sampling. While quota sample-based surveys are used in many peer-reviewed public opinion studies inside and outside of Turkey (Chow & Levin, 2024; Hansen, 2023; Neundorf & Öztürk, 2023), quota samples suffer from a major limitation in that they are not based on a random selection of observations

(Groves, 2006; Yang & Banamah, 2014). Hence, an analysis based on quota samples is likely not generalizable to the population of interest. In this research, I use the quota sample-based KONDA Barometer because it is the only existing data source in Turkey that provides repeated measures (for 11 months across 8 years) of the variables of my theoretical interest. Despite some studies suggesting that quota sample RCS designscan be reliable for overtime comparisons as long as the measurement of variables and quotas are constant across the survey waves (Jackson et al., 2024; McCambridge et al., 2005), I consider Chapter 4 an exploratory inquiry. However, given that the research design of Chapter 4 is able to isolate the public opinion effects of religious legitimation strategies, it is theoretically informative and innovative.

1.3 Theoretical Contributions of the Dissertation

With this cumulative dissertation, I contribute to our understanding of autocratic politics and the role of ideology in autocracies in three ways. Firstly, I show that authoritarian regimes' use of ideologies is consequential for their stability. In Chapter 2, I demonstrate that authoritarian regimes that employ ideological claims to a higher degree are more likely to survive and are more repressive. In Chapter 4, focusing on the religious legitimation strategies of the Erdoğan-AKP regime in Turkey, I show that autocrats' ideological legitimation strategies boost their public support. These findings imply that ideological legitimation strategies are not mere "cheap talk"; they change citizens' attitudes and help autocrats remain in power. This challenges existing arguments that authoritarian regimes use ideological claims solely to create an environment of fear and intimidate citizens (Huang, 2015, 2018), that only codified ideologies, such as communist doctrines, are relevant for autocratic stability (Kailitz, 2013; Kailitz & Stockemer, 2017), and that ideologies are irrelevant to authoritarian regimes in the post-Cold War era (Guriev & Treisman, 2019, 2022; Krastev, 2011). Instead, I show that, on average, autocrats' use of ideological legitimation claims increases their chances of survival, even when we account for these regimes' other characteristics. Furthermore, I demonstrate that ideological

legitimation strategies help autocrats manipulate public opinion. Thus, I highlight that the brainwashing effects of ideologies in autocracies are not limited to the old indoctrination mechanisms (De Juan et al., 2021; Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017) of totalitarian regimes.

Secondly, I show that the ideological claims of autocracies are both reactive and adaptive. In Chapter 3, using the case of Turkey and focusing on the exogenous crisis of the coup attempt in July 2016, I demonstrate that crises increase the intensity (frequency) of ideological claims in the short run. This trend highlights the reactive nature of ideological claims. Furthermore, I show that crises increase the ideological framing of domestic and foreign regime outsiders in the long run. This trend highlights the adaptive nature of ideological claims. Together, the findings of Chapter 3 imply that the ideological claims of autocrats are not produced in a vacuum; autocrats adjust their ideological claims to external circumstances. These findings highlight the dynamic nature of ideological claims in the public communication of the autocratic elite, in line with the analysis of pro-regime media outlets in North Korea (Boussalis et al., 2023a) and Syria (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021b). Synthesizing these findings together with public opinion evidence from Turkey (Aytaç, 2021) and Russia (Sirotkina & Zavadskaya, 2020), I suggest that in the short run, increasing the intensity of ideological claims is a necessity to signal unity, and in the long run, the use of ideological framing becomes an opportunity to blame regime outsiders for crises.

Thirdly, my findings imply that scholars of autocratic politics should exploit the timing of exogenous shocks like crises, and interventions like policies, to make causal inferences about the dynamics and effects of authoritarian regimes' behavior and discourse. In Chapter 3, I demonstrate such a research design by exploiting the coup attempt against the Erdoğan-AKP regime. In Chapter 4, I do this by exploiting the distinct timing of two religious legitimation strategies of the regime. The endogenous nature of political changes in autocracies is highlighted as a problem for the credibility of causal claims in existing research (Frantz & Kendall-Taylor, 2017; Pepinsky, 2014). Taking these studies seriously, in this dissertation, I show the benefit of using exogenous changes and interventions to study the role of ideology in autocracies. With this dissertation, I extend the use of credible

and design-based causal inferences (Angrist & Pischke, 2010; Huntington-Klein, 2021; Libman, 2023) to the study of autocratic politics and invite scholars of authoritarianism to follow similar empirical strategies.

2 Ideology, Repression, and Survival of Authoritarian Regimes: Global Quantitative Analysis (1900-2023)

2.1 Introduction

Legitimation claims, the verbal and written communications that autocrats use to justify their rule, are vital to their survival (Maerz, 2020). Ideological claims, the sets of ideas such as socialism and nationalism, are considered one of the primary tools authoritarian regimes use as legitimation claims (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017; Gerschewski, 2013, 2018b). However, we do not have systematic evidence on whether ideological claims help authoritarian regimes to survive. I address this gap by analyzing whether authoritarian regimes that make greater use of ideological claims are more likely to survive, utilizing a global dataset of authoritarian regimes from 1900 to 2023.

Understanding if relying on ideological claims to higher degrees helps authoritarian regimes to survive is essential for two reasons. Firstly, understanding this effect would help us establish if ideologies are as crucial for modern authoritarian regimes as they are for modern democracies. While there is evidence that ideologies are essential to explain normatively relevant outcomes in democracies, such as policy preferences and voting behavior of elites and citizens (Jost et al., 2009; Knight, 2006; Maynard, 2013), we have no generalizable evidence on whether ideologies matter for the most substantial question for authoritarian regimes, that is, whether they survive or not. Secondly, understanding this

effect can help us test if ideological claims are as consequential as other forms of legitimation claims for the survival of authoritarian regimes. There is abundant evidence that autocrats' emphasis on their material achievements, the quality of institutions, and their personality cult contributes to their survival (Balderacchi, 2018; Baranovitch, 2021; Cassani, 2017; Han, 2021; Maerz, 2020; Thyen, 2017; Zhao, 2009). Despite studies theorizing that ideological claims can have a similar effect (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017; Easton, 1975), we lack empirical evidence for these theories. Addressing this gap is important for our understanding of authoritarian regimes; if research establishes that ideological claims matter for the survival of autocracies, then scholars should incorporate the intensity of ideological claims as an element to explain various outcomes in authoritarian regimes, such as the stability of their ruling coalitions, their foreign policy behavior, and public policies. Otherwise, scholars may conclude that the ideological legitimation process should be used to understand only historical cases, such as communist and fascist regimes (Linz, 2000).

However, establishing generalizable evidence on the effect of ideological claims on authoritarian regime survival is not an easy task. Whether authoritarian regimes can utilize ideological claims credibly is endogenous to historical factors, such as colonial history, and temporal factors that might increase the promotion of certain political ideas globally (Nyseth Brehm, 2016). Additionally, ideological claims are part of authoritarian regimes' intertwined set of stability strategies (Gerschewski, 2013, 2023b), so studying them as individual variables requires careful research design choices and available data on potential confounders. Furthermore, despite advances in text-as-data techniques enhancing the study of ideologies (Grimmer et al., 2022), there is no global dataset of authoritarian regime communication available. Consequently, we lack a comprehensive direct measure of the intensity of ideological claims on a global, comparative scale.

In this study, I overcome these challenges by combining the Varieties of Democracy Institute's Regime Legitimation Expert Survey (RLES) dataset (Tannenberg et al., 2021) with two-way fixed effects estimators. The RLES dataset offers a unique opportunity to study the effects of ideological legitimation, as it includes expert opinion-based global

data on the degree and type of ideological claims from 1900-2023 (Tannenberg et al., 2021). Additionally, the RLES and V-Dem data include indicators of other survival strategies that could help isolate the effect of ideological claims. These strategies include other legitimation claims, including material-based or performance claims to legitimacy, rational-legalist or procedural claims to legitimacy, and strongman-based or personalist claims to legitimacy, as well as data on regimes' cooptation arrangements and repression mechanisms (Gerschewski, 2013; Schneider & Maerz, 2017; Tannenberg et al., 2021). I combine these variables with the original coding of authoritarian regime outcomes from 1900-2023 to study the effect of ideological claims on regime survival. Furthermore, I use TWFE models to tackle endogeneity issues that might derive from temporal and country-specific factors.

I suggest that ideological claims affect the survival of authoritarian regimes in two ways. Firstly, I argue that authoritarian regimes that rely on ideological claims to higher degrees are more likely to survive. I call this the direct effect of ideological claims on authoritarian survival. I test this argument using a TWFE logistic regression model. Theoretically, I contend that ideological claims increase the likelihood of authoritarian survival through three causal mechanisms: antagonism, legitimacy substitution, and indoctrination. I argue that ideological claims help authoritarian regimes frame opposition as antagonistic, illegitimate traitors who work to undermine legitimate patriots, and this discourse constrains the actions of dissidents. Furthermore, I suggest that ideological claims help autocrats substitute and reframe bread-and-butter issues with identity politics during times of crisis, decreasing social discontent. Finally, I propose that ideological claims help authoritarian regimes create a group of indoctrinated true believers in society who follow them unconditionally and mobilize for them when necessary.

Secondly, I argue that authoritarian regimes that rely on ideological claims to higher degrees are more repressive. I call this the indirect effect of ideological claims on authoritarian survival. I test this argument with a TWFE model. Theoretically, I suggest that ideological claims enhance repression through two causal mechanisms: marginalization and elite incentivization. I suggest that ideological claims help the regime marginalize

dissident groups that are not socially well-embedded, demonizing them and making their repression more justified on average. Furthermore, I suggest that ideological claims by autocratic leadership incentivize mid-level officials, such as police and prosecutors, to "punish" dissident behavior that goes against the limits of the country's ideology.

The results suggest that authoritarian regimes that utilize ideological claims to higher degrees are more likely to survive. Specifically, I find that a one-unit increase in the degree of ideological claims increases the likelihood of authoritarian survival by 1.30 times. However, I also find that this effect is moderate compared to the effect of elite-oriented survival strategies. Secondly, I find that more ideological regimes are more likely to violate civil liberties. Furthermore, I identify ideology as one of the main drivers of civil liberty violations in autocracies, compared to alternative explanations. Specifically, I find that a one-unit increase in ideological claims increases the violation of civil liberties by 5 percentage points. In short, the results suggest that ideology helps authoritarian regimes to be more repressive and survive.

The findings of this study enhance our understanding of autocratic politics in multiple ways. Firstly, I show that ideology matters for the survival of authoritarian regimes, regardless of temporal and spatial boundaries. This finding suggests that ideological claims are neither mere rhetoric nor old-fashioned tools specific to interwar and Cold War dictatorships. This joins the growing evidence on the role of legitimation claims in autocracies (Gerschewski, 2023b; Grauvogel & Von Soest, 2014; Keremoğlu et al., 2022; Maerz, 2019) and empirically supports the theoretical arguments that ideological claims may make authoritarian regimes more durable (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017; Gerschewski, 2018b, 2023a). Secondly, I show that ideological claims trigger more repression. This joins the evidence on the interdependence of pillars of authoritarian stability (Gerschewski, 2013) and provides the first global empirical evidence on the ideology-repression relationship. Thus, I suggest understanding ideological claims as a road map for authoritarian regimes' approach to civil liberties. Overall, I urge scholars to incorporate ideology as a variable to understand the stability and demise of authoritarian regimes.

The rest of the article is as follows. In Section 2.2, I conceptualize ideological claims and identify the problems related to ideology in empirical authoritarianism research. In Sections 2.3 and 2.4, I state my theoretical explanations. In Section 4.4, I explain the research design choices. In Section 2.6, I explain and interpret the results. In Section 2.7, I discuss the results and their implications.

2.2 Ideology and Authoritarian Regimes

In the context of authoritarian regimes, I conceptualize ideology as a set of legitimation claims that autocrats use to justify their rule in the eyes of the public. This conceptualization aligns with existing studies of authoritarian legitimation (Gerschewski, 2013, 2018b, 2023a; Tannenberg et al., 2021; Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). I understand ideological claims as a set of illiberal ideas such as nationalism, conservatism, socialism, and religious appeals (Tannenberg et al., 2021; Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). These ideas may include codified doctrines that seek a utopian transformation of society, such as communism and fascism, as well as more discursive ideational tools such as ethnic nationalism and patriotism (Baturo & Tolstrup, 2024; Gerschewski, 2023a). I understand any form of verbal or written communication, such as speeches, statements, or official documents that contain ideological content, as ideological legitimation claims (Gerschewski, 2018b).

I consider ideology as legitimation claims that could vary in intensity. Some regimes rely heavily on ideology to justify their rule, such as North Korea, where communism and Juche ideology occupy every aspect of public space (Dukalskis, 2017). Other regimes may use ideological claims to high degrees but at less extreme levels, such as China, where socialist ideas with Chinese characteristics are highly important to the regime's propaganda but is not at the core of it compared to regime's emphasis on economic stability (Holbig, 2015). On the other hand, some regimes might not use ideological claims at all, such as the neo-patrimonial regimes of sub-Saharan Africa, which predominantly rely on clientelistic ties (Mkandawire, 2015). Therefore, I understand ideological claims as a continuous variable.

Ideological claims are theoretically considered an important factor contributing to the survival and stability of authoritarian regimes (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017; Easton, 1975; Gerschewski, 2023a). However, empirical evidence on the impact of ideological claims on regime survival is limited due to restricted data scope, narrow conceptualization, and specific research design choices, in existing research. A group of studies shows that ideocracies, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes that promote a utopian future to society, are more likely to survive (Kailitz, 2013; Stockemer & Kailitz, 2020). These studies solely focus on codified ideologies such as communism and do not assess the effect of more discursive ideational tools such as nationalism. Studies that consider both codified and discursive ideas as ideological claims are mainly qualitative inquiries of specific cases, which do not show whether higher reliance on ideological claims is linked to regime survival (Bayulgen et al., 2018; Dukalskis, 2017; Kneuer, 2017; Mazepus et al., 2016). Importantly, none of these studies consider ideological claims as a continuous spectrum, failing to capture the effects of nuanced differences in the use of ideological claims. While a few studies analyze ideological legitimation claims' effects on politically relevant variables such as executive constraints (Brunkert & von Soest, 2023) and competition laws (Kim, 2023), they do not analyze whether these claims are directly or indirectly linked to regime survival. Given the lack of empirical research that conceptualizes ideological claims thoroughly and tests their effect on regime survival, I adress this gap in this study.

Furthermore, existing studies on the role of ideological claims in authoritarian regimes do not take the endogenous nature of their intensity into account. The ability of authoritarian regimes to use ideological claims depends on the credibility of such arguments, which is embedded in social cleavages that derive from a country's history, such as violent colonial struggles, revolutions, or imperial past (Aspinall, 2007; Gerschewski, 2023a; Levitsky & Way, 2013; Nyseth Brehm, 2016; Schedler, 2013; Stewart, 2021). Furthermore, specific periods in history may lead to the diffusion of particular ideologies, as in the case of fascism in interwar Europe (Kallis, 2021). Therefore, time and space may affect the presence or absence of ideological claims. I take the endogenous nature of ideological claims into account in this study, as described section 2.4 below.

Ideological claims are crucial, but they are not the only type of legitimation claims authoritarian regimes use to justify their rule (Gerschewski, 2018b). Autocrats also employ materialist or performance claims, emphasizing visible achievements such as economic growth and mega projects (Schlumberger, 2010; Schneider & Maerz, 2017; Zhao, 2009). Personalist claims, promotion of the autocratic ruler's charismatic cult through regime's communication channels, is an effective legitimation strategy that provides stability to authoritarian regimes[1] (Balderacchi, 2018; Brunkert & von Soest, 2023). Procedural claims, regime's emphasis on rules and institutions including the discursive use of democracy, is another widespread strategy used by autocrats (Maerz, 2019). To rigorously isolate ideological claims' effect on regime survival, I include these legitimation claims as variables in this study.

There are also factors beyond legitimation claims that are closely linked to ideological claims and regime survival. For instance, economic stability of the country is likely to effect the regime's need for legitimation claims and can lead to regime instability by creating discontent among the elite (Shih, 2020). Relatedly, cooptation which could be defined as regime's ability to give material compensation to the political and business elite, is likely to be related both to the regime's need for an ideology and likelihood of survival (Schmotz, 2015). Furthermore, repression, that is, use of physical violence, legal defamation of dissidents, and censorship (Tanneberg, 2020), is likely to affect regime survival (Maerz, 2020) and cannot be isolated from legitimation claims due to the need for repressive acts' justification (Josua, 2021). Finally, whether the regime holds any form competitive but unfair or facade elections is likely to affect the regime's legitimation narrative as well as their risk to lose power (Donno, 2013; Gandhi & Lust-Okar, 2009; Levitsky & Way, 2010). To avoid confounding variables, I include economic stability, cooptation, repression, and competitiveness of the elections as variables in this study.

In short, I make four arguments that guide this paper by reviewing existing studies on ideology and legitimation in authoritarian regimes. Firstly, I suggest that ideological

[1]Personalism, a subtype of authoritarian regimes, is empirically shown to be unstable (Meng, 2020). However, studies show that personalism as a regime differs analytically from personalism as a legitimation strategy (Anceschi et al., 2024).

claims are a set of ideas authoritarian regimes use to justify their rule. These claims include both codified, rigid doctrines such as communism and uncodified discursive appeals such as nationalism. Secondly, I suggest that ideological claims may vary in their intensity across regimes, and I propose to study it as a continuous variable. Thirdly, I identify that empirical evidence on the effect of ideological claims on regime survival is limited to the scope of rigid ideologies and qualitative studies, and none of these studies take ideologies' endogenous nature to time and space into account. Finally, I suggest that to isolate the effects of ideological claims, we need to take other legitimation strategies and survival strategies of authoritarian regimes into account.

2.3 Ideological Claims and Mechanisms of Authoritarian Survival

I argue that authoritarian regimes that use ideological claims as a legitimation strategy to a greater extent are more likely to survive. I suggest that this direct effect of ideology on authoritarian survival comes from three primary mechanisms, including *antagonism mechanism*, *legitimacy substitution mechanism*, and *indoctrination mechanism*.

Firstly, I contend that authoritarian incumbents use ideological claims to create a discursive distinction between patriots and traitors[2]. I argue that such claims disproportionately occupy public space due to authoritarian regimes' uneven access to the public sphere vis-a-vis oppositional actors (Levitsky & Way, 2010), and contribute to the likelihood of regime survival. I label this as the *antagonism mechanism*.

My hunch for the antagonism mechanism comes from descriptive evidence across authoritarian regimes. For example, in Iran, Supreme Leader Khamenei uses Islamic values as a tool to create a moral distinction between the pious insider elite—referring to conservatives—and the pro-Western outsider elite—referring to reformists (Selvik, 2018). Similarly, in Venezuela, the left-wing populist discourse of Chavez focuses on distinguishing between the friends and enemies of the people, framing the oppositional and business elite

[2]Gerschewski (2023a) makes a similar argument, suggesting that ideological legitimation claims help autocrats to create a distinction between friends and foes.

as a corrupt oligarchy (Roberts, 2012). In Turkey, Erdogan distinguishes between "national and native" (yerli ve milli) actors and "traitors" (hainler) to delegitimize political positions that go against the ideology of the regime (Yilmaz et al., 2020, p. 272). Furthermore, in Singapore, the People's Action Party government juxtaposes Asian cultural conservatism with liberal Western values, arguing that the former is a better fit for Singapore than the latter (Tan, 2012). These examples illuminate authoritarian regimes use ideological claims as a tool of antagonization.[3]

I suggest that antagonizing ideological claims with a moralistic "patriots against traitors" framing constrains anti-regime behavior in authoritarian regimes. Such discourses limit anti-regime behavior by making it costlier for citizens or powerful elites to support oppositional movements, as these movements are framed as traitors or outsiders. Furthermore, such an essentialist discourse might even lead to preference falsification (Kuran, 1998), in which opposition actors may need to subscribe to ideologically driven policies of the regime—such as nationalist aggressive policies or socialist policies that cut power from business elites—to avoid being considered traitors and to avoid repression. In this way, authoritarian regimes manage to limit acceptable dissident behavior, making themselves more likely to survive.

Secondly, I argue that ideological legitimation claims contribute to authoritarian regimes' stability through the legitimacy substitution mechanism. I suggest that when an authoritarian regime's ability to provide performance legitimacy decreases, such as during an economic crisis or a political turmoil, they use ideological legitimation claims to provide identity-based, diffuse form of legitimacy (Easton, 1975).

Through the legitimacy substitution mechanism, authoritarian regimes may distort the perceptions of political audiences regarding instabilities with identity politics, as in the case of post-soviet authoritarian regimes (Matveeva, 2009). For instance, in Russia, the Putin regime started to use nationalism as a strategy with "New Russia" (Novorossiya) as

[3]It is important to note that while many ideological claims such as nationalist and populist ones are antagonistic by their nature regardless of whether democratic or autocratic actors use them (Jenne, 2021). However, I suggest that ideological claims contribute to regime survival through antagonism mechanism only in autocracies, since in democracies political actors, regardless of whether they are pro or anti-regime, have equal access to public space, compared to autocracies (Zaller et al., 1992).

an ideology in the upcoming years after the 2008 financial crisis, in an attempt to minimize the decreases in Putin's approval ratings (Kneuer, 2017, p. 19). Scholars suggest that regimes with ideological claims in their arsenal are more likely to survive political turmoil, such as party-based autocracies, which develop more sophisticated ideological programs compared to military regimes (Lai & Slater, 2006, p. 117). Furthermore, ideological claims are likely to distort the performance expectations of society in moments of instability by framing visible achievements of the regime as benchmarks of economic success, such as mega energy projects in the case of Tajikistan (Huda, 2022, p. 11) and industrial development in the case of Tanzania (Paget, 2020), instead of bread-and-butter issues. Ideological claims, by providing substitution to performance legitimacy issues during the moments of instability, are likely to justify the regime in the eyes of the public in the short run, making the regime more likely to avoid discontent, increasing the regime's likelihood of survival.

Thirdly, I argue that ideological legitimation claims enhance the likelihood of authoritarian survival through the indoctrination mechanism, in line with existing studies (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017; Neundorf et al., 2023). I suggest that, under favorable conditions, ideological claims in the form of heavy propaganda by incumbents, educational institutions, and mass media create core believers of the regime who are likely to support the regime's actions unconditionally. These core believers are more likely to mobilize in favor of the regime and are unlikely to act against the regime's interests, decreasing the likelihood of unrest and increasing the likelihood of regime survival. For example, in contemporary Vietnam, using socialism and Ho Chi Minh's teachings as doctrines, the ruling party transformed a segment of university students and faculty into true believers who discriminate against students who do not comply with the requirements of regime ideology, such as participation in the youth communist league (Nguyen, 2022). Similarly, in China, the segment of the population that is fully indoctrinated with the official textbooks is more likely to support government intervention in citizens' lives (Kao, 2021). Furthermore, totalitarian regimes of the 20th century invested heavily in indoctrination through propaganda to create a "new man" loyal to the regime, aiming to control how the

masses think about the past, present, and future (Friedrich & Brzezinski, 1956). While the effects of these attempts might be partial and conditional, the evidence suggests that they were greater than zero (De Juan et al., 2021; Kao, 2021).

I suggest that ideological indoctrination, by creating a segment of society that unconditionally supports the regime, increases the likelihood of authoritarian stability. It is, however, important to note that this mechanism is more prevalent in socialist and fascist dictatorships of the 20th century, which have codified ideologies and monopoly of political communication, compared to modern autocracies which have more discursive ideological claims and tend to allow for dissidence even if minimally (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017, p. 261). Therefore, this mechanism is more relevant for historical authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, although variants of it may exist in modern autocracies like Putin's Russia (Neundorf et al., 2023, p. 17).

In short, I suggest that ideological claims contribute to authoritarian regime survival directly through three causal mechanisms. Firstly, I suggest that ideological claims help authoritarian regimes to create a distinction between patriots and traitors. This constrains the limits of oppositional behavior, contributing to regime survival. I call this as the *antagonism mechanism*. Secondly, ideological claims help authoritarian regimes to substitute and redirect their performance objectives in moments of instability by shifting public perception to visible achievements like mega projects and by distorting public perceptions of crises. I label this as the *legitimacy substitution mechanism*. Finally, I suggest that ideological claims help authoritarian regimes indoctrinate people and create core believers who mobilize for the regime under specific conditions, including codified ideologies and a monopoly of propaganda. I identify this as the *indoctrination mechanisms*. These theoretical propositions lead me to the following hypothesis:

H1: Authoritarian regimes that rely on ideological claims to higher degrees are more likely to survive than authoritarian regimes relying on such claims to lower degrees.

2.4 Ideology Claims and Mechanisms of Repression

I argue that, besides increasing the likelihood of regime survival, ideological claims indirectly contribute to regime stability by triggering increases in the level of repression in authoritarian regimes. I suggest that authoritarian regimes that use ideological claims to a higher degree are more likely to violate civil liberties by attacking oppositional actors through both legal and physical means, indicating more repression. I consider this as the indirect effect of ideological claims on authoritarian survival, given that repression is considered a pillar of stability in autocracies (Gerschewski, 2013). I contend that ideological claims enhance repression through two causal mechanisms: the *marginalization mechanism* and the *elite incentivization mechanism*[4].

Firstly, I suggest that ideological claims increase the likelihood of repression by helping to demonize ideologically disembedded groups of dissidents in the eyes of public actors, making their repression more justified on average. Since ideological claims are used to delegitimize dissidents besides legitimizing the rule in authoritarian regimes (Dukalskis & Patane, 2019), I advocate that ideological claims help authoritarian regimes frame value-based opponents of the regime as threats to national security or to the cultural values of the country, making such groups more likely targets of repression. I label this the marginalization mechanism.

Although there is no systematic test of the marginalization mechanism, anecdotal evidence from authoritarian and democratic regimes may provide hints of its presence. For instance, Middle Eastern and North African autocracies are more likely to engage in repression against socially undesired groups, such as those they frame as Islamists and communists (Josua & Edel, 2021). Particularly in Egypt, the military regime that came to power after the Hirak uprising, which ousted Islamist president Mursi, was able to crack down on pro-Mursi protests thanks to the dehumanization of Mursi's movement by the media as Islamist terrorists (Lachapelle, 2022). In Turkey, the Erdogan regime is

[4]While scholars have examined how authoritarian regimes use ideology to justify repression ex-post (Edel & Josua, 2018; Josua, 2021; Keremoğlu et al., 2022), how ideology affects repression in autocracies is unexamined in the empirical comparative research, except in a few cases (Scharpf, 2018).

more likely to repress mayors from the Kurdish nationalist movement, which the regime frames as separatist (Hintz & Ercan, 2024). These anecdotal pieces of evidence hint that autocrats are more likely to repress stigmatized groups that they can frame as ideological radicals threatening national unity. In this way, autocrats may decrease domestic and international criticism of their repressive behavior (Patane, 2016).

Furthermore, ideological claims may lead to marginalization by providing a script for publicly unacceptable behavior and ideas that must be repressed. Evidence from the late 19th-century United States suggests that the Office of Indian Affairs framed the religious practices of Native Americans as a threat to American identity and its Christian character prior to engaging in massacres against them (Roscigno et al., 2015). Similarly, after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Russian regime utilizes state-civilizationism as a conservative ideology and represses groups that do not obey its core, including celebrities who organize "immoral" naked parties and citizens who challenge this ideology's symbols (Komin, 2024; Severreal, 2022). These two cases illustrate that authoritarian regimes may use ideological claims to marginalize some social groups, paving the way for their repression.

Secondly, I suggest that ideological claims increase levels of repression through the elite incentivization mechanism. I argue that when the regime relies heavily on ideological claims to justify its rule, the regime ideology incentivizes mid-level political elites to engage in more repression.

One way this mechanism of elite incentivization functions is through the presence of ideological mid-level elites. Ideologically committed mid-level elites, such as segments of police, military officers, and party members, are more prone to accept violence to transform society in the desired direction, whether that be ethnonationalism or socialism (Lachapelle et al., 2020; Leader Maynard, 2019). For instance, in Argentina during the Dirty War (Guerra Sucia), mid-level military officers who shared the nationalist and anti-communist beliefs of the junta government were more likely to engage in the killing of dissidents (Scharpf, 2018).

Ideological claims may incentivize elites to engage in repression also due to instrumental

reasons (Leader Maynard, 2019, p. 642). In the case of an authoritarian regime with high levels of nationalism as an ideology, a chief police officer may order their police to attack the protesters who engage in wrongdoing against national symbols such as the country's flag, thinking that he/she might be punished for allowing such an activity. Furthermore, in such a regime, prosecutors might be incentivized to open corruption cases against opposition politicians who might be anti-nationalists, thinking that it may increase their chance of promotion.

In sum, I propose that ideological claims enhance repression in authoritarian regimes, indirectly contributing to regime survival. I suggest that ideology affects repression through two causal mechanisms. Firstly, ideological claims help authoritarian regimes marginalize socially disembedded groups of dissidents as threats to the country's unity, framing them as targets of repression. I call this the marginalization mechanism. Secondly, ideological claims incentivize mid-level officials to engage in repression against opponents of the regime. I suggest that these officials might engage in repression because they are committed to the ideological transformation of society, or they approach ideology as an instrumental means to power. Using these mechanisms as hunches, I propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Authoritarian regimes that rely on ideological claims to higher degrees are more likely to engage in the repression of dissidents compared to authoritarian regimes relying on such claims to lower degrees.

.

2.5 Research Design

2.5.1 Data

I apply regression techniques to test the hypotheses outlined above. I use data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project, a global expert survey (Coppedge, Gerring, Knutsen, Lindberg, Teorell, Altman, Angiolillo, Bernhard, Borella, Cornell, et al., 2024a), to identify the scope of the observations and the relevant indicators.

I use V-Dem's Regimes of the World (RoW) measure (Lührmann et al., 2018) to identify all authoritarian regimes available (1900-2023). Firstly, I identify all the authoritarian country-year observations (e.g., Zimbabwe 2012), using RoW. Secondly, I exclude cases in which there is no functioning, sovereign political regime. To implement this, I exclude all the observations where the country is not independent, such as countries that are under colonial rule (e.g., India 1900-1946), or the country is in an interregnum period, such as countries that are in a full-scale civil war (e.g., Somalia 1991-2011). The dataset includes 8,727 country-year observations from 871 authoritarian regimes and 166 countries.

2.5.2 Variables and Estimation

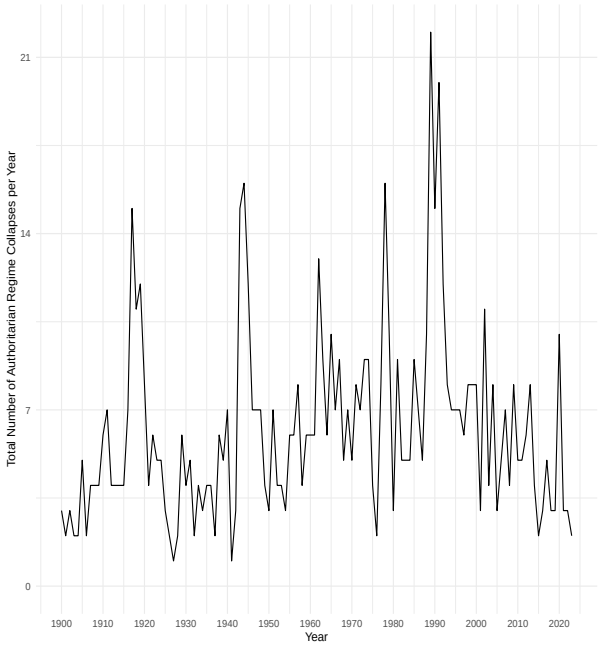

Figure 2.1: Number of Total Authoritarian Regime Collapses per year

I use two dependent variables to test H1 and H2. To test H1, I use regime survival as the dependent variable. I code regime survival as survival (1) if there was no regime change in that year, and collapse (0) if the ruling elite lost power that year[5]. I use the "regime information" indicator from the V-Dem data for coding, which provides a unique

[5]I account for "autocracy to autocracy transitions" by focusing on change in the composition of the ruling elite as a criteria for coding regime collapse, instead of democratization (Geddes et al., 2014).

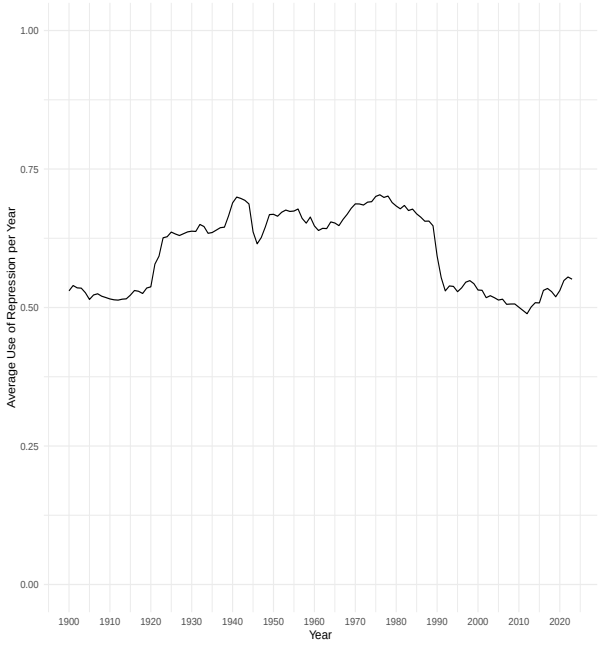

Figure 2.2: Average Use of Repression by Authoritarian Regimes Overtime

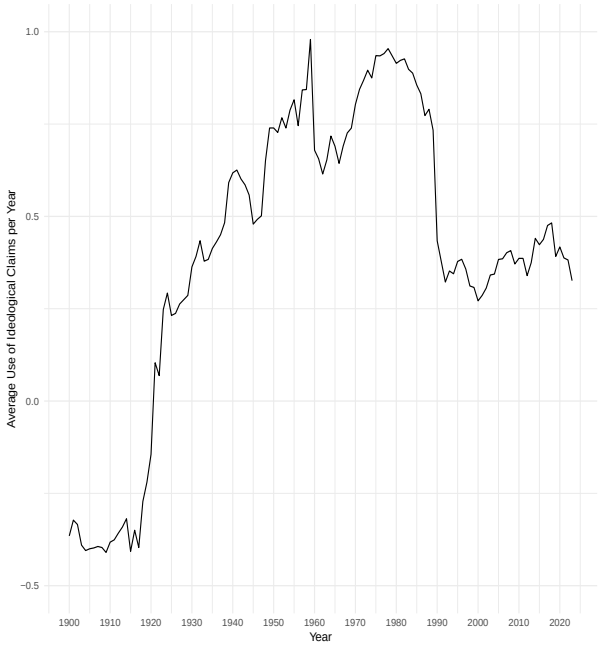

Figure 2.3: Average Use of Ideological Claims by Authoritarian Regimes Overtime

name for each regime in a country (e.g., Communist Party Cuba, 02.01.1959 - Enduring). I code regime survival as 1 if the regime information variable does not change. I also code regime survival 1 if the regime information changes due to a self-coup or the natural death of the leader, using the "Regime end type" indicator from V-Dem. I manually validate the regime survival variable using the overview sections of each country's last 3 Freedom House report (Freedom House, 2024) and Political Handbook of the World 2022-2023 (Lansford, 2023) and recode 22 outcomes, as detailed in Appendix A.4.

Figure 2.1 shows the total number of regime collapses per year. Overall, there are 773 regime collapses, with the years 1989 and 1991 having the highest number of observations with 22 and 20, respectively.

To test H2, I use the level of political repression as the dependent variable. As an indicator, I use the civil liberties index of the V-Dem data. The civil liberties index measures to what extent political liberties such as freedom of association and expression, private liberties such as freedom of religion, and physical integrity, such as freedom from torture, are respected by the government in a country (Coppedge, Gerring, Knutsen, Lindberg, Teorell, Altman, Angiolillo, Bernhard, Borella, Cornell, et al., 2024a, pp. 292–293). The variable is continuous, varying from 0 to 1. I rescale this variable to make values closer to 1 reflect more violations of freedoms, indicating repression.

Figure 2.2 shows the average use of repression by authoritarian regimes over time. The figure suggests that there were no periods where average global repression was significantly higher, despite a slight increase in its use during the Cold War.

I use the degree of ideological claims as the independent variable. I use the ideological legitimation variable from V-Dem's Regime Legitimation Strategies (RLES) expert survey as an indicator (Tannenberg et al., 2021). To identify the degree of ideological legitimation claims, RLES asks country experts to what extent the government in that year promotes a specific ideology or a societal model, such as religious traditionalism and socialism, to justify their rule (Coppedge, Gerring, Knutsen, Lindberg, Teorell, Altman, Angiolillo, Bernhard, Borella, Cornell, et al., 2024a, p. 221). This operationalization aligns with my conceptualization of ideological claims, as depicted in Section 2.2, since the measurement

strategy considers both codified and discursive ideational strategies as ideological claims (Tannenberg et al., 2021, p. 81). The survey asks experts to rate the degree of ideological claims on a 0-4 ordinal scale, with 0 meaning "not at all" and 4 meaning "almost exclusively." The variable is constructed with the transformation of the average of expert responses to an interval scale (-5 to 5), using V-Dem's measurement model which accounts for potential expert biases (Pemstein et al., 2018). This transformation is in line with my identification of ideological claims as a continuous variable.

Figure 2.3 shows the use of ideological claims by authoritarian regimes over time. The figure shows that ideological claims are relevant legitimation strategies throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, with particularly intense usage during the Cold War.

I include a set of control variables to isolate the effect of ideological claims on the dependent variables, based on the theoretical argument laid out in Section 2.2. To test H1, first, I include other legitimation strategies authoritarian regimes may use, including performance claims, procedural claims, and personality-based claims. These variables come from the RLES expert survey and are measured in the same way as ideological claims. Second, I include the type of ideological claims as control variables. These variables also come from RLES and vary on a scale of 0-1. Specifically, I include degrees of nationalism, socialism, conservatism, religious traditionalism, and separatism as controls. Third, I include the reversed civil liberties index of V-Dem as a control. Fourth, I include log-transformed GDP of the country in that year, using Fariss et al. (2022)'s data.

Fifth, I include the level of electoral competitiveness. To measure electoral competitiveness, I replicate Cassani (2021), who use V-Dem's RoW, clean elections, freedom of expression and association measures to distinguish between closed authoritarian regimes, which are regimes that have no multiparty elections to elect an executive, hegemonic authoritarian regimes, regimes that have multiparty elections but only as a facade, and competitive authoritarian regimes, regimes where there are competitive but unfair elections in favor of the incumbent (Schedler, 2013). Finally, I include cooptation by identifying the level of support that the regime gets from the elite group which is most consequential for their survival. Using V-Dem's "Regime Support Group" and "Most Powerful Group"

indicators, I identify the most powerful group for a regime's survival (e.g., the aristocracy, party elite, business elite, rural elite) and how much support the regime gets from that group, on a scale from 0-1. While this measure is indirect, it reflects how much elite support the regime can secure, which most likely derives from the benefits these elite groups receive (Schmotz, 2015). To test H2, I include the same set of control variables, except repression, which is the dependent variable. I provide the descriptive statistics of all variables in Appendix A.1.

I use two separate two-way fixed effects (TWFE) models to estimate H1 and H2. Using TWFE, I cancel out the country-specific and time-specific effects and obtain an estimate based on the average of within-country and within-year slopes. With this empirical strategy, I overcome the potential endogeneity of ideological claims to context. I lag independent variables to avoid the co-determination of regime survival with ideological claims. To test H1, I fit a TWFE logistic regression model, and to test H2, I fit a linear TWFE model. I provide the formula for these models in Appendix A.5

2.6 Results

2.6.1 Direct Effects

I present the analysis of ideological claims' effect on regime survival in table 2.1, testing H1. The model on the left includes only legitimation claims as predictors. The model in the middle includes all the control variables without lagging independent variables. The model on the right is the fully specified model with lagged independent variables. The coefficients are presented as odds ratios with corresponding 95% confidence intervals. I focus on interpreting the model on the right, which is the fully specified model.[6]

The results support the hypothesis that authoritarian regimes that use ideological

[6]The full dataset presented in the research design includes 8727 observations, while the full model with lagged independent variables presented in table 2.1 has 7176 observations. Of these, 948 were automatically excluded by statistical software due to lack of variation in the dependent variable within fixed effects (see Appendix A.3). Additionally, 205 were removed due to lags, and 398 due to missing values. Of the missing values, 314 are all the country-year observations from 2020 to 2023 because of missing GDP data. However, removing this variable and including these observations do not change the direction or significance of the findings. This robustness also applies to the findings in section 2.6.2.

