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ABSTRACT

During the last two decades, executive aggrandizement has emerged as one of the chief threats to democratic regimes. In various countries, ranging from Turkey and Hungary to Venezuela, elected incumbents used their democratic mandates to gradually dismantle democratic institutions. Similar patterns of executive aggrandizement have been visible even in an advanced democracy, the United States of America. Executive aggrandizement is facilitated by the consistent electoral support that incumbents with authoritarian agendas enjoy. In order to understand this threat to the future of liberal democracies, we first need to explain why voters support leaders eroding democratic rights and freedoms in their countries.

This dissertation aims to bring a psychological perspective to the study of mass support for executive aggrandizement. To establish a broad theoretical framework, I offer the concept “affective political ties” as an umbrella term, including partisan identities, partisan emotions, and affective polarization. Building on this framework developed in the Introduction, I explore the conditions under which the strength of affective political ties leads to democratic backsliding. My dissertation reveals how interactions between various forms of affective political ties and political institutions condition the relationship between the strength of affective ties and democratic erosion.

This dissertation is formed of four empirical chapters, in addition to introduction and conclusion chapters. First two empirical chapters rely on online survey experiments conducted in Turkey and Bolivia. My studies in Turkey demonstrate that provoking partisan enthusiasm and anger increases support for executive aggrandizement among incumbent party voters. Importantly, however, this effect is not universal. I fail to provoke partisan emotions among incumbent supporters in Bolivia despite using the same experimental design. I argue that this difference is rooted in diverging levels of partisan identification across these two countries.

Last two chapters broaden the theoretical and geographical scope of this framework. In the third empirical chapter, I conduct a cross-national statistical analysis, using the CSES data. This study finds that affective polarization is detrimental to democratic institutions especially when voters polarize over their feelings towards the ruling party. In the final empirical chapter, I demonstrate how incumbent parties can use political narratives to build affective ties with their voters, relying on the study of utopian developmentalist narrative in Turkey.

**The Affective Politics of Democratic Erosion: Explaining Mass Support
for Executive Aggrandizement**

by

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B.A., Boğaziçi University, 2013
M.A., University of Essex, 2014

Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

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Successful defense of this dissertation will mean that I have been able to receive the highest degree from a prestigious university in a foreign country, the United States. For a first-generation college student, who was born and raised in a small and conservative Turkish town, this is an achievement. I feel proud. More than that, however, I feel grateful to all the people who made this achievement possible. I would not be able to do it without them.

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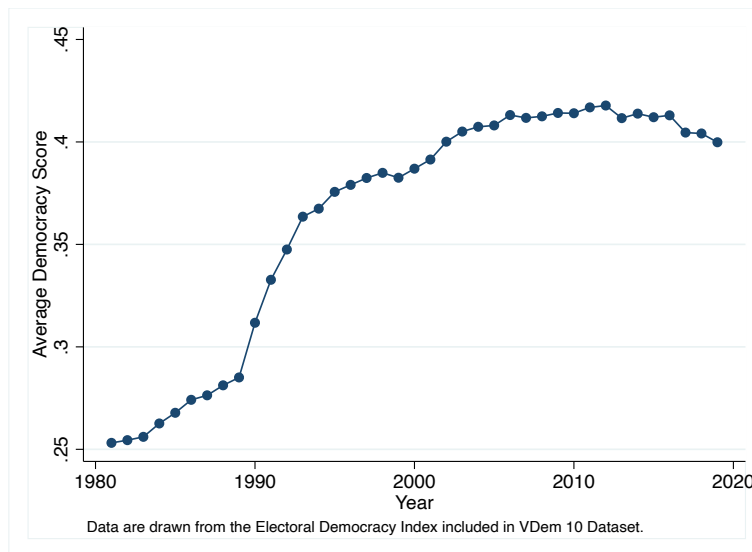
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Several decades ago, most scholars and policy-makers were confident that the entire world was moving towards a liberal democratic future. Looking at Figure 1.1, which shows the trend of democratization between 1980 and 2005, it is not hard to sympathize with that mood. Starting from the second half of 1970s, liberal democracy spread all around the world for more than two decades. Yet, the march of democracy halted several years after the beginning of the 21st century, and a new wave of auto-cratization has arisen especially since 2010 (Freedom House, 2019).

Figure 1.1: Average democracy score across the world since the end of the Cold War



1.1 Third wave of autocratization and the role of electoral support

From a broader historical perspective, the current democratic recession was not totally unexpected. As Huntington (1993) put it, the global diffusion of democracy occurs through waves, and each wave of democratization eventually meets with a certain degree of authoritarian backlash. Both in the interwar period and during 1960s various countries fell into authoritarian regimes, albeit briefly. The third wave of autocratization, as Lührmann and Lindberg (2019) name the current period of democratic backsliding, is milder in its degree compared to previous waves of autocratization, and it is possible to interpret it as a “correction” following large-scale democratic gains of the third wave of democratization even in countries lacking relevant structural preconditions (Levitsky and Way, 2015).

Yet, there is something unique to the third wave of autocratization, and we need to take that into account to have a full picture of the evolution of political regimes in the world. During the 20th century, most democratic breakdowns occurred through coups organized by non-democratic actors (Svolik, 2015). Incumbents, on their part, staged *auto-golpes* to gain unchecked political power, dissolving the parliament at one stroke. These forms of democratic breakdowns have become increasingly rare since the end of the Cold War. Instead, democracies now die slowly, in the hands of incumbents elected through free and fair elections. It is increasingly common to see elected incumbents gradually dismantling democratic institutions and turning democracies into competitive authoritarian regimes, relying on their consistent electoral support. This form of democratic erosion, which is called executive aggrandizement (Bermeo, 2016), threatens even countries with relatively longer democratic histories, such as Venezuela, India, and even the United States.

A paradigmatic case of gradual incumbent takeover is Turkey under Recep Tayyip

Erdogan's rule (Bermeo, 2016; Laebens and Öztürk, 2020). Erdogan founded the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2001. In 2002, his party won general elections, and he became the prime minister of Turkey. Back then Turkey was an electoral democracy, although the military played a tutelary role and political and civil rights of Kurdish actors were continually repressed. Under Erdogan's rule, Turkey went through a gradual period of democratic breakdown. Erdogan established personalistic control over the party organization, media, courts, and nearly all other state institutions. As Erdogan's control over these institutions increased, the room for democratic opposition narrowed to the extent that it became impossible to call Turkey a democracy (Esen and Gumuscu, 2016). By 2019, Erdogan was emboldened enough to force judicial institutions to repeat the municipal election in Istanbul, the biggest city of Turkey, when his party lost the election with a slim margin.

The gradual breakdown of Turkish democracy was facilitated by the consistent electoral support that the AKP enjoyed. Between 2002 and 2017, Erdogan's party won five general elections and three local elections. The party never obtained less than 40 % of votes in a general election, and Erdogan won presidential elections twice, both times obtaining more than 50 % of votes in the first round. In the same vein, AKP voters approved two constitutional referendums, which radically changed Turkey's institutional makeup, in 2012 and 2017. Each election and referendum victory meant approval of Erdogan's authoritarian tactics, further emboldening him to attack democratic institutions.

Incumbent takeover that is facilitated by the consistent support of the electorate is not unique to Turkey. During the last decade several Latin American countries—most prominently Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia, experienced a similar process (Balderacchi, 2018). Victor Orban created an authoritarian regime at the center of Europe relying on a similar playbook (Kaufman and Haggard, 2019). Most scholars

are afraid that Poland is following the same path. These patterns are traceable even in the United States, under Trump’s rule.

There is not yet an established literature on causes of incumbent takeover attempts and determinants of their success. Existing research reveals limitations of structural factors, such as levels of economic development, in protecting against incumbents with authoritarian agendas (Tomini and Wagemann, 2018; Sarfati, 2017). Some scholars suggest that “power imbalances between opposition and incumbent” is the correct framework for exploring cases of backsliding and breakdown (Tomini and Wagemann, 2018; Waldner and Lust, 2018). Yet, to the extent that our understanding of power resources is limited to material resources, our explanations will not be enough to understand the unfolding of democratic erosion.

This dissertation takes two steps to contribute to the existing literature on this issue. First, it focuses primarily on mass behavior and attitudes. As explained above, mass support plays an especially crucial role in facilitating the third wave of autocratization. Absent mass support, there can be no incumbent takeover (Balderacchi, 2018). Despite this, there has been no systematic treatment of electoral support for executive aggrandizement yet. There are various works on mass support for consolidated authoritarian regimes (Magaloni, 2006), but findings from this literature may not apply to cases of autocratization through executive aggrandizement.

Second, this dissertation brings a psychological perspective to the study of autocratization. More specifically, I explore how voters’ affective reactions to political actors, broadly defined as “affective political ties,” influence the process of autocratization. This step represents a sharp divergence from the existing literature on democratic erosion, which predominantly focus on materialistic explanations. My dissertation reveals how affective political ties harm the health of democratic institutions while also exploring the conditions under which we are most likely to see these

effects.

1.2 Conceptualizing affective political ties

In order to study affective politics in comparative context, we first need to establish a broad conceptual framework, which will allow a certain degree of abstraction for comparative purposes. I offer “affective political ties” as the entry point for this analysis.

“Affective political ties” refers to all kinds of psychological bonds, between voters and political actors, that have either positive or negative valence. This umbrella term covers, most prominently, positive and negative partisan identities, positive and negative partisan emotions, affective polarization, and charismatic ties. There are important differences between these forms of affective political ties, and I will discuss these differences below in detail. In overall, however, they all include an affective component, and they are closely related to each other. For example, affective polarization arises from partisan identities (Iyengar *et al.*, 2019) and partisan emotions are highly correlated with partisan group identities (Huddy *et al.*, 2018). Thus, it is theoretically useful to group these ties together and contrast them to non-affective forms of political ties.

As a whole, affective political ties can be contrasted to programmatic and clientelistic linkages between voters and political actors (Kitschelt, 2000). Programmatic linkages refer to universal and non-selective goods that parties promise and provide. They arise from policy or ideology based appeals of political actors. Clientelistic linkages, on the other hand, refer to selective and material incentives linking voters to parties. These linkages ensure that the voter benefits from particular material goods and services in exchange for her support for the party; in other words, voter supports the party to access these goods and services.

There is a large literature in political science that point to clientelistic or programmatic linkages to explain support for authoritarian regimes. Magaloni (2006) argues that the PRI, which ruled Mexico from 1929 to 2000, could sustain its electoral hegemony thanks to vote-buying and distribution of government transfers to the poorest segments of the population. Esen and Gumuscu (2020) develop a similar argument to explain voter support for Erdogan in Turkey. They contend that the AKP successfully established a distributional coalition including a large-enough group of voters and business-people. In return for the channeling of state resources, these groups of voters support the AKP’s authoritarian agenda. Svoblik (2019) argues that partisan *interests*, which include voters’ preferences for specific economic and social policies, can convince voters to abandon democratic principles. Svoblik admits that loyalties to the party and the leader matter too, yet, categorizing loyalty under “partisan interests” prevents a serious engagement with the affective dimension.

In contrast to these approaches, this dissertation focuses on the role of affective linkages. “Affective political ties”, as I name these linkages, refers to the feeling-based experience that a political actor evokes in an individual. An affective engagement with a political actor relies on physiological responses in the individual. For example, Petersen *et al.* (2015) demonstrate that exposure to party logos leads to skin conductance reactions and these physiological responses are closely related to observed behavioral patterns in partisans.

Affective ties operate through principles different from clientelistic or programmatic linkages. When we discuss clientelistic and programmatic linkages, we mostly refer to a transactional relationship between the party and the individual. This relationship is characterized by a rationalist cost-benefit analysis. Affective ties, on the other hand, cannot be limited to this narrowly rationalistic framework as they can lead to self-sacrificing behavior (Huddy *et al.*, 2015) or decreased levels of blame

attribution to certain political actors (Merolla *et al.*, 2007).

Both political organizations and leaders can be the object towards which affective political ties are directed. This dissertation is mostly about the the former, focusing on feelings towards political parties. I only briefly refer to personalistic affective ties, in the form of charisma, in Chapter 5 and in the Conclusion. This is an important limitation: Personalistic affective ties and partisan affective ties are closely related to each other, but they can have diverging outcomes on political systems.

My discussion of affective partisan ties in this dissertation revolve around the three most common forms that these ties take in democracies: partisan identities, partisan emotions, and affective polarization. Below, I introduce each of them and explore how they are related to each other.

1.2.1 *Partisan identities*

Partisanship is defined as the *enduring* orientation of voters towards particular parties (Blais *et al.*, 2001). The stability of partisan attachments and their impact on voter behavior is a well-documented empirical regularity. Yet there are two rival theories on the origins and the nature of this enduring orientation. On the one hand, rational theories of partisanship define partisan ties as the running tally of past evaluations of party and leader performance (Fiorina, 1981; Johnston, 2006). According to this perspective, partisanship is stable only because it requires a significant amount of new information to cancel evaluations that had accumulated over the past.

A different perspective in partisanship literature points to the psychological bond between voters and parties (Angus *et al.*, 1960; Green *et al.*, 2004). According to this perspective, partisanship is rooted in the identification voters establish with political parties. More recently, scholars relied on the Social Identity Theory to explain party identification, arguing that identifying with the partisan group and believing

the moral superiority of this group is central to partisan identification (Bankert *et al.*, 2017; Greene, 1999). In a series of research, Huddy *et al.* (2015, 2018) have demonstrated that identity-based theories of partisanship better explain mobilization for the party, compared to rationalist theories.

My understanding of partisanship in this dissertation is rooted in this second approach. Partisanship is the affective bond between the party and the individual, arising from the identification of the individual with the political party and supporters of that political party. When an individual identifies with a political party, the party becomes a part of the perception of the self. As Bankert *et al.* (2017) operationalize this concept, a partisan feels insulted when someone criticizes the party, becomes happy when the party receives successful results in polls, and uses “us” when referring to other partisans. In countries with older party systems, scholars trace partisan identification to early socialization period of individuals, when they are under the influence of their family and close environment. In Chapter 5, I discuss how the strength of partisan identification can also be traced to the political narratives spread by ruling parties.

1.2.2 *Partisan emotions*

Emotions can be defined as physiological and mental responses to identifiable stimuli deemed consequential for individual or group objectives (Miller, 2011, 577). Affective response to a new situation takes the form of a specific emotion based on the cognitive appraisal of several features of the situation, including threat level, goal congruence, and personal agency. When we sense a threat, for example, we feel anger if we are certain about the source of the threat, and we feel fear if we are uncertain about its source or our ability to cope with it. In return, emotions influence individuals’ behavioral reactions to the stimuli. Political psychologists have revealed

that emotions have a significant effect on the processing of new information and participation in politics (Albertson and Gadarian, 2015; Brader and Marcus, 2013; MacKuen *et al.*, 2010). Aware of the role that emotions play in politics, political campaigns frequently try to influence voters' emotions (Brader, 2005).

This dissertation explores the role of *partisan* emotions, which is directed at certain political actors. Partisan emotions rely on the cognitive appraisal of the political environment with respect to certain dimensions, including congruity with political goals, appraisals about the blame/responsibility of political actors, appraisals about the partisan control over the situation, and the degree of certainty about these appraisals. In this dissertation, I especially focus on partisan anger and enthusiasm. Partisan anger potentially occurs when an individual senses a threat to partisan goals, is certain about the source of that threat, believes that the threat is unfair, and believes that she can deal with that threat. In response, partisan anger leads to a confrontational political behavior, such as partisan mobilization. Partisan enthusiasm potentially occurs when an individual is certain that partisan goals are being reached.

1.2.3 *Affective polarization*

Finally, affective polarization is the increasing distance among voters with respect to their feelings towards political parties (Iyengar *et al.*, 2012; Iyengar and Westwood, 2015; Lelkes, 2016).

Traditionally political scientists understood polarization primarily as an ideological phenomenon. "Party system polarization," which has been the most predominant concept of polarization in comparative politics, refers to the ideological distance between political parties in a national party system (Sartori, 2005). There have also been studies on "mass ideological polarization", which is usually measured through

the self-placement of respondents over the left-right spectrum (Dalton, 2006; Ezrow *et al.*, 2014; Jou, 2016).

Political scientists have always recognized the affective dimension; yet, they have usually feel that it was not necessary to separate the affective dimension from the ideological one. For example, in an early work, Sartori (1969) listed strong emotions as an element of ideology. In a recent work, Handlin (2018) aggregates distance and intensity to produce an aggregate measure of polarization.

In the last few years, however, it has been increasingly noted that political polarization can occur without increasing distance over policy ideas or political ideologies. Recent research in American politics literature, for example, has indicated that current polarization in United States is essentially about the increasing *dislike* of other party. In a different context, Somma (2016) has documented various periods of political polarization in 19th century Latin America when affective polarization was not accompanied by ideological polarization. Scholars have also documented widespread effects of affective polarization on both political and non-political phenomenon (Iyengar *et al.*, 2019). These findings require us to seriously evaluate the role of *affective* polarization during periods of democratic decline.

1.2.4 *Relations between forms of affective partisan ties*

Affective component is a central characteristics that partisan identities, partisan emotions, and affective polarization share. Yet, these three forms of affective political ties diverge on various other dimensions. Most importantly, they are built on different temporal backgrounds. Compared to partisan emotions and affective polarization, partisan identity is a long-term phenomenon, and it is meant to be largely stable throughout the life (Converse, 1969). They are formed mostly during the early socialization period, under the influence of family and the close environment. At

certain points in life, partisans can feel close to political leaders from other parties and they can even vote for them. Yet, partisan bonds should still assert its impact on voter behavior as a separate factor.

Partisan emotions, on the other hand, are short-term and less stable affective states, which arise in reaction to the most recent political developments. In line with the definition of emotions, we would expect partisan emotions to be liable to shifts in their intensity, in response to political events surrounding us.

Affective polarization is situated in between partisan emotions and partisan group identities in terms of its durability. When we measure affective polarization, we really compare the variation in the valence, i.e. like-dislike dimension, towards political parties. Valence is a component of both partisan emotions and partisan identities, it can also change in response to performance evaluations of parties and leaders. In other words, affective polarization is probably an aggregate measure combining long-term affective ties to parties with short-term performance evaluations.

As a parsimonious sociological model, we can argue that partisan identities function as the base upon which affective polarization and partisan emotions develop. Partisan identities, rooted in historical cleavages and early socialization experiences of individuals, facilitate the evoking of short-term affective reactions. For example, to the extent that voters identify with a political party, they will give emotional reactions to the events influencing that party's political chances. Thus, strong partisans are more likely to develop partisan emotions in response to threats to the party status (Crigler and Hevron, 2017; Huddy *et al.*, 2018; McDermott, 2018). I believe that this model has significant explanatory power, especially for cross-national comparisons. In Chapter 3, I use this model to explain the difficulty of evoking partisan emotions in Bolivian voters compared with Turkish voters.

Yet, a sociological model will not do justice to the complex interactions between af-

ffective ties and the agency of political actors to build the affective landscape. Depending on the existing political environment, partisan identification, partisan emotions, and affective polarization can go together, under the influence of political actors. I argue that dominant political narratives play the most important role here. Individuals interpret political events through these narratives, which locate her life within a historical framework. Narratives bring together events selected from past with a vision for future, and they introduce a historical significance to the individual's mundane life. As such, they evoke partisan enthusiasm, they strengthen partisan identification, and they trigger affective polarization. This narrative-based approach to the origins of affective political ties is developed in Chapter 5, through the study of utopian developmentalist narrative in Turkey. This political model is especially important to understand how incumbents can instrumentalize affective politics during periods of democratic backsliding.

1.3 Research Methodology and Case Selection

The central research question of this dissertation is the relationship between affective political ties and democratic erosion. More specifically, my goal is to document how affective political ties help incumbents build mass support for their authoritarian agendas.

In order to engage with this question, I follow a multi-methods research design that brings together cross-national statistical analysis, comparative case studies, online survey experiments, and qualitative discourse analysis. Each of these methodological tools provides a different capability to this research project. By using them in combination with each other, this dissertation aims to develop an empirically rigorous perspective on the relationship between affective political ties and democratic erosion. This perspective is deep, in terms of its analysis of causal mechanisms at the

individual level, and broad, in terms of its cross-national generalizability.

In the following pages, I detail my research design and how I combine these methodological tools. In Chapter 2 and 3, I implement a comparative case study, comparing Turkey to Bolivia. These two countries are selected because they differ in terms of the strength of affective political ties although they were both scenes of executive aggrandizement attempts during the last decade. I use online survey experiments in Turkey and Bolivia to analyze individual level causal mechanisms at work in both of these two cases. To generalize findings from my comparative case study, I use cross-national statistical analysis in Chapter 4. Finally, in Chapter 5, I conduct qualitative discourse analysis in Turkey, which provides a deeper understanding of the origins and the nature of affective political ties. Chapter 5 complements the framework developed in the previous chapter as it explains how incumbent parties can produce and sustain affective political ties with their voters.

1.3.1 Comparative Case Study: Turkey and Bolivia

In the first step of my research, I conduct a comparative case study, comparing two countries that are similar on many respects while having different values on the independent variable, i.e. the strength of affective political ties. This method, which is built on Mill's well-known "method of difference," can also be called as a controlled comparison (George and Bennett, 2005, ch.6). Limiting the focus on only two countries helps me to focus on the causal mechanisms between variables of interest at this initial step of the dissertation.

The two countries that I select for my comparative case study is Turkey and Bolivia. These two countries share some important similarities. They are two middle income countries that were ruled by populist leaders during the last decade. Both Turkey and Bolivia have certain levels of historical experience with democratic gover-

nance, but in neither of these countries a consolidated and stable democratic regime ever emerged. Most importantly, these two countries fit with the “scope condition” of this comparison: There was an attempt for executive aggrandizement during the last decade in both countries. Both Evo Morales, who ruled Bolivia between 2006 and 2019, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has been ruling Turkey since 2002, took steps to monopolize state power and repress the civil, political, and media freedom in the country.

Despite fulfilling scope conditions, these two countries differ with respect to the value of the “independent variable”: the strength of affective political ties between the aggrandizing party and its voters. Strong partisan identities underlie the relationship between the ruling party AKP in Turkey and its voters; the share of partisans in Turkey is significantly higher than even advanced democracies (Laebens and Öztürk, 2020). Bolivia, on the other hand, is lacking in this sense; the share of partisans in Bolivia is lower than the average level in the world.

In addition to the independent variable, these two cases differ with respect to the outcome variable as well. Erdogan’s attempts for executive aggrandizement have been successful by all measures; it is now impossible to call Turkey a democracy. During 2016 and 2018, the AKP government undertook a massive purge in the bureaucracy and jailed tens of thousands of opponents, including political party leaders. Relying on popular support, the AKP changed Turkey’s parliamentary system into a super-presidential one in 2017. This opened the path for Erdogan to stay in power as the president until 2028. Erdogan easily won the presidential election in 2018. Evo Morales, on the other hand, failed in his attempts to extend his stay in power. He ran in the 2019 presidential election, despite the constitution and the referendum result. He lost more than 20% of his support in this election, compared to the previous presidential election, and could not secure a margin large enough to comfortably

claim victory. Questions about election integrity, fomented by the thin-blade election results and irregularities in the conduct of election, led to Morales' removal from power.

While controlled comparisons can be used to eliminate various alternative explanations and develop a closer look at the potential causal mechanisms, they will not be sufficient to make causal inferences. No cross-country small-n comparison is perfect; there is simply too much heterogeneity to control. This limitation applies to the controlled comparison in this study as well. Turkey is significantly richer than Bolivia, and it is better connected to the global economy. The AKP, the ruling party in Turkey, is a right-wing party while MAS, the party that ruled Bolivia, is a left-wing party. Bolivia and Turkey have emerged from different historical trajectories. Turkey is heir to the Ottoman Empire, and it traditionally has had a strong state. Bolivia is a more diverse and decentralized country. Finally, Bolivia has a presidential system, while Turkey was ruled with a parliamentary system until 2017.

These limitations require scholars to combine controlled comparisons with within-case analyses that can help revealing causal mechanisms (George and Bennett, 2005, ch.8). There are various tools for within-case analyses; scholars can benefit from process tracing, historical narratives, or quantitative analyses. In this dissertation, I conduct online survey experiments, in both Turkey and Bolivia, to reveal individual-level causal mechanisms in each case. Experiments are the golden standard for internal validity and causal inference. As such, individual-level analysis of causal mechanisms supports the aggregate-level comparison between Turkey and Bolivia.

Survey experiments that I conduct in Turkey and Bolivia follow the same experimental design. By manipulating affective states of the incumbent party voters, I test how their support to the incumbent party's authoritarian agenda changes. These experiments follow the same logic with respect to the timing too. In both coun-

tries, experiments were conducted during election periods, which were also scenes of aggrandizement attempts. Building on these similarities, I compare the differences between Bolivian and Turkish incumbent party voters' support to incumbent parties' authoritarian agendas.

1.3.2 *Cross-national statistical research*

The comparison between Turkey and Bolivia provides important insights on the relationship between affective political ties and democratic erosion. However, can we generalize from the experience of two countries? Do findings from Chapter 2 and 3 travel to other countries? In order to answer these questions, I conduct a cross-national statistical analysis in Chapter 4.

