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The Politics of Legitimation in Authoritarian Regimes: A Multiple-case Study of Kazakhstan and Russia.

Dissertation submitted to preliminary debate.

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Introduction.

The need for coherent investigation of authoritarian politics governance has become evident since the start of democratic recession in 2006. By now the world has already been experiencing the long-term decline in democracy. According to Freedom House reports, around 75% of the world population saw deterioration in democratic processes.[1]

The role of modern dictatorships', their ambitions and capacity cannot be overestimated in modern world. Economic success of China which stays major autocracy in the world; persistence of monarchic autocracies (Saudi Arabia, Iran, etc.); the reversal of democratization processes like in Russia are conspicuously convincing of the rise of autocratic powers. Moreover, I believe that they are getting more unconstrained not only in their goals but also in their methods both in interim policies and international arena. These concerns have been voiced out by political scientists only recently, particularly, after several events that had shaken the world: the annexation of Crimea and the invasion of the Ukraine by Russia, attempts of the Chinese authorities to demolish Hong Kong's liberties and legal autonomy, Chinese activities in South China Sea, etc.

Unfortunately, today at the outset of the third decade of the 21st century, we should raise even more serious issues: the causes and consequences of authoritarian durability and actions of autocratic regimes on the international arena.

Academic researchers and experts of international organizations draw attention to the incidences of external support for authoritarianism.[2] Transnational repression as one of the tools to control citizens has become an issue of concern. Freedom House reports the widening of the patterns of transnational repression: family intimidation, renditions and assassinations, spyware and online harassment, coercion by proxy, mobility controls.[3] So, on the one hand, digital technologies enabled more opportunities for interference of authoritarian regimes. It is considered that the dictators' perception of the threat from exile opposition increased due to globalization of activism and digital communications. Exile opposition leaders, activists are able to engage in public life in their home country through social media platforms, reveal corruption schemes of the ruling elites, run campaigns for political freedoms and even organize

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[1] (Freedom in the World 2020. A Leaderless Struggle for Democracy. n.d., 1)
[2] See, for example, Levitsky and Way 2010; von Soest 2015; Ambrosio 2009; Cameron and Orenstein 2012.
[3] (Schenkkan and Linzer 2021, 4)

protest marches. Stark example is an exile politican and businessman M.Ablyazov currently living in France who was accused of extremism in Kazakhstan and sentenced to 10 year imprisonment. He founded Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan by announcement on his Facebook page in April 2017. His social media based activity instigated and organized numerous protest rallies in 2018 and 2019 all over Kazakhstan. Each time ordinary protesters were detained, fined or sentenced for administrative arrest of 15 days.

Multiple social activists and journalists had to flee from Russia. G.Kasparov former world chess champion, human-rights activist started The Other Russia Opposition movement in 2006.[4] Multiple times detained by police forces he fleed to the USA in 2013. Poisoned former intelligence services officers such as Litvinenko, journalists such as Karamurza had to move to European countries to continue their oppositional activities.

2021 Nobel prize winner from Russia, Dmitry Muratov, in his Nobel Lecture highlights the disheartening trends:

> The "philosophers' ship"[5] has been replaced by the "journalist plane". This is of course a metaphor, but dozens of journalists are leaving Russia.
>
> But some have been deprived even of this opportunity.
>
> Russian journalists Orkhan Dzhemal, Kirill Radchenko, Alexander Rastorguyev, were brutally shot in the Central African Republic where they were investigating activity of a private Russian military company.[6]

In spite of different interpretations of democratization in recent years, all political scientists confirm the backsliding of democratic processes by now. Thus, the importance of investigating dictatorships has undoubtedly crested by today. At the same time, there is an undeniable lack of academic research on autocratic political systems and configurations, particularly, in comparison to the plethora of literature on democracy.

Conceptually, I use the definition of authoritarian regime as *a political regime with or without competitive, multiparty elections where the principle of checks and balances is not fulfilled, alternation of power does not take place (one leader or a group stay in power for more than*

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[4] (Timeline 2014)

[5] "Philosophers' ship" – in the autumn of 1992 hundreds of intellectuals, writers, philosophers, academics were deported from Russia to Germany by ships in accordance with Lenin's orders for the reasons of having anti-Soviet activity.

[6] (Muratov and Ressa 2021)

two consecutive periods, various reasons can be discussed), no uncertainty regarding the outcome of the elections. The main point is about uncertainty and real competition in choosing leaders. Hybrid regimes with real competition and some uncertainty cannot be referred to as authoritarian. Consequently, not all hybrid regimes are authoritarian. Authoritarian regime, non-democratic regime, autocracy, and dictatorship are used interchangibly in this dissertation.

Authoritarian regimes are not just on the continuum from democratic to less democratic scale as it is traditionally presented by researchers. Here I emphasize that institutions in authoritarian regimes play a different role than these same institutions in democracies.

Core features of modern authoritarian regimes include quasidemocratic institutions meaning that they do not fulfil their classical functions as they do in liberal democracies. Moreover, electoral autocracies have rendered as the most common authoritarian regime today.[7] Democratic institutions are legislatures, elections, political parties.

It is important to add disclaimer that I investigate contemporary authoritarian regimes at the beginning of the 21st century. So, most frequent type of authoritarian regime today is a combination of elections (as a feature of democracy) with the characteristics of autocracy. It is also the reason to pay particular attention to the academic literature starting from the second half of the 20th century so that to account to most recent developments.

Also, these political regimes use coercion and coercive institutions: "Dictators use institutions first and foremost to craft collective compliance, and only secondarily to solicit policy advice or to offer influence in exchange for support."[8] Related to coercion is violence. Certainly, modern authoritarian regimes do not resemble totalitarian regimes of the 20th century. Guriev & Treismann (2010) use term informational autocracy to define modern authoritarian regimes. They notice that totalitarian dictators used systematic terror and killed millions. Today for for describing overt dictatorships they use threshold of only 10 killings or more.[9] Gerschewski emphasizes that while totalitarianism scholars emphasized terror and political ideology, studies on contemporary authoritarianism discuss socio-economic conditions, strategic repression, formal institutions like legislatures, elections, and parties.[10] Violence and repression are no longer the core of modern autocratic regimes.

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[7] (Kailitz 2013, 43)
[8] (Slater, 2010)
[9] (Guriev and Treisman 2018b, 10)
[10] (Gerschewski 2013, 16)

However, coercive capacity along with administrative and extractive capacities constitute three dimensions of state capacity. State capacity essentially is a synonym to institutional quality.

All three dimensions of state capacity are most closely linked to legitimacy of a particular regime. On the one hand, extractive capacity depends on regime's legitimacy. At the same time, administrative capacity and coercive capacity directly impact regime's legitimacy. So, governance may either increase or decrease legitimacy of a regime.

In a democratic setting institutional capacity means "the ability to formulate and carry out policies and enact laws; to administrate efficiently and with a minimum of bureaucracy; to control graft, corruption, and bribery; to maintain a high level of transparency and accountability in government institutions; and, most important, to enforce laws."[11] But in authoritarian regimes strong state capacity implies political prisoners, stronger control of freedoms of assembly and association. As I have discussed before violence, repression, and torture is much less of instruments of modern autocracies as it used to be in totalitarian and authoritarian regimes of the 20th century. Still, political prisoners, prosecution of grassroots activists is a threatening reality in authoritarian regimes.

I suggest that state capacity is a two-sided medal. On the one hand, it allows to develop and implement state programs effectively, on the other hand it curbs democratic freedoms.

The functions of political institutions are perverted. Democratic institutions in authoritarian regimes are not only used as a facade to present to the international arena. These regimes capitalize on these institutions to preserve their power.[12]

First glimpse on institutions in authoritarian regimes can be found in Boix and Svolik (2013). They confirm that the presence of institutions reduces political instability in dictatorships. Namely, authoritarian systems without legislatures are about three times more likely to be removed in a coup or a revolt than dictators with legislatures. Institutions serve as an instrument for co-optation.

Mostly, dictatorships require an institution that "stabilizes the deal made among rulers".[13] For example, often legislatures consist of subservient members. The overwhelming majority of which consists of the propresidential party members.

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[11] (Fukuyama 2004, 9)
[12] (Gandhi 2008; Levitsky and Way 2010).
[13] (Boix 2017, 10)

I find that there are several strands of literature on authoritarian regimes:

- Classifications or typologies of non-democratic regimes.

- Democratization: transition from authoritarian regime to democracy.

- Legitimacy and the durability of authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian consolidation.

- Relationship between a political regime and economic growth/economic development.

- The role of political institutions in authoritarian regime:

  - The role of multiparty elections in the survival of authoritarian regimes and prospects for democratization.

  - The role of dominant political parties in authoritarian regimes.

- Governance/public administration in authoritarian regimes.

- Contentious politics in authoritarian regimes.

Typologies of authoritarian regimes are important in the sense that they allow to highlight most outstanding features of political regimes. Levitsky & Way (2010) produced competitive authoritarianism concept and delineated them from hybrid regimes. Magaloni (2008) distinguishes hegemonic-party autocracies. Larry Diamond (2002) proposed a much widespread term of hybrid regimes, competitive authoritarian and hegemonic authoritarian. Most importantly, different types of non-democratic regimes are different in their degree of infrastructural power and patterns of state-society relations.

Classifications of political regimes are useful in terms of the fact that other scholars may delineate their objects of research to specific types of authoritarian rule to find out some specific features inherent only to these types. For example, Maerz (2016) investigated e-government in competitive and non-competitive authoritarian regimes and made a conclusion that e-government in competitive types actually functions for the benefit of citizens while e-government in non-competitive is used as a façade to gain legitimacy in the eyes of international donors and organizations.

Discussions of the longevity of authoritarian rule often include game theoretical approach, the analysis of strategic behavior of dictator and other political actors.[14]

There is miniscule amount of research on governance in authoritarian regimes: the overwhelming majority are case studies on specific regimes or geographical regions like the

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[14] See, for example, a path-breaking classification of political regimes by Geddes (1999).

Middle East authoritarianism, African countries, China. Term governance encompasses government quality or institutional quality. Governance, government quality, and institutional quality are used interchangeably in this dissertation. I find that with the spread of authoritarianism and its threats on the international arena it is vitally important to know the inner workings and mechanisms of these states.

Since democratic institutions for voicing concerns, voting, and expressing opinions are not working properly, people are taking it out to the streets. As a consequence, contentious politics role will be expanding in the future. People living in non-democratic states due to the global rise in access to information and knowledge will need more channels for raising their concerns and participate in policy-making.

My study represents an attempt to capture the features of contemporary authoritarianism by drawing upon case studies of Kazakhstan and Russia. Time frame for analysis is the period 2000-2021 because it allows to capture Putin's full presidential terms.

For sure, even two cases of authoritarian governance cannot help us understand authoritarian governance in general. Large sample size investigation of authoritarian regimes is unfeasible due to several reasons. There is a wide variety of non-democratic states starting from those with strong institutionalized countries like China and fragile and failed states like Congo, Zair. Ethnic compositions, political institutions, culture, economic indicators even in geographically and historically close states are very diverse. This warrants a researcher to control for multiple variables within a limited number of observations. The second reason is absence or extremely poor quality of statistical data on many fragile authoritarian states.

Usually, Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and the Caucasian and Central Asian are included in the region of Post-Soivet Eurasia.[15]

I subtracted a homogeneous subregion consisting of Kazakhstan and Russia. Russia, and Kazakhstan are categorized as hegemonic authoritarian regimes by the typology of Geddes (2014), Levitsky & Way (2010), Howard & Roessler (2006), as consolidated autocracy by the Freedom House. That said, they make the largest geographical region with autocratic ruling.

The similarity of the two states are supported by multiple statistical indicators. Besides, political events there follow the same pattern which is also analyzed in chapter two on authoritarian institutionalization and governance.

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[15] (Brusis, Ahrens, and Schulze Wessel 2016, 2)

In spite of the fact that these states are far from exemplary in terms of high governance quality, according to the 2018 UN cross-national study, Russia and Kazakhstan appeared in the list of countries with *very high* E-governance development index.[16]

Institutional capacity is similar in these states. The common communist history of these three countries and the demise of the Soviet Union defined that state-building took place almost simultaneously there: new similar government institutions created and similar autocratizing constitutional amendments adopted. In both states one leading propresidential party is dominant while other political parties can be regarded as additional adjuncts of the central authorities. Since democratization was unsuccessful in the overwhelming majority of post-Soviet region (15 CIS countries), I suspect that legacy played a huge role in this sense.

Another meaningful legacy of the former Soviet Union is the Russian language. Russian language is universally used in the capital city and northern, eastern regions of the country. For political communication and making speeches political leaders in Kazakhstan are still largely using Russian language.

Also, Kazakhstan and Russia fall under resource-abundant authoritarian regimes meaning oil-exporting and mineral resources rich countries. Resource abundance for these two states may appear to be an important factor of authoritarian persistence. The WDR 1997 describes how oil price shocks at the beginning of 1970's facilitated a greater expansion of state role in the oil exporting countries. Most importantly, "for the oil exporters they created a bonanza, which many threw into even greater expansion of state programs. As long as resources were flowing in, the institutional weaknesses stayed hidden."[17] So called "petrodollars" allowed for adequate economic development and autocratization of the state.

So, here we approach the next common characteristic of these two countries which is a dependence on natural resource extraction and exports. Undoubtedly, this endowment with natural resources allowed the rulers to get specific support (using terminology of Easton(1965)) by satisfying basic demands of citizens. Scholars conclude that resource abundance does postpone the autocratic regime breakdown.

Common feature of two autocracies is the genuine support of the leaders by the general public. For Russia, Vladimir Putin has been seen as a strong leader who was able to return Crimean

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[16] (UNITED NATIONS E-GOVERNMENT SURVEY 2018 2018, 89)
[17] (World Development Report 1997 : The State in a Changing World n.d., 23)

peninsula to Russia. According to Levada Center (given a title of "foreign agent" in 2021 according to the new "Russian foreign agent law"), one of three research centers, Putin's approval rating has kept around 70-80% during his first two terms of presidency.[18] In Kazakhstan, president Nazarbayev gained genuine support and love according to Isaacs (2010) which he highlights in "the Discourse of Charismatic Leadership and Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan".[19]

The only difference to account for is cultural predispositions. In Kazakhstan the majority of population is muslim exercising eastern cultural traditions with big families. Russian population in its majority profess Russian Orthodox church.

Popular support for autocratic regime at least at the initial stages of presidency may imply that the rulers use successful legitimation strategies or actually perform effectively by producing economic growth and social conditions.

My study is significant for comparative sciences because of the elaboration of the characteristics of post-Soviet authoritarinism: what characteristics they share and what characteristics they don't.

Last but not least, there is a gap in literature on Central Asian region which actually should be of high interest since it consists purely of non-democratic states. Literature on Central Asia is at the nascent stage since recently. Classical scholars pay attention in a very general overview, for example, referring to Kazakhstan as "near-tyranny" by Zakaria, Diamond (2002) mentioning that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan are hegemonic electoral authoritarian.[20]

Chapter 1.

The dissertation start with the description of modern authoritarianism and typologies of political regimes. First of all, I operationalize theoretical frameworks to determine the type of political regime in the analyzed countries. This first overview of political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia are based on studies of Geddes (2014), Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010), Levitsky and Way (2010), Howard & Roessler (2006), V-Dem Democracy Score, Global Freedom Score by Freedom House, and Polity5 project.

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[18] (Rejting doverija Putinu s 1999 goda. VCIOM, Levada i FOM — Rossija v dannyh [Rating Trust in Putin since 1999. VCIOM, Levada i FOM - Russia in data]. n.d.)
[19] (Isaacs 2010)
[20] (Diamond 2002, 30)

My research question in the first chapter was to investigate if different theoretical frameworks produce similar results in defining political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia.

So, case studies are used to illustrate the logic and plausibility of the theoretical framework for the analysis of authoritarian regimes.

Chapter 2.

In Chapter 2 I demonstrate how institutions are developed in authoritarian settings. Qualitative analysis of the political institutions along with comparative legal analysis provide answers to several research questions.

I argue that political leaders in both Kazakhstan and Russia have been devising similar political mechanisms to maintain in power. I provide comparative analysis of legislature on presidential competences. To specify, I argue that dominant party rule actually converge to a strong presidential power.

First of all, I attempt to locate Kazakhstan and Russia among other post-Soviet regimes on democracy-autocracy and quality of institutions scale. The analysis shows that Kazakhstan and Russia are very close according to their democracy-autocracy and quality of institutions indicators. Institutionalization processes have been very similar in Kazakhstan and Russia.

As a result, Kazakhstan and Russia possess a lot of common characteristics both in formal and informal institutions.

My novice conbtribution is presenting constitutional engineering in modern authoritarian settings using case studies of hegemonic authoritarian Kazakhstan and Russia.

Chapters 3.

In the third chapter I start with a review of theoretical approaches towards authoritarian governance in general. Scholars trace modern concept of governance to the 1980's when new forms of governing started to emerge in Great Britain, specifically. Most importantly, these changes implied the rise of participatory government.

Development scholars started a new strand of literature: using textual analyses to reveal governance styles of political leaders. Their dictionary is more than about communication style. Since governance concept stresses "institutional structures that shape how policies are formulated and implemented."[21]

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[21] (Olsen et al. 2021, 4)

Governance in the context of achieveing Sustaindable Development Goals is a large distinctly separate area which is closely linked to policy-making. Governance, particularly, in developing countries is closely analyzed by the World Bank within the realization of their developmental programs.[22]

The importance of governance is linked to the successful implementation of differentiated governance styles, i.e. mix of hierarchic, network, and market governance styles.[23] As a result, the concept of metagovernance emerged as combining different governance styles into a working and successful governance framework. Governance styles determine how they are achieved.

I conclude that modes of governance or styles of governance reflect the essence of the current approach towards governance. International institutes dealing with development issues emphasize the importance of network and market styles of governance. So, I incorporate hierarchic and decentralized modes of governance which comprise network and market modes of governance in my analysis.

Governance answers the question *how*? So, I begin with an assumption that *how* question should be revealed in public communication of political leaders – rulers or head of states are the ones who set the scene in personalist dictatorships and hegemonic authoritarian regimes. Public communication imply public speeches made by the political leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia. In my empirical analysis I use dictionary-based quantitative text analysis on the corpus of speeches of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia through 2000-2021. The literature on quantitative text analysis and the rhetoric of authoritarian leaders is at the nascent stage. It has acquired more attention since recently due to the development of automated text analysis methods. Laver & Garry's (2000) article is considered to be seminal in this field. It extracts the policy positions from election manifestos of political actors in Britain and Ireland: conservative or liberal position in the fields like culture, economy, environment, institutions, groups (women and minorities), and so on. In this example, researchers are extracting narratives and discourses. In chapters 3 and 4 I use dictionary-based content analysis on textual data which is a supervised quantitative analysis. It is based on bag-of-words approach. First, dictionary is constructed by

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[22] See, for example, recent reports by the World Bank Group (Piattifuenfkirchen et al. 2021; Thapa, Farid, and Cristophe 2021). There are numerous reports of this kind on each direction of the development programs across different countries.
[23] (Niestroy and Meuleman 2015)

pre-define key words. Multiple categories (or variables) are created within a dictionary. Words are counted per each category so the category is measured by the total frequency of key words and phrases. All analyses were made in WordStat9 software. Advantage of automated text analysis is the capacity to analyze large volumes.

Dictionary construction involves contextual interpretation and qualitative judgment of an author. However, reliability is achieved because there is no human decision making as part of the text analysis procedure.

To investigate governance styles and language styles of authoritarian leaders in Kazakhstan and Russia, I using the general scheme of dictionary developed by Maerz (2019). Substantially, I merge the literature on styles of language (as in Maerz (2019)) and styles of governance (as in Olsen et.al.(2021).

In chapter 3, I attempt ot anwer two main research questions:

1. What style of governance dominates in the discourse of political leaders of authoritarian Kazakhstan and Russia?

2. What style of language do the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia demonstrate?

Governance styles and styles of language of authoritarian actors are analyzed separately. Styles of language indicator includes the hierarchic and decentralized styles of governance within itself. Democratic style of language is determined by the ratios of decentralized and hierarchic styles of governance in the texts, the rations of liberalism values and power maintanence-illiberalism.

The core of this research is constructing and calculating Illiberal Speech Index and Autocratic Speech Index based on the frequencies of categories on hierarchic, decentralized styles of governance, illiberalism, liberalism and maintenance of power. ASI and ISI are designed to measure overall language styles of authoritarian leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia.

To reveal democratic or autocratic style of language I follow Maerz and Schneider (2021) and construct Illiberal Speech Index (ISI) and Autocratic Speech Index (ASI). This argument's core point is to rank the speeches of the heads of government on authoritarian scale.

The research hypothesis on language styles of political leaders claims that language style of authoritarian Kazakh and Russian leaders should not be different from democratic leaders. It is based on the theory of Guriev and Treisman (2018). They investigated the differences between old-style dictators (20th century totalitarian and authoritarian leaders) and modern autocrats.

Among other differences, they reveal that the language of modern informational autocrats' language is the same as democratic leaders.

In addition, I provide a qualitative comparative analysis of the speeches of the presidents of Kazakstan and Russia with the language styles of democratic leaders Barack Obama and Emmanuel Macron. For a full picture, I also compare with overt dictators of Josef Stalin and Saddam Hussein.

My analysis inquires whether difference between the rhetoric of modern democratic and hegemonic authoritarian leaders exists. On the other hand, I investigated whether modern hegemonic authoriatian Russian and Kazakhstani leaders share similarities with earlier overt dictators like Stalin and Hussein.

The data were collected meticulously by the author. To create a representative database for analysis I collected all speeches addressed to the general public, parliament (who are representatives of the general public), and other broadcasted live or televised speeches.

For texts from Kazakhstani leader, priority was given to the speeches addressed at the citizens in general, then the speeches to the Parliament, the speeches to the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, speeches to the newly created body National Council of Social Trust which includes social activists, civil society representatives, finally to the Extended Meetings with government. In total, I collected 98 political speeches of the president of Kazakhstan. Speeches by N. Nazarbayev were made during the period 2000 - June 2019. Speeches by K.Tokayev were made during the period June 2019 – 2021.

The textual data for the president of Russia includes annual national addresses to the Federal Council, Direct line with president, speeches made at the United Russia political party congresses, annual press-conferences of the president, inauguration speeches. In total, I collected 70 speeches of the Russian president. During the period 2008-2011 speeches were made by D.Medvedev. For the rest of the analyzed years all speeches were made by Vladimir Putin. Unsurprisingly, Medvedev made less public speeches during his presidency. Moreover, Putin continued with his annual Direct Line with regions that had been started during his first term: it was titled as the Direct Line with Prime-minister. Texts are attributed to the institute of president not specific persona.

The description of the corpus of speeches is provided in the Appendices section of the chapter 3. The same corpus of speeches were used for analysis in chapter 3 and 4. The textual data due to large volume can be provided upon request.

Chapter 4.

The importance of legitimating their rule for authoritarian leaders can also be analyzed in the language of autocratic leaders. Such leaders will focus their speeches on their unique historical way, economic achievements, and strong social policies. Comparing public communication of three leaders allows to see if the findings of the strongest authoritarian regime are following along with the leaders' rhetoric. For the computerized content analysis, I used WordStat9 software. Data and methodology are explained in detail in corresponding chapters.

Legitimation strategies influence autocratic resilience and durability. In general, legitimation of authoritarian regimes has become the topic of thorough research recently.[24]

Why do authoritarian regimes seek legitimacy? Because reliance on coercion and repression receives international condemnation and reverts international financial donors. International organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International make annual reports and ratings on violations of human rights, political prisoners, corruption, and so on. In addition, Beetham (1991) underscores that to maintain obedience coercion has to be omnipresent which is costly.[25] Repression is also considered to be a costly measure for supporting authoritarianism.[26] So, legitimacy is considered as a means of securing authoritarian rule at home. Gerschewski (2013) claims that legitimation is one of three pillars of stability of autocratic regimes. The rest of the two are repression and cooptation.

I examine legitimation strategies employed by tow autocratic states Kazakhstan and Russia. Legitimation strategies can be revealed through different pathways. The authorities may convey them directly through political speeches and political communication. Another, relatively new pathway are e-government websites and through official social media accounts. Both platforms for expressing legitimation strategies reveal official legitimacy claims proffered by the ruling elite. So, the sources are objective and clear.

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[24] (Burnell 2006; Kailitz 2013; von Soest and Grauvogel 2016, 2017)
[25] (Beetham 1991, 28)
[26] (von Soest and Grauvogel 2016, 19)

Empirical studies on legitimacy are a relatively recent trend. Gilley in the book *The Right To Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* attempts to measure legitimacy in 72 countries using surveys, analysis of violence in protests, voter turnout, and the state's use of easily avoidable taxes.[27] However, such legitimacy indices provide a lot of issues for debate. According to Gilley (2009), poor and developing states score lowest on the legitimacy index. Russia has the lowest legitimacy index in the period analyzed in the book. However, socio-economic development puts the country in the middle-income group. Most importantly, the beginning of 2000's exhibit high ratings of the president Putin.