Dependent Variable:	Regime Survival (1= Survival, 0 = Collapse)		
Model:	Legitimation only	Full model	Lagged independent variables
Ideological Claims	1.425***	1.259*	1.301*
	(0.201)	(0.227)	(0.245)
Performance Claims	1.327**	1.302**	1.308**
	(0.199)	(0.181)	(0.184)
Procedural Claims	1.047	1.312*	1.563***
	(0.232)	(0.232)	(0.244)
Personalist Claims	1.360**	1.270*	1.243*
	(0.194)	(0.192)	(0.193)
Religious Claims	2.068	2.133	3.172*
	(1.012)	(1.140)	(1.150)
Nationalist Claims	0.481	0.400*	0.324*
	(0.910)	(0.811)	(0.858)
Conservative Claims	1.261	0.911	0.698
	(0.980)	(0.977)	(0.990)
Socialist Claims	0.854	0.778	0.770
	(1.043)	(1.063)	(1.133)
Separatist Claims	0.422	0.676	0.652
	(1.828)	(1.807)	(1.716)
Repression		6.685***	6.481***
		(0.941)	(1.012)
Cooptation		5.601***	4.717***
		(0.619)	(0.597)
Competitive Authoritarianism		1.002	1.385
		(0.373)	(0.382)
Hegemonic Authoritarianism		1.059	1.158
		(0.275)	(0.276)
GDP (logged)		1.117	0.920
		(0.345)	(0.336)
Fixed-effects			
country	Yes	Yes	Yes
year	Yes	Yes	Yes
Squared Correlation	0.10263	0.11596	0.10976
Pseudo R^2	0.13436	0.15124	0.14745
BIC	6,695.8	6,488.7	6,314.5
N of Observations	7,644	7,381	7,176

The standard errors in parentheses are clustered by country and year. The coefficients are odds ratios of independent variables
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.1*

Table 2.1: Analysis of Ideological Legitimation Claims' Effect on Authoritarian Regime Survival (Direct Effect)

claims to higher degrees are more likely to survive. Ideological claims are positively associated with regime survival, statistically significant at a 95% confidence interval. Accordingly, one unit increase in ideological claims increases the likelihood of regime survival by 1.30 times.

The effect of ideological claims is moderate but substantial, in comparison with other variables in the model. Table 2.1 shows that the effect of a unit increase in ideological claims on regime survival (1.30) is very similar to that of performance claims (1.30), higher than that of personality claims (1.24), and lower than that of procedural claims (1.56). This comparison suggests that ideological claims are as important as other claims to legitimacy, although they are slightly less weighty than procedural claims. On the other hand, one unit increase in repression increases the likelihood of authoritarian survival 6.42 times and one unit increase in cooptation increases the likelihood of authoritarian survival 4.7 times. Comparing these odds ratios with that of ideological claims, it is evident that while ideological claims are important, they are less impactful than repressive tools and elite compensation.

The results also suggest that some types of ideological claims are more consequential than others. Specifically, regimes that use religious claims more are likely to survive, with one unit increase in the religiosity of claims increasing the likelihood of survival 3.24 times. However, it is important to read this result with caution, as it is not related to the intensity of ideological claims. Instead, analysis of types of claims suggests that regardless of the degree to which an authoritarian regime uses ideology, if the ideological claims they make are religious they are more likely to survive.

The effect of the intensity of ideological claims I identify is robust to alternative model specifications. The effect of the intensity of ideological claims remains positive and statistically significant in a model where I exclude ambiguous cases including partially occupied territories and the years under transitional governments, in a model where I control for the type of closed authoritarian regime, and a model where I include country-only fixed effects and a model where I exclude the GDP variable to maximize the number of observations. These models are presented in Appendix A.2.

In short, the results support the hypothesis that more reliance on ideological claims leads to a higher likelihood of survival.

2.6.2 Indirect Effects

Dependent Variable:	Repression		
Model:	Legitimation only	Full model	Lagged independent variables
Ideological Claims	0.0595***	0.0502***	0.0505***
	(0.0074)	(0.0066)	(0.0067)
Performance Claims	-0.0082	-0.0175	-0.0140
	(0.0091)	(0.0095)	(0.0095)
Procedural Claims	-0.0748***	-0.0536***	-0.0534***
	(0.0086)	(0.0093)	(0.0093)
Personalist Claims	0.0303***	0.0234***	0.0241***
	(0.0061)	(0.0063)	(0.0065)
Religious Claims	-0.0553	-0.0265	-0.0129
	(0.0488)	(0.0501)	(0.0486)
Nationalist Claims	-0.0330	-0.0468	-0.0482
	(0.0449)	(0.0439)	(0.0423)
Conservative Claims	-0.0066	-0.0456	-0.0456
	(0.0462)	(0.0436)	(0.0437)
Socialist Claims	0.0070	-0.0219	-0.0209
	(0.0510)	(0.0490)	(0.0481)
Separatist Claims	-0.1604*	-0.1229	-0.1378
	(0.0744)	(0.0722)	(0.0740)
Competitive Authoritarianism		-0.1473***	-0.1319***
		(0.0157)	(0.0158)
Hegemonic Authoritarianism		-0.0381***	-0.0339**
		(0.0102)	(0.0100)
Cooptation		0.0690**	0.0626*
		(0.0261)	(0.0272)
GDP (logged)		0.0020	0.0023
		(0.0100)	(0.0104)
Fixed-effects			
country	Yes	Yes	Yes
year	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	8,616	8,305	8,124
R^2	0.81229	0.84821	0.83227
Within R^2	0.46559	0.56810	0.52252

The standard errors in parentheses are clustered by country and year. The coefficients are based on linear fixed effect models
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05*

Table 2.2: Analysis of Ideological Legitimation Claims' Effect on Use of Repression in Authoritarian Regimes (Indirect Effect)

I present the analysis of ideological claims effect on degree of repression in table 2.2, testing H2. Similar to H1, the model on the right presents the full model specification with lagged independent variables and I focus on this model's interpretation.

Table 2.2 supports H2, suggesting that authoritarian regimes that use ideological claims to higher degrees are more repressive. The results suggest that one unit increase

in ideological claims increases repression by 5 percentage points and this relationship is significant at the 99% confidence interval.

Ideological claims are one of the most crucial drivers of repression, according to our model. Among the legitimation strategies, the degree of ideological claims has the highest positive effect on the degree of repression, although personalist claims also lead to higher degrees of repression. On the other hand, in contrast to ideological claims, procedural claims decrease the use of repression. Level of electoral competitiveness and cooptation have higher magnitudes of effects compared to ideological claims on repression where competitive authoritarian regimes are 13 percentage points less repressive and one unit increase in cooptation is associated with a 6 percentage point increase in degree of repression. Overall, ideological claims have the third highest magnitude of effect on repression in the model, also being the second most important positive driver of repression. The significance and direction of ideological claims' effect on repression are robust to the same set of robustness checks described in section 2.6.1. Additionally, type of ideological claims has no effect on level of repression.

In short, the results support H2 that higher degrees of ideological claims make regimes more repressive. Given the independent effect of repression on regime survival, I consider this finding as the indirect effect of ideological claims on regime survival.

2.7 Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I analyze how ideological claims affect the survival of authoritarian regimes. I utilize a global dataset of authoritarian regimes, combining V-Dem's Regimes of the World measure and regime legitimation data with the original coding of authoritarian regime survival and collapses from 1900 to 2023. I use two-way fixed-effect models to estimate the effect of the degree of ideological claims on regime survival and the degree of political repression.

The results suggest that authoritarian regimes that use ideological claims to higher degrees are more likely to survive. I consider this as the direct effect of ideological claims

on regime survival. I show that the effect of ideological claims on regime survival is substantive and significant, but moderate compared to well-established authoritarian survival strategies such as cooptation. I provide three theoretical causal mechanisms of how ideological claims contribute to regime survival, including antagonism, legitimacy substitution, and indoctrination mechanisms. Furthermore, the results suggest that authoritarian regimes that use ideological claims to higher degrees are more repressive. I consider this as the indirect effect of ideological claims on regime survival, given the substantive effect of repression on regime survival. I show that ideological claims are one of the main drivers of repression compared to alternative explanations. I provide two theoretical causal mechanisms of how ideological claims contribute to repression, including marginalization and elite incentivization mechanisms.

This paper has some limitations. Firstly, while I test the effects of ideological claims on regime survival and repression, I do not test the mechanisms of how these effects occur. Future studies may test the causal mechanisms that I theorize, using data from selected cases of authoritarian regimes. For instance, the marginalization mechanism might be tested by identifying the groups that the regime frames using ideological claims and analyzing if ordinary citizens of the regime are more prone to accept these groups' repression compared to groups that the regime does not frame ideologically. This could be achieved by combining quantitative analysis of speeches of authoritarian regime leadership using techniques such as word embeddings (Rodriguez et al., 2023), with survey data that measures attitudes toward dissident groups and their rights. Secondly, I rely on expert surveys as a measurement of ideological claims. Expert measures of ideological claims of authoritarian regimes are the best and most cost-effective measures available cross-nationally. However, they are indirect and subject to human judgment, like every expert-survey-based measure (see Silva and Littvay, 2019). Future work may collect cross-national data on authoritarian regime speeches and measure ideological claims using text-as-data techniques. For instance, techniques such as multilingual sentence embeddings (Licht, 2023) could be used to identify degrees and types of ideological claims in segments of selected texts produced by autocratic regimes around the world.

I make two contributions to the role of ideology in authoritarian regimes with this study. Firstly, I show that ideological claims are consequential for the survival of all types of authoritarian regimes. This finding implies that ideological claims are neither cheap talk nor outdated strategies that are specific to 20th-century dictatorships. This goes against arguments laid out by a group of scholars (Guriev & Treisman, 2019; Krastev, 2011) and provides global evidence for existing theoretical and qualitative studies that suggest ideological claims are crucial for autocratic durability (Gerschewski, 2023b; Lieber, 2013; Mazepus et al., 2016). Furthermore, this finding urges pro-democratic public actors to take ideology in authoritarian regimes seriously. Instead of treating ideational factors as inconsequential and focusing solely on material issues, democracy promoters should understand them and provide alternative narratives. Secondly, I show that ideological claims pave the way for the violation of civil liberties. This provides the first comparative evidence of the relationship between ideology and repression in authoritarian regimes, which has been hypothesized in theoretical work (Gerschewski, 2013, 2023b; Josua, 2021) and tested in single-case quantitative studies (Josua, 2024; Scharpf, 2018). This evidence implies that ideological claims should be considered as an early warning system for stringency of authoritarian regimes. Hence, dissidents and international democratic actors should pay attention to how autocrats talk to strategize against potentially upcoming acts against freedoms. Together, the contributions of the study urge scholars to incorporate ideology as an explanatory variable of autocratic politics.

3 Crises and Ideological Change in Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from the July 2016 Coup Attempt in Turkey

3.1 Introduction

Authoritarian regimes use ideological claims such as religious conservatism and nationalism as public communication tools to justify their policies, delegitimize their dissidents as fifth columnists who work to undermine the public's values, and guide the public's interpretations of political developments (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021a; Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2020; Mazepus et al., 2016; Mylonas & Radnitz, 2022; Paget, 2020). The existing studies show that ideological legitimation claims are significant for authoritarian regimes' consolidation (Brunkert & von Soest, 2023; Kailitz & Stockemer, 2017). However, we do not have clear evidence on whether autocrats change the intensity and strategic use of ideological claims when facing external threats, such as political crises. In this study, I fill this gap by analyzing the effect of crises on the ideological claims of authoritarian regimes, utilizing the competitive authoritarian regime of Turkey before and after the coup attempt in July 2016.[1]

Investigating whether and how crises change the ideological claims of authoritarian regimes is essential for understanding the stability and adaptiveness of these regimes. Authoritarian regimes prefer shaping public opinion in their favor over using repression

[1]A version of this paper is currently at the revise and resubmit stage in Comparative Political Studies

strategies, which may negatively affect their image at home and abroad or backlash and lead to their demise (Guriev & Treisman, 2019; Slantchev & Matush, 2020). Legitimation through public communication is an important mechanism explaining the level of public support for autocrats, as legitimation claims facilitate justification of the regime in the eyes of the population (Gerschewski, 2018b). Among the legitimation claims of modern autocracies, ideological legitimation claims are one of the most efficient tools, as they may help build long-lasting non-material diffuse legitimacy and create true believers (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017; Easton, 1975; Nathan, 2020). On the other hand, crises often function as critical junctures in autocracies as they are likely to lead to political change, institutional reforms, or even regime collapse (Pepinsky, 2014; Volpi, 2020; Volpi & Gerschewski, 2020). It is, therefore, vital to know whether crises can also transform the ideologies of authoritarian regimes, which may affect public opinion dynamics and regime stability in such contexts. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing literature on the role of elite communication in regime-mass relationship in autocracies (Arnon et al., 2023; Boussalis et al., 2023b; Carter & Carter, 2021; Maerz, 2019; Mattingly & Yao, 2022).

Studies aiming to determine how crises impact the communication strategies, including ideological claims, of authoritarian regimes face multiple challenges. One chief difficulty is pinpointing what can be considered a crisis in autocracies given that every challenge to the regime might not qualify as a crisis (Gerschewski, 2018a). Moreover, political changes in autocracies, including shifts in political communication strategies, are endogenous to the strategic calculations of the ruling elite (Pepinsky, 2014). While one group of research suggests that crises lead authoritarian regimes to increase blame-shifting efforts towards regime outsiders (Cooley & Stokes, 2018; Rozenas & Stukal, 2019), these studies do not examine the impact of acute, existential, and exogenous shocks on the regime's political communication, including ideological claims. Understanding the impact of acute and exogenous shocks on ideological claims is essential since they typically are considered as crisis (Gerschewski, 2018a; Hay, 1999). However, acute and exogenous shocks are rare in autocracies, and if they lead to leadership change, isolating their effect on public

communication strategies becomes demanding. Nonetheless, a few studies suggest that acute and existential crises increase the employment of nationalism in authoritarian propaganda, but these studies focus on media outlets, which may mediate and differ from the direct public communication of authoritarian leadership (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021a; Schenk, 2012). It is hardly a coincidence that existing work tends to focus on media outlets, as obtaining systematic longitudinal data of public communication by authoritarian regimes themselves is labor-intensive. Finally, none of the existing work explicitly distinguishes between the short-term and long-lasting effects of crises on ideological claims. The lack of this distinction in the existing work leaves the question of whether crises have a reactionary and transformative effect on authoritarian ideological claims unanswered.

In this study, I overcome these challenges by utilizing a novel web-scraped dataset of executive speeches over eight years from a competitive authoritarian regime, Turkey, under the rule of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Erdoğan regime). I use the Turkish case due to its several analytical advantages. Turkey is a case that gradually backslid into authoritarianism through executive aggrandizement in the recent wave of autocratization, and this regime change polarized the society, similar to other cases such as Hungary under Orban and Venezuela under the rule of Chavez and Maduro (Esen & Gumuscu, 2016; Laebens & Öztürk, 2021). Furthermore, Erdoğan's regime is considered to employ a mixture of religion and nationalism, similar to other competitive authoritarian regimes such as India under the rule of Modi (Rogenhofer & Panievsky, 2020). Therefore, the findings from the Turkish case could be extended to cases that follow similar patterns of regime change and possibly to regimes that have a similar set of ideological claims. Furthermore, the Erdoğan regime experienced a major crisis that could be considered acute and existential: On the 15th of July 2016, there was a coup attempt against Erdoğan by mid-level military officials who blocked the roads and bombed the parliament but were eventually defeated (Esen & Gumuscu, 2017). This coup attempt was exogenous to political leadership, as evidence suggests that the regime elite had no information about the coup beforehand and were unprepared to stop the plotters (Ross et al., 2016). Finally,

given the personalistic nature of Erdoğan's regime (S. Öztürk & Reilly, 2022), focusing on the Turkish case provides an opportunity to focus on executive speeches.

I employ a novel longitudinal dataset of Erdoğan speeches between 2014 and 2022 (n = 1181) to analyze the effect of the crisis on the ideological claims of authoritarian regimes.[2] I use this dataset to test two hypotheses, combining text-as-data techniques with econometric tools (Grimmer et al., 2022). Firstly, I hypothesize that crises create insecurity and ambiguity among the regime elite and the public, leading the regime elite to increase their ideological legitimation efforts in the short run to highlight national unity and distract audiences. I call this the reaction effect. To test this hypothesis, I employ a dictionary-based approach to analyze the frequency of ideological legitimation terms before and after the coup attempt, using an interrupted time series design. I check the robustness of this analysis and the validity of the dictionary measures using topic modeling. Secondly, I hypothesize that crises that are driven by elite division, such as coup attempts, lead the regime to increase the use of ideological claims when discussing regime outsiders. This way the regime uses ideological framing to depict regime outsiders as external threats to the country. I contend that this effect is long-lasting because elite division-driven crises create insecurity about external actors among the rulers and the public, and this insecurity stays after the regime-throwing possibility of crisis disappears. I call this the crystallization effect. To test this second hypothesis, I train two distinct word embedding models and compare the semantic association of ideological legitimation terms with regime-outsider-related terms before and after the coup attempt.

Examining the Turkish case, I find that crises amplify the frequency of autocrats' utilization of ideological legitimation claims in the short run as a reaction. I find that the use of ideological terms in Erdoğan's speeches increased by approximately seven times in the period right after the coup, but the frequency of ideological claims gradually declined to the pre-crisis trend in the long run. Furthermore, I find that the crisis increases the use of ideological claims towards regime outsiders, and this effect is long-lasting. In particular, I find that Erdoğan became significantly more likely to employ ideological terms when

[2] I created this dataset using web-scraping techniques.

talking about the opposition and Western actors after the coup. All these findings are robust to several measurements and model specifications.

My findings make several contributions to our understanding of authoritarian regimes. Firstly, I show that crises change how authoritarian regimes utilize ideological claims. This finding suggests that the ideological claims of modern authoritarian regimes are dynamic and adapt to external challenges rapidly. Such a conclusion implies that the ideological claims of modern authoritarian regimes are neither a tool to intimidate the public (Huang, 2018) nor a tool to indoctrinate the public with a concrete set of beliefs (Bernholz, 2001). Instead, the implication is that modern authoritarian regimes use ideological claims to dynamically manipulate the public's interpretation of political events and actors. This implication extends the findings of recent work on the dynamism of propaganda in authoritarian regimes to ideologies of authoritarian regimes (Chen & Xu, 2017; Mattingly & Yao, 2022). Secondly, I show that the effect of crises on the ideological claims of authoritarian regimes may not merely be reactive but could also have a transformative and enduring nature. This finding suggests that external challenges such as crises may not only transform the institutional design (Mednicoff, 2014) and repression strategies (Josua & Edel, 2021) in authoritarian regimes, but they may also transform the regime's public communication strategies. Such a transformation of communication implies that when we think of critical junctures in autocracies, we must also consider how such ruptures change the relationship between the regime and the masses. Finally, I show that using crises or other forms of exogenous shocks could be an effective tool to trace the changes in political communication in autocracies. Since political communication strategies of autocracies are endogenous to many time and context-varying factors during regular times, using moments of crisis to make causal claims could be a way forward for scholars of authoritarianism.

3.2 Ideology and Varieties of Authoritarian Legitimation

In this research, I use a definition of ideology that captures the empirical reality of public communication in the context of authoritarian regimes. I understand every public communication attempt by autocrats as a legitimation tool (Gerschewski, 2013), and since I am interested in ideology as an authoritarian communication tool, I conceptualize it as ideological legitimation. Following previous studies, I define ideological legitimation as a set of codified or uncodified ideas such as nationalism, religious conservatism, and socialism that seek to establish active support or passive obedience of citizens in authoritarian regimes (Gerschewski, 2013, 2018b; Tannenberg et al., 2021). As argued elsewhere, such a definition limits authoritarian regime ideologies to illiberal ideas (Tannenberg et al., 2021, p. 81). Hence, with such a definition, I limit ideological legitimation to backward-looking and forward-looking illiberal claims (Tannenberg, 2022), excluding the use of liberal ideologies from my definition. I understand ideological legitimation as mentions of religious terms such as god, church, mosque, nationalist terms, such as mentions of the country's "unifying" symbols like the flag, narratives about the country's glorious past, or socialist claims that emphasize historical socialist figures, ideas of democratic centralism and economic egalitarianism.

I understand ideological legitimation claims as a matter of degree. For instance, in the context of nationalism, if a speech includes mentions of words such as homeland, flag, and ancestors very extensively relative to all the other terms, with my measurement strategy, I consider that speech as highly ideological on a continuous scale, compared to a speech that mentions these terms only rarely. Understanding ideological legitimation as a matter of degree allows me to operationalize the concept in a way that I can map differences in degrees in autocrats' usage of legitimating ideas over time. This approach fits the purpose of this paper, as it allows me to understand whether Erdoğan's emphasis on ideological claims increased after the coup attempt[3].

[3]This approach is reliable, as it is also used in other studies of comparative authoritarianism. For

Ideological legitimation claims are not the only communication tool for autocrats to seek public support (Mazepus et al., 2016), hence I establish and measure other types of legitimation claims as a baseline in this research. While categories of political legitimacy and legitimation claims are extensive (Von Haldenwang, 2017), I focus on two additional types of legitimation claims based on the recent literature on authoritarian legitimation: performance-based legitimation claims and procedural legitimation claims.

Performance legitimation claims are output-oriented strategies and can be defined as claims that focus on the regime's visible achievements and material success (Dukalskis, 2017). Other scholars have also used terms such as specific legitimation (Maerz, 2020, p. 67) and allocative legitimation (Pruzan-Jørgensen, 2010) to describe this output-oriented strategy autocrats use. Examples of such claims include autocrats' emphasis on economic growth and financial stability, as well as their focus on projects such as roads, bridges, mega projects like defense-related technological investments, and stadiums (Maerz & Schneider, 2020; Zhao, 2009). As opposed to ideological legitimation claims, which are backward and forward-looking (Tannenberg, 2022), performance legitimation claims of autocrats typically focus on the present and include material-related issues. For instance, as Josua (2017) documents, President Bouteflika of Algeria's focus on socio-economic grievances, credit programs, and development projects in his speeches right after Arab Spring are forms of performance-based legitimation claims.

Procedural legitimation claims can be defined as claims that emphasize legal, institutional, and rational mechanisms to justify a rule (Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017, p. 291). These claims typically aim to create an impression of responsiveness and inclusion among the population. For this reason, this strategy has also been called democratic-procedural legitimation (Debre & Morgenbesser, 2018) and simulating pluralism (Maerz, 2019) by scholars. While these claims are counterintuitive given the undemocratic nature of these regimes, empirically, the leadership of many autocratic regimes, such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, refers to democratic principles discursively (Ibid.). When autocrats refer to the rule of law, elections, democracy, and freedoms, these claims can be considered

instance, implicitly following a similar approach, Dukalskis and Gerschewsksi (2020) assess the relevance of nationalist and communist terms in North Korean leadership's speeches over time.

procedural legitimation claims, regardless of whether such procedures function in practice in the country. Similar to ideological legitimation claims, I understand both procedural and performance legitimation claims as matters of degree.

It is important to note that empirically these three claims might not be completely separate from each other and can intersect. For instance, in socialist authoritarian regimes, leadership's communication on their material achievements is conflated with their egalitarian yet illiberal understanding of the economy (Bernholz, 2015). Similarly, a procedural legitimation claim that includes issues of participation and elections might exclude citizens who are not members of the ethnic majority, as was the case of Ethiopia under the rule of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (Aalen, 2006). Overlaps or interactions between the three types of legitimation claims indeed could challenge the conceptual clarity of my study. However, considering these potential overlaps, as I explain in the research design, I operationalize each legitimation claim with minimal extension (Collier & Gerring, 2009) so that my measurement will empirically focus on only non-overlapping parts.

In short, in this research, I understand ideological legitimation claims as a set of codified or uncodified illiberal ideas such as nationalism, religious conservatism, and socialism. I propose measuring ideological legitimation claims can be measured as a matter of degree. As an operational strategy, I propose using the relative presence of terms associated with ideological legitimation claims in a text. I also include procedural and performance legitimation claims as a baseline in my analysis. I define procedural legitimation claims as the emphasis on legal and institutional mechanisms to create a sense of responsiveness. I define performance legitimation claims as the emphasis on the regime's outputs and visible achievements.

3.3 Crises as Major Threats to Authoritarian Regimes

Since I try to analyze the effect of crises on the ideological claims of authoritarian regimes, it is important to establish what constitutes a crisis and what does not. In this research,

I understand crises as major events threatening a political system's status quo. If an event challenges the regime's functionality as a whole and requires concrete actions by the regime elite (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002), I consider this event a crisis. Hence, I consider any event that involves vertical threats, such as mass protests; lateral threats, such as publicly visible prominent elite defections in the ruling party; or structural threats (Schedler, 2013), such as financial breakdown, as a crisis (Pepinsky, 2009). Importantly, I consider the regime-threatening event itself rather than whether it manages to change the political status quo as an indicator crisis. This strategy enables me to incorporate "near misses" (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007) of political change as crises. Following my definition, examples of crises in authoritarian regimes may include political uprisings like the Arap Spring, economic crises like the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, and coup attempts, such as the 2014 Coup in Thailand.

In this paper, I empirically focus on a crisis that derives from a horizontal threat and is acute and existential, following Gerschewski's (2018a, p. 15) typology. The 15th of July coup attempt in Turkey is a military coup attempt that is a division between the military and political elite; hence generalizability of my findings is likely to be limited to the effects of horizontal threats on ideological claims in authoritarian regimes. Furthermore, the coup attempts are existential threats, as coups typically aim to overthrow the ruling elite as a whole, and are acute since coups succeed or fail within 1-2 days. Thus, the scope of my paper lies in authoritarian regimes that face an acute, existential crisis that derives from horizontal threats.

3.4 Crises, Ideology and Legitimation Claims

I expect that crises, which I understand as major and disruptive challenges that political elites face, lead to an increase in legitimation efforts of authoritarian regimes, including an increase in the instrumentalization of ideological legitimation claims. I derive this expectation from two theoretical observations. Firstly, I contend that crises create a feeling of insecurity and ambiguity among the ruling elite and the public. Horizontal threats like

coup attempts indicate that removal of the regime elite from office is a possibility, and structural threats like economic crises show the regime's vulnerability, both of which create insecurity among the ruling elite (Rozenas, 2016). Similarly, since most authoritarian regimes have an informed segment of the public by the existence of limited independent media (Guriev & Treisman, 2019) and by the probability of the public observing the effect of the crisis in their daily lives (Alyukov, 2023; Rozenas & Stukal, 2019), this informed segment is likely to perceive crises as a sign of instability. Secondly, crises challenge authoritarian regimes' popularity as they might disrupt the reciprocal social contract between citizens and elites (Magaloni, 2006). For instance, if a regime's popularity is based on economic stability, the regime is likely to lose popularity from some segments of the population if an economic crisis occurs. The increased insecurity among the political elite and the public along with the challenge of popularity loss may jeopardize the stability of authoritarian regimes by amplifying elite division and increasing public discontent.

However, given the advantage of all authoritarian regimes in disseminating their legitimating claims in higher volume compared to alternative actors such as dissidents (Dukalskis, 2017; Levitsky & Way, 2010), it is likely that regime elite and pro-regime communication channels alike will increase their effort to legitimate their rule after a crises in an attempt to minimize the adverse effects of the crisis in the public sphere. I expect that the increased effort in legitimation claims take two forms after a crisis: An increase in the intensity of ideological claims and an increase in the use of ideological framing toward regime outsiders, that is the constructed enemies of the regime.

Firstly, I expect authoritarian regimes to increase the intensity of their legitimation claims, including ideological ones, after a crisis. Since crises create a risk of popularity loss along with ambiguity and insecurity in the public sphere in autocracies, once a crisis occurs, autocrats are likely to try to prime audiences with legitimation claims to highlight unity and distract audiences from political conflicts related to the crisis. Evidence across cases suggests that autocrats might capitalize on ideological claims like nationalism to create a sense of national unity after a crisis. For instance, evidence from Russia suggests that the regime successfully primed the audiences with nationalist rhetoric to create a

rally-round-the-flag effect after the invasion of Crimea and the economic crisis in 2014 (Sirotkina & Zavadskaya, 2020). Similarly, in Serbia, the Vucic regime used the narrative of foreign actor involvement during a corruption scandal protest to delegitimize the protesters in 2016 (Günay & Dzihic, 2016). Using the public and elite insecurity and ambiguity along with the potential popularity loss as a triggering causal mechanism, in line with the empirical hunches from other cases, I hypothesize that the intensity of ideological legitimation claims increases after a crisis (H1).

I argue that the effect of the crises on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims should be observed only in the short run as a reaction effect rather than a long-lasting transformation effect. Empirical studies from autocracies show that the effect of any disruption on the communication of authoritarian elites could be different in the short and long run. For example, after the Plizen uprising of 1953 in Czechoslovakia, the ruling elite engaged in derogatory frames to present protesters as an outsider 'bourgeois' group immediately after the crisis, but in the long run, the ruling elite started to blame regime insiders for inefficient policies which led to an uprising (Bray et al., 2019). In the case of ideological claims, I argue that this increase is likely to occur only as a reaction to crises. I expect that once the regime-challenging threat of the crisis disappears, the intensity of the ideological claims regresses to the pre-crisis trend. Since I expect the effect of the crisis on the increase in the intensity of ideological claims to occur because of the ambiguity the crisis creates among the elite and public, I also expect that this increase is prominent only in the moment of ambiguity, that is the immediate aftermath of the crisis. I call this the reaction effect.

Secondly, I expect that after a crisis, autocrats increase their use of ideological claims when framing regime outsiders. The heightened risk of popularity loss and insecurity that crises create is likely to incentivize autocrats not only to intensify their ideological claims but also to strategically employ them to antagonize regime outsiders. This may serve as an additional means of diverting attention from political conflicts associated with the crises. Evidence across cases such as Syria, Seychelles, and Russia suggests that autocracies often use ideological claims to frame regime outsiders as enemies of

the state and the nation, and these framing efforts increase in the immediate aftermath of the crisis(Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021a; Dukalskis & Patane, 2019; Mazepus et al., 2016). After a crisis, authoritarian regimes might frame foreign powers as enemies of the state in a conspiratorial manner to present them as plotters of the crisis, such as the framing of Turkey and Gulf countries by the ruling elite after the uprising in Syria in 2011 (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021a). Similarly, autocracies may frame domestic opponents ideologically after a crisis to blame them for working against the country's interest, as in the case of Zimbabwe, where the ruling socialist party Zimbabwe African National Union framed the main opposition party as traitors for resisting land reforms, in the early 2000s (Levitsky & Way, 2012). Using these empirical examples as hunches, I hypothesize that authoritarian regimes use more ideological framing after a crisis when talking about domestic and foreign regime outsiders than pre-crisis (H2).

I argue that the effect of the crises on the increase in the use of ideological framing on regime outsiders (H2) is a long-lasting transformative effect when they come in the form of horizontal threats. I argue as such because once an autocrat survives a crisis of elite division, ambiguity and insecurity among the public on the stability of the country and regime is likely to disappear but the level of insecurity about external threats to the country is likely to persist, in the form of anti-elitism. Since authoritarian regimes have dominance in the public sphere and signaling advantage compared to the regime outsiders (Dukalskis, 2017; Guriev & Treisman, 2019), once the regime fuels the public with anti-regime-outsiders rhetoric, this rhetoric will likely transmit a general skepticism towards those regime outsiders. This general attitude provides an opportunity for autocrats to bundle regime outsiders as a unified threat against the nation, state, or values of the society. I label this mechanism as the crystalization effect. The plausibility of the crystalization effect derives also from the evidence that autocrats use collective memory of events of the past to construct villains who can be used as scapegoats in current events (Hellmann, 2021). I argue that crystalizing regime outsiders as a threat to the nation as a whole becomes a long-lasting opportunity after a crisis.

3.5 Research Design

3.5.1 Case Selection and Data

I analyze the speeches of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey from 2014 to 2022 to test the hypotheses outlined above. Using the Erdoğan regime as a case study provides three analytical advantages. Firstly, Turkey is a competitive authoritarian regime that backslid from democracy in the recent wave of autocratization and Turkish society is very polarized (Laebens & Öztürk, 2021). The findings of this study therefore could be generalized to cases that show similar patterns of regime change and polarization such as Hungary (Enyedi, 2016). Secondly, Turkey is a highly personalized authoritarian regime (Yilmaz & Bashirov, 2018), where a substantial amount of the regime's legitimation claims directly come from Erdoğan himself. Thus, the Turkish case enables me to focus on executive speeches. Finally, the Erdoğan regime has experienced an acute and existential crisis that is relevant to the inquiry of this paper: There was a coup attempt against Erdoğan on July 15, 2016. The plotters were mid-level military officials, they bombed the parliament and even planned an association against Erdoğan but they were eventually defeated after the (pro-regime) public mobilized in streets (Esen & Gumuscu, 2017).

I argue that to identify the effect of the crisis on ideological legitimation claims in Erdoğan speeches, the coup attempt can be treated as an exogenous factor. Coup attempts are typically endogenous to institutional setup, economic shocks, and power struggles between military and political elite in authoritarian regimes (Olar, 2019), thus using them as exogenous variables for careful consideration. I treat the coup attempt on July 15, 2016, as an exogenous factor to Erdoğan's speeches since the coup was a surprise to all political actors, including Erdoğan, given that Erdoğan regime has been able to suppress the military's role in Turkish politics over the course first 14 years of his rule between 2002 and 2014 (Esen & Gumuscu, 2017). Furthermore, on the night of the coup, Erdoğan was on holiday and joined live television via FaceTime, which possibly indicates that he was not prepared for the coup. Furthermore, evidence suggests that the regime elite did not

have any information about the coup beforehand (CNN Türk, 2016). In short, considering that the coup attempt was a shock to the ruling elite, hence it was exogenous to them, I treat the coup attempt as an exogenous cut-off point.

I use Erdoğan's speeches that are available on the website of the Presidency of the Turkish Republic in my analysis. To collect the data, I use web scraping techniques, utilizing the Rvest package in the R software (Wickham, 2023). I scrape all available speeches and their dates to be able to build a time series model and their titles to be able to get some other control variables on where the speech was held, as I explain below. At the time of data collection for this paper, there were 1181 speeches available on the website, containing speeches delivered between Erdoğan's presidential inauguration on November 2, 2014, and June 17, 2022.[4] The available speeches might not include the population of all speeches Erdoğan gave between these days. For instance, speeches that Erdoğan did not read from a prompter will be less likely to be scripted later, or the presidency might deliberately not upload some speeches. Here I assume that the unavailable speeches are very similar to available speeches on average.

I preprocess the collected data to minimize measurement errors in the analysis. I remove all the punctuations, symbols, separators, and numbers from the texts to avoid errors in topic modeling. I also remove the so-called stopwords, words that reoccur a lot but have no substantial differentiating power. Finally, I stem the words to make words with the same root identical. I imply these steps using the quanteda package in R (Benoit et al., 2018). The final dataset includes 1181 speeches containing 45428 words. I tokenize the texts as single words.

3.5.2 Measuring Legitimation Claims Using Quantitative Text Analysis

To measure ideological legitimation, performance legitimation, and procedural legitimation claims, I use two strategies: dictionary-based approach as the main measurement

[4]Since Erdoğan was the prime minister between 2002 and that day, and Turkey before 2014 can still be considered a defective democracy, I focus on the period after 2014.

strategy and Latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) based topic modeling as a robustness check (Grimmer et al., 2022). With the dictionary-based approach, I deductively trace the change in intensity of legitimation claims over time, and with the topic models, I inductively validate the findings of the dictionary-based models.

I rely on two criteria to create the list of dictionary terms. Firstly, I limit each dictionary list to terms that have context-specific theoretical relevance. For instance, a term such as "territory" might indicate nationalism comparatively (Maerz & Schneider, 2020), but in Erdoğan speeches or the Turkish language, this term might be used to talk about the territorial integrity of other states. I avoid including such terms to avoid false positives (negatives). To fulfill this criterion, I start by surveying the studies that analyze the Erdoğan regime's legitimation strategies (Aytaç, 2021; A. E. Öztürk, 2016; Rogenhofer & Panievsky, 2020) to identify the categories of ideological legitimation claims. A survey of these studies indicate three types of interlinked categories of ideological legitimation claims: religious conservatism (Yilmaz & Erturk, 2021), nationalism (Maessen, 2014), and populism (Aytaç & Elçi, 2019). I include only religious conservative and nationalist terms in the dictionary list of ideological legitimation terms, given the problems of measuring populism with text-as-data approaches (Hawkins & Silva, 2018).

To find terms related to religious conservatism and nationalism, I start by identifying the existing set of terms that are considered as indicators of legitimation claims, in the Turkey-specific research or comparative research (Bayulgen et al., 2018; Maerz, 2019; Maerz & Schneider, 2020; Yilmaz et al., 2020). After coming up with an initial list of dictionary terms following this step, I validate the dictionary terms in their context, using the keywords in context approach (KWIC) (Wood, 1984). I read one to five texts for each term in the initial list and exclude terms that result in false positives or negatives. I do not create two separate dictionaries for religious conservatism and nationalism because of the intertwined nature of the two types of claims in the Erdoğan regime's legitimation claims (Haynes, 2010; Yavuz & Öztürk, 2019; Yilmaz et al., 2020). I follow the same criteria above to compile the procedural and performance legitimation dictionaries.[5].

[5]I provide the list of the dictionary terms in English and Turkish in the appendices B.1 and B.2

Secondly, I limit the dictionary lists to terms that distinctively belong to one of the three legitimation claims. For instance, Erdoğan might refer to the "state" both as a guarantor of stability, hence in terms of performance, and as a paternalistic-ideological figure. For this reason, I do not include the word "state" and words that have similar problems in any of my dictionaries.

To validate the results of the dictionary-based approach, I run LDA-based topic models (Blei et al., 2003). LDA technique uses a Bayesian estimation of the co-occurrence of words in each text across the corpus and estimates the probability of the words being related to the same topics. This technique is a partial membership model where the probability of any topic being part of the text is calculated given the probability of other topics (Grimmer et al., 2022, p. 238) where the probability of all topics sums up to 1, which allows controlling for the existence of any other topic in a speech.

Using the LDA technique, I determine whether there are topics that are similar to the three types of legitimation claims I identify. For instance, if the terms "judiciary", "justice", and "democracy" co-occur as a topic, one may interpret this as the topic of procedural legitimation following my conceptualization. Using the output of the topic models, I check the robustness of the reaction effect hypothesis as I explain in section 3.6.4. Although the LDA technique is sensitive to the number of topics (k) the researcher chooses, I report the results for several k to show if and how the results change. Importantly, the LDA technique identifies the co-occurrence of the terms hierarchically, where the first word in a topic is more likely to be in the topic than the second one. I use this hierarchical nature of the LDA results to test the crystallization effect hypothesis, as I discuss in the relevant sections.

I present the topic models and their interpretation after discussing the results based on the dictionary approach. I analyze the data in all the models in Turkish, but I provide the English translation of the topic models in the results section.

3.5.3 Analytical Strategy I: Interrupted Time Series Analysis with Segmented Regression

I use an interrupted time series (ITS) analysis (Huntington-Klein, 2021; Taljaard et al., 2014) to test the reaction effect hypothesis, that is short-term positive effect of the coup attempt on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims in Erdoğan's speeches. To assess this effect, I fit a model where the square-transformed values of intensity of ideological legitimation (count of the frequency of ideological legitimation dictionary terms for each speech) is the dependent variable. In this model, I have five predictors. Firstly, I use the dates of the speech centered around the date of the coup as a predictor. Secondly, I use a binary variable indicating whether the speech was held before or after the coup. Thirdly, I use the interaction of these two variables. With this setup, the dates of the speech centered around the date of the coup represent the secular, general trend in the data irrespective of the coup. The binary indicator of whether the speech was held after the coup represents the jump in the data right after the coup. With this predictor, I can detect if the coup had an immediate effect on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims. The interaction term indicates the gradual effect of the coup attempt, enabling me to assess if the coup has a gradual effect on the speeches in the long run.

Fourthly, I control for the type of event where the speech was given. I add this variable because the event the speech was given could confound the date of the speech and the intensity of ideological claims. For example, if the speech was given for a memorial event of a nationally important historical figure, this speech is likely to be held on this figure's birth or date of death, and nationalist terms are likely to occur more in these speeches. After investigating the titles of every speech manually, I categorized this variable into seven levels: *educational institution events*, such as the beginning of the academic year speech in a university, *civil society events*, where Erdoğan speaks to a non-governmental organization audience, *political elite events*, where the attendees primarily consist of the political elite, such as bureaucrats or ruling party members. *project events*, such as the opening ceremony of developmental projects, *international events*, where the attendees

primarily consist of international actors, such as foreign journalists or politicians from other countries, *religious or memorial events*, such as speeches on religious holidays or events commemorating national figures like Kemal Atatürk and *general public events*, where the speech is held directly to the general public, such as rallies or broadcasted public addresses. With this seven-level categorization, I make sure that every speech is appropriately classified, without being forced into a category they do not fit in.

Fifthly, I control for the logged length of speeches, as longer speeches are likely to include more legitimation claims. I control for the length of speeches instead of dividing dictionary counts by speeches as this is the convention in the dictionary-based research in political science (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016; Traber et al., 2020). This strategy also avoids problems related to ratio variables (Kronmal, 1993).