Replacing country names with variables and producing general knowledge have been the main goals in the discipline of political science (King *et al.*, 1994; Teune and Przeworski, 1970). Cross-national statistical analyses, also called as large-N studies, has been the primary methodological tool for this pursuit. Studying a multitude of countries at the same time increases the confidence that findings are generalizable across time and space.

The limitations of regression analyses using long lists of explanatory variables is well-known (see, Achen, 2005). It is difficult to make causal claims using observational data only, and adding several explanatory variables or using complex statistical models will rarely be enough to control for the large differences at the country level. However, when used in combination with other methods, such as experiments and qualitative case studies, cross-national statistical analysis can still be useful to increase our confidence in the generalizability of findings.

Motivated with this perspective, I use cross-national statistical analysis to test findings from my controlled comparison. The data for this analysis come from the

Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). CSES surveys are conducted several months after national elections, and they share a set of common questions. By June 2018, the CSES online database included 174 different surveys from 55 countries, conducted between 1996 and 2018 (Quinlan *et al.*, 2018). CSES sample is formed predominantly of advanced democracies, but it also includes countries such as Thailand, Peru, Kenya, and Albania. Turkey is also among the countries included in CSES surveys. The diversity of this sample allows us to explore questions related to affective politics with a broader geographical and temporal scope.

1.3.3 *Qualitative Discourse Analysis*

The first three empirical chapters of this dissertation explore the relationship between affective political ties and democratic erosion, primarily relying on the use of quantitative data. Both in the comparative case study and cross-national statistical analysis, Turkey emerges as a case of strong affective ties and democratic erosion. Yet, these analyses say little about the nature and origins of strong affective political ties in Turkey. In order to engage with this question, I conduct a narrative analysis in Chapter 5, which explores how the discourse of the ruling party in Turkey can produce and sustain affective political ties. This chapter complements the framework developed in this dissertation as it helps us to see how incumbents can manipulate the affective landscape in a country.

Narrative analysis is a form of qualitative discourse analysis. Qualitative discourse analysis aims to describe how various ideational elements are linked together and to theorize what kind of effects these relations produce. The data might be all kinds of verbal and nonverbal materials that are used to express and disseminate opinion. *Qualitative* analysis of data necessarily limits the scope of the analysis and the number of materials that can be analyzed; however, it allows a nuanced look that can capture

more complex and less visible patterns, hence contributing especially to the theory development. By carefully analyzing each piece of information, scholars of qualitative discourse analysis infer broader meaning structures in the society, shared by groups of people.

Years of scholarly research have revealed some patterns of meaning structures that are common and widespread across societies; search for these patterns guides qualitative discourse analysis. For example, scholars starting with the premises of Laclau's discourse analysis might explore how distinct verbal and nonverbal elements are articulated in such a way that the political space is divided into two fronts over a constitutive antagonism (Laclau, 2005). Narrative is another such pattern, in which selected elements from the past, present and future are combined to create a temporal story of collective agency. Narrative analysis explores shared narratives building collective ideas and identities of a social group (Hammack and Pilecki, 2012).

In Chapter 5, I first analyze the discourse of the AKP to reveal discursive themes that the party aimed to disseminate among the Turkish people. To ensure the systematic nature of the analysis, I limit my focus mainly to the AKP's election campaign in 2011. Having monopolized the political power in the country with the 2010 referendum, AKP abandoned all pretenses of "conservative democratic ideology" and established a new, more aggressive, discourse in the 2011 election campaign. Based on election posters, I document the broader narrative that the election campaign aimed to convey. In the second part of this chapter, I explore how this narrative theme is associated with affective reactions among the AKP voters. I use video data analysis, relying on YouTube videos shared by the AKP voters at a specific historical moment, to examine affective reactions among the AKP voters.

1.4 Affective political ties and democratic decline: Findings and the outline

This dissertation reveals how affective politics facilitate incumbents' attempts to aggrandize their political power, but it also documents the factors that condition this relationship.

In Chapter 2, I study how partisan emotions shape incumbent voters' attitudes towards autocratization, relying on two different survey experiments conducted in Turkey. Incumbent voters are the most critical group to prevent attempts of incumbent takeover because, by definition, they are large enough to keep the incumbent in power during the aggrandizement period. In other words, incumbent voters' rejection of autocratization can save the democratic regime from authoritarian takeover attempts.

Survey experiments from Turkey demonstrate that partisan anger and enthusiasm can convince incumbent party voters to support authoritarian steps of the incumbent. Voters who have higher levels of partisan anger are more likely to approve most recent steps of autocratization even though they do not prefer authoritarian regime in principle. Voters who have higher level of partisan enthusiasm, on the other hand, do not engage with opposition's complaints about the impending authoritarianism. I believe that this finding reveals the logic of gradual incumbent takeover. In each critical juncture, such as a referendum, incumbents like Erdogan can manipulate partisan emotions to build mass support for their authoritarian agenda. They do not need a voter group supportive of authoritarianism in principle, as long as they can evoke partisan emotions.

Chapter 3 qualifies findings from the second chapter, and it reveals the interaction between forms of affective political ties. This chapter builds on a survey experiment conducted in Bolivia, which follows the design of the first survey experiment con-

ducted in Turkey. Bolivia is selected as another case of attempted incumbent takeover that is comparable to Turkey. The crucial finding of this experiment is that, although I use the same survey design, I fail to replicate findings of the survey in Turkey. I even fail to manipulate partisan anger in Bolivia in a statistically significant way, let alone demonstrating the impact of partisan anger on political attitudes. I argue that this failure to provoke partisan anger in Bolivia is grounded in the lack of strong partisan identities in Bolivia. Thus, this chapter makes a contribution to the literature by showing that manipulation of partisan emotions for political gains requires some antecedent conditions.

In the fourth chapter, I extend the geographical scope of my research, studying the role of affective polarization through a cross-national analysis. This chapter also takes into account how affective polarization interacts with ideological polarization and the institutional framework. I find that democracies are especially under threat when people polarize over their feelings towards the executive. Affective polarization over the incumbent fully mediates negative effects of ideological polarization on democratic regimes, revealing the importance of affective political ties for democratic erosion. Importantly, I also demonstrate that the distribution of political power moderates the relationship between ideological and affective polarization; ideological polarization leads to affective polarization over the incumbent especially when constraints to executive authority are weak.

The fifth chapter complements the framework developed in this dissertation. In this chapter, I explore how the ruling party in Turkey uses political narratives to establish affective political ties with its voters. Despite the young age of its party system, Turkey is one of the most affectively polarized countries in the world (Lauka *et al.*, 2018), and the strength of partisan group identities in Turkey is higher than many developed countries (Laebens and Öztürk, 2020). Most scholars explain widespread af-

fective political ties in Turkey with reference to the secular-Islamist cleavage. Without rejecting the role of historical structures, Chapter 5 aims to develop a narrative-based framework to study origins of partisan affects. I demonstrate that the incumbent party in Turkey has used the utopian developmentalist narrative in a skillful manner to build affective political ties. Combining this chapter with previous chapters, in which I demonstrate the impact of partisan emotions and affective polarization on democratic backsliding, offers a general model to explain mass support for executive aggrandizement in Turkey and beyond.

This dissertation reveals the significant role that affective political ties play during periods of executive aggrandizement. More importantly, however, this dissertation points to conditions under which these effects occur. In line with the ignorance of affective politics in the political science literature for a long time, we know very little about the interactions between forms of affective political ties and other institutional and ideological factors. In the conclusion, I discuss these limitations in the existing literature, contribution of this dissertation, and avenues for future research.

PARTISAN EMOTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR EXECUTIVE
AGGRANDIZEMENT IN TURKEY

Voter support for incumbents with authoritarian agendas is puzzling. Most voters prefer democratic regimes (Kiewiet de Jonge, 2016), and they strongly dislike power-hungry leaders (Kinder *et al.*, 1980). Furthermore, emerging authoritarian regimes diminish these very voters' power to influence political outcomes. Why do voters continue supporting incumbents with authoritarian agendas, then?

The existing literature on regime preferences focuses on political values and economic interests to explain authoritarian regime preferences. None of these approaches, however, helps us to understand support for executive aggrandizement. In this chapter, I offer partisan emotions to explain how incumbents can build mass support for their authoritarian agendas, despite democratic preferences of most voters.

The remaining part of this chapter is formed of four sections. First, I review the literature on regime preferences and argue that a focus on affective political ties is necessary. In the following two sections, I respectively explore the impact of partisan anger and partisan enthusiasm on the behavior of incumbent supporters, using two online survey experiments conducted in Turkey in Summer and Fall 2019. In the last section, I discuss broader implications of my findings.

2.1 Explaining Voter Support for Executive Aggrandizement

To begin with, a vast literature in political science, going back to Easton (1957)'s seminal work, considers "support for democracy" as a stable political value, assuming that democratic values will guide voters to vote against authoritarian leaders (for a

review, see Mattes, 2018). Most recently, Claassen (2020) has demonstrated that voter support for democracy helps democracies survive.

This perspective does not help us to understand the third wave of autocratization, because there are not significant differences, with regard to democratic values, between countries that have recently gone through executive aggrandizement and others that have not. In Turkey, for example, the World Values Survey that was conducted in 2012, when the country was going through a radical process of executive aggrandizement, found support for democracy at 77 %, which was on a par with established democracies surveyed in the same wave.¹ This is not only about the discursive appeal of the “D-word.” Even when scholars avoid abstract statements referring to “democracy,” measuring committed support for the principle of power-sharing and vertical accountability, they find similar results. For example, through an analysis of LAPOP surveys conducted between 2006 and 2012, Kiewiet de Jonge (2016) demonstrates that around 80 % of Latin American voters reject executive coups on courts and congress. In Venezuela, which was going through a radical process of executive aggrandizement during those years, 83.2 % of voters rejected executive coups on legislative branches.

A second strand of research posits that authoritarian systems enjoy genuine popular support as long as they can deliver material benefits to the citizens (Magaloni, 2006; Rose *et al.*, 2011). There is a certain truth in this argument. It is no coincidence that most successful aggrandizers of the last decade, i.e., Putin, Erdogan and Chavez, all built their popular support during the era of fast economic growth in early 2000s and their popularity declined during the economic recession of 2010s (Greene and

¹Support for democracy was measured as the proportion of voters who answered the question “How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?” with a score of 8/10 or higher. This proportion was % 88 in Sweden % 84 in Germany, % 77 in Turkey, % 75 in Spain, % 73 in Chile, % 73 in South Korea, and % 72 in the United States.

Robertson, 2019; Judah, 2013; Kalaycıoğlu, 2008; Nadeau *et al.*, 2013). Still, popular support for these regimes survived economic crises, and significant aggrandizement occurred after the end of economic boom period. In the case of Turkey, for example, Erdogan supporters approved a constitutional referendum that changed Turkey’s parliamentary system into a hyper-presidential one in 2017, amid an ongoing economic crisis.

Most recently, scholars have pointed to the role of “partisanship” to explain voter support for autocratization. Analyzing voter behavior during the above-mentioned 2017 constitutional referendum in Turkey, Aytaç *et al.* (2017) find that partisanship largely explains the voting behavior of incumbent voters. Similarly, through an experimental study in Hungary, Ahlquist *et al.* (2018) demonstrate that voters follow partisan cues to decide their vote on constitutional referendum changing the electoral law (also see, Graham and Svobik, 2020). These works are promising, but there is still a lot to explain. How and why do partisan ties explain voting for authoritarianism? Is this simply cue taking in an overly technical topic, as rationalist theories of partisanship suggest (Shively, 1979)? Or, does partisanship account for certain visceral processes affecting our reasoning?

A focus on the role of partisan emotions offers a promising avenue to understand why voters support aggrandizement. I argue that certain partisan emotions play a significant role during periods of aggrandizement by convincing incumbent voters to support authoritarian acts of the incumbent. Most incumbent voters, even in countries like Turkey and Venezuela, are supportive of democratic principles. They enjoy the power to choose who rules the country, and they are skeptical of power-hungry leaders. Granted, they do not take opposition protests about impending authoritarianism seriously in the beginning. Yet, as the authoritarian steps of the ruling party become increasingly blatant, some of these voters hesitate to continue

their support for the ruling party. I argue that, partisan emotions play a significant role during these moments of confusion for incumbent voters. Anger at the opposition party and enthusiasm for the incumbent party convince incumbent voters to support aggrandizement, even if they are still against authoritarianism in principle.

2.2 Incumbent voters support executive aggrandizement when they are angry at the opposition party

2.2.1 *The role of partisan anger: Theory and hypotheses*

According to appraisal theories in political psychology, anger primarily arises from the appraisal of harm inflicted upon the self by an intentional actor (Batson *et al.*, 2009; Hechler and Kessler, 2018). Blame attribution is central to the feeling of anger; research demonstrates that, for example, people are more likely to make causal judgments about terrorist attacks when they are primed to feel anger, rather than sadness (Small *et al.*, 2006). As a result, angry individuals are more likely to take risks and confront the actor inflicting harm upon the self, with the goal of punishing or correcting the “unfair action.” Research demonstrates that angry individuals are more supportive of punitive policies (Hartnagel and Templeton, 2012; Johnson, 2009; García-Ponce *et al.*, 2018), military campaigns (Cheung-Blunden and Blunden, 2008; Huddy and Feldman, 2011), and aggression during civil conflicts (Spanovic *et al.*, 2010). Angry individuals are also more likely to rely on existing dispositions during their reasoning. In politics, this means that angry individuals will stick more closely to their partisan and ideological commitments (MacKuen *et al.*, 2010; Suhay and Erisen, 2018; Vasilopoulos *et al.*, 2019).

In this study, I focus on partisan anger, i.e. anger felt at a political party. Partisan anger may derive from positive partisan identities: Partisans are more likely to feel

anger when they think that the rival party threatens their party's electoral status (Huddy *et al.*, 2018) or when their co-partisans are exposed to uncivil attacks from the rival party (Gervais, 2019). Yet, analyses of American election surveys demonstrate that it is also quite common to see anger at one party as decoupled from a strong attachment to another party (Groenendyk, 2018), a phenomenon that can be called negative partisanship (Medeiros and Noël, 2014).

I argue that anger at the opposition party leads to support for aggrandizement in two different ways: convincing incumbent voters that the opposition party violates societal norms and generating demand among incumbent voters for retribution.

To begin with the former, incumbent supporters become more likely to rely on the incumbent propaganda when they feel angry at the opposition party. Angry individuals are more likely to associate the out-group with negative character attributes (DeSteno *et al.*, 2004), and they are more likely to be influenced by their existing identities (MacKuen *et al.*, 2010). These effects matter during periods of executive aggrandizement, when opposition parties protest against the incumbent attack on democracy and the incumbent tries to justify its authoritarian moves. Anger at the opposition party convinces incumbent voters to believe the incumbent propaganda and ignore the protests of the opposition.

Second, as incumbent voters believe that the opposition party violates norms and harms their interests, they become more intolerant of opposition activities and more supportive of retributive measures. Anger is associated with the belief that the other party has violated a norm and its supporters deserve a punishment for this. Applying this to the context of autocratization, we can expect that angry incumbent supporters will be more supportive of government behavior that will "punish" opposition actors.

I do not expect anger at the opposition party to have a significant effect on regime preferences and support for authoritarian rule -including authoritarian rule by one's

own party. Political values are usually formed around abstract and general ideals. Judgements ensuing from partisan anger, on the other hand, are rather particular and contextual. Incumbent voters do not significantly change their regime preferences when they are angry; they only approve the punishment of a wrongdoing.

2.2.2 Data

In order to measure the impact of partisan anger on the behavior of incumbent voters, I conducted an online survey experiment in Turkey in June 2019.

Under Turkey's current hyper-presidential system, the only remaining path of opposition parties to meaningful political power is the mayorship of major cities. Local politics has especially gained significance when the main opposition party, Republican People's Party (CHP), won mayorships of both Istanbul and Ankara in the 2019 Turkish local election, which was held on March 31. The election result was a shock to the ruling party, which had governed those cities for the last two decades. Especially dramatic one for the AKP was the defeat in Istanbul; the government candidate lost the election with a margin of 0.03 %. Rather than accepting the defeat, the AKP chose to force the Supreme Electoral Council to cancel the Istanbul election. The Supreme Electoral Council acquiesced to the AKP's pressure, and it announced repeat elections in Istanbul to be held on June 23. Arguably, this was the AKP's most blatant attack ever on democratic institutions in Turkey. By not recognizing the election result, the AKP was pushing the threshold between competitive authoritarianism and full authoritarianism.

My survey uses this unfortunate experience of the Turkish democracy to study how partisan anger affects voter behavior. The survey was conducted between June 1 and June 21, right before the repeat election in Istanbul. ² All of the survey

²I used the online opt-in panel of Next Generation, a public opinion research company based

participants were incumbent supporters that were registered to vote in Istanbul. I define incumbent supporters as participants who had either voted for the incumbent party in the previous election or defined themselves as AKP partisans. Those who did not provide any of these conditions were filtered out.

To measure support for autocratization, I first asked respondents their attitudes towards the election cancellation:

- Do you think that the decision to cancel the March 31 election was correct and fair?

After this question, I asked respondents to rate the following six statements on a scale extending from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”:

- CHP supporters should not be allowed to organize election campaign in my neighborhood.
- If the CHP wins the Istanbul election again, the election should be completely cancelled.
- Media organizations that constantly broadcast pro-CHP news should be shut down.
- If the CHP wins the next presidential election, they should not be allowed to govern the country.
- If he deems it necessary, the president should be allowed to cancel elections and rule the country without elections.
- When there is a national crisis, the president should be allowed to disband the Parliament and rule without the Parliament.

As can be seen, these statements were ordered in terms of their level of gener-

in Turkey. Compared to the general public, survey participants were more educated, had higher household income, were more partisan.

alization. The first two statements includes limited measures against the CHP, and they were only relevant for the context of repeat elections in Istanbul. The third and fourth statements included more radical and broader measures against the CHP. They were no more limited to Istanbul elections. Finally, the last two statements were the most abstract ones. They also captured decidedly authoritarian preferences. The last one was the statement used to measure authoritarian preferences in LAPOP surveys. Importantly, the order of these statements was randomized for survey participants.

The independent variable was anger at the opposition party. In order to manipulate anger I used self-writing tasks, a method becoming increasingly common among political psychologists (Erisen, 2018). Two hundred participants were randomly assigned to two groups: anger and control. In order to induce anger, I asked respondents in the treatment group to write what makes them angry at the CHP or CHP supporters. Participants in the control group were instructed to write what they do to relax; the goal here was to create an emotion-free atmosphere for these participants. After the treatment, all participants answered same questions. At the end of the survey, I asked respondents how they felt towards the CHP and the AKP to check whether the treatment was successful.

To begin with, the anger treatment was effective to stimulate anger at the opposition party, as can be seen from Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Manipulation check: Manipulating partisan anger in Turkey

	CHP-Anger	CHP-Anger (w. controls)	CHP-Fear	CHP-Fear (w. controls)	AKP-Enthusiasm	AKP-Enthusiasm (w. controls)
Treatment: Anger to CHP	0.694*	0.874**	0.123	0.207	0.130	0.166
<i>Base: Daily Routine</i>	(0.021)	(0.004)	(0.641)	(0.460)	(0.631)	(0.499)
<i>N</i>	202	183	202	183	202	183

p-values in parentheses: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Controls are age, education, income, gender, and partisanship strength. Dependent variable ranges from 1 to 7.

Participants exposed to the anger treatment felt significantly more anger at the CHP. Importantly, the groups did not differ with regards to other partisan emotions,

i.e., enthusiasm for the AKP and fear from the CHP.

To get a better grasp of the sample, I analyzed what respondents wrote about the CHP. This exercise does not provide representative insights on AKP voters, but it can still be informative for interpreting findings of this survey. To begin with, twenty respondents told that they did not feel anger at the CHP: They had some disagreements but these did not amount to the feeling of anger. This is close to a finding from a representative survey that 30 % of AKP supporters in Istanbul do not feel anger at the CHP (Erdogan *et al.*, 2019).

The analysis of the remaining eighty respondents reveals three distinct sources of anger at the CHP. On the one hand, a group of respondents complain about the CHP's and CHP supporters' negative attitudes towards religious voters and religion. These answers reflect the ideological cleavage in Turkey, between secularism and the Islamic life style. These answers also fit squarely with the definition of “negative partisanship” (Medeiros and Noël, 2014), as respondents associate CHP supporters with a certain attitude, independently from their positive assessments towards another party. There are several examples of first-person experiences of past discrimination in the sample. For example, one of the respondents said that “I was insulted by several people, who told that they were CHP supporters, because I wore headscarf. If what they said is true and if these people really have connections to the party, then I feel antipathy because of what they told to me.”³ In other examples, the respondent identifies with those exposed to discrimination: “First of all, I know that the CHP is a real enemy of the religion. We have not forgotten what they did to our headscarfed sisters and we will never forget...”⁴ . It is important to note that the AKP and its

³In Turkish: *Başörtülü olduğum için CHP taraftarı olduğunu söyleyen birkaç kişi tarafından hakarete maruz kaldım. Eğer söyledikleri doğruysa ve bu kişiler parti ile bağlantılı ise önyargılı davranışları sebebiyle antipati hissediyorum.*

⁴In Turkish: *Öncelikle CHP partisinin tam bir din düşmanı olduğunu biliyorum türbanlı kardeşlerimize ettikleri muameleyi unutmamak unutmuyacağız.*

media plays an important role in sustaining the anti-religious image of the CHP, by stirring up past injustices. ⁵

Secondly, there is a group of respondents who complain about the opposition style of the CHP, describing its leaders as liars who oppose every single positive step that the AKP took. Most of these responses include positive references to the AKP and Recep Tayyip Erdogan as well. I believe that the anger of these voters is derivative of their positive feelings towards the AKP. In other words, they are angry at the CHP because they are AKP partisans. When CHP leaders criticize the AKP's policies, these partisans feel threatened. For example, some of the respondents describe the origins of her anger in the following way: "Lies and constant slanders of the CHP leader Kilicdaroglu," "They do not care about Turkey, their grudge against Erdogan has blinded them," "That they constantly criticize everything; they criticize whenever the president says something, they have yet to say one positive word for something that the president [Erdogan] did." ⁶

Finally, there is a third group of responses, in which respondents accuse the CHP to have a relationship with "enemies" and "terrorist groups," mainly with reference to the Kurdish political movement of Turkey. This discourse was frequently used by Erdogan during the campaign period to demonize the CHP (Esen and Gumuscu, 2019); seemingly, it has been successful to a certain extent. For example, respondents say that "CHP has been working together with anyone whose interests conflict with our country, even when those are terrorists," or "Unfortunately, rather than expressing their own thoughts, CHP is collaborating with other countries and pro-terror parties

⁵For example, see the video, created by the AKP before 2018 elections, <https://video.haber7.com/video-galeri/121101-ak-partiden-dunu-ve-bugunu-anlatan-muhtesem-reklam-filmi>

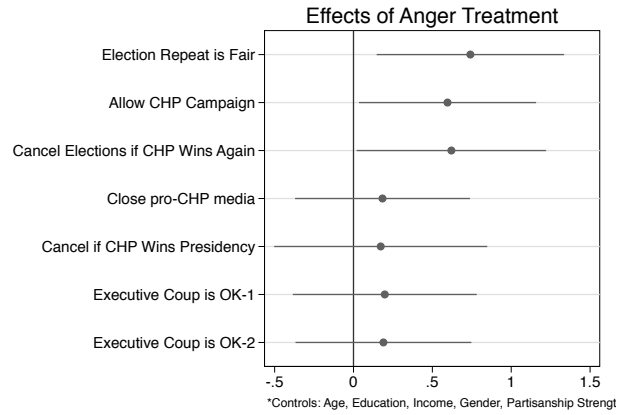
⁶In Turkish: "*Chp partisinin başkanı kılıçlar oğlunun yalanları sürekli iftiraları*", "*Türkiye umurlarında değil erdoğanın olan kinleri gözlerini kör ermiş*", "*Sürekli olarak herseye bir kulp takmaları yani c.baskanı bisey dese hemen onun konuşmasına eleştiri yapıyor hiç bu zmana kadar c.baskaninin soyledigi yaptigi bir ise bu iyidir demediler*".

that want Turkey’s ruin and it is expressing what they want.” ⁷

2.2.3 Findings

I use ordered logistic regression to test the effect of anger treatment on support for the seven statements listed above. The range of the dependent variable extends from zero for “strongly disagree” to four for “strongly agree.” Figure 2.1 presents results from the analysis.

Figure 2.1: Effects of anger on support for autocratization in Turkey



To begin with, partisans exposed to the anger treatment were more likely to believe that it was fair to repeat elections. This finding is striking especially given the timing of the survey. After March 31, politics in Turkey was largely focused on Istanbul elections. Endless recounts lasted for more than a month, and parties started their election campaigns immediately after the announcement of the repeat of elections in April 2019. In this context, we would expect voters’ opinions to be already formed by the time the survey was fielded. Even under these circumstances, however, the

⁷In Turkish: “CHP geçmişten günümüze ülkemizin çıkarlarına ters olan kim olursa olsun teröristte olsa onlarla hareket ediyor” , Malesef kendi duygu ve düşünceleri halka anlatmak yerine , Türkiye’nin kötülüğünü isteyen dış ülkeler ve terör yandaşı partiler ile işbirliği içinde olup onların istediğini anlatmaktadır.

anger treatment could shift perceptions of fairness of election cancellation.