More comprehensive empirical survey on legitimation strategies of authoritarian regimes can be found in von Soest and Grauvogel (2017). This is first expert survey on legitimacy in authoritarian regimes.

Language or political speeches turn out to be one of the best sources of legitimation claims of authoritarian leaders.

That is why I also use a computerized content analysis which requires building a dictionary. This study distinguishes seven categories of legitimacy claims: economic performance, social provision, governance, identity-based legitimation, defense, democracy and liberalism, international recognition.

Building on theories of von Soest and Grauvogel (2017), Tannenberg et al. (2021), and Guriev & Treisman (2019), I elaborate the following research hypotheses:

Research hypothesis 1: Economic performance based legitimacy plays the most important role in the rhetoric of Russian and Kazakhstani leaders.

Research hypothesis 2: Russian legitimacy is based on defence and military discourses more than in Kazakhstan.

In view of Putin's aggressive behavior on the international arena I suggest that he must legitimate his actions in front of his own people, that is why defence issues should be of high importance to him.

I add qualitative analysis to further illustrate the difference in legitimation strategies between Kazakh and Russian presidents. In addition, within my study I investigate how legitimacy claims change over time.

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[27] (Gilley 2009)

My novice contribution is in extending the toolkit of empirical approaches to measuring authoritarian legitimacy. Discourse of political leaders and political communication turn out to be one of the best sources of legitimation claims of authoritarian leaders.

One of the reasons is that the discourse propounded by a leader in autocracies is obviously broadcasted by state-controlled media, political actors subservient or just loyal to the ruling elites and further disseminated to the public masses. Essentialy, a personalist dictator defines legitimation strategies.

Moreover, mostly in closed autocracies and sultanistic regimes, the discourse of a leader is presented as ultimate truth. Multiple books, monographs and speeches are studied at schools. Excerpts and quotes of an autocrat are put on the walls of public offices as slogans. They are massively discussed by propagandist media, journalists and in talk shows. The examples are Turkmenistan, Northern Korea. Kazakhstan also paved the way towards personality cult. Children study the books of the first president at schools. Movies about the childhood, youth and maturity of the first president Nazarbayev are made.

Thus, my research is devoted to uncovering common patterns of and explanations for the developments of authoritarianism in post-Soviet regimes. On the one hand, my research will add value to comparative politics by quantifying authoritarian discourse. On the other hand, it will produce thorough understanding of the largest region with a persistent authoritarian governance (Russia and Kazakhstan).

Chapter 1. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks: How to Think of Authoritarianism?

1.1. The rise of authoritarianism.

By recently, society at large and political scientists, in particular, have gleefully observed victorious stride of democracy around the world. In his seminal book *The third wave: democratization in the late twentieth century* in 1991 Samuel Huntington stated that between 1974-1990 the world started to experience the third wave of democratization. In 1974, according to Diamond and Freedom House surveys, there were 39 electoral democracies which was only 27% of the existing states at that period; by the beginning of 1998 the number of democracies increased dramatically to 117, or 61% of the states existing at that period.[28]

However, since 2006 democratic recession started to show its signs: number of electoral and liberal democracies started to decline.[29] In the first decade of the 21st century scholars started to raise worrying issues about the reversal of democratization processes: among the most notable ones are Larry Diamond in 2008 and 2015 articles, Puddington et. al. (2007) in the Freedom House reports. In particular, Puddington noted in 2007 Freedom House report that authoritarian former Soviet Union countries systematiclly weaken pro-democracy forces, organizations, and movements.[30]

However, Levitsky & Way (2015) propose an alternative view that authoritarianism has never subsided in reality. In addition, the demolition of the Soviet Union did not imply automatic transformation of the constituent states into democracies. They claimed that:

> Many of the authoritarian crises of the early and mid-1990s did not constitute meaningful movement toward democracy. Numerous autocracies broke down because states either collapsed (e.g., Azerbaijan, Georgia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Zaire) or weakened dramatically (e.g., Belarus, Madagascar, Malawi, Ukraine). State failure brings violence and instability; it almost never brings democratization. Many other regime "openings" were, in reality, moments of extraordinary

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[28] (Diamond 2015, 99)
[29] (Diamond 2015, 99; Levitsky and Way 2015, 45)
[30] (Puddington et al. 2007, 3)

incumbent weakness, driven not by societal pressure for democracy but rather by severe fiscal crisis, state weakness, or external vulnerability.[31]

To conclude, whether the world has been witnessing an ominous backsliding to authoritarianism is a topic of heated scientific debates in political science, political psychology, and sociology. The role of modern dictatorships', their ambitions and capacity cannot be overestimated in modern world. Economic success of China which stays major autocracy in the world; persistence of monarchic autocracies (Saudi Arabia, Iran, etc.); the reversal of democratization processes like in Russia are conspicuously convincing of the rise of autocratic powers. Moreover, I believe that they are getting more unconstrained not only in their goals but also in their methods both in interim policies and international arena. These concerns have been voiced out by political scientists since recently, particularly, after several events that had shaken the world: the annexation of Crimea and the invasion of the Ukraine by Russia, Chinese activities in South China Sea, etc.

Larry Diamond (2008) emphasizes that: "Around the world, a backlash has gathered against international democracy promotion efforts, led by Russia and China, and such regional petropowers as Iran and Venezuela."[32] Puddington (2017) also emphasizes the role of Russia in media control, propaganda, rewriting the role of Josef Stalin in history books for political purposes, etc.[33] Walker (2016) marks that there is a clear threat from authoritarian states to the whole democratic world:

> Today, authoritarian regimes are projecting power beyond their borders. They are targeting crucial democratic institutions, including elections and the media. They use deep economic and business ties to export corrupt practices and insinuate themselves into the politics of democracies, both new and established. They are influencing international public opinion and investing heavily in their own instruments of "soft power" in order to compete with democracy in the realm of ideas.[34]

Literature on non-democratic and authoritarian regimes has acquired several peculiarities today. First of all, there are relatively few comprehensive empirical studies on authoritarian regimes.

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[31] (Levitsky and Way 2015, 51)
[32] (Diamond 2008, 12)
[33] (Puddington 2017, 2)
[34] (Walker 2016, 49,50)

Once such papers or books emerge, they almost immediately become seminal studies on authoritarianism.[35] *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* by Juan Linz can be regarded as foundational to the literature on authoritarianism. First published in 1978 and then republished in 2000, the book provides classification of political regimes, first of all distinguishing totalitarian from authoritarian regimes. Furthermore, Linz delineates and describes a particular type – sultanistic regime. In coauthorship with Houchang E. Chehabi, Linz dedicates a separate book to sultanism in 1998.

The analysis of political systems and political configurations is under the focus of comparative politics. So, the bulk of research is devoted to country case studies[36] or regional authoritarianism (e.g., Latin America,[37] Middle East[38], post-Soviet Eurasia[39]).

Second point is a numerous amount of overlapping terms for political regimes that are neither democratic nor completely autocratic. The presence of elections in a political system makes it tempting to call it democracy. However, for me as a citizen of authoritarian state, elections bear no meaning when administrative apparatus control most areas of life. This view resonates with the political scientists that are considered to be neutral or independent in Kazakhstan (and which are very few in number).[40] The halting nature of elections criterion makes room for a wide range of pseudo democracies. This multitude of names is sometimes confusing which also reflects the fragmentation of research. As was noted by Diamond:

> Few conceptual issues in political science have been subjected to closer or more prolific scrutiny in recent decades than this problem of "what democracy is . . . and is not," and which regimes are "democracies" and which not. We are replete with definitions and standards and tools of measurement. But the curious fact is that—a quarter-century into the "third wave" of democratization and the renaissance it brought in comparative democratic studies—we are still far from

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[35] Among most influential are Linz (1978) and (2000); Geddes (1999); Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014); Levitsky and Way (2010), (2002); Svolik (2012); Gandhi and Przeworski (2007)

[36] (Linz 1964; Heydemann 1999; Hildebrandt 2013; Gel'man 2015; Rodan 2003)

[37] (Diamond et al. 1999; O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 2013)

[38] (Bellin 2004, 2012; Heydemann and Leenders 2020)

[39] (Brusis, Ahrens, and Schulze Wessel 2016; Bunce and Wolchik 2011; Ó Beacháin and Polese 2012; von Soest and Grauvogel 2016)

[40] See, for example, Facebook post of one of the most famous political analyst in Kazakhstan, D. Satpayev, on the upcoming, 9th of June 2019, Presidential elections in Kazakhstan: https://www.facebook.com/dosyms/posts/2195316313890096 , accessed 10.04.2019.

consensus on what constitutes "democracy." And we still struggle to classify ambiguous regimes.[41]

My third remark is related to the fact that political regimes have been changing considerably today: the third wave of democratization first, then its reversal in recent years, the emergence of hybrid regimes. That is why, some aspects of research by earlier political scientists (1960's-1970's) render themselves obsolete in describing modern authoritarianism.[42]

Last but not least, there is a huge gap in literature on Central Asian region which actually should be of high interest since it consists purely of non-democratic states. Maximum attention to this region include, for example, referring to Kazakhstan as "near-tyranny" by Zakaria (1997, 23), describing these countries within worldwide classifications by the international organizations such as Freedom House, and in some research paper such as in Diamond (2002) where Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan are described as hegemonic electoral authoritarian.[43]

Before delving deeper into critical analysis of literature on authoritarianism in section 1.4, I define this notion so that to delineate it from other political regimes in the following section. Most importantly, this section investigates specific features of contemporary authoritarian regimes. For additional clarifications, a section 1.3. on terminology is provided.

The objectives of my literature review in the section 1.4. are manyfold. First one is to delimit the scope of the topics on non-democratic regimes. The second one is to present a systematic view of political science literature on what a democracy and authoritarian regime look like today. The third objective is to analyze most common classifications of authoritarian regimes.

1.2. Conceptualizing contemporary authoritarianism.

Democracy and democratization is considered to be a core issue of political science. Either democracy or autocracy, or something in middle, all of them are political regimes or political systems. Schmitter and Karl in a famous article "What democracy is … and is not" describe political regime as the following:

> *A regime or system of governance* is an ensemble of patterns that determines the methods of access to the principal public offices; the characteristics of the actors

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[41] (Diamond 2002, 21)

[42] See, for example, the use of universal suffrage as an important measure of democracy in Dahl (1971), a particular attention towards totalitarianism in Linz (Linz 2000).

[43] (Diamond 2002, 30)

admitted to or excluded from such access; the strategies that actors may use to gain access; and the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions… For the sake of economy and comparison, these forms, characteristics, and rules are usually bundled together and given a generic label. Democratic is one; others are autocratic, authoritarian, despotic, dictatorial, tyrannical, totalitarian, absolutist, traditional, monarchic, oligarchic, plutocratic, aristocratic, and sultanistic.[44]

The term governance has slightly changed its meaning since this formulation in 1991. Governance has evolved into *quality* of political arrangements such as responsiveness, transparency, etc.. Governance is further discussed in detail in Terminology section and chapter three.

Before moving into the investigation of non-democratic political regimes in depth let us start from the foundational level so that to be able to draw a big picture first. Two groups of political regimes can be drawn: democratic and non-democratic. Non-democratic is rather general comprehensive category which in literature accounts for everything that is not democracy.[45] Conceptualization of non-democratic regimes as a residual category is criticized by Gandhi (2008)[46] for masking the variety of non-democratic political regimes. Still, it is logical to start investigation into an authoritarian political regime from distinguishing democracy concept by elaborating on which countries can be classified as democracies and which not.

There are two alternative views on the concept of democracy. The first one is so called "minimalist" approach.

Minimalist concept of democracy was in a sense formulated by Schumpeter (1942) and was accepted by scholars as the basis for measuring and classifying democracies.[47] In his book "Socialism, capitalism and democracy" Schumpeter gives the following definition „the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's

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[44] (Schmitter and Lynn Karl 1991, 4)
[45] See (Gandhi 2008, 7; Przeworski et al. 2000, 18)
[46] (Gandhi 2008, 7)
[47] (Diamond 1996, 21)

vote."[48] Basically, the presence of elections has become the gist of democracy today. However, to be precise *electoral democracy* requires the following:

1. a competitive multiparty political system;

2. universal adult suffrage for all citizens;

3. regularly contested elections under a secure and secret ballot and the absence of massive, outcome changing fraud;

4. significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and open campaigning.[49]

Following the footsteps of many other political scientists I use the term *electoral democracy* to mean a minimal concept of democracy.[50]

Famous proponents of the minimal approach for analyzing democracies are S.Huntington (1974), F. Zakaria (1997), Przeworski et.al. (2000). Zakaria argues that

Of course elections must be open and fair, and this requires some protections for freedom of speech and assembly. But to go beyond this minimalist definition and label a country democratic only if it guarantees a comprehensive catalogue of social, political, economic, and religious rights turns the word democracy into a badge of honor rather than a descriptive category… To have democracy mean, subjectively, "a good government" renders it analytically useless.[51]

Zakaria separates democracy and constitutional liberalism which is "the rule of law, private property rights, and increasingly, separated powers and free speech and assembly."[52] That is why he uses the term *illiberal democracy* for elected governments where violations of human rights and freedoms are present. The advantage of minimal concept of democracy is its operationalizability.[53]

The second approach states that the presence of elections alone does not let us call regime democratic.[54] As Linz (2000) called them "non-democratic regimes with an electoral facade".[55] Linz criticizes this approach by claiming that at the turn of the 21st century: "New adjectival

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[48] (Schumpeter 1942, 246)
[49] (Brownlee 2009, 517)
[50] See also (Przeworski et al. 2000), (Merkel 2004)
[51] (Zakaria 1997, 25)
[52] (Zakaria 1997, 27)
[53] See (Zakaria 1997, 25)
[54] (Alvarez et al. 1996; Levitsky and Way 2015; Linz 2000; Merkel 2004; Schedler 2002)
[55] (Linz 2000, 38)

democracies are labeled "pseudo," "semi," "illiberal (electoral)," or "delegative"-but these terms are in fact being used to describe nondemocratic regimes".[56] Schedler (2002) continues critique on adjectival democracies stating that such regimes "violate minimal democratic norms so severely that it makes no sense to classify them as democracies, however qualified". [57] Moreover, Schedler (2002) continues by concluding that "These electoral regimes . . . are instances of authoritarian rule. The time has come to abandon misleading labels and to take their nondemocratic nature seriously."[58]

Levitsky & Way (2010) support the above mentioned authors: "Rather than "partial," "incomplete," or "unconsolidated" democracies, these cases should be conceptualized for what they are: a distinct, nondemocratic regime type."[59]

Robert Dahl laid out the theoretical framework of democracy in 1972 in his seminal works on polyarchy (real-world democracies in Dahl's language). He is definitely not among the "minimalists" because his concept of polyarchy requires a considerable amount of freedoms and pluralism. Dahl elaborated on eight institutional guarantees which constituted the main characteristic of democracy: "the quality of being completely or almost completely responsive to all its citizens."[60] Some of them are freedom to form and join organizations, freedom of expression, right to vote, etc.[61] The varying degrees of these freedoms can be used to classify and describe national political systems. In Dahl's opinion they form scales or dimensions: public contestation (public opposition or political competition, "the extent of permissible opposition") and participation/inclusiveness (the level of enfranchisement). Since universal suffrage was not widely present at that time even in a very democratized Europe, participation variable turned to be a very important one for Dahl. However, this variable is evidently obsolete nowadays with the presence of universal suffrage all around the world.

Using two-dimensional axes Dahl (1971) draws a graph that depicts four extreme types of political regimes:

- Polyarchies,
- Closed hegemonies (total absence of political competition and universal suffrage),

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[56] (Linz 2000, 34)
[57] (Schedler 2002, 36)
[58] (Schedler 2002, 36)
[59] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 4)
[60] (Dahl 1971, 4)
[61] For the full list of institutional guarantees see (Dahl 1971, 3)

- Competitive oligarchies (high public contestation but no inclusiveness),
- Inclusive hegemonies (high participation rates but the absence of competition).

All the area in between these four extreme regimes may include a vast diversity of regimes. Dahl didn't give names to all the possible combinations of political systems in order to escape redundant terminology. Thus, Robert Dahl was among the first ones to notice "gray zone" or "hybrid" regimes.

So, 114 countries were classified according to eligibility to participate in elections (percent of adult citizens eligible to vote) and degree of opportunity for public opposition (which is graded on scale from high to low based on the data from Arthur S. Banks and Robert B. Textor's *A Cross Polity Survey*). It is no doubt that due to universal suffrage worldwide, criteria on inclusiveness (participation) renders itself obsolete nowadays.

Dahl, Norling, and Williams on the date 1969 classified 114 countries into 29 polyarchies and 6 near-polyarchies and the rest.[62] However, while providing four types of regimes Dahl's (with Norling and Williams) work resulted in delineating democratic states from non-democratic without further elaboration on non-democratic ones.

Larry Diamond (2002) sticks to the neutral position that both approaches are useful. However, he concludes that today minimal approach includes wider requirements.[63]

So, what are the pitfalls of the minimal concept of democracy as described in literature? One of the objects under critique was noticed by Diamond: how free and fair elections can be identified and measured. To measure free and fair elections, numerous questions have to be analyzed, for example: "… what constitutes "fair, honest, and free" elections? How can we know that parties have had a fair chance to campaign and that voters around the country (especially countries as large and diverse as Russia, Nigeria, and Indonesia) have been able to exercise their will freely?"[64]

The second critique claims that multiparty elections do not manifest in constraints on the executives. As was addressed by Zakaria in 1997 and noted by many others: "Democratically elected regimes, often ones that have been reelected or reaffirmed through referenda are

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[62] (Dahl 1971, 246)

[63] For example, certain rights and freedoms, alternation of power as an indicator like in Przeworski et al. (2000), Linz (2000) and others.

[64] (Diamond 2002, 22)

routinely ignoring constitutional limits on their power and depriving their citizens of basic rights and freedoms."[65]

Consequently, multiparty elections in otherwise authoritarian regimes are basically used to serve two functions:

1. to "create a democratic façade for the regime and thus enhance its legitimacy";

2. to attract international investors and actors: "After the fall of communism, the language of democracy promotion became dominant among international donors, and this led numerous autocrats in the developing world to adopt elections so as to get access to international funds."[66] The most disappointing thing is that no progress has been noticed in such autocracies with electoral façade: "In the 1990s rulers were fusing plebiscitarianism and authoritarianism at an astounding rate, in the process defying expectations that they would soon adopt genuine democracy."[67] Thus, I can suggest that the democratization wave of the 1990's had not actually meant true democratization. Moreover, the signs of democratic recession appeared more than ten years before it was noted by formal measurements in Freedom House Indices.[68] Zakaria notices that the reason for the initial optimism about the democratic triumph born within the third wave of democratization can be found in the faulty assumption that democratic institutional design automatically envisaged all other characteristics of Western democracy:

> It has been difficult to recognize this problem because for almost a century in the West, democracy has meant liberal democracy – a political system marked not only by free and fair elections, but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property.[69]

Multiparty elections have become a routinized institute in modern autocracies. Moreover, since recently, literature on authoritarianism has gone one step further and started to investigate the role of multiparty elections in authoritarian resilience (stability and survival of authoritarian regimes). See, for example, Levitsky and Way (2010); Bunce and Wolchik (2011); Blaydes (2010); Edgell et al. (2018).

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[65] (Zakaria 1997, 22)
[66] (Magaloni 2008, 727)
[67] (Brownlee 2009, 516)
[68] See Arch Puddington's survey (Puddington 2007, 125)
[69] (Zakaria 1997, 22)

As a conclusion, I support the wider approach towards democracy. That is why the definition proposed by Fukuyama feels most comprehensive as it envisages the presence of functioning democratic institutions: "Liberal democracy is more than majority voting in elections; it is a complex set of institutions that restrain and regularize the exercise of power through law and a system of checks and balances."[70] This definition refers to democracy as a governance system. This wider approach, in my opinion, can describe modern democracy and modern authoritarian state much more accurately while being operationalizable. I have three arguments to support a 'thicker' concept of democracy.

First argument concerns the importance of elections in modern political life. Today elections are not the only way for people to participate in making decisions. Civil society have acquired a multitude of tools to affect and participate in political decisions. Information and communication technologies, the internet also extend the scope of tools for participating in public policy making even in non-democratic states: some autocracies are at the vanguard of developing e-governance.

Second, educational level of citizens has been rising up which impacts political participation and activism. Fukuyama emphasizes education as the first factor to underpin the upsurge of democracy since the late 20th century:

> This social mobilization was driven by a host of factors: greatly expanded access to education that made people more aware of themselves and the political world around them; information technology which facilitated the rapid spread of ideas and knowledge; cheap travel and communications that allowed people to vote with their feet if they didn't like their government; and greater prosperity, which induced people to demand better protection of their rights.[71]

All the factors are closely intertwined. Participation in political life within groups may turn out to be fruitful as people with common interests and professional expertise unite in constructive way, particularly, at the international arena.

Third argument is that democracy has a dynamic nature. Alternation of power is another condition by which researchers categorize a regime to be democratic.[72] In empirical research a

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[70] (Fukuyama 2011, 4)
[71] (Fukuyama 2011, 3,4)
[72] See (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010; Przeworski et al. 2000)

political regime is classified per each separate year. The advantage of accounting for alternation of power within certain periods of time is convenient for measuring and classifying democracies and non-democracies. In his research on the effect of political regimes on economic development Przeworski operationalized this factor: "Democracy is a political regime in which rulers are selected through free and contested elections. Operationally, democracy is a regime in which incumbents lose elections and leave office if they do."[73]

The above reasoning allows me to conclude that elections alone do not make regime democratic. Still, the presence of elections render to be the first and foremost feature of democracy.

Merkel (2004) substantiates a "thicker" definition of democracy and argues that a considerable share of electoral democracies as counted by Freedom House are actually not liberal. In 2001, only 58,3 percent of all electoral democracies in the world can be called liberal.[74]

Due to the global democratization processes since 1974, scholars started to pay unprecedented attention to hybrid regimes within the realm of democratic and non-democratic political systems. The amount of literature on hybrid regimes surged along with their numbers.

As Diamond noticed in 2002:

> First, more regimes than ever before are adopting the form of electoral democracy, with regular, competitive, multiparty elections. Second, many of these regimes— indeed, an unprecedented proportion of the world's countries—have the form of electoral democracy but fail to meet the substantive test, or do so only ambiguously.[75]

Magaloni also notices the spread of these hybrid regimes:

> After the end of the Cold War, hegemonic-party autocracies (Magaloni, 2006), or what other scholars call "electoral dictatorships" or "competitive authoritarian regimes" …, have displaced single-party and military dictatorships as the most common form of autocracy in the world.[76]

In my review I focus on the academic literature starting from 1960's, from Samuel Huntington and Robert Dahl, as, in my opinion, the features of modern democracies and non-democracies have started to manifest since that time period, the third wave of democratization.

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[73] (Przeworski 2004a, 301)
[74] (Merkel 2004, 36)
[75] (Diamond 2002, 22)
[76] (Magaloni 2008, 717)

The analysis of literature on political regimes shows that either "hybrid" regime[77], "competitive authoritarian"[78], "gray zone regime"[79], "defective"[80] democracy or other partial democracies: these terms largely emerged after 1990.

However, Diamond (2002) claims that today

> … Democracy is the only broadly legitimate regime form, and regimes have felt unprecedented pressure (international and domestic) to adopt—or at least to mimic—the democratic form. Virtually all hybrid regimes in the world today are quite deliberately pseudodemocratic, "in that the existence of formally democratic political institutions, such as multiparty electoral competition, masks (often, in part, to legitimate) the reality of authoritarian domination.[81]

Still, the confusion with delineating some hybrid regimes from others is hard to tackle. For example, Brownlee (2009) considers competitive authoritarian and hegemonic authoritarian types within hybrid regimes which clearly points to the presence of centralized power control particularly for hegemonic authoritarian types.[82] At the same time, a *political gray zone*, the term originating from Carothers (2010) describes only 'feckless pluralism' (Ukraine is the example), dominant-power politics and transitional countries whose "political trajectory is as yet unclear".[83] So, political gray zones are more loosely defined and substantiated exhibiting more of governance weakness than autocratization:

> They have some attributes of democratic political life, including at least limited political space for opposition parties and independent civil society, as well as regular elections and democratic constitutions. Yet they suffer from serious democratic deficits, often including poor representation of citizens' interests, low levels of political participation beyond voting, frequent abuse of the law by government officials, elections of uncertain legitimacy, very low levels of public confidence in state institutions, and persistently poor institutional performance by the state.[84]

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[77] (Brownlee 2009; Diamond 2002; Karl 1995)
[78] (Levitsky and Way 2010)
[79] (Carothers 2002)
[80] (Merkel 2004)
[81] (Diamond 2002, 24)
[82] (Brownlee 2009)
[83] (Carothers 2002, 14)
[84] (Carothers 2002, 10)

So, what does an authoritarian regime represent today? Following the logic of a residual category, I can conclude that it represents *a political regime with or without competitive, multiparty elections where the principle of checks and balances is not fulfilled, alternation of power does not take place (one leader or a group stay in power for more than two consecutive periods, various reasons can be discussed), no uncertainty regarding the outcome of the elections.* Hybrid regimes that do not display some uncertainty regarding election results can be referred to as authoritarian regimes. That is why I conclude that modern authoritarianism incorporates some hybrid regimes: it is justified to assess hybrid regimes case by case.