With all these variables, I estimate the following equation where Y is the degree of ideological legitimation claims, X is the date, T is whether the date is after the coup and P is the set of control variables, with two local polynomial lines:

$$\mathrm{Y} = \beta 0 + \beta 1(\mathbb{Z}(\text{ X - 15th of July 2016}))+$$

$$\beta 2(\mathbb{Z}(\text{ X - 15th of July 2016}))^2 + \beta 3(\mathrm{T}) + \beta 4(\mathrm{X} \times T) + \beta 5(\mathrm{X} \times T)^2 + \beta 6(P) \quad (3.1)$$

The main advantage of this estimation is that speeches around the cutoff are likely to be identical except for the effect of the coup attempt. However, as we move away from the cutoff, there will likely be other major events, such as elections, which will be likely to create errors in the estimates. For this reason, I limit my analysis in the model to speeches that were held six months before and six months after the coup attempt. To avoid this choice leading me to the wrong conclusion, I replicate the analysis with several versions of data including a model with an equal number of days before and after the coup, a model with all available data, and a model where I divide the dictionary count by the total number of words in the speech and report the results for these models as well. Finally, I estimate similar equations for performance and procedural legitimation claims as well. This way, I show the change in the intensity of ideological legitimation comparatively.

3.5.4 Analytical Strategy II: Word Embedding with GloVe approach

I use a word embedding approach to test the crystallization effect hypothesis, that is the increase in ideological framing of regime outsiders after the crisis. The word embedding approach represents every word in a corpus as a vector explained by the context they are used in (Grimmer et al., 2022). This vectorization enables me to identify the (dis)association between words related to regime outsiders and ideological legitimation claims in Erdoğan's speeches. Following the idea that a word can be identified by "the company it keeps" (Firth, 1957), the word embedding approach uses the local word window around a word to identify semantic similarity between different words and similarity in their meanings (Grimmer et al., 2022). For instance, if the words "migration" and "illegal" systematically occur around a similar set of words within texts in a corpus or consistently occur together in the same word window across the texts, the word embedding technique identifies these words as highly semantically similar. One of the main advantages of the word embedding approach is that the relationship between two words can be normalized as a cosine similarity measure where -1 cosine similarity implies complete disassociation, 0 implies complete orthogonality between the words, and 1 implies complete similarity.

Utilizing the word embedding technique, I identify if terms related to regime outsiders have a substantial increase in their association with the terms related to ideological legitimation claims after the coup attempt. Specifically, I fit two-word embedding models to Erdoğan's speeches before and after the coup attempt and compare the average cosine similarity of regime outsider terms and ideological legitimation terms in these two periods. To do so, I first identify a set of terms that represent ideological legitimation claims and regime outsiders. Secondly, I take the average cosine similarity of all regime outsider terms with each ideological legitimation term. Finally, I take the average of all cosine similarity averages of regime outsider terms with ideological legitimation terms.

I compile the set of ideological legitimation and regime outsider terms both inductively and deductively. I use the top 5 words of the ideological legitimation topic (if any) of the

LDA model described in section 3.5.2 as representative terms of ideological legitimation claims. I use two sets of regime outsider terms for the analysis, including Western actors-related terms and domestic opposition-related terms, as depicted in Table 3.1. I focus on these two sets of terms since the existing work suggests that the Erdoğan regime frames both opposition parties, including the Republic People's Party (CHP) and the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP), and Western actors such as the US and the EU as existential security threats to the nation (Günay, 2016; Yilmaz & Shipoli, 2022). Considering this evidence, I test if ideological framing efforts against these groups intensify after the crisis. Besides the case-specific appropriateness of the choice of regime outsider groups, separating between the domestic and the international regime outsiders allows me to see if the crystallization effect hypothesis holds for the framing of both national and foreign actors. For the domestic opposition-related terms, I choose four terms, including "CHP", which is the abbreviation of the main opposition party, "HDP", which is the abbreviation of the pro-Kurdish party, "Bay", which captures the mention of "Bay Kemal", (Mr.Kemal) which is a way Erdoğan refers to the leader (at that time) of the main opposition party in a pejorative way, and the term "opposition". For Western actors-related terms, I choose three words, including (the) "West", (the) "EU," and "USA". I chose these words as my preliminary investigation of speeches based on the KWIC approach suggests that these are the main terms Erdoğan uses when talking about Western actors. Importantly, I selectively stem all these words in the corpus rather than stemming the entire corpus for this part of the analysis, as is done by other applications of word embeddings in political science (Rodman, 2020). This way, for instance, the term EU includes both the EU and European Union.

I also add two other sets of terms as a baseline to compare the ideological framing of regime outsiders with other politically relevant issues. Specifically, I also test the association of ideological legitimation terms with economy-related terms and terror-related terms. I choose these issues as they are the essential issues of Turkish politics in general, even before Erdoğan's rule (Çarkoğlu, 2008; Sayari, 2010). This way, I aim to comparatively show that change in the framing of regime outsiders is not a coincidental time trend and

the trend is unique to regime outsiders. For terror-related terms, I only use the term "terror". For economy-related terms, I use "finance" "economy" and "central bank" as my preliminary investigation with the KWIC approach suggests that all these terms are central to the discussion of economic issues in Erdoğan's speeches.

List of Terms			
Opposition-related terms	West-related terms	Economy-related terms	Terror-related terms
Republican People's Party (CHP)	West (Batı)	Economy (Ekonomi)	Terror (Terör)
People's Democratic Party (HDP)	European Union (Avrupa Birliği)	Finance (Finans)	-
Mr.Kemal (Bay Kemal)	USA (ABD)	Central Bank (Merkez Bankası)	-
Opposition (Muhalefet)	-	-	-

Table 3.1: List of regime outsider terms for the word embedding model in English, and in Turkish in paranthesis

I make several computational and design choices to train the word embedding models. Firstly, to avoid any effect on the results deriving from differences in the size of data, I train the model with corpora of equal size before and after the coup. Hence, since the corpus includes 255 speeches before the coup, I limit the post-coup part of the data to approximately 255 speeches as well.[6] With this criteria, I include speeches from the 28th of April 2014 until the 18th of August 2019.[7] To assess the robustness of the results, I also replicate the analysis with several ranges of data and report the replicated analysis in the results section. Secondly, I use the text2vec package (Selivanov et al., 2020) to fit the model and keep all the default parameters of the package the same except for the local context window size. I chose a context window of 18 for training the model, which equals the average sentence length in the corpus. I use the global vector algorithm (GloVe) version of the word embedding technique (Pennington et al., 2014). Finally, to avoid random differences in every model iteration and to provide robust, reproducible results, I use 50 bootstrapped samples of the corpus to train the models, following Antoniak and

[6]Since Erdoğan gave two speeches on the potential cut-off date, I stick to 254 as the number of speeches for the post-coup part of the corpus.

[7]This way, the average number of words for the corpora before and after the coup are also similar, being equal to 1509.027 and 1507.256, respectively.

Mimno (2018). Thus, I show results based on averages of 50 models with bootstrapped samples and provide 95% confidence intervals for the estimation in each period.

3.6 Results

3.6.1 Descriptive Statistics of Dictionary Analysis

Strategy	Mean Frequency
Performance Legitimation	34.08
Ideological Legitimation	21.35
Procedural Legitimation	15.17

Table 3.2: Average Frequency of Each Legitimation Strategy in All Speeches of Erdoğan (2014-2022)

Table 3.2 presents the average counts of all three types of legitimation claims based on the dictionary analysis approach, using all 1181 speeches. Accordingly, Erdoğan mentions performance legitimation terms approximately 34 times, ideological legitimation terms approximately 21 times, and procedural legitimation terms approximately 15 times on average per text. These descriptive findings are in line with the general findings of the comparative authoritarianism literature: Firstly, the literature suggests that modern competitive authoritarian regimes are performance dependent (Cassani, 2017), and this argument is supported by data for the Turkish case, as performance is the most frequent type of legitimation claim Erdoğan uses. Secondly, the literature suggests that competitive authoritarian regimes do not use procedural claims as much as other types of claims since the "competitive" nature of electoral institutions already provides this type of legitimacy (Maerz, 2019). This is supported by the relative rareness of procedural claims in Erdoğan's speeches vis-à-vis ideological and performance claims.

Figure 3.1 presents the 7-speeches rolling means of each legitimation strategy over time. Figure 3.1 shows that the intensity of each legitimation strategy varies over time,

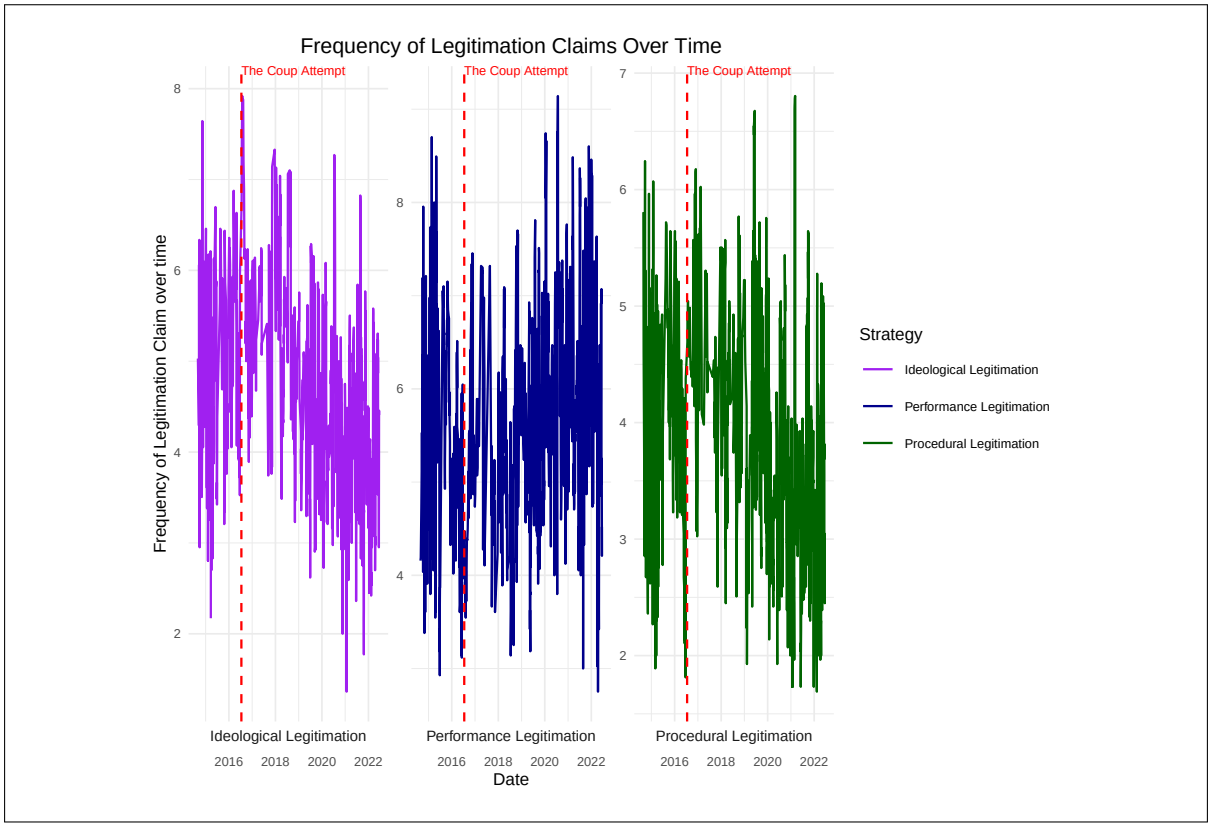

Figure 3.1: Frequency of Three Legitimation Strategies in Erdoğan's Speeches Over Time

with patterns of increase and decrease over the 8 years. An in-depth investigation of selected speeches supports the trend of variation. For instance, in a speech Erdoğan gave on August 29, 2015, to sub-district managers (mukhtars), Erdoğan mainly talks about Turkey's Kurdish question and mentions words such as "motherland" and "martyr" frequently (Erdoğan, 2015a). Opposingly in a speech he gave approximately one month later to the G-20 Energy Ministers Committee, he does not use any ideological legitimation terms (Erdoğan, 2015b). As these examples show, the frequency of ideological legitimation claims varies across the speeches. In this paper, I test if the coup attempt contributed to these fluctuations.

3.6.2 Effect of the Coup Attempt on Intensity of Ideological Legitimation Claims

Table 3.3 presents the results of the analysis of the effect of the coup attempt on each legitimation strategy, based on speeches 6 months before and after the coup attempt. The

	Dependent variable:		
	Ideological Legitimation (square-rooted)	Procedural Legitimation (square-rooted)	Performance Legitimation (square-rooted)
Model Number	(1)	(2)	(3)
After the Coup Attempt (Immediate Effect)	2.545* (1.014)	3.496*** (0.919)	−0.328 (0.972)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt (Secular Trend)	−0.001 (0.020)	−0.042* (0.018)	−0.012 (0.021)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt^2) (Secular Trend)^2	−0.00002 (0.0001)	−0.0002 (0.0001)	−0.0001 (0.0001)
Time Since the Coup Attempt (Gradual Effect)	−0.043 (0.025)	0.026 (0.023)	0.033 (0.027)
Time Since the Coup Attempt^2) (Gradual Effect)^2	0.0002 (0.0001)	0.0002 (0.0001)	−0.0001 (0.0001)
Civil Society Event	−1.431** (0.499)	0.615 (0.425)	0.157 (0.533)
Educational Institution Event	−1.410** (0.488)	−0.550 (0.414)	0.474 (0.635)
International Event	−2.066** (0.640)	0.503 (0.432)	0.570 (0.646)
Political Elite Event	−0.989** (0.471)	1.327* (0.545)	−0.380 (0.412)
Project Event	−1.102 (0.559)	−0.960* (0.441)	2.800*** (0.538)
Religious or Memorial Event	1.274 (0.650)	−0.710 (0.375)	−0.863 (0.462)
Length of the Speech (logged)	2.328*** (0.389)	2.002*** (0.342)	1.878*** (0.344)
Constant	−10.943*** (2.978)	−13.109*** (2.570)	−9.609*** (2.510)
Observations	110	110	110
R^2	0.60	0.59	0.44
Adjusted R^2	0.55	0.54	0.37
Note:			*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 3.3: Main model results for the effect of coup attempt on legitimation strategies presented with heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors in parenthesis

parenthesis below each coefficient are the heteroskedasticity-consistent (HC) standard errors. I report HC errors instead of Heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation consistent errors as I establish with a Durbin-Watson test and a graphical analysis that there is no autocorrelation in the data despite the time series nature of it (D-W Statistics = 2.10). Model 1 presents the effect of the coup attempt on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims. For the type of event variable, I use speeches Erdoğan directly gave to the public as a reference category. Models 2 and 3 include the effect of the coup attempt on performance and procedural legitimation claims as a benchmark for the coup attempt's effect on ideological legitimation claims.

The results suggest that there is a statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) jump immediately after the coup attempt in the intensity of ideological legitimation claims. This jump implies that the coup has an immediate effect on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims in Erdoğan's speeches. The speeches right after the coup contain 6.48 times more ideological claims than speeches just before the coup attempt. The significance and direction of these findings are robust to several model specifications, including a model where I divide the dictionary count by the length of the speech instead of controlling for length, a model with an equal number of observations or an equal number of days before and after the coup as well as a model with all available data. The statistical significance of findings only diminishes if I include data from only 3 months before and after the coup attempt, which however has only 49 observations.

The specified model and further robustness checks suggest that the coup attempt has a short-term positive effect on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims. Comparison of Model 1 with a counterfactual model that does not account for the coup attempt and uses only the place, length, and date of the speech as predictors illuminates this finding further. The speech after the coup contains 72 ideological terms, and model 1 predicts this to be 82.18. On the contrary, the counterfactual model predicts that Erdoğan would use 47.76 ideological terms had the coup attempt did not occur.

On the other hand, the coup attempt has no immediate effect on performance legitimation claims (model 3), but it has an immediate positive effect on the intensity of

procedural legitimation claims (model 2). The positive effect of the coup attempt on procedural legitimation claim is higher in magnitude than the coup's effect on ideological legitimation. Combining findings of models 1 and 3 suggests Erdoğan used democratic and illiberal ideological terms together intensely after the coup attempt. This is potentially because Erdoğan did not frame the coup attempt as a regime crisis but rather as a crisis of democracy.

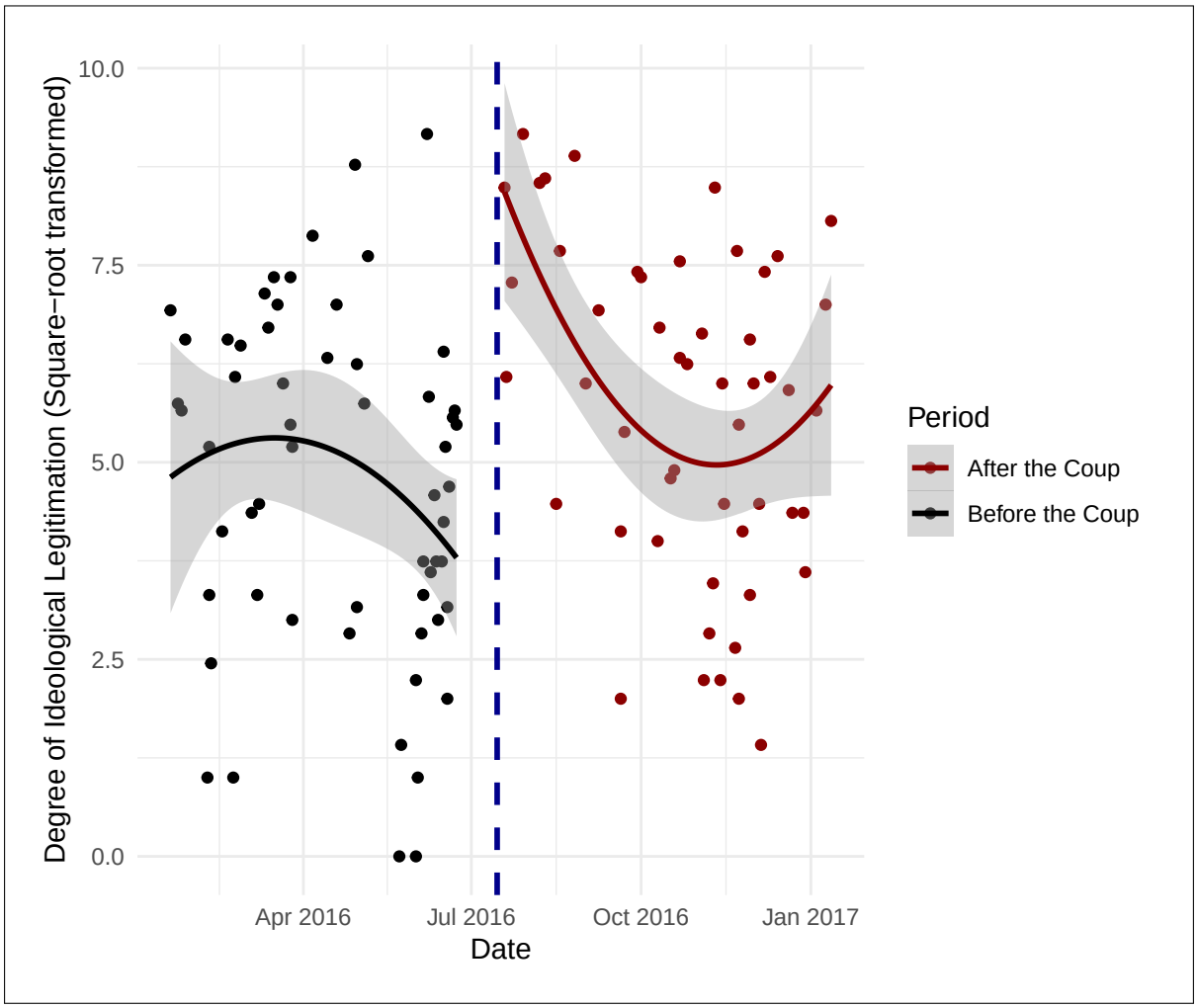

Figure 3.2: Effect of the Coup Attempt on Degree of Ideological Legitimation Claims in Erdoğan's Speeches

However, the coup attempt does not have a statistically significant gradual effect on the intensity of ideological claims. Figure 3.2, which visualizes model 1, illustrates this finding. On average, starting in April 2016, the intensity of ideological legitimation claims decreases but the coup attempt interrupts this trend and leads to a substantial jump. Then, the

short-term positive effect of the coup attempt gradually disappears, and the decreasing trend continues until October 2016. Then, there is a small increase between October 2016 and January 2017 but this trend is not statistically significant and is indistinguishable from the trend before the coup attempt. Hence, the intensity of ideological legitimation claims regresses to the mean gradually in the long run. These results are also consistent with the alternative model specifications outlined above. Similarly, the coup attempt has no gradual effect on the procedural legitimation claims in the long run. Overall, the results are in line with my reaction effect hypothesis as the coup attempt has an immediate effect but no gradual effect on ideological legitimation claims.

3.6.3 Topic Models and Their (Dis)similarity to Dictionary Terms

Topic 1 Education-Culture	Topic 2 Religion	Topic 3 Sports	Topic 4 International Relations	Topic 5 Religious Nationalism	Topic 6 Projects	Topic 7 Pandemic	Topic 8 Mega Projects	Topic 9 Security	Topic 10 Paternalism and Justice	Topic 11 Unidentifiable
education	brother	young	turk	nation	projects	country	country	country	woman	turk
university	islam	sports	country	turk	road	year	defence	terror	justice	brother
year	allah	youth	year	country	service	nation	turk	organization	right	nation
student	muslim	recep	world	martyr	country	face	project	turk	court	moment
country	doing	moment	great	history	artifact	pandemic	industry	world	law	says
world	god	president	doing	great	city	health	technology	against	woman	country
külliye	you	tayyip	you	state	opening	support	energy	place	state	time
artifact	world	thanks	say	year	water	support	national	syria	children	party
great	is	erdoğan	unity	struggle	brother	world	superb	nation	life	do
school	prophet	athlete	important	soil	year	eat	produce	domestic	social	will be
history	mosque	president	international	veteran	build	citizen	superb	border	disabled	knows
does	muslim	say	friend	allah	istanbul	lira	world	security	institution	look
civilization	religion	does	period	temmuz	city	front	air	place	society	different
art	prophet	does	between	çanakkale	region	service	industry	moment	place	business
place	life	age	feature	period	city	too	moment	society	business	

Table 3.4: Topics in Erdoğan Speeches (2014-2022) Identified Using Latent Dirichlet Allocation Method, Presented with the Top 15 Words and Interpreted Topic Title

In Table 3.4, I present the results of the LDA-based topic models. LDA is sensitive to the number of topics (k) the researcher chooses since the topics that emerge become more specific as one increases k. I stick to k=11 in the analysis. I choose this number using substantial clarity of the topics and minimal overlap between them as the main criteria.[8]

[8]The analysis is conducted in Turkish, but I translated these terms to English for presentation purposes in the paper.

The first row indicates the topic number, and the second row indicates the topic titles I labeled. The terms under each topic title in the columns present the top 15 terms related to the topic, as computed with the LDA approach, given their co-occurrences. In each topic, I present the most likely 15 words in the order of the most likely to the 15th most likely.

The result suggests that the three types of legitimation claims I identify are prevalent in Erdoğan's speeches, also using an inductive approach. Following my definition of ideological legitimation as a set of illiberal ideas, Topic 5 can be exclusively considered as an ideological legitimation claim topic. Specifically, I label Topic 5 as religious nationalism, since it suggests that terms such as "veteran" (Gazi), "Allah", and "Canakkale" (a front in World War I in which the Ottoman Empire defeated allies) co-occur together. When combined, the co-occurrence of such terms suggests that the topic is related to a nationalist-militarist discourse with a religious glorification. Importantly, the presence of this topic is robust to any number of topics (k) I choose to create topics if the k is bigger than 5. To validate the ideological nature of this topic in the current model, I did a close reading of the speech with the highest probability of having Topic 5 (P = 0.90). Indeed, the speech involves connecting terms like "martyr" and "Canakkale" to alleged external threats on Turkey, and the text emphasizes national unity as a way to fight against those threats. Thus, I qualify topic 5 as a topic of ideological legitimation. On the contrary, I do not qualify Topic 2, which I label as "religion", as an ideological legitimation topic, although terms like "Allah" and "mosque" might lead us to qualify it as so. A close reading of texts with the highest probability of this topic seems to suggest that this topic tends to be more probable in speeches that were given at religious events with a limited political nature (such as reading the koran contest or Muhammed's life contest for kids). Thus, while topic 2 may be used for legitimation purposes, it does not contain ideological claims.

Following my definition of performance legitimation claims as claims about the regime's visible material achievements, topics 6 and 8 seem to be related to performance legitimation. Topic 6 includes terms related to tangible outputs, such as "build", "road", and "invest". For this reason, I label it as "projects". Topic 8 is about mega projects, as it includes terms

such as “air”, “defense”, and ”technology“, most likely referring to recent developments in the Turkish military defense industry.

The results also address the limitations of my conceptualization. For example, following my definition of procedural legitimation claims as autocrats' emphasis on institutional and legal mechanisms, it appears that procedural legitimation claims occur as a topic together with paternalistic discourses. Specifically, Topic 10 suggests that whenever Erdoğan mentions legal terms such as “law”, “court”, and “justice”, he also mentions terms that indicate a paternalistic understanding of family such as “woman” and “child”. Thus, the results suggest that procedural legitimation claims are combined with paternalistic claims about family in Erdoğan's speeches. Furthermore, topic 9 is about security issues which could be considered both as a performance legitimation topic or as an ideological legitimation topic since the framing of security issues in official Turkish discourse tends to be nationalistic (Barrinha, 2011). The results also show that there are topics Erdoğan discusses beyond my conceptualization of legitimation claims such as educational and cultural issues (topic 1). Nonetheless, overall the results of the topic models suggest that the three legitimation claims I identify are prevalent in Erdoğan's speeches using an inductive approach as well.

3.6.4 Statistical Analysis of the Topic Models

	Ideological Legitimation	Procedural Legitimation	Performance Legitimation
Religious Nationalism (topic probability)	0.61***	0.04	-0.34***
	Note:	*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001	

Table 3.5: Pearson's correlation with significance test between three legitimation dictionaries and religious nationalism topic

To assess the robustness of the dictionary-based measurement of ideological legitimation claims and the reaction effect hypothesis, I follow two strategies. Firstly, I run three Pearson correlations with significance tests between the counts of the three legitimation claim dictionaries and the continuous probability of religious nationalism topic in the texts. With this strategy, I test the reliability of dictionary-based measurements. If the

dictionary count of ideological legitimation claims is positively and significantly associated with religious nationalism topic probability, the results would indicate reliability among these two measurement strategies. Similarly, if performance and procedural legitimation claims are negatively associated with religious nationalism topic probability, the results would indicate a reliability.

Table 3.5 shows the results of the Pearson correlation tests. The results show that dictionary-based measurement is reliable vis-à-vis the topic models, as the dictionary-based measure of the intensity of ideological legitimation claims is positively and significantly associated with religious nationalism topic probability. Furthermore, the dictionary-based measure of performance legitimation claims is negatively associated with religious nationalism topic probability and the measure for procedural legitimation claims has only a minimally positive, but non-significant, association with religious nationalism topic probability. These results suggest that the most-likely terms in the religious nationalism topic are significantly similar to my dictionary terms of ideological legitimation claims.

Secondly, utilizing the findings of the topic models, I replicate the analysis of the effect of the coup attempt on the intensity of ideological legitimation. I change the dependent variable in Model 1, which is the square-rooted frequency of the ideological legitimation dictionary terms, with square-rooted topic probability of religious nationalism. As shown in Figure 3.3 (full table is provided in appendix B.7), the results remain quite similar: right after the coup, religious nationalism topic probability significantly increases in the speeches, as in the original model. Similar to the original model, the coup attempt does not affect the probability of religious nationalism topic probability gradually. The results remain the same if I use the output of the religious nationalism topic from any other LDA model with less or more number of topics.[9] Overall, the model I present in Figure 3.3 supports my original finding, on the immediate positive effect of the coup attempt on the intensity of ideological legitimation.

[9]The religious nationalism topic is present in the models for any model above k=6 and using the output from these models in the regression models do not change the results.

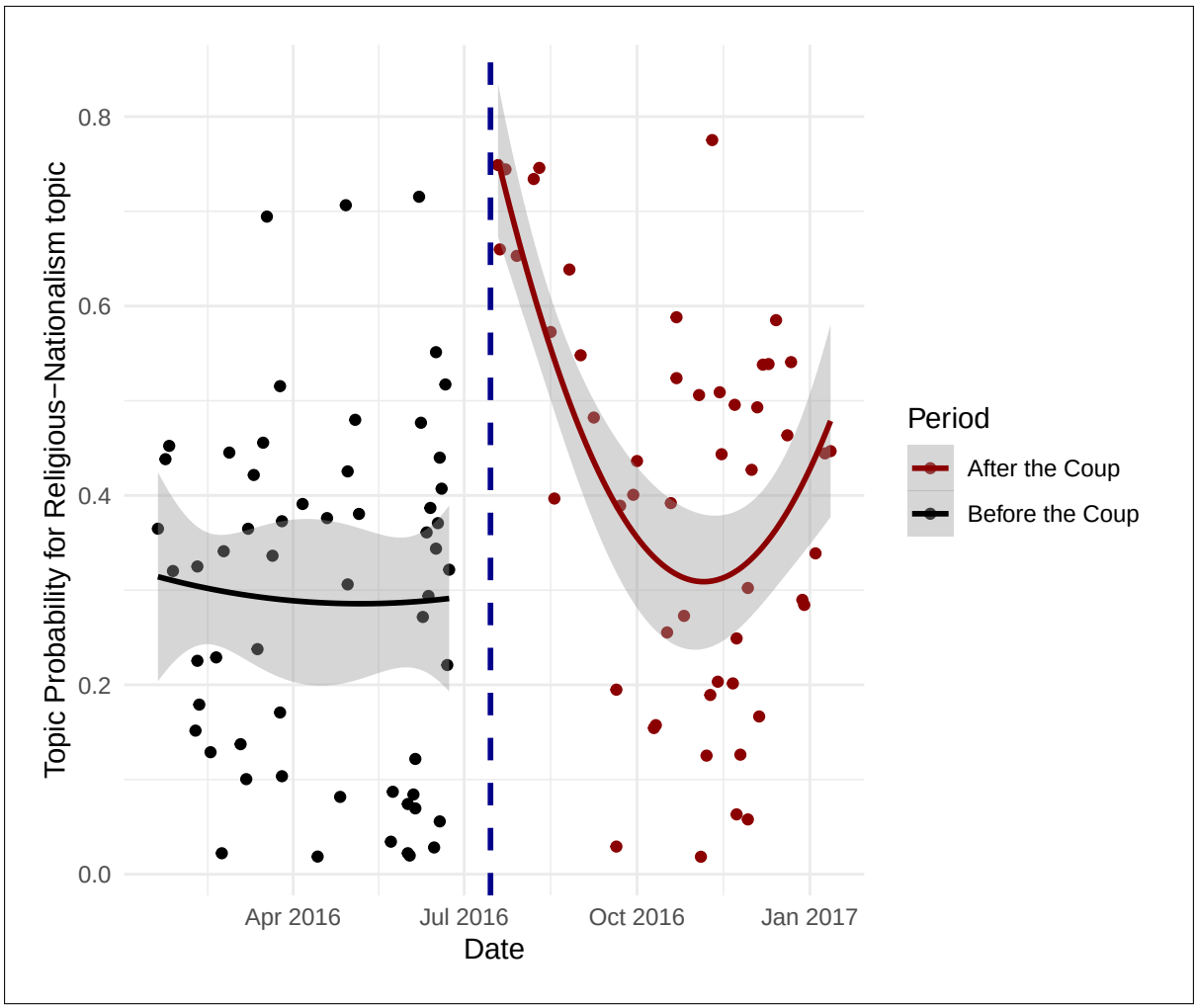

Figure 3.3: Effect of the coup attempt on the degree of ideological legitimation in Erdoğan's speeches based on religious nationalism topic probability

3.6.5 Word Embedding Models

In Figure 3.4, I compare the association of ideological legitimation claims with regime outsider-related terms, including terms related to Western actors and domestic opposition actors, in Erdoğan's speeches before and after the coup attempt. I also compare the association of ideological legitimation claims with two other relevant issues, including the economy and terror, as a baseline to understand whether the substantial increase in ideological framing is exclusive to the regime outsiders. The black dots in each panel represent the average cosine similarity of ideological legitimation claims to each issue based on the mean of 50 bootstrapped samples before the coup attempt, and the error bars around them represent the deviation of this mean based on 95% confidence intervals. The red dots and error bars represent the cosine similarity values in each panel after the coup attempt. The vertical axis includes the cosine similarity level for each value, which may vary from -1 to 1, and the horizontal axis presents the issues.

The results suggest that the use of ideological legitimation claims in the framing of regime outsiders increases after the coup attempt in Erdoğan's speeches, as I expect in the crystallization effect hypothesis. The cosine similarity of West-related terms to ideological legitimation claims increases more than three times from 0.07 to 0.23, and the cosine similarity of opposition-related terms to ideological legitimation claims increases from 0.32 to 0.37, indicating a substantial change. Importantly, these increases are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval. Furthermore, since I use data from mid-April 2014 to mid-August 2019 to train these models, the results also suggest that the crystallization effect I hypothesize is long-lasting. Importantly, these increases do not seem to be coincidental: The cosine similarity between economic terms and terror-related terms with ideological legitimation claims increases only by around 0.01 cosine similarity each and these increases are not statistically significant. The null results from these baseline analyses suggest that the increased use of ideological framing after the coup is specific to the regime outsiders. These findings are also robust to different specifications of data: When I divide the data into 6-month intervals and train word embedding models for each

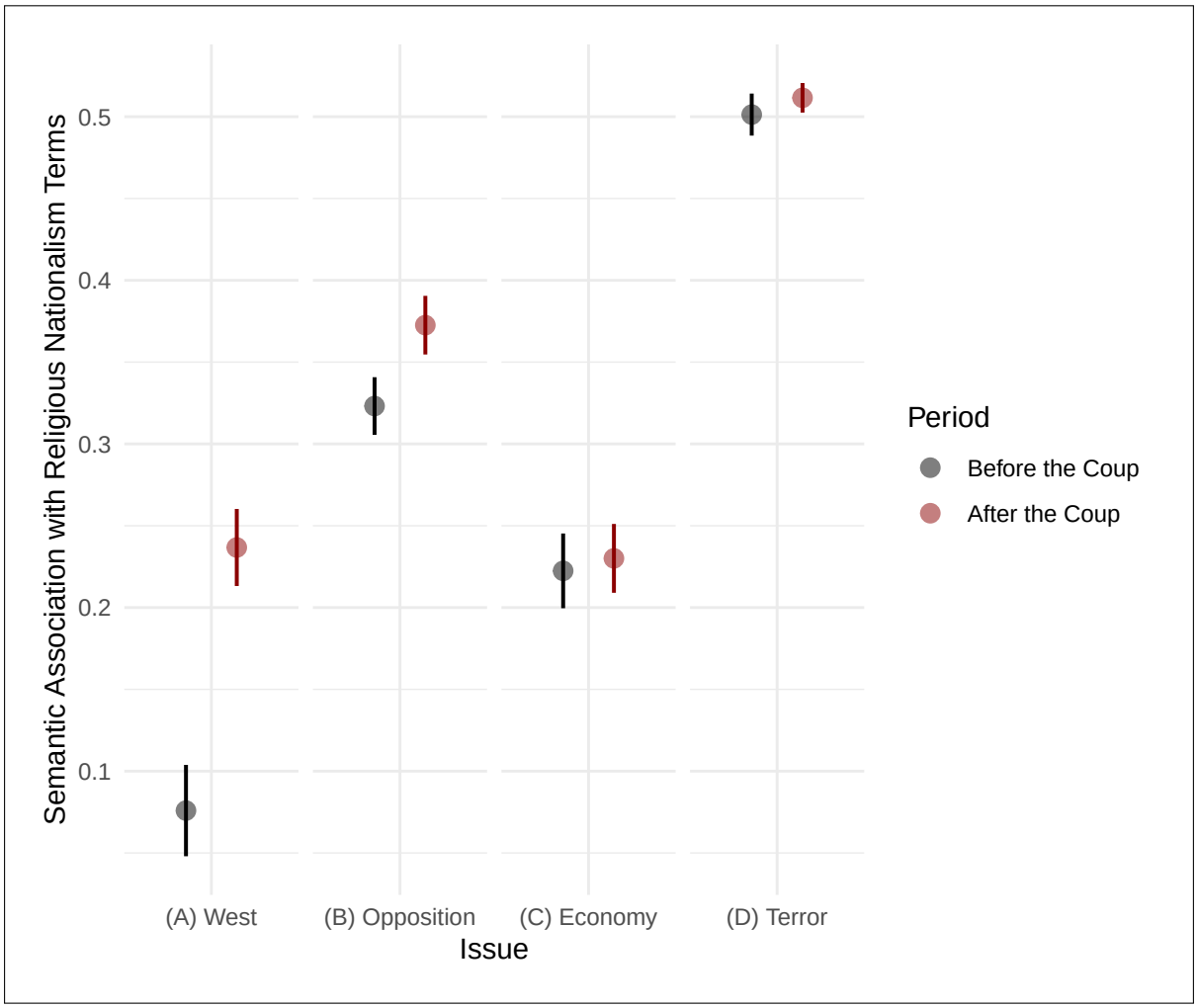

Figure 3.4: The effect of the coup attempt on ideological framing of regime outsiders. The red dots represent the average cosine similarity of illiberal ideological terms to each issue based on the mean of 50 bootstrapped samples, and the error bars around them represent the deviation of this mean based on 95% confidence intervals

period, the findings indicate that there is no immediate rise in the ideological framing of regime outsiders compared to the 6 months preceding the coup attempt (Appendix B.8). However, starting from the first half of 2018, there is a substantial and significant increase in the ideological framing of regime outsiders, validating that there is a long-lasting effect. Overall, the results suggest that the ideological framing of regime outsiders after the coup attempt increases in Erdoğan's speeches, and this increase is statistically significant and long-lasting.

An investigation of representative texts suggests that the way Erdoğan talks about regime outsiders became increasingly ideological after the coup attempt compared to his speeches before the coup attempt. For instance, in the speech just before the coup attempt, talking about a terrorist attack in Nice in June 2016, he criticizes the European Union for tolerating terrorist organizations but does not frame this security issue in an ideological manner (Erdoğan, 2016a). On the contrary, in a speech a week after the coup, he attacks Western actors for their criticism of post-coup purges in Turkish bureaucracy but uses ideologically filled language with the words "martyr" and "my country" being in the same sentence with the term "West" (Erdoğan, 2016b). These representative examples further validate our results that the crisis led to an increase in the ideological framing of regime outsiders in Turkey.

3.7 Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I analyze how crises affect the intensity and usage of ideological legitimation claims of authoritarian regimes. Empirically, I utilize the case of Turkey and analyze the speeches of President Erdoğan before and after the coup attempt on July 15, 2016, which I consider a plausibly exogenous, acute, and existential crisis. I combine a dictionary-based measurement strategy and a topic modeling strategy with ITS regression to analyze the effect of the crisis on the intensity of ideological legitimation claims. I use a word embedding model to analyze the effect of the crisis on how regime outsiders are framed. The ITS regression results suggest that the intensity of ideological claims increases immediately

after the crisis without any gradual effect in the long run. I label this effect as the reaction effect. The results from word embedding models suggest that the use of ideological legitimation claims against the regime's outsiders, including domestic opposition and international enemies of the regime, substantially increases after the crisis in a long-lasting way. I label this second effect the crystallization effect, as I argue that crises enable authoritarian regimes to capitalize on anti-elite attitudes among the public and elite circle to antagonize political actors who are outsiders to the regime.

This study has some limitations. Firstly, the Turkish case has only one plausibly exogenous crisis: a coup attempt, a horizontal threat that derived from the military elite. Due to the availability of this single case, I am unable to address whether different types of crises, such as political vs. economic (Offe, 1976) or horizontal vs. vertical crisis, affect the regime's ideological claims differently. Hence, future studies may compare different types of crises using cross-national data to understand how the type of crisis affects the legitimation claims of authoritarian regimes. Secondly, I only focus on speeches of the regime executive to analyze legitimation claims. I do not include any data from ruling party statements, ruling party parliamentarians, or social media posts of pro-regime actors, who may differ from the executive on how they communicate after a crisis. Finally, while I hypothesize insecurity and ambiguity that may arise among the public actors as a causal mechanism for change in ideological legitimation claims of elites, I do not test this mechanism due to the lack of public opinion data or elite surveys. Future studies may test these mechanisms by combining elite speeches with individual-level data tracing the changes in the perception of the public opinion or the ruling elite, after a crisis.

My study has three contributions to the study of authoritarian regimes. Firstly, I show that crises can change how and to what extent authoritarian regimes use ideological legitimation claims to justify their rule. This suggests that authoritarian regimes use ideological claims dynamically and adapt them to external challenges. This finding goes against the existing studies which suggest that authoritarian regimes use ideological claims either to indoctrinate the public with a set of ideas or to create an environment of fear (Bernholz, 2001; Huang, 2018). Instead, the finding implies that authoritarian regimes

use ideological claims to manipulate how the public interprets political developments and actors. Therefore, ideological claims of authoritarian regimes should be considered as part of their menu of manipulation (Schedler, 2002). Secondly, I show that the effect of crises on authoritarian regimes' ideological claims may not only be a short-term reaction. Instead, I show that the effect of crises on ideological claims or other types of legitimation claims could be long-lasting in authoritarian regimes. This implies that moments of crisis can transform how autocrats communicate with the public. Therefore, to fully understand how crises change authoritarian regimes, we should go beyond how such moments change authoritarian institutions, power-sharing dynamics, and repression strategies and include the change in authoritarian regimes' communication in our analyses. Finally, I show that moments of exogenous interruption can be used to study changes and continuities in authoritarian regimes' communicative strategies, in line with the existing work (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021a; Boussalis et al., 2023b). These interruptions provide space for making causal claims on how autocrats communicate with the public without making a lot of modeling assumptions and by minimizing the issues of endogeneity.