When we look at the remaining six statements, we see that the anger treatment has a significant impact on the first two of them, but not others. The first two statements are directly about Istanbul elections, and, compared to others, they refer to milder forms of repression. The remaining statements, especially the last two, are abstract and general, directly capturing preferences for an authoritarian rule. Thus, it seems that, anger at the opposition party does not lead to a general support for authoritarianism. This is not relieving news, however. Aggrandizers do not need committed support for authoritarianism to establish an authoritarian regime. Rather, what they need is a group of voters that may lend their support at critical moments. This chapter demonstrates that provoking anger may help the incumbent to realize this.

2.3 Incumbent voters oppose executive aggrandizement when they lose their partisan enthusiasm

In this section, I focus on the “other part” of the story: partisan enthusiasm. As the scholarly community has largely been preoccupied with the increasing partisan hostility, which reveals itself through partisan anger, negative partisanship, and incivility, we tend to ignore positive emotions, which seem less potent and threatening. Yet, partisan enthusiasm characterizes many of the aggrandizing regimes as much as partisan anger does (e.g., see Havlík and Voda, 2018; Love and Windsor, 2018; Montiel and Uyheng, 2020).

In the remaining parts of this section, I first demonstrate that incumbent voters are more likely to oppose autocratization when they feel less enthusiasm for the incumbent party. The study also reveals that providing more information to participants about aggrandizement, including both critical and supportive arguments,

convinces participants to oppose aggrandizement when they do not feel enthusiastic for the ruling party. Highly enthusiastic incumbent voters, on the other hand, become even more supportive of autocratization when they hear further information on autocratization. Bringing these findings together points to the crucial role that partisan enthusiasm plays during periods of backsliding.

2.3.1 *The role of partisan enthusiasm: theory and hypotheses*

Enthusiasm is aroused when there is a stimulus indicating that a goal has been met or will be met. The feeling of enthusiasm informs us that the current environment is rewarding. As a result, enthusiastic individuals tend to follow their existing predispositions. When they process a message, they rely more on the source of the message rather than its content (Lerner *et al.*, 2015; Marcus *et al.*, 2000).

Some sources of political enthusiasm can be listed as the enactment of desired policies, the lead one's party has in the polls, the smile of a charismatic politician, or the use of uplifting music in campaign advertising (Brader and Marcus, 2013; Huddy *et al.*, 2018). When partisans feel enthusiasm, their party identities play a more significant role during opinion formation (Brader, 2005), and they participate more in politics to support their parties (Valentino *et al.*, 2011). These effects are the same with those of anger, yet the existing literature usually finds that the feeling of enthusiasm produces weaker effect sizes compared to the feeling of anger (Suhay and Erisen, 2018; Valentino *et al.*, 2011).

In this study, I argue that incumbent voters become more likely to support executive aggrandizement when they feel enthusiastic about the incumbent party. This is simply because partisans feel more confidence in their party at those moments, hence paying less attention to counter-arguments during the process of reasoning. Even though opposition parties protest against aggrandizement, these protests fall

on deaf ears, failing to influence the opinion of incumbent voters. When incumbent supporters feel less enthusiasm, on the other hand, they go through a more critical process of reasoning, and become more open to opposition arguments.

2.3.2 Data

In order to test effects of partisan enthusiasm on voter support for autocratization, I conducted another online survey experiment in Turkey in October 2019. The sample was formed of five hundred AKP supporters, who had either voted for the AKP in the last election or had defined themselves as AKP partisan.

By the time I fielded the survey, the opposition candidate had won the repeat election in Istanbul. Yet, there were rumors that the government could remove opposition mayors of Istanbul and Ankara using legal means, a tactic the AKP government frequently used against Kurdish mayors during the last few years. In line with these rumors, Erdogan and the Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu repeatedly threatened opposition mayors of Ankara and Istanbul with removal.⁸ Hence, the main dependent variable in this study is whether respondents support the removal of Istanbul and Ankara mayors or not.

In order to manipulate partisan enthusiasm, I used self-writing tasks. There are some important differences between this study and Study 1, however. There are three different treatment groups in this study: enthusiasm, anger, and anxiety. Unlike the previous study, I did not mention party names in any of the treatment conditions; instead, I asked participants to write down what made them enthusiastic/angry/anxious about the political and economic situation in Turkey. In addition to these, I formed two control groups: political and non-political. For the former, I asked participants to write down what they thought about the current situation of Turkish politics. In

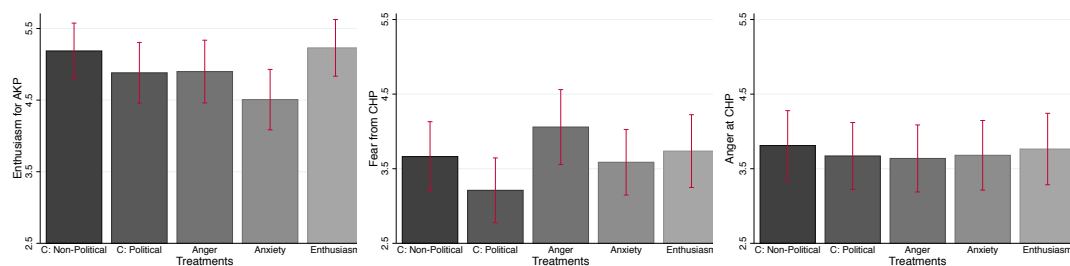
⁸<https://www.voanews.com/europe/crisis-looms-erdogan-targets-istanbul-mayor>

the second control group, I told participants to write down a regular day of theirs. This design aims to provide a stronger understanding of the causal mechanisms at work. Five hundred participants were randomly assigned to each of these groups.

In order to give participants a chance to think thoroughly on the issue, and to follow how their decision changes as they think more, each respondent was asked twice about their support for the removal of opposition mayors. First one was right after the respondents were exposed to the treatment. Second one was after they read eight different statements on this issue. Four of these statements defended the removal of mayors, while the other four criticized it. As explained above, we would expect enthusiastic voters to stick to their partisan identities both the first time and the second time. On the other hand, partisans that are not enthusiastic should be more likely to change their minds as they read these statements.

To check whether treatments worked as intended, I asked respondents, at the end of the survey, to what extent they feel enthusiastic for the AKP, angry at the CHP, and afraid of the CHP, on a scale from one to seven. Results are visually presented in Figure 2.2 with error bars.

Figure 2.2: Manipulation check: Manipulating enthusiasm, anger, and anxiety in Turkey



To start with, none of the treatments created a significant change across levels of anger at the CHP, as the graph located on the right-hand side of Figure 2.2

demonstrates. To remind, using a treatment different from the first study on anger, I did not ask respondents what made them angry at the CHP. Instead, participants wrote down what made them angry about the Turkish politics. Apparently, anger at the political and economic situation of the country does not directly prime negative emotions towards the main opposition party. Interestingly, provoking anger at the situation of the country led to the increased feeling of fear of the CHP.

When we compare levels of enthusiasm, located on the left-hand side of Figure 2.2, we see statistically significant changes across treatment groups. Surprisingly, however, enthusiasm treatment is not the primary source of the variation across levels of enthusiasm. The level of enthusiasm is the same across enthusiasm and non-political-control groups, while it is lower in other three groups (political-control, anger, and anxiety). I believe that this implies a ceiling effect: AKP partisans hold strong positive feelings towards their party even when they are not primed to think about political issues. When they think about the current political situation of the country, however, their level of enthusiasm erodes. The most significant drop occurs among the voters in the anxiety condition. Participants in the anxiety condition feel significantly less enthusiastic towards the AKP, compared to voters in the political control condition, non-political control condition, and the enthusiasm condition.

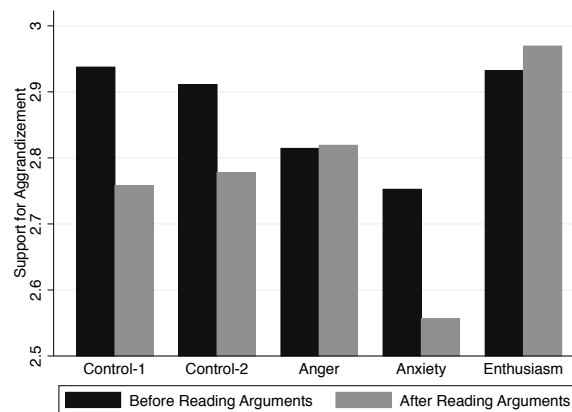
To get a better idea of the collected data, I analyzed the content of responses to self-writing tasks. In the enthusiasm condition, around twenty of the respondents did not provide an enthusiastic answer; ten of these respondents explicitly said that there was nothing to be enthusiastic about Turkey's current condition. Around sixty of the remaining eighty respondents, on the other hand, responded with partisan themes: Erdogan's leadership, material services provided by the AKP, and AKP supporters' mobilization against the coup attempt in 2016. Finally, around twenty participants responded with nationalist themes, such as Turkey becoming a leader country in the

world or Turkey’s “victories” in the “war against terror” in Syria. Respondents in anxiety and political-control conditions produced quite different answers. Complaints about economic problems predominated in both. In the anxiety condition, around sixty of all respondents complained about economic problems, while twenty respondents were worried about the war in Syria and the refugee crisis. In the political control group, most respondents were critical about the situation in the country.

2.3.3 Findings

First, let’s compare how support for the removal of opposition mayors varies across the five groups of respondents. To remind, all respondents answered this question twice: right after the treatment and after reading four supportive and four critical statements about the issue. Figure 2.3 demonstrates the mean values that the dependent variable takes across all these conditions. The scale of the dependent variable extends from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree).

Figure 2.3: Changes in the level of support for autocratization in Turkey

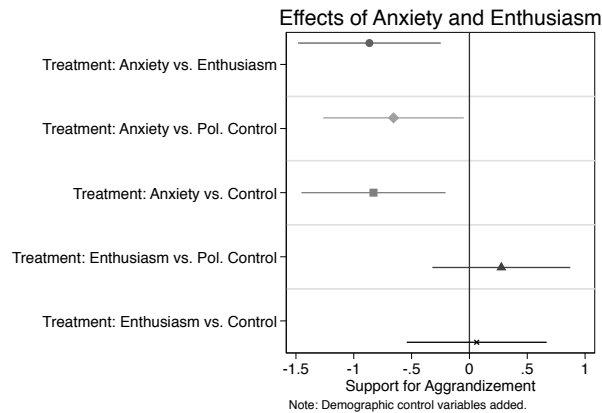


The figure reveals that, among the five groups of respondents, those in the anxiety condition profess the lowest levels of support for executive aggrandizement, both after

the first question and after they read supportive and critical statements. The initial levels of support in control conditions are close to the initial level of support in the enthusiasm condition. However, levels of support diverge as respondents engage with arguments on the issue. Participants in the control conditions change their minds and become more critical of autocratization steps while participants in the enthusiasm condition become even more supportive. This is in line with the argument that enthusiastic voters closely follow their existing predispositions during reasoning. The difference between the enthusiasm condition and two control conditions, regarding the change between the first answer and the second answer, is statistically significant with a p value of 0.024.

Are the final differences across five respondent groups statistically significant, and is it really about the changing levels of enthusiasm? In order to answer these questions, I first conduct an ordered logit regression. Below, Figure 2.4 compares levels of statistical significance for five different pairs of respondent groups. These pairs are listed on the left-hand side of the coefficient plot. To be clear, these are not variables in the same model; each row refers to the explanatory variable of a different model.

Figure 2.4: Effects of emotions on support for autocratization in Turkey



To start with, the top row demonstrates the effect of the anxiety treatment when compared with the effect of enthusiasm treatment. This is the model in which the difference becomes most clear. The effect is similarly significant when each of two control conditions are chosen as the base condition to the anxiety treatment. There is no such effect, on the other hand, when control conditions are used as the base condition to the enthusiasm treatment. As I have demonstrated above, there is no significant difference across the enthusiasm treatment and control conditions regarding the level of partisan enthusiasm evoked among the respondents.

The first three models are significant; but are these effects really mediated by enthusiasm, as argued above? Table 2.2 presents the proportion of effects mediated by partisan enthusiasm in the first three models. Results demonstrate that enthusiasm mediates these effects to a significant degree, ranging between 25 % and 39 %. Once we control for partisan enthusiasm, the relationship between treatments and outcomes falls below the conventional level of statistical significance in all three models.

To summarize, this study demonstrates that when partisans lose their enthusiasm for the incumbent party, they become less supportive of the executive aggrandizement. Below, I discuss this finding from a broader perspective.

2.4 Conclusion

Incumbent voters may support acts of autocratization even when they reject authoritarianism in principle. Serious acts of autocratization, such as election cancellation, force the AKP voters to make a decision: Will they approve the consolidation of power at the hands of Erdogan? Emotions play a significant role for decision making during these critical moments.

When voters are angry at the opposition party, they become more likely to support acts of autocratization. AKP voters in the first study, who were exposed to the anger

Table 2.2: The mediation of treatment effects by enthusiasm for the AKP

		Coefficient	p value
Treatment: Anxiety-Enthusiasm			
	Total Effect	-0.23	0.005**
	Direct Effect	-0.14	0.078
	Mediated by Enthusiasm	-0.09	0.011*
	Proportion	0.39	
Treatment: Anxiety-Control (Pol.)			
	Total Effect	-0.16	0.039*
	Direct Effect	-0.12	0.11
	Mediated by Enthusiasm	-0.04	0.085
	Proportion	0.25	
Treatment: Anxiety-Control (Non-Pol.)			
	Total Effect	-0.18	0.018*
	Direct Effect	-0.013	0.108
	Mediated by Enthusiasm	-0.06	0.033*
	Proportion	0.33	

Note: Controls (age, gender, education, income, partisanship strength) are added.

treatment, recalled how seculars in Turkey had repressed their freedom before the AKP came to the power and how CHP supporters looked down upon them even today. After recalling these events, they felt more anger at the CHP. While these angry voters still rejected the establishment of a fully authoritarian regime in the country, they were more supportive of steps to force an election repeat in Istanbul. Thus, this study demonstrates that provoking anger at the opposition party helps the AKP to overcome its voters' resistance to autocratization. Enthusiasm for the ruling party leads to similar results. My findings from the second study demonstrate that enthusiasm for the ruling party plays an important role in convincing AKP voters to support autocratization. When incumbent voters lose their enthusiasm, they engage more with opposition arguments, and they become more likely to oppose autocratization.

These findings significantly improve our understanding of mass support for political regimes. We already know that authoritarian regimes that can deliver material benefits enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of vast portions of the people (Magaloni, 2006; Rose *et al.*, 2011). Similarly, voters in democracies are willing to let the president bypass the legislature and court when they think that the economic performance is strong (Singer, 2018). Yet, taking emotions into account, rather than limiting ourselves to the study of material conditions, significantly broadens our perspective. Emotions are responsive to various kinds of stimuli besides material conditions. Leaders spend a lot of time and energy to manipulate anger and enthusiasm (McDermott, 2018), and this is especially the case in aggrandizing regimes. Love and Windsor (2018) demonstrate that Chavez' discourse was filled with appeals evoking enthusiasm and anger. In most of his speeches, Erdogan aims to inflame feelings of his supporters; famously, he once defended his rhetorical style saying that the anger was an oratorical art.⁹ Manipulative power of authoritarian leaders becomes especially strong when they can control the media environment. Not surprisingly, Turkish politics is filled with partisan emotions. Research conducted before the repeat election in Istanbul found that, for example, 70 % of AKP voters in Istanbul felt anger at the opposition candidate, while 69 % of opposition voters felt anger at Recep Tayyip Erdogan (Erdogan *et al.*, 2019).

The experimental design of this study increases our confidence in the internal validity of the causal claims in this chapter. Finding similar results across two different survey experiments, on the other hand, demonstrate that these effects can be generalized to the broader Turkish context. Yet, do these effects travel globally? Would we see similar effects in other countries too? There are reasons to doubt that this is the case. During the last decade, Turkey has turned into one of the most affectively polar-

⁹<http://www.gazetevatan.com/ofke-de-hitabet-sanati-161818-siyaset/>

ized countries in the world. Partisan identities are common and widespread (Laebens and Öztürk, 2020). As I demonstrate in Chapter 5, the AKP government has made significant investments in spreading certain political narratives to reproduce partisan emotions. This is not the case, however, in each country that experienced executive aggrandizement. In the next chapter, I demonstrate that manipulating partisan emotions to gather support for executive aggrandizement is not possible in Bolivia, another case of attempted executive aggrandizement.

Chapter 3

LIMITS OF AFFECTIVE POLITICS: EVIDENCE FROM BOLIVIA

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that partisan emotions can help incumbents to build popular support for their authoritarian agendas. This chapter aims to qualify and contextualize that finding. Incumbents' manipulation of the affective landscape is a central way in which affective politics is instrumentalized for democratic erosion. Yet, it is not an instrument that always works the way the incumbent intends. Instead, the instrumental use of partisan emotions require the existence of long-lasting affective political ties, most importantly in the form of partisan identities. Absent these ties, incumbents' efforts to instrumentalize partisan emotions for political gains might fall short of reaching the goal.

The rest of this chapter is formed of four sections. In the first section, I introduce Bolivia as a case of attempted executive aggrandizement. This section justifies the case selection and describes the process of executive aggrandizement in Bolivia, occurring under Morales' rule, from 2006 to 2019. In the second section, I share my findings from an survey experiment conducted in Bolivia before the 2019 presidential election. This survey experiment follows the same design with the survey experiment conducted in Turkey and presented in Chapter 2. In contrast to the results in Turkey, however, I find that manipulating partisan anger *does not* lead to increased support for autocratization in Bolivia. In the third section, I explain this divergence between the results in Bolivia and Turkey with reference to weak partisan ties in Bolivia. In

the last section, I discuss implications of this finding.

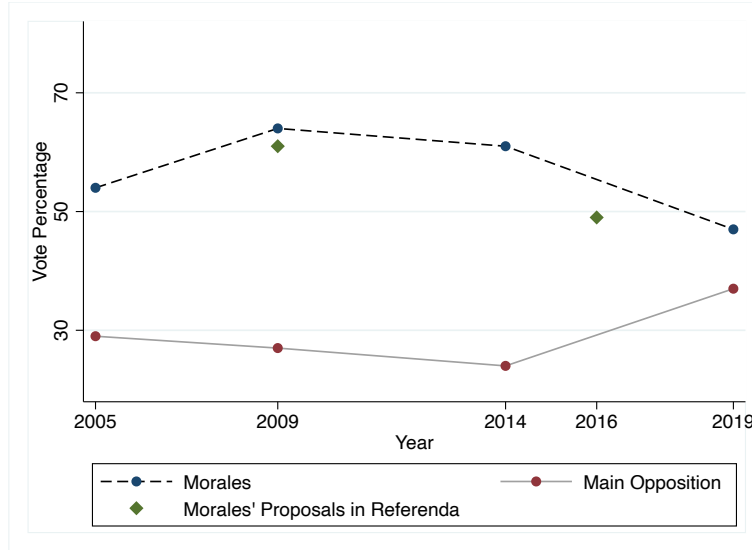
3.1 Bolivia as a case of failed executive aggrandizement

While Turkey is a case of successful executive aggrandizement, Bolivia, under Evo Morales, is case of a failed one. Similar to Erdogan, Morales came to power in the first decade of the 21st century. He adopted a populist rhetoric, he oversaw historic rates of economic growth, and he used his executive power to establish control over state institutions. He eventually attempted to lengthen his stay in power through non-democratic means. All these similarities help us to use the Bolivian case to contextualize our findings from the Turkish case.

Evo Morales came to power in 2005, winning the presidential election in the first round -this was the first time in Bolivia's democratic history that a candidate won the presidential election outright. Starting from the beginning of his tenure in 2006, Morales promised to transform the country. He pushed for a new constitution, which was popularly approved in 2008. The new constitution let Morales to run for president for two more terms, beginning with the new presidential election in 2009. His popularity, grounded in his political and economic successes, helped him to easily win presidential elections in 2009 and 2014 with historic vote margins, as Figure 3.1, on the next page, demonstrates. Under Morales, historically excluded groups in Bolivia, such as indigenous people, had an opportunity to participate in the political system of the country (Crabtree, 2020). Thanks to the commodity boom, Bolivian economy caught fast economic growth rates and the MAS government, under the leadership of Morales, channeled this new wealth to significantly improve living standards of the Bolivian people.

Yet, Morales used his unprecedented popularity to aggrandize his executive power and to lengthen his stay in power beyond the limits recognized in the 2009 constitu-

Figure 3.1: Vote margins in presidential elections and referenda



tion. He gradually established control over state institutions, including the judiciary. Media freedom was limited, and critical journalists faced with harassment (Anria, 2016). In 2016, the MAS government forced a national referendum, which would allow Morales to run for presidency for the fourth time.

Morales probably thought that his electoral popularity would suffice for an easy win. Yet, it turned out to be a close race between him and the opposition. Scandals coming days before the vote, which included a corruption scandal and an arson attack on opposition-controlled municipal building, further harmed Morales' credibility (Achtenberg, 2016, 374). Eventually, Bolivian voters rejected Morales' bid for one more term, giving Morales his first serious electoral defeat. Compared to the presidential election conducted only two years ago, the vote for Morales had fallen by 20% in the referendum.

Despite initially accepting the defeat, the ruling party later adopted a discourse dismissing the legitimacy of referendum results based on the argument that people were "duped" by the media (Lehoucq, 2020, 132). Morales and the MAS eventually

decided to ignore the referendum result and to use their influence over the courts to secure indefinite reelection. In November 2017, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Bolivia made the controversial decision that term limits violated political rights, and it abolished the term limits altogether (Verdugo, 2019). This allowed Morales the right to run for a fourth term in the 2019 presidential election.

As it is well known, this election did not end well for Morales. Morales' troubles were visible during the campaign period; credible election polls demonstrated that he was unable to secure a comfortable vote margin that would prevent a run-off with the main opposition candidate, Carlos Mesa. The initial results on the election day also pointed to a second round. Then, some irregularities occurred during the vote count. The official announcement that Morales had won the election in the first round, avoiding the run-off with a margin less than 1%, satisfied neither the opposition groups nor the international observers. Ensuing opposition protests turned violent and costed many lives. The army eventually intervened, forcing Morales to resign and flee the country.

3.2 Inability to provoke partisan anger in Bolivia

Both Turkey and Bolivia have recently gone through a period of executive aggrandizement during the last decade. Does this mean that the finding in Chapter 2, that provoking partisan emotions helps incumbents build support for their authoritarian agendas, applies to the Bolivian case? In order to test this argument, I conducted an online survey experiment in Bolivia, right before the 2019 presidential election held on October 20. Data collection started on October 1 and lasted until the election day. I recruited participants through an international online panel company.¹

The design of this survey closely followed the design of the first survey in Chapter

¹The panel company is named Syno International. For more information, visit synoint.com.

2, which was conducted in Turkey before the repeat election in Istanbul. The sample was limited to those who had voted for Morales in the previous election or who professed partisan ties to the MAS. I randomly assigned respondents to treatment and placebo groups, and I asked respondents in the treatment group to write down what makes them angry at the opposition parties. Respondents in the placebo group wrote down what they usually did to feel relaxed. After the treatment, all respondents answered the questions that measured their support for autocratization. To remind, Morales was still president when this survey was conducted.

There are two differences between the design of surveys in Turkey and Bolivia, which were necessitated by the institutional difference across these two cases. First, Bolivia has a presidential system and candidates running for the presidential post are not closely associated with a single political party. This means that “partisan anger at the main opposition party” might not mean the same thing it means in Turkey. For this reason, I formed a third group of respondents, who wrote down what made them angry at the opposition candidate, Carlos Mesa. Findings from this third group of respondents, presented in Appendix B, do not reveal any significant differences. Second, in order to study the impact of emotions on attitudes towards executive aggrandizement, it is necessary to ask questions about specific acts of executive aggrandizement in a given country, rather than measuring regime preferences through abstract questions. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, partisan emotions do not affect regime preferences but they shift attitudes towards acts of autocratization. For this reason, I formulated new questions that are about the steps of autocratization in Bolivia.

Let’s start with a manipulation check to discuss the findings. In Chapter 2, I demonstrated that a self-writing task, in which I asked respondents to write what made them angry about the opposition party, significantly increased anger at the

opposition in Turkey. The most crucial finding from the survey in Bolivia is that this simple design did *not* evoke partisan anger at opposition parties. Neither asking the respondents to think about opposition parties nor about the opposition candidate led incumbent voters to feel increased partisan anger. Table 3.1 below and Table B.1 in Appendix B present these results.

Table 3.1: Manipulation check: Manipulating anger to right-wing political parties in Bolivia

	Anger	Anger Full Model	Fear	Fear Full Model	Enthusiasm	Enthusiasm Full Model
Treatment: Anger to Opp. Part.	0.483 (0.519)	0.241 (0.755)	0.625 (0.390)	0.549 (0.464)	-0.304 (0.729)	-0.140 (0.874)
<i>N</i>	171	162	171	162	171	162

p-values in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

This finding helps us to contextualize our findings from the Turkish case. It seems that it is not always straightforward to evoke partisan anger at opposition parties among incumbent voters.