The essence of authoritarian regimes lies in two core concepts of political science: distribution of power and alternation of power. Alternation of power is directly linked to the certainty of election outcomes.

Although many political scientists (mentioned above in the discussion of the critique of minimalist approach) are against the minimal approach to democracy, they still use the adjectival democracy terms. Only in Przeworski (2000) I found a clear dichotomous approach to classification: either democracy or dictatorship. He argues that:

> And should we stick the cases that cannot be unambiguously classified, given our rules, into an "intermediate" category, halfway between democracy and dictatorship? That view strikes us as ludicrous. If we cannot classify some cases given our rules, all this means is that we either have unclear rules or have insufficient information to apply them.[85]

Also, I support the argument of Ezrow and Frantz (2011) that contemporary classifications of non-democratic regimes can be grouped into two: continuous and categorical. Continuous typologies of non-democratic regimes such as those by by Diamond (2002), Levitsky & Way (2010) and others are based on how "authoritarian" they are. Categorical typologies view all dictatorships as "equally "authoritarian" and instead focus on how they differ from one another."[86] Henceforth, it is widely accepted to use terms "dictatorship" and "authoritarian regime" interchangeably.[87] I will also stick to this maxim.

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[85] (Przeworski et al. 2000, 57)
[86] (Ezrow and Frantz 2011, 8)
[87] (Alvarez et al. 1996; Ezrow and Frantz 2011; Linz 2000; Magaloni 2008; Przeworski et al. 2000, 14)

Gerschewski (2018) uses the term *autocracy* as encompassing authoritarian, sultanistic, and even totalitarian regimes.[88] Obviously, they can also be referred to as non-democratic regimes. Although, they are more non-democratic than hybrid regimes.

As was noticed by Fukuyama, "A state without constraining institutions is a dictatorship."[89] The term *dictatorship* originally meant:

> … designating an extraordinary office limited and foreseen in the constitution for emergency situations – limited in time to six months, which could not be extended, or in function to carry out a particular task… Dictatorship as extraordinary emergency power limiting civil liberties temporarily and/or increasing the power of certain offices becomes hard to distinguish from other types of autocratic rule when it lasts beyond a well-defined situation.[90]

Today dictatorships grew into life-long autocracies. Actually, the classical understanding of autocracy can be found in Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965): "The ruler is not accountable to anyone else for what he does. He is the autos who himself wields the power, that is to say, makes the decisions and reaps the results."[91] I can conclude that dictatorship is a form of autocratic rule, while autocracy is an apogee of dictatorship. So, autocracy is also used interchangeably for authoritarian regime and dictatorship by many political scientists.[92]

The issue of the control of rulers by law and constitution has one of the longest histories in the world of politics. Vivid examples of autocracies are the Later Roman Empire, the tyranny of Greek city-states and in Renaissance Italy, and the absolutist monarchies of Europe (up to the 20 the mid-20th century) including tsarist Russia.[93]

Literature on the concept of authoritarianism is a kind of starting point on the one hand. On the other hand, it is closely linked to classification of political regimes and classification of authoritarian regimes. Scholarly research on the performance of political regimes in general, their classification, typology and measurement started to emerge from 1960-1970's.[94] While

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[88] (Gerschewski 2018, 662).
[89] (Fukuyama 2015, 13)
[90] (Linz 2000, 62)
[91] (Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965, 5)
[92] See also (Schmitter and Lynn Karl 1991, 13), (Magaloni 2008, 739), (Svolik 2012, 22),
[93] (Linz 2000)
[94] (Roller 2013)

first major measurements of democracy across nations were developed by Lerner (1958), Lipset (1959), Coleman (1960), Cutright (1963), and Banks and Textor (1963).[95]

Many attempts to classify and measure political regimes have been made since 1960's till present time. Not only academics, but also international organizations present their results to the public on global scale.

1.3. Terminology.

Comparative politics is abundant with concepts which have to be clearly delineated so that to be able to do comparative analysis. Political scientists love to construct notions which meanings overlap. Change of emphasis may push a scholar to create and use a new term. I will start from the very basic definitions vital for further research.

State. State represents a type of political order, a political system, or a polity.[96] The Oxford Handbook on Governance and Limited statehood (2018) approaches state from two standpoints. First one is a state as a set of functions it is supposed to perform. Second is a classical definition of state as formulated by Max Weber: "A compulsory political organization with continuous operation (politischer Anstaltsbetrieb) will be called a 'state' insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order."[97] So, monopoly to the legitimate use of force to enforce its rules has become the core point of the definition of state.

Pluralism is one of the important elements of democracy. Pluralism is used in its political sense as defined by Lijphart (1975) meaning "distribution of political power … many separate elites, rather than a single power elite, exert influence in many different problem areas."[98]

Political institutions. What do I include in the concept of institutions? According to the legendary Douglas North institutions are "the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social, or economic."[99] Institutions set the limits within which an individual makes choice.

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[95] (Bollen 1990)
[96] (The Oxford Handbook of Governance and Limited Statehood 2018, 5)
[97] (Weber 1978, 54)
[98] (Lijphart 1976, 2)
[99] (North 1990, 3)

Thus, *institutionalization* means rulemaking, developing best practices and changes in rule configurations. *Political institutionalization* covers rules and procedures in the political sphere which includes state activity, actions of political actors, etc.. Under institutionalization I imply both rules formalized by law and constitution and practices which developed informally.

According to Fukuyama (2004) institutional capacity includes: public administration, political system design, basis of legitimization, structural and cultural factors.

Also, I use term *autocratization* in relation to the "substantial de-facto decline of core institutional requirements for electoral democracy."[100] The process of autocratization should result in highly institutionalized authoritarian regime.

Slater develops theory stating that authoritarian institutions are fundamentally different from democratic. The very nature of authoritarian institutions can be distinguished in a way:

> Whereas democratic institutions serve to provide predictable patterns of representation, authoritarian institutions primarily serve to provide a stable basis for domination. The raison d'etre of authoritarian institutions is not to constrain "despotic power," but to supply a regime with the "infrastructural power" necessary to implement its command over potential opposition in civil society and within the multiple layers of the state apparatus itself. While democratic institutions serve to keep the executive in check, authoritarian institutions serve to keep political opposition under wraps.[101]

Slater notices that in democracies, specifically, in the USA democratic procedures are used to curtail the chief executive's power: presidential term limits, elections, judicial revies, advice and consent, judicial review, and federalism.[102] In authoritarian settings organizations and political actors are more important than procedures like, for example, in military, single party, and personal dictatorships.

In studies dedicated to nondemocracies often the term *political elites* is used. Since autocracies may be ruled not only by a single personalist ruler, but by a clique of people, the use of political elites is warranted. Even in case of a single dictator, political elites notion assumes people who make decisions or impact decisions so it may include close loyalists, friends, family, etc. I use

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[100] (Lührmann and Lindberg 2019, 3)
[101] (Slater 2003, 82)
[102] (Slater 2003, 86)

the term in relation towards the personalist ruler, government, people who impact decisions made by government (which can be dictator's close allies, family member, etc.). Authoritarian leader is the main representative of political elites.

One of the basic terms used in this dissertation is a *regime* that is why I will deliberate more on it in addition to the definition provided in the previous section which basically defined regime as governance patterns. Fishman (1990) highlights the distribution of power aspect of a political regime in his definition: "… the formal and informal organization of the center of political power, and of its relations with the broader society. A regime determines who has access to political power, and how those who are in power deal with those who are not."[103] To understand better the meaning of a regime, author refines that in totalitarianism, regime fully penetrates state. In personalist dictatorships and sultanistic types regime is entangled with state.[104]

Political regime in the interpretation of Linz implies the applicability of this word to authoritarian political system: "the patterns of allocation, use, and abuse of power in a polity. This encompasses more than the political institutions in a democracy and less than the comprehensive structures of domination in totalitarian systems."[105]

Geddes provides a concise definition of a regime: "sets of formal and informal rules and procedures for selecting national leaders and policies."[106] Again, a political regime encompasses governance issues.

Although, a political regime encompasses governance issues, the term *governance* evolved substantially. For the definition of g*overnance* I share the approach proposed by the developmentalist scholar Meuleman (2014): "The totality of interactions in which government, other public bodies, private sector and civil society participate (in one way or another), aimed at solving public challenges or creating public opportunities".[107] It envisages more technical issues and, thus, public administration. Chapter three of my thesis includes a table which summarizes various perspectives on governance from different international institutes. My preference towards definitions provided by the research centers and international institutes is warranted by their operationalizability. As these definitions reflect the constituent elements of

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[103] (Fishman 1990, 428)
[104] (Fishman 1990, 428)
[105] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 10)
[106] (Geddes 2003, 70)
[107] (L. Meuleman 2014, 2)

the concept which are empirically surveyed and measured. For example, World Bank with Worldwide Governance Indicators or governance for achieving SDGs.

Legitimacy in authoritarian regimes. Chapter three is dedicated to the study of legitimation politics in authoritarian regimes. Legitimation in democratic regimes are clear and transparent: free and fair elections. Some scholars claim that it is wrong even to say legitimate autocracy because such regimes do not rely on people's support.[108] It is more appropriate to say that legitimation in authoritarian regime acquires new various subtleties as opposed to legitimation in democracy. For example, Burnell (2006) among other factors define decent economic and social conditions as internal sources of legitimacy. As I have noticed in the introduction, modern authoritarian regimes do not use terror and ideology systematically as it used to be the case in the 20th century: "Today's autocracies cannot rely (at least in the long term) entirely on their abuse of power in a strictly hierarchical, pyramid-shaped political order as the unconstrained tyrants of the past..."[109] To put it simply, the power of the rulers has to be justified. So, I consider the definition by Kailitz explains it: "Legitimation implies the basic organization of the political regime, namely who has justified access to power; who is justified to select the government; and how and under what conditions and limitations rule is legitimately exercised."[110]

Legitimation produces desirable to autocratic rulers results: "Legitimation seeks to guarantee active consent, compliance with the rules, passive obedience, or mere toleration within the population."[111]

Authoritarian persistence or resilience directly stems from legitimacy. Heydemann and Leenders (2020) provide the following definition: "Authoritarian resilience refers to the attributes, relational qualities, and institutional arrangements that have long given regimes in the Middle East, institutionalized systems of rule, the capacity to adapt governance strategies to changing domestic and international conditions."[112] They define authoritarian persistence as focusing on the outcomes not the processes of how regime adapts and survives.

However, I treat authoritarian persistence and resilience as synonyms in this dissertation because the factors of both persistence and resilience always go together.

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[108] For example, Przeworski (1991)
[109] (Gerschewski 2013, 18)
[110] (Kailitz 2013, 41)
[111] (Gerschewski 2013, 18)
[112] (Heydemann and Leenders 2020, 5)

Legitimation claims or *legitimation strategies* are claims made by governments to justify their rule. So, these are used interchangibly in this thesis. Within the concept of legitimacy, several categories of legitimation claims are investigated which will be discussed in the corresponding chapter.

In my empirical part of thesis I use term *discourse* towards the public speeches of political actors. Milliken refers to the concept of discourse "as structures of signification which construct social realities."[113] This understanding is based on constructivist approach which says "things do not mean (the material world does not convey meaning); rather, people construct the meaning of things, using sign systems (predominantly, but not exclusively linguistic)."[114]

Maerz and Schneider (2021) define public discourse as "the entity of official communication put forward by a government and its agents."[115]

So, in my research I refer to public discourse, public communication, and public rhetoric interchangibly.

Within my investigation of legitimacy claims I construct categories of legitimacy claims. One of the categories is identity-based legitimation which includes nationalism and religion in my study. Orwell in his essays in 1945 defines *nationalism* as "the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognising no other duty than that of advancing its interests".[116] Orwell describes desrtuctive consequences of nationalism such as obsession with allegiance to a particular unit and further aggression. Dictators often capitalize on identity based feelings. Specific notions I include in nationalism are provided in the corresponding methodological sections.

Repression. I utilize the definition of repression by Davenport (2007): "… repression involves the actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for the purpose of imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions."[117] Earl (2011) provides more general understanding of repression

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[113] (Milliken 1999, 229)
[114] (Milliken 1999, 229)
[115] (Maerz and Schneider 2021, 1)
[116] (Orwell 2018, 362)
[117] (Davenport 2007, 2)

which includes state and nonstate actions: "... state or private action meant to prevent, control, or constrain non-institutional, collective action (e.g., protest), including its initiation".[118]

Civil service definition reflects the characteristics of Weberian bureaucracy. Pritchett and Woolcock (2004) describe: "… the civil service—a hierarchical, impersonal, rule-based organization."[119]

The *size of government* is most often **t**he size of government or the size of the state sector. Measuring the size of government: first indicator outlined by the World Development Report 1997 is the ratio of government expenditure to the economy's total expenditure or total output.[120] Since the salaries of street-level bureaucrats comprise a significant proportion of nondefense governmental expenditures, any doubts about the size of government budgets quickly translate into concerns for the scope and content of these public services.[121]

1.4. Scope of research on authoritarianism.

The previous sections defined and discussed the notions of political regime, democracy, non-democracy and authoritarianism. Also, I attempted to sort out major terms and definitions and their differences: dictatorship, autocracy, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.

Historically all states were formed and lived for centuries as dictatorships. Historical aspects are touched upon by Zakaria (1997), Linz (2000), and discussed in detail by Fukuyama in a series of books (2011). In this section I try to shed light on the scope of literature on authoritarianism.

Main topics of research on authoritarian or non-democratic regimes include:
- Classifications or typologies of non-democratic regimes.
- Democratization: transition from authoritarian regime to democracy.
- Legitimacy and the durability of authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian consolidation.
- Type of authoritarian regime and economic growth/economic development.
- Governance/public administration in authoritarian regimes.

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[118] (Earl 2011, 263)
[119] (Pritchett and Woolcock 2004, 208)
[120] (World Development Report 1997 : The State in a Changing World n.d., 33)
[121] (Lipsky 2010, 3)

- The role of multiparty elections in the survival of authoritarian regimes and prospects for democratization.

- The role of political institutions in authoritarian regimes, particularly, dominant political parties.

- Contentious politics in authoritarian regimes.

Also, main topics of research and main research papers are presented in the table below.

Classification of non-democratic regimes is the foundational level for further research on authoritarian regimes which I mentioned in the previous sections. Hybrid regimes, the resurgence of competitive authoritarianism is largely discussed within this framework.

Transition has been under most thorough research for longest due to the global democratization processes. It largely includes the discussion of economic liberalization. Transition paradigm so gleefully accepted among academics after the start of the third wave of democratization, has been reconsidered and reexamined since the signs of its reversal after 2006.[122] Furthermore, democratization started to be studied along with de-democratization processes like in Bogaards (2018), Szabó (2018) of which Hungary has been regarded as a good example.

The overwhelming majority of literature is dedicated towards transition in post-Soviet countries, Eastern Europe.[123] Institutionalism states that institutions matter: they matter in economic growth and development. After the collapse of the Soviet Union scholars expected that adoption of market economy institutions and creation of democratic institutions by transiting economies would turn them into full-fledged democracies. Based on this idea Washington Consensus proposed multiple reforms. The failure of this idea is evident by now. Today researchers claim that it is not possible to copy institutions of a developed Denmark and expect that the third World country will turn into Denmark.[124] Przeworski supports: "Conditions shape institutions and institutions only transmit the causal effects of these conditions."[125] In other words, institutions are endogenous. Berkovitz, Pistor & Richard (2003) came to conclusion that transplanted legal systems cannot be firmly established and have weaker effect

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[122] See, for example, (Carothers 2002, 6; Levitsky and Way 2010, 2015)
[123] Such as in (Whitehead 2001) on democratic transitions in different regions of the world (Latin America, South Europe, (O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 2013) on Latin America,
[124] (Pritchett and Woolcock 2004)
[125] (Przeworski 2004b, 166)

than home-grown legal systems. Democratic reforms of the 1990's in the majority of the post-Soviet states were doomed to failure.

While *transitology*[126] investigates the process of transition from various non-democratic regimes (be it socialist, military dictatorships or others) to democracy, authoritarian consolidation is the reverse. It is the process of empowerment of dictatorial regimes, particularly today, in the 21st century.

The longevity and durability of authoritarian governments topic discusses the dynamics of power sharing and the strategies and technologies used by dictators to stay in power. Some of prominent studies on power-sharing and the longevity authoritarian rule are Svolik (2009) and Magaloni (2008). The durability and persistence of non-democratic regimes have been under more intense focus of political scientists than other areas of authoritarianism. Longevity and persistence of authoritarian regimes are closely connected to other subjects of comparative politics: "an analysis of the interaction of the autocratic strategies of repression, legitimacy and the cooptation of elites and societal forces and their implications for the persistence or failure of autocracy" are investigated.[127]

Furthermore, research on the sources of authoritarian resilience and longevity is growing. There are comprehensive literature reviews on the topic such as by Gandhi and Lust-Okar (2009), Magaloni and Kricheli (2010), Brancati (2014).

At one point any authoritarian regime is forced to combat social and economic problems, particularly at the age of globalization and influence from the international community. The question arises if there are opportunities to find new options and management tools to address social and economic problems other than intimidation and coercion. These are the topics of authoritarian legitimacy and resilience. For example, Kailitz (2013) relates legitimation strategies of authoritarian leaders to the longevity of a regime. Papers dedicated to legitimacy are described in detail in the part on legitimacy.

Governance and public administration in authoritarian regimes are relatively new facets of research which are linked to the consolidation topic. Authoritarian governance literature is mostly represented by case studies on major modern autocracies such as China[128], Russia[129], etc.

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[126] Term used by Carothers (2002, 6)
[127] (Croissant and Wurster 2013, 3)
[128] (Chen, Pan, and Xu 2016; Dimitrov 2015a; Rothstein 2015; Saich 2016)
[129] (Åslund 2007; Gel'man 2017; Smyth 2020; Sperling 2014)

and governance issues in general and in different areas (for example, environmental governance).

Governance is investigated from several perspectives: governance itself and e-government. Scholars are particularly interested if bad governance is inherent to authoritarian regimes. See, for example, Gel'man 2017 on the reasons for bad governance in modern Russia. The impact of the internet and social media in authoritarian regimes on political results is closely related to the governance in authoritarian systems, and quite often reveals positive aspects of authoritarian governments. E-government is often investigated through multiple case studies.[130]

Topic on the role of elections has gained its popularity since 1990's due to the upsurge of electoral authoritarianism as defined by Schedler (2006) or competitive authoritarianism as coined by Levitsky & Way (2010). So, the presence of multiparty elections in otherwise non-democratic settings allowed to pinpoint a specific type of political regime. The spread of multiparty elections is proved statistically:

> Whereas in 1975 almost one-half of non-democracies had no elected legislature at
> all, by 2015 more than two-thirds had parliaments in which non-government parties
> had at least a token presence… More and more authoritarian leaders have been
> taking office by election, rather than by military coup or some other irregular path.
> Between the 1970s cohort and the 2000s cohort of dictators (who remained in office
> at least five years), the percentage originally elected rose from 14 to 56 percent.[131]

Multiple studies are devoted to the role of formal political institutions in authoritarian regimes. Particularly, the use of elections, originally democratic institution, is studied thoroughly by comparativists. That is why I put this topic into separate row of the table as the studies on authoritarian elections are centrifugal to other research on political institutions.

Table 1.1. A summary of scholarship on authoritarian regimes.

Topic	Key references.
Classifications or typologies of non-democratic regimes.	(Alvarez et al. 1996; D. Collier and Levitsky 1997; Diamond 2002; Geddes 1999; Levitsky and Way 2010; Linz 2000; Schedler 2006; Wahman, Teorell, and Hadenius 2013)
Democratization: transition from authoritarian regime to democracy.	(Zakaria 1997, 23), (Fishman 1990; Linz and Stepan 1996; O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Arnson 2013; O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Thompson 1995).

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[130] (Maerz 2016; O'Connor, Janenova, and Knox 2019).
[131] (Guriev and Treisman 2018, 10)

Legitimacy and the longevity/durability of authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian consolidation.	Legitimacy: (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017; Gerschewski 2013, 2018; Kailitz 2013; Maerz 2020; von Soest and Grauvogel 2016, 2017; Tannenberg et al. 2021) Durability and power-sharing: (Brownlee 2007; Haber 2006; Magaloni 2008; Svolik 2009) (Rodan 2003), (Göbel 2011)
Type of authoritarian regime and economic growth/economic development.	Wright (2008), Haber (2006), (Przeworski et al. 2000)
Governance/public administration in authoritarian regimes.	(Brownlee 2007) (Croissant and Hellmann 2018; Fukuyama 2004; Gel'man 2017; Heydemann and Leenders 2020; Jayasuriya 2000; Linde and Karlsson 2013; Rothstein 2015)
The role of multiparty elections in the survival of authoritarian regimes and prospects for democratization.	Levitsky and Way 2010; Bunce and Wolchik 2011; Blaydes 2010; Edgell et al. 2018. Lindberg (2006), Howard & Roessler (2006), Gandhi and Lust-Okar (2009), (Miller 2015)
The role of political institutions in authoritarian regimes, particularly, dominant political parties.	(Gandhi 2008), (Wright 2008), (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010) (Reuter 2010; Reuter and Remington 2009)
Contentious politics in authoritarian regimes.	(Lawson 2019), (Ulfelder 2005), (Lorentzen 2013), (Way 2008) Arab spring events: (Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015; Khondker 2011; Stepan and Linz 2013; Wolfsfeld, Segev, and Sheafer 2013)

Source: Author's compilation.

Some researchers conclude on positive impact of holding repeated elections in authoritarian states. Specifically, Edgell et al. (2018) finds evidence for a positive effect of regular multiparty elections on democratization through experiential learning in general. At the same time, results vary considerably accross regions and time. For post-communist states, the authors conclude positive impact of regular elections. Lindberg (2006) using data on African countries concludes that regular elections stimulate liberalization and democratic values. Howard and Roessler (2006) claim that by accident authoritarian elections may result in "liberalizing electoral outcome" and, thus, new government.

Modern dominant party regimes are also under thorough investigation. Case studies draw attention to the dominant party formation in Russia, United Russia case[132]; Turkey and AKP party[133], dominant party rule in South Africa[134]. If earlier research conceived political institutions as constraints on power holders, contemporary research is inclined to think that the

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[132] (Reuter 2010; Reuter and Remington 2009)

[133] (Müftüler-Baç and Keyman 2012)

[134] (Bogaards 2004)

ruling elites use political institutions to consolidate their hold on power and, thus, to build resilient regime.[135]

Contentious politics in authoritarian regimes covers the cases of popular revolt in autocratic states such as unexpected Arab spring uprisings, Turkish protest movements. Research on the Arab spring events is particularly interested in sheding light on the role of social media in protest organization, for example, (Khondker 2011; Wolfsfeld, Segev, and Sheafer 2013). One of the most outstanding investigations into the role of social networks in protest movements can be found in *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest* by Zeynep Tufekci.

It is a common assumptions that contentious collective actions are a good indicator of the weakness of a regime and disruptions in legitimacy.[136] Authoritarian settings add up to the intensity of contention: "If citizens take to the streets despite significant risks of imprisonment, injury or death, their protest is a more informative signal of the intensity of anti-government sentiment and the underlying weakness of the regime than where protest is routinized".[137] Ulfelder (2005) relates contentious politics to the type of authoritarian regime:

> … while contentious collective action appears to have no systematic effect on the survival of personalist regimes, it does affect the risk of breakdown in single party and military regimes, but the degree and direction of that effect depends on the nature of the contentious events. Regimes involving single-party and military rule are both more likely to break down in the wake of anti-government demonstrations. Single-party regimes appear particularly vulnerable to general strikes, but are little affected by riots. By contrast, military regimes are actually more likely to survive in the wake of riots.[138]

Comparative authoritarianism studies provide a variety of theoretical methods including statistical models and tests for delineating types of non-democratic regimes, game theoretical approaches to the analysis of power-sharing mechanisms in autocratic regimes and formal

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[135] (Pepinsky 2014, 1)
[136] (Lorentzen 2013)
[137] (Kricheli, Livne, and Magaloni 2011, 3)
[138] (Ulfelder 2005, 323)

theoretical models to explain some patterns. Often quantitative approach is applied followed by in-depth case study analysis.[139]

1.5. Classifications of political regimes.

In this section I investigate most influential classifications of political regimes. Delineating types of non-democratic political regimes is a useful task since it helps to understand the possible patterns of transition to democracy and the problems of democratic consolidation.[140] At the initial stage of research, it allows researchers to sort out and systematize definitions and terms.