4 Religious Legitimation and Support for Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence From Turkey (2013-2021)

4.1 Introduction

Authoritarian regimes use religion as an ideological legitimation tool to maximize public support, frame the repression of dissidents as the protection of citizens' religious beliefs, and indoctrinate the public with religious ideas (Bentzen & Gokmen, 2023; Coulson, 2004; Fox, 2018; Yefet & Lavie, 2021). Existing studies primarily focus on how authoritarian regimes strategically employ religion for legitimation through public communication channels, symbolic acts, education, and policies (Gerschewski, 2023b; Hashmi, 2007; Kuru, 2019; Riaz, 2024; Selvik, 2018). However, the effects of these religious legitimation strategies on citizens' attitudes toward the regime remain poorly understood. In this study, I address this gap by leveraging the distinct timing of two religious legitimation strategies that occurred around the same time in Turkey, a competitive authoritarian regime (Castaldo, 2018; Esen & Gumuscu, 2016). Specifically, I use repeated cross-sectional survey data from 2013 to 2021 to assess changes in support for the ruling party among citizens following the conversion of the Hagia Sophia Museum into a mosque and the regime-driven public debate on withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention.

Identifying the effects of the religious legitimation strategies of autocrats on citizens'[1]

[1]In this paper, I use "citizens" and "individuals" interchangeably to decrease repetition in the text.

attitudes toward the regime is vital for understanding the dynamic nature of the regime-society relationship in autocracies. Autocrats desire public support at minimal cost (Guriev & Treisman, 2020b; Rosenfeld & Wallace, 2024), often preferring ideational sources of support, such as appealing to citizens' religious and nationalist beliefs, over material sources, like perceptions of economic stability, which are more fragile and costly (Gerschewski, 2023b; Slater, 2010). Relatedly, while ideational factors such as religiosity, religious worldviews, conservatism, and nationalism predict citizens' support for some autocracies (Belchior et al., 2018; Chang et al., 2013; Gulevich & Krivoshchekov, 2024; Nathan, 2020), we do not have evidence on how the regime's actions could change these levels of support. Establishing that religious legitimation strategies boost public support for autocrats would imply that ideational sources of support for autocrats are not static; by endorsing religion (Schleutker, 2021), autocrats may secure more public support than they otherwise would have. Therefore, by testing the effects of the regime's religious legitimation strategies on public support in autocracies, I contribute to the literature on sources of public support in autocracies (Buckley et al., 2024; Guriev & Treisman, 2020a; Neundorf et al., 2024).

However, isolating the effects of the religious legitimation strategies of autocrats on citizens' attitudes toward the regime is challenging. Whether autocrats use religion as a legitimation claim is endogenous to the historical relevance of religious beliefs (Bentzen & Gokmen, 2023; Gerschewski, 2023b) and to contemporary social demands for the role of religion in politics. Autocrats may engage in religious legitimation because religious groups or segments of society demand it (Fox, 2015). While framing experiments could isolate the effect of religious framing of policies on political attitudes in democracies and autocracies (DeMora et al., 2024; Fair et al., 2018), such studies would not be able to longitudinally show if religious legitimation strategies of the autocratic elite change the citizens' perception of the regime.

In this study, I focus on the case of Turkey under the rule of the Recep Tayyip Erdoğan-Justice and Development Party (Erdoğan-AKP) and leverage a repeated cross-sectional dataset (2013–2021). By using the Turkish case, I partially overcome the challenges of

isolating the effects of religious legitimation. Specifically, I assess the boost in support for the ruling party AKP after July 2020, that is, after the regime engaged in two simultenous religious legimation strategies: Conversion of the Hagia Sophia Museum into a mosque, and initiation of the public debate over withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention, a human rights treaty aiming to protect women against gender-based violence (Council of Europe, 2011). I treat the conversion of Hagia Sophia—a church during the Byzantine Empire—to a mosque as a religious legitimation strategy since the regime framed the conversion with religious discourse and glorified it (Oztig & Adisonmez, 2023). I treat the regime-driven public debate on withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention as a religious legitimation strategy since the pro-regime religious conservative actors were leading the debate, some members of the regime elite framed the convention as an attack to conservative values rooted in religious beliefs and because the ruling party seem to have initiated the debate to avoid vote shifts to other religious conservative parties (Dilipak, 2020; Euronews, 2020; Yeni Akit, 2019).[2]

Empirically, I leverage the Konda Barometer, a repeated cross-sectional dataset collected by Konda Research and Consultancy, a commercial polling company that gathers data across 11 months of every year since 2010 and shares it with paying subscribers. The dataset includes repeated measures of different cross-sections of respondents' intended vote preferences, demographic characteristics, place of residence, religiosity, and lifestyles. By comparing respondents' intention to vote for the AKP before and after July 2020, while accounting for confounding factors, I identify the effects of the Hagia Sophia conversion and the Istanbul Convention debate across subgroups of citizens. However, while I use the data to help isolate causal effects, I critically engage with it throughout this paper due to its quota sampling strategy and questionable measurement of some key variables for this study.

I hypothesize that authoritarian regimes' use of religious legitimation strategies strengthens regime support among citizens who hold a religious ideology—those whose social and political worldviews are deeply influenced by the religious doctrines they follow.

[2]I elaborate on these arguments in Section 4.4.1.

Theoretically, I contend that citizens who hold a religious ideology have strong preferences on issues related to the role of religion in politics and interpret the religious legitimation strategies of the regime as a sign of ideological congruence between their strong preferences and the values of the regime elites. This increases their support for the regime on average. Furthermore, I hypothesize that religious legitimation strategies have no effect on citizens who do not hold a religious ideology. Theoretically, I contend that this is because they do not perceive these acts as a sign of ideological congruence between themselves and the regime.

I test these hypotheses with a two-way fixed-effects multivariate regression model that includes an interaction term between holding a religious ideology and being interviewed right after July 2020. The results provide mixed evidence for my expectations. The results suggest that, in the Turkish case, those who hold a religious ideology—who self-identify as religious conservative as opposed to modern or traditional conservative—are substantially and significantly more likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP right after July 2020 in comparison to their group average across all months and also in comparison to their group average right before July 2020. Furthermore, I find that those who identify as traditional conservatives or modern are not more likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP right after July 2020 compared to their group averages across all the other months. These findings are in line with my expectations. However, I also find that traditional conservatives are more likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP compared to their group average just before July 2020, and this increase is similar to that of religious conservatives. Therefore, the results suggest that the regime's religious legitimation strategies had a positive and substantial effect on citizens with a religious ideology, but this effect also extends to all citizens with conservative ideologies.

The findings I identify are likely not generalizable to the voting population in Turkey; they are based on repeated cross-sectional data that use quota sampling and an unreliable measure of religious ideology, as opposed to randomly sampled panel data that replicates existing measures of religious ideology. Therefore, one primary implication of this study is that scholars of autocratic politics should invest in collecting reliable data to study the

dynamics of the regime-society relationship in autocracies.

Given its limitations, this study is exploratory in nature. However, it still informs our understanding of the sources of popular support in autocracies in two important ways. Firstly, I show that religious legitimation strategies may boost public support for authoritarian regimes. To my knowledge, this is the first attempt to identify the effects of religious legitimation on the sustainment of autocratic regimes. The findings supports the arguments of qualitative studies, which suggest that the instrumentalization of religion provides popular legitimacy for autocrats (Schlumberger, 2010, p. 241; Riaz, 2024, p. 181; Omelicheva, 2016b, p. 147) . Thus, autocrats not only co-opt religion to gain the support of religious elites or repress religion to avoid radicalization and control society (Koesel, 2014; Sarkissian, 2015; Schleutker, 2016, 2021), but also successfully use it as a legitimation tool. Secondly, and relatedly, I demonstrate that the effect of holding a religious ideology on supporting authoritarian regimes is mediated by the regimes' supply of religious legitimation. This finding extends the country-specific evidence on the effect of individuals' religiosity and religious ideology on their support for authoritarian incumbents and institutions (e.g, Ciftci et al., 2019; Geddes and Zaller, 1989; Scoggins, 2022). In particular, I show that the relationship between holding a religious ideology and support for autocratic incumbents is dynamic; this relationship intensifies as autocrats utilize religious legitimation strategies. Therefore, I show that the role of individuals' religious ideologies in shaping attitudes toward authoritarian regimes is not only country-specific (Hoffman, 2020; Thyen & Gerschewski, 2018) but also varies over time.

The rest of the paper is as follows. In Section 4.2, I define religious legitimation and identify the issues in the existing work related to it in autocracies. In Section 4.3, I state my expectations regarding the effects of religious legitimation on citizens of autocracies. In Section 4.4, I discuss the details of the Turkish case and religious legitimation strategies of July 2020, critically assess the data source, and specify the empirical model for testing my hypothesis. In Section 4.5, I discuss the findings of my study, and in Section 4.6, I discuss the implications of these findings for my hypothesis and theories of autocratic politics.

4.2 Religious Legitimation and Authoritarian Regimes

In this paper, I understand religious legitimation as the strategic use of religious ideas through discourses, symbolic acts, and policies by political actors to seek public support. I consider religious legitimation a subcategory of ideological legitimation, as it involves either referring to or materializing a set of ideas influenced by religions (Fox, 2018; Gerschewski, 2023b; Tannenberg et al., 2021). While existing empirical studies on religious and ideological legitimation primarily consider them as verbal communication tools (Grauvogel & von Soest, 2024), I suggest that religious (and other forms of ideological) legitimation strategies include acts and policies, provided these acts and policies are related to religion and aim to justify the rule in the eyes of segments of the population (Gerschewski, 2013).

With this definition, I view religious legitimation as encompassing systematic religious ideologies, such as Hindutva in India, which centers Indian nationalism around Hinduism (Leidig, 2020); symbolic visible acts, such as the promotion of Buddhist statues by the current Military Junta in Myanmar (Foxeus, 2023); and policies framed with religious references, such as the anti-gay propaganda bill introduced in Russia in 2013, which pro-regime actors framed as an act in favor of the Antichrist (Dolińska-Rydzek & van den Berg, 2020). Consequently, I acknowledge that religious legitimation includes both systematic attempts by political actors to promote religion and sporadic acts and discourses that utilize religious symbols and framing. At the upper end of the spectrum, religious legitimation may involve making religious scripts central to constitutional rule, as in the case of the theocratic regime of Iran (Khalaji, 2011); at the lower end of the spectrum, it may involve rare public use of religion, as in the case of the Sadat and Mubarak regimes in Egypt, which invoked religious symbols occasionally to appeal to Islamist and religious segments of the population (Schlumberger, 2010).

The proposed conceptualization of religious legitimation lies within two scope conditions. Firstly, I focus on religious legitimation in authoritarian regimes, where the regime has uneven access to public institutions and communication channels (Levitsky & Way, 2010). Religious legitimation, as conceptualized here, are also observed in the behavior and

statements of actors in democracies (Weiberg-Salzmann & Willems, 2020), such as in the case of Israel, where the Netanyahu government uses "Judeo-Christianism" as civilizational rhetoric to defend its illiberal actions (Rogenhofer & Panievsky, 2020). However, the nature and intensity of these claims are likely moderated by formal and informal democratic institutions in such countries. Secondly, I focus on the use of the majority religion as a legitimation tool, rather than minority religions. Namely, if in an autocracy the majority of citizens identify as Christian, the sporadic use of Islam as a legitimation tool to appeal to a Muslim minority by the autocratic regime would fall beyond the scope of this article.

Existing studies on the role of religious legitimation in autocracies primarily focus on its supply side, illustrating how religion is employed as a political tool in various contexts. One stream of research highlights that religion is often used as a discursive legitimation tool. For instance, in Kazakhstan, Islam has been utilized to unify ethnically diverse groups (Omelicheva, 2016b). In Chile, under Pinochet's rule, Christian civilizationalism was framed as a defense against socialist atheism (Sjørup, 2017), while in Orbán's Hungary, it has been leveraged to oppose gender diversity and multiculturalism (Enyedi, 2020, 2024; Zoltán & Bozóki, 2016). In Thailand's and Myanmar's military regimes, Buddhism has been employed to present the ruling elites as symbolic representatives of the religion (Freedman, 2024).

Another line of work shows that religious legitimation comes in the form of policies, as in the case of the Islamization of the educational curriculum by the military regimes of 20th-century Pakistan (Sheikh & Ahmed, 2020), and through invoking Quranic references in legal documents in Bangladesh (Riaz, 2024). A final group of studies shows that authoritarian regimes engage in religious legitimation through symbolic visible acts, such as authoritarian regimes with Muslim-majority populations that build mega mosques to boost a sense of religious-nationalist identity and reclaim Islam as a political tool from Islamic opposition (Sheline, 2019; Van de Ven, 2020).

While these studies show how religious legitimation is used through discourses, policies, and symbolic acts, they do not assess the effects of such strategies. In this study, I address this gap by showing how the supply of religious legitimation affects citizens' attitudes

toward the regime.

To study the effect of religious legitimation strategies on citizens of autocracies, I take the heterogeneity of citizens' religious ideology into account. A large amount of empirical work analyzes the correlates of religion-related variables on attitudes toward democracy and support for authoritarian regimes (Collins & Owen, 2012; Geddes & Zaller, 1989; Mauk, 2020; Meyer et al., 2008; Spierings, 2014). Amongst, a group of studies shows that religiosity — how religious a person identifies or how much they practice religion — affects whether they are likely to support democracy as a system (Collins & Owen, 2012; Meyer et al., 2008), and whether they support authoritarian incumbents (Geddes & Zaller, 1989; Scoggins, 2022). The direction of findings in these studies is mixed and country-specific (Hoffman, 2018, 2020; Thyen & Gerschewski, 2018). However, these studies are informative in suggesting that religiosity mediates how individuals perceive authoritarian systems (Jost et al., 2014). This implies that religiosity potentially also mediate how individuals perceive religious legitimation strategies of authoritarian regimes.

However, religiosity is not the only way to conceptualize and measure religious social identity. A second group of studies suggests that religiosity, as the self-identified level of devoutness or the extent of practicing religion, is not informative for political attitudes when religious ideology — that is, how religion mediates, shapes, and interacts with individuals' worldviews on social and political matters — is taken into account (Bloom & Arikan, 2013; Ciftci et al., 2019; Farooq et al., 2024). Accordingly, religious ideologies such as religious orthodoxy — seeing religious scripts and divine powers as the basis of social order (Ciftci et al., 2019, p. 437) —, religious conservatism — religious script-based, socially conservative worldviews in opposition to liberal values (Ellis & Stimson, 2012) —, and politicized religiosity, such as political Islamism — an ideology that aims to increase the role of Islam in political institutions (March, 2015) —, are more likely to shape people's views toward political systems and the actions associated with them, as opposed to religiosity, which is measured by belief or practices and can take modernist and secularist forms (Ciftci et al., 2019; N. J. Davis & Robinson, 2006).

Thus, existing work suggests two ways to conceptualize religious identity, religiosity

and religious ideology. Since I analyze religious legitimation strategies and understand them as ideological in this paper, I consider religious ideology, as opposed to religiosity, as the important mediator for this study. I focus on religious ideology because I contend that religious ideologies such as religious orthodoxy and religious conservatism are better conceptual constructs of religion as an illiberal ideology, as opposed to religiosity which can take progressive forms. However, given the well-established research that assesses the effect of religiosity on political attitudes (discussed above), I take religiosity as an alternative measure to enhance the comparability and robustness of this study's inquiry.

Overall, I make three arguments by reviewing existing work on religion's role in autocracies. Firstly, I understand religious legitimation as an ideological tool encompassing discourses, symbolic acts, and policies that authoritarian regimes use to seek public support. Secondly, I argue that existing work on religious legitimation focuses on how autocrats use religious legitimation but does not analyze its effects on citizens' attitudes toward the regime. Thirdly, I suggest that to assess the effect of religious legitimation strategies on citizens, we must consider the variance of religious ideology across citizens as a source of heterogeneity.

4.3 Religious Legitimation and Popularity of Autocrats

I argue that authoritarian regimes' use of religious legitimation strategies increases regime support among citizens with a religious ideology (Hypothesis 1). Theoretically, I suggest that people who hold a religious ideology perceive the religious legitimation strategies of autocrats as a signal of congruence between their ideological beliefs and the regime's values, making them more likely to support the regime. This inference of congruence occurs because of a combination of their strong preferences on issues related to religion and the regime's information distribution capabilities. I propose that this causal mechanism is specific to people who hold a religious ideology, as those who do not hold a religious ideology do not experience a change in the level of perceived congruence between themselves and the regime after being exposed to religious legitimation. Consequently, I additionally

expect that the religious legitimation strategies of the regime have no effect on people who do not hold a religious ideology (Hypothesis 2). I expand on this argument below by recontextualizing existing empirical work on democracies.

Firstly, I suggest that people who hold a religious ideology strongly prefer political elites who stand for these values, regardless of the political system they live in. Research on ideological congruence suggests that, in democracies, the alignment of citizens' and political elites' positions—such as on left-right self-placement, nationalism, and cultural values—is critical for citizens' voting behavior, the quality of democratic representation, and political stability (Golder & Stramski, 2010; Klingemann et al., 2017; Leininger, 2024; Mayne & Hakhverdian, 2017; Rohrschneider & Whitefield, 2012; Welzel & Klingemann, 2008). Similarly, empirical studies of religious ideology in democratic contexts suggest that people with a religious ideology have strong policy preferences on issues that are essential to their values, and they tend to align with political actors who are congruent with these values. For instance, Christian nationalists in the United States—people who argue that a Christian social order should be central to politics and American identity—are more likely to advocate for banning pornography (Perry & Whitehead, 2022), defend the death penalty (J. Davis, 2018), and support the Republican Party, particularly Trump (Whitehead & Perry, 2020), a politician who promotes these policies (Philo, 2023). Similarly, in Indonesia, an electoral democracy, political Islam is a strong "religious-ideological cleavage," as parties and their voters align strongly in their level of political Islamism (Fossati et al., 2020, p. 10). These two cases illustrate that religious ideology leads to strong preferences even outside of autocratic contexts, and that religious individuals support actors who are congruent with these preferences.

Secondly, recontextualizing the findings on the political consequences of religious ideology in democracies, I contend that people with a religious ideology in autocracies interpret autocrats' religious legitimation attempts as a strong sign of congruence. In autocracies, the ruling elite has unequal access to the public sphere through propaganda channels such as the media compared to the opposition, which helps them distribute and manipulate information effectively and set the political agenda (Chen & Xu, 2017;

Dukalskis, 2017; Guriev & Treisman, 2020b; Rosenfeld & Wallace, 2024; Schatz, 2009). While evidence suggests that citizens often approach regime propaganda with skepticism and reject the regime's arguments (Mattingly & Yao, 2022; Matveeva, 2009), I argue that this is less likely when it comes to people with a religious ideology. Given that people with a religious ideology have strong preferences on issues related to their social values, as discussed above, they will likely infer religious legitimation attempts as a sign of congruence with their religious ideology. I suggest that this inference of religious-ideological congruence makes them more likely to support the regime, on average.

I propose that people who do not hold a religious ideology do not update their position on support for the regime after the regime engages in religious legitimation. This is because an act of religious legitimation does not signal congruence to them, as they are unlikely to hold strong preferences on religion-related issues unless this issue profoundly affects their lifestyle (e.g., the introduction of Sharia Law).

Based on the theoretical hunches above, I hypothesize the following:

H1: In autocracies, the ruling elite's use of religious legitimation strategies increases regime support among citizens who hold a religious ideology.

H2: In autocracies, the ruling elite's use of religious legitimation strategies does not affect regime support among citizens who do not hold a religious ideology.

.

4.4 Research Design

4.4.1 Turkey: Competitive Authoritarianism and Religious Legitimation

I focus on the case of Turkey under the rule of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to test the hypotheses outlined above. I suggest that the Turkish case offers three analytical advantages.

Firstly, AKP rule in Turkey led to an autocratization trend in the early 2010s and Turkey was classified as a competitive authoritarian regime by 2013, according to the

Varieties of Democracy Institute (Lührmann et al., 2018), and at the latest by 2015 based on case-specific evidence (Esen & Gumuscu, 2016). Turkey's classification as a competitive authoritarian regime—characterized by free but unfair elections due to the incumbent's disproportionate access to media and state institutions compared to the opposition (Levitsky & Way, 2010)—positions Turkey as "authoritarian," making it an appropriate case for this study. At the same time, the regime's "competitive" nature implies that preference falsification (Kuran, 1998) among citizens is likely to be lower, though still present, compared to more hegemonic authoritarian regimes like Russia.

Secondly, the role of Sunni Islam, the majority religion, as a significant political variable is well-documented in AKP-led Turkey, both among citizens and political elites. On the one hand, while following different conceptualizations, studies show that religiosity, religious orthodoxy, and religious conservatism are substantive predictors of AKP support, although the significance of this varies by electoral cycle and over time (Aytaç & Çarkoğlu, 2021; Balta et al., 2023; Çarkoğlu, 2012, 2019; Kalaycıoğlu, 2021). Furthermore, in the Turkish context, the cleavage between those who identify as religious and conservative and those who identify as secular has been central to political polarization, already present before the rise of the AKP in 2002 (Çarkoğlu & Toprak, 2000, 2007). Some scholars trace this divide back to the Ottoman Empire, where the predominantly rural population held a distinct religious identity, while the urban elite gradually embraced secularization (Mardin, 1973). Thus, in Turkey, a devout religiosity is often a political identity, and those who identify as more religious typically embrace right-wing ideologies (Yılmaz et al., 2016) and hold distinct policy preferences (Arikan, 2016). On the other hand, studies show that the AKP-Erdoğan regime consistently uses religion as a tool of legitimation by employing religious symbols, invoking religion in educational institutions, and incorporating religious discourse into public communication (Fox & Öztürk, 2024; Gumuscu, 2013; A. E. Öztürk, 2016, 2019). Yet, none of the existing studies assess the relationship between the religious legitimation strategies of the regime and the religious ideology of citizens in Turkey. I use the Turkish case for this purpose.

Thirdly, the Turkish regime employed two religious legitimation strategies in July

2020, which are directly relevant to this study and easy to isolate due to their distinct timing. The first strategy is the conversion of the Hagia Sophia Museum into a mosque on July 24, 2020. Existing work suggests that this decision carried significant religious symbolism, given the history of Hagia Sophia as a church during the Byzantine Empire and then a mosque during the Ottoman Empire (Oztig & Adisonmez, 2023). With this decision, Erdoğan aimed to appeal to the religious sentiments of the public (Oztig & Adisonmez, 2023, p. 15).[3] Indeed, in a speech three days after the conversion, Erdoğan stated that the conversion of Hagia Sophia to a mosque was not a "mere opening (service) of a new mosque" but was done in accordance with "God's (Allah's) command and good news (müjde)" (Erdoğan, 2020). Given the centrality of Islamic ideology in the conversion of Hagia Sophia to a mosque, I treat it as a religious legitimation strategy.

The second strategy is the regime-driven public debate in July 2020 about Turkey's potential withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, a treaty aimed at combating violence against women and various forms of gender-based violence (Council of Europe, 2011). Throughout July 2020, pro-regime pundits, the leadership of some religious conservative NGOs, and government officials criticized the convention, claiming that the convention's emphasis on societal gender equality regardless of sexual orientation conflicted with the values of Turkish society and indicated that Turkey should withdraw from the convention (Güneş & Ezikoğlu, 2023). For instance, Numan Kurtulmuş, head of the parliamentary group of the AKP, argued on the 2nd of July 2020 that "it was a mistake to sign the convention," and that the AKP does not stand with a convention that "paves the way for marginal groups such as LGBT" and a convention that claims to "fight against alleged honor (namus) and customs" (Euronews, 2020). Furthermore, Abdurrahman Dilipak, a pro-regime religious conservative columnist, indicated on the 27th of July 2020 that those who support the Istanbul Convention are "prostitutes" and quoted Erol Yarar, founder of the Islamist business association MUSIAD, who said that defending the Istanbul Convention is fighting against "the belief system", and is against "the creationist principle"

[3]The regime elite also framed Hagia Sophia as a sovereignty issue to appeal to nationalist citizens (Oztig & Adisonmez, 2023; Sofos, 2021). However, religious framing and sacralization of Hagia Sophia were at the core of this strategy (Rahimov, 2021).

(Dilipak, 2020).

Most of the arguments in the regime-driven public debate around the Istanbul Convention did not explicitly invoke religion. However, I treat the debate as a case of indirect religious legitimation for three reasons. Firstly, as discussed above, the regime's Islamist wing was prominent in this debate. Secondly, the regime elite, such as Numan Kurtulmuş, framed the convention as a threat to the conservative values of Turkish society, rooted in religious beliefs, by discursively connecting the convention to issues such as LGBTQI+ freedoms. Thirdly, Islamists who are not directly linked to the regime, such as the Islamist New Welfare Party (Yeniden Refah Partisi), a potential alternative party for religious-conservative citizens and Milli Gazete, an anti-Erdoğan Islamist newspaper, advocated for Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention with explicit Islamic framing in the months preceding July 2020 (Keleş & Onay, 2021; Kocabıçak, 2023; Yeni Akit, 2019; Yeniden Refah Istanbul, 2024). Thus, it is also likely that the regime initiated the debate to appeal to Islamist voters who were not supportive of the Istanbul Convention. In the same vein, expert evaluations suggest that, by targeting the Istanbul Convention, the regime aimed to consolidate its religious-conservative support base (Aksoy, 2021). In light of this evidence, I treat the public debate on the Istanbul Convention as a religious legitimation strategy initiated by the AKP-Erdoğan regime.

Importantly, while the regime officially withdrew from the convention in March 2021, the public interest in the convention intensified in July 2020. This is evident from the trend analysis of the Google search for the term Istanbul Convention (İstanbul Sözleşmesi) in Turkish, as depicted in Figure 4.1.

The Turkish regime's use of these two religious legitimation strategies in July 2020 provides an opportunity to study the effects of religious legitimation. Particularly, keeping everything else constant and controlling for confounding factors, it is possible to identify the effect of these strategies on people with a religious ideology by comparing this group's regime support before and after July 2020. As I explain in Section 4.4.3 , I utilize the distinct timing of these events for such a test. It is, however, crucial to note that it is impossible to differentiate between the effect of the Hagia Sophia Conversion and the

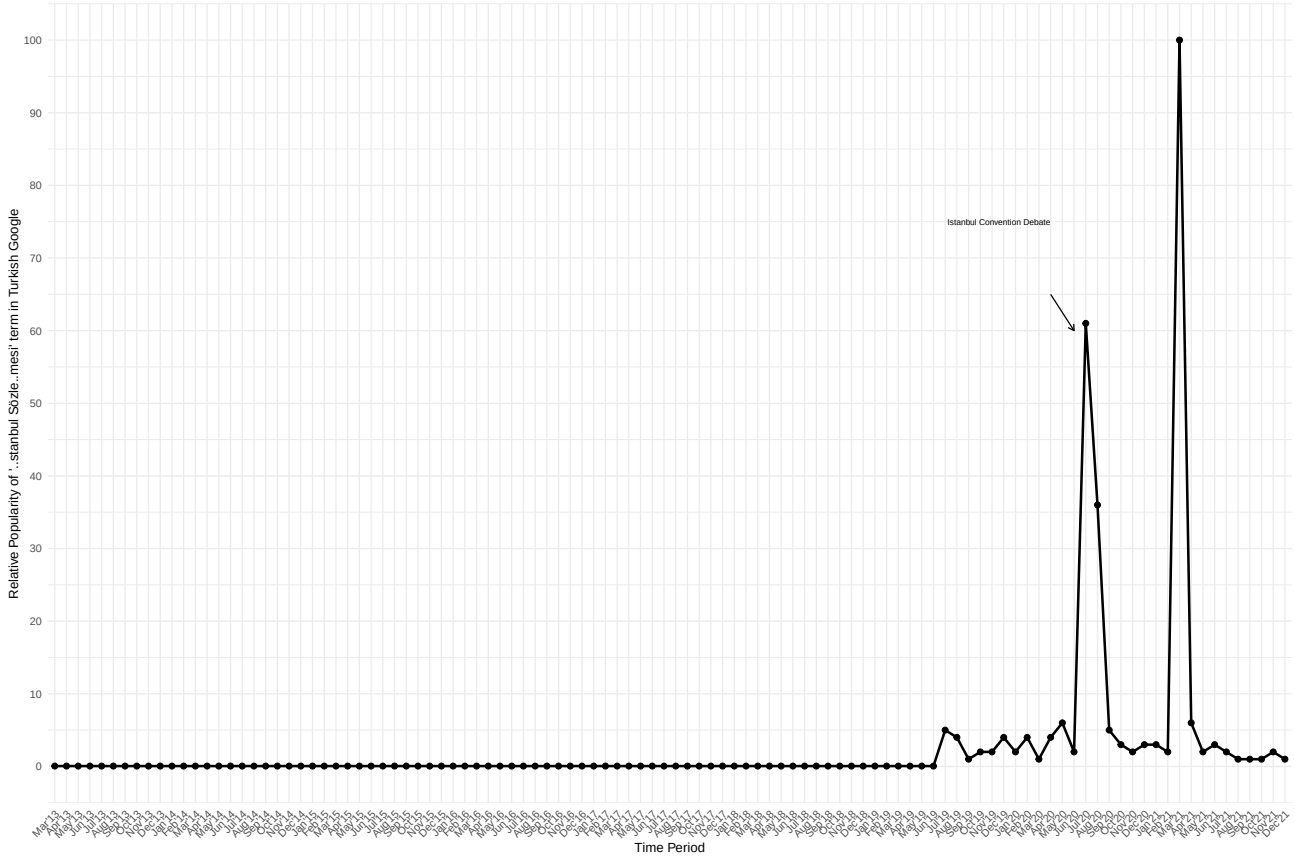

Figure 4.1: Relative popularity of "İstanbul Sözleşmesi" in Turkish Google Searches (Source: Google Trends) (Trends, n.d.)

Istanbul Convention public debate, given that they occurred concurrently. Therefore, I estimate their combined average effect in this paper.

Nonetheless, isolating the effects of these two religious legitimation strategies on regime support depends on the absence of other major events around their timing that could influence regime support. I identified no such events that varied between the months of the summer of 2020 despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, which also hit Turkey in March 2020. The COVID-19 measures just before and after July 2020, that is, in June 2020 and August 2020, did not vary substantially, as the Turkish government lifted lockdown measures and major restrictions in public spaces in June 2020 and did not reintroduce them until November 2020 (Genç, 2021). Similarly, while reported COVID-19 cases increased by 200,000 from June 2020 to August 2020 (Worldometer, 2024), this increase was relatively small, and likely had no public opinion consequences.[4]

[4]However, it is important to note that the Turkish government was accused of under-reporting COVID-19 cases (Insight, 2020)

Besides providing several analytical advantages, the Turkish case also provides a clear scope condition which helps me identify what other cases are likely informed by this study. First, Turkey experienced autocratization during the third wave of autocratization and became a competitive authoritarian regime after years of institutionalized defective democracy (Esen & Gumuscu, 2016, p. 1582). Second, religion plays a central role in shaping citizen behavior and elite legitimation in Turkey (Çarkoğlu, 2019; A. E. Öztürk, 2019). Given these two characteristics, the results of this study are likely generalizable to cases such as India (Mazhar & S Goraya, 2022) and the Philippines (Francisco, 2021), which share similar patterns, and potentially to other cases that meet either condition, such as Thailand (Nilsen, 2012), and Myanmar (Frydenlund et al., 2021).

4.4.2 Data

In this research, I use the Konda Barometer dataset. The Konda Barometer dataset is a set of repeated cross-sectional surveys collected by the commercial polling company Konda Research and Consultancy in Turkey, which shares its data with paid subscribers.[5] The dataset comprises monthly face-to-face interviews conducted from March 2010 to the present. Each survey wave features a new sample of respondents, making the dataset consist of repeated cross-sections rather than a panel. In each wave, participants are asked about their voting intentions, demographic characteristics, and political events that occurred around the survey wave they were interviewed in. For this study, I focus on data from February 2013 to December 2021, as focusing on this period allows me to concentrate on the autocratic episode of the AKP-Erdoğan rule and control for relevant demographic variables when building the models. The dataset has both strengths and weaknesses.

The dataset has two primary strengths for the purpose of my study. First and foremost, the dataset is collected 11 months per year[6] and includes variables on self-identified religiosity and religious ideology and the respondent's preferred political party to support if an election were held on the upcoming Sunday (please see Section 4.4.3 for

[5]The company's description of the data and examples of reports they send their paid subscribers can be found at the following link: www.konda.com.tr/kondabarometre?l=en.

[6]In each year, Konda selects one month and does not field any survey in that month. The excluded month is unsystematic across the years.

details).[7] Thus, by comparing the trends of the relationship between holding a religious ideology and supporting the ruling party before and after July 2020, we can assess the effect of the regime's religious legitimation strategies on public opinion. The availability of 11 repeated cross-sectional surveys for each year between 2013 and 2021 is the main reason why I use this dataset in this study. Secondly, the dataset includes some demographic variables such as age, educational attainment, and ethnic identity, so it allows me to control for confounding factors in the analysis.

Yet, the dataset suffers from a weak sampling strategy. In each wave, the survey design combines a slightly subjective cluster sampling in the first stage and quota sampling in the second stage. At first, 49,301 villages (köy) and neighborhoods (mahalle) are clustered based on a combination of four criteria, including their NUTS-1 region, whether they are a neighborhood or village, their average education level based on population registry data[8] and the level of political competition across parties which could take three values including ruling party dominant, opposition dominant, and equal competition (KONDA, 2023, p. 9). Then, sex (gender) and age quotas are applied within each cluster based on official population statistics of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜIK) with the intention that different age groups and males and females are interviewed in the ratio they are in the population (KONDA, 2023, p. 11).

This survey design implies that the data is not representative of the Turkish voting population. While cluster sampling could be justified since it is a cost-effective strategy, involving a subjective and dynamic definition of political competition leaves ambiguity about whether the dataset's clusters are representative units. More importantly, using quota sampling implies that the observations are not randomly selected, and the results will not be generalizable to all Turkish citizens who are eligible to vote, given that quota sampling is a purposive sampling technique (Yang & Banamah, 2014). The dataset includes weights calculated using data raking ratio estimation (Battaglia et al., 2009), which are estimated based on demographic variables such as sex, age, NUTS-1 region,

[7] In Turkey, elections are always held on Sunday so this phrasing seems appropriate

[8] By "population registry data" I mean the Address Based Population Registration System of the Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2024)

whether the respondent lives in a rural or urban area, and the respondent's employment status (KONDA, 2023, p. 13). Raking ratio estimations may reduce bias in the sample to a small degree and I implement them in my analysis (See 4.4.3). However, these weights are unlikely to substantially correct the biases, as the sampled respondents were not randomly selected (Groves, 2006). In short, I suggest that the non-random nature of the data collection implies a sample that is not representative of the population. The non-randomness of the data will likely produce results that are not trustworthy vis-a-vis true population values.

However, while acknowledging the major limitation of the survey design, I use the dataset with several cautions. Firstly, I focus exclusively on analyzing the time trends, mainly the effect of being interviewed in August 2020 (that is, right after July 2020). Following behavioral research on substance addiction, we may assume that the measurement and sampling errors are constant and reliable across the survey waves (Jackson et al., 2024; McCambridge et al., 2005), given that a quota sampling strategy based on sex and age groups has been used in each wave. Although I acknowledge the potential fallacies in the estimates, I utilize the dataset to identify time trends given that the dataset is the only available source for such an inquiry. Secondly, although I report p-values in my regression estimates (see below), I acknowledge that these do not indicate whether the estimates are generalizable to the broader population. Rather, I use p-values to assess the significance of differences across time points, and I place greater emphasis on the coefficient estimates. In short, I suggest that the dataset could potentially be used to assess changes over time; however, I acknowledge that the research is exploratory in nature, and the results are not generalizable to the Turkish voting population.

Despite the limitations mentioned, I use the dataset to build a multivariate, two-way fixed effects model to assess how religious ideology moderates the relationship between the regime's legitimation strategies and citizens' support for the regime. The details of this model are explained in the section.

4.4.3 Variables and Estimation

The dependent variable of the study is whether respondents intend to vote for the AKP or not (1 = AKP, 0 = not AKP) if there were a general parliamentary election on the upcoming Sunday. While following H1 and H2, we should have a dependent variable in our models that reflects regime support, the intention to vote for the AKP is at best a partial measure of regime support. However, I use the intention to vote for the AKP as the dependent variable because this is the only available measure that could capture the support for the government - hence for the authoritarian regime, in the context of competitive authoritarian regimes (Levitsky & Way, 2010)—across all waves. This is because in the Konda Barometer there are no survey questions on the approval of regime available across all the survey waves.[9]

Figure 4.2 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would vote for the AKP if there were a general parliamentary election this Sunday, across survey waves. Figure 4.2 demonstrates that support for the AKP decreased by 10% from February 2013 to January 2020, and fluctuated between 5% to 10% after January 2020. Furthermore, it highlights an increase in overall support for the AKP immediately following the regime's religious legitimation strategies described in Section 4.4.1.

The independent variable of the study is the interaction term between the respondent's self-identified lifestyle and the survey wave of August 2020. The lifestyle measure comes from a question asking respondents how they would identify their lifestyle among the following three categories: "modern," "traditional conservative," and "religious conservative." I treat the respondents' self-identification of their lifestyle as religious conservative as an indicator of holding a religious ideology. Treating religious conservative identification as a form of religious ideology aligns with my conceptualization of religiosity as a political identity in the Turkish context (see Section 4.4.1).

With the interaction term, I assess if those who identify as religious conservatives were

[9]Although the AKP entered an informal coalition with the far-right Nationalist Action Party (MHP) in 2018 (Ayan Musil, 2024), including the intention to vote for the MHP would capture MHP partisans who may not necessarily approve of the AKP or Erdoğan, so focusing on the intention to vote for the AKP is likely more consistent.

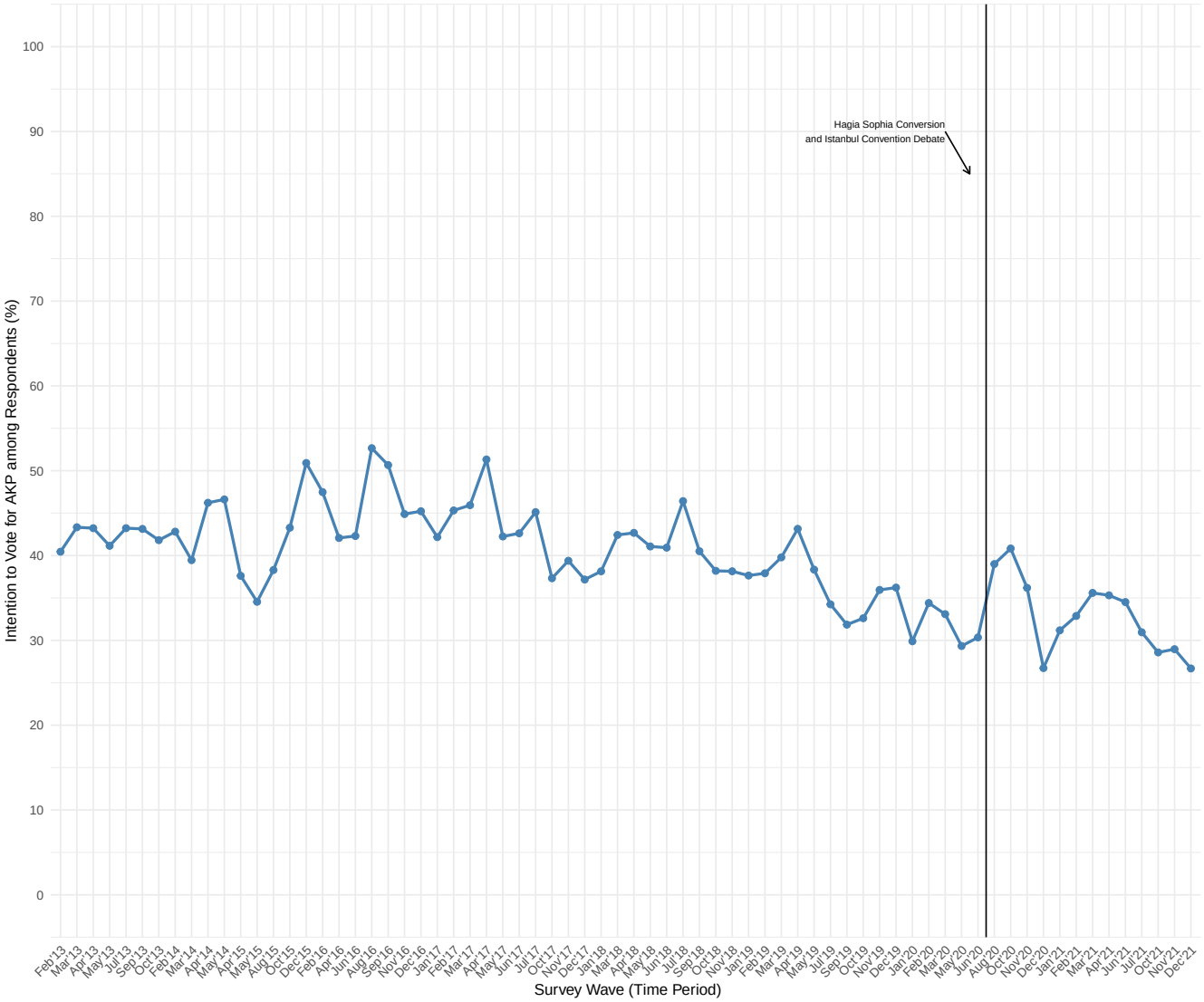

Figure 4.2: Distribution of respondents intention to vote for the AKP across survey waves (in %)

more (less) likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP if they were interviewed in August 2020—right after the religious legitimation strategies of July 2020—compared to their average intention to vote for the AKP in all other waves. This specification test H1. To test H2, I assess the same pattern for those who identify either as traditional conservative or modern. To further scrutinize these hypotheses, I also compare the estimated support for the AKP among all three groups in August 2020 with their support levels from June 2020. This way I compare regime support just before the religious legitimation strategies of July 2020 across three lifestyle categories with these groups' regime support just after July 2020.