In the second step of this research, I measure attitudes towards autocratization. Following the design of the first survey experiment in Chapter 2, I ask respondents to rate several statements on autocratization, which have varying degrees of abstraction. Here are the statements:

- It was fair for the Supreme Electoral Tribunal to permit Morales to run for one more term, despite the opposition victory in the referendum.
- If MAS introduces new regulations to make it more difficult for opposition parties to win elections, such as limiting the campaign period, would you support these regulations?

- Candidates from the opposition should be allowed to organize an electoral campaign in my district.
- If opposition wins the next presidential election, the election should be repeated.
- It is necessary to ban candidates from opposition parties in the next election.
- When the times are difficult, it is justifiable that the President of Bolivia closes the Legislative Assembly and governs without the Legislative Assembly.
- If it is necessary to continue the Process of Change in Bolivia, the President can suspend the elections and govern without the Legislative Assembly.

Importantly, respondents saw these statements in a randomized order. Results are presented in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Effects of anger towards right-wing opposition parties on attitudes towards autocratization

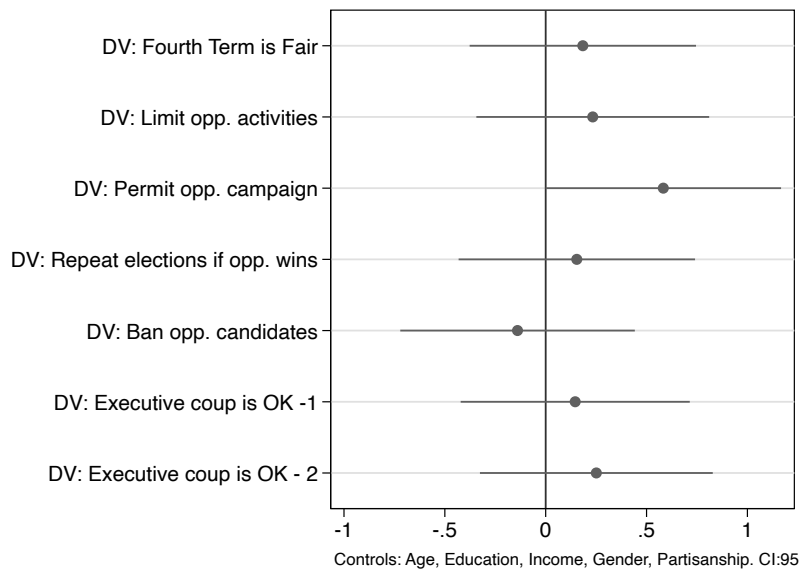


Figure 3.2 demonstrates no consistent or significant effect of anger treatment on attitudes towards autocratization. This finding diverges from findings in the Turkish case, in which anger treatment caused shifts in attitudes towards autocratization. Based on the Turkish case, we would at least expect a change in the first statement, in which we asked attitudes towards Morales' rejection of opposition victory in the referendum. Yet, even in the first item, which is as concrete as possible, we do not see any significant changes. The results do not change when we manipulate anger at opposition candidate Carlos Mesa, rather than right-wing opposition parties. This can be seen in Figure B.1 in Appendix B.

3.3 Explaining the failure to evoke partisan anger in Bolivia

I believe that the failure to evoke partisan anger in our survey experiment reflects a general feature of Bolivian politics during the Morales era. During his tenure, Morales used a rhetoric that could evoke emotional reactions. On the one hand, he developed enthusiastic plans for the future of Bolivia and Bolivian people. He promised a radical transformation when he first came to power, with respect to both economic and political spheres (Weyland, 2009). A new constitution and the fight against neoliberal institutions marked his transformative vision. Until the last days in power, Morales kept his efforts to sustain this enthusiasm by framing his tenure as a historical age for Bolivia, calling it the Process of Change (Proceso de Cambio) and perpetuating his future vision through the Bicentennial Patriotic Agenda (Agenda Patriótica del Bicentenario).

Morales also frequently used a rhetoric that could evoke negative emotions towards the opposition. Most scholars group Morales' regime as a populist regime, in the same league with Chavez's regime in Venezuela and Correa's regime in Ecuador De la Torre (2017). There are some features peculiar to Bolivia, such as the significant role played

by social movements under Morales regime, which contradicts with the top-down and personalistic politics in those countries (Anria, 2013). Still, there is an agreement among scholars that Morales' rhetoric was mainly centred around the discourse of "social antagonism between the pure people and corrupt elites" (Mudde, 2017). He combined this populist discourse with nationalist themes, claiming to represent the Bolivian nation's struggle against the anti-imperialist camp, headed by the USA. Morales increased his populist tone during last years of his rule (Balch, 2019), and he did not avoid using a demonizing language against the opposition, for example accusing the opposition of receiving donations from the USA ² and plotting coups against the MAS ³. Yet, despite his rhetoric laden with emotional references, Morales lost more than one fifth of his voter support in the 2016 referendum and the 2019 election.

Why is it difficult to evoke partisan emotions in Bolivia, compared to Turkey? I argue that a crucial difference between Bolivia and Turkey, which led to the diverging outcome across these two cases, was the weakness of partisan identities in Bolivia. As explained in Chapter 1, partisanship is a long-term affective linkage between the party and the voter. Voters usually gain their partisan identities in early socialization period, following their parents or other people around them. Once formed, partisanship functions as a group identity. The individual assigns superior moral attributes to the partisan group and identifies with them, while denigrating voters of the rival party (Rothschild *et al.*, 2019). As such, partisanship carries politics beyond the transactional logic and gives a moral content to it. Furthermore, identification with a political party means that political developments that include a threat or a boon to the party's political status can now create emotional reactions (McDermott, 2018;

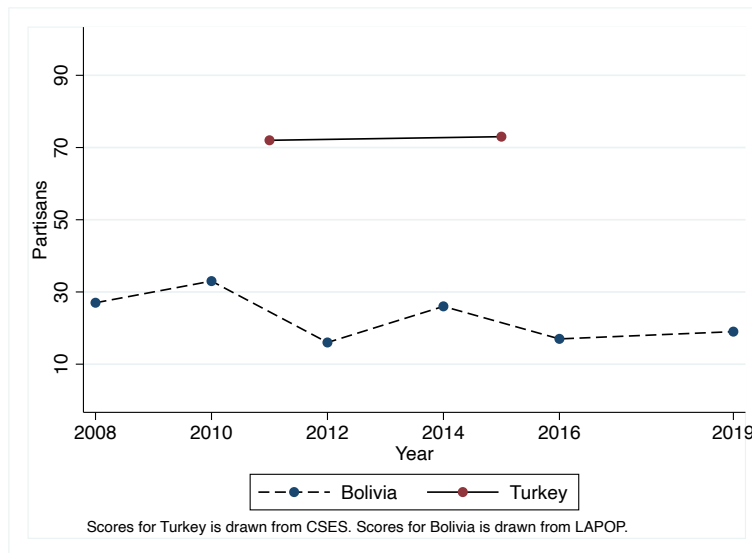
²<https://www.erbol.com.bo/nacional/evo-morales-dice-que-est%C3%A1-seguro-de-tener-dos-tercios-en-la-asamblea-legislativa>

³<https://www.france24.com/es/20190913-evo-morales-golpe-estado-disturbios>

Huddy *et al.*, 2018). Emotions follow the appraisal of threats and rewards in the environment, and these appraisals are especially likely if one identifies with a political party. For these reasons, I argue, it is easier for politicians to evoke partisan emotions in countries where partisan identities are common and widespread.

There is a large difference between Bolivia and Turkey with respect to the proportion of partisans, as it is demonstrated in Figure 3.3.⁴

Figure 3.3: Percentage of partisans in Turkey and Bolivia



The weakness of partisan ties in Bolivia deserves further explanation. On the one hand, there are historical reasons behind it. Party system in Bolivia was in decline throughout 1990s and 2000s. As Centellas (2009) put it, vote for the systemic parties in presidential elections declined from 74 % in 1985 to 42 % in 2002 and 7 % in 2005. Bolivia had five presidents between 2000 and 2006, two of which had to resign due

⁴The exact numbers should be evaluated with caution. Scores for Turkey rely on the CSES surveys, while scores for Bolivia rely on LAPOP surveys. There are some differences between the wording of relevant survey items and the timing of these surveys, which are discussed in detail in Appendix B. However, the overall finding that partisan ties are exceptionally weak in Bolivia, especially compared with Turkey, survives this careful scrutiny.

to popular protests and one for health reasons. These political instabilities erode existing partisan loyalties.

Still, we would expect the strengthening of partisan identities at least during the last decade, under the rule of Morales and the MAS. This was a period of elite polarization (Crabtree, 2020; Handlin, 2018) and increased autocratization, which contributed to the development of partisan ties in Turkey (Laebens and Öztürk, 2020).

It is important to consider the organizational structure of the ruling coalition to explain this puzzle. From the very beginning *social* movements in Bolivia played a leading role in the electoral victory of the MAS (Anria, 2018). The MAS was established as a large tent of social movements. Social movements within MAS protected their institutional independence and, in Conaghan (2018, 242)’s words, “the primary loyalties of members resided with their organization rather than MAS.” In contrast to its electoral power, MAS was an institutionally underdeveloped organization. Social movements, which were a part of MAS, did not avoid using contentious tactics when they disagreed with Morales (Anria, 2018).

This can be contrasted to the Turkish case, in which the Islamist *social* movement was decidedly defeated before the AKP came to power with a new political rhetoric. This helped the AKP and Erdogan to easily monopolize the power within the ruling bloc; members of the Islamist social movement felt grateful to Erdogan and the AKP for this political victory.

Opposition form and behavior might have also played a role in the lack of widespread affective political ties in Bolivia. Opposition was scattered and weak during most of Morales’ presidency (Conaghan, 2018, 249). This prevents the possibility of a mass-level political polarization, which would then strengthen partisan identification with parties. In line with their overall weakness, opposition actors in Bolivia usually

avoided radical strategies that their counterparts in Turkey or Venezuela unsuccessfully tried (Cleary and Öztürk, 2020). Morales, despite his populist rhetoric, also made some concessions during periods of heightened political crises in the first years of his presidency.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, my goal was to show the conditions under which our findings from the Turkish case would apply. The existing literature in political psychology is focused nearly completely on advanced democracies. This results in faulty generalizations. The Bolivian case protects us from such a danger, revealing that provoking partisan emotions and shifting voters attitudes in this way is not always an easy task. Historical and institutional context matters. These issues are further discussed in the Conclusion chapter of this dissertation.

Before concluding, we need to an important limitation to the empirical claims in this chapter. I argued that diverging levels of partisanship between Turkey and Bolivia is the cause of the difficulty of evoking partisan emotions in Bolivia. A strong test of the relationship between partisan identities and partisan emotions would require a statistical model with an interaction variable between partisanship and the anger treatment. Without an analysis at the individual level, comparison of partisanship scores between Turkey and Bolivia can only be suggestive. The problem is that, however, this kind of a statistical model would require a much larger sample size, especially given that the proportion of partisans is already low in Bolivia. Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, and online access is highly limited. It took around three weeks, for example, to collect 260 respondents for this study. Future research on this issue will need to rely on new strategies of data collection to reach larger sample sizes in these contexts.

Chapter 4

A CROSS-NATIONAL EXAMINATION: AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION AND DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING

In the previous two chapters, I relied on the analysis of individual-level data to demonstrate that, under certain conditions, partisan emotions increase support for executive aggrandizement among incumbent voters. In this chapter, I extend this finding to cross-national context, relying on indicators aggregated at the country level. This allows, most importantly, to study how political institutions and other country-level phenomena impact the role of affective political ties during democratic erosion.

With respect to the types of affective political ties, this chapter deals with affective polarization. This is, on the one hand, a necessity: the only survey item that is available for large-N analysis of affective political ties is party and leader feeling thermometers, included in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) database. But in addition to practical necessities, there are also theoretical gains from the study of affective polarization. The worldwide increase in the level of political polarization and the dangers this poses to the health of democratic institutions have recently become an issue of concern for many scholars (Somer and McCoy, 2019; Svobik, 2019). This chapter contributes to these debates by focusing on the affective side of polarization and exploring the conditions under which affective polarization harms democratic institutions.

In following pages, I first review the literature on polarization and introduce the distinction between affective and ideological forms of polarization. Building on these, I theorize the conditions under which affective polarization may harm democracies.

Most importantly, I argue that affective polarization harms democratic institutions especially when voters are polarized over their affective reactions towards the ruling party. In the remaining part of this chapter, I call this form of polarization as “affective polarization over the incumbent,” or shortly as “incumbent polarization” when needed. This chapter also studies the close relationship between ideological and affective ties and how this relationship is influenced by the institutional framework. I argue that ideological polarization leads to affective polarization over the incumbent especially when constraints to executive authority is weak. This is because ideological differences become threatening especially when there are few institutional guarantees to protect the losers of the election. I test these arguments using data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project (CSES) and the Varieties of Democracy Project. Empirical tests and robustness checks support my arguments.

4.1 Taking affective polarization seriously

The alarming trend in democracies, described in the Introduction chapter, has renewed the interest in political polarization. Many scholars are convinced that increasing polarization was the driving force behind surprising developments such as the 2016 presidential election in the United States, the rise of populist and extreme-right parties in Europe, and the Brexit vote (Ford and Goodwin, 2017; Schaffner *et al.*, 2018). Many scholars believe that polarization is the primary cause of democratic decline in countries such as Turkey, Venezuela, Poland, Hungary, and Thailand (Kaufman and Haggard, 2019; McCoy *et al.*, 2018). However, the empirical literature on this relationship remains limited and inconclusive.

In the early literature on democratic breakdowns, there was a consensus that party system polarization was one of the causes of democratic breakdown (Linz and Stepan,

1978; Valenzuela, 1978). Relying on surveys from eight different European countries, Sani and Sartori (1983, 308) demonstrated that low party system polarization correlated with better functioning democracies. Huntington (1993, 290) offered “extreme polarization often produced by leftists” as an explanation of first and second waves of democratic breakdowns. The general argument in all these studies was that as political parties developed more disparate ideologies, located farther away from each other along the left-right axis, it would be harder for these parties to work together. This inability to compromise created political crises and power vacuum, inviting anti-democratic actors to the political scene. The emphasis on detrimental effects of party system polarization still lasts in the literature on democratic decline (Capoccia, 2001; Diamond, 2015; Kaufman and Haggard, 2019; Somer and McCoy, 2018).

On the other hand, a different literature developed especially in the last few years point to a positive relationship between political polarization and democratic health. Using first two waves of Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) surveys, Wang (2014) demonstrates that party system polarization is positively correlated with democracy scores, even after controlling for economic development, age of democratic regime, and other institutional variables. Based on these regression results, Wang concludes that political polarization actually promotes democratization. Through a comparative historical research design, Bornschier (2019) demonstrates that stable party systems with higher quality democratic institutions emerged in Latin America only when ideological polarization has been sustained for a long enough time. Findings like these have led scholars to reach the vague conclusion that *a certain degree* or *some level* of polarization was good for democracy, while excess was dangerous (McCoy *et al.*, 2018; Wang, 2014).

I believe that one of the sources of this problem with the existing literature is that political scientists are not always consistent in what they mean with political

polarization. Until the last few years, most scholars understood polarization predominantly as the ideological distance between political parties in a national party system. This concept of polarization, defined as “party system polarization,” can be traced back to Sartori (2005)’s discussion of polarized pluralism developed in 1970s. There have also been studies on *mass* level ideological polarization, usually measured through the self-placement of respondents over the left-right spectrum (Dalton, 2006; Ezrow *et al.*, 2014; Jou, 2016).

Affective polarization, as a concept that is distinct from ideological polarization, has been absent in most of these discussions; but there are good reasons to take affective polarization seriously in comparative politics. Affective polarization is highly correlated with partisan emotions, and, as discussed in Chapter 2, emotions can explain crucial forms of political behavior at the individual level. For example, anger and enthusiasm encourage voters to participate in politics, offering a solution to the collective action problem (Groenendyk and Banks, 2014). Emotions shape whether individuals will engage in deliberative or partisan reasoning; angry voters are more likely to follow partisan reasoning, while anxiety is associated with deliberative thinking (MacKuen *et al.*, 2010). These individual level effects may aggregate in various ways depending on the political and institutional context of a country, triggering political change.

Furthermore, a lack of attention to affective polarization may significantly bias cross-country comparisons of polarization. In many countries, political parties do not differ significantly along policy ideas and political ideologies. This is especially the case in new democracies with unconsolidated party systems. In these environments, affective polarization towards parties and leaders may emerge as a better way to capture political polarization, and ignoring this form of polarization may result in downplaying levels of polarization in those countries.

4.2 Polarization and democracy: Hypotheses

In this section, I develop hypotheses on the relationship between ideological and affective forms of polarization and their effects on democratic institutions. First, I explore under what conditions political polarization has detrimental effects on democratic institutions, paying special attention to the elite behavior as the intervening mechanism. Second, I explore the relationship between ideological and affective forms of polarization, taking into account how political institutions mediate this relationship.

4.2.1 *Affective polarization over the incumbent and democratic decline*

I believe that the most immediate effects of polarization on democratic institutions occur through the incentive mechanisms political polarization creates for elites, and we need to consider which parts of polarization influences the elite behavior most. In this respect, I suggest distinguishing affective polarization towards the party that governs from affective polarization towards other parties. The latter is measured through “mass affective polarization”, which takes feelings towards all parties into account equally (Lauka *et al.*, 2018). While this measure may be useful to explain some political outcomes, I argue that, affective polarization towards the political actor that controls the executive power has some unique effects over the trajectory of democratic regimes.

Incumbents controlling the executive authority are the most powerful actors in democratic regimes. In parliamentary systems, this actor is the ruling party. Ruling parties, nearly always led by prime ministers, have significant powers over the legislative process, and they can use this power to push policy and institutional changes. In presidential systems, incumbents are the presidents. Although presidential systems

usually dictate a more strict separation of power, presidents still hold more power than any other actor in the democratic system. Besides their control over the legislative process, incumbents have varying levels of control over the bureaucracy and security forces. Some incumbents can even choose to misuse this power to create unfair advantages for themselves in the electoral system (Levitsky and Way, 2010).

Affective polarization over the incumbent is important for the health of democratic regimes, I believe, because it has direct impact on what the incumbent will do with executive power and how the opposition will react.

First, the increase in the proportion of voters having extremely *negative* affects towards the incumbent may radicalize the behavior of the incumbent. We can expect that increased hostility from the opposition voters will increase incumbent's threat perception: once the incumbent loses power, these opposition groups might support judicial action against the incumbent. This can give the incumbent a reason to try to stay in power as long as possible by manipulating or destroying electoral institutions. In addition to this, the increased hostility by the opposition groups may convince the ruling party leaders to cease any efforts of dialogue and negotiation with opposition voters, thinking that there are not any votes to win there. McCoy and Somer (2019) argue that Gezi protests in 2013 in Turkey had this effect by antagonizing progovernment groups and accelerating government repression. The Gezi protests in Turkey revealed the extent of opposition animus towards Erdogan (Altun, 2016), pushing Erdogan towards a more divisive rhetoric and more repressive policies (Bashirov and Lancaster, 2018).

Second, the increase in the proportion of voters having extremely *positive* affects towards the incumbent may encourage aggrandizing behavior of the incumbent. Recent research has demonstrated that voters may support authoritarian moves by incumbents when they are strong partisans of the ruling party (Ahlquist *et al.*, 2018;

Graham and Svobik, 2020). Believing that their base will follow them under any conditions, executives having strong bonds with their followers will have the courage to create institutional and economic crises to aggrandize their power, which will necessarily emerge as executives try to grasp more power. Balderacchi (2018) argues that competitive authoritarian regimes in Latin America emerged only when leaders with authoritarian intentions had strong personal bonds with their voters, and leveraged these bonds against institutions constraining the executive power. For example, Chavez widely used emotional appeals to mobilize his followers, and relied on this popular support to dismantle democratic institutions in Venezuela (Love and Windsor, 2018; Levitsky and Loxton, 2013).

Finally, affective polarization over the incumbent can encourage opposition elites to pursue non-democratic means against the incumbent. A strong dislike towards the ruling party usually goes together with the delegitimization of the authority of this party in the eyes of opposition voters and non-democratic political actors, such as military and judicial bureaucracy. Such an environment is a breeding ground for conspiracies against the incumbent and democratic institutions. Military coup against Thaksin in Thailand in 2006, which followed significant polarization of Thai polity, is an example of this relationship between the affective polarization over the incumbent and the opposition-led democratic decline (Kongkirati, 2019). Once opposition chooses to follow extra-democratic means, democratic breakdown may follow even if these groups fail in their attack (Gamboa, 2017). These arguments bring me to my first hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 1: Affective polarization over the incumbent has a negative effect on electoral democracy.

I do not expect other forms of political polarization to have such negative effects

on democratic institutions since they are less directly related to the center of political power. To start with, there is a long chain of causality between mass ideological polarization and political power. While one can argue that parties will respond to mass ideological polarization by embracing more radical positions, many different factors, such as electoral laws, can also play a role in shaping party decisions to form ideological platforms. Secondly, even if some political parties sincerely embraced extreme ideological positions, as it is the case in party system polarization, this does not necessarily mean that those parties, and their supporters, will have the opportunity to disrupt the democratic equilibrium. Unlike cases of high level of affective polarization over the incumbent, in which executive is the center of polarization, actors driving party system polarization may actually be peripheral to political power. In addition to this, ideological forms of polarization may not have detrimental effects of affective polarization, such as creating a loyal support base that is more willing to bear the burden of disruption of democratic equilibrium. When it is not accompanied by emotions, ideas' mobilizing force may be rather limited (Goodwin *et al.*, 2009). Finally, mass affective polarization should be weakly, if at all, related to democratic decline because this measure takes feelings towards opposition parties into account and these feelings are not directly related to the behavior of most important political actors, as it is explained above.

4.2.2 Party system polarization and affective polarization over the incumbent

Does this mean that party system polarization, which has been studied extensively in the literature on democratization, is unrelated to democratic health? As I discussed in the introduction, there is a large literature listing potential positive and negative effects of party system polarization on democratic institutions. If this really is the case, we need to distinguish between mechanisms through which party system

polarization shows its negative and positive effects, rather than attempting to reveal the average treatment effect of party system polarization. I argue that affective polarization over the incumbent may be relevant here by mediating the negative effects of party system polarization on democratic institutions. Increased ideological distance between political parties harm democracies because it increases affective polarization over the incumbent. This may be the case, for example, when the ruling party has an extreme ideological position over the left-right continuum. In this scenario, ideological polarization will be transferred to the incumbent as ideological distance may fuel affective responses (Lauka *et al.*, 2018; Rogowski and Sutherland, 2016).

HYPOTHESIS 2: Party system polarization is associated with the affective polarization over the incumbent.

I believe that political power plays a role in shaping the relationship between affective and ideological polarization too. If incumbency is a special position because it holds political power, party system polarization should especially lead to affective polarization over the incumbent when incumbents in a country has more political power. I argue that the impact of party system polarization on affective polarization over the incumbent is especially high when constraints to executive authority are weak. When executive power is checked through other authorities (legislative body, bureaucracy, or judiciary), the ideology of the governing party may not matter a lot. However, as the checks over the executive authority weaken, the executive authority becomes more able to create large scale changes in the society. In this political climate, there are more reasons for people to develop strong emotions towards the incumbent. Below is the hypothesis summarizing this point:

HYPOTHESIS 3: The relationship between party system polarization and affective polarization over the incumbent becomes stronger when there are fewer

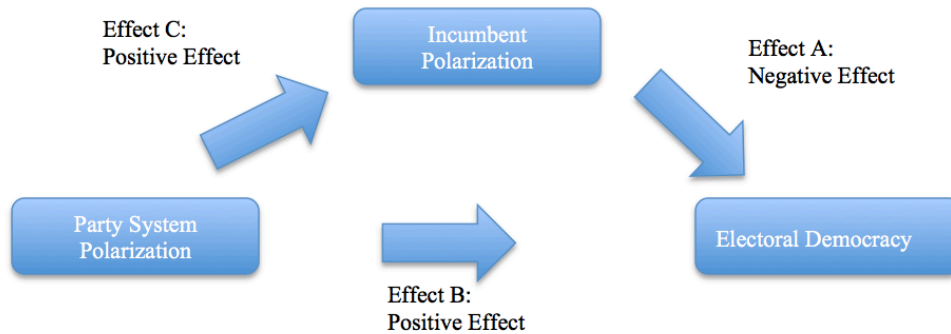
constraints on executive power.