There are several important sources of data on democratization and political regimes which distinguish between democracies and autocracies and, most importantly, between types of authoritarian regimes. Polity IV (currently, Polity5) and Freedom House are most commonly used sources of data on political regimes and political institutions.[141] V-Dem project is also acquiring more popularity.

First comprehensive measures of political systems started to emerge in 1960's when Polity IV project was initiated. (PolityProject n.d.) Its website contains annual information on regime and authority characteristics. It includes all independent states (with a total population of 500,000 or more) and covers the years 1800-2017. These datasets are one of the important sources for analytics today. Polity IV Project's scales of democracy and autocracy have been widely used by scholars. Polity score delineates three political regimes: autocracies (regimes with scores −10 to −6), democracies (6 to 10), and anocracies (with scores between the first two categories). The methodology defines institutionalized democracy similarly to Dahl's concept: "A mature and internally coherent democracy, for example, might be operationally defined as one in which (a) political participation is unrestricted, open, and fully competitive; (b) executive recruitment is elective, and (c) constraints on the chief executive are substantial."[142]

Second earliest efforts on measuring democracies and autocracies around the world can be found in the reports published by Freedom House, a non-profit organization in Washington,

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[139] See, for example, (Kailitz 2013; Maerz 2019; von Soest and Grauvogel 2016).
[140] (Linz 2000, 30)
[141] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 62)
[142] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 15)

D.C. Merkel (2004) described Freedom House as the preferred source of data for journalists, publicists, political scientists around the world.[143]

Freedom House surveys have provided yearly measurements since 1971 on the state of political rights (contestation, opposition and participation) and civil liberties. According to the official reports, Freedom House evaluates the state of freedom in countries and territories. To get Global Freedom score each country and territory is assigned between 0 and 4 points on a series of 25 indicators, for an aggregate score of up to 100. (Freedom in the World 2021: Democracy under Siege 2021, 32) The indicators are grouped into the categories of political rights (0–40) and civil liberties (0–60). Based on the resulted Global Freedom score, the country is given an overall status of Free, Partly Free, or Not Free.

Political rights include electoral process (questions about free and fair elections), political pluralism and participatıon (obstacles to political parties, etc.), functioning of government (transparency and openness of government, etc.). [144] Civil liberties include freedom of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, rule of law, personal autonomy and individual rights (e.g. freedom of movement, rights to own property, etc.). [145]

Since recently, Freedom House also provides Democracy Scores, Internet freedom scores (not for all countries) along the above mentioned Global Freedom Scores. Democracy score measures democratic governance: "separate ratings on national and local governance, electoral process, independent media, civil society, judicial framework and independence, and corruption" which basically covers governance issues and not that much about freedom.[146] Based on Democracy scores, countries are classified into consolidated authoritarian regimes, semi-consolidated authoritarian regimes, transitional regimes, and consolidated democracies.

Most recent database is the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project which provides the largest dataset on democracies and autocracies, almost 30 million data points for 202 countries from 1789 to 2020.[147] The advantage of this dataset is comprehensiveness in the authors' appoach where democracy is viewed from many perspectives: electoral, liberal, majoritarian, consensual, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian.[148] The measure points on different

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[143] (Merkel 2004, 34)
[144] (Freedom in the World Research Methodology 2022)
[145] (Freedom in the World Research Methodology 2022)
[146] (Countries and Territories 2022)
[147] (Alizada et al. 2021, 2)
[148] (The V-Dem Project n.d.)

aspects of democracy are based on the assessments of country experts.[149] Another advantage of their datasets is the variety of indicators.

Using V-Dem data, researchers classify four political regimes: liberal democracy, electoral democracy, electoral autocracy, and closed autocracy.[150] I am interested in the autocratic types. Their definition of closed autocracies includes "the chief executive is either not subjected to elections or there is no meaningful, de-facto competition in elections."[151]

Electoral autocracies are described as holding "de-facto multiparty elections for the chief executive, but they fall short of democratic standards due to significant irregularities, limitations on party competition or other violations of Dahl's institutional requisites for democracies."[152]

The extensive statistical databases which determine character of political regimes are extremely important for further research and further differentiation between the regimes. As such, Howard & Roessler (2006) determine the type of a political regime by combining two most commonly used datasets on political regimes - Freedom House scores and Polity5 (previously, PolityIV) indices. Their method is distinct with its clear and easy to apply operationalizability.

In addition to the datasets I mentioned above, political scientists developed classifications of political regimes and corresponding datasets on these regimes. Some of the most influential ones are regime datasets by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) (earlier version is by Geddes (1999)), Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010), classification by Wahman, Teorell, and Hadenius (2013).

While earlier research on political regimes represent theoretical criteria and conditions for delineating democracies from dictatorships and subtypes of authoritarian regimes, recent studies extend scholarship by new datasets on countries with substantial longitudinal and temporal coverage. Such typologies constitute a solid empirical foundation for further research on authoritarianism. Most importantly, such indicators developed by different authors and institutions are highly correlated which make them reliable and operationalizable for researchers.[153]

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[149] (Alizada et al. 2021, 9)
[150] (Alizada et al. 2021, 31)
[151] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 61)
[152] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 61)
[153] See (Przeworski et al. 2000, 56)

Next subsections (1.5.1.- 1.5.4.) describe most important classifications of authoritarian regimes which will be used for determining political regimes of Kazakhstan and Russia. Also, I add the discussion of the approach propounded by Diamond (2002) as it adds value to the discussion of the typologies of authoritarian regimes.

1.5.1. The typology of political regimes by Juan J. Linz (1978, 2000).

Theory of authoritarian political regimes should be started from seminal work *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* by Linz (1978, 2000). The explanation of authoritarinism formulated by Linz in 1964 article was one of the earliest explanation of political authoritarianism receiving high credit by contemporary scholars.[154] The contribution of Linz is in theoretically elaborate taxonomy of political regimes. He also emphasized the difference between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.

Each scholarly attempt to classify political regimes is strongly tied to the time period when the research was being done. That is why Linz's picture of political systems in 1975 is a little different from the ones that we see after 2000's. However, his book titled *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* stays encyclopedial for modern political scientists.

Linz (2000) formulated the concept of an authoritarian regime as distinct from both democracy and totalitarian system. Totalitarian system is defined by the presence of three characteristics: "a monistic center of power", the presence of ideology, mass collective mobilization for political and social tasks.[155] Only simultaneous presence of all these factors make the system totalitarian. Ideology is an important element of totalitarianism is also shown by Friedrich and Brzezinski: "ideology (consisting of an official body of doctrine covering all vital aspects of man's existence to which everyone living in that society is supposed to adhere, at least passively), a single party typically led by one man, a terroristic police, a communications monopoly, a weapons monopoly, and a centrally directed economy."[156]

No wonder, totalitarian societies were under the scrutiny of political scientists and philosophers of the post-World War II period. Fascism and Communist party in the Soviet bloc were extensively investigated by the brightest scholars of the 20th century, Hannah Arendt 1973, Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965, Huntington and Moore 1970, Linz 1975. Huntington and Moore

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[154] (Purcell 1973, 302)
[155] (Linz 2000, 71)
[156] (Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965, 21)

(1970) provide most comprehensive classification of one-party systems based not only on theoretical propositions but also on empirical relationships of politics with social divisions. Sartori, Allardt, and Stein in 1970 also made a comparative study of political parties, totalitarianism, authoritarianism, dictatorship, despotism, and absolutism. Almond and Powell (1966) constructed classification of conservative, modernizing, and premobilized authoritarian (Spain, Brazil, and Ghana of the 60's would respectively be the examples). As was noted by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965): "Totalitarian regimes of 20th century were novelty, no government like that had existed before the 20th century."[157] There are few totalitarian regimes: Nazi Germany, Communist Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Communist China. Modern North Korea also has the features of a totalitarian regime.[158]

The typology of non-democratic regimes by Linz J. (2000) distinguishes totalitarian regimes, authoritarian regimes in all their varieties, particularly post-totalitarianism (as a distinctive type of authoritarian rule), "sultanistic" regimes or regimes with strong sultanistic tendencies.

Linz's practical criteria for delimiting democratic regimes from non-democratic are based on his definition of democracy which "allows the free formulation of political preferences, through the use of basic freedoms of association, information, and communication, for the purpose of free competition between leaders to validate at regular intervals by nonviolent means their claim to rule."[159] To sum up, his requirement for a state to be put into the group of democracies is the presence of political rights, freedom to form political parties, contestation in elections, elections at regular intervals, alternation in power (not always an indicator). The analysis of these features permits us to unequivocally distinguish democratic and non-democratic states. Further on, to identify the type of non-democratic regime the author uses three criteria: "the way of exercising power, organizing power, linking with the societies, on the nature of the belief systems sustaining it, and on the role of citizens in the political process."[160] Post-totalitarian regime is actually a subtype of authoritarian regime.

Authoritarian regime according to Linz (2000) means:

> … political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive

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[157] (Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965, 23)
[158] (Ezrow and Frantz 2011, 3)
[159] (Linz 2000, 58)
[160] (Linz 2000, 168)

political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones.[161]

While democracies exercise almost unlimited institutionalized pluralism, authoritarian regimes exercise limited pluralism which lead to semiopposition and pseudoopposition.

One of the outstanding features of the authoritarian regime according to Linz (2000) is the absence of certain ideology or ideological commitments. So, Linz (2000) uses the term "mentality" rather than "ideology," when describing authoritarianism. Since "mentalities are ways of thinking and feeling, more emotional than rational, that provide noncodified ways of reacting to different situations."[162]

Sultanistic regimes are defined by Linz as "tyrannical, arbitrary rule exercised by an individual and his clients with the help of the praetorian guard, without any forms of organized participation in power of institutional structures, with little effort of legitimation of any sort, and in pursuit of more private than collective goals."[163] Linz relates sultanistic regimes to neopatrimonialism.

Further on Linz (2000) constructs five types of authoritarian regimes. Subtypes of authoritarian regimes are distinguished based on three dimensions: the degree of political mobilization or apathy, mentality or ideology, character of limited pluralism ("which institutions and groups are allowed to participate and in what way, and which ones are excluded").[164] Based on three dimensions Linz (2000) constructs a cube: starting from privileged bureaucratic-military-technocratic elite to single-party regime along first axis, mentality to ideology on second axis, apathy to organized mobilization on third axis.

Although, Linz (2000) seriously elaborates on subtypes of authoritarian regimes, it is clearly seen that such typology with strong emphasis on ideology and groups realizing limited pluralism (the mobilizational authoritarian, post-totalitarian) is rather obsolete by today. As Diamond notices, it does not take into account competitive authoritarian regimes.

1.5.2. Classification by Geddes (1999; Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014).

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[161] (Linz 2000, 255)
[162] (Linz 2000, 168)
[163] (Linz 2000, 54)
[164] (Linz 2000, 174)

Geddes (1999) distinguishes dictatorships based on which groups possess political power and control. Geddes (1999) delineates personalist, military, single-party, and hybrid. The criteria for typology is "control over access to power and influence rather than formal institutional characteristics."[165] The typification of a regimes is based on careful judgements of the coders.

Operationalization rules for determining if a regime is autocratic: "an executive achieves power through undemocratic means and, with his inner circle establishes new rules for choosing leaders and policies."[166]

Authoritarian regimes are distinguished "by any methods other than a direct, reasonably fair competitive election in which at least ten percent of the total population (equivalent to about 40 percent of the adult male population) was eligible to vote."[167]

Conditions for judging unfree and unfair elections in practice include:

> … if one or more large party is not allowed to participate; and/or if there are widespread reports of violence, jailing, and/or intimidation of opposition leaders or supporters; and/or if there are credible reports of vote fraud widespread enough to change election outcome (especially if reported by international observers); and/or if the incumbent so dominates political resources and the media that observers do not consider elections fair.[168]

New dataset by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) was extended, updated; new variables were added. In addition to personalist, military, dominant-party regimes monarchic, oligarchic, indirect military, or hybrids of the first three appeared.[169] The authors explain new types in the way:

> Oligarchy identifies regimes in which leaders are chosen through competitive elections but most of the population is disenfranchised, e.g., South Africa before 1994. Indirect military rule refers to regimes in which formal political leaders are chosen through competitive elections, but the military either prevents parties that

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[165] (Geddes 1999, 124)
[166] (Geddes and Frantz 2014, 6)
[167] (Geddes and Frantz 2014, 6)
[168] (Geddes and Frantz 2014, 6)
[169] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 318)

would attract large numbers of voters from participating or controls key policy choices.[170]

The authors' main point is that different types of authoritarian regimes democratize in their own way. To answer the question how exactly they tend to democratize she constructed a theoretical model based on game theory assumptions and then supported her conclusions by the evidence from the dataset of 163 authoritarian regimes in 94 countries.[171] Geddes (1999) in addition answers the question on conditions for transition from one regime to the other.

The empirical investigation comes to several important conclusions. For example, personalist dictators in 69% of the times face exile, imprisonment, or death after ouster which rates are much lower in dominant-party regimes.[172] Furthermore, these dictators are more likely to have tragic fates if country transits to another autocracy than to democracy.[173] In general, violence during transition reduces the probability for democratization.[174]

Ezrow and Frantz (2011) made a concise and up to date review of the typologies of dictatorships. As for their own research they use the typology by Geddes (1999) with the addition of monarchial regimes.

1.5.3. Classification by Levitsky & Way (2002, 2010).

Second continuous typology of non-democratic regimes I discuss is the classification by Levitsky and Way (2010). Levitsky and Way (2010) argue that political regimes may manifest both competitive and authoritarian features which still make them authoritarian.

The scholars range 35 countries into *full authoritarian, competitive authoritarian* and *democracies*.[175]

The starting point is defining democracy. Levitsky & Way's (2002) democracy satisfies five conditions (the fifth is specific to Levitsky & Way's (2010):

    (1) free, fair, and competitive elections;

    (2) full adult suffrage;

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[170] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 318)
[171] (Geddes 1999, 117)
[172] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 321)
[173] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 321)
[174] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 327)
[175] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 365)

(3) broad protection of civil liberties, including freedom of speech, press, and association; and

(4) the absence of nonelected "tutelary" authorities (e.g., militaries, monarchies, or religious bodies) that limit elected officials' power to govern.[176]

The fifth condition added by the authors is "the existence of a reasonably level playing field between incumbents and opposition."[177]

They formulated the concept of *competitive authoritarian* regime which is widely used by Diamond and other influential scholars. In their view: "Such regimes are competitive in that opposition parties use democratic institutions to contest seriously for power, but they are not democratic because the playing field is heavily skewed in favor of incumbents. Competition is thus real but unfair."[178] So, they formulate three criteria which allow to systematize regimes accordingly: noncompetitiveness of elections, civil liberties and uneven playing field. These three categories are further elaborated into detailed requirements.

According to Levitsky and Way, the assumption that hybrid regimes are (or should be) moving towards a democratic direction lacks empirical foundation. Hybrid regimes followed diverse trajectories during the post–Cold War period. Although some of them democratized (e.g., Ghana, Mexico, and Slovakia), most did not.[179]

Full authoritarianism by Levitsky & Way are characterized by noncompetitive.[180] Noncompetitive elections mean:

(1) major candidates are formally barred or effectively excluded on a regular basis;

(2) repression or legal controls effectively prevent opposition parties from running public campaigns; or

(3) fraud is so massive that there is virtually no observable relationship between voter preferences and official electoral results.[181]

Concerning civil liberties in full authoritarianism: "basic civil liberties are often violated so systematically that opposition parties, civic groups, and the media are not even minimally

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[176] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 6)
[177] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 6)
[178] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 5)
[179] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 6)
[180] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)
[181] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)

protected (e.g., Egypt and Uzbekistan). As a result, much opposition activity takes place underground or in exile."[182]

Full authoritarianism can be subdivided into two categories: "closed regimes in which national-level democratic institutions do not exist (e.g., China, Cuba, and Saudi Arabia) and hegemonic regimes in which formal democratic institutions exist on paper but are reduced to façade status in practice."[183]

Levitsky & Way make an important comment that elections are necessary for hegemonic authoritarian regimes in a way that they fulfil other functions than we are used to see in democracy: "… in post–Cold War Egypt, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, elections served functions (e.g., a means of enhancing regime legitimacy, generating information, or distributing patronage) other than determining who governed."[184]

Monarchies, sultanistic regimes, bureaucratic authoritarianism, and single-party regimes are full authoritarian regimes according to Levitsky & Way.[185]

Competitive authoritarianism includes constitutional channels for opposition to participate in contestation, elections are held regullarly.[186] However, violations of electoral procedures take place such as ballot-box stuffing, manipulation with voter lists, falsification of results, etc. At the same time, such manipulations do not render elections meaningless. Civil liberties (freedom of speech, freedom of association) are partially respected: authors list some details on the usual ways it happens in such states.

Outstanding feature of Levitsky & Way (2010) is the classification of dictatorships in terms of three perspectives. While usually researchers elaborate in detail on democratic institutions and then show how they are violated in a particular regime. Also, Levitsky and Way's (2010) argue that international linkages started to have stronger effects on the likelihood of democratization after 1990.

1.5.4. Classification by Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).

Classification of non-democratic regimes constructed by Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) is based on the method of government removal and what kind of inner circles the rulers rely on.

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[182] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 8)
[183] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)
[184] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)
[185] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 8)
[186] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)

Distinction between democracies and non-democracies is based on three criteria: ex-ante uncertainty ("the outcome of the election is not known before it takes place"), ex-post irreversibility (the winner of the electoral contest actually takes office"), and ("repeatability ("elections that meet the first two criteria occur at regular and known intervals").[187]

Before proceeding to typify non-democratic regimes they develop the following conditions for distinguishing democracies from dictatorships: first, more than one legal party; second, a legislature is elected in popular elections; chief executive of the regime is also popularly elected either directly or non-directly; an alternation of power took place under the same rules and procedures that had brought the incumbent.[188] To be classified as democracy, a regime must satisfy all listed conditions.

Among dictatorships they distinguish monarchic dictatorships, military dictatorships, and civilian dictatorships.

Basically, differentiation between democracy and dictatorship is based on the method of removal of the government and accession of a new one. So, we see that Cheibub et.al. (2010) uses minimal approach towards measuring political regimes. Moreover, he argues that many theories measuring democracies are based on "vague and arbitrary operational rules" and add little information to the analysis.[189]

Cheibub's condition for shifting a regime into non-democracy is when:

> … some incumbents who have come to power via contested elections have eliminated them while in office. Since this violates the repeatability condition for democracy, in cases like this we code as non-democratic all the years from the moment the incumbent came to power to the moment when contested elections were eliminated.[190]

Monarchs rely on their family and kin networks to come to power and maintain it. Military and party dictatroships are described: "Military rulers confine key potential rivals from the armed forces within juntas; and, civilian dictators usually create a smaller body within a regime party—a political bureau—to coopt potential rivals."[191] However, Cheibub notes that party is

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[187] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 69)
[188] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 69)
[189] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 68)
[190] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 69)
[191] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 84)

not a defining element for civilian dictatorships. That is why everything that is not monarchy or military dictatorship automatically falls into civilian dictatorship.

Wahman, Teorell, and Hadenius (2013), Hadenius & Teorell (2007) typology is similar to Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland's logic. They base their typology on the modes of accessing and maintaining political power.[192]

However, unlike Cheibub et.al. (2004), Wahman, et.al. (2013) do not pay attention to the longevity of a dictator in power. Wahman, Teorell, and Hadenius claim that their classification is different from that of Cheibub (2010) in the way that it does not rely on the characteristics and a social group of ruling elite but on the institutions dictators use to access and maintain power.[193]

While developing criteria for delineating different types of authoritarianism, the authors construct a dataset that covers the period 1972-2010 and distinguish three types of regimes:

1) monarchies – hereditary succession, or lineage,

2) military regimes – the actual or threatened military force,

3) electoral regimes – popular elections.

Further on, they elaborate on the division of electoral regimes into *multiparty competition* regimes, *no-party* regimes, and *one-party* regimes.

1.5.5. Classification by Diamond (2002, 2008).

Larry Diamond's studies represent a thorough theoretical underpinning for the classification of contemporary political regimes. The classification of political regimes by Larry Diamond (2002) exercises six categories on a democratic-authoritarian continuum. Diamond investigates a variety of hybrid regimes which combine features of both democratic and authoritarian political systems. In his view it is legitimate to name these regimes as *pseudodemocracies.*

Diamond makes distinction between six political regimes: liberal democracy, electoral democracy, competitive authoritarian, hegemonic electoral authoritarian, politically closed authoritarian, ambiguous.[194]

All the listed regimes except for liberal democracy "lack an arena of contestation sufficiently open, free, and fair so that the ruling party can readily be turned out of power if it is no longer

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[192] (Wahman, Teorell, and Hadenius 2013, 20)
[193] (Wahman, Teorell, and Hadenius 2013, 21)
[194] (Diamond 2002, 26)

preferred by a plurality of the electorate".[195] In other words author also calls them pseudodemocracies which can be generally characterized as systems with "regular, multiparty elections and other formal institutions of democracy like a national assembly, court system, constitution, and so on, but the people are not able to vote their leaders out of power because the system is, in effect, rigged."[196]

Competitive authoritarian regime is different from electoral democracy at the level of free, fair, inclusive, and meaningful elections.[197] It is important to define free elections: "when the legal barriers to entry into the political arena are low, when there is substantial freedom for candidates and supporters of different political parties to campaign and solicit votes, and when voters experience little or no coercion in exercising their electoral choices."[198] He also provides thorough definition of fair elections. So, to distinguish competitive authoritarianism empirically careful judgements about the scale, pattern and context of violations are necessary. Competitive authoritarian regime in Diamond's (2002) view is a product of contemporary world.

Hegemonic electoral authoritarian according to Diamond: "a relatively institutionalized ruling party monopolizes political arena, using coercion, patronage, media control, and other means to deny formally legal opposition parties any real chance of competing for power."[199]

Politically closed authoritarian means regime that lacks any political competition and pluralism. Basically, these regimes are very close to Dahl's closed hegemonies.

The upsurge of such pseudodemocracies is an essential feature of the late period of the third wave of democratization.[200]

1.6. Classifying political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia.

The contribution of academic scholarship studied in the preceding sections is the construction of a political map of the world. The theoretical part of this chapter deliberated on classifications and measurements of political regimes.

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[195] (Diamond 2002, 25)
[196] (Diamond 2008, 23)
[197] (Diamond 2002, 28)
[198] (Diamond 2002, 28)
[199] (Diamond 2002, 25)
[200] (Diamond 2002, 25)

In contrast to research on post-Soviet Central Asia, literature on post-communist development of Russia is immense. Particularly, scholars question the factors of regime survival in Russia.[201] In this section I make a comparative analysis of Russian and Kazakhstani political regimes as per main available measures of political regimes, on the one hand. Fortunately, today multiple datasets on authoritarian regimes are available. One of the earliest databases on political regimes covering wide longitudinal and temporal dimensions belong to the Polity project. The latest version is Polity5 project measures. The data from Freedom House and V-Dem project are also used to determine the political regimes of Kazakhstan and Russia in this study. In addition, Howard & Roessler (2006) determine the type of a political regime by combining two most commonly used datasets on political regimes - Freedom House scores and Polity5 (previously, PolityIV) indices which rules are also applied to the Russian and Kazakhstani political systems. To substantiate the discussion of political regimes of the analyzed two states, I utilize theoretical classifications of political regimes, i.e. by (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014), by Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010), and by Levitsky and Way (2010). In addition, I analyze the political systems through the lens of Linz (2000).

I start from one of the most influential typologies Geddes (1999, 2014) after which more political scientists started to develop their classifications. Along with Geddes work scholars usually refer to the typology of Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).

In Table 1.2. below I summarize an overview of political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to Geddes dataset (1999, 2014), Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland's dataset, classification by Levitsky and Way (2010), Freedom House, Polity5, and V-Dem project.

Table 1.2. Types of authoritarian regime in Kazakhstan and Russia.

#	Source of dataset or classfication authors	Kazakhstan	Russia
1	Classification by (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014) and dataset	Personalist dictatorship (1991-2010)	Personalist dictatorship (1993-2010)
2	Classification by Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland's (CGV) dataset	Civillian dictatorship (1991-2008)	Civillian dictatorship (1991-2008)
3	Classification by Levitsky and Way (2010)	Full authoritarian (hegemonic authoritarian since 1991).	Full Authoritarian regime (2008)[202], Competitive authoritarian regime (1990-1995)
4	Freedom House (in 2021)	2021:	2021:

[201] (Dawisha 2015; Fish 2005; Gel'man 2015; Goldman 2008; Hedlund 2005; Smyth 2020)
[202] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 370)

		Consolidated Authoritarian Regime by Democracy score=5 (Democracy percentage= 5.36) Not Free: Global Freedom Score = 23 (Political rights=5, Civil liberties=18)	Consolidated Authoritarian Regime by Democracy score=7 (Democracy percentage= 6.55) Not Free: Global Freedom Score = 20 (Political rights=5, Civil liberties=15)
5	Polity5	Autocracy (2000-2018)	Democracy (2000-2007) Anocracy (2008-2018)
6	V Dem project by	Electoral autocracy during the period 2000-2020.	Electoral autocracy during the period 2000-2020.