Figure 4.3 shows the percentage of respondents who identify as religious conservative, traditional conservative, and modern. The ratio of respondents in each of the three categories remains stable across waves from February 2013 to February 2020. Starting in March 2020, these ratios fluctuate substantially. The changes in the frequency of the three categories are likely for two reasons. Firstly, in March and May 2020, due to restrictions on survey fieldwork during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Konda collected data through telephone calls, although they maintained the same clustering and quota sampling strategy, as before March 2020.[10] Secondly, the rest of the fluctuations are likely due to sampling errors caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of face-to-face interviews after May 2020. This may include non-response errors, which could be non-random (Brochu & Créchet, 2022). These fluctuations introduce an additional limitation to our study by indicating further problems in the randomness of the data. However, since Konda uses the same sample clusters and quotas for every survey wave, including those after March 2020, as I described in Section 4.4.2, I assume that the data remain comparable for my exploratory analysis. Importantly, Figure 4.3 shows that the ratios of lifestyle variables are at similar levels in June 2020 and August 2020, and both of the fieldwork was done with face-to-face interviews, so the data from just before and just after the religious legitimation strategies of the regime are comparable.

It is important to note the limitations of the measurement of religious conservatism in the dataset, from a conceptual perspective. Firstly, the distinction between "traditional" and "religious" conservatism in this dataset "is at best ambiguous" (Çarkoğlu, 2019, p. 8), since Turkish conservatism is rooted in religious values (Çarkoğlu & Kalaycioğlu, 2009, p. 29). Relatedly, existing studies that closely focus on what I conceptualize as religious ideology measure religious conservatism in Turkey as a latent variable capturing the intersection between the orthodoxy of Sunni religious attitudes and how conservative these attitudes are in terms of wanting to maintain the status quo in society (Çarkoğlu & Kalaycioğlu, 2009; Kalaycioğlu, 2007; Kalaycıoğlu, 2021). For instance, Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu (2009, p. 80), using factor analysis, distinguish between progressive and

[10]This information was disclosed to me by their fieldwork director after I requested clarification.

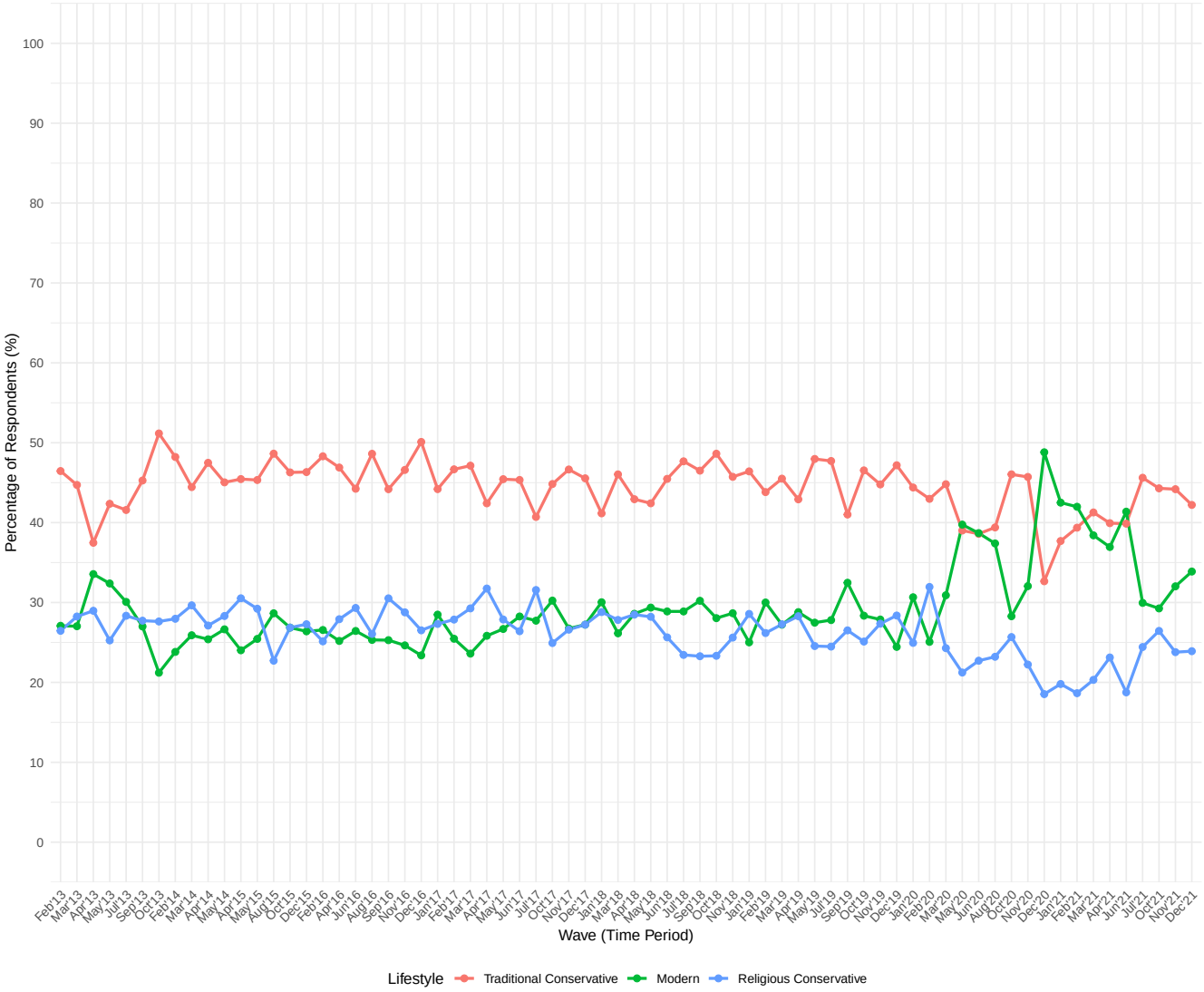

Figure 4.3: Distribution of respondents' self-identified lifestyles across survey waves (in %)

reactionary conservative policy positions, where progressivism is driven by factors such as positive attitudes toward freedoms and reactionary conservatism is driven by factors such as anti-abortion positions and advocating for the establishment of Quran courses for adolescents. I acknowledge that their measure better captures how a diverse set of policy positions may make an individual progressive as opposed to (religious) conservative. Yet, since I do not have access to such a diverse set of survey items, I do not follow their strategy.

Nonetheless, I use the religious conservatism measure due to its relevance to this study, while acknowledging its substantial limitations. The most important benefit of this measure is that it is available across all the survey waves, enabling me to test the

effect of the religious legitimation events in July 2020 while accounting for general trends in public support for the AKP. Furthermore, religious conservative self-identification aims to measure the intersection of religion with the respondent's worldviews, closely approximating what I label as religious ideology, rather than just measuring religious beliefs and practices. When respondents have the option to identify as religiously conservative in opposition to modern, this likely pushes them to think beyond religiosity, as individuals who identify as modern may still practice religion (Ciftci et al., 2019; N. J. Davis & Robinson, 2006). Furthermore, if we follow the existing work that utilizes the data, we could assume that this distinction tries to reflect the difference in conservative attitudes embedded in religious views and non-religious traditions (Kirdiş, 2022, p. 79) or assume that this distinction is hierarchical (Balta et al., 2023, p. 750) where identifying as religious conservative implies placing oneself as someone who considers the role of religion in their political ideology more than a regular conservative person. However, considering the limitations highlighted above, we could conclude that the traditional-religious conservative distinction in the dataset is far from perfect. Acknowledging the limitations of the measure, I provide models based on alternative measures in Appendix C.4, using religiosity instead of religious conservatism.

I include several control variables in the models to isolate the relationship between religious conservatism's interaction with August 2020 and the intention to vote for the AKP. To account for the potential confounding effects of demographic characteristics, I include the respondents' age group, educational attainment, sex, whether they live in rural areas, and whether they identify as Kurdish, as Kurdish identification affects political behavior in Turkey (Aytaç & Çarkoğlu, 2021). To account for the confounding effects of objective economic factors at the micro-level, I include whether the respondent is unemployed and whether they belong to the lower, lower-middle, middle, or upper class. To account for subjective economic factors, I include a variable that measures whether respondents think they will struggle financially next month. Additionally, I include the last party the respondent voted for, as this likely predicts their future vote in the Turkish context (Aytaç, 2018) and could be associated with their lifestyle.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that events beyond July 2020 could create heterogeneity among people who hold religious ideologies and those who do not. For this reason, I control for an additional set of events. Specifically, I include three additional interaction terms between lifestyle variables and survey waves that took place right after the Gezi protests of 2013 (July 2013), the corruption scandal in 2013 (February 2014), and the coup attempt on the 15th of July 2016 (August 2016). I include the Gezi Protests - the largest and most systematic protest against the AKP-Erdoğan regime - since the regime systematically started to publicly portray the opposition as the enemy and conservative groups as the true people after the protests (Özen, 2020). I include the corruption scandal of December 2013 - a public scandal where Erdoğan and his close associates' phone calls discussing corruption schemes were revealed - because Erdoğan and AKP argued that the Gülenists, that is an Islamist sect that follows the retired preacher Fethullah Gülen, were behind this conspiracy (Onbaşı, 2020). This may have disproportionately alienated the segments of the society who were supporting Gülen and who were likely religious conservatives.[11] Finally, I include the coup attempt - a failed coup attempt by predominantly low-level military officers against Erdoğan-, since it significantly made the regime's legitimation strategy ideological (Yilmaz et al., 2020) which would likely be perceived differently across different lifestyle groups.[12]

Finally, I include the city in which respondents live and the survey wave during which they were interviewed as fixed effects. This allows me to compare individuals within cities while keeping the survey wave constant, and to compare individuals within survey waves while keeping the city constant.[13] I cluster the standard errors of the model by city and survey wave to account for unobserved heterogeneity within survey waves and cities. I

[11]It is important to note that until that point, Gülen was an ally of the government. After the coup attempt on the 15th of July 2016, Gülen and his movement started to be considered terrorists by most (if not all) political movements in Turkey(Esen & Gumuscu, 2017).

[12]Additionally, the second paper of this dissertation studies the effect of the coup attempt on the Turkish regime's legitimation strategies. The findings of Chapter 3 provide substantial reasons to include the coup as an interaction term, as I show that the use of religious nationalism by Erdoğan significantly increased after the coup

[13]I include survey waves as dummies for each wave as opposed to regular fixed effects. I follow this approach since the independent variable is an interaction term that involves the survey waves, to be able to present the unmoderated coefficients and their level of uncertainty for each constitutive term of the interaction (Brambor et al., 2006).

also add the survey weights through the raking technique when estimating the models.

With this set of variables, I estimate a two-way fixed effects logistic regression model that has 152,979 observations. Descriptive Statistics of this model are presented in Appendix C.2 and the exact wording and details of the survey questions are presented in C.5. The model corresponds to the following equation, where traditional conservatism is the reference category for the lifestyle variable:

$$\begin{aligned}
\ln\left(\frac{P(\text{Vote for the AKP}=1)}{1-P(\text{Vote for the AKP}=1)}\right) &= \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Religious Conservative}_i \times \text{Wave August 2020} \\
&+ \beta_2 \text{Modern}_i \times \text{Wave August 2020} \\
&+ \beta_3 \text{Religious Conservative}_i \times \text{Wave July 2013} \\
&+ \beta_4 \text{Modern}_i \times \text{Wave July 2013} \\
&+ \beta_5 \text{Religious Conservative}_i \times \text{Wave February 2014} \\
&+ \beta_6 \text{Modern}_i \times \text{Wave February 2014} \\
&+ \beta_7 \text{Religious Conservative}_i \times \text{Wave August 2016} \\
&+ \beta_8 \text{Modern}_i \times \text{Wave August 2016} \\
&+ \sum_{k=9}^{n} \beta_k \text{Control Variables}_i \\
&+ \gamma_1 \text{Survey Waves}_i \\
&+ \gamma_2 \text{City}_i + \epsilon_{ij} \qquad (4.1)
\end{aligned}$$

I ran multiple robustness checks of the model above. Some of these models incorporate additional variables that were excluded from the original model due to their potentially endogenous nature. In particular, in the robustness models, I control for individuals' news consumption patterns to account for the confounding association between information sources, lifestyle, and voting patterns. Additionally, I control for whether respondents expect an economic crisis in the country next month. I also include religiosity as a control variable in one additional model. The religiosity variable includes four possible categories: "Non-Believer," "Believer," "Religious," and "Devout.". I excluded religiosity from the

original model because, despite their differences, religiosity and religious ideology are likely not orthogonal to each other. Additionally, I ran a model where I controlled for household income instead of economic class.[14]

4.5 Findings

I test the hypotheses outlined in section 4.3 through an interaction term between being interviewed in August 2020 and the self-identified lifestyle of the respondents. For this reason, I present the average marginal effects of each constitutive term of the interaction along with their confidence intervals (Brambor et al., 2006) to explain the findings. I provide the full regression tables for the model, I analyze in this section in the Appendix C.1 (denoted as main model).

Figure 4.4 presents the predicted intention to vote for the AKP across three lifestyle groups, comparing those respondents interviewed in August 2020 and outside August 2020. The vertical axis shows the average predicted intention to vote for the AKP, ranging from 0 to 1. The horizontal axis presents the lifestyle categories. The blue dots represent the average predicted likelihood for the respondents interviewed in August 2020, and the lines around the dots represent the 95% confidence intervals (CI's). The orange dots present the same values for the average predicted likelihood of groups interviewed outside of August 2020. These estimates are based on the multivariate two-way fixed-effect model described in section 4.4.3.

Figure 4.4 supports my hypotheses that religious legitimation strategies increase support among those with a religious ideology (H1) while having no substantive effect on those without (H2). The average predicted intention to vote for the AKP is 0.67 % across all months for religious conservatives, whereas this value increases to 0.73% in August 2020. Accordingly, religious conservatives are 6 percentage points more likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP in August 2020, compared to their average likelihood in

[14]I opted for economic class in the original model since the economic class variable also accounts for the number of residents in the house and car ownership (see Appendix C.5. Furthermore, due to the economic crisis and high inflation that has persisted in Turkey since 2018 (Orhangazi & Yeldan, 2021), income measures are likely not comparable across the 10 years, despite the survey wave fixed effects.

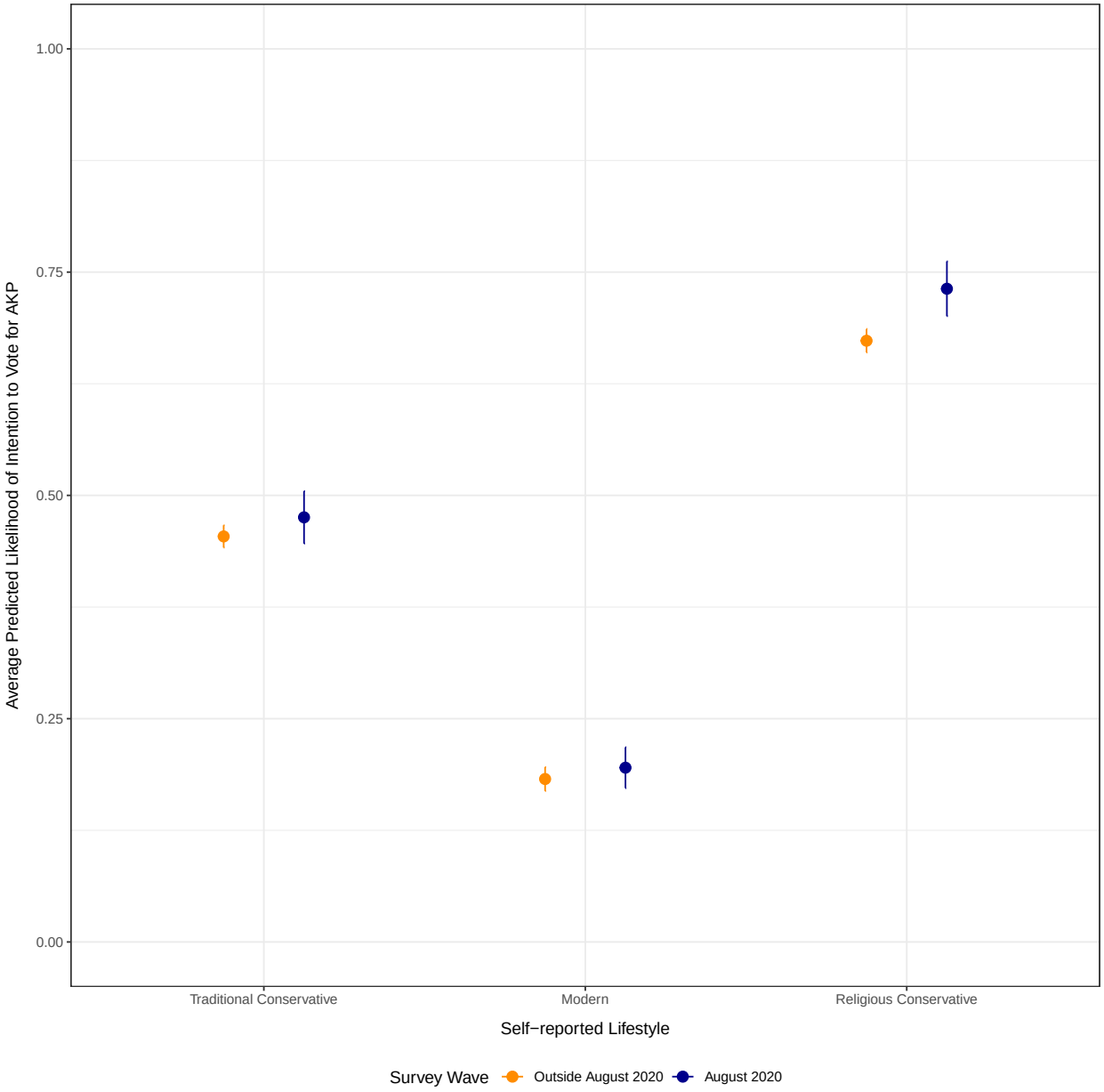

Figure 4.4: Average predicted intention to vote for the AKP across three lifestyle groups in and outside of August 2020. The estimates are derived from transforming interaction terms into average marginal predictions and are presented with standard errors clustered by city of respondents and survey wave.

every other month, and this difference is significant at the 99 % CI.

In contrast, traditional conservatives are only approximately 2 percentage points more likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP in August 2020 compared to their average for every other month (from 0.45 % to 0.47 %), and those who identify as modern are just 1 percentage point more likely to indicate an intention to vote for the AKP in August 2020 compared to their average (from 0.18 % to 0.19 %). Furthermore, the change

in intention to vote for the AKP in August 2020 for those who identify as traditional conservatives or modern is not statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, in comparison to their average.

Importantly, the difference in the predicted intention vote for the AKP between religious conservatives and traditional conservatives increases by 3 percentage points in August 2020 compared to the average difference between these two groups across all the other months (from 0.05 % to 0.08 %), and this increase is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval. This suggests that, on average, the religious legitimation strategies of July 2020 did not affect those who identify as traditional conservative or modern, in comparison to those who identify as a religious conservative, if we consider the average support of these groups across all the survey waves as baseline.

Overall, if we trust the survey design and measurement of variables despite their major shortcomings, the analysis of Figure 4.4 supports my expectation that debates around the Istanbul Convention and Hagia Sophia's conversion to a mosque made religious conservatives more likely to vote for the AKP than they otherwise would (H1). Furthermore, as I expect, we do not observe such a pattern for those who identify as traditional conservatives or modern (H2).

The analysis of Figure 4.4 provides general support for my hypotheses but does not assess the effect of the Istanbul Convention debate and Hagia Sophia conversion in comparison to the pre-trend of intention to vote for the AKP across lifestyle groups, nor does it address whether their effects are long-lasting. To address these two issues, I estimate the average marginal predicted likelihood of voting for the AKP for each lifestyle group for each month. Figure 4.5 visualizes the findings of this estimation. The vertical axis represents the average predicted likelihood to intend to vote for the AKP. The horizontal axis represents each survey wave available in the model. The blue line shows the trend for religious conservatives, the red line shows the trend for traditional conservatives, and the green line shows the trend for those who identify as modern.

Figure 4.5 shows further evidence supporting H1. According to Figure 4.5 the average predicted intention to vote for the AKP substantially increases in August 2020 compared to

June 2020. In June 2020, the average predicted support is 0.65%, and this value increases by 8 percentage points to 0.73%, in August. This increase is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. Furthermore, in August 2020, predicted support for the AKP among religious conservatives reaches its highest level since April 2019. These trends provide further evidence of the effect of the religious legitimation strategies of July 2020 on regime support among citizens who identify as religious conservatives.

However, Figure 4.5 provides mixed evidence for H2. Figure 4.5 shows that predicted intention to vote for the AKP among those who identify as traditional conservatives or modern also increases from June 2020 to August 2020. Among those who identify as traditional conservatives, predicted support for the AKP increases by 8 percentage points from 0.39 in June 2020 to 0.47 in August 2020. Among those who identify as modern, predicted support for the AKP increases by 5 percentage points from 0.14 in June 2020 to 0.19 in August 2020. Furthermore, these increases are significantly higher than 0 at the 99% confidence level. Accordingly, the effect of the religious legitimation strategies of July 2020 on religious conservatives is equal to that of traditional conservatives, while it is larger than those that identify as modern. These trends suggest that the effect of the regime's religious legitimation strategies is equally effective for those who identify as traditional conservatives, going against H2. However, it is important to bear in mind that Figure 4.5 only provides further insights into time trends and does not explicitly test the interaction effect as hypothesized.

Finally, Figure 4.5 shows that the effect of the regime's religious legitimation strategies is likely not long-lasting. Although support for the AKP among religious conservatives increases from 0.65 in June 2020 to 0.73 in August 2020, it decreases by 0.18 percentage points to 0.55 by December 2021. I did not hypothesize a long-lasting effect in this paper, and this appears to be in line with the trends in the data.

If we trust the analysis despite the data's major shortcomings or at least consider it as exploratory evidence, combined evidence from the assessment of the interaction term and analysis of the time trends supports Hypothesis 1 and provide mixed evidence for Hypothesis 2 (see Section 4.3).

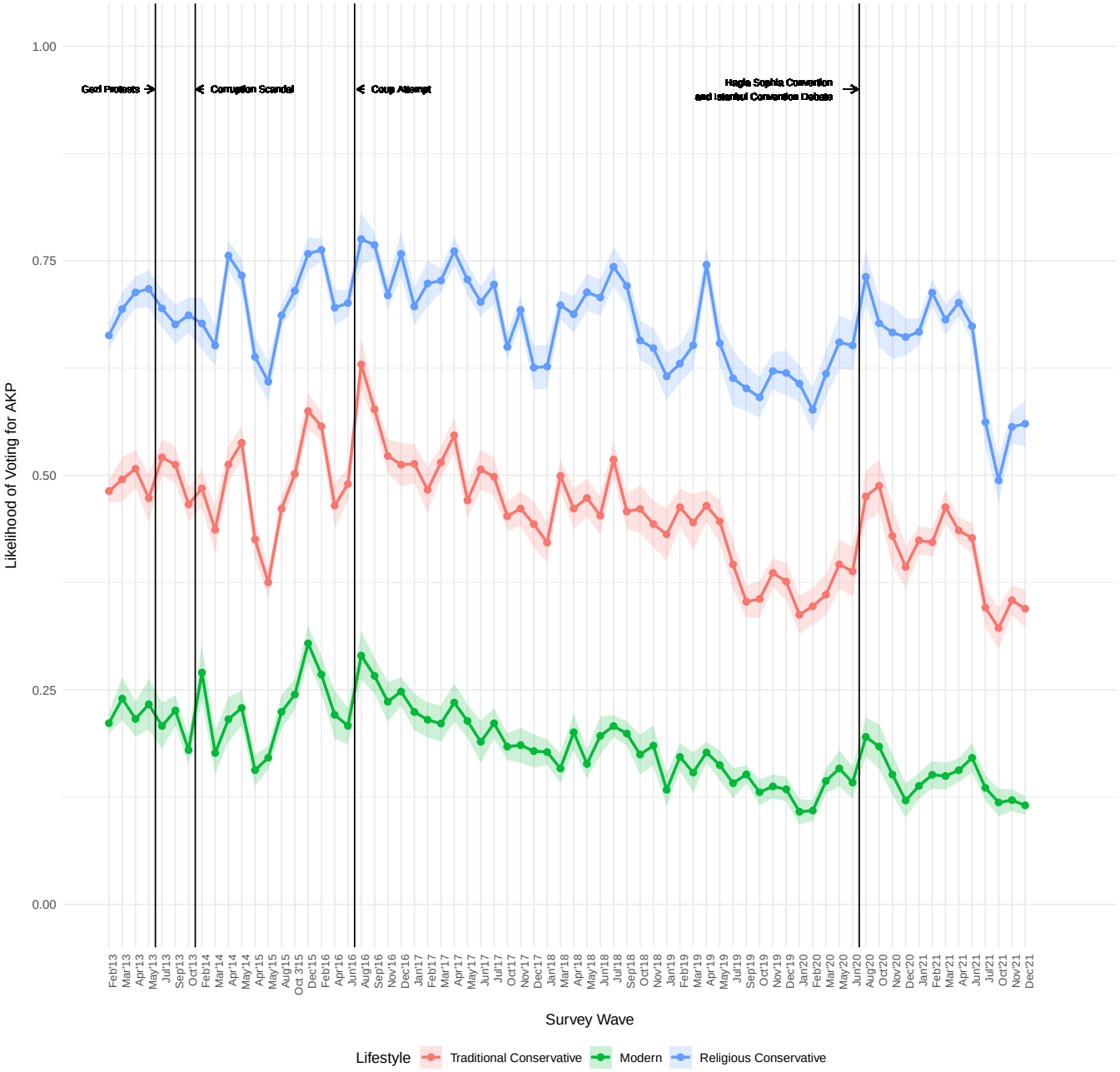

Figure 4.5: Average predicted intention to vote for the AKP across three lifestyle groups over time. The estimates are the average marginal effect of each lifestyle group across survey waves and are presented with standard errors clustered by city of respondents and survey wave.

These results are robust to alternative specifications, including a model where no raking (weighting) is implemented, a model with NUTS-1 region fixed effects, a model with district fixed effects, a model where religiosity in addition to religious ideology and

potentially endogenous variables including news consumption patterns and expectations of an economic crisis are controlled, a model where I control for the household income instead of economic class, and a model in which I exclude observations after August 2020. The full regression tables of these models are presented in Appendix C.1. I include the model that excludes observations after August 2020 as an additional check since one could argue that these observations are "treated" by the religious legitimation strategies of July 2020. I additionally provide the figures for average marginal effects for this model in appendix C.3.

Finally, as I establish in Section 4.2 , self-identified religiosity —rather than religious ideology— could be considered a relevant variable for this study. In light of this, I test a model that assesses the interaction between August 2020 and a survey item measuring religiosity, instead of the interaction between August 2020 and Lifestyle. The results of this model are presented visually in Appendix C.4. The analysis shows that individuals categorized as "Devout" or "Religious" became significantly more likely to support the AKP after July 2020. In contrast, the effect is much smaller for those categorized as "Believer," and a negative effect is observed for those categorized as "Non-Believer".

4.6 Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, I investigate how religious legitimation strategies affect popular support for autocratic regimes. I argue that these strategies increase regime support among citizens whose political views are shaped by their religious beliefs while having no effect on those without a religious ideology. To test this argument, I focus on Turkey and utilize the Konda Barometer, a repeated cross-sectional commercial survey. Using a regression model with city- and month-level fixed effects and demographic controls, I compare regime support among religious conservatives—those with a religious ideology—and those identifying as traditional conservatives or modern, before and after two key religious legitimation events in July 2020: the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque and the regime-led debate on withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention.

The findings suggest that religious legitimation strategies increase regime support among citizens with a religious ideology. In particular, I find that in Turkey, average support for the ruling AKP among those who identify as religious conservatives increases by 6% immediately after July 2020, compared to their group average across all survey waves, and by 8% compared to right before July 2020. However, the findings also suggest that religious legitimation strategies increase regime support among non-religious conservatives. I find that support for the AKP among those who identify as traditional conservatives or modern does not substantially increase relative to their group average across all waves. Yet, support for the AKP among those who identify as traditional conservatives still shows an 8% increase in support immediately after July 2020 compared to right before. I consider these findings as exploratory evidence on the positive effect of religious legitimation strategies on the regime support of citizens with a religious ideology. However, I acknowledge that, based on the results of the study, the effect extends to all citizens who identify as conservative.

This study has one major limitation: I leverage a dataset based on a repeated cross-sectional survey, rather than a panel, which is based on purposive quota sampling instead of random sampling and categorizes lifestyles as modern, traditional conservative, and religious conservative. The repeated cross-sectional nature of the data means that respondents are treated as similar based on their observable characteristics. The use of quota sampling implies that we cannot generalize the results to the Turkish population. Additionally, the operationalization of lifestyle categories requires trusting respondents to differentiate between traditional and religious conservatism. Given these limitations, this study serves as an exploratory exercise in examining the effects of religious legitimation among citizens in autocracies. However, this limitation has a significant implication: scholars of autocratic politics must invest in producing representative panel surveys with multiple waves if we are to study the dynamic nature of public opinion in autocracies. While such an effort would be costly, the exploratory findings of this study suggest that it is necessary.

This exploratory study contributes to the study of public opinion in autocracies in

two related ways. Firstly, I show that religious legitimation strategies increase public support for authoritarian regimes, especially among citizens with religious ideologies. This suggests that instrumentalizing religion creates legitimacy for autocrats, as theorized elsewhere (Dukalskis, 2017, p. 255, Schleutker, 2021, p. 229). This finding implies that politicizing religion helps autocrats gain support at a low cost when segments of the population view politics through the lens of religious beliefs. Thus, autocrats do not gain popularity solely because they convince the public of their competence (Guriev & Treisman, 2020b) or merely because of their economic performance (Lucardi, 2019); they also gain popularity because they signal to the population that the regime protects their values. Secondly, I show that the support of citizens with religious ideologies for autocrats is dynamic and particularly depends on how autocrats use religion. This finding implies that citizens with religion-driven political beliefs are not prone to support autocracies simply because their values are status-quo-oriented and conservative, as some existing work implies (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Tessler, 2002). Rather, I show that individuals who hold religion-driven conservative beliefs positively adjust their attitudes toward the regime when exposed to religious legitimation. Thus, I suggest that while whether an individual has a religious ideology could be static, their effects vary over time. Together, these contributions highlight that religion is an essential factor in understanding public opinion in autocracies.

5 Conclusion and Implications of the Dissertation

In this cumulative dissertation, I studied authoritarian regimes' use of ideologies—ideas such as nationalism, politicized religion, socialism, and conservatism—to legitimize their rule publicly through claims and policies. In Chapter 2 (Paper 1), I identify ideological legitimation as a tool of regime survival and repression in autocracies. In Chapter 3 (Paper 2), I show ideological legitimation claims as adaptive discourses that transform in intensity and usage after crises. In Chapter 4 (Paper 3), I demonstrate ideological legitimation as a strategy that autocrats use to alter their public popularity. Collectively, with the three papers of this dissertation, I underscore the crucial role of ideological legitimation strategies for the stability and adaptability of autocracies. Furthermore, the papers of this dissertation complement each other by analyzing the role of ideology in autocracies at different levels. While Chapter 2 shows the importance of ideological claims at the global level, Chapter 3 highlights the relevance of ideological claims at the within-regime level, and Chapter 4 demonstrates the significance of ideological legitimation at the citizen level. In this way, I present a comprehensive picture of the causes and consequences of ideological legitimation in autocracies.

In Chapter 2, I used data from the V-Dem RLES expert survey (1900–2023, n = 8,727). I fit a TWFE multivariate model to assess the effect of the degree of ideological claims—i.e., to what extent a regime uses ideology—on the survival of authoritarian regimes and their level of repression. I found that, on average, ideological claims significantly increase the chances of survival and the intensity of repression in autocracies.

In Chapter 3, I used text-as-data methods and interrupted time-series regression to analyze ideological claims in speeches of President Erdoğan of Turkey (2014–2022, n = 7,175). In this paper, I compared changes in the intensity and framing usage of ideological claims in authoritarian regimes, leveraging the coup attempt in July 2016 in Turkey as an exogenous shock. I found that crises increase the intensity of ideological claims in the short run and their usage against domestic and foreign enemies of authoritarian regimes in the long run.

In Chapter 4, I used a repeated-cross-sectional public opinion dataset from Turkey (2013–2021, n = 152,979) to assess the effect of religious legitimation strategies, a subtype of ideological legitimation. Leveraging the distinct timing of the Turkish regime's two simultaneous religious legitimation strategies—the transformation of the Hagia Sophia museum into a mosque and the regime-driven public debate on Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention—I identified the effects of religious legitimation strategies on regime support levels of citizens with and without religious ideology. The results suggest that while religious legitimation strategies boost the support of autocrats among people with religious ideology, this pattern of boost extends to non-religious conservative ideologies.

I inform our understanding of autocratic politics in three important ways with this dissertation. Firstly, I show that ideological legitimation strategies are substantial for the survival and popularity of autocracies. My findings in Chapter 2 imply that ideologies are relevant for the stability of autocracies, regardless of whether they are codified or not and irrespective of the period one might think of. Furthermore, my findings in Chapter 3 imply that ideologies not only contribute to regime stability through uniting elite cadres emotionally (Levitsky & Way, 2013) or indoctrinating citizens with a set of concrete attitudes (Kao, 2021); Use of ideological legitimation strategies helps autocrats guide public opinion in their favor. With the findings, I identify the relational nature of the legitimation strategies of autocrats and the legitimacy beliefs of citizens, in line with theoretical discussions in the existing research (Gerschewski, 2018b, p. 661; Von Soest and Grauvogel, 2017).

My findings on the role of ideology in the survival and popularity of autocrats should guide future work. For instance, scholars could use vignette experiments (Hainmueller et al., 2015) to study the effects of ideological legitimation claims on public opinion in autocracies. These designs could be useful to identify if the ideological framing towards regime outsiders I highlight in Chapter 3 would increase regime support. Indeed, a few studies provide evidence in this direction in the context of Turkey (Aytaç, 2021; Neundorf et al., 2024), without explicitly testing the effects of ideological framing of domestic and foreign "enemies" of the regime.

Secondly, I show that the ideological claims of autocrats can be reactionary and adapt to challenges. My findings in Chapter 3 imply that autocrats use ideological claims as a reaction to the uncertainties crises create and adapt their ideological claims to blame outsiders for crises. These implications suggest that when we study ideological legitimation, we also have to study "ideological change". This suggestion aligns with the implications of research on closed authoritarian regimes with no elections (Alrababa'h & Blaydes, 2021b; Boussalis et al., 2023a; Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2020). Taking ideological change seriously implies that ideological claims are dynamic strategies. For comparative research, this would imply that we should not solely focus on categorizing the types of ideological claims in terms of their content (Tannenberg et al., 2021). Instead, we should focus on the periods in which different ideological claims are used. For instance,this approach would help us better understand why a regime with a strict secular ideology would utilize religion on occasion, as in the case of Baathist Egypt (Schlumberger, 2010).

The adaptive and reactive nature of ideological claims in autocracies should guide future studies. With text-as-data tools growing as a method in political science (Birkenmaier et al., 2024), replicating and expanding the reaction and adaptation hypotheses I highlighted in this dissertation and highlighted by other researchers (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2020) seems straightforward. Large-scale research projects with the resources to scrape speeches from autocratic leaders around the world could compare the changes in the ideological claims of autocrats after moments of social unrest, such as protests, which are likely comparable indicators of unpopularity across autocracies (Dukalskis & Patane, 2019).

Furthermore, my research design could be expanded to study how autocrats react to less system-threatening challenges, such as elite defections (Río, 2022), and minor decreases in public approval ratings of autocratic regimes, in cases where such data is available.

Thirdly, I highlight temporality as a methodological tool for studying political change in autocracies. In Chapter 3, I highlight the advantages of using exogenous shocks to trace changes in the discourses of the autocratic elite, including ideological ones. In Chapter 4, I highlight the advantages of using distinct timing of policies to study changes in public attitudes towards the regime. With these empirical strategies, I provide examples of using time to make causal inferences about political changes in autocracies. Indeed, a few studies exploit the temporality of events to make causal inferences in autocracies. The examples include the analysis of the effects of martial laws on protest behavior in Pinochet's Chile (Sánchez-Barría, 2022), the effect of journalist expulsions on their coverage of the regime in China (DeButts & Pan, 2024), and the effect of internet bans on protest behavior during the Arab Spring in Egypt (Hassanpour, 2014). Yet, none of these studies focus on the changing effects and content of the regime's legitimation strategies. I suggest that legitimation should also be studied causally by exploiting temporality. For instance, the introduction of welfare programs and sudden changes in minimum salary could be used to track changes in public opinion towards the regime among the poor, using RCS or panel data. Similarly, we can study how regional conflicts and public policy failures change the ideological discourses of authoritarian regimes. This would help us better understand if autocrats use ideology as a substitution for their performance failures. Thus, with the empirical strategies I followed in this dissertation, I invite scholars of autocratic politics to use time as a tool for establishing causality.