4.2.3 *A general model: polarization and democracy*

I have so far argued that party system polarization does not have a net effect on democratic institutions, but it can have negative effects mediated through the affective polarization over the incumbent. If this is the case, we should see party system polarization's positive effects on democratic health once we control for the affective polarization over the incumbent. In other words, I argue that party system polarization has a dual effect on democratic institutions. First, it has an indirect and negative effect occurring through the affective polarization over the incumbent. Second, it has a direct positive effect on democratic institutions occurring independently from the affective polarization over the incumbent. Political scientists have already listed these positive effects of party system polarization on electoral democracies (Carlin *et al.*, 2015; LeBas, 2018; Lupu, 2015; Maoz and Somer-Topcu, 2010). As McCoy *et al.* (2018) summarize them, polarization facilitates party building, constituency mobilization and stabilization, simplifies choices for voters, and helps consolidate political party systems (McCoy *et al.*, 2018). Once we control for the affective polarization over the incumbent, statistical analysis should reveal these positive effects. Figure 4.1 below presents a summary of the model that I suggest.

This model is a partial mediation model (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Mathieu and Taylor, 2006), as affective polarization over the incumbent partially mediates the relationship between party system polarization and electoral democracies. What is different from most partial mediation models studied in the literature is that the indirect relationship occurring through effect C and A has a negative effect on the dependent variable, while the direct relationship occurring through effect B has a positive effect. To summarize:

Figure 4.1: Forms of polarization and democracy: Theoretical model



HYPOTHESIS 4: Party system polarization has a negative effect on electoral democracy, which is mediated through the affective polarization over the incumbent.

HYPOTHESIS 5: Party system polarization has a positive effect on electoral democracy, which occurs independently from affective polarization over the incumbent.

4.3 Data and tests

To test these hypotheses I am using election surveys included in the CSES dataset. By June 2018, 174 different surveys from 55 countries were included in the CSES online database (Quinlan *et al.*, 2018). All of these surveys are conducted in general election years, and mostly in parliamentary election years. Unfortunately, not all election surveys are useful to measure affective polarization. I had to drop 32 election surveys from the sample because they did not include relevant feeling thermometers. This leaves us with 142 surveys from 49 countries. In 14 countries, we have only one election survey. In 8 countries, we have two election surveys. In remaining 27 countries, we have three or more surveys. There is a considerable amount of variation

regarding democracy and economic development scores across countries included in this sample.

The data I use for this research has a clustered nature: country-years are nested in countries. Thus, observations from the same country correlate with each other. This correlation between observations from the same country violates the assumption in OLS regression models that residuals are independent from each other, and cause incorrect standard errors (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2008, 2). In order to deal with this problem, I use mixed effects models in all stages of this study. It is important to underline that mixed effects models used in this article stay within conventional limits of minimum required sample sizes, especially because I do not estimate random components and inter-level interactions in any of these models (Huang, 2018; Maas and Hox, 2005; Scherbaum and Ferreter, 2009; Theall *et al.*, 2011). All variables of interest are first level variables, and all models have around 120-140 observations at the first level. To maximize statistical power and minimize biases, I estimate my models using restricted maximum likelihood with Kenward-Roger method, as recommended by McNeish and Haring (McNeish and Haring, 2017). In one of the robustness checks, I cluster standard errors, using ordinary least squares estimation method.

In order to measure party system polarization, scholars locate parties along an ideological continuum, extending from extreme right to extreme left. Then, party polarization score is calculated as the total of each party's distance to the system mean, parties being weighted according to their vote shares (Dalton, 2008, 905). Dalton's operationalization of party system polarization, based on CSES dataset, has been widely used in comparative politics literature during the last decade, and I follow the same operationalization.¹ In order to locate parties along the left-right

¹See, for example, Adams *et al.* (2012); Curini (2015); Dalton and McAllister (2015); Ezrow *et al.*

axis, we may use party manifestos from the Comparative Manifesto Project, expert surveys, or citizens' perceptions, as they are measured in CSES surveys. Following Dalton, I use citizens' perceptions of parties left-right positions. This helps me to avoid losing any observations, since other polarization measures also come from the same CSES dataset. More importantly, this is theoretically more relevant, since I expect ideological polarization to have an impact to the degree that voters perceive these changes.

In American politics literature, scholars usually measure affective polarization through feeling thermometers. In the two-party context of American politics, it is quite straightforward to calculate affective polarization: they simply subtract one's feeling thermometer score for two parties. In order to measure affective polarization in the context of multi-party systems, Lauka et al. suggest using party feeling thermometers included in CSES surveys. (Lauka *et al.*, 2018, 114) After recording the ratings of each respondent for up to nine most important political parties in the party system, they code 0, 1, and 2 as strong dislikes, and 8, 9, and 10 as strong likes. The formula they use based on this coding is presented below:

$$Mass\ Affective\ Polarization = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^9 L_p^i * D_p^i}{0.25 * N}$$

In this formula, L_p is the proportion of people strongly liking a party, D_p is the proportion of people strongly disliking each party, and N is corrected number of effective parties. Because people are able to like more than one party, the maximum score per country would be 0.25 times the number of parties (as half the population at each end of the spectrum would represent $0.5 * 0.5 = 0.25$). For this reason, they divide the outcome by 0.25.

(2014); Zechmeister and Corral (2013).

In order to operationalize affective polarization over the incumbent, I mainly follow the formula suggested by Lauka et al. to measure mass affective polarization in multiparty democracies. (Lauka *et al.*, 2018) I start with the same party feeling thermometer question included in CSES surveys. I group voters reporting their feelings towards the incumbent as 0/10, 1/10, 9/10 and 10/10 as extreme voters. These voters are one standard deviation outside of the mean value of the entire CSES sample regarding their feelings towards the incumbent. I multiply the proportion of voters having extremely positive feelings towards the incumbent (9/10 and 10/10) with the proportion of voters having extremely negative feelings towards the incumbent (1/10 and 0/10). In order to fix the maximum possible value of the polarization over incumbent affects to 1, I divide the result of this multiplication by 0.25. Thus, a polity in which half of the voters have extremely negative feelings towards the incumbent while the other half harbor extremely positive feelings will have a score of the affective polarization over the incumbent, or shortly “incumbent polarization score,” of 1. If none of the voters have extreme feelings towards the incumbent, the incumbent polarization score will equal 0. Below is the formula of this operationalization.

Responses to Feeling Thermometer	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Proportion of Voters in This Group	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
Quality of Voters in This Group	extreme		mean one std. dev.						extreme		

$$Incumbent\ Polarization\ score = \frac{(a + b) * (j + k)}{0.25}$$

This formula prioritizes principles of bimodality and extremeness in operationalizing political polarization.² Extremeness is included in the measure of polarization

²See, Fiorina and Abrams (2008). As explained above, Lauka et al.’s operationalization include voters reporting their feeling as 8/10 or 3/10 within the group of polarized voters. They do not give an explanation of why they take 3 and 8 as cutoff. I think it is theoretically more justified to set this boundary to one standard deviation away from mean voters. Voters reporting their feelings

through the counting of voters at extreme poles. The more voters locate themselves at the extreme poles in their feelings to incumbents, the higher affective polarization over the incumbent is. Bimodality is included in the measure of polarization through the multiplication of extreme poles. As a result, the more voters are distributed evenly across two poles, the higher the affective polarization over the incumbent is.

A required step to calculate the levels of affective polarization over the incumbent is to determine which political actor holds the executive power in each case. CSES surveys are conducted in election years. Regardless of the timing of the survey, affective polarization over the incumbent, or incumbent polarization score, used in this study measures polarization of affects towards the political actor that governed *after* the election. Thus, incumbent polarization scores demonstrate affective polarization towards the incumbent at the beginning of their tenure, right after a general election. Regression models are designed to take this aspect into account. In the Appendix, I provide a document listing the ruling parties and presidents for each observation of the dataset.

Most of the countries included in CSES surveys have parliamentary regimes. If a country has a parliamentary regime, I define the ruling party as the incumbent, and I measure polarization of feelings towards that party. If there is a coalition government, I measure polarization of feelings towards the biggest party in the coalition government, which is usually the party of the prime minister.³ If it is a presidential

as 0, 1, 9, and 10 are outside of one standard deviation of mean, hence extreme feeling voters. Furthermore, it is better to have a narrower definition of extreme voters to produce more effective measures. This decision does not significantly change regression results in this work, as it can be seen from Robustness Check 3 in the Appendix.

³I checked whether including other coalition parties in the measurement of incumbent polarization makes a difference. I calculated incumbent polarization score for each party in the coalition government, and I weighted these scores in proportion to seats each party in the coalition had in the parliament. The assumption was that number of seats in the parliament corresponds to the executive power a party in the coalition government has. This weighted aggregate measure of affective polarization over the incumbent does not change results in any significant way, mostly because smaller partners in the coalition usually have much fewer seats than the biggest party in coalition.

regime, I determine the president as the incumbent, and I measure polarization of feelings towards the president. In other words, in presidential countries I use the feeling thermometer for presidents, not presidents' parties.⁴ Semi-presidential regimes are in the gray area. In these regimes, I use party feeling thermometers because I want to maximize data availability.⁵

In order to operationalize the health of core democratic institutions, I use electoral democracy index from the V-Dem dataset. This index aims to capture “the core value of making rulers responsive to citizens achieved through electoral competition for the electorate’s approval under circumstances when suffrage is extensive; political and civil society organizations can operate freely; elections are clean and not marred by fraud or systematic irregularities; and elections affect the composition of the chief executive of the country”. (Coppedge *et al.*, 2018) I use this index as it fits best with my theoretical focus on the competitiveness aspect of democracies. For party system polarization variable, I use Dalton’s index provided in the CSES website. (Dalton, 2008) In cases where Dalton does not provide party system polarization score, I calculate party system polarization scores based on the formula provided by Dalton. I calculate mass ideological polarization and mass affective polarization based on the formulas presented in this article and Lauka et al.’s article(Lauka *et al.*, 2018) The data on GDP per capita comes from the Maddison Project.(Bolt *et al.*, 2018) I use CSES dataset for the regime age variable. This variable counts years passing since

For this reason, I chose the simplest way, and limited the analysis to the biggest party in coalition governments. The only exception is Switzerland, in which an executive council governs the country. In Switzerland, incumbent polarization score is weighted according to the number of executive council members per party.

⁴This is a necessity because political parties are usually much weaker in presidential regimes, and it is the president who controls the executive power.

⁵It is possible that all these nuances create some impact over the magnitude of incumbent polarization score. For this reason, I control for presidentialism in some of the regression models. I find that the statistical relationship between democracy scores and incumbent polarization scores does not change according to the decision of including/excluding presidentialism in the analysis.

transition to democracy. Table 4.1 on the next page presents descriptive statistics of these key variables. Now we can start with the test of Hypothesis 1:

Table 4.1: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Incumbent Polarization Score	142	0.11	0.08	0.00	0.44
Party System Polarization	155	3.23	1.25	0.10	6.07
Mass Affective Polarization	162	0.21	0.11	0.00	0.78
Mass Ideological Polarization	169	0.04	0.06	0.00	0.44
GDP per capita	164	28067.68	14279.25	2877.00	79894.00
Democracy Score	160	0.81	0.13	0.18	0.93
Regime Age	160	47.5	46.52	0	203

HYPOTHESIS 1: Affective polarization over the incumbent has a negative effect on electoral democracy.

In order to test this hypothesis, I use a mixed effects model with random intercepts and lagged dependent variable. I am using random intercept model, which allows only the intercepts, not slopes, to take random values; this helps to keep things simple and maximize statistical power. I am using lagged values of dependent variable as a control variable in order to alleviate concerns of endogeneity and autocorrelation. This type of model is also called as a dynamic model in the sense that the dependent variable is modeled as the result of an update of past values of the dependent variable with the effect of independent variables. (Wilkins, 2018; Keele and Kelly, 2006, 4) I regress democracy scores at time $t + 3$ over independent variables, controlling for democracy scores at $t-1$. Note that I choose the time lag between two democracy scores as four years, which is close to an election period.

I use three groups of control variables. The first group is called the basic group. This group includes GDP per capita and regime age. Second group includes institutional variables: party fragmentation, proportional election system and presidential

regimes. Third group includes social variables: population, ethnic fractionalization and religious fractionalization. Results are presented in Figure 4.2 on the following page. All values on the regression table are standardized.

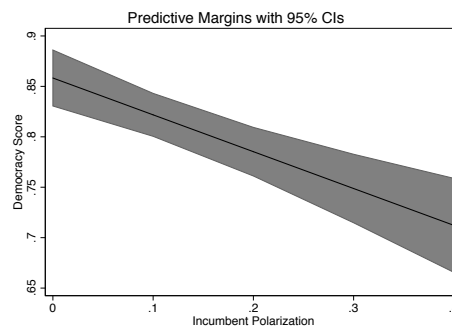
Figure 4.2: Affective polarization over the incumbent and democracy: Regression results

	Effects over Democracy Scores at t + 3											
	Basic1	Basic2	Basic3	Basic4	Inst1	Inst2	Inst3	Inst4	Social1	Social2	Social3	Social4
Democracy at t-1	0.44*** (0.06)	0.19*** (0.05)	0.48*** (0.06)	0.20*** (0.04)	0.44*** (0.06)	0.19*** (0.05)	0.48*** (0.06)	0.18*** (0.04)	0.38*** (0.06)	0.17** (0.05)	0.37*** (0.06)	0.19*** (0.04)
Regime Age	0.16 (0.11)	0.21 (0.17)	0.18 (0.13)	0.08 (0.16)	0.17 (0.11)	0.26 (0.17)	0.19 (0.12)	0.12 (0.16)	0.17 (0.12)	0.24 (0.17)	0.26 (0.14)	0.12 (0.16)
GDP per capita	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.09)	0.00 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.00 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.09)	0.01 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.07)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.07)
Incumbent Polarization	-0.24*** (0.05)				-0.27*** (0.05)				-0.21*** (0.05)			
Party System Polarization		0.03 (0.05)				-0.00 (0.05)				0.00 (0.05)		
Mass Affective Polarization			-0.06 (0.05)				-0.13* (0.06)				-0.04 (0.05)	
Mass Ideological Polarization				0.07 (0.04)				0.06 (0.05)				0.06 (0.04)
Party Fragmentation					-0.16* (0.07)	-0.17** (0.06)	-0.26*** (0.07)	-0.15** (0.05)				
Presidentialism					0.14 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.15)	0.07 (0.09)	-0.21 (0.15)				
Proportional System					0.13 (0.08)	0.09 (0.11)	0.16 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.08)				
Ethnic Fractionalization									-0.19 (0.10)	-0.39** (0.14)	-0.25* (0.11)	-0.38** (0.14)
Religious Fractionalization									0.14 (0.10)	0.24 (0.15)	0.12 (0.11)	0.20 (0.15)
Population									-0.13 (0.09)	-0.27 (0.14)	-0.21 (0.11)	-0.19 (0.13)
Observations	132	142	141	144	131	141	141	143	130	140	139	142

Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. All values are standardized.

Unsurprisingly, democracy score at t-1 emerges as the most significant determinant of democracy score at t+3. GDP per capita and regime age do not have significant impacts over democracy score at t+3, probably because their effects can be seen only in the long term and we control for long-term effects by using the lagged dependent variable as a control variable. Party fragmentation, a political variable that can have an impact over the short term, has consistently significant and negative effect on democratic health, on the other hand. Among polarization variables, incumbent polarization score emerges as the only variable that can explain the decline in democratic health. The effect is statistically significant at 0.001 significance level across all three models. This effect is substantively significant too. 1 standard deviation increase in the incumbent polarization score causes a decrease in democracy score around 0.25 standard deviation across all three models. The effect of mass affective polarization has also a negative sign, however this effect is not significant at 0.10 significance level in two of the three models. We should keep in mind that this variable includes incumbent polarization too, so the negative sign may simply be a result of this. Finally, party system polarization and mass ideological polarization do not have any significant effect across all three models. Below, Figure 4.3 shows the effect of incumbent polarization on electoral democracy score.

Figure 4.3: Marginal effects of affective polarization over the incumbent on the democracy score at t+3



To make sure that findings of this article are robust to different model specifications, I conducted five different robustness checks. Regression tables from these tests are presented in Appendix C. All robustness checks include variations of the main regression test presented above. In the first robustness check, I used Polity and Freedom House scores as dependent variable, instead of electoral democracy index from V-Dem. The negative effect of affective polarization over the incumbent becomes even more substantial and significant with these dependent variables. In the second robustness check, I used different temporal specifications in the dynamic model. Rather than regressing democracy scores at $t+3$ over democracy scores at $t-1$, I regressed democracy scores at $t+2$ over democracy scores at $t-1$, democracy scores at $t+3$ over democracy scores at t , and democracy score over $t+4$ over democracy score at t . The effect of affective polarization over the incumbent is weakest, in terms of coefficient size, when we attempt to predict democracy score at $t+2$. This must be because the negative effects have not yet accumulated enough by the end of the second year after elections. Even in this case, however, all models are significant at 0.05 significance level. In the third robustness check, I used a slightly different operationalization of affective polarization over the incumbent. Rather than defining extreme feelings as 0, 1, 9, and 10, I defined extreme values as 0, 1, 2, 8, 9, and 10. This operationalization is the same with Lauka *et al.* (2018)'s operationalization. Coefficient sizes of incumbent polarization score are slightly smaller because this operationalization is less successful at distinguishing extremely polarized voters from moderate voters. However, coefficients are still significant at 0.01 significance level across all three models.

The last two robustness checks use different statistical models. In the fourth robustness check, I clustered standard errors, instead of modeling standard errors through a mixed effects model. As expected in the literature, this reduces the statis-

tical power of the model, hence a general increase in standard errors (Cheah, 2009; McNeish and Harring, 2017). Incumbent polarization score is significant in only one out of three models; other polarization variables are not significant in any of the models. Still, affective polarization over the incumbent seems to be a better predictor than other polarization variables. In the fifth robustness check, I used a fixed effects model. This creates a more conservative test, limiting sources of variation to observations from the same country. Using this fixed effect model reduces explanatory power of the lagged dependent variable because we completely limited variation to within case analysis. Affective polarization over the incumbent is still statistically and substantially significant; in all of the three models, incumbent polarization score is significant at 0.01 significance level, effect sizes ranging from -0.16 to -0.21. None of the other three polarization variables reach these significance levels.

HYPOTHESIS 2: Party system polarization is associated with higher levels of affective polarization over the incumbent.

HYPOTHESIS 3: The relationship between party system polarization and affective polarization over the incumbent becomes stronger when there are fewer constraints on executive power.

In order to test these two hypotheses, I again used a mixed effects model with random intercepts. To measure constraints to the executive authority, I used ‘executive constraints’ variable of Polity IV. According to Coppedge *et al.* (2018), this variable refers to the extent of institutionalized constraints on the decision making powers of chief executives. These limitations include those imposed by any ‘accountability groups’ (i.e. legislatures, ruling party, councils of nobles, the military, judiciary). I

used this variable as it covers all forms of constraints; my argument does not distinguish between different forms of constraints. Other control variables include GDP per capita, regime age, party fragmentation, ethnic fractionalization, religious fractionalization, and population. GDP per capita may decrease affective polarization over the incumbent because a certain level of material wealth may decrease the worry of people about power politics (Przeworski, 2009). Regime age may increase incumbent polarization score because party cleavages and partisanship will be more established in these democracies (Rokkan *et al.*, 1967). Party fragmentation may decrease affective polarization over the incumbent because when more parties are included in the political system, it may be harder to establish an antagonistic front in the form of us versus them. Finally, higher ethnic fractionalization may be related to higher levels of affective polarization over the incumbent because ethnic differences create potential for emotional appeals in the society (Cederman *et al.*, 2013; Fjelde and Höglund, 2016). For robustness check, I ran the same model replacing Polity variable with two variables from V-Dem dataset with more specific content: legislative constraints on the executive power and judicial constraints on the executive power.

Regression results, presented on the following page, demonstrate that party system polarization is the most significant determinant of incumbent polarization score. Furthermore, this effect is especially strong when constraints to executive authority are weak. Both the “political constraints” variable from Polity dataset and “legislative constraints” variable from V-Dem dataset have a significant impact over the relationship between party system polarization and affective polarization over the incumbent. The ‘judicial constraints’ variable from V-Dem also has the same sign, but it does not reach 0.05 significance level (p value: 0.14). Below are two graphs that demonstrate how political constraints variables shape the relationship between party system polarization and affective polarization over the incumbent:

Figure 4.4: Determinants of affective polarization over the incumbent: the role of executive constraints (Polity)

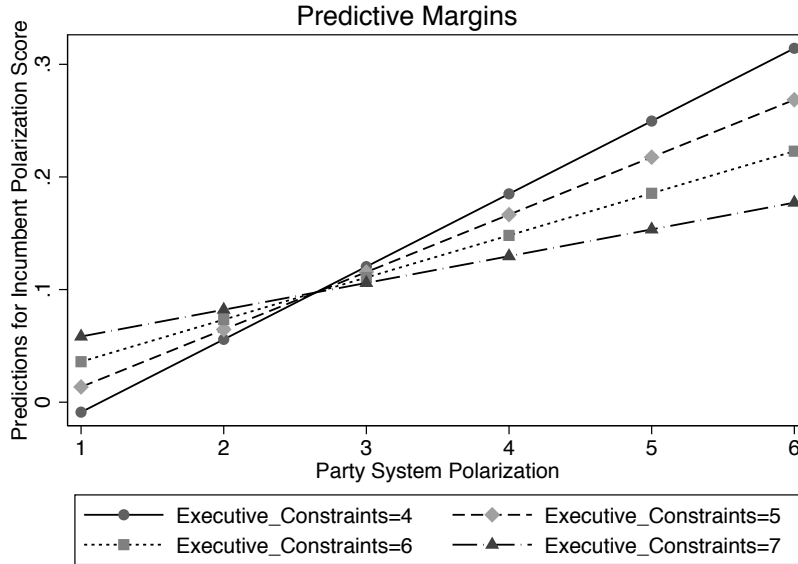


Figure 4.5: Determinants of affective polarization over the incumbent: the role of legislative constraints (V-Dem)

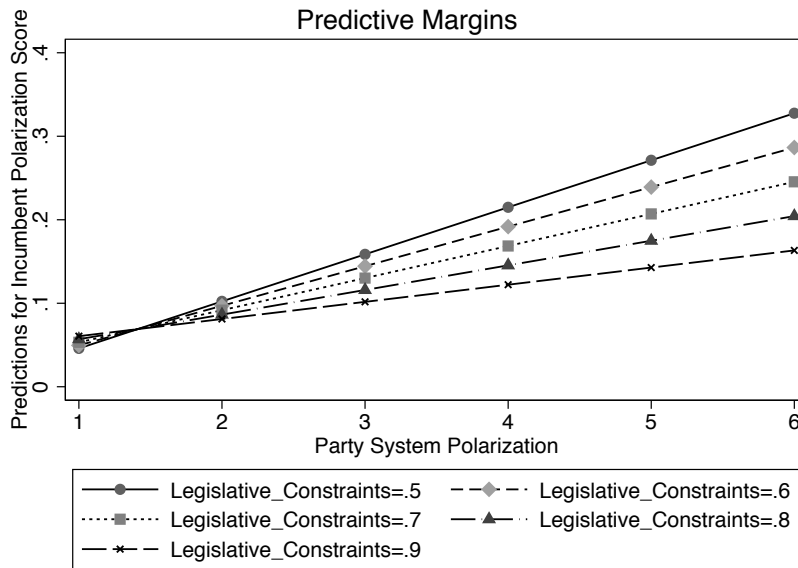


Figure 4.6: Political institutions and affective political ties: Regression results

Determinants of Incumbent Polarization			
	General	Legislative	Judicial
GDP per capita	-0.026* (0.011)	-0.024* (0.010)	-0.016 (0.010)
Regime Age	-0.002 (0.013)	0.002 (0.012)	0.003 (0.012)
Presidentialism	0.013 (0.011)	0.018 (0.010)	0.009 (0.010)
Proportional System	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.007 (0.009)	-0.004 (0.009)
Party Fragmentation	-0.001 (0.008)	-0.001 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.007)
Ethnic Fractionalization	0.024* (0.010)	0.017 (0.010)	0.017 (0.009)
Religious Fractionalization	-0.014 (0.010)	-0.009 (0.010)	-0.007 (0.009)
Population	0.018 (0.011)	0.011 (0.010)	0.020 (0.010)
Party System Polarization	0.119** (0.041)	0.101*** (0.027)	0.075** (0.029)
Constraints (Polity)	0.036 (0.021)		
Party System Polarization # Constraints (Polity)	-0.014* (0.006)		
Legislative Constraints		0.126 (0.114)	
Party System Polarization # Legislative Constraints		-0.089** (0.032)	
Judicial Constraints			-0.125 (0.079)
Party System Polarization # Judicial Constraints			-0.051 (0.034)
Observations	128	134	134
Log lik.	150.314	165.814	170.689

Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. All values except those in interaction are standardized.