Sources: (Cheibub n.d.; Countries and Territories 2022; Russia n.d.; The V-Dem Project n.d.; Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014; Levitsky and Way 2010)

1.6.1. Political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to Geddes et al. (2014) typology.

One of the seminal studies on non-democratic political regimes is made by Geddes (1999) and updated version Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014). As such, Geddes et al. (2014) dataset typifies political regimes into dominant-party, military, personalist, monarchic, oligarchic, indirect military, or hybrids of the first three.[203] I utilize this classification for my description instead of the earlier one by the same authors developed in 1999 because it provides more details on the regimes. The new dataset is extended, updated, and new variables are added.

The dataset contains information on the start and end dates of the autocratic regimes, subsequent regimes after the breakdown, level of violence during breakdown and type of failure event.[204] Since the dataset covers the period from 1946 to 2010 in independent countries with more than one million inhabitants in 2009.[205]

Since gaining independence in December 1991 till 2010, Geddes et.al. rated Kazakhstan as *personalist dictatorship*. The authors define personalist regime

> … as autocracies in which discretion over policy and personnel are concentrated in the hands of one man, military or civilian. In the real world, that discretion is often maintained by balancing the interests of multiple competing groups within the dictators support coalition; the military, or the faction of it that supports the dictator, is one among the groups balanced.[206]

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[203] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 319)
[204] (Geddes and Frantz 2014, 17)
[205] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 317)
[206] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 319)

A strong man can be a military person but he is different from military dictatorship in the absence of collegial military rule.

Russian political regime is characterised as personalist dictatorship also. But the autocratic spell is 17 years, between 1993 – 2010. During the founding years, Russian Federation was ranked as democracy.

The characteristic features of these autocratic regimes is that the incumbent comes to power through undemocratic means:

> … if one or more large party is not allowed to participate; and/or if there are widespread reports of violence, jailing, and/or intimidation of opposition leaders or supporters; and/or if there are credible reports of vote fraud widespread enough to change election outcome (especially if reported by international observers); and/or if the incumbent so dominates political resources and the media that observers do not consider elections fair.[207]

Fraudulent elections and prosecution of opposition leaders during Nazarbayev's 1991-2019 and onwards Tokayev's 2019-2021 is the usual practice which facts are provided in subsequent chapters. As was concluded in the Polity IV country report on Kazakhstan "Opposition parties were harassed and denied fair access and leading opposition candidates were routinely disqualified."[208]

According to Geddes et.al. (2014), personalist regimes are least likely to democratize.[209] Another tendency is that dictators of personalist regimes are very likely (69%) to end up in exile, imprisoned, or murdered after ouster.[210]

Kailitz (2013) points to an important trend in personalist rulership: "A personal autocracy gets established, for example, when one person becomes "president for life", such as in the case of Hastings Banda in Malawi (1971), Jean-Bédel Bokassa in the Central African Republic (1972), Francisco Macias in Equatorial Guinea (1973), Idi Amin in Uganda (1976), Saparmurat Niyazov in Turkmenistan (1999) or François (1964) and Jean-Claude Duvalier (1971) in Haiti."[211] Th examples of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia also have strived for

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[207] (Geddes and Frantz 2014, 6)
[208] (Polity IV Country Report 2018, 2)
[209] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 324)
[210] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 326)
[211] (Kailitz 2013, 49)

'president for life' status. Nursultan Nazarbayev acquired the lifelong status of the Leader of the Nation (Elbasy in Kazakh) in accordande with this dictatorial tradition. Recent 2020 constitutional amendments to the nullifying previous terms for president Putin also represent the steps towards the "president for life" tradition.

1.6.2. Political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).

Theoretical underpinning of this dataset is provided in the theoretical part. Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) dataset covers 202 countries, from 1946 or year of independence to 2008.[212]

Both Russia and Kazakhstan are categorized as civilian dictatorships through all the years since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Although, one of the operationalizing rules stipulate an alternation of power through elections, Russia was still considered dictatorship through all the years before and after Putin.

This typology of authoritarian regimes is rather coarse because they distinguish between autocracies based on the "inner sanctuums": monarchies, military and civilian dictatorships. Civilian dictatorships include various regimes. The authors state that in the majority of cases civilian dictatorships imply single party based regimes.[213]

Patronage is a characteristic feature of such regimes: "Members of a single party mobilize popular support and supervise behaviors of people unwilling to identify themselves with the dictator. In exchange, the party offers individuals willing to collaborate with the regime a vehicle for advancing their careers within a stable system of patronage."[214]

In general, regarding Russian and Kazakhstani system Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland's argument is true in terms of the party as "a political bureau—to co-opt potential rivals."[215]

This has been true for Kazakhstan for all the years since independce. According to the V-Dem indices, the Kazakhstani system is characterized by unified party control which means "A single party controls the executive and legislative branches of the national government."[216]

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[212] (Cheibub n.d.)
[213] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 19)
[214] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 20)
[215] (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010, 18)
[216] (Coppedge et al. 2021, 96)

According to the dynamics of the National Party Control Index, Russia started to show signs of the unified party control since 2006. (See Figure 1.1. below.)

Figure 1.1. National party control index for Kazakhstan and Russia, 2000-2021.
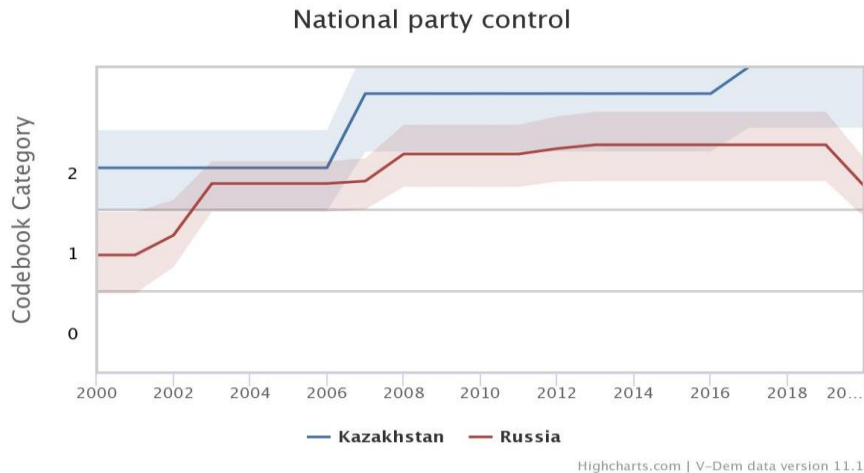
Source: V-Dem project graphing tools. https://www.v-dem.net/graphingtools.html

So, why do autocracies use parties? Geddes answers this question:

> Organizing a ruling party, allocating resources to it to pay employees and distribute some benefits to others, and building the networks needed to link the regime inner circle to local leaders create widespread vested interests in the party's persistence. Citizens want to continue receiving whatever benefits the party delivers. Elites who occupy high offices in the ruling party would be alienated by losing their posts, which might lead to efforts to unseat the dictator.[217]

On the one hand, both Kazakhstan and Russia are rated as personalist dictatorships. On the other hand, they possess clear indicators of dominant party rule.

1.6.3. Political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to Polity5 dataset.

The Polity5 project surveys and measures states with a total population of 500,000 or more, throughout the period 1800-2018. The "Polity Score" ranges political regimes on the continuum on a scale ranging three part categorization of "autocracies" (-10 to -6), "anocracies" (-5 to +5 and three special values: -66, -77 and -88), and "democracies" (+6 to +10).[218]

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[217] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018, 135)
[218] (The Polity Project n.d.)

Components of polity score include key qualities of executive recruitment (competitiveness and opennness), constraints on executive authority and political competition, changes in the institutionalized qualities of governing authority.[219]

Characteristic feature of the project's is that scores are given to both democratic and autocratic features: Polity score result is computed as the autocratic substracted from democratic, meaning that the ones that score more win.[220]

By operationalizing concepts of institutionalized democracy and institutionalized autocracy, they code countries according to their rules of operationalization. Institutionalized democracy is characterized by three elements: "(a) political participation is unrestricted, open, and fully competitive; (b) executive recruitment is elective, and (c) constraints on the chief executive are substantial."[221]

Institutionalized autocracy is characterized as: "In mature form, autocracies sharply restrict or suppress competitive political participation. Their chief executives are chosen in a regularized process of selection within the political elite, and once in office they exercise power with few institutional constraints. Most modern autocracies also exercise a high degree of directiveness over social and economic activity, but we regard this as a function of political ideology and choice, not a defining property of autocracy."[222]

By anocracy the authors mean "incoherent" polities or combinations of democratic and autocratic authority patterns.[223]

Polity5 project classifies Russian political regime as democracy during the period 2000-2007. There are several foundations behind these results. First presidential elections were marked as fairly democratic with minor irregularities. First of all, genuine popular support of Putin by masses in the initial years of presidency allowed for winning elections easily: "Putin achieved a profound shift in Russian public opinion and, for the first time in a decade, amassed a significant support base from formerly split constituencies and disparate parties. Building on his success in conducting the second Chechen war while serving as prime minister and, then,

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[219] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 16)
[220] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 14)
[221] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 15)
[222] (Marshall & Gurr, 2020, 16)
[223] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 9)

acting president, Putin avoided a second round of balloting by capturing 52.9% of the popular vote in the first round."[224]

In 2008 Russia was tranferred from democracy category into anocracy category by Polity authors.

Tightening control of Putin's grip was observed: "Legislative elections in 2003 brought a significant majority for the personalist, pro-Putin, party United Russia."[225]

The report concludes that in spite of popular support, federal center's activities in 2006 and 2007 made comprehensive and systematic efforts to curtail political competition. One of the causes were amendments to electoral legislation which "(1) raised the minimum vote threshold necessary for parties to hold seats in national and regional bodies; (2) lowered the voter turnout minimum necessary for elections to be deemed valid; and (3) eliminated the "against all" option on the ballot."[226]

Second, orchestrated transfer of power to hand-picked successor D. Medvedev while holding early parliamentary elections in 2007 to ensure the support in Duma by getting majority of votes for the United Russia. In an atmosphere of mass popularity he announced that "he would personally lead United Russia's party list in the Duma elections later that year."[227]

To the benefit of the authorities, the OSCE mission was not able to observe the 2007 State Duma elections: "The ODIHR (the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights – *Author*) requested to deploy 20 experts on 7 November and 50 further observers on 15 November. Despite repeated attempts to attain entry visa into the Russian Federation for ODIHR experts and observers, entry visas have continuously been denied. The ODIHR therefore concludes that the authorities of the Russian Federation remain unwilling to receive ODIHR observers in a timely and co-operative manner and co-operate fully with them."[228]

Kazakhstan has been autocracy in Polity IV dataset since 1995 till the last analyzed year 2018 which means almost no institutional constrains on the executive, political participation is severely restricted. Years 1991-1994 were unsurprisingly scored as anocracy because first

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[224] (Polity IV Country Report: Russia 2010, 1)
[225] (Polity IV Country Report: Russia 2010, 2)
[226] (Polity IV Country Report: Russia 2010, 5)
[227] (Hale 2014, 279)
[228] (Baranowska 2007)

Kazakhstani constitution of 1993 declared parliamentary republic with relatively independent parliament.

1.6.4. Political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to the Global Freedom Score.

First of all, researchers notice the deterioration of situation with political rights and civil liberties in Russia. The figure below shows a sharp downward trend for Russia. According to the Annual Freedom in the World reports, Russia was Partly Free in 2000-2004, Not Free in 2005-2021. Not Free status means that political rights and civil liberties are severely restricted in the country.

The reasons for worsening situation "due to the virtual elimination of influential political opposition parties within the country and the further concentration of executive power."[229] Mostly, amendments to the legislation cancelling regional governors' elections in 2004 contributed to the worsening of political rights.

The figure below points to the deterioration of situation with political rights and civil liberties in Russia. Particularly, civil liberties category contributed to the decrease in freedom scores. As was mentioned before, civil liberties include freedom of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, rule of law, personal autonomy and individual rights (e.g. freedom of movement, rights to own property, etc.).[230]

Figure 1.2. The dynamics of the Global Freedom Score, 2003-2021.
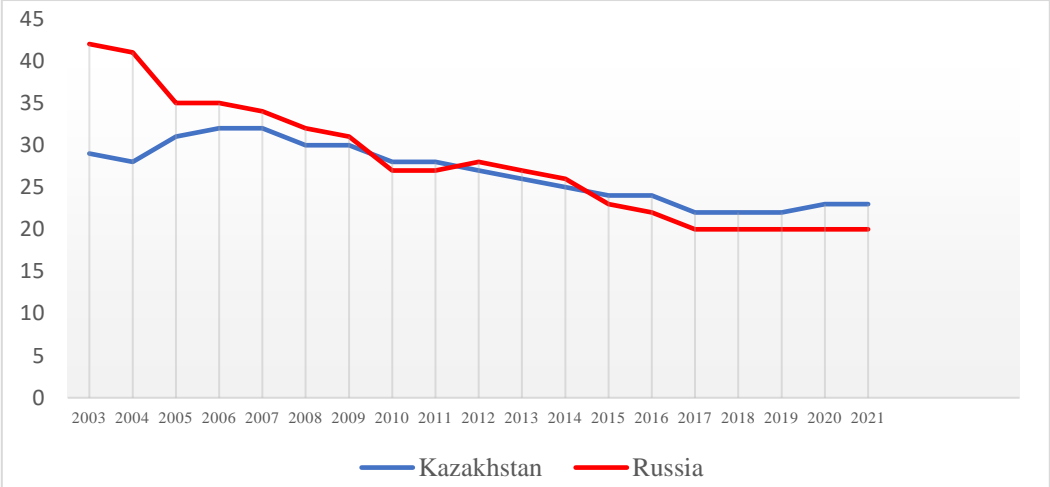
Source: based on data from "Freedom in the World" annual reports, 2003-2021.

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[229] (Freedom in the World 2005: THE ANNUAL SURVEY OF POLITICAL RIGHTS & CIVIL LIBERTIES 2005, 519)

[230] (Freedom in the World Research Methodology n.d.)

Kazakhstan has been having the status of Not Free for all the years under analysis, 2000-2021. Furthermore, the country has faired better than Russia since 2015.

The difference between the scores is due to the differences in the protection of civil liberties in two countries which can be seen in graph below.

Figure 1.3. Civil liberties score in Kazakhstan and Russia, 2013-2021.
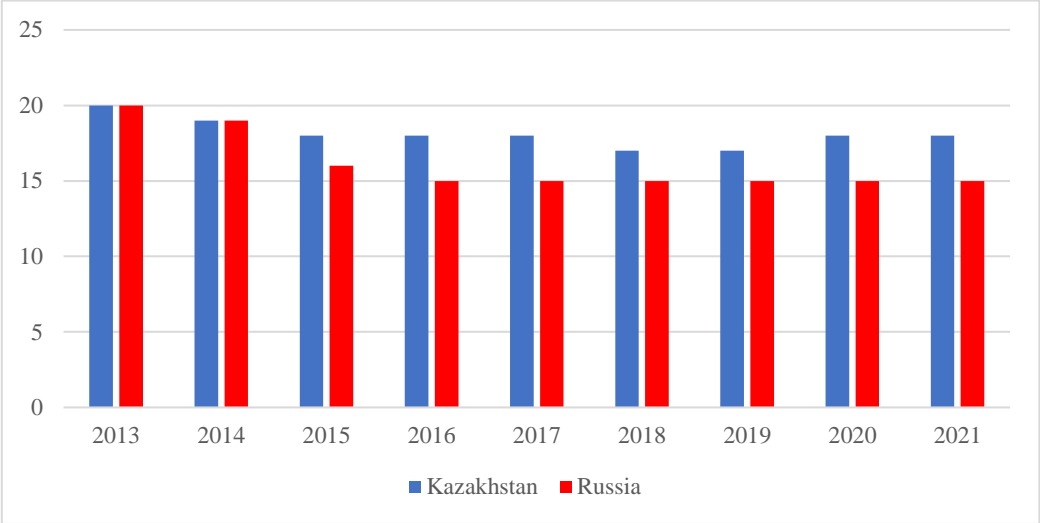
Source: based on data from "Freedom in the World" annual reports, 2013-2021.

1.6.5. Political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to V-Dem Democracy Score.

The Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project provides measure points on various aspects of democracy which are based on the assessments of country experts.[231] The V-Dem graphing tools are freely available at the official website of the project.[232] All graphs are provided with intervals to account for uncertainty and measurement errors. In case of overlapping intervals on the graph, the authors ask to regard values as the same.

Both Kazakhstan and Russia are classified as *electoral autocracies* through the whole period 2000-2020. The score at least 1 on V-Dem multiparty elections indicator meaning the presence of multiparty elections makes a regime at least electoral autocracy.[233]

First of all, autocracies are regarded in Dahl's fashions as where rulers are not accountable to citizens.[234] Electoral autocracies "subject the chief executive and the legislature to de–jure

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[231] (Alizada et al. 2021, 9)

[232] (Graphing Tools n.d.)

[233] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 65)

[234] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 63)

multiparty elections".[235] However, these elections "fall short of democratic standards due to significant irregularities, limitations on party competition or other violations of Dahl's institutional requisites for democracies."[236] To compare, their definition of closed autocracies includes "the chief executive is either not subjected to elections or there is no meaningful, de-facto competition in elections."[237]

The largest discrepancy between Russia and Kazakhstan is in the values of participatory democracy index. (See Figure 1.4. below.)

Participatory component means "… active participation by citizens in all political processes, electoral and non-electoral. It is motivated by uneasiness about a bedrock practice of electoral democracy: delegating authority to representatives. Thus, direct rule by citizens is preferred, wherever practicable. This model of democracy thus takes suffrage for granted, emphasizing engagement in civil society organizations, direct democracy, and subnational elected bodies."[238]

This result is congruent with Polity5 measures which point to better conditions for competitive political participation in Russia compared to Kazakhstan.

Figure 1.4. V-Dem project main democracy indices, 2020.
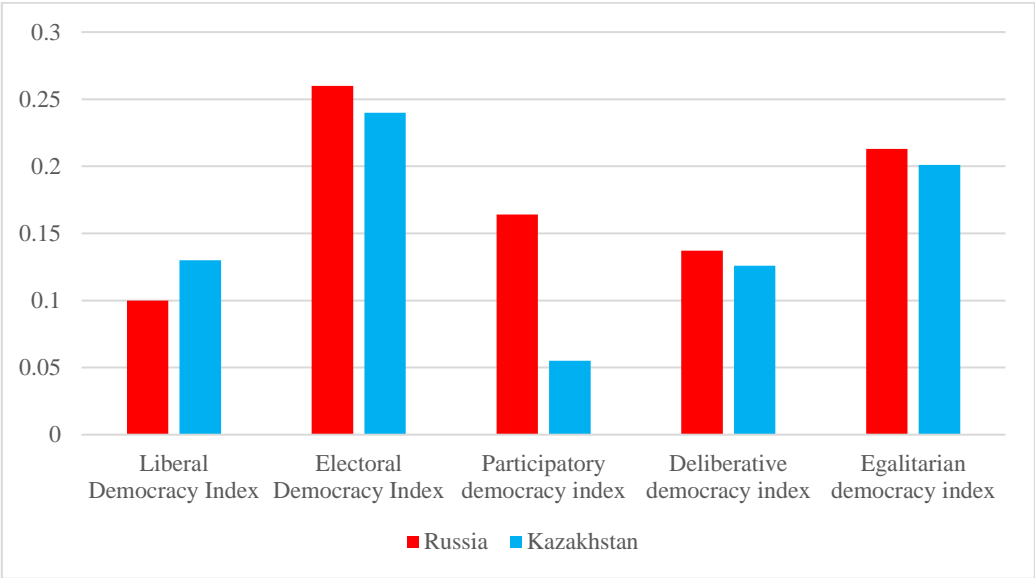
Sources: based on data from (Alizada et al. 2021, 35)

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[235] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 283)

[236] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 61)

[237] (Lührmann, Tannenberg, and Lindberg 2018, 61)

[238] (Coppedge et al. 2021, 51)

Participatory component is defined by civil society participation, elected local government power (elected regional government power), and direct popular vote.[239] Discrepancy between Kazakhstan and Russia is influenced by the absence of popular elections of regional governors and local governors in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan has never held elections into regional goverments. First elections into local governments (only into smallest villages) were held for the first time in 2021.

Direct popular voting as defined by researchers[240] is not practiced at regional levels at all. So, almost complete absence of political participatory mechanisms (except for traditional presidential and parliamentary elections) explains the placement of Kazakhstan in institutionalized autocracies category.

Figure 1.5. Comparative analysis of participatory component indices, 2020.
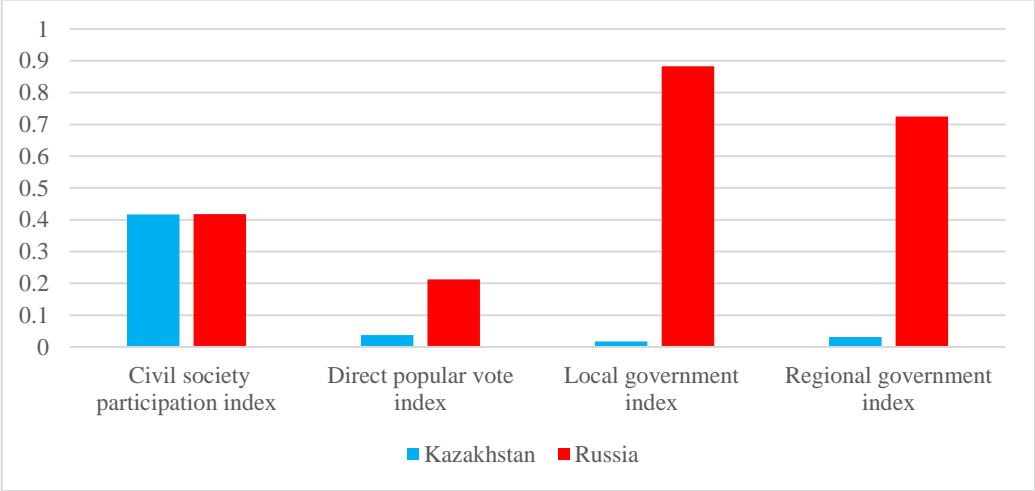
Source: Author.

Liberal Democracy Index is considered as the comprehensive index which includes both electoral elements and liberal. Overall, with score 0.13 Kazakhstan is ranked 143th on Liberal Democracy Index in 2020, and Russia is ranked 153rd.[241]

According to the V-Dem authors the liberal component includes "constitutionally protected civil liberties, strong rule of law, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances that, together, limit the exercise of executive power."[242] Electoral component index includes

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[239] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 51)

[240] "Direct popular voting refers here to an institutionalized process by which citizens of a region or country register their choice or opinion on specific issues through a ballot. It is intended to embrace initiatives, referendums, and plebiscites, as those terms are usually understood." (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 52)

[241] (Alizada et al., 2021, p. 35)

[242] (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 52)

"suffrage", "elected officials", "clean elections", "freedom of association", "freedom of expression and alternative sources of information".[243] These characteristics together caputre together capture Dahl's seven institutions of polyarchy. (Marshall and Gurr 2020, 36) Electoral Democracy indicators are almost the same in Kazakhstan and Russia (Kazakhstan = 0.24 and Russia = 0.261).

Basically, the only contribution into the higher levels on liberal democracy in Kazakhstan is made by liberal component (Kazakhstan scores 0.338 and Russia – 0.238).[244]

Also, Kazakhstan performs a little better on the equality before the law and individual liberty (Kazakhstan=0.61 and Russia=0.49).[245] While Kazakhstan has been demonstrating stable autocratic features through all the years, Russia has been experiencing sharp decrease in democratic qualities since the Putin incumbency. (Figure 1.6.) The figure below shows that since 2013 Russian political system has even faired worse than the Kazakhstani. The V-Dem project provides similar results on liberal and political characteristics of Kazakhstan and Russia to those found in the Freedom House reports.

Figure 1.6. Liberal Democracy Index for Kazakhstan and Russia, 2000-2020.

Source: The V-Dem Dataset. https://www.v-dem.net/vdemds.html
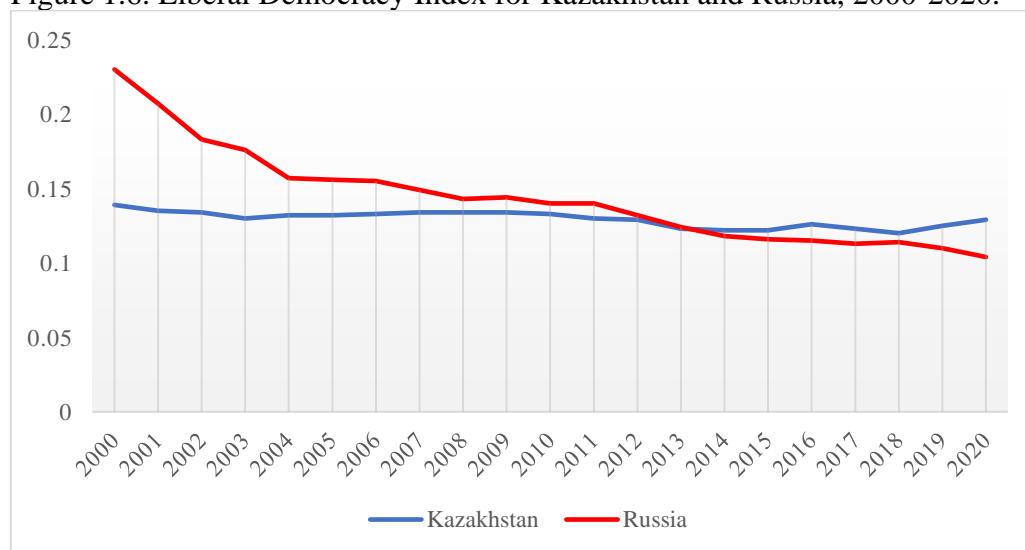
Distinctive feature of V-Dem project is the variety of indicators and nested structure of these indeces which allow to delve deeper into the causes of overall trends.