A Appendix of Chapter 2

A.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	N of Missing Values
Ideological Claims	0.487	1.371	-2.998	3.743	111
Repression	0.606	0.211	0.053	0.991	0
Performance Claims	0.032	1.282	-4.268	3.189	110
Procedural Claims	-0.220	1.134	-3.728	2.898	110
Personalist Claims	0.807	1.285	-2.829	3.577	110
Religious Claims	0.152	0.235	0.000	1.000	108
Nationalist Claims	0.557	0.264	0.000	1.000	108
Conservative Claims	0.357	0.266	0.000	1.000	108
Socialist Claims	0.232	0.315	0.000	1.000	108
Separatist Claims	0.042	0.090	0.000	0.625	108
Cooptation	0.765	0.216	0.000	1.000	108
GDP	15282.104	82909.714	19.889	227909.269	314

Table A.1: Descriptive Statistics

A.2 Robustness Checks

Dependent Variable:	Regime Survival (1= Survival, 0 = Collapse)			
Model:	No GDP, No Lag	No GDP	Closed Regime Types	No Transitional or Partial Occupied Countries
Variables				
Ideological Claims	1.252*	1.294*	1.259*	1.250*
	(0.217)	(0.237)	(0.219)	(0.217)
Performance Claims	1.310**	1.267*	1.321**	1.347**
	(0.174)	(0.182)	(0.186)	(0.192)
Procedural Claims	1.309*	1.523**	1.299*	1.313*
	(0.219)	(0.237)	(0.239)	(0.233)
Personalist Claims	1.269**	1.250*	1.274*	1.279**
	(0.178)	(0.186)	(0.198)	(0.186)
Repression	7.040***	6.131***	6.506***	5.728***
	(0.935)	(0.986)	(0.860)	(0.987)
Cooptation	5.189***	4.537***	5.566***	5.898***
	(0.584)	(0.599)	(0.626)	(0.639)
Religious Claims	2.191	2.560*	2.052	2.435
	(1.064)	(1.065)	(1.064)	(1.182)
Nationalist Claims	0.475*	0.348*	0.493*	0.422*
	(0.813)	(0.816)	(0.780)	(0.842)
Conservative Claims	1.066	0.695	1.062	0.925
	(0.938)	(0.942)	(0.948)	(0.974)
Socialist Claims	0.839	0.761	0.654	0.811
	(1.019)	(1.074)	(1.103)	(1.088)
Separatist Claims	0.826	0.700	0.933	0.605
	(1.692)	(1.688)	(1.703)	(2.038)
Competitive Authoritarian	0.970	1.336		0.931
	(0.364)	(0.376)		(0.405)
Hegemonic Authoritarian	1.080	1.173		1.022
	(0.272)	(0.280)		(0.286)
GDP (logged)			1.120	1.037
			(0.337)	(0.339)
Military Regime			0.800	
			(0.713)	
Mixed Regime			0.780	
			(0.613)	
Multiparty Regime			1.887	
			(1.891)	
Personalist Regime			1.029	
			(0.639)	
SingleParty Regime			2.055	
			(1.153)	
Fixed-effects				
country	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	7,644	7,336	7,381	7,274
Squared Correlation	0.11374	0.10744	0.11822	0.10951
Pseudo R^2	0.14964	0.14438	0.15374	0.14748
BIC	6,656.0	6,407.3	6,503.4	6,288.3

The standard errors in parentheses are clustered by country and year. The coefficients are odds ratios of independent variables
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05*

Table A.2: Robustness Checks for H1

Dependent Variable:			Repression	
Model:	No GDP No Lag	No GDP	Closed Regime Types	No Transitional or Partial Occupied Countries
Variables				
Ideological Claims	0.0474***	0.0478***	0.0537***	0.0501***
	(0.0067)	(0.0067)	(0.0067)	(0.0067)
Performance Claims	-0.0163*	-0.0158*	-0.0147*	-0.0176*
	(0.0088)	(0.0090)	(0.0079)	(0.0096)
Procedural Claims	-0.0524***	-0.0525***	-0.0683***	-0.0519***
	(0.0091)	(0.0093)	(0.0085)	(0.0093)
Personalist Claims	0.0247***	0.0245***	0.0321***	0.0243***
	(0.0061)	(0.0062)	(0.0065)	(0.0063)
Religious Claims	-0.0165	-0.0192	-0.0471	-0.0214
	(0.0423)	(0.0439)	(0.0504)	(0.0501)
Nationalist Claims	-0.0409	-0.0433	-0.0209	-0.0504
	(0.0396)	(0.0408)	(0.0425)	(0.0443)
Conservative Claims	-0.0439	-0.0451	0.0023	-0.0522
	(0.0401)	(0.0416)	(0.0443)	(0.0437)
Socialist Claims	-0.0102	-0.0147	-0.0499	-0.0264
	(0.0441)	(0.0459)	(0.0508)	(0.0492)
Separatist Claims	-0.1153*	-0.1124	-0.1452*	-0.1282*
	(0.0646)	(0.0680)	(0.0757)	(0.0700)
Competitive Authoritarian	-0.1503***	-0.1496***		-0.1453***
	(0.0154)	(0.0160)		(0.0158)
Hegemonic Authoritarian	-0.0362***	-0.0381***		-0.0374***
	(0.0103)	(0.0103)		(0.0102)
Cooptation	0.0670***	0.0731***	0.0585**	0.0761***
	(0.0255)	(0.0261)	(0.0261)	(0.0257)
GDP (logged)			0.0026	0.0017
			(0.0109)	(0.0098)
Military Regime			0.0790***	
			(0.0269)	
Mixed Regime			0.0268	
			(0.0242)	
Multiparty Regime			0.0747	
			(0.0483)	
Personalist Regime			0.0004	
			(0.0271)	
SingleParty Regime			0.1610***	
			(0.0398)	
Fixed-effects				
country	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	8,616	8,346	8,305	8,252
R^2	0.84629	0.84785	0.83642	0.85163
Within R^2	0.56239	0.56234	0.53457	0.57258

Clustered (country & year) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05*

Table A.3: Robustness Checks for H2

A.3 Cases of No Variance

- **Countries that have no observations of regime collapse:** Djibouti (1977-2023), Eritrea (1993-2023), Eswatini (1968-2023), India (2017-2023), Jordan (1946-2023), Kazakhstan (1991-2023), Mauritius (2023), Morocco (1900-2023), Mozambique (1975-2023), North Korea (1948-2023), Oman (1900-2023), Papua New Guinea (2007-2023), Saudi Arabia (1932-2023), Singapore (1965-2023), South Sudan (2011-2023),Tanzania (1962-2023), Turkmenistan (1991-2023), United Arab Emirates (1971-2023),Uzbekistan (1991-2023), Vietnam (1990-2022)

- **Countries that have no observations of regime survival:** Botswana (1966), Finland (1917), Ireland (1921), Israel (1948), Kosovo (2011)

A.4 Recoded Cases

In the following, I state the cases I manually recoded, along with the reason for coding.

- **Azerbaijan 1992:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: In 1993, Aliyev came to power, so I consider 1992 as the last year of the Azerbaijani Popular Front Party rule.

- **Belarus 1991:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: In 1991, Belarus was a transitional republic, and the President of the country (Chairman of the Supreme Council) changed by 1992.

- **Georgia 1994:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: In 1995, Shevardnadze was installed as the new President, which I consider a breakaway from the previous regime.

- **Georgia 2009:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: Georgia democratized by 2010, and since 2009 is the last year of autocratic rule, I code this year as a case of autocratic collapse.

- **Kyrgyzstan 2004:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: In 2005, due to the Tulip Revolution, the regime changed. V-Dem codes 2004 as the last year of Akayev's presidency, so I consider 2004 as the last year of his autocratic rule.

- **Kyrgyzstan 2009:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: In 2010, due to the so-called "April Events," Kyrgyzstan became a parliamentary republic, and President Bakiyev resigned, so I consider 2009 as the last year of presidential autocratic rule.

- **Kyrgyzstan 2020:** recoded from 1 to 0

Reason: Protests surrounding the 2020 Parliamentary elections led to the resignation of President Jeenbekov, leading to the rule of President Japorov, who has been in power since.

- **Moldova 1991:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: Moldova democratized under the rule of President Snegur in 1992, so 1991 was the last and only year under autocratic rule until 2005.

- **Tajikistan 1991:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: The current regime in Tajikistan, under the rule of President Rahmon, started in 1991, and the presidents who ruled during 1991 were members of the Communist Party of Tajikistan, being a different set of elites than Rahmon.

- **Ukraine 2004:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: Given that after the Orange Revolution and the 2004 elections, Pro-Russian Kuchma lost power, I code 2004 as a year of regime change in Ukraine.

- **Russia 1921:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The Russian Federative Soviet Republic was followed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, although V-Dem codes these two regimes differently. Given the continuity of the elite, I treat them as one regime.

- **Russia 1992:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The Soviet Union had already dissolved in 1991, and President Yeltsin's rule and the Russian Federation were established.

- **Russia 1999:** recoded from 1 to 0

  Reason: President Yeltsin resigned, and the de facto rule of President Putin started.

- **China 1981:** recoded from 0 to 1

Reason: The Communist Party of China has been in power since 1949 until today.

- **China 2017:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The Communist Party of China has been in power since 1949 until today.

- **Czechia 1988:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The Velvet Revolution happened in 1989, not 1988.

- **Equatorial Guinea 2020:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The President who came to power in 1979 is still in power.

- **Kazakhstan 2021:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: President Toqaev, successor of President Nazarbaev, is still in power.

- **Central African Republic 2022:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: President Touadéra was re-elected in 2020 and is still in power.

- **Central African Republic 2023:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: President Touadéra was re-elected in 2020 and is still in power.

- **Mali 2022:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The military junta that came to power in 2020 is still in power.

- **Mali 2023:** recoded from 0 to 1

  Reason: The military junta that came to power in 2020 is still in power.

A.5 Model Specification

The Equation A.1 below represents the models fit to test hypothesis 1 in section 2.6.1. In the model λ_i represents the country's fixed effects and δ_t represents the time fixed effects.

$$\begin{aligned}\ln\left(\frac{P(\text{Regime Survival}_{it}=1)}{1-P(\text{Regime Survival}_{it}=1)}\right) &= \alpha+\beta_1\text{Ideological Claims}_{i,t-1}\\ &+\sum_{k=2}^{n}\beta_k\text{Control Variables}_{i,t-1}+\lambda_i+\delta_t+\epsilon_{it}\end{aligned} \tag{A.1}$$

The Equation A.2 below represents the models fit to test hypothesis 2 in section 2.6.2. In the model λ_i represents the country's fixed effects and δ_t represents the time fixed effects.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Repression Level}_{it} &= \alpha+\beta_1\text{Ideological Claims}_{i,t-1}\\ &+\sum_{k=2}^{n}\beta_k\text{Control Variables}_{i,t-1}+\lambda_i+\delta_t+\epsilon_{it}\end{aligned} \tag{A.2}$$

B Appendix of Chapter 3

B.1 Dictionary Terms in English

Dictionary Terms (in English)		
Ideological Legitimation Terms	Procedural Legitimation Terms	Performance Legitimation Terms
My State	Authoritarian	Defence
Khan	Dictator	Growth
Treason	Oppression	Job
Malazgirt	Corrupt	Business
Sultan	Plural	Education
Holy	Equal	Development
Hero	Fair	Percent
Martyr	Free	Welfare
Islam	Peace	Prosperity
Muslim	Mediate	Bridge
Mosque	Negotiate	Industry
Homeland	Referendum	Inflation
My Religion	Negotiate	Interest
Separatist	Transparent	Health
Ancestor	Violate	Unemployement
Victory	Volunteer	Stability
Glory	Vote	Technology
Heritage	Anti-Democratic	Crisis
Honor	Constitution	Dam
Grandchild	Judiciary	Plant
Ottoman	Local	Factory
Morality	Justice	Economy
Obscene	Tolerance	Housing
Deviant	Justice 2	Construction
Tradition	Judicial	Wage
Spirit	Right	Debt
My Country	Minority	Salary
Flag	Ballot box	IMF
Traitor	Legitimate	Car
Generation	Law	Refrigetor
Veteran	Institution	Queue
Flag	Parliament	Hospital
Flag 2	Tutelary	Airport
Faith	Democracy	Road
Survival (of state)		Capital
My Nation		Bank
		Agriculture
		Saving
		Reform

Table B.1: Dictionary terms for measuring legitimation claims in English

B.2 Dictionary Terms in Turkish

Dictionary Terms (in Turkish)		
Ideological Legitimation Terms	Procedural Legitimation Terms	Performance Legitimation Terms
devletim*	otoriter*	savunma
han	dikta*	büyüme*
ihane*	otokra*	iş*
malazgirt*	baskı*	eğit*
feth*	yolsuz*	kalkın*
fetih*	ayrım*	yatır*
sultan	çoğul*	yüzde*
hazre*	eşit*	refah*
kahrama*	adil*	köpr*
şehit*	özgürl*	sanay*
islam*	barış*	enflas*
müsl*	arabulucu*	faiz*
peygambe*	müzakere*	sağlık*
minar*	referandum*	işsiz*
camii*	şeffaf*	istikrar*
vatan	ihlal*	teknoloji*
vatan-millet	gönüllü*	kriz*
vatana	oyl*	baraj*
vatanda	anti-demokratik	tesis*
vatandaki	anayasa*	fabrika*
vatandan	yargı*	iktisa*
vatani*	yerel*	konut*
vatanı*	adalet*	inşaat*
vatanla*	hoşgör*	ücret*
vatanp*	adaletl*	dolar*
vatans*	adli*	borç*
dinim*	hakla*	maaş
bölüc*	azınlık*	IMF
ecda*	sandık*	araba*
zafer*	meşru*	buzdola*
şanlıdır	hukuk*	kuyru*
şanlı	kurum*	hastan*
şanla	meclis*	havalimanı
miras*	vesaye*	yol
namus*	demok*	sermaye*
		banka*
		endüstri
		proje*
		otomobil*
		tarım*
		tasarruf*
		reform

Table B.2: Dictionary terms for measuring legitimation claims in Turkish

B.3 Model Results with Full Data

	Dependent variable:		
	Ideological Legitimation (square-rooted)	Procedural Legitimation (square-rooted)	Performance Legitimation (square-rooted)
Model Number	(1)	(2)	(3)
After the Coup Attempt (Immediate Effect)	0.864*	0.870**	−0.346
	(0.339)	(0.303)	(0.350)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt (Secular Trend)	−0.001	−0.003	−0.002
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt^2 (Secular Trend)	−0.0000033	−0.0000016	−0.0000014
	(0.0000027)	(0.0000025)	(0.0000026)
After the Coup Attempt: Time Distance	−0.00054	0.0029	0.0030
	(0.0019)	(0.0017)	(0.0019)
After the Coup Attempt: Time Distance^2	0.0000038	0.0000017	0.0000012
	(0.0000027)	(0.0000025)	(0.0000026)
Civil Society Event	−0.873***	−0.035	−0.082
	(0.143)	(0.160)	(0.184)
Educational Institution Event	−0.823***	−0.800***	0.052
	(0.152)	(0.143)	(0.209)
International Event	−1.862***	0.142	0.850***
	(0.151)	(0.133)	(0.189)
Political Elite Event	−0.362*	1.001***	−0.093
	(0.144)	(0.202)	(0.188)
Project Event	−1.128***	−0.744***	2.144***
	(0.133)	(0.116)	(0.159)
Religious or Memorial Event	1.912***	−0.528***	−1.460***
	(0.182)	(0.146)	(0.158)
Length of the Speech (logged)	1.692***	1.970***	2.684***
	(0.075)	(0.083)	(0.112)
Constant	−6.961***	−11.076***	−14.991***
	(0.633)	(0.636)	(0.847)
Observations	1,181	1,181	1,181
R^2	0.594	0.489	0.545
Adjusted R^2	0.590	0.484	0.540
Note:			*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table B.3: Model results with full data for the effect of coup attempt on legitimation strategies presented with heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors in parentheses

B.4 Model Results with Equal Time

	Dependent variable:		
	Ideological Legitimation (square-rooted)	Procedural Legitimation (square-rooted)	Performance Legitimation (square-rooted)
Model Number	(1)	(2)	(3)
After the Coup Attempt (Immediate Effect)	1.221** (0.446)	1.169** (0.419)	−0.333 (0.461)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt (Secular Trend)	−0.0002 (0.002)	−0.003 (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt^2 (Secular Trend^2)	−0.0000017 (0.000003)	−0.0000011 (0.000003)	−0.0000027 (0.000003)
Civil Society Event	−1.460*** (0.236)	−0.007 (0.234)	0.398 (0.271)
Educational Institution Event	−1.606*** (0.259)	−0.776*** (0.217)	0.526 (0.298)
International Event	−2.645*** (0.279)	−0.030 (0.231)	1.437*** (0.322)
Political Elite Event	−1.126*** (0.251)	1.493*** (0.351)	0.131 (0.285)
Project Event	−1.868*** (0.251)	−0.734*** (0.197)	2.459*** (0.260)
Religious or Memorial Event	1.343*** (0.333)	−0.830*** (0.236)	−0.935*** (0.244)
Length of the Speech (logged)	2.006*** (0.166)	2.334*** (0.153)	2.396*** (0.175)
Time Since the Coup Attempt (Gradual Effect)	−0.005 (0.003)	−0.0007 (0.002)	0.006 (0.003)
Time Since the Coup Attempt^2 (Gradual Effect^2)	0.000006 (0.000004)	0.000006 (0.000004)	−0.000001 (0.000004)
Constant	−8.594*** (1.291)	−13.699*** (1.150)	−13.330*** (1.337)
Observations	397	397	397
R^2	0.625	0.546	0.528
Adjusted R^2	0.613	0.532	0.513
Note:			*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table B.4: Model results for the effect of the coup attempt on legitimation strategies, with equal time points before and after the coup presented with heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors in parentheses

B.5 Model Results with Equal Observations

	Dependent variable:		
	Ideological Legitimation (square-rooted)	Procedural Legitimation (square-rooted)	Performance Legitimation (square-rooted)
Model Number	(1)	(2)	(3)
After the Coup Attempt (Immediate Effect)	2.143***	1.597**	0.176
	(0.551)	(0.527)	(0.547)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt (Secular Trend)	−0.0001	−0.002	−0.002
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt^2 (Secular Trend^2)	−0.000017	−0.0000002	−0.000025
	(0.000027)	(0.000026)	(0.000027)
Civil Society Event	−1.298***	−0.114	0.371
	(0.259)	(0.263)	(0.296)
Educational Institution Event	−1.396***	−0.864***	0.578
	(0.285)	(0.247)	(0.333)
International Event	−2.505***	−0.261	1.441***
	(0.314)	(0.259)	(0.356)
Political Elite Event	−0.969***	1.031**	−0.177
	(0.287)	(0.366)	(0.279)
Project Event	−1.525***	−0.724**	2.571***
	(0.280)	(0.221)	(0.270)
Religious or Memorial Event	1.428**	−1.001***	−1.119***
	(0.433)	(0.284)	(0.281)
Length of the Speech (logged)	1.958***	2.447***	2.307***
	(0.178)	(0.157)	(0.173)
Time Since Coup Attempt (Gradual Effect)	−0.020*	−0.011	−0.004
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.009)
Time Since Coup Attempt^2 (Gradual Effect^2)	0.00005	0.00004	0.00003
	(0.00003)	(0.00002)	(0.00003)
Constant	−8.390***	−14.332***	−12.641***
	(1.378)	(1.194)	(1.311)
Observations	318	318	318
R^2	0.612	0.598	0.561
Adjusted R^2	0.597	0.582	0.544
Note:			*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table B.5: Model results for the effect of the coup attempt on legitimation strategies, with an equal amount of data before and after the coup. The models are presented with heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors in parentheses

B.6 Results for Models with Dependent Variables Divided by the Length

	Dependent variable:		
	Ideological Legitimation (square-rooted)	Procedural Legitimation (square-rooted)	Performance Legitimation (square-rooted)
Model Number	(1)	(2)	(3)
After the Coup Attempt (Immediate Effect)	0.065* (0.029)	0.099*** (0.023)	−0.012 (0.027)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt (Secular Trend)	0.00002 (0.001)	−0.001* (0.0005)	−0.0002 (0.001)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt^2 (Secular Trend^2)	−0.0000017 (0.000003)	−0.0000011 (0.000003)	−0.0000027 (0.000003)
Civil Society Event	−0.034* (0.013)	0.016 (0.010)	0.003 (0.013)
Educational Institution Event	−0.035** (0.013)	−0.013 (0.011)	0.014 (0.016)
International Event	−0.065*** (0.017)	0.009 (0.011)	0.020 (0.016)
Political Elite Event	−0.024* (0.012)	0.035** (0.013)	−0.008 (0.010)
Project Event	−0.032* (0.014)	−0.029** (0.010)	0.084*** (0.014)
Religious or Memorial Event	0.036 (0.020)	−0.017 (0.009)	−0.020 (0.011)
Time Since the Coup Attempt (Gradual Effect)	−0.001 (0.0006)	0.0007 (0.0005)	0.0006 (0.0006)
Time Since the Coup Attempt^2 (Gradual Effect^2)	0.000004 (0.000003)	0.00001* (0.000003)	−0.000001 (0.000003)
Constant	0.155*** (0.024)	0.030 (0.019)	0.108*** (0.023)
Observations	109	109	109
R^2	0.409	0.410	0.422
Adjusted R^2	0.342	0.343	0.357
Note:			*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table B.6: Model results for the effect of the coup attempt on legitimation strategies, with dependent variables divided by length of speech. The models are presented with heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors in parentheses

B.7 Topic Model OLS Table

	Religious Nationalism (topic probability)
Model Number	4
After the Coup Attempt	0.306**
	(0.100)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt	0.002
(Secular Trend)	(0.002)
Time Distance to the Coup Attempt^2	0.00001
(Secular Trend)^2	(0.00001)
Time Since the Coup Attempt	−0.008**
(Gradual Effect)	(0.003)
Time Since the Coup Attempt^2	0.00002
(Gradual Effect)^2	(0.00001)
Major Audience Civil Society	−0.116*
	(0.045)
Educational Institution Event	−0.136*
	(0.058)
Major Audience International Actors	−0.266***
	(0.042)
Major Audience Political Elite	−0.046
	(0.048)
Developmental Project Event	−0.077
	(0.056)
Religious or Memorial Event	0.165*
	(0.073)
Length of the Speech	0.029
(logged)	(0.040)
Constant	0.245
	(0.292)
Observations	110
R^2	0.54
Adjusted R^2	0.49
Note:	*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table B.7: Effect of the coup attempt on probability of religious nationalism as a topic in the speeches

B.8 Word embedding robustness checks

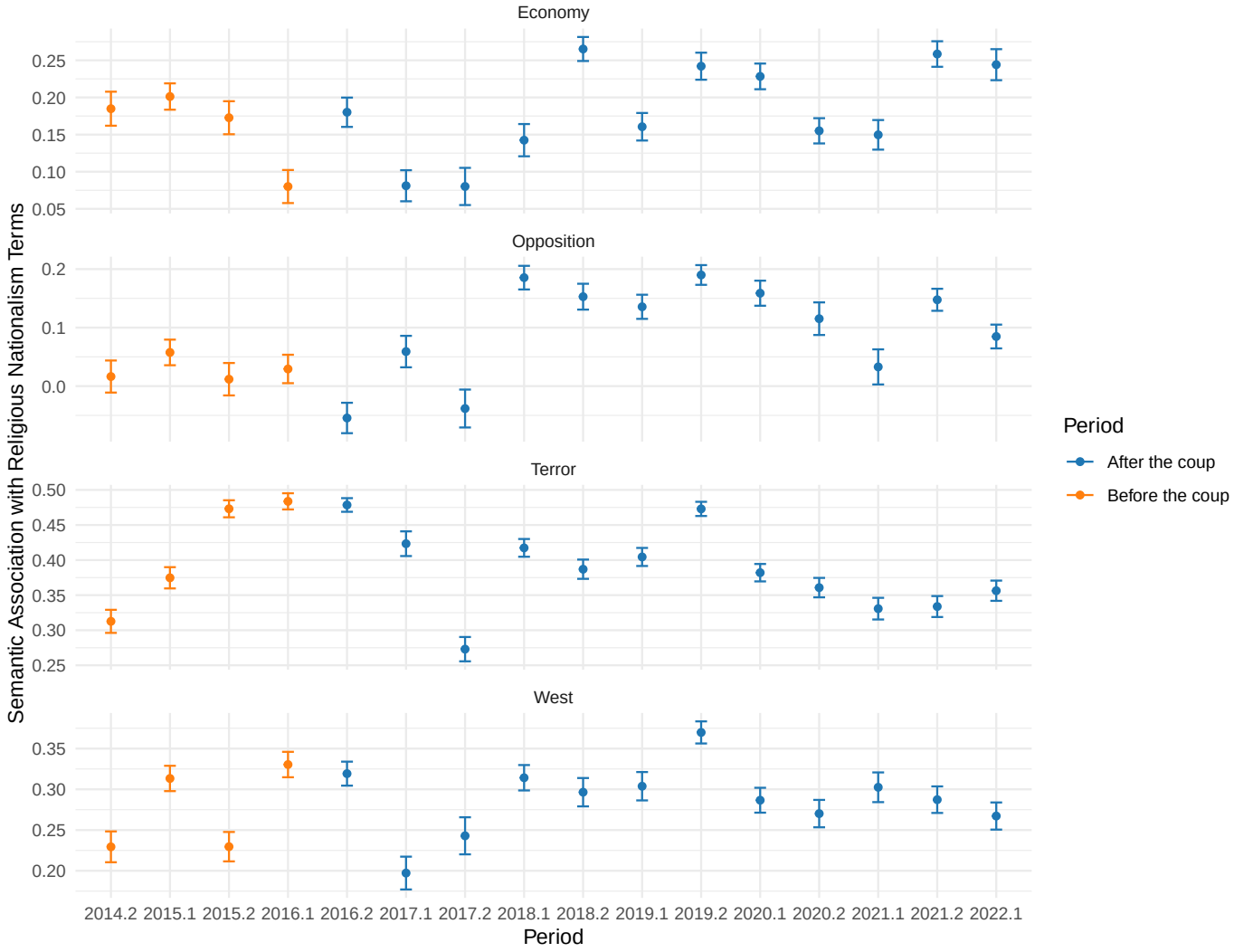

Figure B.1: The effect of the coup attempt on ideological framing of regime outsiders based on models trained for each 6-month interval

C Appendix of Chapter 4

C.1 Regression Tables of the Models

Dependent Variable:	Intention to Vote for the AKP (Reference Category = No)						
Model:	Main model	Unweighted	NUTS-1 fixed effects	District fixed effects	Endogenous and Religiosity controls	Household income control model	Model with data until September 2020
Independent Variables							
Lifestyle (Reference Category = Traditional Conservative)							
Modern	-0.4591***	-0.4891***	-0.4606***	-0.4552***	-0.2618***	-0.4680***	-0.4697***
	(0.0672)	(0.0697)	(0.0653)	(0.0341)	(0.0592)	(0.0681)	(0.0716)
Religious Conservative	0.4864***	0.4755***	0.4954***	0.4834***	0.3356***	0.4883***	0.4635***
	(0.0472)	(0.0483)	(0.0585)	(0.0298)	(0.0511)	(0.0491)	(0.0476)
Interaction Terms (Reference Categories = Traditional Conservative, February '13)							
Modern × August 2020	0.1614	0.1039	0.1446	0.1556*	0.2305	0.1698	0.1448
	(0.1341)	(0.1216)	(0.1459)	(0.0752)	(0.1385)	(0.1368)	(0.1299)
Religious Conservative × August '20	0.2681*	0.3366*	0.2453	0.2754**	0.2400	0.2617*	0.2753*
	(0.1310)	(0.1411)	(0.1613)	(0.0863)	(0.1638)	(0.1329)	(0.1310)

Modern × August '16	-0.1843	-0.1529	-0.1689	-0.1736*	-0.1261	-0.1828	-0.1796
	(0.1119)	(0.1124)	(0.0986)	(0.0696)	(0.1193)	(0.1122)	(0.1115)
Religious Conservative × August '16	0.0545	0.0623	0.0574	0.0228	0.0924	0.0526	0.0796
	(0.1381)	(0.1402)	(0.1838)	(0.0826)	(0.1559)	(0.1413)	(0.1349)
Modern × July '13	-0.2244	-0.1938	-0.1795	-0.2510**	-0.3155*	-0.2431	-0.2221
	(0.1452)	(0.1442)	(0.1328)	(0.0951)	(0.1386)	(0.1343)	(0.1410)
Religious Conservative × July '13	-0.1023	-0.0911	-0.1116	-0.0554	0.0594	-0.1350	-0.0715
	(0.1615)	(0.1630)	(0.2135)	(0.1010)	(0.1647)	(0.1535)	(0.1542)
Modern × February '14	0.3038**	0.3365***	0.3293*	0.2782**	0.1286	0.3095**	0.2990**
	(0.0974)	(0.0987)	(0.1288)	(0.0887)	(0.1231)	(0.0979)	(0.0919)
Religious Conservative × February '14	-0.2454*	-0.2343*	-0.2339	-0.2758***	-0.2284	-0.2463*	-0.2188*
	(0.1163)	(0.1167)	(0.1320)	(0.0772)	(0.1323)	(0.0979)	(0.1174)
(0.1115)							
Sex (Reference Category = Female)							
Male	0.0162	-0.0068	0.0156	0.0168	0.0767*	0.0113	-0.0033
	(0.0342)	(0.0323)	(0.0347)	(0.0275)	(0.0369)	(0.0343)	(0.0385)
Age Group (Reference Category = 18-28)							
29-43	0.4974***	0.5257***	0.5107***	0.4853***	0.6024***	0.5035***	0.5419***
	(0.0615)	(0.0608)	(0.0584)	(0.0457)	(0.0630)	(0.0604)	(0.0709)
44+	0.0583	0.0678	0.0628	0.0507	0.1112**	0.0612	0.0747
	(0.0416)	(0.0404)	(0.0450)	(0.0274)	(0.0400)	(0.0404)	(0.0420)
Education (Reference Category = Below High School)							
High School	-0.1672***	-0.1756***	-0.1704***	-0.1604***	-0.1445***	-0.1736***	-0.1647***
	(0.0372)	(0.0369)	(0.0422)	(0.0288)	(0.0365)	(0.0360)	(0.0399)
University	-0.5835***	-0.6080***	-0.5848***	-0.5772***	-0.5470***	-0.5990***	-0.6035***
	(0.0425)	(0.0432)	(0.0425)	(0.0331)	(0.0389)	(0.0378)	(0.0490)
Ethnicity (Reference Category = Non-Kurdish)							
Kurdish	-0.3088***	-0.2919***	-0.3780***	-0.2827***	-0.2180**	-0.3060***	-0.2830***
	(0.0692)	(0.0690)	(0.0856)	(0.0505)	(0.0720)	(0.0680)	(0.0745)

Rural-Urban (Reference Category = Urban)							
Rural	0.1015*	0.0964*	0.0982	0.1071**	0.0727	0.0983*	0.1095*
	(0.0416)	(0.0414)	(0.0523)	(0.0386)	(0.0447)	(0.0410)	(0.0438)
Economic Class (Reference Category = Lower Class)							
Lower Middle	-0.0035	-0.0148	-0.0112	-0.0086	-0.0171		0.0324
	(0.0340)	(0.0354)	(0.0299)	(0.0372)	(0.0333)		(0.0358)
Middle	0.0568	0.0555	0.0523	0.0547	0.0211		0.1046**
	(0.0355)	(0.0350)	(0.0296)	(0.0351)	(0.0365)		(0.0367)
Upper	-0.0543	-0.0567	-0.0723	-0.0365	-0.0093		0.0077
	(0.0472)	(0.0460)	(0.0468)	(0.0476)	(0.0461)		(0.0467)
Voted for the AKP in the last election (Reference Category = Did Not Vote for the AKP)							
Voted AKP	3.891***	3.884***	3.896***	3.899***	3.544***	3.884***	3.879***
	(0.0838)	(0.0824)	(0.0921)	(0.0687)	(0.0753)	(0.0830)	(0.0859)
Expects Financial Difficulty in Coming Months (Reference Category = No)							
Yes	-0.9998***	-1.000***	-1.006***	-1.003***	-0.4707***	-1.007***	-0.9631***
	(0.0481)	(0.0469)	(0.0512)	(0.0393)	(0.0421)	(0.0481)	(0.0528)
Unemployment (Reference Category = Employed)							
Unemployed	-0.1038*	-0.0879	-0.1101	-0.1138*	-0.0914	-0.1007*	-0.1155
	(0.0500)	(0.0488)	(0.0600)	(0.0504)	(0.0472)	(0.0463)	(0.0612)
Monthly Household Income (Continious Variable)							
Income						-0.00001	
						0.00003	
Survey Waves (Reference Category = February '13)							
July'13	0.3628***	0.3544***	0.3359***	0.3465***	0.3436***	0.3831***	0.3479***
	(0.0851)	(0.0847)	(0.0991)	(0.0590)	(0.0870)	(0.0805)	(0.0828)
February'14	0.2280**	0.2183**	0.1972*	0.2094**	0.3750***	0.2135***	0.2157***
	(0.0849)	(0.0844)	(0.0877)	(0.0738)	(0.0991)	(0.0827)	(0.0812)
August'16	0.7713***	0.7617***	0.7877***	0.7635***	0.6231***	0.7618***	0.7582***
	(0.1406)	(0.1389)	(0.1555)	(0.0817)	(0.1564)	(0.1334)	(0.1373)
August'20	0.0914	0.3721**	0.1407	0.1226	0.3247**	0.0958	0.0894
	(0.1200)	(0.1180)	(0.1374)	(0.0819)	(0.1161)	(0.1150)	(0.1147)
Expects Economic Crisis (Reference Category = No)							

Yes					-0.7612***		
					(0.0356)		
News Consumption Media Type (Reference Category = Pro-AKP)							
AKP-leaning					-0.6256***		
					(0.0401)		
Oppositional					-1.308***		
					(0.0724)		
Gülenist							
)					(0.1721)		
Don't Watch					-0.9096***		
News							
					(0.0563)		
Religiosity (Reference Category = Non-Believer)							
Believer					0.4069***		
)					(0.1176)		
Religious					0.6945***		
					(0.1153)		
Devout					0.8108***		
					(0.1121)		
Fixed-effects							
City	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
NUTS-1	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
District	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Survey Wave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics							
Observations	152,979	152,979	152,996	152,066	131,389	155,768	129,264
Squared Correlation	0.59978	0.60191	0.59810	0.60272	0.61556	0.59859	0.59653
Pseudo R^2	0.50079	0.52400	0.49855	0.50503	0.52335	0.49960	0.49906
BIC	102,783.4	99,522.5	102,511.4	107,697.9	84,614.1	104,736.8	87,802.1

*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05*

Table C.1: The regressions presenting the models described in section 4.5. The coefficients are log-odds of independent variables presented with the corresponding standard errors at 95% confidence interval. The model on the most-left side is the model that informs Figures 4.4 and 4.5.

C.2 Descriptive Statistics of the Main Model

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Lifestyle	Traditional Conservative	68149	44.5
	Modern	44510	29.1
	Religious Conservative	40320	26.4
Age Group	18-28	38165	24.9
	29-43	51692	33.8
	44+	63122	41.3
Sex	Female	73595	48.1
	Male	79384	51.9
Education Level	Below High School	80949	52.9
	High School	45744	29.9
	University	26286	17.2
Ethnicity	Kurdish	23778	15.5
	Non-Kurdish	129201	84.5
Economic Class	Lower Class	28786	18.8
	Lower-Middle Class	50693	33.1
	Middle Class	41305	27.0
	Upper Class	32195	21.0
Voted for the AKP in the Last Election	No	84624	55.3
	Yes	68355	44.7
Expects Personal Financial Difficulties in the Coming Months	Yes	87383	57.1
	No	65596	42.9
Locality Type	Rural	23626	15.4
	Urban	129353	84.6
Unemployment	Employed	143241	93.6
	Unemployed	9738	6.4

Table C.2: Unweighted Descriptive Statistics of Variables Used in the Model Except for Cities and Survey Waves

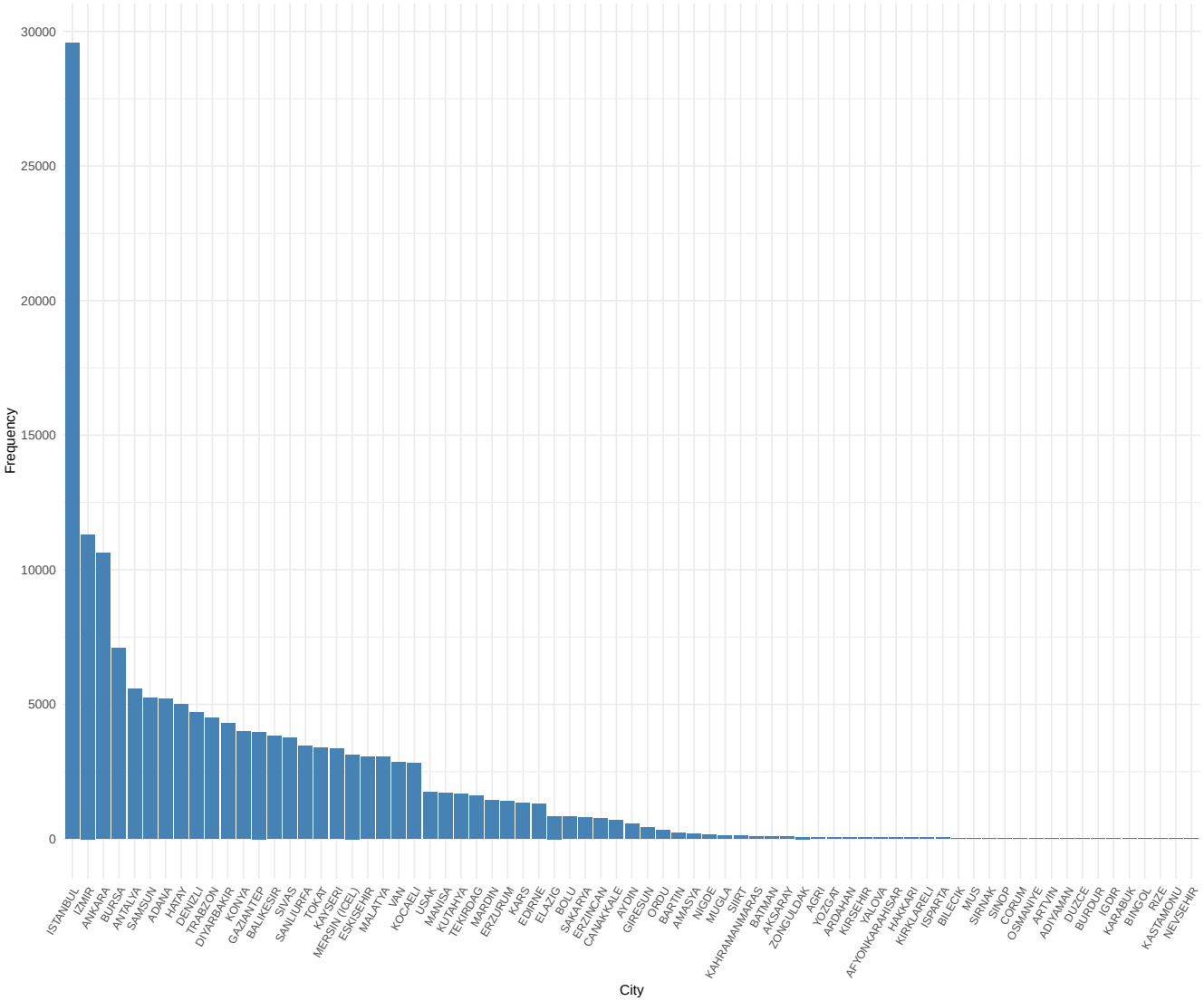

Figure C.1: Distribution of Number of Respondents per City

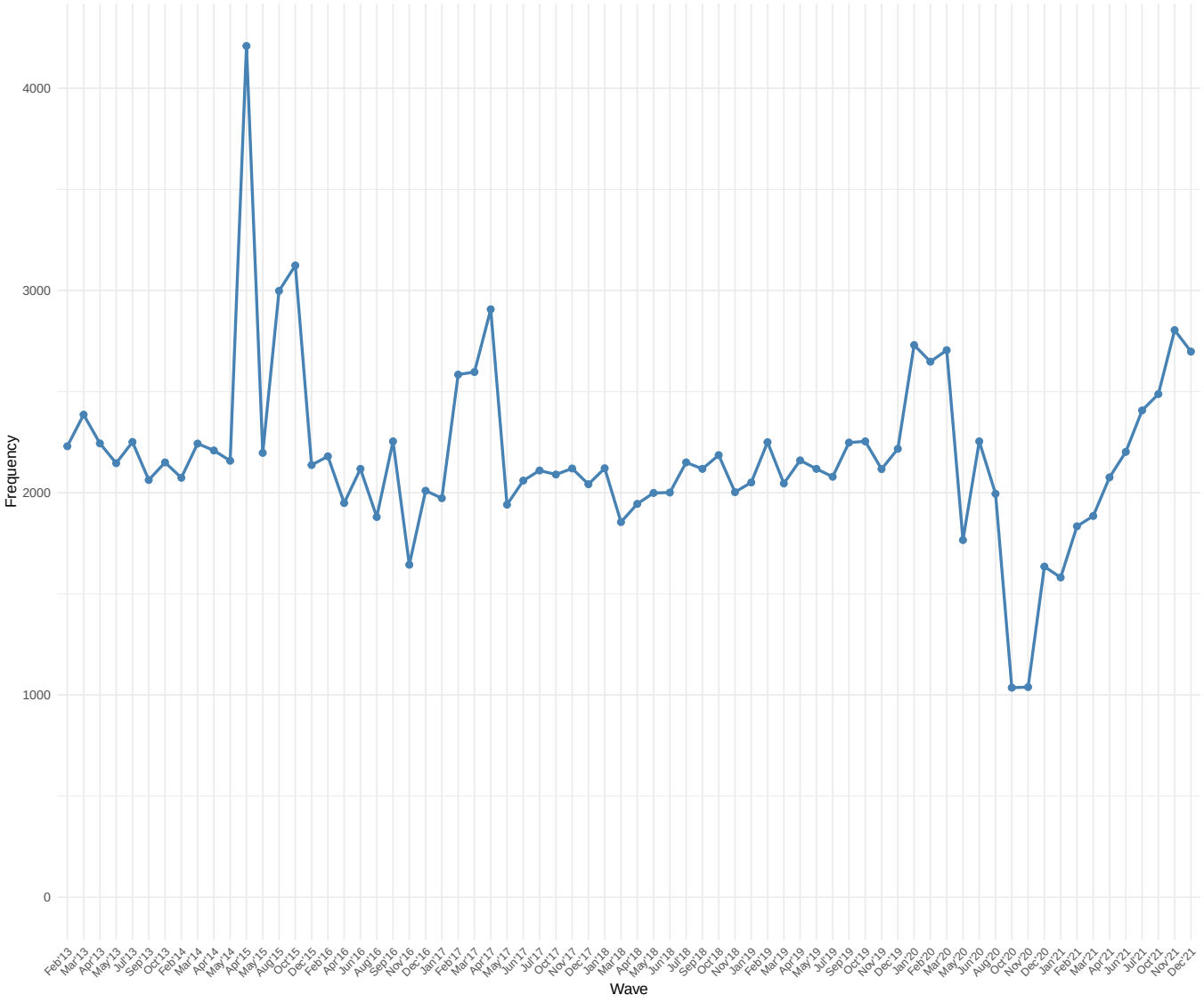

Figure C.2: Distribution of Number of Respondents Across Waves

C.3 Models Based on Data until September 2020

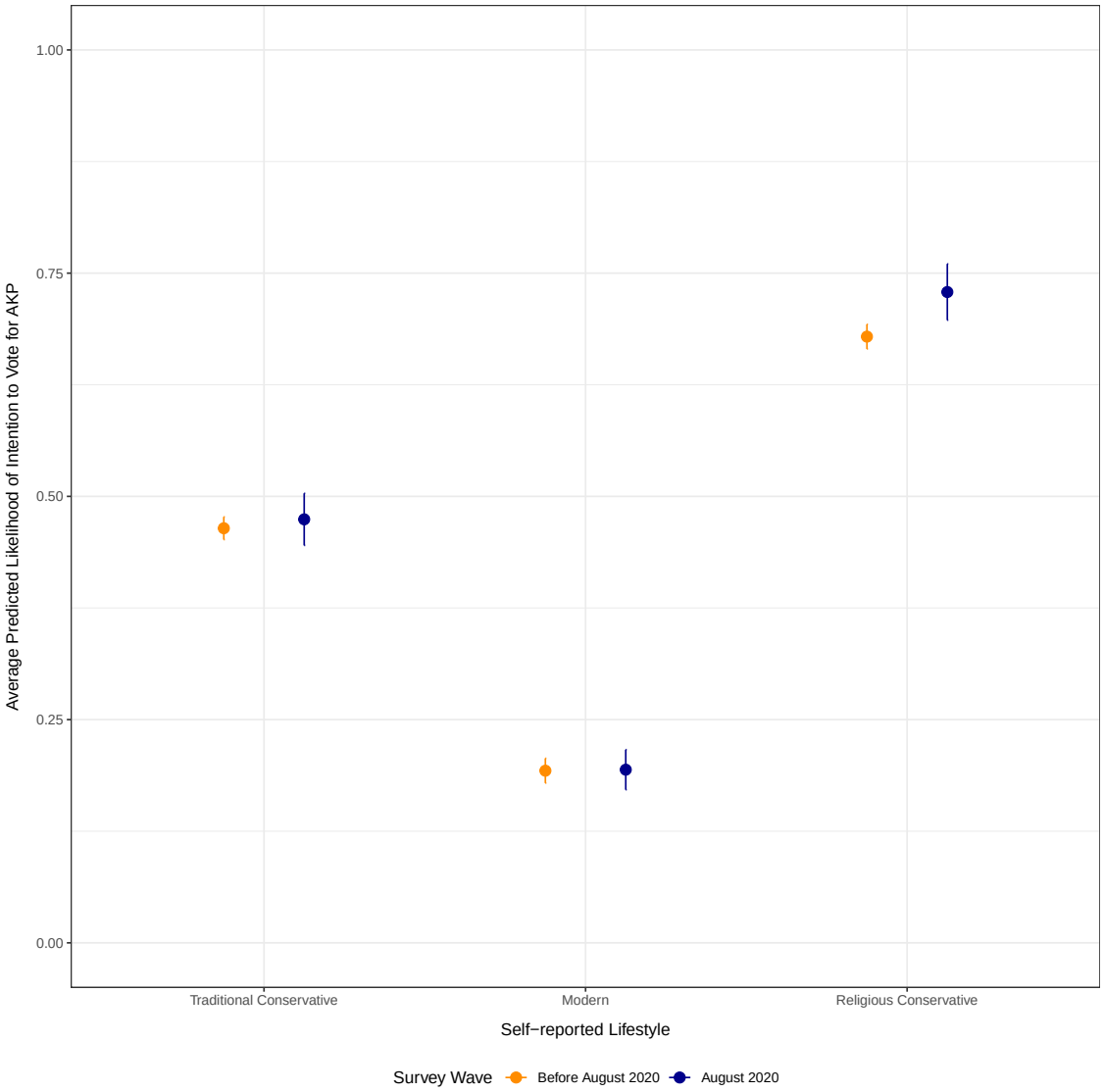

Figure C.3: Replication of analysis of the effect of Hagia Sophia conversion and Istanbul Convention public debate on citizens excluding the data after August 2020