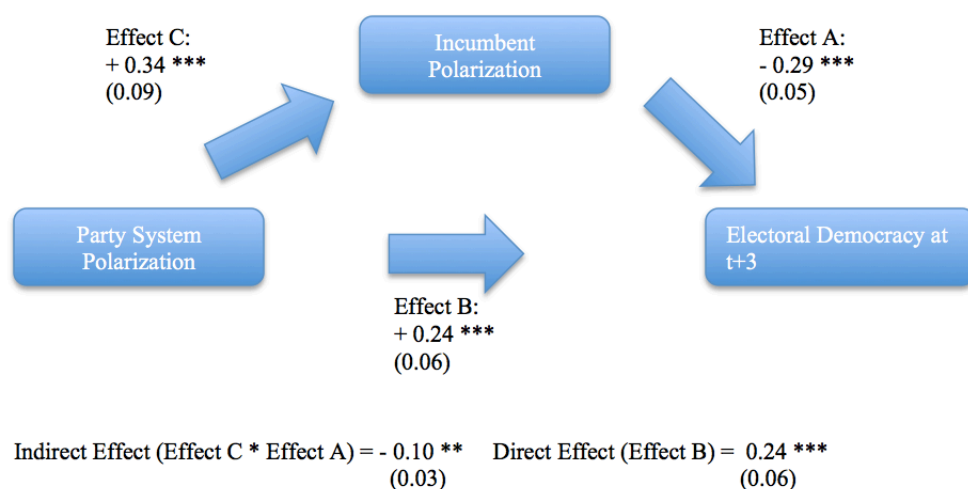
As an additional robustness check, I test this same model clustering standard errors, rather than using a mixed effects model. As it is presented in Appendix C (Robustness Check 6), results do not change. The interaction of party system polarization with executive constraints and legislative constraint variables are significant 0.01 significance level. The interaction between party system polarization and judicial constraint, on the other hand, has a p value of 0.076.

HYPOTHESIS 4: Party system polarization has a negative effect on electoral democracy, which is mediated through affective polarization over the incumbent.

HYPOTHESIS 5: Party system polarization has a positive effect on electoral democracy, which occurs independently from affective polarization over the incumbent.

I have argued that affective polarization over the incumbent mediates negative effects of party system polarization on electoral democracies, and party system polarization has positive effects on democratic institutions when controlled for affective polarization over the incumbent. Testing the statistical significance of the indirect effect of party system polarization on the democracy score, occurring through affective polarization over the incumbent, requires the test of the entire model (Danner *et al.*, 2015). I conduct this analysis using two-level mediational structural equation model, which allows a more powered and flexible test of mixed effects mediated models (Gunzler *et al.*, 2013; Rabe-Hesketh *et al.*, 2004; Stata *et al.*, 2011). Following previous models, random intercepts are introduced for each countries. Democracy score at t-1, GDP per capita and regime age are used as control variables. On the next page, Figure 4.7 summarizes results from this analysis.

Figure 4.7: Forms of polarization and democracy: Results from mediation analysis



Note: Results are from a multilevel mediational structural equation model estimated in Stata. Analysis includes democracy score at t-1, regime age and GDP per capita as control variables. Analysis includes random intercept for countries. All values are standardized; coefficients are in terms of standard deviations. Standard errors are in parentheses. * means $p < 0.5$; ** means $p < 0.01$; *** means $p < 0.001$.

Results demonstrate that both hypotheses hold. The size of the indirect effect is relatively small compared to the direct effect, but still significant with a p value of 0.001.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have extended the study of affective political ties to more than fifty countries through cross-national statistical analysis. My results are in line with findings from the first two empirical chapters: strong affective partisan ties weaken democratic institutions. However, this study also informs us about the conditions under which we are most likely to see these effects.

My findings demonstrate that polarization is especially perilous when it occurs in the form of affective polarization towards the party holding the executive power. Ideological differences, on the other hand, harms democracies to the extent that

they drive affective polarization towards the ruling party. Political institutions plays a role here too, by moderating the relationship between party system polarization and affective polarization over the incumbent. When there are strong constraints to executive authority, ideological differences are less likely to feed affective polarization.

Chapter 5

ORIGINS OF AFFECTIVE TIES: A NARRATIVE BASED APPROACH

In the preceding chapters, I have extensively discussed how the strength of affective political ties, especially of those directed towards the ruling party, might threaten democratic regimes. These findings necessarily lead to questions on the origins of affective political ties. Where do these ties come from? How do political parties and leaders establish affective bonds with their supporters? How are these affective ties reproduced over time?

An understanding of the origins of affective political ties is necessary to reach a fuller account of the instrumental use of affective political ties by incumbents during periods of democratic breakdown. Existing political science literature offers several mechanisms in this regard, focusing on early socialization (Converse, 1969), party organization and civil society density (Samuels and Zucco, 2015), and charismatic leadership (McDonnell, 2016; Sy *et al.*, 2018). These are all conducive to the cultivation of affective political ties, yet, I believe that one of the most important sources of affective politics goes largely unnoticed in the existing literature: political narratives. A focus on political narratives can especially be useful to understand the affective landscape in countries with younger and weaker democratic institutions. Study of political narratives will also help us to see how various forms of affective political ties can work in tandem, supporting and strengthening each other.

Narratives are sequential stories, bringing selectively framed events from past and present together with visions of future, and cast along a dramatic form (Bottici, 2007; Hammack and Pilecki, 2012; Kølvråa, 2016). They play a crucial role in the construction and solidification of collective identities because they take groups of

individuals as their subjects (Klar and Baram, 2016). Through their dramatization of the history, they provide the sense of historical significance to individuals, who identify as members of those groups (Bottici, 2007; Chernobrov, 2016), and they evoke affective reactions in individuals gripped by them. Political narratives, built on the historical agency of political groups, strengthen affective political ties. Probably nationalism is the most potent source of political narratives in the modern ages. Populist narratives have also emerged as a globally influential narrative during the last decade (Skonieczny, 2018; Ungureanu and Popartan, 2020).

In this chapter, I focus on the Turkish case to reveal how a less studied form of political narratives, which I call “utopian developmentalist narratives”, can play a significant role in the formation of affective political ties. I argue that the AKP, a political party that is less than twenty years old, benefited from developmentalist narratives to establish affective bonds with voters close to the party for sociological or economic reasons. This narrative promised a bright vision of future to the AKP voters, and it offered them a role in the “historical transformation” that the AKP had instigated. The grandiosity of developmentalist promises and the enjoyment offered by these promises aroused AKP voters. The AKP was inviting its voters to be a part of this historical transformation; most of its voters accepted this offer, and they felt proud for being a part of it. Increased identification with the AKP and Erdogan, partisan enthusiasm, and anger at the main opposition party (CHP) for criticizing these attempts ensued.

The rest of this chapter is formed of four sections. First, I take a closer look at the affective landscape in Turkish politics, with the goal of demonstrating exceptionally strong affective political ties between the incumbent party, AKP, and its voters. In the second section, I develop the concept of “utopian developmentalist narratives.” The third and fourth sections provide empirical evidence on the role of utopian de-

velopmentalism in Turkish politics. In the third section, I demonstrate the central place of the developmentalist narrative in the AKP discourse. In the fourth section, I demonstrate that AKP supporters' engagement with this narrative evokes affective reactions.

5.1 The strength of affective political ties in Turkey

Since coming to power in 2002, the AKP and its leader Erdoğan relied on strong popular support to change the political system of Turkey into an authoritarian regime. Although the AKP experienced various political and economic crises during this period, it has managed to keep a firm grip on its partisans' hearts and minds, emerging unscathed from all those crises.

Quantitative and cross-national indicators document the strength of affective partisan ties between the AKP and its voters. For example, let's take a look at the feeling thermometer score, which is widely used to study voters' affective reactions to parties (Druckman and Levendusky, 2019). Figure 5.1 relies on the CSES (Comparative Study of Electoral Systems) survey conducted in Turkey after the 2015 General Election.

Figure 5.1: AKP voters feelings' towards the AKP

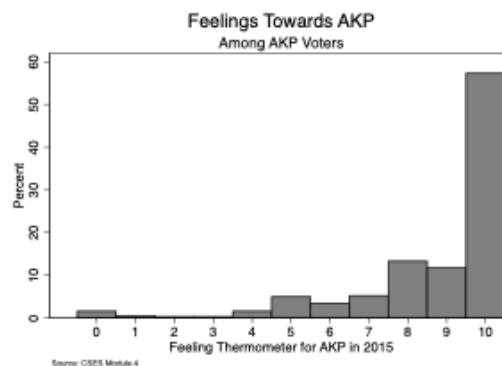
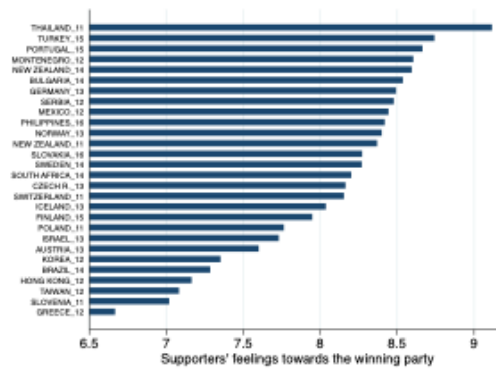


Figure 5.1 demonstrates that around 60 % of AKP voters rated their feelings

towards the AKP as 10/10 — the highest possible rating. This is a quite high proportion, and this becomes more clear when we compare the AKP to prominent political parties in other countries. Below, in Figure 5.2, I compare the average feeling thermometer score of AKP voters to the voters of the most popular parties of other countries included in CSES Module 4. The AKP is only second to Thailand’s Pheu Thai Party in this comparison.

Figure 5.2: Incumbent voters’ feelings towards the incumbent in CSES Module 4



One can also provide some qualitative indicators of the strength of affective ties between the AKP and its voters, such as the collective resistance of AKP supporters against the coup d’etat in 2016 (Esen and Gumuscu, 2017) or the stability in the AKP’s vote share across two decades despite radical shifts in the AKP’s policies.

The origins of strong affective partisan ties to the AKP is an interesting puzzle in itself. While exceptionally high levels of political polarization (Lauka *et al.*, 2018), Erdogan’s charisma (Erisen, 2018), or the AKP’s populist rhetoric (Aytaç, 2014; Selçuk, 2016) may be some of the reasons why AKP voters have developed strong affective ties, I believe that we should also acknowledge the role of utopian narratives within the AKP discourse. As I demonstrate it below, developmentalism has held a

central place in AKP’s public discourse since 2011 (Paker, 2017); yet, it went largely unnoticed in the relevant literature due to the emphasis on the AKP’s Islamism and populism.

5.2 Utopian narratives and developmentalism

Narratives, as defined above, are sequential stories, bringing selectively framed events from past and present together with visions of future, and cast along a dramatic form. Utopian narratives are political narratives in which the promise of a bright future is the most emphasized theme within the sequential structure of the narrative. Scholars of utopian studies define “utopia” with regards to the content, form, or function (Levitas, 2010). My understanding of utopian narratives is blind to the content of the utopia — there can be communist, fascist, or neoliberal utopian narratives. Similarly, unlike most of the critical scholarship on utopias, I do not make any assumptions regarding the political function of the utopia. Utopias may serve existing power relations in the society, or they can play transformative roles. Utopian narratives do not require that the utopian content provided a fully-fledged alternative social model (Kenny, 2007). Instead, much like all other narratives, utopian narratives tie together particular interpretations of events from the past and present with a vision for the future (Geoghegan, 2007). What distinguishes utopian narratives from other narratives is the predominant role of this vision of the future within the overall narrative and its unique character.

The narrative of future gains a utopian character when it promises its audience unfamiliar pleasures that will be realized through radical changes in the audience environment. Utopian narratives, by definition, promise a vision of the future in which the individual, who is the target audience of this narrative, will live in joy. Importantly, this promised vision of future is radically different from the individual’s

current environment. Utopian political designs do not promise to correct things gradually; they promise to build a new world from scratch. For example, utopian narratives include designs of a new law or a new social order. Going further, these designs may even aim to create “the new human” (Dalakoglou, 2012; Humphrey, 2005; Overy, 2005). These depictions of the future as a radical break from today promise a joyful experience that is not similar to what the individual has been used to in a daily life. Utopian narratives rather promise an experience that exceeds the boundaries of everyday experience, analogous to what Lacanian psychoanalysts call *jouissance* (Glynos, 2001; Hook, 2017; Kølvråa and Ifversen, 2017). This combination of radical unfamiliarity and joy, in the form of the promise of unfamiliar pleasures, relates utopian narratives to affective reactions.

Developmentalism is the most common form of utopian narratives within the context of mass politics. It may be helpful to distinguish between routine developmental policies and developmentalist utopian narratives to clarify what developmentalism means as a political narrative. Developmental policies and projects, as a set of large-scale initiatives that aim to improve the quality of life, are part of routine political discourse in many countries. As governments undertake large-scale developmental projects, they boast about those projects and their contributions to the society. Yet, these policies usually do not signify more than their instrumental purposes: improving the quality of life. They are characterized with the rational logic of cost-benefit. They stay local and isolated in the overall government discourse. These policies are articulated independently from other policy spheres, such as foreign policy, domestic policy, economic policy, and trade policy. They are not tied to a selective reading of past, present and future.

Developmentalist political narrative emerges when the goal of development gains the central place within the overall political discourse. This means that “develop-

ment” becomes the nodal point of the political discourse, fixing the meaning of all other signifiers (Glynos and Howarth, 2007; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Thus, for example, trade policy, industrial policy, foreign policy, or education policy are no longer independent from each other; instead, they are now all tied to the issue of development. In addition to this, developmentalist goals can be linked to a series of events in past and present within the narrative framework. For example, developmentalist goals may be articulated as the rebirth of past glory; “Make America Great Again” exemplifies this. “Development” may be articulated along with conspiracy theories; hence, current underdevelopment can be explained as a result of external or internal enemies. Finally, developmentalist narrative may be linked to a collective identity. For example, developmentalism went together with nationalism in many developing countries during the post War period (Desai, 2008).

Clear descriptions of the coveted social order is a common feature of all utopian accounts, and this equally applies to developmentalist utopian narratives. Providing detailed descriptions of the promised future helps the audience to imagine the future more clearly and get excited with this vision of the future. As different from some other utopias, however, the promise in developmentalist utopias is predominantly about increased opportunities of production and, especially, consumption (Inden, 1995). In addition to detailed descriptions of developmentalist goals, temporal references can also help turning “development” into an object of desire. Determining a specific temporal point for the realization of developmental goals, rather than framing development as a gradual process, creates the location of “unfamiliar pleasures.” This rhetorical move increases the appeal of the utopian promise through closure; the affective investments of the audience are now focused on a specific temporal point, rather than being diffused over the process.

Like all other utopian narratives, developmentalist narratives arouse the audience

gripped by its promises. Goal congruence is central to the evocation of emotions, as discussed in Chapter 2, and developmentalist narratives define grandiose goals. In addition to this, the political nature of these narratives may assign positive and negative valence towards political actors. Among voters believing in developmentalist narratives, potentially because of the ideological, economic, or sociological proximity to the actor spreading them, these narratives will evoke partisan enthusiasm for this actor. Furthermore, to the extent that utopian narratives are articulated along with partisan group identities or conspiracy theories, they should evoke negative emotions, such as partisan anger and hatred, at rival political actors. As discussed in Chapter 2, we feel anger when an actor intentionally harms us. When opposition parties criticize developmentalist projects, attempting to forestall them through various means, they will be the object of partisan anger.

Examples of political actors employing developmentalist utopian narratives to secure popular support can be found in both democratic and non-democratic contexts. A well-known example from democratic regimes is the Targets Plan of Juscelino Kubitschek, the president of Brazil from 1956 to 1961 (Maram, 1990; Ioris, 2012). Kubitschek's developmentalist program was formulated as a utopian narrative. His political campaign was centered on the promise of historic economic growth, and utopian appeal was strengthened with a temporal reference: "fifty years of development in five years." This promise was accompanied by detailed descriptions of ambitious developmental goals, the most famous of which was building a new capital city, Brasília. These rhetorical moves concretized "development" and turned it into an object of desire. "A jump of fifty years in future" or "a capital city that will be built from scratch" promised supporters a break from today's world, and filled them with enthusiasm and excitement (Maram, 1990). As this utopian narrative has been rooted among Brazilians, it made Kubitschek one of the most popular Brazilian

presidents ever.

Various authoritarian regimes also frame developmental goals in a utopian fashion to build popular legitimacy and to mobilize their support base (Weitz, 2015). The developmentalist urge of Stalinism is clear in Stalin's these words: "We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries and we can make good this distance in ten years." This belief in a bright future survived the de-Stalinization period, as symbolized with Khrushchev's famous phrase "Whether you like it or not, history is on our side. We will bury you." Achievements of the Soviet system in space missions helped spreading this mood among the public (Derluguian, 2005, 90). Similarly, the Maoist regime's political mobilization campaign, "The Great Leap Forward," relied on utopian characteristics to mobilize emotions of euphoria and enthusiasm among supporters (Liu, 2010, 353). As Liu puts it, the Maoist regime described its communist utopian vision with great detail, claiming that this utopian future was fast approaching.

5.3 Developmentalist utopian narratives in the AKP discourse

The AKP defined economic development as one of the goals of the party since its establishment in 2001, as the full name of the party clearly demonstrates: "Justice and Development Party." Yet, during its first years in power, "development" stayed as a routine policy area, as defined above. In this early period, lasting from the AKP's coming to power in 2002 to AKP's second electoral victory in 2007, the AKP followed IMF conditionality, Western-centric foreign policy and democratic discourse (Hale and Ozbudun, 2009). After 2007 general election, however, the party started to follow different policy lines, marked with increasing self-confidence. With regards to the economic policy, for example, the AKP rejected to renew IMF agreements in order to avoid budgetary constraints. Similarly around these years, AKP elites

started to put more emphasis on becoming a regional leader in the old Ottoman geography (Fisher Onar, 2011; Saraçoğlu and Demirkol, 2015). Finally, the AKP became less interested in branding itself as a force for democracy and freedom, and instead it shifted its focus on the construction of large-scale infrastructural projects that would transform Turkish economy (Paker, 2017). In the campaign period of the 2011 general election, AKP leadership articulated these moves around a coherent popular narrative, which is defined in this dissertation as a developmentalist utopian narrative. From that point onwards, the party and its leader Erdoğan heavily invested in the spread of this narrative.

A study of the 2011 election campaign can help us to see the AKP's developmentalist utopian narrative in its most articulate form. In order to study this election campaign in a systematic way, I focus on one of its parts that can represent the whole well enough: election posters. The central party organization of the AKP produced 36 election posters for this election to be used nationally. These posters were circulated all around the country, advertised on the media, and placed on billboards. When taken together, I believe, these posters provide a representative picture of the message AKP elites wanted to give in this election campaign. As I analyze these posters below, my method is to reveal and interpret predominant themes that are repeatedly stated across these posters.

To start with, there are two groups of posters, differing with respect to their shared slogans, design, and content. The first group of the posters is about past successes and services of the government; the second group introduces promises for the future. Posters in the first group total 15 posters; and, they all carry a common slogan, i.e. "it was a dream; it came true," in addition to slogans unique to each poster. An example is provided in Figure 5.3.¹ Some of the alleged past services of the

¹On the left, in red and bold fonts, it reads "we also have fast train now." On the right, in white

government, which were described in these posters, included cheap credits, increased social spending, agricultural subsidies, free textbooks for schoolchildren, improved health services, the first national aircraft, the first national satellite, and high-speed rail. It can be inferred that these posters' primary goal is to address daily economic concerns by referring to improvements in government services. On the other hand, however, the notion of “a dream coming true” and the expressed pride in producing objects of technological superiority, such as a satellite and an aircraft, reveal the developmentalist mindset behind the 2011 election campaign.

Figure 5.3: Election Posters - Past services



Posters in the second group, on the other hand, are much more directly focused on the goal of establishing a developmentalist narrative. These posters specify a temporal location for the utopia, provide detailed descriptions of the promised future, and articulate “development” as the nodal point of the entire AKP discourse.

To start with, all of the posters in this group are branded with the slogan “Turkey is ready; Target 2023”, which provide a temporal focal point for the AKP’s developmentalist utopian narrative. Through this slogan, AKP promises a complete transformation of Turkey by 2023. 2023 is the centenary of the modern Turkish Republic; fonts, it reads, “we introduced high-speed rails to Turkey”. Below, it reads “it was a dream, it came true.”

hence, this slogan carries a strong symbolic element to it. The 2011 election was the first time the AKP adopted “Target 2023” as a party slogan, and this was the most widely used slogan throughout the entire election campaign. Whenever Erdoğan made a campaign speech, for example, “Target 2023” was written on the background. TV commercials of AKP broadcast right before the election started and ended with this same slogan. Erdoğan himself referred to this slogan many times in his speeches. After the 2011 election, “Target 2023” continued to be one of the main slogans of the party, and a common reference point among party members from all ranks.

“Target 2023” has played a central role for the construction of the utopian narrative in two ways. First, specifying 2023 as the target year was the constitutive step that created a well-defined location for the promised utopia. As I have put it above, “development” gains utopian characteristics when it is articulated as a concrete object. Specifying 2023 as the target year produced this “object of desire”, distinguishing 2023 from the area of routine politics. In one sense, the period of familiar environment was supposed to end in 2022, and, 2023 was constructed as the abode of new pleasures. Second, “Target 2023” functioned as the nodal point of the AKP discourse, as it linked disparate policy spheres to the developmentalist promise. Thus, foreign policy, trade policy, education policy, or developmental policies were no longer isolated policy areas that were characteristically different from each other. Instead, as they were articulated through the slogan “Target 2023,” all these policy areas turned into related nodes of the overarching developmentalist project. One year after the 2011 elections, for example, the AKP prepared a 70-page document listing 2023 goals in various policy areas (AKP, 2012). Ministries prepared their own documents listing their goals for 2023.

The analysis of election posters in the second group reveals the content of the AKP’s utopia: a developmentalist utopia that largely relied on the construction of

large-scale infrastructural projects. Apart from their economic logics, these infrastructural projects aimed to impress supporters with their grandiose designs. The star of these projects was an artificial water leeway to be constructed between the Black Sea and Marmara Sea. The AKP proudly introduced this project as the “magnificent project”. “Two new cities to Istanbul, one is in Europe, one is in Asia,” “3rd Bridge and 3rd Airport to Istanbul,” “Rail Tunnel under the Bosphorus,” “500,000 new houses,” and “22 huge city hospitals” were some of the other construction based promises that were introduced in election posters. An example of election posters in the second group is provided in Figure 5.4.²

Figure 5.4: Election Posters - Future promises



In addition to construction based promises, there were also posters that combined the developmentalist logic with nationalist themes, promising to improve Turkey’s standing vis-à-vis advanced countries. The promises of domestic fighter aircraft and domestic helicopter, for example, combined the goal of industrialization with an appeal to militarism. Two election posters included promises that directly pit Turkey against other countries of the world: “one of the ten biggest economies in the world” and “one of the five biggest economies in the world in the agriculture.” Each of these

²on the left, it reads “3rd Bridge and 3rd Airport to Istanbul.” Below, it reads “Turkey is ready, Target 2023.”

promises was widely advertised in the pro-AKP media. One can take a look at the pre-election commercials broadcasted on television to get a sense of the developmentalist framing of these advertisements (AKP, 2011).

Developmentalist slogans and promises produced in the 2011 election campaign became the core theme in the AKP's party narrative after 2011. As these slogans and promises were articulated together with selected events from past and present, a fully-fledged narrative structure emerged. AKP leaders frequently referred to this narrative to interpret political events. For example, when the AKP faced one of the biggest crises of its history in 2013, i.e., Gezi protests in Istanbul attended by hundreds of thousands of citizens, AKP used the developmentalist narrative to frame this event. Party leaders argued that these protests were designed and supported by foreign states to prevent Turkey from reaching its 2023 goals. An analysis of the official propaganda video produced and circulated by AKP during the Gezi Protests documents these arguments (AKP, 2013). The title of this video can be translated as "The Grand Plot: See the Real Face of Gezi Events, My Turkey." The video starts with the claim that the month before the Gezi protests erupted was the brightest month of the entire history of modern Turkey. Then, the size of investments made during that May is shown on the video one by one: "the biggest airport: 22 billion euro," "3rd bridge on Bosphorus: 2.5 billion euro," "Channel Istanbul: 10 billion euro," "2nd nuclear reactor: 22 billion euro," "interests at the lowest: 4.6 %." In the following parts of the 27-minute video, coverage of the events in foreign media outlets is presented as the proof that Gezi Events were planned by "domestic and foreign enemies that want to stop the growing Turkey." AKP leaders continuously repeated all these points as they talked about Gezi protests, and it seems that AKP supporters bought these claims. Public surveys conducted during that period show that around 80 % of AKP supporters believed that Gezi protests were really planned by some

foreign conspirers (Konda, 2014, 35).

5.4 How AKP supporters engage with developmentalist narratives

In this section, I explore how AKP supporters engage with the utopian developmentalist narrative, emotionally and discursively.

Empirical study of popular emotions is not easy, as emotions are fleeting bodily reactions to a real world stimulus. In Chapter 2 and 3, I used self-writing tasks to study partisan emotions. This method is convenient for the purpose of conducting an experiment. Yet, non-natural evocation of emotions in this method can harm interpretative analyses. In this chapter, I follow a different method to study affective partisan ties, and I use video data analysis.

Video data analysis provides researchers with a special opportunity to observe emotional reactions directly (Collins, 2009; Nassauer and Legewie, 2019), and this method is increasingly used in various fields such as sociology (Nassauer and Legewie, 2018) and human geography (Laurier, 2016). In this study, I use online reaction videos that demonstrate us AKP supporters' emotional and discursive engagement with the utopian narrative. To establish a systematic structure for analysis, I limit my study of reaction videos to a single situation (first physical encounter with a symbol of utopian narrative), a single location (Osman Gazi Bridge, a suspension bridge over the Marmara Sea), and a single temporal period (all videos were recorded during the first week after the bridge was officially opened in July 2016).