1.6.6. Political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according to Levitsky and Way (2010).

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[243] (Alizada et al. 2021, 42)
[244] The V-Dem Dataset. https://www.v-dem.net/vdemds.html
[245] (V-Dem Dataset Version 11.1 2021)

Levitsky and Way (2010) did not collect database of political regimes but ranged 35 countries into *full authoritarian*, *competitive authoritarian* and *democracies*. The theoretical contribution of their work is in finding factors affecting further democratization or autocratization of competitive authoritarian regimes, i.e. the diverging pathways of competitive authoritarian regimes after 1990's.

Russia during the period 1990-1995 was categorized as competitive authoritarian. However, the political regime in 2008 was classified as full authoritarian.

Full authoritarian is characterized as:

> … a regime in which no viable channels exist for opposition to contest legally for executive power. This category includes closed regimes in which national-level democratic institutions do not exist (e.g., China, Cuba, and Saudi Arabia) and hegemonic regimes in which formal democratic institutions exist on paper but are reduced to facade status in practice.[246]

The difference between competitive authoritarian and full authoritarian lies in the meaningful competition. Regular elections, opposition parties are able to function, open offices, recruit candidates, organize campaigns, politicians are not subject to exile or imprisonment.[247] However, the difference from democracy lies in the manipulation of state institutions and resources so that it seriously impedes political competition.

The authors substantiate that violation of civil liberties is not enough to be defined as competitive authoritarian because there are such facts as "de facto governing-party control of the private media – achieved through informal proxy or patronage arrangements" which cannot be referred as civil liberties' violations.[248]

Kazakhstan was excluded from the analyzed regimes as it was already full authoritarian or hegemonic authoritarin in 1990's: there is no actual transition period. So, Kazakhstan is referred to as a hegemonic authoritarian regime.

So, the key points for modern Russian and Kazakh regimes is that there is no uncertainty regarding the results of elections. If initially Russia possessed some features of competitive authoritarianism, by 2008 it has turned into full authoritarian regime.

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[246] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)
[247] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)
[248] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 6)

If we follow the history of elections in Kazakhstan both presidential and parliamentary, it is clear that the probability of occasional win of opposition are basically close to zero.

I concur with the position that Russian elections results seem to be closer to allowing opposisional forces. However, the legislation on strong limitations on political parties and regional governors elections basically forbids the presence of true opposition.

1.6.8. Operationalization of political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia according Howard & Roessler (2006).

Datasets on political regimes constructed using expert surveys (like Freedom House) or theoretical classifications of analyzing countries based on author's criteria satisfaction (like Levitsky & Way (2010)) provide sound and reliable data to use for further research by other scholars. However, using theoretical conditions or criteria developed by scholars to classify regimes will mean subjective judgements.

I consider most advantageous approach for researchers is to rely on datasets constructed and calculated by the analytical centers annually. First of all, most recent data are always available for research. Moreover, often methodology is updated by authors to account for some upcoming changes. At the same time, the methodology is harmonized in such a way that newly collected indices and indices from previous periods data can be compared dynamically.

It is possible to combine two approaches for doing empirical research such as in Howard & Roessler (2006) and von Soest & Grauvogel (2017). So, I decided to follow von Soest & Grauvogel (2017) who investigate the legitimation in authoritarian political regimes and in post-Soviet states specifically (von Soest and Grauvogel 2016) and, subsequently, Howard & Roessler (2006) from whom this approach originates. Howard & Roessler (2006) determine the type of a political regime by combining two most commonly used datasets on political regimes – the Freedom House scores and Polity5 (previously, PolityIV) indices.

Howard & Roessler (2006) delineate closed authoritarian, hegemonic authoritarian, competitive authoritarian, and electoral democracies. The rules operationalizing type of a political regime are represented in the table below.

Table 1.3. Operationalizing authoritarian regimes.

Regime type	Measurement criteria
Closed authoritarianism	No multi-candidate national elections for selection of executive
Hegemonic authoritarianism	Freedom House rating ≥ 2 and Polity IV < 6 and winner received $\geq 70\%$ of the vote or seats in previous elections

Competitive authoritarianism	Freedom House rating ≥ 2 and Polity IV < 6 and winner received < 70% of the vote or seats in previous elections
Electoral and liberal democracy	Freedom House rating < 2 and Polity IV ≥ 6

Source: (Howard and Roessler 2006, 368; von Soest and Grauvogel 2017, 10)

This categorization also puts Kazakhstan and Russia into hegemonic authoritarian regimes category. Hegemonic authoritarian regimes by Roessler & Howard (2009) is congruent with Levitsky & Way (2010) hegemonic authoritarianism: regimes where "the restrictions on opposition parties and their political activities, bias in state-owned media coverage, and other forms of repression so severely circumscribe contestation that the incumbent candidate or party does not face the possibility of losing, often leading to a de facto one-party rule."[249]

In 2021 Kazakhstan's Freedom House rating is 4 which makes the country "not free". Most recent Polity5 scores are calculated for 2018. Russia scores 4 on Polity IV which makes it open anocracy. In the last presidential elections current president Vladimir Putin got 76.69% of votes. As a result, Russia complies with the conditions of hegemonic authoritarian regime.

Kazakhstan scores -6 on Polity5 which implies the category of autocracy. Last presidential elections in Kazakhstan took place in 2019. For the first time Nursultan Nazarbayev did not participate. However, not long before the elections he acquired the title of the first president or Leader of the Nation while keeping the position of the Chairman of the Security Council. This title of the Leader of the Nation maintains wide credentials. So, in 2019 K. Tokayev won the presidential election with 70.96% of votes. These figures make the political regime in Kazakhstan a hegemonic authoritarian.

Having summarized the types of political regimes both theoretically and empirically, I was able to operationalize and classify the political regimes established in Kazakhstan and Russia by today.

Conclusion

Political scientists confirm that the world has been experiencing democratic recession since 2007. The third wave of democratization brought about many subtypes of seemingly democratic systems which led to the stretching of the concept of democracy, and as a result the increase of scholarly debates. Thus, modern dictatorship is basically a hybrid regime quite often masked as

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[249] (Roessler & Howard 2009, 108)

democracy by the use of elections. I conclude that core points of an authoritarian regime are distribution of power and alternation of power.

The multitude of research on hybrid regimes should not distract a scholar from the relevance of authoritarianism. That is why a new problem on defining contemporary authoritarianism within this increased volume of academic literature has appeared. In this chapter I attempted to systematize research on what contemporary authoritarianism constitutes.

It allows to enhance possibility for future empirical studies in comparative politics and research of concrete political regimes.

Starting from what democracy is and what democracy is not, I approach non-democratic regimes. This way I conclude that many so called hybrid regimes can actually be referred to as contemporary authoritarian types.

I argue that the extended approach towards democracy is instrumental today for at least three reasons.

First of all, the role of elections has been diminishing mostly due to the internet and informational technologies. Civil society and people at large have acquired a multitude of tools to affect and participate in political decisions (online petitions, the discussion forums for new legislation, etc.). Governmental responsiveness has become a crucial indicator in democracy ratings such as Freedom House, Worldwide Governance Indicators, etc.

Second, due to the internet and higher educational levels globally civil society is expanding. The relationship between education and political participation is straightforward. Third argument is the rising importance of the longevity of authoritarian regimes meaning that alternation of power as an adequate indicator of modern dictatorship so that political regimes should be analyzed in dynamics.

Moreover, these factors are directly impacting modern authoritarian regimes. Some rich autocracies outperform stable democracies in the development of e-governance reflecting that an autocratic government may also be responsive and transparent.

Due to the fact that the minimalist concept of democracy had deeply implanted in modern research, there is plethora of political regimes that are ambiguously floating between democracies and authoritarian regimes which are often called adjectival democracies. The classifications of political regimes are considered to be crucial for future research and theory

building. As such, Geddes and other authors attempt to make predictions regarding the longevity of autocracies based on their type.

As a result of the discussion of democracies and non-democracies, I come to conclusion that the uncertainty about elections, alternation of power, distribution of power or structure of power are the core points distinguishing one from another. Basically, these are also elements of governance. Quality of governance or political institutions started to play a major role.

To be precise, I concur with the argument on the importance of uncertainty of electoral outcome for delinating authoritarian regime from democratic: "lack an arena of contestation sufficiently open, free, and fair so that the ruling party can readily be turned out of power if it is no longer preferred by a plurality of the electorate".[250] If a hybrid regime does not display some uncertainty regarding election results then it can be referred to as an authoritarian regime. That is why I conclude that modern authoritarianism incorporates some hybrid regimes: it is justified to assess hybrid regimes case by case.

The electoral uncertainty is directly linked to alternation of power. Ezrow and Frantz suggest that categorical classifications are based on three criteria: which social groups hold power, the mode of accession to power and its maintenance, and strategies used by the dictator to stay in power. Actually, first two groups are very close to each other. The only difference is that criteria with modes of accessing power imply the presence of formal institutions: elections, hereditary power, etc. The third group based on the strategies of dictators is founded on the principle of the insecurity of dictator. The majority of classifications are based on what social group wields power and, thus, on the structure of power.

Based on the critical overview of literature on non-democratic regimes I systematize main areas of research on these political systems.

- First and foremost, authoritarianism scholarship includes efforts on finding factors differentiating between the types of authoritarian regimes. This literature firstly delineates dictatorships from democracies and then elaborates on types of dictatorships.

- Since 1990's a rising tide of literature on transition and democratization can be observed. Earlier studies on political systems have the common feature of focusing most predominantly either on democracy issues or on totalitarian regimes.

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[250] (Diamond 2002, 25)

- Substantial amount of literature considers the longevity and resillience of authoritarian regimes as their major characteristics.

- The relationship between non-democracy and economic development is a substantial part of political economy literature.

- The role of political institutions, namely, multiparty elections, dominant political parties are gaining popularity among scholars on authoritarianism. The Arab spring events, protests in Gezi square, and 2020 protests in Belarus and most recent history on "bloody January" in Kazakhstan (Januray 2022) instigated research on contentious collective actions in long-standing autocracies.

Other most studied subjects of authoritarianism were presented in Table 1.1.

Earlier scholars looked at political regimes from a different angle. They mostly theorized on behavior patterns of authoritarian governments and dictator himself, and then constructed typologies based on their approach. Most prominent among them are Huntington (1968; 1970) and Linz (1973, 2000). I conclude that earlier works by political scientists (R.Dahl, S.Huntington) became partially obsolete for analyzing modern political regimes because of high attention to the indicator of suffrage and enfranchisement.

Modern literature still exhibits a gap on the Central Asian region which actually should be of high interest since it consists purely of non-democratic states.

Many contemporary studies on non-democratic political systems along with theoretical underpinnings of their typologies, include datasets on the characteristics of regimes. It is undoubtedly of high importance for future research in this area. Usually, such studies classify each country and each year as one regime or another.

In this part of my thesis I elaborated on the classifications of political regimes paying particular attention to the seminal studies in these areas such as Linz (1978, 2000), Geddes (1999, 2014), Levitsky & Way(2010), Diamond (2002, 2008), and others.

Finally, I apply main typologies to the cases of Kazakhstan and Russia. Using case studies of Kazakhstan and Russia, I test oprationalizability of classifications by Geddes (2014), Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010), Levitsky and Way (2010), Howard & Roessler (2006), V-Dem Democracy Score, Global Freedom Score by Freedom House, and Polity5 project.

I conclude that the assessments of international agencies and experts of both Russian and Kazakhstani political regimes resonate despite diverse methodologies and analytical frameworks.

On the one hand, both Kazakhstan and Russia are rated as *personalist dictatorships* in Geddes (2014). On the other hand, they possess indicators of dominant party rule so that even Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) categorized them as civillian dictatorships. However, Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) do not account for crucial details to the level that they do not distinguish a strong personal ruler in these countries.

In this sense, delineating competitive authoritarian and hegemonic authoritarian is justified as it reflects main characteristic of a personal ruling: contestation is so severely barred that the incumbent candidate cannot lose. *Hegemonic authoritarian* character of both Kazakhstan and Russia are observed by Levitsky & Way (2010).

Furthermore, when I apply a combined technique proposed by Roessler & Howard (2009), it allows to conclude that both political systems are *hegemonic authoritarian*.

The description of hegemonic authoritarian is similar among different authors. The crucial point in hegemonic authoritarian regimes: when election results do not demonstrate uncertainty, elections are regarded as a mere tool of legitimisation. Diamond's explanation of hegemonic authoritarianism elucidates main aspects of its practice: "a relatively institutionalized ruling party monopolizes political arena, using coercion, patronage, media control, and other means to deny formally legal opposition parties any real chance of competing for power."[251]

The rating of Kazakhstan and Russia by the research centers allows to trace the dynamic of political regimes in the countries. Polity5 and Freedom House agree on the first term of president Putin being largely democratic.

According to the *Annual Freedom in the World* reports, Russia was Partly Free in 2000-2004, Not Free in 2005-2021. Freedom House rates Kazakhstan with the status of Not Free for all the years under analysis, 2000-2021.

PolityIV project categorized Russia as democracy between 2000-2007 and only after 2008 shifted it into anocracy category. Authors account for autocratization processes only when democratic procedures, specifically, elections are substantially violated. To be precise only

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[251] (Diamond 2002, 25)

when drastic violations took place such as the OSCE observers were not given visas to monitor elections in Russia, the Polity5 project moved Russian system into the mixed category.

V-Dem project describes both states as a single party controlling the executive and legislative branches of the government. Kazakhstan allows for multi-party elections and multi-party legislature. However, the overwhelming majority in parliament belongs to the pro-presidential party Nur Otan. Thus, personalist regime in Kazakhstan has a dominant political party Nur Otan. Personalist regime of Russia also operates through the dominant party United Russia. Although it was established later than in Kazakhstan, the party occupies a central position in the Russian parliament and plays a strong redistributional function among loyalties.

Although, Kazakhstan has been a personal autocracy for longer period of time, it exhibits a better situation with corruption and constraints on the executive. Civil liberties are also better protected in Kazakhstan according to both Freedom House and V-Dem project data (liberal component index is higher). Since 2015 Kazakhstan has faired better than Russia on the scores of civil liberties' protection. Undoubtedly, autocratization processes in Russia accelerated substantially after the first term of Putin's presidency.

I conclude that empirical research like the one by Freedom House and V-Dem Project better reflect dynamic changes in authoritarian regimes than theoretical works typifying regimes. The important advantage of V-Dem project indicators is the availablity of wide range of indicators which allows to measure autocratic governments comprehensively. I suggest that using V-Dem project indicators and Freedom House scores are most applicable for empirical research.

Categorizing states according to several deductical criteria like in Levitsky & Way (2010), Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) provides a very general information on political regime and does not capture changes on time. Geddes et.al. (2014) utilize more criteria and more refined categories.

The contribution of academic scholarship studied in this chapter lies in the construction of a political map of the world. Due to the rise in interest towards measuring authoritarian governments, it was important to highlight pluses and minuses of different typologies and datasets on political regimes. However, it is no less important to investigate internal operation and functioning of authoritarian regimes.

Chapter 2. Authoritarian institutions and the personalization of power in Kazakhstan and Russia.

2.1. Post-Soviet authoritarianism: locating Kazakhstan and Russia.

As I highlighted in the first chapter, the concepts of political regime and governance are intertwined. Still, it is important to delineate governance from other concepts. Researchers either classify and typify political regimes according to minimalist definitions such as one party or multi-party, free and fair elections or no elections, the process of transfer of power (hereditary, by coup d'etat or by elections) or attempt to determine causality between the type of a regime and its durability. The importance of governance in authoritarian political systems is hugely underestimated by scholars.

Why are researchers interested in differentiating between democratic and non-democratic political regimes?

Because it allows to answer fundamental questions of political science:

- Who holds power?
- How is power acquired and transferred?
- How is power exercised?

In democracies power belongs to the elected officials. In autocratic regimes it belongs to someone whose formal characteristics might change any time: sometimes unexpected person as a result of a coup d'etat or revolution.

Power is acquired as a result of free and fair elections in democracies (or sufficiently free and fair). However, in autocracies power is acquired via various modes like revolution, coup, in a hereditary tradition, successor hand-picking and so on.

Power is transferred as a result of elections in democracies. Power transfer in authoritarian regimes may take place as a result of hereditary traditions, decisions of a group of people, like the ruling elites, etc.

The exercise of power is an extensive topic encompassing government, governance, public administration. In modern world power is not only in the hands of government but also in the hands of civil society and nongovernmental organizations. Citizens participate in the discussion of legal acts, bringing up their proposals and recommendations. Whether they are heard or not is what distinguishes democracy from autocracy. Wright (2021) notices about autocratic rule:

"Legislative debates and votes may simply ratify policy choices made elsewhere, and cabinet ministers often implement decisions but do not make them."[252]

This chapter incorporates the analysis of how power is exercised in authoritarian regimes. It includes governance and institutionalization issues.

Previous chapter provided evidence that present days Kazakhstan and Russia represent personalist dictatorships and hegemonic authoritarian regimes. Russia had a short history of democratic development during 1990's and the first term of Vladimir Putin according to Freedom House and Polity IV. Kazakhstan has been rated as personalist dictatorship and autocracy from its very independence without any democratic glimpses. However, the deterioration of democratic practices in Russia accelerated so much in the last decade that by today it demonstrates worse situation with civil liberties than Kazakhstan.

So, the main question is how autocratization processes pointed out by the scholars manifested in the political reality of Russia and Kazakhstan. I attempt to assesses authoritarian institutionalization on the examples of Kazakhstan and Russia. To accomplish my endeavor I utilize comparative legal analysis along with tracing the changes in political institutions dynamically between 2000-2021. The list of all legal acts cited in this chapter is provided in the Appendices section, Table A.6.

First of all, I attempt to locate Kazakhstan and Russia among other post-Soviet regimes on democracy-autocracy and quality of institutions scale. The analysis shows that Kazakhstan and Russia are very close according to their democracy-autocracy and quality of institutions indicators. Institutionalization processes have been very similar in Kazakhstan and Russia.

To measure levels of democracy or autocracy, Freedom House Global Freedom scores are used. I should draw your attention that today Freedom House provides Democracy Scores along the above mentioned and widely known Global Freedom Scores. Democracy score measures democratic governance: "… separate ratings on national and local governance, electoral process, independent media, civil society, judicial framework and independence, and corruption" which basically covers governance issues.[253]

To measure governance or quality of institutions I use *government effectiveness* indicator because it is the closest to public administration issues among other six dimensions.

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[252] (Wright 2021, 17)
[253] (Countries and Territories 2022)

Governnment effectiveness is defined as "the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies."[254] I consider it to be most relevant to governance measures. Closest to that is regulatory state but it is more narrow as it is concerned with the regulation of private sector.

Figure 2.1. below allows to clearly delineate three groups of countries. First group consists of Not Free states as per Global Freedom score by Freedom House (marked by red diamonds): Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. They are also classified as consolidated authoritarian regimes (as per democracy score also by FH rating).[255] Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine are rated as Partly Free (marked by blue diamonds). At the same time Armenia is a semi-consolidated authoritarian regime. Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine are transitional or hybrid regimes. Baltic states are classified as consolidated democracies or Free states (green diamonds on the graph). In a recent article of the Rand Corporation experts on post-Soviet states, Courtney and Yallowitz, dubbed them *mid-tiers*.[256]

The scatter plot shows linear relationship between freedom scores and government effectivenes, but it does not tell us much about causality. Average government effectiveness of the "not free" group is a little lower that average government effectiveness of "partially free" groups and much lower than the average government effectiveness of three consolidated democratic Baltic states. Due to the presence of Georgia in partially free countries, government effectivenes of this group has increased. So, partially free states are still oscillating in low quality of institutions and governance.

Thriving Baltic countries represent a stark example of eschewing Soviet legacy and treading on democracy path: their government effectiveness and freedom indicators are highest among all post-communist countries. In addition, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are members of the European Union and NATO. Their GDP per capita in 2020 by PPP was 36 386 USD which is the same as in Spain and higher than in Central Europe.[257]

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[254] (A Decade of Measuring the Quality of Governance 2007)
[255] (Countries and Territories 2022)
[256] (Courtney and Yalowitz 2021)
[257] (Courtney and Yalowitz 2021)

However, there are two leaders on government effectiveness indicator among the "not free" group: Kazakhstan and Russia. These two countries demonstrate government effectiveness higher than the majority of partially free post-Soviet countries. Still, it does not imply high quality of government effectiveness. Kazakhstan is ranked 73rd on Government Effectiveness between Trinidad & Tobago and Tonga, Russia is ranked 84th between Colombia and Serbia.[258] (with the indicator 0.16 for Kazakhstan and 0.03 for Russia, where -2.5 is a weak government effectiveness and +2.5 is a strong government effectiveness.)

Figure 2.1. Democracy/autocracy and quality of institutions in post-Soviet countries, 2020.
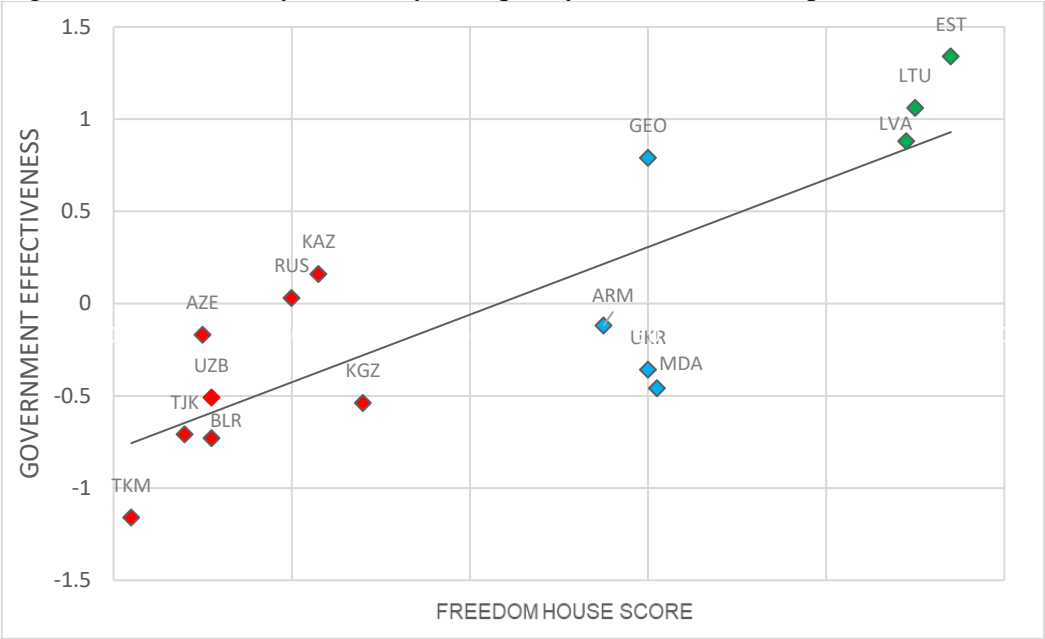
Legend: ARM – Armenia; AZE – Azerbaijan; BLR – Belarus; EST –Estonia; GEO – Georgia; KAZ – Kazakhstan; KGZ – Kyrgyzstan; LTU – Lithuania; LVA – Latvia; MDA – Moldova; RUS – Russia; TJK – Tajikistan; TKM – Turkmenistan; UKR – Ukraine; UZB – Uzbekistan.
Democracy score range is (0;100).
Sources: Freedom House Countries and Territories, https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores; World Government Indicators for the calendar year 2020, https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports

According to the authors of the WGI due to the margins of error, instead of focusing on the point estimates researchers should rely on confidence intervals which overlap for countries that are very close in values of point estimates.[259] So, basically, Kazakhstan and Russia exhibit the same government effectiveness. However, Kazakhstan demonstrate better results on Regulatory State, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. (Figure 2.2.)