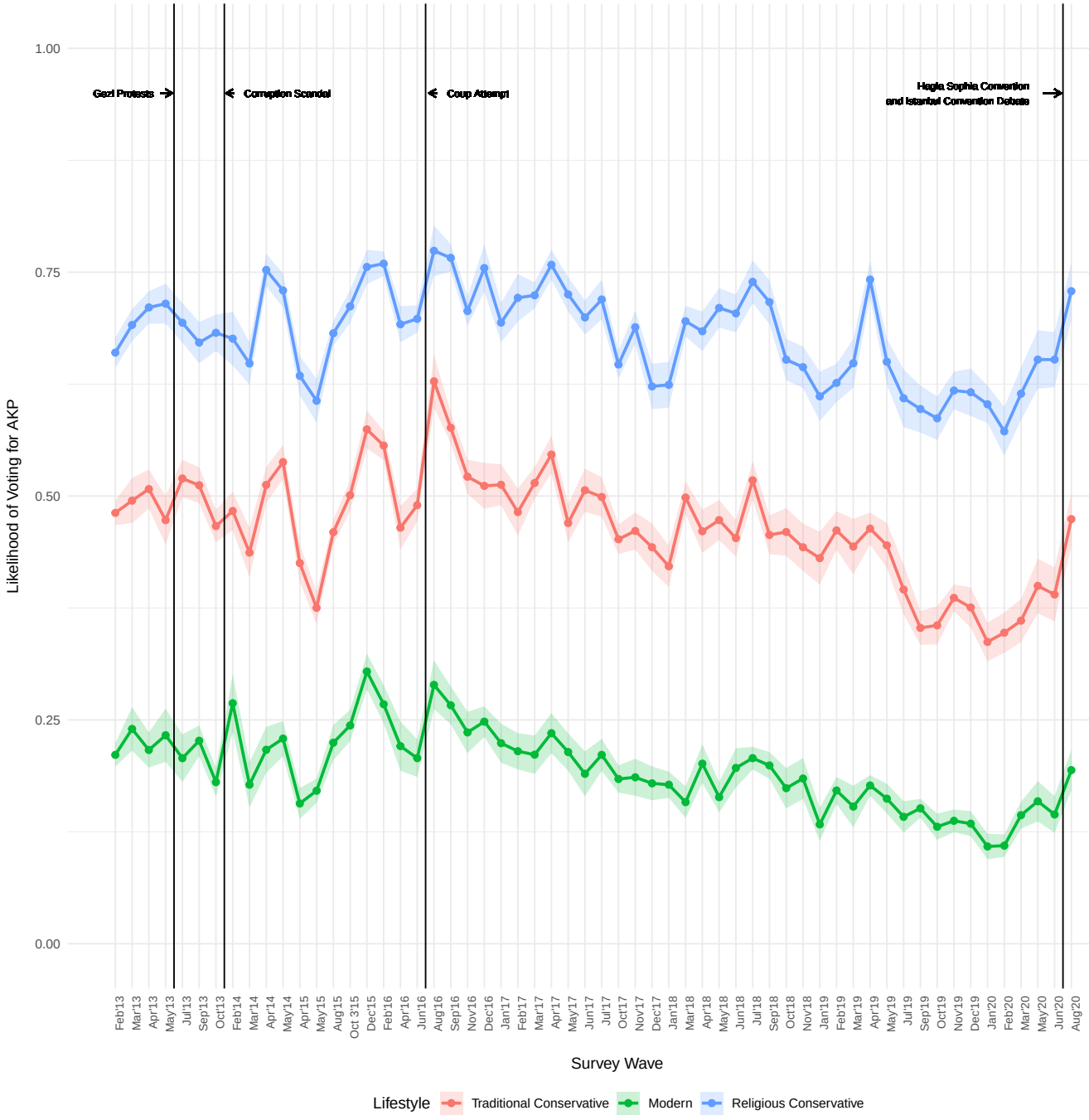

Figure C.4: Replication of analysis of the effect of Hagia Sophia conversion and Istanbul Convention public debate on citizens excluding the data after August 2020,using the pre-trend to August 2020 as baseline

C.4 Models Based on Religiosity

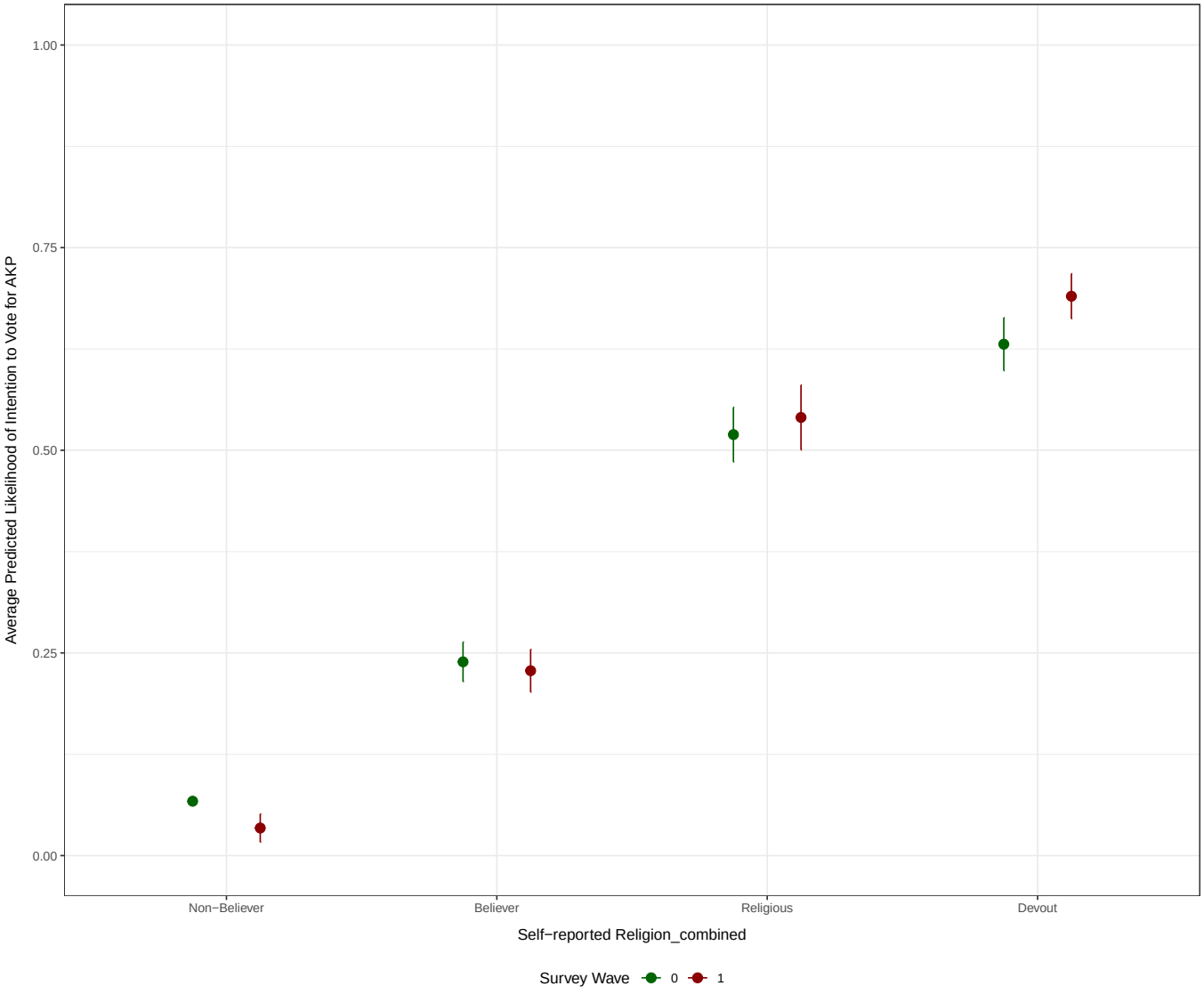

Figure C.5: Replication of analysis of the effect of Hagia Sophia conversion and Istanbul Convention public debate on citizens using religiosity as a measure and group average outside August 2020 as baseline

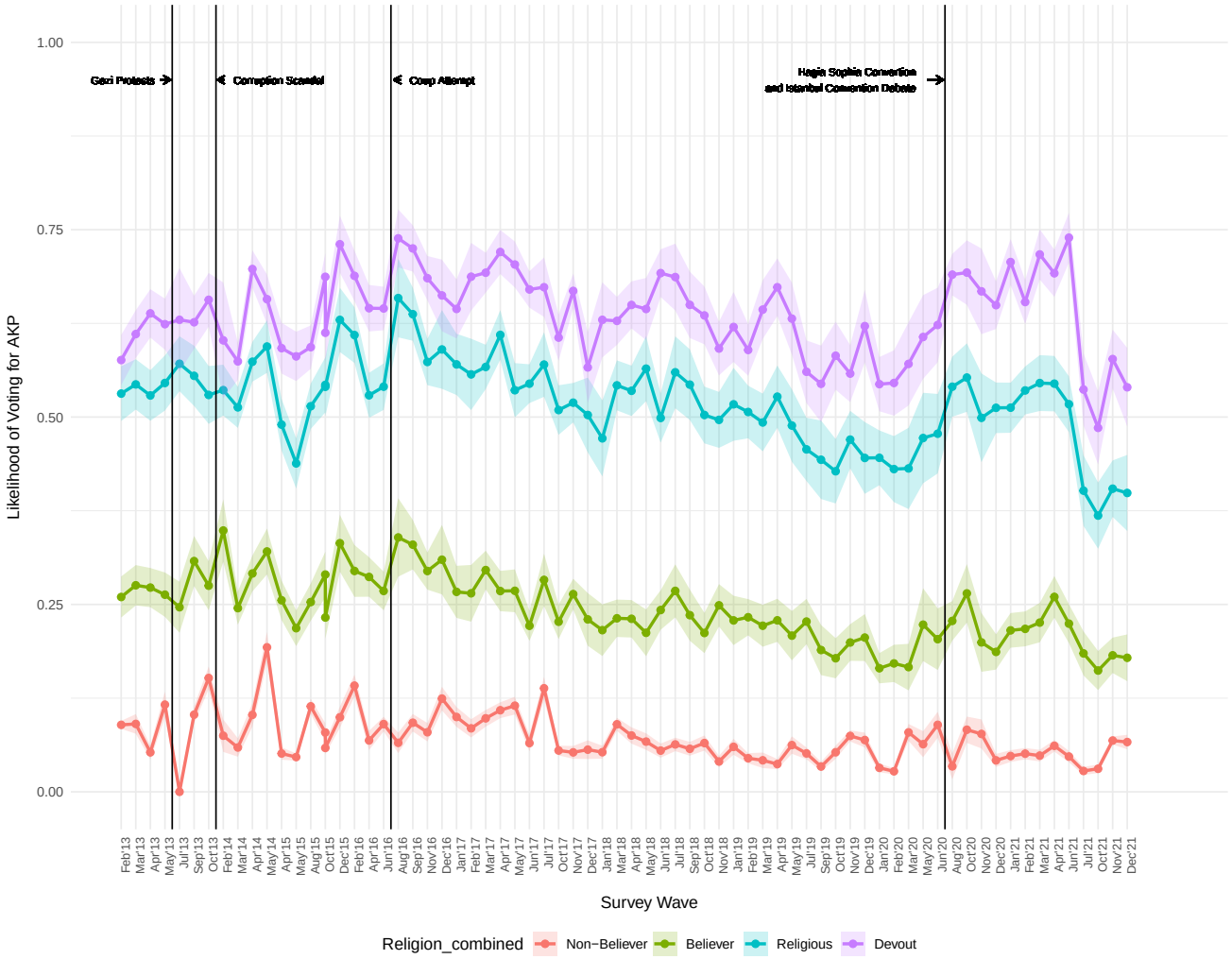

Figure C.6: Replication of analysis of the effect of Hagia Sophia conversion and Istanbul Convention public debate on citizens using religiosity as a measure and pre-trend to August 2020 as baseline

C.5 Exact Phrasing and Categories of Survey Questions in Turkish and English

Note: For the items where I indicate that the question is "Unknown," I imply that I do not have access to the actual question that was asked.

- **Intention to vote for the AKP (and other parties)**

  Question in English: If a general parliamentary election were held today, who and which party would you vote for?

  Question in Turkish: (Bugün bir genel milletvekilliği seçimi yapılsa, oyunuzu kime, hangi partiye verirsiniz?)

  Potential Answers: It includes parties that have the intention to compete in the parliamentary election in the closest general election for each survey wave. The answers include the following parties (but many of these parties are only available in time periods they are active in politics) AK Parti (AKP), CHP (Republican People's Party), MHP (Nationalist Movement Party), HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party), İyi Parti (Good Party), Saadet Partisi (Felicity Party), Gelecek Partisi (Future Party), Deva Partisi (Democracy and Progress Party), Diğer partiler (Other parties), Kararsız (Undecided), Oy kullanmaz (Won't vote), DP - Demokrat Parti (DP - Democrat Party), DSP - Demokratik Sol Parti (DSP - Democratic Left Party), SHP - Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti (SHP - Social Democratic Populist Party), TDH/HYP - Türkiye Değişim Hareketi/Halkın Yükseliş Partisi (TDH/HYP - Turkish Change Movement/People's Ascension Party), BBP - Büyük Birlik Partisi (BBP - Great Union Party), EMEP - Emek Partisi (EMEP - Labor Party), GP - Genç Parti (GP - Young Party), İP - İşçi Partisi (İP - Workers' Party), HEPAR (Rights and Equality Party), TKP - Türkiye Komünist Partisi (TKP - Communist Party of Turkey), TP - Türkiye Partisi (TP - Party of Turkey), HAS - Halkın Sesi Partisi (HAS - Voice of the People Party), Memleket Partisi (Homeland Party), Türkiye İşçi Partisi

(Workers' Party of Turkey), Vatan Partisi (Patriotic Party), Türkiye Değişim Partisi (Party for Change in Turkey), Yeniden Refah Partisi (New Welfare Party), Zafer Partisi (Victory Party)

Usage in the Data: I create a binary variable for whether the response is AKP or not.

Models that include the variable: Dependent variable in all the models

- **Lifestyle**

  Question in English: In terms of lifestyle, which of the three groups below do you consider yourself to be in?

  Question in Turkish: (Kendinizi, hayat tarzı bakımından aşağıda sayacağım üç gruptan hangisinde sayarsınız?)

  Potential Answers: Modern (Modern), Traditional Conservative (Geleneksel Muhafazakar), Religious Conservative (Dindar Muhafazakar)

  Usage in the Data: I use the variable as it is and treat it as a categorical variable.

  Models that include the variable: All models, except the model presented in Section C.4.

- **Age Group**

  Question in English: Unknown

  Question in Turkish: (Unknown)

  Potential Answers: (Unknown)

  Usage in the Data: The data is categorized into three categories: 15-17, 18-28, 29-43, and 44+. I exclude the 15-17 group since they are not eligible to vote. Another categorization (15-17, 18-33, 34-50, 51+) is available, but this version has missing values in some critical survey waves.

  Models that include the variable: All the models

- **Education**

Question in English: Unknown

Question in Turkish: (Unknown)

Potential Answers: Illiterate (Okuryazar değil), Literate without a diploma (Diplomasız okur), Primary school graduate (İlkokul mezunu), Elementary / Middle school graduate (İlköğretim / Ortaokul mezunu), High school graduate (Lise mezunu), University graduate (Üniversite mezunu), Master's degree (Yüksek lisans), PhD (Doktora)

Usage in the Data: I use a grouped version of this data that consists of three categories: Below High School (Lise Altı), High School (Lise), University (Üniversite).

Models that include the variable: All the models

- **Economic Class**

Question in English: Calculated using the number of people in the household, household income, and car ownership.

Question in Turkish:

Potential Answers: Lower Class (Alt Sınıf), Lower Middle Class (Alt orta sınıf), New Middle Class (Yeni orta sınıf), Upper Class (Üst sınıf)

Usage in the Data: I use it as it is, except that I call the New Middle Class category "Middle Class."

Models that include the variable: All the models

- **Last Vote**

Question in English: In the general elections of July 22, 2007 / June 12, 2011 / June 7, 2015 / November 1, 2015 / June 24, 2018, to whom and which party did you give your vote?

Question in Turkish: (22 Temmuz 2007 / 12 Haziran 2011 / 7 Haziran 2015 / 1 Kasım 2015 / 24 Haziran 2018 genel seçimlerinde oyunuzu kime, hangi partiye vermiştiniz?)

Potential Answers: The list of parties that participated in that election.

Usage in the Data: I merge six different questions, asking respondents the party they voted for in the last general legislative election, and then create a binary variable for whether the response is AKP or not.

Models that include the variable: All the models

- **Unemployment**

Question in English: Employment Status (Question Unknown)

Question in Turkish: (Çalışma durumu)

Potential Answers: Civil servant (Devlet memuru), Private sector (Özel sektör), Worker (İşçi), Tradesperson (Esnaf), Merchant / Businessperson (Tüccar / iş insanı), Freelancer / Self-employed (Serbest meslek sahibi), Farmer, agricultural worker, livestock breeder (Çiftçi, ziraatçı, hayvancı), Employed, other (Çalışıyor, diğer), Retired (Emekli), Housewife (Ev kadını), Student (Öğrenci), Unemployed (İşsiz), Unable to work (Çalışamaz halde), Marginal sector (street vendor, cleaning) (Marjinal sektör (işporta, temizlik))

Usage in the Data: I create a binary variable indicating whether the response is "Unemployed" or not.

Models that include the variable: All the models

- **Expects Financial Difficulty in Coming Months**

Question in English: Do you expect any financial difficulties in your own life in the coming months?

Question in Turkish: (Önümüzdeki aylarda kendi hayatınızda bir ekonomik zorluk bekliyor musunuz?)

Potential Answers: Yes (Evet), No (Hayır)

Usage in the Data: I use the variable as it is.

Models that include the variable: All the models

- **Sex**

  Question in English: Unknown if it was asked or assumed.

  Question in Turkish:

  Potential Answers: Female (Kadın), Male (Erkek)

  Usage in the Data: I use the variable as it is.

  Models that include the variable: All the models.

- **Urban-Rural**

  Question in English: No question, assumed by the sampling design.

  Question in Turkish:

  Potential Answers: There are two items that inform this variable. In 93.61% of the data, there are three categories: Rural (Kır), Urban (Kent), Metropolis (Metropol). In 6.39% of the data, there are only Rural (Kır) and Urban (Kent).

  Usage in the Data: I recode Metropolis as Urban.

  Models that include the variable: All the models.

- **Ethnicity**

  Question in English: We are all citizens of the Republic of Turkey, but we may come from different ethnic backgrounds; how do you identify or feel about your identity?

  Question in Turkish: (Hepimiz Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandaşıyız, ama değişik etnik kökenlerden olabiliriz; siz kendinizi, kimliğinizi ne olarak biliyorsunuz veya hissediyorsunuz?)

  Potential Answers: Turkish (Türk), Kurdish (Kürt), Zaza (Zaza), Arab (Arap), Other (Diğer)

  Usage in the Data: I create a binary variable. I code it "Kurdish" if the response is Kurdish or Zaza, otherwise, I code it "Non-Kurdish."

Models that include the variable: All the models.

- **Expects Economic Crisis**

  Question in English: Do you expect an economic crisis in Turkey in the coming months?

  Question in Turkish: (Önümüzdeki aylarda Türkiye'de ekonomik kriz bekliyor musunuz?)

  Potential Answers: Yes (Evet), No (Hayır)

  Usage in the Data: I use it as it is.

  Models that include the variable: Only in the model labeled "Endogenous and Religiosity Control" in C.1.

- **News Consumption Media Type**

  Question in English: Unknown. The question is written as "TV preference for news", which is not a question.

  Question in Turkish: Unknown. The question is written as "Haber için TV tercihi", which is not a question

  Potential Answers: I don't watch the news on TV (Haberleri TV'den izlemiyorum), I don't watch TV (TV izlemiyorum), I don't follow the news (Haber takip etmiyorum), A Haber, ATV, CNN Türk, Fox TV, Haber Türk, Halk TV, Kanal 7, Kanal D, NTV, Show TV, Star TV, TRT, Ulusal Kanal, Diğer kanallar (Other channels), Kanaltürk, IMC TV, Roj/Nuçe/Sterk, Samanyolu, Yerel kanallar (Local channels), Kanal 1, Cem TV, Flash TV, TGRT, Cnbc-e

  Usage in the Data: I create a categorical variable that differentiates between political leanings of the channels.

  I code it "Pro-AKP media" if the response is one of the following: A Haber, ATV, Kanal 7, TRT.

  I code it "Mainstream AKP-leaning media" if the response is one of the following: CNN Türk, Haber Türk, Kanal D, NTV, Show TV, Star TV, Ulusal Kanal, Kanal 1.

I code it "Oppositional Media" if the response is one of the following: Fox TV, Halk TV, IMC TV, Roj/Nuç/Sterk, Cem TV, Flash TV, Cnbc-e.

I code it "Gülenist", referring to TV channels connected to Fethullah Gülen, a former cleric believed to be behind the July 15, 2016 coup attempt, if the response is one of the following: Kanaltürk, Samanyolu.

I code it "Don't Watch News" if the response is one of the following: I don't watch the news on TV (Haberleri TV'den izlemiyorum), I don't watch TV (TV izlemiyorum), I don't follow the news (Haber takip etmiyorum).

Models that include the variable: Only in the model titled "Endogenous and Religiosity Control" in Table C.1.

- **Religiosity**

Question in English: How would you describe yourself in terms of religiosity from the options I will read below?

Question in Turkish: (Dindarlık açısından kendinizi aşağıda okuyacaklarımdan hangisiyle tarif edersiniz?)

Potential Answers: 1) Someone who has no religious belief (Dini inancı olmayan biri). This is coded as Atheist in the codebook.

2) Someone who does not really believe in the requirements of religion (Dinin gereklerine pek inanmayan biri). This is coded as Non-Believer (İnançsız) in the codebook.

3) Someone who is religious but does not fully observe the requirements of religion (İnançlı ama dinin gereklerini pek yerine getiremeyen biri). This is coded as Believer (İnançlı) in the codebook.

4) A religious person who tries to fulfill the requirements of religion (Dinin gereklerini yerine getirmeye çalışan dindar biri). This is coded as Religious (Dindar) in the codebook.

5) A religious person who fully fulfills all the requirements of religion (Dinin tüm gereklerini tam yerine getiren dindar biri). This is coded as Devout

(Sofu) in the codebook.

Usage in the Data: I collapse the Non-Believer and Atheist categories and call them Non-Believer because this question is asked in two different forms, dependent on the wave, and the Atheist response is not available in some of them.

Models that include the variable: In the model titled "Endogenous and Religiosity Control" in Table C.1 and the model in Section C.4.

Bibliography

Aalen, L. (2006). Ethnic federalism and self-determination for nationalities in a semi-authoritarian state: The case of ethiopia. *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, *13*(2-3), 243–261.

Ádám, Z., & Bozóki, A. (2016). State and faith: Right-wing populism and nationalized religion in hungary. *Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics*, *2*(1), 98–122.

Aksoy, H. A. (2021). What lies behind turkey's withdrawal from the istanbul convention? [Accessed: 2024-09-11].

Alrababa'h, A., & Blaydes, L. (2021a). Authoritarian media and diversionary threats: Lessons from 30 years of syrian state discourse. *Political Science Research and Methods*, *9*(4), 693–708.

Alrababa'h, A., & Blaydes, L. (2021b). Authoritarian media and diversionary threats: Lessons from 30 years of syrian state discourse. *Political Science Research and Methods*, *9*(4), 693–708.

Alyukov, M. (2023). Harnessing distrust: News, credibility heuristics, and war in an authoritarian regime. *Political Communication*, *40*(5), 527–554.

Anceschi, L., Baturo, A., Cavatorta, F., et al. (2024). *Personalism and personalist regimes*. Oxford University Press.

Angrist, J. D., & Pischke, J.-S. (2010). The credibility revolution in empirical economics: How better research design is taking the con out of econometrics. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *24*(2), 3–30.

Antoniak, M., & Mimno, D. (2018). Evaluating the stability of embedding-based word similarities. *Transactions of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, *6*, 107–119.

Arikan, G. (2016). Values, religiosity and support for redistribution and social policy in turkey. In *Political psychology of turkish political behavior* (pp. 34–52). Routledge.

Arnon, D., Edwards, P., & Li, H. (2023). Message or messenger? source and labeling effects in authoritarian response to protest. *Comparative Political Studies*, *56*(12), 1891–1923.

Aspinall, E. (2007). The construction of grievance. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *51*(6), 950–972.

Ayan Musil, P. (2024). How incumbents create uneven patterns of competition during autocratization: The akp case of turkey. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 1–19.

Aytaç, S. E., & Çarkoğlu, A. (2021). Terror attacks, issue salience, and party competence: Diagnosing shifting vote preferences in a panel study. *Party Politics*, *27*(4), 755–766.

Aytaç, S. E. (2018). Relative economic performance and the incumbent vote: A reference point theory. *The Journal of Politics*, *80*(1), 16–29.

Aytaç, S. E. (2021). Effectiveness of incumbent's strategic communication during economic crisis under electoral authoritarianism: Evidence from turkey. *American Political Science Review*, *115*(4), 1517–1523.

Aytaç, S. E., & Elçi, E. (2019). Populism in turkey. In *Populism around the world* (pp. 89–108). Springer.

Backes, U., & Kailitz, S. (2016). Ideocracies in comparison. *Ideocracies in Comparison: Legitimation-Co-Optation-Repression*, 1–10.

Balderacchi, C. (2018). Political leadership and the construction of competitive authoritarian regimes in latin america: Implications and prospects for democracy. *Democratization*, *25*(3), 504–523.

Balta, E., Demiralp, S., & Demiralp, S. (2023). Debating voter defection in turkey. *Turkish Studies*, *24*(5), 739–763.

Baranovitch, N. (2021). A strong leader for a time of crisis: Xi jinping's strongman politics as a collective response to regime weakness. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *30*(128), 249–265.

Barrinha, A. (2011). The political importance of labelling: Terrorism and turkey's discourse on the pkk. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(2), 163–180.

Battaglia, M. P., Hoaglin, D. C., & Frankel, M. R. (2009). Practical considerations in raking survey data. *Survey Practice*, *2*(5).

Baturo, A., & Tolstrup, J. (2024). Strategic communication in dictatorships: Performance, patriotism, and intimidation. *The Journal of Politics*, *86*(2), 582–596.

Bayulgen, O., Arbatli, E., & Canbolat, S. (2018). Elite survival strategies and authoritarian reversal in turkey. *Polity*, *50*(3), 333–365.

Beaudonnet, L., & Hoyo Prohuber, H. (2024). Being european, the nationalist way: Europe in the discourse of radical right parties. *Party Politics*, *30*(3), 519–530.

Beck, N. (2001). Time-series–cross-section data. *Statistica Neerlandica*, *55*(2), 111–133.

Belchior, A. M., Sanches, E. R., & José, G. M. (2018). Policy congruence in a competitive authoritarian regime: Learning from the angolan case. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *53*(2), 201–216.

Benoit, K., Watanabe, K., Wang, H., Nulty, P., Obeng, A., Müller, S., & Matsuo, A. (2018). Quanteda: An r package for the quantitative analysis of textual data. *Journal of Open Source Software*, *3*(30), 774.

Benoit, K., & Wiesehomeier, N. (2009). Expert judgments. In S. Pickel, G. Pickel, H.-J. Lauth, & D. Jahn (Eds.), *Methoden der vergleichenden politik- und sozialwissenschaft*. Springer VS. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-91826-6_25

Bentzen, J. S., & Gokmen, G. (2023). The power of religion. *Journal of Economic Growth*, *28*(1), 45–78.

Bernal, J. L., Cummins, S., & Gasparrini, A. (2017). Interrupted time series regression for the evaluation of public health interventions: A tutorial. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, *46*(1), 348–355.

Bernholz, P. (2001). Ideocracy and totalitarianism: A formal analysis incorporating ideology. *Public Choice*, *108*(1-2), 33–75.

Bernholz, P. (2015). Legitimation, co-optation, and repression in ideocracies: A rational choice perspective. In *Ideocracies in comparison* (pp. 87–105). Routledge.

Birkenmaier, L., Lechner, C. M., & Wagner, C. (2024). The search for solid ground in text as data: A systematic review of validation practices and practical recommendations for validation. *Communication methods and measures*, *18*(3), 249–277.

Blei, D. M., Ng, A. Y., & Jordan, M. I. (2003). Latent dirichlet allocation. *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, *3*(Jan), 993–1022.

Bloom, P. B.-N., & Arikan, G. (2013). Religion and support for democracy: A cross-national test of the mediating mechanisms. *British Journal of Political Science*, *43*(2), 375–397.

Bonikowski, B., & Gidron, N. (2016). The populist style in american politics: Presidential campaign discourse, 1952–1996. *Social Forces*, *94*(4), 1593–1621.

Boussalis, C., Dukalskis, A., & Gerschewski, J. (2023a). Why it matters what autocrats say: Assessing competing theories of propaganda. *Problems of Post-Communism*, *70*(3), 241–252.

Boussalis, C., Dukalskis, A., & Gerschewski, J. (2023b). Why it matters what autocrats say: Assessing competing theories of propaganda. *Problems of Post-Communism*, *70*(3), 241–252.

Brady, H. E., & Johnston, R. (2015). Repeated cross-sections in survey data. *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences: An Interdisciplinary, Searchable, and Linkable Resource*, 1–18.

Brambor, T., Clark, W. R., & Golder, M. (2006). Understanding interaction models: Improving empirical analyses. *Political Analysis*, *14*(1), 63–82.

Bray, L. A., Shriver, T. E., & Adams, A. E. (2019). Framing authoritarian legitimacy: Elite cohesion in the aftermath of popular rebellion. *Social Movement Studies*, *18*(6), 682–701.

Brochu, P., & Créchet, J. (2022). Survey non-response in covid-19 times: The case of the labour force survey. *Canadian Public Policy*, *48*(3), 451–472.

Brunkert, L., & von Soest, C. (2023). Praising the leader: Personalist legitimation strategies and the deterioration of executive constraints. *Democratization*, *30*(3), 419–439.

Buckley, N., Marquardt, K. L., Reuter, O. J., & Tertytchnaya, K. (2024). Endogenous popularity: How perceptions of support affect the popularity of authoritarian regimes. *American Political Science Review*, *118*(2), 1046–1052.

Capoccia, G., & Kelemen, R. D. (2007). The study of critical junctures: Theory, narrative, and counterfactuals in historical institutionalism. *World Politics*, *59*(3), 341–369.

Çarkoğlu, A. (2008). Ideology or economic pragmatism?: Profiling turkish voters in 2007. *Turkish Studies*, *9*(2), 317–344.

Çarkoğlu, A. (2012). Economic evaluations vs. ideology: Diagnosing the sources of electoral change in turkey, 2002–2011. *Electoral Studies*, *31*(3), 513–521.

Çarkoğlu, A. (2019). Electoral choice and religion: Turkey. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of politics*.

Çarkoğlu, A., & Elçi, E. (2023). Populist attitudes and challenges towards liberal democracy: An empirical assessment of the turkish case. *International Political Science Review*, *44*(5), 729–746.

Çarkoğlu, A., & Kalaycioğlu, E. (2009). *The rising tide of conservatism in turkey*. Springer.

Çarkoğlu, A., & Toprak, B. (2000). *Türkiye'de din, toplum ve siyaset* (Report). Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı.

Çarkoğlu, A., & Toprak, B. (2007). *Religion, society and politics in a changing turkey* (Report). Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı.

Carter, E. B., & Carter, B. L. (2021). Propaganda and protest in autocracies. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *65*(5), 919–949.

Cassani, A. (2017). Social services to claim legitimacy: Comparing autocracies' performance. *Contemporary Politics*, *23*(3), 348–368.

Cassani, A. (2021). Varieties of autocracy and human development. In *Research handbook on democracy and development*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Castaldo, A. (2018). Populism and competitive authoritarianism in turkey. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *18*(4), 467–487.

Cerrone, J. (2023). Reconciling national and supranational identities: Civilizationism in european far-right discourse. *Perspectives on Politics*, *21*(3), 951–966.

Chang, A., Chu, Y.-h., & Welsh, B. (2013). Southeast asia: Sources of regime support. *Journal of Democracy*, *24*(2), 150–164.

Chen, J., & Xu, Y. (2017). Information manipulation and reform in authoritarian regimes. *Political Science Research and Methods*, *5*(1), 163–178.

Chow, W. M., & Levin, D. H. (2024). Muddying the waters: How perceived foreign interference affects public opinion on protest movements. *American Political Science Review*, 1–18.

Ciftci, S., Wuthrich, F. M., & Shamaileh, A. (2019). Islam, religious outlooks, and support for democracy. *Political Research Quarterly*, *72*(2), 435–449.

Clark, T. S., & Linzer, D. A. (2015). Should i use fixed or random effects? *Political Science Research and Methods*, *3*(2), 399–408.

Clarke, H. D., Stewart, M. C., Ault, M., & Elliott, E. (2005). Men, women, and the dynamics of presidential approval. *British Journal of Political Science*, *35*(1), 31–51.

CNN Türk. (2016). Darbe gece saat 03:00'te başlayacaktı [Accessed: 03-Oct-2024].

Collie, A., Beck, D., Gray, S. E., & Lane, T. J. (2020). Impact of legislative reform on benefit access and disability duration in workers' compensation: An interrupted time series study. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, *77*(1), 32–39.

Collier, D., & Gerring, J. (2009). Concepts and method in social science: The tradition of giovanni sartori (introduction). *Concepts & Method in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori, 1st Edition,(Eds.) David Collier, John Gerring, London: Routledge*, 1–10.

Collins, K., & Owen, E. (2012). Islamic religiosity and regime preferences: Explaining support for democracy and political islam in central asia and the caucasus. *Political Research Quarterly*, *65*(3), 499–515.

Cooley, S. C., & Stokes, E. C. (2018). Manufacturing resilience: An analysis of broadcast and web-based news presentations of the 2014–2015 russian economic downturn. *Global Media and Communication*, *14*(1), 123–139.

Coppedge, M., Gerring, J., Knutsen, C. H., Lindberg, S. I., Teorell, J., Altman, D., Angiolillo, F., Bernhard, M., Borella, C., Cornell, A., et al. (2024a). V-dem codebook v14.

Coppedge, M., Gerring, J., Knutsen, C. H., Lindberg, S. I., Teorell, J., Altman, D., Angiolillo, F., Bernhard, M., Borella, C., Cornell, A., Fish, M. S., Fox, L., Gastaldi, L., Gjerlow, H., Glynn, A., God, A. G., Grahn, S., Hicken, A., Kinzelbach, K., ... Ziblatt, D. (2024b). V-dem [country-year/country-date] dataset v14.

Coulson, A. (2004). Education and indoctrination in the muslim world. *Policy Analysis*, *29*, 1–36.

Council of Europe. (2011). Council of europe convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (istanbul convention). https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention

Davis, J. (2018). Enforcing christian nationalism: Examining the link between group identity and punitive attitudes in the united states. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *57*(2), 300–317.

Davis, N. J., & Robinson, R. V. (2006). The egalitarian face of islamic orthodoxy: Support for islamic law and economic justice in seven muslim-majority nations. *American Sociological Review*, *71*(2), 167–190.

De Juan, A., Haass, F., & Pierskalla, J. (2021). The partial effectiveness of indoctrination in autocracies: Evidence from the german democratic republic. *World Politics*, *73*(4), 593–628.

Debre, M. J., & Morgenbesser, L. (2018). Out of the shadows: Autocratic regimes, election observation and legitimation. In *Justifying dictatorship* (pp. 78–97). Routledge.

DeButts, M., & Pan, J. (2024). Reporting after removal: The effects of journalist expulsion on foreign news coverage. *Journal of Communication*, jqae015.

DeMora, S. L., Merolla, J. L., Newman, B., & Zechmeister, E. J. (2024). Jesus was a refugee: Religious values framing can increase support for refugees among white evangelical republicans. *Political Behavior*, 1–24.

Dilipak, A. (2020). *Akp'nin papatyaları* [Accessed: 2024-09-11]. https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/yazarlar/abdurrahman-dilipak/akpnin-papatyalari-33008.html

Dolińska-Rydzek, M., & van den Berg, M. (2020). "gays as a weapon of the antichrist": Religious nationalism, homosexuality, and the antichrist on the russian internet. In *Public discourses about homosexuality and religion in europe and beyond* (pp. 285–307). Springer.

Donno, D. (2013). Elections and democratization in authoritarian regimes. *American Journal of Political Science*, *57*(3), 703–716.

Dukalskis, A. (2017). *The authoritarian public sphere: Legitimation and autocratic power in north korea, burma, and china*. Routledge.

Dukalskis, A., & Gerschewski, J. (2017). What autocracies say (and what citizens hear): Proposing four mechanisms of autocratic legitimation. *Contemporary Politics*, *23*(3), 251–268.

Dukalskis, A., & Gerschewski, J. (2020). Adapting or freezing? ideological reactions of communist regimes to a post-communist world. *Government and Opposition*, *55*(3), 511–532.

Dukalskis, A., & Patane, C. (2019). Justifying power: When autocracies talk about themselves and their opponents. *Contemporary Politics*, *25*(4), 457–478.

Dulay, D., Hicken, A., Menon, A., & Holmes, R. (2023). Continuity, history, and identity: Why bongbong marcos won the 2022 philippine presidential election. *Pacific Affairs*, *96*(1), 85–104.

Easton, D. (1975). A re-assessment of the concept of political support. *British Journal of Political Science*, *5*(4), 435–457.

Edel, M., & Josua, M. (2018). How authoritarian rulers seek to legitimize repression: Framing mass killings in egypt and uzbekistan. *Democratization*, *25*(5), 882–900.