Building a suspension bridge over the Gulf of Izmit was one of the promises that the AKP made during its 2011 election campaign; hence, this bridge is a symbol of the utopian narrative. The bridge was named after the founder of Ottoman Empire, Osman Gazi, indicating symbolic significance attached to the bridge within the AKP narrative. The Osman Gazi Bridge was opened on June 30, 2016, with the ceremonial

drive of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan over the bridge. Although long suspension bridges were not new to Turkey -there are two suspension bridges over Bosphorus that were opened in 1973 and 1988-, construction of the Osman Gazi Bridge was presented as a remarkable success by AKP leaders and supporters. During their first drive over the Osman Gazi Bridge, some AKP supporters recorded reaction videos via their smart phones in order to share this “historic experience” on social media. These reaction videos comprise the material of this study.

As I searched YouTube content for this study, I came across 72 reaction videos that fit with the properties listed above: They were recorded by ordinary people driving over the Osman Gazi Bridge during the first week of its official opening. These reaction videos can be classified into three groups with respect to their utility for this research. The first group, the most useful for this research, includes videos in which people talk and express their feelings and thoughts. I found thirty videos of this type, and stopped looking for further videos at this point. The findings of this study predominantly rely on this group of videos. ³ In Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6, presented on the next page, I provide screenshots from a typical video. In the second group of videos, video recorders broadcast partisan music (marches with strong rhythms and symbolic lyrics), but there is no talk. I found sixteen videos of this type. Although these videos do not include any speech, the musical content suggests that supporters recording these videos were aroused and excited by the encounter with the bridge. Finally, the third group of videos includes neither talk, nor partisan music. Although titles or descriptions of these videos in YouTube usually include some partisan slogans, their content is not useful for the analysis of affective ties.

In interpreting these videos, I explored discursive and affective themes shared across different videos. As I analyzed affective themes, I studied both subjective

³URL links of these videos can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 5.5: Screenshot image from an example video

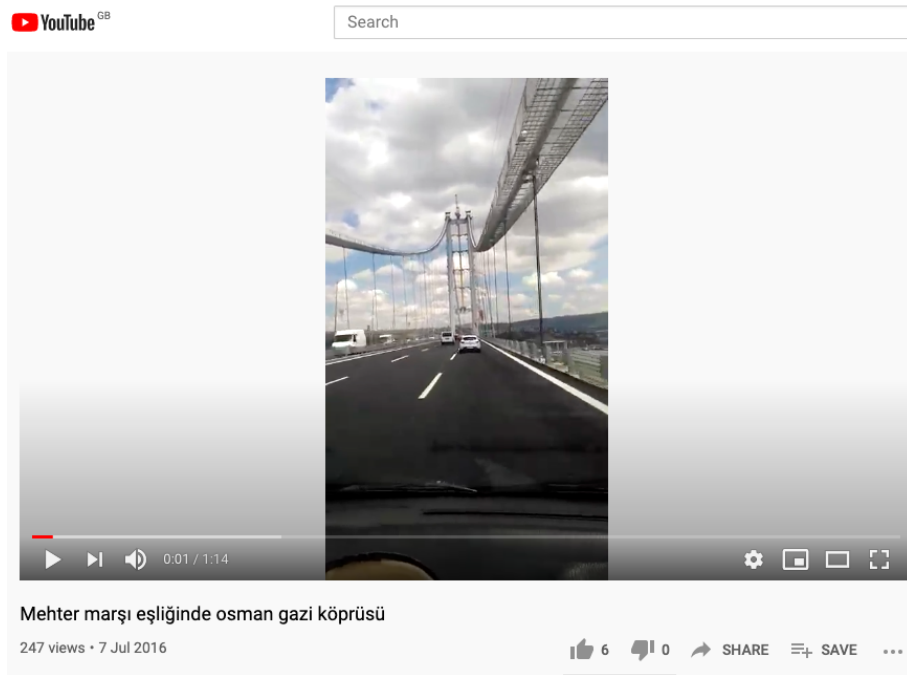


Figure 5.6: People shooting the example video



descriptions of the emotional state, such as *“I am very proud today”*, and vocal characteristics of speeches, such as higher levels of pitch or frequent use of exclamations and interjections (Mauss and Robinson, 2009). As I analyzed discursive themes, I looked for narrative characteristics as introduced in the theory section above. For example, I wanted to see whether supporters talked about the bridge as a service that improves the quality of everyday life or as part of a narrative theme linking the past and the present with the future.

It is important to note that these individuals in the videos may not represent the entire AKP electorate. It is quite possible that these are core partisans, who had already developed strong affective ties towards the AKP for reasons different from AKP’s developmentalism. On the other hand, I argue that the emotional and discursive reactions that we see in these videos are quite genuine. All of the videos analyzed here were recorded by ordinary citizens; they were not produced by the party organization or a media company. Thus, a study of these videos allows us to explore a specific type of engagement with developmentalist utopian narratives.

In the following two subsections, I separately present my findings from the analysis of affective and discursive content of these videos.

5.4.1 Affective content: Arousal, partisan enthusiasm, and partisan anger

To start with, these videos demonstrate that encounter with the Osman Gazi Bridge strongly arouses AKP supporters. This is clear in expressions of awe, repeated words of exclamation and injection, heightened voice, and increased attention to the environment. For example, the use of colloquial Arabic-origin words expressing amazement, such as *“Allah Allah,” “Masallah,” “Subhanallah,”* and *“La ilahe illallah, Muhammeden Resullullah”*, is common; we can see these in seven of these videos. A typical example is: *“Oh my God, look at that, oh my God, oh my God,*

what is this beauty, what is this beauty, there can be no such thing!” In another video, we hear: *“Hey Maasallah, hey Maasallah, look at that, look at that.”* In eight other videos, there exist repeated use of exclamation words, such as *wow, hey, ay, ulan.* As AKP supporters constantly repeat words of surprise and shock, they express their inability to believe what they see. In four other videos we see chanting or singing. In others, some stressed words and higher levels of pitch reveal the arousal of supporters. These moments of arousal are followed by enthusiastic praises of the bridge. Some supporters in the videos carefully explore parts of the bridge, and then tell others in the video how long the bridge is, how impressive the pillars are, how smooth the asphalt is, or how sophisticated the workmanship is in a quite excited tone. In one of the videos, the driver is so amazed that he starts praying, which lasts for more than two minutes.

Arousal goes hand in hand with partisan emotions. Nearly all of the thirty videos from the first group include partisan references; only in three videos do we not hear any explicit partisan material. An interesting finding is that supporters overwhelmingly mention Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as the constructor of the bridge and express their gratitude to him; in twenty one videos we see direct mentions of Erdoğan. Supporters in these videos refer to Erdoğan either with his first name, Tayyip, or with his nickname, reis, meaning “the leader.” There are several videos in which supporters repeatedly chant his name: *“Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.”* One of the supporters goes so far as praying to God to take from his life and give it to Erdoğan. Another one thanks God for sending Erdoğan to them. Yet another thanks Erdoğan’s mother for giving birth to him. As high arousal is coupled with high valence, emotions of enthusiasm, joy, and thrill become quite clear in these videos. We hear references to the AKP in six videos, yet these are much less emotionally laden. This suggests that partisan affects evoked by the utopian narrative are associated

more clearly with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, rather than the AKP. Another striking indication of this affective condition, i.e., high arousal and high valence, are videos with partisan marches. In nearly one third of all videos, AKP supporters play high volume, fast tempo, strong rhythm partisan marches as they drive over the bridge.

Another interesting finding from these videos is the frequent expression of negative emotions towards opponents of the AKP. In total, eighteen of thirty videos include references to the opposition party or its supporters. Hatred and anger, rather than fear, are the most visible negative emotions in these videos. During the videos, supporters quickly transition between their praises towards the AKP and insults towards opponents. As they transition from praise to insults, their voice increases and their speech becomes emphatic. Stressing each word, they narrate how much harm opponents caused to the nation throughout history. More than half, i.e., 17 out of 30, of these videos include insults to the opposition supporters, such as “*traitors*,” “*dishonorable people*,” “*ungrateful people*,” “*vampires exploiting the country*,” and “*enemies of the people*.” Several supporters say that they do not want CHP supporters to use the bridge since they were against the bridge. One goes farther, wishing that CHP supporters using the bridge fell into the sea and died. Several supporters, i.e., 4 out of 30, make fun of CHP supporters for criticizing the bridge’s construction.

5.4.2 *Discursive content: Utopian vision, historical significance, collective identity*

A discursive analysis of these reaction videos shows that the Osman Gazi Bridge is more than a bridge for the supporters in these videos; it is a symbol of the AKP’s political narrative. Certainly, there are various references to direct material benefits of the bridge to individuals. In thirteen of thirty videos we hear references relying on everyday cost-benefit analysis, such as the new bridge’s positive impact on the traffic congestion problem. Videos including references to a narrative framework, however,

comprise more than half of all videos.

To start with, there are several direct references to the AKP's utopian developmentalist narrative. Most strikingly, some supporters refer to "2023" as they encounter the bridge. For example, feeling enchanted, one of the supporters says: *"This is not the half of it; wait until 2023."* Some others try to imagine the level of development that the bridge will bring. One says, *"There will be another Istanbul here."* In another video, we hear *"You know what, I cannot even imagine how this area will be in ten years time."* Indicating how all developmentalist promises are closely tied to each other, some other supporters start talking about other ongoing infrastructure projects: *"Let's leave this aside. Third airport. Again, in Çanakkale, a huge new bridge at the length of 3800 meter is being constructed."* Along with the imagination of future development, we also see many people entertaining the current level of development that became possible under the AKP rule: *"They [parties before AKP] could not even build a canal bridge, now they [AKP] are building a bridge over the sea."*

As mentioned above, developmentalist narratives refer to the most advanced countries in the world to concretize the promise of development. Looking at the bridge through this narrative perspective, AKP supporters in these videos feel the need to compare the Osman Gazi Bridge with those in Europe and the United States. Several speakers remind viewers that this is the fourth longest bridge in the world. A kid, after his mother asks her what she thinks about the bridge, responds: *"This is our pride in the world."* In one of the videos, the driver, who has a relatively calm tone, asks another passenger in the car: *"How did you find this in comparison to those in Europe?"* Some others are more thrilled: *"Wow, are we in Europe? Is this Frankfurt or London?"* asks one. Finally, there are those who are sure that the United States and Europe would not be able to build a bridge like this: *"Even America cannot do*

this, they will go crazy now.” exclaims yet another one.

As they drive over the bridge, people in these videos feel that they are experiencing a historical moment. Given that producing the feeling of historical significance is a crucial function of narratives (Bottici, 2007; Stavrakakis, 2002), this shows how the AKP’s developmentalism functions as a narrative. For example, in one of the videos mentioned above, a mother tells her kids that this is a day to be told to their grandchildren. In many videos, supporters thank God for showing these days to them: “*My God, thank You for sending Tayyip [Erdoğan] to us so that we could see these days.*” They cannot believe that they are really are driving over that bridge: “*Oh my God, were we supposed to see these days?*” This feeling of historical significance is usually coupled with a counterfactual narrative; several people tell that others [supporters of opposition parties] would not see this day even in their dreams. “*They [opponents of AKP] told it was impossible, but it [the bridge] happened,*” says one.

Finally, there is a strong element of partisan group identity in these videos. Frequent insults to AKP opponents, for example, suggest that opponents are seen as a coherent group, different from AKP supporters (Iyengar *et al.*, 2012). Partisan groups are historicized as some AKP supporters argue that supporters of the CHP used to exploit Turkey before the AKP came to power. A quite interesting finding, which comes across several times in the videos, is that AKP supporters call this bridge “*our bridge*”, distinguishing it from bridges over Bosphorus built by previous governments. Some even say that “*their bridge*” is better than the others. Thus, one can see that, AKP’s utopian narrative is articulated along with narratives of the past in a way that strengthens perception of coherent groups (Scuzzarello, 2015, 182).

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the role of utopian narratives in shaping the affective landscape in Turkey. First, I defined utopian and developmentalist narratives and explained how these narratives are related to affective reactions. Building on this, I demonstrated that the AKP heavily invested to establish a developmentalist utopian narrative. Through video data analysis, I also explored how AKP partisans engage with this narrative. This analysis revealed that the experience of utopian narratives is an affective experience, filled with arousal, positive emotions towards Erdoğan and the AKP, and negative emotions towards opposition supporters. The narrative themes accompanying this affective experience include bright future, historical significance, and collective identity. From a broader perspective, this chapter offered a *political* framework that can explain how incumbent parties can establish affective ties with their voters. This complements Chapter 2, in which I discussed how affective ties may influence incumbent voters' reasoning during periods of executive aggrandizement.

There are two important questions that go beyond the scope of this dissertation and are left for future research. First, the research design in this chapter is not suited to reveal what proportion of AKP supporters affectively react to the AKP's developmentalist narrative. Second, the empirical discussion is only limited to the case of Turkey, hence this paper does not provide a comparative perspective that can be used to explore historical and political conditions behind the emergence of developmentalist narratives. Answering these questions is necessary to evaluate the full extent of political narratives' influence.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This dissertation relies on political psychology literature to explain the role voters' feelings play during periods of democratic backsliding. In combining two distinct fields of study, political psychology and political regimes, it offers novel insights in both areas. In this last chapter, I summarize the contribution of this dissertation, and I suggest directions for future research. The chapter is organized around three themes: Affective political ties as an umbrella concept, taking context into consideration when studying political affects, and democracy and political affects.

6.1 Affective political ties as an umbrella concept

Political science literature has largely shaped around the assumption of rational voters. Until the last two decades, emotions did not have a place even in the political psychology literature (Brader and Marcus, 2013). As a result of this, our knowledge on the role of affects in politics stays limited. An especially important shortcoming is that most of the literature is limited to the context of advanced democracies. This dissertation extends the geographical and substantial focus in the political psychology literature. As we climb the ladder of abstraction, however, it is necessary to develop new terms that can travel across countries and contexts.

In order to develop a broader framework to study affective politics, I offered to use “affective political ties” as an umbrella concept. As explained in Chapter 1, this concept brings together all forms of psychological attachments that include positive or negative valence towards a political actor, be it a political party or a

leader. Affective political ties should be contrasted to clientelistic, ideological, or programmatic political ties, which are all characterized with a transactional logic and material expectations from the political actor.

“Affective political ties” refers to a broad range of affective attachments, and it is necessary to study how these attachments are related to each other as well. An important distinction between affective political ties is the object of affective attachment. In this dissertation, I studied affective *partisan* ties: partisan identities, partisan emotions, and affective polarization. However, affective ties to the leader, which is called *charismatic ties*, also play a significant political role, especially in countries with less developed party systems. Chapter 5, in which I explore origins of partisan ties, offers some insights on the relationship between charismatic ties and partisan ties. Analysis of video recordings demonstrate that when AKP supporters refer to Erdogan, they express a higher level of affective arousal, compared to their references to the AKP. It might be the case that charismatic ties in Turkey underlie partisan affects that we have discussed in the context of Turkey. We need more research to reveal how partisan and personalistic affective ties are related to each other.

6.2 Taking the context into consideration when studying political affects

As mentioned above, the existing literature on emotions and partisan identities have mainly been limited to the context of advanced democracies. Yet, these countries have unique political and institutional features, such as well-established party systems and liberal democratic institutions guaranteeing minority rights. A necessary task ahead of us is to explore how political, social, and institutional contexts shape the effects of affective political ties. This dissertation offers important insights in this sense.

In Chapter 2, I demonstrated how partisan emotions can lead to support for executive aggrandizement among incumbent voters, even when these voters still prefer democratic regimes over autocratic ones. Importantly, however, our analysis in Chapter 3 demonstrated that this finding does not travel to Bolivia, another case of attempted executive aggrandizement. I explained this difference with respect to the difference in the strength of partisan identification across countries, arguing that existing partisan ties makes the evocation of partisan emotions easier, which then have unique effects on individuals' reasoning during periods of democratic erosion. This comparison demonstrates that we should be careful when generalizing from survey experiments, and findings should always be contextualized. Turkey is currently one of the most affectively polarized countries in the world (Lauka *et al.*, 2018), with levels of partisanship higher than the oldest democracies (Laebens and Öztürk, 2020). The current intensity of the affective ties in Turkey makes it easier to evoke consequential emotional reactions from voters.

This finding is in line with what Phoenix (2019) shows through the comparison of racial groups in the United States: groups can differ in whether they will react to certain stimulus in an emotional way and what kind of political behaviors their emotional reaction will lead to. Emotional reactions are built on enduring collective goals, expectations, and narratives. As we study affective reactions across different countries, there is no reason to assume that we will reach straightforward universal generalizations. Instead, we should constantly explore how contextual factors condition the effects of affective political ties. This is not an easy task. Few cross-national surveys include survey items that can be used to study affective political ties in depth, and statistical tests that include interaction effects require large sample sizes that are difficult to collect in less developed countries. Still, political scientists do need to take the context into account before making any kinds of general inferences about affective

ties.

Chapter 4 also offered important insights on the role of context in shaping the relationship between the strength of affective political ties and democratic erosion. Unlike Chapter 2 and 3, this chapter relied on the analysis of aggregate data from more than 50 countries. This allowed us to take into account the role of institutional and aggregate level variables as well. First, our analysis in this chapter demonstrated that mass affective politics harm democracies only when voters are polarized over their feelings to the incumbent party. Affective polarization towards the opposition party does not have the same influence with affective polarization towards the incumbent party. Another interesting finding from this chapter was the role of constraints on the executive. Ideological polarization leads to affective polarization especially when constraints to executive authority is weak. This finding suggests that one way to keep affective polarization under control is to establish a system of checks and balances that guarantee a certain degree of power-sharing among winners and losers of elections.

6.3 Democracy and political affects

Finally, this dissertation contributes to the literature on democratic erosion by documenting some of the negative impacts of affective political ties on democratic institutions.

The literature on political regimes, which explore questions such as democratization, democratic breakdown, and mass support for authoritarianism, have been silent about the role of political affects for a long time. Most scholars in the literature relied on economic explanations to understand these processes (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006; Magaloni, 2006), and only recently scholars are applying emotions to explore mass support for authoritarianism (Marcus *et al.*, 2019). My dissertation contributes to this emerging literature by demonstrating the need to focus on political affects to

understand the role of mass behavior during periods of executive aggrandizement. In Chapter 2, I documented that incumbent voters are more likely to support steps of autocratization when they feel anger at the opposition party or enthusiasm for the ruling party. When incumbent voters lose their enthusiasm, for example because they think about the problems the country is going through, they withdraw their support for aggrandizement. In Chapter 4, I demonstrated that when voters polarize over their feelings towards the ruling party, what follows is democratic decline.

My findings should not lead to the conclusion that strong affective ties are always detrimental to democratic institutions or that incumbents can easily manipulate partisan affects to promote their authoritarian agendas.

To start with the latter, there are strong limitations to the discursive power of incumbents. Chapter 3 discussed historical and institutional limitations in Bolivia, which resulted in weak partisan ties. Even in Turkey, however, the AKP government cannot always rely on partisan emotions to sustain its rule. Emotions do not last forever; human beings are quite capable at regulating their emotions and adjusting their expectations. Arguably, partisan anger can reproduce itself to a certain extent, through the incivility of partisan groups towards each other. This is especially the case when partisanship is rooted in deep social cleavages. A significant portion of the AKP supporters in Turkey were angry at the main opposition party because of the behavior of opposition partisans. Yet, the opposition party's political strategy during the last few years has been decreasing polarization in the country; the slogan of the opposition candidate in the Istanbul election was "radical love" (Esen and Gumuscu, 2019). In such an environment, the incumbent may find it difficult to sustain partisan anger forever. It may be even harder to sustain voters' enthusiasm. Building a bright vision for the future, economic development, domestic political victories and an aggressive foreign policy may help the incumbent to gain enthusiastic

support from voters, as demonstrated in Chapter 5. However, enthusiasm eventually ebbs away as people adjust their expectations accordingly. For example, Greene and Robertson (2019) demonstrate that the annexation of Crimea by the Russian state created an enthusiasm boost in Russia, significantly improving Putin's approval ratings. Yet, even the effects of this major event lasted for two years, and then completely evaporated.

We should also be careful not to conclude that we need a dispassionate form of politics to sustain the democratic equilibrium. To the contrary, opposition parties need to evoke enthusiasm and anger among their own supporters, especially under competitive authoritarian regimes. These emotions can substitute for the lack of material resources, and they can help mobilizing people against the emerging authoritarian rule. In fact, opposition parties in Turkey won local elections in Istanbul and Ankara despite the AKP's widespread use of state resources, mainly because they could imbue voters with a sense of enthusiasm and hope. Relying on these feelings, thousands of opposition voters voluntarily organized on the election day to prevent election fraud.

These two points lead to the conclusion that affective political ties can influence the outcome of executive aggrandizement in many different ways, and we should always avoid broad and hasty generalizations.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX FOR CHAPTER 3: MEASURING PARTISAN IDENTIFICATION USING CSES VERSUS LAPOP

As we use LAPOP questions to measure partisanship, there are two important points to keep in mind. First, the wording of the LAPOP partisanship question is not in complete fit with the theory of partisanship. The question is formulated as “*¿En este momento, simpatiza con algún partido político?*” This can be translated to English as “*Do you currently identify with a political party?*” If partisanship will be meaningful as a concept, we should assume that it is a stable phenomenon. This is why CSES questions include “usually” when they ask about party identification. By using “currently,” LAPOP questions may be shifting the attention towards current evaluations of parties. There is no reason to assume that, however, this form of the question necessarily underestimates the proportion of partisans.

Another issue to consider is that CSES surveys are fielded when partisan ties are at their strongest. These are post-election surveys, fielded several weeks after the election. Recent research has demonstrated that election cycles strengthen partisan ties (Singh and Thornton, 2019). LAPOP surveys, on the other hand, are rarely fielded right after elections. In this sense, LAPOP surveys will underestimate the proportion of partisans, compared to post-election surveys such as CSES or ANES.

To have a sense of the difference in terms of outcomes, I compare partisanship proportions in countries included in both surveys in Table [A.1](#) on the next page.

Table A.1: CSES - LAPOP comparison

Country	Percentage of Partisans (Survey Year)					
Argentina (CSES)						42 (2015)
Argentina (LAPOP)				26 (2014)		20 (2016-17)
Brazil (CSES)	33 (2006)			48 (2010)		25 (2014)
Brazil (LAPOP)	34 (2006)			31 (2010)		23 (2014)
Chile (CSES)	35 (2005)				26 (2009)	
Chile (LAPOP)		26 (2006)	21 (2008)			10 (2010)
Mexico (CSES)	56 (2006)			56 (2009)		45 (2012)
Mexico (LAPOP)	49 (2006)	32 (2008)			29 (2010)	36 (2012)
Peru (CSES)	39 (2006)			48 (2011)		37 (2016)
Peru (LAPOP)	30 (2006)	21 (2010)			16 (2012)	16 (2016-7)
Uruguay				77 (2009)		
Uruguay (LAPOP)		50 (2008)			66(2010)	
<i>Turkey</i> (CSES)		72 (2011)			73 (2015)	
<i>Bolivia</i> (LAPOP)	27 (2008)	33 (2010)	16 (2012)	26 (2014)	17 (2016)	19 (2019)

Table A.1 clearly demonstrates that LAPOP surveys underestimate the proportion of partisans. However, this difference is not large, especially if both surveys are conducted in the election year. In Mexico, Peru, and Brazil, where several LAPOP surveys are conducted in election years, the difference is less than 10 points, with the exception of 2010 elections in Brazil.

2014 and 2019 LAPOP surveys in Bolivia were conducted in election years, which means that we can expect margin of difference between CSES and LAPOP to be lower. Furthermore, the proportion of partisans in Bolivia is quite low, even when we take into account the difference between LAPOP and CSES surveys. In no other LAPOP surveys, we see a proportion lower than 20 % in an election year, as it is the case in Bolivia in 2019. This gives confidence about my claims in Chapter 3, regarding the weakness of partisan ties in Bolivia.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX FOR CHAPTER 3: MEASURING ANGER TO OPPOSITION CANDIDATE

The survey experiment in Chapter 3 manipulated partisan emotions towards the “right-wing political parties and politicians” in Bolivia. It might be argued that the presidential nature of Bolivian political system requires attention to opposition’s presidential candidates too. Due to this concern, I collected another sample, in which I manipulated emotions towards the opposition’s main candidate in the presidential election of 2019, Carlos Mesa. As such, Table B.1 presents results of the regression model testing whether the anger treatment has successfully manipulated partisan emotions towards Carlos Mesa among incumbent party voters in Bolivia. We do not see a statistically significant effect for any of the emotions.