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[258] (Government effectiveness by country, around the world n.d.)
[259] (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010, 13)

Figure 2.2. WGI for Kazakhstan and Russia, 2020.
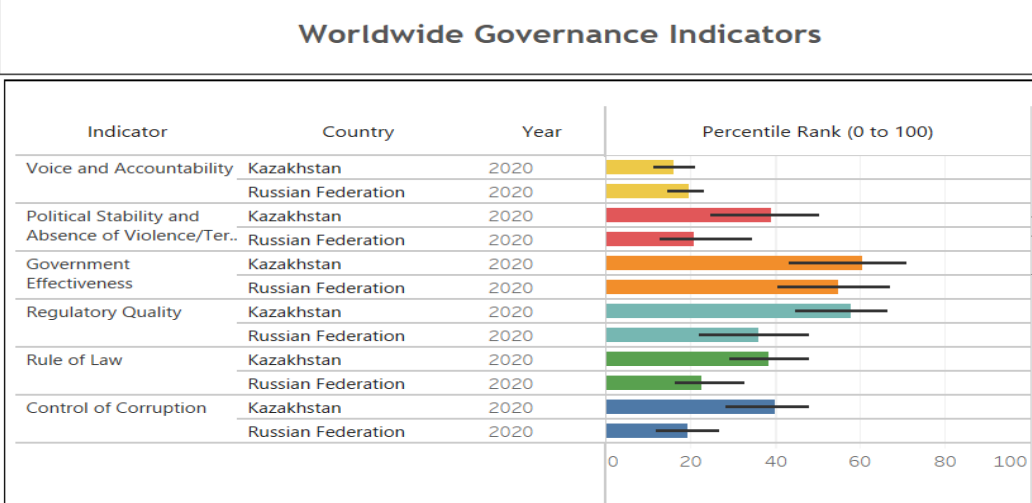
To delve deeper, I provide comparative data on all aspects of institutional quality of post-Soviet states in Table 2.1. Surprisingly, three strong consolidated authoritarian regimes, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia demonstrate very high e-governance development. On e-governance development these three countries are comparable to the group of consolidated democracies Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Since 2018 Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia have been in the group of countries with very high E-Government Development Index. Moreover, Kazakhstan is in the 3rd quartile of the group with very high EGDI in 2020 (meaning higher index that half of its very high EGDI group). Russia, Belarus are in the 2nd quartile of the group with very high EGDI in 2020.[260] In 2014 and 2016 Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia belonged to the group of high EGDI. So, we can observe a stable development of e-governance in these authoritarian nations since 2010.

Legitimation is considered to be major reason why autocracies start developing e-governance.[261]

Table 2.1. Quality of institutions in post-Soviet regimes, 2020.

Country	Global Freedom Score	E-Governance Development Index (EGDI)	Worldwie Governance Indicators					
			Voice and Accountability	Political Stability and Absence of Violence	Government Effectiveness	Regulatory Quality	Rule of Law	Control of Corruption

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[260] ("UNITED NATIONS E-Government Survey 2020 Digital Government in the Decade of Action for Sustainable Development" 2020, 5)
[261] (Maerz 2016b)

Not Free countries								
Azerbaijan	10	0.71 (High EGDI)	-1.55	-0.73	-0.17	-0.31	-0.69	-1.05
Belarus	11	0.8084 (Very High EGDI)	-1.46	-0.73	-0.73	-0.65	-1	-0.17
Kazakhstan	23	0.8375 (Very High EGDI)	-1.19	-0.26	0.16	0.14	-0.4	-0.39
Kyrgyzstan	28	0.6749 (High EGDI)	-0.59	-0.43	-0.54	-0.4	-0.93	-1.11
Russia	20	0.8244 (Very High EGDI)	-1.08	-0.73	0.03	-0.44	-0.76	-0.91
Tajikistan	8	0.4649 (Middle EGDI)	-1.78	-0.52	-0.71	-1.02	-1.22	-1.32
Turkmenistan	2	0.4034 (Middle EGDI)	-2.03	-0.29	-1.16	-1.99	-1.41	-1.54
Uzbekistan	11	0.6665 (High EGDI)	-1.54	-0.44	-0.36	-0.94	-1.06	-1.05
Partialy Free countries								
Armenia	55	0.7136 (High EGDI)	0.04	-0.57	-0.12	0.25	-0.08	0.03
Georgia	60	0.7174 (High EGDI)	0.06	-0.43	0.79	1.11	0.29	0.6
Moldova	61	0.6881 (High EGDI)	-0.05	-0.42	-0.46	0.04	-0.41	-0.57
Ukraine	60	0.7119 (High EGDI)	0.09	-1.16	-0.36	-0.3	-0.67	-0.78
Free countries								
Estonia	94	0.9473 (Very High EGDI)	1.17	0.71	1.34	1.54	1.38	1.61
Lithuania	90	0.8665 (Very High EGDI)	1.01	0.87	1.06	1.09	0.99	0.81
Latvia	89	0.7798 (Very High EGDI)	0.87	0.46	0.88	1.19	0.96	0.72

Sources: Worldwide Governance Indicators. https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports

The first United Nations E-government Survey was accomplished in 2003. At the very beginning of the 21st century the situation was different. The 2001 UN E-Governance Survey states that highest ranks of the E-Government Global Index of above the medium point were reached only by developed industrialized countries wich already had the access to information and more participatory governance in general.[262] Since around 2010 leading positions in the development of E-Governance are no longer shared only by advanced democracies. Autocratic states started entering groups of countries with high EGDI in 2008 according to the UN E-Governance surveys of 2008 and 2010. Researchers started noticing the spread of e-participation in non-democratic regimes.[263] Linde and Karlsson (2013) highlight that between 2003-2008 e-participation improved most rapidly in strong autocratic regimes like Bahrain,

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[262] (Benchmarking E-government: A Global Perspective 2001, 3)
[263] (Åström et al. 2012; Karlsson 2013)

Kazakhstan, China, and Belarus.[264] As a natural consequence, researchers started to focus on the reasons behind this phenomenon.

To conclude, the preliminary analysis shows that Kazakhstan and Russia are similar on the quality of institutions indicators which allows to assume that autocratic institutionalization processes have also been similar.

2.2. Constitutional engineering and authoritarian institutionalization in Kazakhstan.

2.2.1. Dual Power: the First President and President.

No doubt, since 1991 after the establishment of the independent Republic of Kazakhstan, a political regime of Kazakhstan has acquired many distinct characteristics.

Executive power consists of *the first president* "*Leader of the Nation"* (Nursultan Nazarbayev), *the president* and *the cabinet* (government). It is often claimed that Kazakhstan experiences dual executive rule. However, the question of where power resides has many interesting implications.

The double-executive story unfolded in 2019, when the president of twenty-nine-year spell resigned on March 20. According to the constitution, the Speaker of the Senate, K.Tokayev became an interim president till the future elections in 2020. But on April 9 this interim president announced the early presidential election for June 9, 2019.

The first president, N.Nazarbayev, as a leader of the dominant political party Nur Otan, announced his decision that Tokayev would run for presidency from the party Nur Otan. Thus, the elections were announced two months before (which is prescribed about early elections). The candidates for the presidency started to emerge approximately one and a half month before elections. I intentionally describe the dates of the last electoral process in Kazakhstan to provide evidence of how rulers can rule at their own will. The results of the elections are summarized in the table 1 including the results all previous elections.

Strong presidential powers stay after the first president resigns and his successor comes who has been his subordinate for many years. The Human Rights Watch named the current president in the news about upcoming review of Kazakhstan's rights record at the United Nations (UN)

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[264] (Linde and Karlsson 2013, 275)

"the hand-picked successor of President Nursultan Nazarbaev".[265] That is why there is no point in contemplating on changes in the political regime after the presidential elections in 2019. Thus, I study the executive branch as the combination of two institutes, the first president and the president.

Such unions in the executive branch of governance may remind of Putin-Medvedev short-run move which allowed them to secure future presidential positions for Putin. Dual executive in Kazakhstan in practice means the same old executive of twenty-nine year period is still in power.

So, today, there is a unique political institute in the country - the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, called Yelbasy which is translated as the leader of the nation. This was established by the Constitutional Law in 2000 which declared the current president, N.Nazarbayev, as the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.[266] This law states political and legal conditions of Yelbasy, the rights and guarantees provided to him as the identity of exceptional importance. Basically, one person, N.Nazarbayev, represents a separate political institute which can be treated as political innovation. It is not just a title given to one person, it is political institution with all necessary provisions.

Besides being an institute of its own, this person holds several important positions in the political system of the country today[267]:

- The Chairman of the Security Council (lifelong[268]),
- The Chairman of Nur Otan Political Party,
- The Chairman of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan,
- The Chairman of the Council on the National Fund,
- The Chairman of the Higher Trust Fund of the Nazarbayev University, Nazarbayev Intellectual schools and Nazarbayev Fund,
- The Chairman of the International Association of Kazakh minorities,
- Member of the Constitutional Council.

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[265] (Kazakhstan: UN Review Should Press for Reforms. 2019)
[266] (Constitutional Law on the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan-Yelbasy. 2000)
[267] (The First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Elbasy. n.d.)
[268] (Act on the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2018, Article 1.2.)

These positions cover several areas of public policy decision-making: Nur Otan is the leading power in the parliament (84 seats out of 98 elected seats), the National Fund as the safeguard instrument in economic crisis times, University and schools cover a huge project on education. In addition, the first president derives his major competences from his position of the first president and his position of the Chairman of the Security Council:

1. The institute of the first president grants Nazarbayev with important lifelong powers[269]:

    1.1. To address Kazakhstani people, state organs and his initiatives on all public policy matters including foreign policy shall be considered by all relevant state organs and public officials;

    1.2. To speak in the parliament and the cabinet;

    1.3. To be the chairman of the Security Council, the Chairman of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan; be a member of the Constitutional Council.

    1.4. All initiatives on main directions of public policy must be negotiated with the first president.

2. In addition, Nazarbayev's current position as the Chairman of the Security Council vested him with major competences[270]:

    2.1. The discussion of the candidates for chief executive positions of all regions and for chief executive positions of all governmental organs that are accountable to the president. One of the most important organs is the Administration of the President.

    2.2. All candidates for ministerial posts except for the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Internal Affairs are to be discussed with the Chairman of the Security Council before being appointed by the president.[271]

    2.3. The Commander-in-chief of the General Headquarters of the Armed Forces, Commanders-in-Chief of all kinds of armed forces, Commanders-in-Chief of all regional armed forces, the Commander-in-Chief of National Guard are to be discussed with Chairman of the Security Council before being appointed by the president.[272]

    2.4. Government reports once per year to the Chairman of the Security Council about national security and order.

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[269] (Constitutional Law on the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan-Yelbasy. 2000, Article 1.)
[270] (Act on the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2018)
[271] (Order of the President on some issues of the personnel policies in government. 2002)
[272] (Order of the President on some issues of the personnel policies in government. 2002)

Basically, overall control over public policy is vested into the hands of the first president.

Law on the Security Council Act of July 2018 gave the Security Council constitutional powers and made Nazarbayev lifelong Chairman of the Security Council which meant maintaining power after resignation.[273] The resignation the first president took place half a year later, on March 19, 2019. Actually, the Security Council was established in 1993 but basically played only formal advisory role until July 2018.[274]

There is another unique political institute, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, an advisory board formed by the first president. Most importantly, this body elects nine members of the lower house of the parliament who are confirmed by the Chairman of the Assembly, the first president N. Nazarbayev. The last report of the OSCE on the parliamentary elections in 2016 notices that "This provision continues to be at odds with Paragraph 7.2 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document, which provides for "all seats in at least one chamber of the national legislature to be freely contested in a popular vote.""[275]

Also, this body proposes public policy decisions on the issues of national minorities, interethnic peace and unity: to facilitate the communication between state institutes, organizations and civil society on the matters of ethnical, intercultural relationships and peace; to facilitate the development of ethnicities and cultures; to collaborate with the governmental bodies on fight against extremism and radicalism. On the one hand, the establishment of such organization was warranted by multiethnic composition and cultural diversity: more than 100 ethnicities live in the country.[276] On the other hand, in my opinion, it became the only ideological instrument: multiethnical and multilingual population living in peace has always been a matter of exceptional pride. Policy of preserving peace and multiculturalism is often used as the warrant for using repression against any protests and social movements.

The institute of the presidency was established and Nazarbayev was elected the president by the Higher Council of Deputies on April 24, 1990. Still, it was the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic.[277] Both events took place on the same day. As usually, elections had no alternative.

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[273] (Act on the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2018)
[274] (On the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1993)
[275] (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Right. 2016, 5)
[276] (Smailov 2010)
[277] (Order of the Higher Council of the Kazakh SSR on the President of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. 1990)

Later, in October 1990, the Higher Council of deputies enacted the Declaration on State Sovereignty. Finally, Kazakhstan declared its independence on December 16, 1991 when the Higher Council of People's deputies (Parliament) enacted the constitutional law „On the state independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan." Thus far, since 1990 till 2019 Kazakhstan has been ruled by one person, N.A. Nazarbayev.

In general, there is a wide range of power distribution of either more executive or more legislative branch in both forms of government: presidential and parliamentary.[278] Executive can practice a strong dominance in both: parliamentary and presidential systems. There are also semi presidentialism and other forms, but it is not subject of current discussion.

Acemoglu distinguishes two types of political power: de jure political power and de facto political power.[279] De jure political power assumes power allocated to the particular group by political system and political institutions.[280] De facto power basically implies that the elite wields the coercion and repression mechanisms. The analysis of the legislation on the president and the parliament allows to evaluate de jure political power of the president. Tables 2 and 3 in the Appendices list major competences of the president and the parliament. The list of competences of the president is particularly long in relation to the legislative branch.

Even surface level look at the competences of the president allows to see stark clash of interests in case of the Constitutional Council. The president appoints the Chairman of the Constitutional Council and two members out of six other members. In addition, housing, transportation and other provisions, medical service of the members of the council are decided by the president. The competence of this organ includes controlling the legitimacy of the presidential and the parliamentary elections, referendum; if parliament initiates the impeachment of the president, it controls the procedure as to the constitutional norms. At the same time the Law states that the council is self-sufficient and independent from other state organs, organizations and public officials and is subordinate only to the constitution.[281]

Thus, I see strong dependence of the Constitutional Council on the president which makes it impossible to function as truly independent organ. The Constitutional Council takes into consideration claims addressed only by the president, judges and several parliament members.

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[278] (Fish 2011, 2; Lijphart 2012, 115)
[279] (Acemoglu 2009, 21)
[280] (Acemoglu 2009, 20)
[281] (Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan 1995, Article 1)

It also severely contaminates legal system in the country. Such legislation creates ripe conditions for high echelon corruption and patrimonialism.

Another conspicuous collision concerns the Central Election Committee. Again, the president appoints the chairman and two members of the Central Election Committee.[282] Its functions include administering all election processes including elections of the president: checking the legitimacy of each candidate, organizing examination of the candidates, and eventually approving or disapproving each running candidate.

In general, I see presidential form of government provide fertile grounds for further growth of authoritarianism. As in the presidential forms of government "presidents derive considerable strength from their direct popular election and the fact that they can claim that they (and their vice presidents, if any) are the only public officials elected by the people as a whole."[283] Then a ruler is able to hide all his decisions behind this kind of legitimacy. That is what occurred in Kazakhstan. I can conclude that there is no state organ that is not impacted by the executive branch.

Executive-legislative balance of power is an important feature of any political system. Where does the actual power reside? Fish and Kroenig[284] conducted a survey in all countries of the world and measured the legislative power according to 32 indicators in 2006. As a result, they constructed Parliamentary Powers Index (PPI) which ranges from zero (least powerful) to one (most powerful), is a score that reflects a legislature's aggregate strength. Kazakhstan scored 0.38 in total on the level of legislature strength which is comparable with such sultanistic nations as defined by Linz[285] as:

- Central African Republic with the score 0.34[286],
- Uganda – 0.44[287],
- Equatorial Guinea – 0.31[288].

These scores reflecting weak legislature support my conclusions on the legislative branch in Kazakhstan.

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[282] (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995, Article 44)
[283] (Lijphart 2012, 117)
[284] (Fish 2011, 1)
[285] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 9)
[286] (Fish 2011, 125)
[287] (Fish 2011, 696)
[288] (Fish 2011, 283)

2.2.2. The role of legislature in the political system of Kazakhstan.

Scholarship on authoritarian regimes has been expanding to include research on legislative politics there. Studies largely focused on legislature's role in the political economy, in particular power-sharing role.[289]

It is generally concluded that in authoritarian regimes legislatures have no real lawmaking decisions because they can be overridden by a dictator.[290]

Current constitution of 1995 established two-chamber parliament creating bicameral legislature: an upper house is Senate and a lower house is called Majilis.[291] The Senate consists of 34 elected deputies (32 up to 2018) and 15 deputies appointed by president. Thirty-four are elected by members of local legislatures. Majilis consists of 107 deputies, 9 of them are elected by the Assembly of the people of Kazakhstan.

Legislature's institutional autonomy is quite weak. First of all, there are fifteen members of the Senate (upper house of the parliament) who are directly appointed by the president. Also, there are members of the lower house of the parliament who are basically indirectly appointed by the first president: they are elected by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan whose chairman has always been N. Nazarbayev, while being president up to 2019 and the first president since then. Moreover, the Senate's speaker (the Chairman of the Upper House of the Parliament) is nominated by the president and then approved by the members of the parliament.[292] Last but not least, the legislature is not immune from dissolution by the president. In addition, the president has a right to initiate early parliamentary elections. All these characteristics render Kazakhstani Parliament an impotent institute or "pocket parliament" (term used in Kazakhstan to describe the country's parliament).

Let's delve deeper into the analysis of the relationship between executive and parliamentary powers. I am curious to know how much influence Kazakhstani parliament is able to exercise if we imagine that it is an independent and democratically elected organ.

First, the parliament has a right to oust the executive. However, the Constitutional Council's and the Supreme Court's of Justice participation is required; to be precise, the report on

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[289] (Bonvecchi and Simison 2017; Krol 2021; Magaloni 2008)
[290] (Magaloni 2008)
[291] (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995, Article 50)
[292] (Constitutional Law on the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Status of its Deputies. 1995, Article 9)

procedural compliance from the Constitutional Council and an official decision of the Court of Justice.[293] At the same time, the Chairman and two members of the Constitutional Council are appointed solely by the president. Also, the president nominates all judges and the Chairman of the Supreme Court who are then confirmed by the Senate. The executive's role in these judicial organs is so strong that even with the adequate and democratically elected parliament, it would not be possible to oust the president.

Second, the parliament's right to exercise a vote of no-confidence to the cabinet bears no real consequence because then the president makes a final decision on the resignation of the cabinet. The competence of the parliament to accept reports and question ministers and cabinet in general does not assume any repercussions: for example, no resolutions or decisions of the parliament are mandatory to be implemented by the cabinet.

Third, the president appoints the prime-minister after the deliberation with the lower house of the parliament. The parliament also confirms the majority of the ministerial candidates except for three ministers: the minister of foreign affairs, the minister of internal affairs (police) and the defense minister. Actually, the president gets confirmation for his candidates not only from the parliament but also from the Chairman of the Security Council (the first president). So, in this case the parliament and the Security Council exercise the same power. However, the president can release the prime-minister or any minister from office freely without any consultations with the parliament. Thus, the constitutional power of the executive regarding the public policies implemented in the country provide conditions to the president for acting at his own will.

Fourth, Kazakhstani parliament has some influence over two agencies of coercion: The National Security Bureau Chairman and the Public Prosecutor General are confirmed by the Senate but proposed and appointed by the president. Other agencies of coercion are overseen solely by the president who appoints the minister of internal affairs and the defense minister without any consultations. Moreover, the first president as the Chairman of the Security Council confirms all the Commanders-in-Chief of all armed forces. So, real power of coercion and military defense is in the hands of the executives.

Fifth, the legislative act returned by the president with his objections can be overridden by two-thirds majority vote in the lower chamber and then by two-thirds majority vote in the upper

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[293] See the details in the Table A.3. on parliamentary competences in the Appendices to this chapter.

chamber of the parliament. Regarding constitutional laws, overriding presidential objections is harder, supermajority of three-fourths is needed. In addition, the act returned by the president must be considered within one month. In my opinion, such technical tricks play major role in many political processes weakening democratic procedures and making them undoable.

Sixth, the influence of the executive over the legislation lies in that the president has a right of legislative initiative by submitting legal acts to the lower chamber of the parliament. Moreover, the president has a right to prioritize legal acts under consideration meaning that high priority legislation must be considered within two-month period. The role of the president in the legislature is considerable: his public policy decisions can be smoothly legalized.

To summarize, democracy cannot be realized through the parliament with paltry powers. Every major competence of the parliament is locked in a vicious circle: final decision is directly or indirectly made by the executive. To conclude, legislature's instruments to influence and control government are minute. Kazakhstani parliament does not have power to make legally-binding decisions.

2.2.3. The history of amendments to the constitution of Kazakhstan.

The purpose and at the same time the outcome of the weak legislature is politically unilateral process of changing institutional design and amending constitution in accordance with the will of one person.

Strong presidential powers also comprise the right to initiate amendments to constitution and legal acts. President has a right to issue an act on amendments in the constitution for consideration by the parliament. The parliament introduces these amendments and additions on the constitution proposed by the president of Kazakhstan at the joint sessions of the parliament.[294] Amendments and additions to the constitution shall be approved by supermajority of no less than three-fourths of votes in each house of the parliament.

Also, amendments and additions to the constitution can be voted for or against in all-nation referendum. However, it is the president who authorizes referendum. The parliament can only propose referendum and the president has a right to call off the proposal.

The first constitution was adopted in 1993. According to the first constitution, parliament wielded more powers than according to the second constitution of 1995 that is functioning now. The second constitution was adopted by the public referendum after being under public

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[294] (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995, Article 53)

deliberation for one month only which is obviously too short for public to consider and deliver necessary public discussions and objections.

By far, current Kazakhstani Constitution survived five amendments. First amendments were enacted in 1998, then 2007, 2011, 2017 and 2019. All changes adopted concerned the powers of the president. Moreover, these changes systematically and substantially reinforced the executive powers of the president. Unsurprisingly, the president is the one who proposes an act with the amendments to the constitution which is then enacted by the parliament. Below I attempt to analyze and show it in more detail.

- In 1998, presidential term was increased from five to seven years while the term of the members of the lower house of the parliament was reduced from six to five years.[295] The requirement on a candidate for presidency being under 65 years was removed. The requirement that presidential elections are recognized as legitimate in case of more than 50% turnout was cancelled.

- In 2007 a new addition to the constitution established that the constraint that the same person cannot be elected as president more than twice does not extend to the first president of Kazakhstan, N.Nazarbayev.[296] Also, the president received extra powers: he forms the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and Higher Judiciary Comission.

- In 2011 an amendment introduced that the president had a right to initiate early presidential elections.[297] Strengthening of the executive powers is obvious.

- In March 2017, an amendment to the constitution stated that the independence, unity, territory, a form of government established by the founder of independent Kazakhstan, the first president (N.A. Nazarbayev), as well as his status are immutable.[298] The manipulation of contitutional text is evident in this amendment. Sovereignty and independence of Kazakhstan was proclaimed as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. New state, the republic of Kazakhstan, emerged naturally from Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic with all its borders and cultural identity as a consequence of the demise of the Soviet Union. It is not possible to establish a "founder" per se.

[295] (Law on amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1998)
[296] (Law on amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2007)
[297] (Law on amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2011)
[298] (Law on amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2017)

However, 2017 amendments were largely hailed by the state-controlled media as to be extending the power of parliament. As a matter of fact, one statement was removed from the constitution: the parliament with two-thirds of vote can delegate the legislative function to the president for a period of no more than one year. This legal occasion was inserted into the constitution in 2007 and removed in 2017.

Another 2017 amendment included that other constitutional acts could introduce extra requirements for the eligibility of a candidate for presidency. This statement can be seen as a legal way to prevent alternative candidates in the future presidential elections. Actually, this article of the constitution was almost immediately capitalized on. In June 2017, the parliament adopted the amendment to the legislation on elections that five-year civil service or the elected position experience were mandatory for a candidate running for presidency.[299] Most importantly, self-nomination was abolished. Taking into account the fact that the registration and the existence of independent political parties were basically impossible, these amendments excluded any possibility of an unexpected candidate for the ruling elites.

- Last amendments took place in 2019 when the name of the capital of Kazakhstan was changed from Astana to Nur-Sultan, which is the name of the first president.[300] This decision was made by the temporary president Tokayev immediately after the resignation of the first president. It was allegedly an act performed to confirm the commitment to the current political regime in the country.

2.2.4. Electoral system in Kazakhstan.

Although electoral systems are usually determined by ordinary legislation, Sartori (1994) includes it into constitutional engineering because "every political form hinges on its electoral arrangements just as much as on its architectural (and more properly constitutional)".[301]

To understand the executive branch in Kazakhstan, it is crucial to know the history and the conditions of the presidential elections as they reflect the pathway and methods of autocratic regimes. Table 2.2. below summarizes the results and votes cast at all presidential elections to be discussed here.

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[299] (Act on Elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan 1995)
[300] (Law on amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2019)
[301] Sartori (1994, 140)

Table 2.2. Results of presidential elections in Kazakhstan.