Elçi, E. (2019). The rise of populism in turkey: A content analysis. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *19*(3), 387–408.

Ellis, C., & Stimson, J. A. (2012). Conservatism as social and religious identity. In *Ideology in america* (pp. 115–148). Cambridge University Press.

Enyedi, Z. (2016). Populist polarization and party system institutionalization: The role of party politics in de-democratization. *Problems of Post-communism*, *63*(4), 210–220.

Enyedi, Z. (2020). Right-wing authoritarian innovations in central and eastern europe. *East European Politics*, *36*(3), 363–377.

Enyedi, Z. (2024). Ideological modules of autocratization 1. In *The routledge handbook of autocratization* (pp. 153–165). Routledge.

Erdoğan, R. T. (2015a, August 26). *10. muhtarlar toplantısı'nda yaptıkları konuşma.*

Erdoğan, R. T. (2015b, October 2). *G-20 enerji bakanları toplantısı'nda yaptıkları konuşma.*

Erdoğan, R. T. (2016a, June 23). *Kanaat önderleri ile iftar programında yaptıkları konuşma.*

Erdoğan, R. T. (2016b, July 29). *Beştepe millet kongre ve kültür merkezi açılışı ile şehitleri anma programı'nda yaptıkları konuşma.*

Erdoğan, R. T. (2020). Kabine toplantısının ardından yaptıkları konuşma [Accessed: September 11, 2024]. https://www.tccb.gov.tr/konusmalar/353/120733/kabine-toplantisinin-ardindan-yaptiklari-konusma

Esen, B., & Gumuscu, S. (2016). Rising competitive authoritarianism in turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, *37*(9), 1581–1606.

Esen, B., & Gumuscu, S. (2017). Turkey: How the coup failed. *Journal of Democracy*, *28*(1), 59–73.

Euronews. (2020). *Numan kurtulmuş: Istanbul sözleşmesi'nin imzalanması yanlıştı, sözleşmeden çıkılır* [Accessed: 2024-09-11]. https://tr.euronews.com/2020/07/02/numan-kurtulmus-istanbul-sozlesmesi-nin-imzalanmas-yanl-st-sozlesmeden-cikilir

Fair, C. C., Littman, R., & Nugent, E. R. (2018). Conceptions of sharia and support for militancy and democratic values: Evidence from pakistan. *Political Science Research and Methods*, *6*(3), 429–448.

Fariss, C. J., Anders, T., Markowitz, J. N., & Barnum, M. (2022). New estimates of over 500 years of historic gdp and population data. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *66*(3), 553–591.

Farooq, M., Bouwhuis, S., & Muis, J. (2024). Explaining democratic support in pakistan and india using modernization theory and instrumentalism. *Democratization*, 1–25.

Farrell, J., & Rabin, M. (1996). Cheap talk. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *10*(3), 103–118.

Firth, J. (1957). A synopsis of linguistic theory, 1930-1955. *Studies in Linguistic Analysis*, 10–32.

Fossati, D., Aspinall, E., Muhtadi, B., & Warburton, E. (2020). Ideological representation in clientelistic democracies: The indonesian case. *Electoral Studies*, *63*, 102111.

Fox, J. (2015). *Political secularism, religion, and the state: A time series analysis of worldwide data*. Cambridge University Press.

Fox, J. (2018). *An introduction to religion and politics: Theory and practice*. Routledge.

Fox, J., & Öztürk, A. E. (2024). Rational choice theory and religion: The case of turkey. *Religion, State & Society*, 1–18.

Foxeus, N. (2023). Buddhist kingship as a source of political legitimacy in times of crisis in myanmar [London School of Economics South Asia Blog, Published: July 17, 2023, Accessed: September 2, 2024].

Francisco, J. M. C. (2021). Challenges of dutertismo for philippine christianity: Revisiting populism and religion. *International Journal of Asian Christianity*, *4*(1), 145–160.

Frantz, E., & Kendall-Taylor, A. (2017). Pathways to democratization in personalist dictatorships. *Democratization*, *24*(1), 20–40.

Freedman, A. (2024). Religion and state legitimacy in thailand and myanmar. In *Freedom of religion and religious diversity* (pp. 229–245). Routledge.

Freedom House. (2024). Mounting damage: Flawed elections and armed conflict [Accessed: 2024-08-31].

Friedrich, C. J., & Brzezinski, Z. (1956). *Totalitarian dictatorship and autocracy*. Harvard University Press.

Frydenlund, I., Mang, P. Z., Wai, P., & Hayward, S. (2021). Religious responses to the military coup in myanmar. *The review of faith & International Affairs*, *19*(3), 77–88.

Gandhi, J., & Lust-Okar, E. (2009). Elections under authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *12*(1), 403–422.

Geddes, B., Wright, J., & Frantz, E. (2014). Autocratic breakdown and regime transitions: A new data set. *Perspectives on Politics*, *12*(2), 313–331.

Geddes, B., & Zaller, J. (1989). Sources of popular support for authoritarian regimes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 319–347.

Genç, K. (2021). Covid-19 in turkey: A nation on edge. *Lancet*, *397*(10287), 1794.

Gerschewski, J. (2013). The three pillars of stability: Legitimation, repression, and co-optation in autocratic regimes. *Democratization*, *20*(1), 13–38.

Gerschewski, J. (2018a). Analyzing crises in autocratic regimes. In *Crisis in autocratic regimes* (pp. 1–20). Lynne Rienner Boulder.

Gerschewski, J. (2018b). Legitimacy in autocracies: Oxymoron or essential feature? *Perspectives on Politics*, *16*(3), 652–665.

Gerschewski, J. (2023a). Legitimation. In *The two logics of autocratic rule* (pp. 38–74). Cambridge University Press.

Gerschewski, J. (2023b). *The two logics of autocratic rule*. Cambridge University Press.

Golder, M., & Stramski, J. (2010). Ideological congruence and electoral institutions. *American Journal of Political Science*, *54*(1), 90–106.

Grauvogel, J., & von Soest, C. (2024). Legitimacy and legitimation strategies in authoritarian regimes. In A. Wolf (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of authoritarian politics*. Oxford University Press.

Grauvogel, J., & Von Soest, C. (2014). Claims to legitimacy count: Why sanctions fail to instigate democratisation in authoritarian regimes. *European Journal of Political Research*, *53*(4), 635–653.

Grimmer, J., Roberts, M. E., & Stewart, B. M. (2022). *Text as data: A new framework for machine learning and the social sciences*. Princeton University Press.

Grimmer, J., & Stewart, B. M. (2013). Text as data: The promise and pitfalls of automatic content analysis methods for political texts. *Political Analysis*, *21*(3), 267–297.

Groves, R. M. (2006). Nonresponse rates and nonresponse bias in household surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *70*(5), 646–675.

Gründl, J. (2022). Populist ideas on social media: A dictionary-based measurement of populist communication. *New Media & Society*, *24*(6), 1481–1499.

Gulevich, O., & Krivoshchekov, V. (2024). Traditional masculinity ideology and political protests in authoritarian regimes: Unpacking the role of attitudes toward political authorities. *Psychology of Men & Masculinities*.

Gumuscu, S. (2013). The emerging predominant party system in turkey. *Government and Opposition*, *48*(2), 223–244.

Günay, C. (2016). Foreign policy as a source of legitimation for" competitive authoritarian regimes": The case of turkey's akp. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 39–46.

Günay, C., & Dzihic, V. (2016). Decoding the authoritarian code: Exercising 'legitimate'power politics through the ruling parties in turkey, macedonia and serbia. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *16*(4), 529–549.

Güneş, A., & Ezikoğlu, Ç. (2023). Legal and political challenges of gender equality and crimes against women in turkey: The question of istanbul convention. *Women & Criminal Justice*, *33*(1), 14–27.

Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2019). Informational autocrats. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *33*(4), 100–127.

Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2020a). The popularity of authoritarian leaders: A cross-national investigation. *World Politics*, *72*(4), 601–638.

Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2020b). A theory of informational autocracy. *Journal of Public Economics*, *186*, 104158.

Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2022). *Spin dictators: The changing face of tyranny in the 21st century*. Princeton University Press.

Hainmueller, J., Hangartner, D., & Yamamoto, T. (2015). Validating vignette and conjoint survey experiments against real-world behavior. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *112*(8), 2395–2400.

Han, K. (2021). Autocratic welfare programs, economic perceptions, and support for the dictator: Evidence from african autocracies. *International Political Science Review*, *42*(3), 416–429.

Hansen, K. J. (2023). Greed, envy, and admiration: The distinct nature of public opinion about redistribution from the rich. *American Political Science Review*, *117*(1), 217–234.

Hardeniya, T., & Borikar, D. A. (2016). Dictionary-based approach to sentiment analysis: A review. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering, Management and Science*, *2*(5), 239438.

Hashmi, A. S. (2007). Use of religion in violent conflicts by authoritarian regimes: Pakistan and malaysia in comparative perspective. *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, *30*(4), 22.

Hassanpour, N. (2014). Media disruption and revolutionary unrest: Evidence from mubarak's quasi-experiment. *Political Communication*, *31*(1), 1–24.

Hawkins, K. A., & Silva, B. C. (2018). Textual analysis: Big data approaches. In *The ideational approach to populism* (pp. 27–48). Routledge.

Hay, C. (1999). Crisis and the structural transformation of the state: Interrogating the process of change. *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, *1*(3), 317–344.

Haynes, J. (2010). Politics, identity and religious nationalism in turkey: From atatürk to the akp. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *64*(3), 312–327.

Hazama, Y. (2021). Conservatives, nationalists, and incumbent support in turkey. *Turkish Studies*, *22*(5), 667–693.

Hellmann, O. (2021). The dictator's screenplay: Collective memory narratives and the legitimacy of communist rule in east asia. *Democratization*, *28*(4), 659–683.

Hintz, L., & Ercan, H. (2024). Permissive prejudice in localized authoritarian consolidation: Evidence from turkey's municipalities. *Democratization*, 1–25.

Hoffman, M. (2018). Government legitimacy and religion. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of politics*.

Hoffman, M. (2020). Religion and tolerance of minority sects in the arab world. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *64*(2-3), 432–458.

Holbig, H. (2015). Ideology after the end of ideology: China and the quest for autocratic legitimation. In *Comparing autocracies in the early twenty-first century* (pp. 133–153). Routledge.

Hooghe, L., Bakker, R., Brigevich, A., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Marks, G., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M., & Vachudova, M. (2010). Reliability and validity of measuring

party positions: The chapel hill expert surveys of 2002 and 2006. *European Journal of Political Research*, *49*(5), 687–703.

Huang, H. (2015). Propaganda as signaling. *Comparative Politics*, *47*(4), 419–444.

Huang, H. (2018). The pathology of hard propaganda. *The Journal of Politics*, *80*(3), 1034–1038.

Huda, M. S. (2022). Autocratic power? energy megaprojects in the age of democratic backsliding. *Energy Research & Social Science*, *90*, 102605.

Huntington-Klein, N. (2021). *The effect: An introduction to research design and causality*. Chapman; Hall/CRC.

Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy: The human development sequence*. Cambridge University Press.

Insight, B. (2020). Turkish government accused of hiding real covid-19 figures [Accessed: 2024-09-21]. https://balkaninsight.com/2020/08/28/turkish-government-accused-of-hiding-real-covid-19-figures/

Jackson, S. E., Tattan-Birch, H., Buss, V., Shahab, L., & Brown, J. (2024). Trends in daily cigarette consumption among smokers: A population study in england, 2008–2023. *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*, ntae071.

Jenne, E. K. (2021). Populism, nationalism, and revisionist foreign policy. *International affairs*, *97*(2), 323–343.

Jost, J. T., Federico, C. M., & Napier, J. L. (2009). Political ideology: Its structure, functions, and elective affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *60*(1), 307–337.

Jost, J. T., Hawkins, C. B., Nosek, B. A., Hennes, E. P., Stern, C., Gosling, S. D., & Graham, J. (2014). Belief in a just god (and a just society): A system justification perspective on religious ideology. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, *34*(1), 56.

Josua, M. (2017). Legitimation towards whom? *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, *11*(2), 301–324.

Josua, M. (2021). The legitimation of repression in autocracies. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of politics*.

Josua, M. (2024). Justifications of repression in autocracies: An empirical analysis of morocco and tunisia, 2000–2010. *Contemporary Politics*, *30*(1), 108–136.

Josua, M., & Edel, M. (2021). The arab uprisings and the return of repression. *Mediterranean Politics*, *26*(5), 586–611.

Juego, B. (2017). The philippines 2017: Duterte-led authoritarian populism and its liberal-democratic roots. *Asia Maior*, (28).

Kailitz, S. (2013). Classifying political regimes revisited: Legitimation and durability. *Democratization*, *20*(1), 39–60.

Kailitz, S., & Stockemer, D. (2017). Regime legitimation, elite cohesion and the durability of autocratic regime types. *International Political Science Review*, *38*(3), 332–348.

Kalaycioğlu, E. (2007). Politics of conservatism in turkey. *Turkish Studies*, *8*(2), 233–252.

Kalaycıoğlu, E. (2021). Kulturkampf and voting behavior in turkey: A key to turkish party politics? In A. Çarkoğlu & E. Kalaycıoğlu (Eds.), *Elections and public opinion in turkey: Through the prism of the 2018 elections* (pp. 133–156). Routledge.

Kallis, A. (2021). The transnational co-production of interwar 'fascism': On the dynamics of ideational mobility and localization. *European History Quarterly*, *51*(2), 189–213.

Kao, J. C. (2021). Family matters: Education and the (conditional) effect of state indoctrination in china. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *85*(1), 54–78.

Kayaoğlu, A. (2017). Voting behavior of the youth in turkey: What drives involvement in or causes alienation from conventional political participation? *Turkish Studies*, *18*(1), 32–55.

Keleş, D., & Onay, D. (2021). Islamcı basında istanbul sözleşmesi karşıtlığının izlekleri: Milli gazete örneği. *Kültür ve İletişim*, *24*(48), 372–405.

Keremoğlu, E., Hellmeier, S., & Weidmann, N. B. (2022). Thin-skinned leaders: Regime legitimation, protest issues, and repression in autocracies. *Political Science Research and Methods*, *10*(1), 136–152.

Khalaji, M. (2011). Iran's regime of religion. *Journal of International Affairs*, 131–147.

Kim, N. K. (2023). Regime legitimation strategies and competition laws in autocracies. *World Development*, *170*, 106341.

Kirdiş, E. (2022). Revisiting religious economy models: The decline of religious engagement among turkish youth. *Political Science Quarterly*, *137*(1), 73–97.

Klingemann, H.-D., Gancheva, D., & Weßels, B. (2017). Ideological congruence: Choice, visibility and clarity. In P. Harfst, I. Kubbe, & T. Poguntke (Eds.), *Parties, governments and elites*. Springer VS. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-17446-0_4

Kneuer, M. (2017). Legitimation beyond ideology: Authoritarian regimes and the construction of missions. *Zeitschrift Für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, *11*(2), 181–211.

Knight, K. (2006). Transformations of the concept of ideology in the twentieth century. *American Political Science Review*, *100*(4), 619–626.

Kocabıçak, E. (2023). The causes and the consequences of the patriarchal state: Evidence from turkey. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *98*, 102744.

Koesel, K. J. (2014). *Religion and authoritarianism: Cooperation, conflict, and the consequences*. Cambridge University Press.

Koltsova, O., & Koltcov, S. (2013). Mapping the public agenda with topic modeling: The case of the russian livejournal. *Policy & Internet*, *5*(2), 207–227.

Komin, M. (2024). Late-stage putinism: The war in ukraine and russia's shifting ideology [Accessed: 2024-07-25]. *ECFR*. https://ecfr.eu/publication/late-stage-putinism-the-war-in-ukraine-and-russias-shifting-ideology/

KONDA. (2023). *Kasım barometre 147 biyopsi*. KONDA. https://konda.com.tr/uploads/2311-kasim-barometre-147-biyopsi-6bb749bcf359abda17b1718ca9e47484489908.pdf

Korac-Kakabadse, N., Kouzmin, A., & Kakabadse, A. (2002). Spirituality and leadership praxis. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *17*(3), 165–182.

Krastev, I. (2011). Paradoxes of the new authoritarianism. *Journal of Democracy*, *22*(2), 5–16.

Krekó, P., & Enyedi, Z. (2018). Explaining eastern europe: Orbán's laboratory of illiberalism. *Journal of Democracy*, *29*(3), 39–51.

Kronmal, R. A. (1993). Spurious correlation and the fallacy of the ratio standard revisited. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society)*, *156*(3), 379–392.

Kuran, T. (1998). *Private truths, public lies: The social consequences of preference falsification*. Harvard University Press.

Kuru, A. T. (2019). *Islam, authoritarianism, and underdevelopment: A global and historical comparison*. Cambridge University Press.

Lachapelle, J. (2022). Repression reconsidered: Bystander effects and legitimation in authoritarian regimes. *Comparative Politics*.

Lachapelle, J., Levitsky, S., Way, L. A., & Casey, A. E. (2020). Social revolution and authoritarian durability. *World Politics*, *72*(4), 557–600.

Laclau, E. (1996). The death and resurrection of the theory of ideology. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *1*(3), 201–220.

Laebens, M. G., & Öztürk, A. (2021). Partisanship and autocratization: Polarization, power asymmetry, and partisan social identities in turkey. *Comparative Political Studies*, *54*(2), 245–279.

Lai, B., & Slater, D. (2006). Institutions of the offensive: Domestic sources of dispute initiation in authoritarian regimes, 1950–1992. *American Journal of Political Science*, *50*(1), 113–126.

Lansford, T. (Ed.). (2023). *Political handbook of the world 2022-2023*. CQ Press/SAGE Publications.

Leader Maynard, J. (2019). Ideology and armed conflict. *Journal of Peace Research*, *56*(5), 635–649.

Lebo, M. J., & Weber, C. (2015). An effective approach to the repeated cross-sectional design. *American Journal of Political Science*, *59*(1), 242–258.

Leidig, E. (2020). Hindutva as a variant of right-wing extremism. *Patterns of Prejudice*, *54*(3), 215–237.

Leininger, J. (2024). Religious actors and autocratization. In *The routledge handbook of autocratization* (pp. 289–304). Routledge.

Levitsky, S., & Way, L. A. (2010). *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the cold war*. Cambridge University Press.

Levitsky, S., & Way, L. A. (2012). Beyond patronage: Violent struggle, ruling party cohesion, and authoritarian durability. *Perspectives on Politics*, *10*(4), 869–889.

Levitsky, S., & Way, L. A. (2013). The durability of revolutionary regimes. *Journal of Democracy*, *24*(3), 5–17.

Libman, A. (2023). Credibility revolution and the future of russian studies. *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *39*(1-2), 60–69.

Licht, H. (2023). Cross-lingual classification of political texts using multilingual sentence embeddings. *Political Analysis*, *31*(3), 366–379.

Lieber, A. (2013). The chinese ideology: Reconciling the politics with the economics of contemporary reform. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *18*, 335–353.

Linz, J. J. (2000). *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Lucardi, A. (2019). Strength in expectation: Elections, economic performance, and authoritarian breakdown. *The Journal of Politics*, *81*(2), 552–570.

Lührmann, A., & Lindberg, S. I. (2019). A third wave of autocratization is here: What is new about it? *Democratization*, *26*(7), 1095–1113.

Lührmann, A., Tannenberg, M., & Lindberg, S. I. (2018). Regimes of the world (row): Opening new avenues for the comparative study of political regimes. *Politics and Governance*, *6*(1), 60.

Maerz, S. F. (2019). Simulating pluralism: The language of democracy in hegemonic authoritarianism. *Political Research Exchange*, *1*(1), 1–23.

Maerz, S. F. (2020). The many faces of authoritarian persistence: A set-theory perspective on the survival strategies of authoritarian regimes. *Government and Opposition*, *55*(1), 64–87.

Maerz, S. F., & Schneider, C. Q. (2020). Comparing public communication in democracies and autocracies: Automated text analyses of speeches by heads of government. *Quality & Quantity*, *54*(2), 517–545.

Maessen, E. (2014). Reassessing turkish national memory: An analysis of the representation of turkish national memory by the akp. *Middle Eastern Studies*, *50*(2), 309–324.

Magaloni, B. (2006). *Voting for autocracy: Hegemonic party survival and its demise in mexico* (Vol. 296). Cambridge University Press Cambridge.

March, A. F. (2015). Political islam: Theory. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *18*(1), 103–123.

Mardin, Ş. (1973). Center-periphery relations: A key to turkish politics? *Daedalus*, 169–190.

Mattingly, D. C., & Yao, E. (2022). How soft propaganda persuades. *Comparative Political Studies*, *55*(9), 1569–1594.

Matveeva, A. (2009). Legitimising central asian authoritarianism: Political manipulation and symbolic power. *Europe-Asia Studies*, *61*(7), 1095–1121.

Mauk, M. (2020). *Citizen support for democratic and autocratic regimes*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Maynard, J. L. (2013). A map of the field of ideological analysis. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *18*(3), 299–327.

Mayne, Q., & Hakhverdian, A. (2017). Ideological congruence and citizen satisfaction: Evidence from 25 advanced democracies. *Comparative Political Studies*, *50*(6), 822–849.

Mazepus, H., Veenendaal, W., McCarthy-Jones, A., & Trak Vásquez, J. M. (2016). A comparative study of legitimation strategies in hybrid regimes. *Policy Studies*, *37*(4), 350–369.

Mazhar, M. S., & S Goraya, N. (2022). India turns an electoral autocracy. *South Asian Studies*, *36*(2).

McCambridge, J., Mitcheson, L., Winstock, A., & Hunt, N. (2005). Five-year trends in patterns of drug use among people who use stimulants in dance contexts in the united kingdom. *Addiction*, *100*(8), 1140–1149.

Mednicoff, D. M. (2014). A tale of three constitutions: Common drives and diverse outcomes in post-2010 arab legal politics. *Temple International and Comparative Law Journal*, *28*, 215.

Meng, A. (2020). *Constraining dictatorship: From personalized rule to institutionalized regimes*. Cambridge University Press.

Meyer, K., Tope, D., & Price, A. M. (2008). Religion and support for democracy: A crossnational examination. *Sociological Spectrum*, *28*(5), 625–653.

Mikolov, T., Yih, W.-t., & Zweig, G. (2013). Linguistic regularities in continuous space word representations. *Proceedings of the 2013 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies*, 746–751.

Mkandawire, T. (2015). Neopatrimonialism and the political economy of economic performance in africa: Critical reflections. *World Politics*, *67*(3), 563–612.

Mylonas, H., & Radnitz, S. (2022). *Enemies within: The global politics of fifth columns*. Oxford University Press.

Nathan, A. J. (2020). The puzzle of authoritarian legitimacy. *Journal of Democracy*, *31*(1), 158–168.

Neundorf, A., Nazrullaeva, E., Northmore-Ball, K., Tertytchnaya, K., & Kim, W. (2023). Varieties of indoctrination: The politicization of education and the media around the world. *Perspectives on Politics*, 1–28.

Neundorf, A., & Öztürk, A. (2023). How to improve representativeness and cost-effectiveness in samples recruited through meta: A comparison of advertisement tools. *Plos one*, *18*(2), e0281243.

Neundorf, A., Öztürk, A., Northmore-Ball, K., Tertytchnaya, K., & Gerschewski, J. (2024). A loyal base: Support for authoritarian regimes in times of crisis. *Comparative Political Studies*.

Nguyen, T. (2022). Exploiting ideology and making higher education serve vietnam's authoritarian regime. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *55*(4), 83–104.

Nilsen, M. (2012). Military temples and saffron-robed soldiers: Legitimacy and the securing of buddhism in southern thailand. In *Buddhism and violence* (pp. 37–53). Routledge.

Nyseth Brehm, H. (2016). State context and exclusionary ideologies. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *60*(2), 131–149.

Offe, C. (1976). Crisis of crisis management: Elements of a political crisis theory. *International Journal of Politics*, *6*(3), 29–67.

Olar, R.-G. (2019). Fait accompli, or live to fight another day? deterring and surviving coups in authoritarian regimes. *Research & Politics*, *6*(1), 1–7.

Omelicheva, M. Y. (2016a). Authoritarian legitimation: Assessing discourses of legitimacy in kazakhstan and uzbekistan. *Central Asian Survey*, *35*(4), 481–500.

Omelicheva, M. Y. (2016b). Islam and power legitimation: Instrumentalisation of religion in central asian states. *Contemporary Politics*, *22*(2), 144–163.

Onbaşı, N. (2020). The role of populist strategies in differing outcomes of corruption scandals in brazil and turkey. *Turkish Studies*, *21*(2), 188–207.

Orhangazi, Ö., & Yeldan, A. E. (2021). The re-making of the turkish crisis. *Development and Change*, *52*(3), 460–503.

Özen, H. (2020). Reproducing 'hegemony'thereafter? the long-term political effects of the gezi protests in turkey. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *20*(2), 245–264.

Oztig, L. I., & Adisonmez, U. C. (2023). Sovereignty, power, and authority: Understanding the conversion of hagia sophia from a performative perspective. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 1–21.

Öztürk, A. E. (2016). Turkey's diyanet under akp rule: From protector to imposer of state ideology? *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *16*(4), 619–635.

Öztürk, A. E. (2019). An alternative reading of religion and authoritarianism: The new logic between religion and state in the akp's new turkey. *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *19*(1), 79–98.

Öztürk, S., & Reilly, T. (2022). Assessing centralization: On turkey's rising personalist regime. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 1–19.

Paget, D. (2020). Again, making tanzania great: Magufuli's restorationist developmental nationalism. *Democratization*, *27*(7), 1240–1260.

Patane, C. F. (2016). *Rhetoric as repression: The roles and effects of government framing* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri–Columbia].

Pemstein, D., Marquardt, K. L., Tzelgov, E., Wang, Y.-t., Krusell, J., & Miri, F. (2018). The v-dem measurement model: Latent variable analysis for cross-national and cross-temporal expert-coded data. *V-Dem working paper*, *21*.

Pennington, J., Socher, R., & Manning, C. D. (2014). Glove: Global vectors for word representation. *Proceedings of the 2014 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP)*, 1532–1543.

Pepinsky, T. (2009). *Economic crises and the breakdown of authoritarian regimes: Indonesia and malaysia in comparative perspective*. Cambridge University Press.

Pepinsky, T. (2014). The institutional turn in comparative authoritarianism. *British Journal of Political Science*, *44*(3), 631–653.

Pepinsky, T., Reiff, Á., & Szabo, K. (2022). The ukrainian refugee crisis and the politics of public opinion: Evidence from hungary. *Perspectives on Politics*, 1–26.

Perry, S. L., & Whitehead, A. L. (2022). Porn as a threat to the mythic social order: Christian nationalism, anti-pornography legislation, and fear of pornography as a public menace. *The Sociological Quarterly*, *63*(2), 316–336.

Peterssen, S. (2022). Ideological polarisation in the venezuelan presidential crisis. *CADAAD Journal*, *14*(1), 63–85.

Philo, K. (2023). *The gop's 2025 plan to ban porn and attack lgbtq rights is alarming* [Accessed: 2024-09-10]. https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/project-2025-porn-ban-lgbtq-transgender-rcna161562

Pruzan-Jørgensen, J. E. (2010). Analyzing authoritarian regime legitimation: Findings from morocco. *Middle East Critique*, *19*(3), 269–286.

Rahimov, R. (2021). The geopolitics of sacralization: Turkey's reversion of the hagia sofia. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, *15*(2), 273–287.

Rai, P. (2023). Political legitimation and charismatic routinization of modi 'wave'in india. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 00219096231179655.

Riaz, A. (2024). Religion as a tool for authoritarian legitimation: The case of bangladesh. *World Affairs*.

Río, A. d. (2022). Strategic uncertainty and elite defections in electoral autocracies: A cross-national analysis. *Comparative Political Studies*, *55*(13), 2250–2282.

Roberts, K. M. (2012). Populism and democracy in venezuela under hugo chávez. In C. Mudde & C. Rovira Kaltwasser (Eds.), *Populism in europe and the americas: Threat or corrective for democracy?* (pp. 136–159). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139152365.008

Rodman, E. (2020). A timely intervention: Tracking the changing meanings of political concepts with word vectors. *Political Analysis*, *28*(1), 87–111.

Rodriguez, P. L., Spirling, A., & Stewart, B. M. (2023). Embedding regression: Models for context-specific description and inference. *American Political Science Review*, *117*(4), 1255–1274.

Rogenhofer, J. M., & Panievsky, A. (2020). Antidemocratic populism in power: Comparing erdoğan's turkey with modi's india and netanyahu's israel. *Democratization*, *27*(8), 1394–1412.

Rohrschneider, R., & Whitefield, S. (2012). Chapter 5: Ideological congruence. In *The strain of representation: How parties represent diverse voters in western and eastern europe* (p. 0). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199652785.003.0005

Roscigno, V., Cantzler, J., Restifo, S., & Guetzkow, J. (2015). Legitimation, state repression, and the sioux massacre at wounded knee. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, *20*(1), 17–40.

Rosenfeld, B., & Wallace, J. (2024). Information politics and propaganda in authoritarian societies. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *27*.

Ross, A., Jalabi, R., & Kingsley, P. (2016, July 16). *What's happened in turkey? how the failed coup unfolded*. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/16/whats-happened-in-turkey-first-hours-of-the-coup

Rozenas, A. (2016). Office insecurity and electoral manipulation. *The Journal of Politics*, *78*(1), 232–248.

Rozenas, A., & Stukal, D. (2019). How autocrats manipulate economic news: Evidence from russia's state-controlled television. *The Journal of Politics*, *81*(3), 982–996.

Sagarzazu, I., & Thies, C. G. (2019). The foreign policy rhetoric of populism: Chávez, oil, and anti-imperialism. *Political Research Quarterly*, *72*(1), 205–214.

Sánchez-Barría, F. (2022). It's all about timing: Temporal dynamics in the protest–repression nexus in pinochet's chile, 1982–1989. In L. Leitz (Ed.), *Race and space* (pp. 173–203, Vol. 46). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Sarkissian, A. (2015). *The varieties of religious repression: Why governments restrict religion*. Oxford University Press.

Sayari, S. (2010). Political violence and terrorism in turkey, 1976–80: A retrospective analysis. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *22*(2), 198–215.

Scharpf, A. (2018). Ideology and state terror: How officer beliefs shaped repression during argentina's 'dirty war'. *Journal of Peace Research*, *55*(2), 206–221.

Schatz, E. (2009). The soft authoritarian tool kit: Agenda-setting power in kazakhstan and kyrgyzstan. *Comparative Politics*, *41*(2), 203–222.

Schedler, A. (2002). Elections without democracy: The menu of manipulation. *Journal of Democracy*, *13*(2), 36–50.

Schedler, A. (2013). *The politics of uncertainty: Sustaining and subverting electoral authoritarianism*. OUP Oxford.

Schenk, C. (2012). Nationalism in the russian media: Content analysis of newspaper coverage surrounding conflict in stavropol, 24 may–7 june 2007. *Nationalities Papers*, *40*(5), 783–805.

Schleutker, E. (2016). A note on the determinants of the regulation of religion. *Politics and Religion*, *9*(4), 744–770.

Schleutker, E. (2021). Co-optation and repression of religion in authoritarian regimes. *Politics and Religion*, *14*(2), 209–240.

Schlumberger, O. (2010). Opening old bottles in search of new wine: On nondemocratic legitimacy in the middle east. *Middle East Critique*, *19*(3), 233–250.

Schmotz, A. (2015). Vulnerability and compensation: Constructing an index of co-optation in autocratic regimes. *European Political Science*, *14*, 439–457.

Schneider, C. Q., & Maerz, S. F. (2017). Legitimation, cooptation, and repression and the survival of electoral autocracies. *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, *11*(2), 213–235.

Scoggins, B. (2022). Identity politics or economics? explaining voter support for hungary's illiberal fidesz. *East European Politics and Societies*, *36*(1), 3–28.

Selivanov, D., Bickel, M., & Wang, Q. (2020). *Package 'text2vec'* [https://text2vec.org/].

Selvik, K. (2018). Autocratic legitimation in iran: Ali khamenei's discourse on regime "insiders" and "outsiders". *Democratization*, *25*(7), 1114–1131.

Severreal. (2022). *"pereplyunuli kafkianskiy absurd". dva dela za sozhzhennyy flag s bukvoy z* [Accessed: 2024-07-25]. https://www.severreal.org/a/pereplyunuli-kafkianskiy-absurd-dva-dela-za-sozhzhennyy-flag-s-bukvoy-z/31847891.html

Sheikh, M. Z. H., & Ahmed, Z. S. (2020). Military, authoritarianism and islam: A comparative analysis of bangladesh and pakistan. *Politics and Religion*, *13*(2), 333–360.

Sheline, A. R. (2019). Constructing an islamic nation: National mosque building as a form of nation-building. *Nationalities Papers*, *47*(1), 104–120.

Shih, V. C. (2020). *Economic shocks and authoritarian stability: Duration, financial control, and institutions*. University of Michigan Press.

Silva, B. C., & Littvay, L. (2019). Comparative research is harder than we thought: Regional differences in experts' understanding of electoral integrity questions. *Political Analysis*, *27*(4), 599–604.

Sirotkina, E., & Zavadskaya, M. (2020). When the party's over: Political blame attribution under an electoral authoritarian regime. *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *36*(1), 37–60.

Sjørup, L. (2017). Pinochet as protector of and martyr for christianity in chile. *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, *19*(2), 43–55.

Slantchev, B. L., & Matush, K. S. (2020). The authoritarian wager: Political action and the sudden collapse of repression. *Comparative Political Studies*, *53*(2), 214–252.

Slater, D. (2010). *Ordering power: Contentious politics and authoritarian leviathans in southeast asia*. Cambridge University Press.

Sofos, S. A. (2021). Space and the emotional topography of populism in turkey: The case of hagia sophia. *Cogent Social Sciences*, *7*(1), 1982495.

Somer, M. (2016). Understanding turkey's democratic breakdown: Old vs. new and indigenous vs. global authoritarianism. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *16*(4), 481–503.

Spierings, N. (2014). The influence of islamic orientations on democratic support and tolerance in five arab countries. *Politics and Religion*, *7*(4), 706–733.

Stewart, K. L. (2021). Democratic and autocratic nation building. *Nationalities Papers*, *49*(2), 205–212.

Stockemer, D., & Kailitz, S. (2020). Economic development: How does it influence the survival of different types of autocracy? *International Political Science Review*, *41*(5), 711–727.

Taljaard, M., McKenzie, J. E., Ramsay, C. R., & Grimshaw, J. M. (2014). The use of segmented regression in analysing interrupted time series studies: An example in pre-hospital ambulance care. *Implementation Science*, *9*(1), 1–4.

Tan, K. P. (2012). The ideology of pragmatism: Neo-liberal globalisation and political authoritarianism in singapore. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *42*(1), 67–92.

Tanneberg, D. (2020). *The politics of repression under authoritarian rule*. Springer.

Tannenberg, M. (2022). *Towards legitimacy as congruence: Regimes' menus of legitimation and citizens' appetites* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Gothenburg, Faculty of Social Sciences].

Tannenberg, M., Bernhard, M., Gerschewski, J., Lührmann, A., & von Soest, C. (2021). Claiming the right to rule: Regime legitimation strategies from 1900 to 2019. *European Political Science Review*, *13*(1), 77–94.

Tessler, M. (2002). Islam and democracy in the middle east: The impact of religious orientations on attitudes toward democracy in four arab countries. *Comparative Politics*, 337–354.

Thomas, M. A. (2010). What do the worldwide governance indicators measure? *The European Journal of Development Research*, *22*, 31–54.

Thompson, M. R. (2022). Duterte's violent populism: Mass murder, political legitimacy, and the "death of development" in the philippines. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *52*(3), 403–428.

Thyen, K. (2017). Promising democracy, legitimizing autocracy? perceptions of regime democraticness among university students in morocco. *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, *11*(2), 325–347.

Thyen, K., & Gerschewski, J. (2018). Legitimacy and protest under authoritarianism: Explaining student mobilization in egypt and morocco during the arab uprisings. *Democratization*, *25*(1), 38–57.

Traber, D., Schoonvelde, M., & Schumacher, G. (2020). Errors have been made, others will be blamed: Issue engagement and blame shifting in prime minister speeches during the economic crisis in europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, *59*(1), 45–67.

Trends, G. (n.d.). Google trends [Accessed: 2024-09-16].

Turkish Statistical Institute. (2024). Address Based Population Registration System (ADNKS) [Accessed: October 3, 2024].

Van de Ven, A. (2020). Triumph (re-) imagined: Saddam's monument to victory. *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, *27*(1), 112–134.

Venetoklis, T. (2021). Exogenous shocks and citizens' satisfaction with governmental policies: Can empirical evidence from the 2008 financial crisis help us understand better the effects of the covid-19 pandemic? *Quality & Quantity*, *55*(6), 1973–2000.

Volpi, F. (2020). Algeria: When elections hurt democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, *31*(2), 152–165.

Volpi, F., & Gerschewski, J. (2020). Crises and critical junctures in authoritarian regimes: Addressing uprisings' temporalities and discontinuities. *Third World Quarterly*, *41*(6), 1030–1045.

von Soest, C., & Grauvogel, J. (2016). Comparing legitimation strategies in post-soviet countries. In M. Brusis, J. Ahrens, & M. S. Wessel (Eds.), *Politics and legitimacy in post-soviet eurasia* (pp. 35–55). Palgrave Macmillan.

Von Haldenwang, C. (2017). The relevance of legitimation–a mew framework for analysis. *Contemporary Politics*, *23*(3), 269–286.

Von Soest, C., & Grauvogel, J. (2017). Identity, procedures and performance: How authoritarian regimes legitimize their rule. *Contemporary Politics*, *23*(3), 287–305.

Weiberg-Salzmann, M., & Willems, U. (2020). Challenging the political: Religious actors and religious arguments in liberal democracies. *Religion and Biopolitics*, 3–29.

Welzel, C., & Klingemann, H.-D. (2008). Evidencing and explaining democratic congruence: The perspective of'substantive'democracy. *World Values Research, WVR*, *1*(3).

Whitehead, A. L., & Perry, S. L. (2020). *Taking america back for god: Christian nationalism in the united states*. Oxford University Press.

Wickham, H. (2023). *Rvest: Easily harvest (scrape) web pages* [https://rvest.tidyverse.org/, https://github.com/tidyverse/rvest].

Wood, M. (1984). Using key-word-in-context concordance programs for qualitative and quantitative social research. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *20*(3), 289–297.

Worldometer. (2024). Turkey coronavirus cases [Accessed: 2024-09-21]. https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/turkey/

Xu, Y. (2023). Causal inference with time-series cross-sectional data: A reflection [Preprint].

Yang, K., & Banamah, A. (2014). Quota sampling as an alternative to probability sampling? an experimental study. *Sociological Research Online*, *19*(1), 56–66.

Yavuz, M. H., & Öztürk, A. E. (2019). Turkish secularism and islam under the reign of erdoğan. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *19*(1), 1–9.

Yefet, B., & Lavie, L. (2021). Legitimation in post-revolutionary egypt: Al-sisi and the renewal of authoritarianism. *Digest of Middle East Studies*, *30*(3), 170–185.

Yeni Akit. (2019). Yeniden refah partisi'nden başkan erdoğan'a flaş çağrı [Accessed: 2024-09-21]. https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/yeniden-refah-partisinden-baskan-erdogana-flas-cagri-835401.html

Yeniden Refah Istanbul. (2024). Genel başkanımız dr. fatih erbakan'dan 'istanbul sözleşmesi' açıklaması [Accessed: 2024-09-21]. https://yenidenrefahistanbul.org.tr/mpage/genel-baskanimiz-dr-fatih-erbakan-39-dan-39-istanbul-sozlesmesi-39-aciklamasi/1418

Yilmaz, I., & Albayrak, I. (2021). Religion as an authoritarian securitization and violence legitimation tool: The erdoğanist diyanet's framing of a religious movement as an existential threat. *Religions*, *12*(8), 574.

Yilmaz, I., & Bashirov, G. (2018). The akp after 15 years: Emergence of erdoganism in turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, *39*(9), 1812–1830.

Yilmaz, I., Caman, M. E., & Bashirov, G. (2020). How an islamist party managed to legitimate its authoritarianization in the eyes of the secularist opposition: The case of turkey. *Democratization*, *27*(2), 265–282.

Yilmaz, I., & Erturk, O. F. (2021). Populism, violence and authoritarian stability: Necropolitics in turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, *42*(7), 1524–1543.

Yilmaz, I., & Shipoli, E. (2022). Use of past collective traumas, fear and conspiracy theories for securitization of the opposition and authoritarian nation: The turkish case. *Democratization*, *29*(2), 320–336.

Yılmaz, O., Sarıbay, S. A., Bahçekapılı, H. G., & Harma, M. (2016). Political orientations, ideological self-categorizations, party preferences, and moral foundations of young turkish voters. *Turkish Studies*, *17*(4), 544–566.

Zaller, J. R., et al. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. Cambridge University Press.

Zhao, D. (2009). The mandate of heaven and performance legitimation in historical and contemporary china. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *53*(3), 416–433.

Zoltán, Á., & Bozóki, A. (2016). State and faith: Right-wing populism and nationalized religion in hungary. *Intersections: East-European Journal of Society and Politics*, *2*(1), 98–122.