Table B.1: Manipulation check: Manipulating anger to the opposition candidate in Bolivia

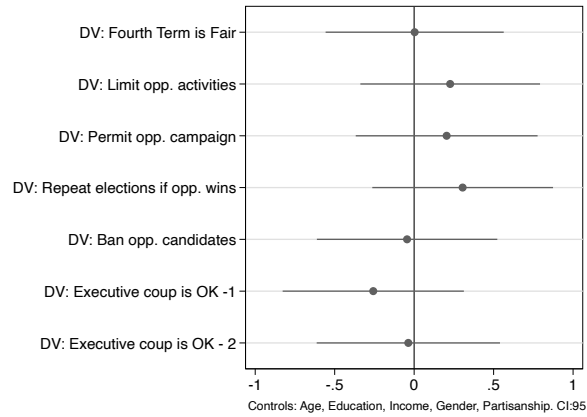
	Anger	Anger (Full model)	Fear	Fear (Full model)	Enthusiasm	Enthusiasm (Full Model)
Treatment: Anger to Opposition	1.514	1.423	0.0213	0.107	-0.318	-0.448
<i>Base: Daily Routine</i>	(0.056)	(0.080)	(0.976)	(0.882)	(0.732)	(0.619)
<i>N</i>	173	167	173	167	172	167

p-values in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure B.1 presents results of the regression model testing this treatment's effect on support for authoritarianism. Results are the same with those presented in Chapter 3: the treatment does not have any effect on support for the incumbent's authoritarian agenda.

Figure B.1: Effects of anger towards opposition candidate on attitudes towards autocratization in Bolivia



APPENDIX C

APPENDIX FOR CHAPTER 4: ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

In this section, I presents results of the regression models used as robustness checks for the analysis in Chapter 4.

In the first robustness check, I use Polity and Freedom House scores as dependent variable, instead of electoral democracy index from V-Dem. The negative effect of affective polarization over the incumbent becomes even more substantial and significant with these dependent variables.

In Robustness Check 2, I use different temporal specifications in the dynamic model. Rather than regressing democracy scores at $t+3$ over democracy scores at $t-1$, I regressed democracy scores at $t+2$ over democracy scores at $t-1$, democracy scores at $t+3$ over democracy scores at t , and democracy score over $t+4$ over democracy score at t . The effect of affective polarization over the incumbent is weakest, in terms of coefficient size, when we attempt to predict democracy score at $t+2$. This must be because the negative effects have not yet accumulated enough by the end of the second year after elections. Even in this case, however, all models are significant at 0.05 significance level.

In Robustness Check 3, I use a slightly different operationalization of affective polarization over the incumbent. Rather than defining extreme feelings as 0, 1, 9, and 10, I defined extreme values as 0, 1, 2, 8, 9, and 10. This operationalization is the same with Lauka *et al.* (2018)'s operationalization. Coefficient sizes of incumbent polarization score are slightly smaller because this operationalization is less successful at distinguishing extremely polarized voters from moderate voters. However, coefficients are still significant at 0.01 significance level across all three models.

Robustness Check 1: Different Measures of Democracy as Dependent Variables

	Polity at t+3	Polity at t+3	Polity at t+3	FH at t+3	FH at t+3	FH at t+3
Polity at t-1	0.43*** (0.07)	0.45*** (0.07)	0.36*** (0.08)			
Incumbent Polarization	-0.36*** (0.08)	-0.39*** (0.09)	-0.38*** (0.09)	-0.25*** (0.05)	-0.28*** (0.05)	-0.23*** (0.05)
Regime Age	0.11 (0.13)	0.10 (0.12)	0.13 (0.15)	0.05 (0.07)	0.09 (0.08)	0.09 (0.09)
GDP per capita	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.18 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.07)	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.05 (0.08)
Party Fragmentation		-0.15 (0.11)			-0.13* (0.06)	
Presidentialism		0.20 (0.11)			0.11 (0.06)	
Proportional System		0.13 (0.10)			0.19** (0.06)	
Ethnic Fractionalization			-0.15 (0.12)			-0.16* (0.07)
Religious Fractionalization			0.22 (0.11)			0.13 (0.07)
Population			-0.13 (0.11)			-0.09 (0.07)
FH at t-1				0.66*** (0.06)	0.62*** (0.06)	0.55*** (0.06)
Observations	119	119	118	131	130	130

Standard errors in parentheses
 * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Robustness Check 2: Different Temporal Specifications

	Democracy at t+2	Democracy at t+2	Democracy at t+3	Democracy at t+3	Democracy at t+3	Democracy at t+4	Democracy at t+4	Democracy at t+4
Incumbent Polarization	-0.12** (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.09* (0.04)	-0.24*** (0.05)	-0.27*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.27*** (0.06)	-0.23*** (0.06)
Regime Age	0.09 (0.12)	0.11 (0.12)	0.08 (0.12)	0.16 (0.11)	0.19 (0.11)	0.19 (0.12)	0.19 (0.14)	0.17 (0.15)
GDP per capita	0.03 (0.07)	0.03 (0.07)	0.02 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.08)	0.02 (0.09)	-0.01 (0.09)
Democracy at t-1	0.38*** (0.05)	0.34*** (0.05)	0.34*** (0.05)					
Party Fragmentation		-0.14** (0.05)			-0.17* (0.07)			-0.12 (0.08)
Presidentialism		0.06 (0.08)			0.14 (0.08)			0.12 (0.10)
Proportional System		-0.01 (0.07)			0.16* (0.08)			0.12 (0.09)
Ethnic Fractionalization			-0.22* (0.10)			-0.22* (0.10)		-0.28* (0.12)
Religious Fractionalization			0.21* (0.10)			0.16 (0.10)		0.22 (0.12)
Population			-0.16 (0.10)			-0.13 (0.10)		-0.12 (0.12)
Democracy at t				0.40*** (0.06)	0.42*** (0.06)	0.33*** (0.06)	0.21*** (0.06)	0.25*** (0.06)
Observations	139	138	137	132	131	130	125	123

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Robustness Check 3: Incumbent Polarization Differently Measured			
	Democracy at t+3	Democracy at t+3	Democracy at t+3
Democracy at t-1	0.47*** (0.10)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.40*** (0.08)
Incumbent Polarization	-0.18*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.14** (0.05)
Regime Age	0.17 (0.12)	0.17 (0.11)	0.19 (0.12)
GDP per capita	-0.01 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.08)
Party Fragmentation		-0.13 (0.07)	
Presidentialism		0.14 (0.09)	
Proportional System		0.13 (0.08)	
Ethnic Fractionalization			-0.20* (0.10)
Religious Fractionalization			0.15 (0.09)
Population			-0.14 (0.09)
Observations	132	131	130

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

In Robustness Check 4 and 5, I use different statistical models. In the fourth robustness check, I cluster standard errors, instead of a mixed effects model. This reduces the statistical power of the model. Incumbent polarization score is significant in only one out of three models; other polarization variables are not significant in any of the models. Still, affective polarization over the incumbent seems to be a better predictor than other polarization variables.

In Robustness Check 5, I use a fixed effects model. This is a more conservative test because it limits variation to observations from the same country. This model has a lower explanatory power to explain the lagged dependent variable since the variation is limited to within case analysis. Even in this model, we find that the affective polarization over the incumbent is significant at 0.01 level. Effect sizes range from -0.16 to -0.21.

Robustness Check 4 (Clustering Standard Errors): Effects over Democracy Scores at t + 3

	Basic1	Basic2	Basic3	Basic4	Inst1	Inst2	Inst3	Inst4	Social1	Social2	Social3	Social4
Democracy at t-1	0.76*** (0.000)	0.80*** (0.000)	0.80*** (0.000)	0.71*** (0.000)	0.77*** (0.000)	0.80*** (0.000)	0.79*** (0.000)	0.71*** (0.000)	0.72*** (0.000)	0.79*** (0.000)	0.76*** (0.000)	0.68*** (0.000)
Regime Age	0.05* (0.033)	0.03 (0.284)	0.04 (0.130)	0.02 (0.332)	0.06 (0.396)	0.05 (0.387)	0.06 (0.348)	0.04 (0.407)	0.06 (0.082)	0.04 (0.343)	0.07 (0.104)	0.03 (0.420)
GDP per capita	-0.01 (0.817)	0.07 (0.205)	0.04 (0.396)	0.05 (0.243)	0.01 (0.927)	0.09 (0.170)	0.05 (0.373)	0.07 (0.154)	-0.03 (0.696)	0.05 (0.361)	0.01 (0.888)	0.05 (0.310)
Incumbent Polarization	-0.12 (0.126)				-0.17* (0.020)				-0.11 (0.308)			
Party System Polarization		0.01 (0.816)				0.00 (0.997)				-0.04 (0.504)		
Mass Affective Polarization			-0.04 (0.372)				-0.06 (0.309)				-0.06 (0.229)	
Mass Ideological Polarization				-0.11 (0.107)				-0.08 (0.181)				-0.11 (0.102)
Party Fragmentation					-0.10* (0.039)	-0.13* (0.039)	-0.15* (0.018)	-0.10 (0.097)				
Presidentialism					0.22* (0.041)	0.13 (0.104)	0.12 (0.123)	0.08 (0.161)				
Proportional System					0.13 (0.185)	0.15 (0.125)	0.17 (0.131)	0.12 (0.170)				
Ethnic Fractionalization									-0.05 (0.415)	-0.01 (0.848)	-0.02 (0.701)	0.03 (0.643)
Religious Fractionalization									0.05 (0.343)	0.02 (0.773)	0.02 (0.768)	-0.01 (0.798)
Population									-0.05 (0.198)	-0.08 (0.146)	-0.07 (0.108)	-0.04 (0.232)
Observations	132	142	141	144	131	141	141	143	130	140	139	142

p-values in parentheses * *p* < 0.05, ** *p* < 0.01, *** *p* < 0.001. All values are standardized.

Robustness Check 5 (Fixed Effect Model): Effects over Democracy Scores at t+3

	Basic1	Basic2	Basic3	Basic4	Inst1	Inst2	Inst3	Inst4	Social1	Social2	Social3	Social4
Democracy at t-1	0.18** (0.07)	0.07 (0.05)	0.19** (0.07)	0.14** (0.04)	0.16* (0.06)	0.06 (0.05)	0.19** (0.07)	0.13** (0.04)	0.18** (0.07)	0.08 (0.05)	0.19** (0.07)	0.14*** (0.04)
Regime Age	0.22 (0.37)	-0.48 (0.32)	0.13 (0.38)	-0.47 (0.24)	0.52 (0.38)	-0.34 (0.34)	0.24 (0.39)	-0.34 (0.25)	0.34 (0.39)	-0.22 (0.35)	0.31 (0.40)	-0.50 (0.26)
GDP per capita	-0.10 (0.12)	0.05 (0.11)	-0.16 (0.13)	0.06 (0.08)	-0.18 (0.12)	0.02 (0.11)	-0.17 (0.13)	0.03 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.12)	0.02 (0.11)	-0.17 (0.13)	0.06 (0.08)
Incumbent Polarization	-0.17** (0.06)				-0.21*** (0.05)				-0.16** (0.06)			
Party System Polarization		0.02 (0.05)				-0.01 (0.05)				0.01 (0.05)		
Mass Affective Polarization			0.04 (0.06)				-0.06 (0.07)				0.04 (0.06)	
Mass Ideological Polarization				0.14** (0.04)				0.11 (0.05)				0.14** (0.04)
Party Fragmentation					-0.22** (0.07)	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.22* (0.09)	-0.11* (0.05)				
Presidentialism					-0.01 (0.13)	0.00 (.)	0.02 (0.14)	0.00 (.)				
Proportional System					-0.22 (0.13)	-0.26 (0.14)	-0.25 (0.14)	-0.17 (0.09)				
Ethnic Fractionalization									0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)
Religious Fractionalization									0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)
Population									-0.42 (0.42)	-0.93 (0.49)	-0.65 (0.42)	0.09 (0.27)
Observations	132	142	141	144	131	141	141	143	130	140	139	142

Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Robustness check 6, presented on this page, uses clustered standard errors, rather than a mixed effects model, to test determinants of incumbent polarization. Results are similar to Figure 4.6 in Chapter 4. The interaction of party system polarization with executive constraints and legislative constraint variables are significant at 0.01 significance level. The interaction between party system polarization and judicial constraint, on the other hand, has a p value of 0.076.

Robustness Check 6 (Clustered Standard Errors): Determinants of Incumbent Polarization			
	IP	IP	IP
GDP per capita	-0.040** (0.009)	-0.035** (0.010)	-0.028** (0.007)
Regime Age	0.011 (0.007)	0.009 (0.008)	0.011 (0.007)
Presidentialism	0.012 (0.008)	0.018 (0.010)	0.010 (0.010)
Proportional System	-0.001 (0.009)	-0.005 (0.009)	0.001 (0.008)
Party Fragmentation	-0.002 (0.008)	0.001 (0.007)	-0.003 (0.008)
Ethnic Fractionalization	0.015 (0.010)	0.013 (0.010)	0.010 (0.010)
Religious Fractionalization	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.003 (0.010)
Population	0.013 (0.008)	0.007 (0.008)	0.017 (0.010)
Party System Polarization	0.138** (0.044)	0.113*** (0.028)	0.107* (0.047)
Constraints (Polity)	0.028 (0.014)		
Party System Polarization # Constraints (Polity)	-0.017** (0.006)		
Legislative Constraints		0.218 (0.115)	
Party System Polarization # Legislative Constraints		-0.112** (0.033)	
Judicial Constraints			0.018 (0.130)
Party System Polarization # Judicial Constraints			-0.097 (0.054)
Observations	128	134	134

Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX FOR CHAPTER 5: YOUTUBE LINKS FOR VIDEOS

In the following three pages, URL links and further information are provided for 30 videos that are analyzed in Chapter 5. This list was created on September 21, 2017. Some of the videos might have been removed from YouTube since then.

Table D.1: Videos analyzed for Chapter 5

1	Title of the video:	"OSMANGAZI KÖPRÜSÜ"nden Geçen Kamyoncu (Süper) :D
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNFH2JDkLbI
	Publisher:	Muhammet Türkyılmaz
	Publishing Date:	2-Jul-16
	Views	14498
2	Title of the video:	Osmangazi Köprüsü açıldı. Bizde geçtik. 01.07.2016
	Link	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBuyh6B1Dyo
	Publisher:	Her Telden
	Publishing Date:	1-Jul-16
	Views:	14286
3	Title of the video:	Orhan gazi körfez köprüsü ilk geçiş
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iiFzj7CGMYg
	Publisher:	ekrem karaduman
	Publishing Date:	12-Jul-16
	Views:	4462 views
4	Title of the video:	OSMAN GAZI KÖPRÜSÜ-2016
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXGUZiZYbRc
	Publisher:	Muhammed Bulut
	Publishing Date:	9-Jul-16
	Views:	427 views
5	Title of the video:	Osmangazi köprüsü süper
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA0aHUQUC4s
	Publisher:	Yasin Pamuk
	Publishing Date:	30-Jun-16
	Views:	419 views
6	Title of the video:	Osmangazi Köprüsü Vatana ve millete Hayırlı olsun. ZORUNA GİDEN GEÇMESİN DELİKANLI OLSUN
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kycqjaCwLM0
	Publisher:	Ahmet bayraktar
	Publishing Date:	7-Jul-16
	Views:	111 views
7	Title of the video:	Osman Gazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdpCyn3Igeo
	Publisher:	Mehmet Koşlu
	Publishing Date:	7-Jul-16
	Views:	77 views
8	Title of the video:	Mehter marşı eşliğinde osman gazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWlbe6o1Zp0
	Publisher:	Mevlut Guzey
	Publishing Date:	7-Jul-16
	Views:	151 views
9	Title of the video:	Osmangazi Köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEcBWp7lkh8
	Publisher:	Kafkas Kartal
	Publishing Date:	9-Jul-11
	Views:	52 views
10	Title of the video:	OSMAN GAZI KÖPRÜSÜ GECE GEÇİŞİ
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utbVb2aSIJw&t=119s
	Publisher:	Serhat Turan
	Publishing Date:	4-Jul-16
	Views:	856 views

Table D.2: Videos analyzed for Chapter 5

11.	Title of the video:	Osman gazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMr4.4NlgKo
	Publisher:	Abdulbasit Yazıcı
	Publishing Date:	Jul 4, 2016
	Views:	83 views
12.	Title of the video:	osmangazi köprüsü hizmetin hası
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRuNpR6Jt7g
	Publisher:	Nuh BEKTAŞ
	Publishing Date:	July 4, 2016
	Views:	293 views
13.	Title of the video:	osmangazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kW9jBU5f86Q
	Publisher:	yasin kambur
	Publishing Date:	Jul 5, 2016
	Views:	174 views
14.	Title of the video:	Osmangazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ48iKQAobQ
	Publisher:	Minişler ve Biz
	Publishing Date:	Jul 9, 2016
	Views:	42 views
15.	Title of the video:	Osman gazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JoWbiDhCQjo
	Publisher:	HAKAN BAŞ
	Publishing Date:	Jul 7, 2016
	Views:	32 views
16.	Title of the video:	işte osmangazi köprüsü mehter marşı ile :))
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YX2tleSW5eI
	Publisher:	Davut Ustun
	Publishing Date:	Jul 6, 2016
	Views:	204 views
17.	Title of the video:	Osmangazi köprüsü. Dombıra
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbgEY1MUMS0
	Publisher:	Ercan Alkan
	Publishing Date:	Jul 6, 2016
	Views:	233 views
18.	Title of the video:	TÜRKÜN KÖPRÜSÜ OSMANGAZİ KÖPRÜSÜ
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIZcms6vMI4
	Publisher:	Osman Demir
	Publishing Date:	Jul 7, 2016
	Views:	52 views
19.	Title of the video:	Osman gazi köprüsü onlar konuşur akp yapar
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BwrygWj1vlo
	Publisher:	Gülçin Sevgili
	Publishing Date:	Jul 6, 2016
	Views:	57 views
20.	Title of the video:	Dünyanın en uzun köprülerinden OSMAN GAZİ KÖPRÜSÜ ALLAH TAYİP ERDOĞANI başımızdan eksik etmesin.
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw3tt5jRXwQ
	Publisher:	şevket çalikuşu
	Publishing Date:	Jul 2, 2016
	Views:	47 views

Table D.3: Videos analyzed for Chapter 5

21.	Title of the video:	3 Temmuz 2016 OSMANGAZİ KÖPRÜSÜ
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYyvw0xsMuc
	Publisher:	RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN
	Publishing Date:	Jul 3, 2016
	Views:	108 views
22.	Title of the video:	Osmangazi köprüsü ilk geçişimiz
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKBzM-0KSRU
	Publisher:	uğur Kabil
	Publishing Date:	Jul 5, 2016
	Views:	26 views
23.	Title of the video:	Osmangazi Köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tS4K7TtVGN8
	Publisher:	mustafa topaloğlu
	Publishing Date:	Jul 5, 2016
	Views:	47 views
24.	Title of the video:	Osmangazi köprüsü
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pe5A5fepJZI
	Publisher:	zonguldak lı
	Publishing Date:	Jul 5, 2016
	Views:	77 views
25.	Title of the video:	Osman Gazi köprüsü instagram yalcincoban02
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ji4e3XLyVnY
	Publisher:	Yalcin Coban
	Publishing Date:	Jul 4, 2016
	Views:	142 views
26.	Title of the video:	Osman gazi köprüsü. Allah bin kere razı olsun bu millet için çalışanlara
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlRJdOWOZ1g
	Publisher:	Halil Gul
	Publishing Date:	Jul 4, 2016
	Views:	54 views (Unavailable)
27.	Title of the video:	RTY#Osman gazi#köprü#Mzl
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bo84lJh0miw
	Publisher:	Mehmet Zeki Lazoglu
	Publishing Date:	Jul 7, 2016
	Views:	84 views
28.	Title of the video:	Osmangazi koprusu neşet kara
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrwlZQNGHsw
	Publisher:	Neşet Kara
	Publishing Date:	July 4 2016
	Views:	287 views
29.	Title of the video:	Osman gazi köprüsü ilk görüntüler
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KdPs-y_sE5c
	Publisher:	Yılmaz Akar
	Publishing Date:	Jul 4, 2016
	Views:	85 views
30.	Title of the video:	OSMAN GAZİ KÖPRÜSÜ.
	Link:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sN_6OeayVEI
	Publisher:	özdemir ArıÇiftliği mehmet özdemir
	Publishing Date:	Jul 3, 2016
	Views:	619 views

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK

2020 - Present

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

School of Social & Political Sciences

Project DEMED: Democracy under Threat: How Education can Save it

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

2020

Ph.D. in Political Science

Dissertation: *The Affective Politics of Democratic Erosion: Explaining Mass Support for Executive Aggrandizement*

University of Essex, Colchester, UK

2014

M.A. in Ideology & Discourse Analysis

Boğaziçi University, İstanbul, Turkey

2013

B.A. in Political Science & International Relations

High Honors

B.A. in Economics

High Honors

JOURNAL ARTICLES

“When Does Backsliding Lead to Breakdown? Uncertainty and Opposition Strategies in Democracies at Risk.” Co-authored with Matthew R. Cleary. 2020. *Perspectives on Politics*, Advance online publication.

“Partisanship and Autocratization: Polarization, Power Asymmetry and Partisan Social Identities in Turkey.” Co-authored with Melis Laebens. 2020. *Comparative Political Studies*, Advance online publication.

“Islamists Against the Class Cleavage: Identity Formation and Interest Representation in the Case of Hak-İş in Turkey.” 2018. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 54(3): 459-474.

GRANTS, AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Selected External Grants, Awards and Fellowships

Travel Award, Elections, Public Opinion and Voting Behavior Section of American Political Science Association (APSA). 2019.

Research Grant, Centennial Center for Political Science and Public Affairs, American Political Science Association (APSA). 2018.

Research Grant, Association for the Study of Middle East and Africa (ASMEA). 2018.

Short-Term Research Fellowship, Travel Grant, and Honorarium, Hoover Institution at Stanford University. 2018.

Jean Monnet Scholarship Programme, Grant Scheme Programme for Promotion of the Civil Society Dialogue Between the European Union and Turkey, 2014.

Selected Internal Grants, Awards and Fellowships

Best Graduate Student Paper Award, Middle Eastern Studies Program, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs. 2020, 2016.

Summer Research Grant, Program on Latin America and the Caribbean, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs. 2020.

Andrew Berlin Family Research Grant, Institute for Security Policy and Law. 2019, 2018.

Ketcham Award for the Study of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Department of Political Science, 2019.

Summer Research Grant, Middle Eastern Studies Program, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs. 2019, 2018, 2017.

Koff Award for Best Graduate Student Paper in Comparative Politics, Department of Political Science. 2018, 2017.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AT CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP), Annual Meeting. 2020, 2019.

NYU - CESS Experimental Political Science Conference, New York University. 2020.

American Political Science Association (APSA), Annual Meeting, Washington D.C. 2019.

Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), Annual Meeting, Chicago. 2019, 2018.

Turkey Today: Issues in Turkish Politics Workshop, Yale University & Columbia University. 2019, 2017.

Association for the Study of the Middle East and North Africa (ASMEA), Annual Meeting, Washington D.C. 2018.

Hoover Workshop on Authoritarianism and Democratic Breakdown, Stanford University. 2018.

Middle East Studies Association (MESA), Annual Meeting, Washington D.C. 2017.

Under Attack: The State of Democracy in Turkey, Invited Talk at Cornell University. 2017.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Barcelona Summer School in Survey Methodology, The Research and Expertise Centre for Survey Methodology (RECSM) of the Pompeu Fabra University (UPF). 2020

GESIS Summer School in Survey Methodology, Registered participant for 2020.

International Society for Political Psychology (ISPP) Summer Academy. 2020.

Political Psychology Summer Course, Central European University. 2019.

4th Leuven-Montréal Winter School on Elections, Université de Montréal. 2018.

ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods, University of Michigan, 2017.

TEACHING

Independent Teaching Experience

Instructor, PSC/MES 344 Politics of Middle East, Syracuse University, 2018.

Instructor, Qualitative Data Analysis, Summer Methods School, Kadir Has University, 2018.

Faculty Sponsor, PAI 690 Independent Study, Syracuse University, 2018.

Instructor, PSC 124 International Relations, Syracuse University, 2017.

Other Teaching Experience & Teaching Award

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Syracuse University Graduate School, 2019.

Teaching Assistant for Comparative Politics, International Political Economy, International Relations, Religion and Politics in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior. Syracuse University. 2014-2020.

Future Professoriate Program, Syracuse University Graduate School. 2016-2018.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Journal Reviewer, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Rethinking Marxism*.

Panel Organizer, American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting, 2019.

Discussant, Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Annual Meeting, Chicago, 2018.

Member of Conference Organization Committee, Issues in Turkish Politics Conferences at Columbia University (2019), Northeastern University (2018), Yale University (2017).

Member of Organization Committee, Summer School on Methods, Kadir Has University, 2018.

President, Political Science Graduate Students Association of Syracuse University, 2018-2019.

Founding Member, Northeast Working Group on Turkish Politics, 2017-2020.

Member of Sherman Social Committee, Political Science Graduate Students Association of Syracuse University, 2016-2017.

Officer of Academic Relations, Turkish Students Association at Syracuse University, 2015-2017.

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association (APSA)

International Society for Political Psychology (ISPP)

Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Languages Turkish (Native), English (Fluent), Russian (Intermediate).

Software & Tools Stata, R, L^AT_EX, ATLAS.Ti.

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