Date of elections	Turnout	Details	Share of votes
December 1991	88,2%	N.Nazarbayev	98,7 %
Referendum 1995: On the prolongation of Nazarbayev till 2000.	91,26%	"Yes"	95,46 %
1999 (early)	86%	1. Nazarbayev 2. Abdildin (Communist party)	**79,78 %** 11,7 %
2005 (early)	77%	5 candidates: 1. Nazarbayev 2. Tuyakbay	**91,15 %** 6,61 %
2011 (early)	89,98%	4 candidates: 1. Nazarbayev 2. Kassymov	**95,55 %** 1,94 %
2015 (early)	95,22%	3 candidates: 1. Nazarbayev 2. Syzdykov	**97,75 %** 1,61 %
2019 (early)	77.5%	7 candidates: 1. Tokayev 2. Kossanov 3. Yespaeva	**70.96%** 16.23% 5.05%

Note: Data for 2011, 2015, 2019 elections The Central Election Committee website. Retrieved from https://www.election.gov.kz/rus/news/messages/index.php?ID=2205&sphrase_id=22253, https://www.election.gov.kz/rus/news/messages/index.php?ID=2186&sphrase_id=22253, https://www.election.gov.kz/rus/news/releases/index.php?ID=5289.

First direct presidential elections took place in 1991 with the only candidate, Nursultan Nazarbayev, before official Declaration of Independence in December 1991.

Second presidential elections were to be held in 1996. However, in 1995 the Assembly of the people of Kazakhstan proposed a referendum on the prolongation for the presidency of Nazarbayev till 2000 which outcome was predictable due to high approval ratings and reputation of the president when the country was receiving petrodollars from rich oil industry: 95,46% voted for the prolongation.

So, the second early elections of the president of Kazakhstan in 1999 were first multiple candidate elections.

Third presidential elections expected in 2006 should not have had the incumbent running because the limit on two terms for one person had been exhausted. However, in 2000 the Constitutional Council announced that the presidential terms that had started before 1999 could not be taken into account because the current Constitution was adopted in 1995 meaning that

the presidential terms should be counted since then.[302] Thus, Nazarbayev had a right to run for one more term. No wonder, with such a high influence of the president over the chairman and the members of the constitutional council that they interpret the legislation in favor of the president and to secure the president in his seat. That is why he participated and won the elections in 2005 again with 91.15% of votes.

Along with this decision of the Constitutional Council, the year 2000 was notable by the Constitutional law on the First President of the republic of Kazakhstan which gradually granted him unlimited powers and a special status "Elbasy – the Leader of the Nation".

The next elections of 2011 and 2015 allowed the president Nazarbayev running again because of the amendment to the constitution in 2007 which stated that due to the special status as the first president, he is exempt from the limit on two terms.

Except for the first presidential elections in 1991, all next six elections were early ones. I suggest that early elections were used as the way to forestall the emergence of unexpected alternative candidates and .

Thus, the referendum on the prolongation of the term of the incumbent president, reinterpretation of the constitution, endowment of the special status and the establishment of the institute of the first president became crucial instruments in subverting democratic institutes and ruling at one's own will.

Particular attention should be paid to extremely high turnout rates of the electorate. Does it imply high political socialization, political consciousness, and active participation of the people of Kazakhstan or something else? Here, I would like to cite the reports of the OSCE observers on the last elections in Kazakhstan in 2019:

> The campaign was low-key and generated limited public interest. While no candidate reported difficulties with requesting a campaign venue, the requirement to receive permission to hold a public event ten days in advance, rather than to provide notification, is contrary to international standards. There were multiple cases in which police conducted questioning and detentions to break-up or to prevent peaceful gatherings.[303]

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[302] (Regulatory Decree of the Constitutional Council of the RK on the official interpretation of the Article 5.42 of the Constitution of the RK 2000)

[303] (International Election Observation Mission, Republic of Kazakhstan, Early Presidential Election, 9 June 2019. Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions. 2019, 2)

I suggest that the political participation is encouraged to the level enough to maintain the ruling elite in power. All alternative views are repressed severely which became particularly vivid to all in the last couple of years in Kazakhstan.

Polity IV country report describes 1995 referendum and 1999 presidential and parliamentary elections: "Opposition parties were harassed and denied fair access and leading opposition candidates were routinely disqualified. By September 2004 elections, Nazarbayev had institutionalized his followers as the Otan (Fatherland) and had discarded any pretense of competitiveness."[304]

Most importantly, modern legislation of Kazakhstan creates legal hurdles to the registration of new parties: party must list 40,000 documented members; parties based on ethnic origin, religion, or gender are prohibited. Not to mention that the authorities are very reluctant in the registration processes and are free to prolong the process.

The 1999 elections also had severe problems with "free and fair elections" because the main opponent Kazhegeldin was not admitted to run for presidency because of minor administrative transgression.

The same policy of repression and intimidation for alternative views was present in 2005 elections. So, all presidential elections undermined the presence of any kind of opposition even if it were a single person with peaceful picketing.

Along with the limited political participation, political inequality grew to immeasurable hights. The fact that political inequality has reached its peak is seen from the frequent demonstrations and protest movements with political claims for the change of political regime, transition to parliamentary form of government, resignation of certain political figures. Basically, political inequality means the division of the people of Kazakhstan into the elite and the citizens; when public policies are formed and realized in favour of the elite and preferences of ordinary citizenry are not taken into account.

As with the presidential elections, it is usual practice to call for early elections.

Members of the lower house of the parliament are elected by party-list proportional representation voting system. In Kazakhstan multi-member constituencies are used. Members of the Senate are elected by the municipal councillors by the majority of votes. That is why

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[304] (Polity IV Country Report 2018)

when I discuss parliamentary elections I imply elections into the lower house of the parliament, Majilis.

First elections into the parliament took place in 1995, those elections were based on the majoritarian electoral system in multiple electoral districts corresponding to the geographical regions of the country.

Second parliamentary elections took place in 1999. It is interesting to note that the leading political party Nur Otan was founded in 1999 just before the second elections into the parliament when the party-based proportional voting was realized for the first time. The chairman of Nur Otan has always been the first president himself. This party does not associate itself with a pure social-democratic or liberal ideas. The absence of such ideology implies the absence of political mobilization and thwarts the sense of social and political participation.[305] The usual practice of accepting the employees of the state organizations, namely, hospitals, schools, factories, etc. into the party Nur Otan largely realized in Kazakhstan does not create the sense of political participation in society. Such party members are used in the administrative purposes. According to the OSCE reports on 2019 elections: "The de facto over-representation of Nur Otan in election commissions is at odds with the aim of the Election Law, which entitles each party to one seat on lower-level election commissions, and raises concerns regarding the impartiality and integrity of commissions provided for by international standards."[306] Thus, electoral corruption is inherent in both presidential and parliamentary elections.

The results on all five parliamentary elections are summarized in Table 2.3. below.

Table 2.3. Results of parliamentary elections (Majilis, Lower Chamber of Parliament).

Date of elections	Turnout	Party	Votes cast
1999 (early)	62,5 %	**Nur Otan** Communist party Agrarian party	**31 %** 17,7 % 12,6 %
2004	56,5 %	**Nur Otan** Democratic Party Assar party	**60,61 %** 12 % 11,3 %
2007 (early)	64,6 %	**Nur Otan** National social-democrats Democrats	**88,4 %** 4,5 % 3 %

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[305] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 24)
[306] (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Right. 2016, 7)

2012 (early)	75,4 %	**Nur Otan** Democratic Party Akzhol" Communist Party	**81 %** 7,5 % 7,2 %
2016 (early)	77 %	**Nur Otan** Democratic Party Akzhol" Communist Party	**82 %** 7,18 % 7,14 %

Source: Data for all years from the official website of the parliament of Kazakhstan. Retrieved from http://www.parlam.kz/ru/mazhilis/history?id=history.

The figures show that the alleged popularity of the presidential party Nur Otan was growing with every election.

Today Majilis consists of 106 members, 7 deputies come from the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, 84 (out of 98 elected deputies) are from Nur Otan; other two parties take 7 seats each. Figures here confirm the exceptional skewness of power towards the dominant political party. Independent observers of the OSCE confirmed in their report: "The political landscape is characterized by the dominance of Nur Otan and a lack of genuine opposition in the country, with several prominent critics of the government either imprisoned or living in exile."[307]

Taking into account that these two other official parties are sham and functioning as with the purpose to show some alternativeness in politics, the situation is more dire. The Freedom House Report in 2018 described the legislative elections as not meeting democratic standards: "Irregularities including ballot box stuffing, group and proxy voting, and manipulation of voter lists have been reported, and the ruling party benefits from a blurred distinction between it and the state."[308]

Thus, in addition to strong executive powers the president and the first president capitalize on their parliamentary supermajority to impose restrictions on or assert control over the opposition, the media, asylum seekers, and the private sector.

Adoption of new legal acts restricting political parties was exercised by Kazakhstani authorities as well as in Russia. In July 2002 Act on political parties increased requirement on membership from 3 000 to 50 000 members with minimum number of members in each region, capital city and cities of the republican level to be equal to 700 members. As a result, in 2003 out of 19 existing parties 7 parties were reregistered.

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[307] (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Right. 2016, 4)
[308] (Freedom in the World 2019. Kazakhstan country report n.d.)

In 2009 new amendments envisaged the required minimal membership to be equal to 40 000 members and at least 600 members in each region.[309]

With newly elected president Tokayev the government attempted to show liberalising reforms. The minimal membership was reduced from 40 000 people to 20 000.[310] Furthermore, new law installed quota for women and young people of up to 29 years old: they must constitute at least 30% of all deputies in the lower chamber of parliament and at least 30% of deputies in local legislatures.[311]

Obviously, the manipulation of legislation to curb oppositional forces is an outstanding feature of political regime in Kazakhstan. Multiparty elections in authoritarian regimes have been studied extensively as a new phenomenon inherent to democratic recession of the 21st century. As a result, holding elections does not correspond to a regime being hybrid but well institutionalized authoritarian regime.

2.3. Constitutional Engineering and authoritarian institutionalization in Russia.

2.3.1. Russian Constitution: the history of power personalization.

As I mentioned in the theoretical part, Berkovitz, Pistor & Richard (2003) came to conclusion that transplanted legal systems cannot be firmly established and have weaker effect than home-grown legal systems. In post-Soviet authoritarian regimes, home-grown institutions take hold because they fit the interests of the rulers or ruling elites. This trend is one more argument for the endogenous character of political institutions. Political institutions are shaped by those who are in power.

Particularly, 2000's appear to be period for the spread of home-grown institutions and legislation both in Russia and Kazakhstan. Because in authoritarian regimes political institutions are largely shaped by those who are in power. The examples of Russia and Kazakhstan provide evidence for this argument.

There are several perspectives on post-Soviet authoritarianism. In contrast to research on post-Soviet Central Asia, literature on post-communist development of Russia is immense. In case

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[309] Act on amendments and additions to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhsan "On political parties" by February 6, 2009, № 122-IV: https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z090000122_

[310] Article 1.2, Act on amendments and additions to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhsan "On political parties" by May 25, 2020, № 336-VI. https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=33966664&pos=3;-108#pos=3;-108

[311] Article 1.3, Act on amendments and additions to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhsan "On political parties" by May 25, 2020, № 336-VI. https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=33966664&pos=3;-108#pos=3;-108

of the Russian political regime, scholars advance the importance of Soviet legacy in modern political system be it in the executive branch[312] or law enforcement organs[313].

Sakwa emphasizes the dualism of the Russian political regime which is reflected in the coexistence of constitutionalism (elections, parties and pluralism are enshrined in the Russian constitution) and authoritarianism. Sakwa (2004) concludes that "A power system stands outside of constitutional institutions and processes, governed by its own rules and understandings (ponyatiya, a code of mutual comprehension) which together comprise an 'informal constitution'."[314]

Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted in 1993 and since then has been dubbed as the most liberal constitution of Russia.[315] The constitution has undergone amendments in 2008, 2014, and 2020.

2008 amendments were initiated by the newly elected president Medvedev in his National Address. Presidential terms was extended from 4 years to 6 years, State Duma deputies' term – from 4 to 5 years.[316]

In 2014 president acquired competences to nominate a candidate for the Prosecutor General and candidates for the deputies of the Prosecutor General which had to be then appointed by the Federation Council (the upper house of parliament). President also acquired a right to appoint all regional prosecutors.[317] As a result the Prosecutor General lost competences to appoint his deputies and the regional prosecutors.

In addition, in 2014 president acquired a right to appoint up to 10% of the members of the upper chamber of parliament, the Federation Council.[318] His appointees are considered to be representatives of the Russian Federation as a whole while the Federation Council is composed of the representatives from all regions of federations.

Undoubtedly, most memorable event in the recent history of Russia is the adoption of constitutional amendments in 2020. This time amendments to the constitution were proposed

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[312] (Huskey 2014)
[313] (Karklins 2002; Shelley 1990; Taylor 2014)
[314] (Sakwa 2020, 23)
[315] (Pomeranz 2020)
[316] (Federal Law on the Amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of December 30, 2008 N 6-FKZ "On Changing the Term of Office of the President of the Russian Federation and the State Duma" n.d.)
[317] (Law on the amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of February 5, 2014 N 2-FKZ "On the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation" n.d.)
[318] (Law on the Amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of July 21, 2014 N 11-FKZ "On the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" 2014)

for a nationwide vote.   Referendum resulted in around 78% votes in favour of the amendments with voter turnout 67.97%.[319]

First, in January 2020 president proposed amendments stating the supremacy of the constitution over international legislative norms in Family Code, Civil Code, Criminal Code, and other legal acts[320]. Not long after, in March 2020, the deputy of the Council of Federation, Valentina Tereshkova – first ever woman cosmonaut – suggested that Putin's previous terms should not be counted towards the total. As a result, previous terms are nullified which allows Putin to remain in power for 12 more years till 2036. Tereshkova's proposal was based on the idea that the amendments were changing the constitution so substantially that the president's terms under the old version of the constitution cannot be counted.[321]

In spite of three packages of amendments, the suggestion on the nullifying of previous terms instigated most acute debates. Oppositional activists, experts and international organizations met the innovations negatively. Radio Freedom Europe cite experts on the amendments who called the process a "Soviet-style "initiation" of a political move".[322] Freedom House described it as "a highly choreographed referendum".[323] The whole intitiative was called "a big show" in the blog post of the Wilson Center author.[324]

However, the referendum took place in summer 2020 and resulted in landslide support by population: 77.9% of voters were in favor of the constitutional amendments, 21.2% voted against while the voter turnout was 67.97%.[325]

Constitutional reforms also touched upon governance system. In his intitiative Putin introduced a new concept "public power": "I consider it necessary to consolidate in the constitution the principles of a unified system of public power (edinaya sistema publichnoi vlasti), and to build effective cooperation between state and municipal bodies."[326]

A seminal amendment of 2020 is granting the State Council the status of the constitutional state organ in the amendments of 2020. The Federal Law on State Council of the Russian federation

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[319] (The course of the all-Russian vote on the approval of amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation n.d.)
[320] See, for example, (Draft law On Amendments to Articles 6 and 165 of the Family Code of the Russian Federation n.d.)
[321] (Teague 2020)
[322] (Russia's Constitutional Court Approves Amendments Allowing Putin To Rule Until 2036 2020)
[323] (Russia n.d.)
[324] (Pomeranz 2020)
[325] (Lisitsyna 2021)
[326] (Teague 2020)

states that State Council decides on major issues of internal and foreign politics of the country, socio-economic development; on the policies of socio-economic development of all regions and municipalities of Russian Federation, facilitates functioning of the state organs and the whole system of public power.[327] President chairs the Council.[328]

The State Council was founded in 2000 by the special order of president Putin.[329] The State Council consists of the representative of the president in federal units, governors of federal units, chairs of the Federation Council and the State Duma, chairs of political fraction in the State Duma. The role of the State Councuk according to Petrov et.al. lies in:

> … this system gives governors on the Presidium direct monthly access to the president and special authorization for policy initiative during their terms, affording them the opportunity to voice regional concerns about existing policy or problems of implementation, to inform the Kremlin about the state of affairs in their regions, and to suggest new ideas for new policy originating outside of Moscow.[330]

This body is similar to the Security Council in Kazakhstan which also decides on strategic goals of internal and foreign policies, socio-economic development and so on. This body allowed Nazarbayev to rule from behind the scenes after stepping down in 2019. Basically, a constitutional status of the State Council allows the president to prepare the grounds for further ruling from behind the scenes after 2036.

The process looks very similar to the actions taken by the first president, N.Nazarbayev, long before his resignation in 2019 when he revived the Security Council and then ensured himself the position of a life-long Chairman of the Security Council.

Another similarity in the autocratizaiton processes of Kazakhstan and Russia. Devising so called "substitutions" is a characteristic feature of the authoritarian regimes who want to mimick democracy. The stark example is the Public Chamber (Obshchestvennaya palata). During the Putin first administration the Public Chamber was founded which consisted of several prominent public figures and members of NGOs who gathered for consultation. This was kind of a substitute for parliament.

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[327] (Federal Law No. 394-FZ of December 8, 2020 "On the State Council of the Russian Federation". n.d., Article 3.1-3.2)

[328] Article 8.1 (Federal Law No. 394-FZ of December 8, 2020 "On the State Council of the Russian Federation" n.d., Article 8.1.)

[329] (New State Council: why does Putin need it? 2020)

[330] (Petrov, Lipman, and Hale 2014, 11)

Similar institute was established by president Tokayev in Kazakhstan in 2019, the National Council of Social Trust which handpicked several public figures and social activists for deliberation on the most important issues in all policy areas.

Sakwa described these capacities towards engineering new instituions as: "The creation of para-constitutional bodies, such as the seven (later eight) federal districts, the State Council and the Civic Chamber, did not repudiate the formal framework of the constitution but weakened public accountability mechanisms in favour of administrative rationality."[331]

The above mentioned amendments ensured president Putin's immunity should he leave office and become the Chairman of the State Council. As a result of the 2020 amendments, competences of the Russian president expanded considerably. Ex-president has acquired a right to be senator, member of the Federation Council for life. President acquired lifelong immunity meaning that the current legislation bans criminal and administrative charges and investigation of ex-president of the RF for cases furing his presidency. Also, he cannot be detained, arrested, searched, interrogated about the cases during his presidency. He can be stripped of the integrity or heavy crimes after the permission of the State Duma and the Federation Council.

Kazakhstani ruler devised secure conditions for himself much earlier. As such, Kazakhstani authorities have gone further and stipulated full financial, infrastructural provision and maintenance of the same living conditions as during the presidency for the first president and his family, where the notion of family is defined broadly as people living with him.

Russian president sits at the top of Russia's legal hierarchy. Comparative table (Table A.4. in the Appendices) provides evidence on the vertical hierarchy of both political systems, in Russia and Kazakhstan.

President of the RF directly determines 30/170=17.6% seats in the Federation Council. President of Kazakhstan determines 15/47=32% seats in the Senate. Since the upper chamber of the Russian parliament also largely consists of United Russia members.

Russian President holds tight control over judicial system in the country. He appoints and dismisses prosecutors of all federation units (regions), prosecutors of military and other specialized structures equated to the regional level prosecutors after consultation with the

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[331] (Sakwa 2020, 46)

Federation Council. Kazakhstani president does not determine the fate of regional prosecutors' offices.

In Kazakhstan, president has a tighter grip on the Election Committee: president appoints the Chairman and two members at his will.

Following the events shaping the balance of power in the political system of Russia, I observe similarity with the events in Kazakhstan. In the case of Kazakhstan, the establishing new institutes such as the Leader of the Nation, the title of the first president can be regarded as personality cult. Since Kazakhstan's first president is older than Putin, that is why the amendments to the constitution on prolongation of presidential terms took place earlier.

2.3.2. The evolution of the Russian federalism and new centralism.

As Russia has federative state organization, the article 12 of the 1993 constitution enshrined autonomy of (*sub'ekty federacii*) local self-governments. While federal and regional governments are state organs, municipal level is not state level. Local self-governments are not part of the system of state organs.[332] Structure of local self-governments as well as the borders of their territories used to be determined by the population independently.[333] In 2020 self-governments entered the united system of public power (however, not of state organs). Although, they are still not state organs, they are integrated into the power hierarchy of state bodies. So, 2020 amenments allowed state organs to participate in the organization/formation of self-governments and appointments and dismissal of self-government officials and executives. As a consequence, autonomy of self-governments is compromised.

In 2020 amendments the opportunity to declare certain territories of the country "federal territories" emerged with the purpose of administering them directly. Teague (2020) considers this potential possibility as a way towards turning Russia from federal state into a unitary state. According to the legislators, the point is to improve coordination of decisions and public policies between local and state organs. Unified hierarchy of state power similar to the Soviet type has unfolded.

However, experts on Russian politics highlight that recentralization of power started earlier, from the beginning of 2000's.[334] The term recentralization spread implying actions to build

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[332] (Constitution of the Russian Federation of December 25, 1993, as amended on December 30, 2008. n.d.)

[333] Article 131, (Constitution of the Russian Federation of December 25, 1993, as amended on December 30, 2008. n.d., Article 131)

[334] (Gel'man 2006; Golosov 2014)

centralized governance after a period of liberal reforms under Boris Yeltsyn. In 1995 presidential decree established direct gubernatorial elections (elections of governors of the constituent entities of Russian Federation). In 2004, president Putin abolished elections of governors at the federal units (regions) in the aftermath of the horrible terrorist attack in Beslan.[335] He insisted on the need to strengthen power vertical to successfully fight terrorism:

> War on terrorism is the state task which requires the mobilization of all resources. Obviously, the coherence of all actions of executive vertical must be there. Also, in my opinion, to provide for the unity of state power and coherent development of federalism, common participation of federal level and regional level in the formation of regions is necessary. That is why senior officials of the constituent entities of Russian Federation must be elected by legislatures after the nomination by the president.[336]

The same year the amendments to the Law "On principles of the organization of state organs of the federal units of the RF" were adopted which enshrined the right of president to nominate candidates for regional governors (gubernators) which then had to be approved by local legislatures. Also, president could dismiss a governor for reason of the loss of trust.

Gel'man concludes that political changes of the first term of Putin (2000-2004) formed *new centralism.* The author argues for new centralism taking place because of the following events and processes[337]:

1) Establishing seven new federal districts where an envoy of the president had to fulfil the functions of control over the activity of regional branches of federal ministries and monitoring the work of the presidents' of autonomous republics and heads of regions. Most importantly, presidential envoys had to work on legal conformity of regional constitutions to the national constitution.[338]

2) In 2000 the rules of the formation of the Federation Council changed. The Federation Council consists of two representatives from each federal unit of RF (sub'ekt RF): one from regional legislature and one from executive organ. Representative of the executive

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[335] (History of elections and appointments of heads of subjects of Russia 2019)
[336] (Opening remarks at an expanded meeting of the Government with the participation of the heads of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation 2004) The original Russian quote is provided in the Appendices section to this chapter.
[337] (Gel'man 2006, 98)
[338] (Sakwa 2020, 62)

organ is appointed by the head of the constituent entity. Representative of regional legislature is elected by this legislature. Earlier, Between 1995 – 2000 the Federation Council included the head of the region and the head of regional legislature from each constituent entity of the country. Obviously, they fulfilled their duties at the Federation Council part-time.

3) President's right to dismiss the heads of the constituencies and to dissolve parliament in case of the court decision on violation of federal laws also forced regional elites to complacency.

4) Tax system was changed in a way that the volume and proportion of federal taxes increased. As a result, regional and municipal budgets appeared to be more dependent on transfers from Moscow.

Federal districts with a presidential envoy are characterized by Sakwa (2020) as Putin's first major institutional innovation.[339]

Informal politics between the Center and regions exacerbated. Kremlin was rewarding loyal regional elites and prolonged their rule for more terms. Also, in exchange for favorable results of federal elections or redistribution of property, the Center kept the loyal heads of regions in their positions or transferred them for higher positions in Moscow.[340]

Centralism or recentralization penetrated elections and political parties, too. Golosov (2014) describes this period as:

> The new party law, adopted in 2001, endowed national political parties with an exclusive license to run candidates in regional elections and restricted the number of licensed parties by limiting the entrance into the arena of party politics. Local political parties that existed in a few regions of Russia before the reform were thereby subjected to rapid extinction. With the new tools for party regulation at hand, the authorities made an effort to restrict the most important alternative to political parties in regional elections, the independent candidacy. This was achieved by adopting a law according to which no less than one-half of representatives (deputies) in a regional legislative assembly, or its lower chamber, were to be

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[339] (Sakwa 2020, 62)
[340] (Gel'man 2006, 99)

elected by proportional representation rules, which meant a party-list system in the Russian legal context.[341]

The 2001 law on political parties was more restrictive but not prohibitive. Probably, because the goal of the federal center was to facilitate party development: because the end of 1990s in the country were characterized with political disintegration.[342] Under the new Law on political parties, to be registered as political party several conditions had to be satisfied. It had to have branches in more than half of regions of the country. The total number of members had to be at least 10 000 with the condition that in no less than half of the regions it formed branches of no less than 100 members, and no less than 50 in the remaining regions.

For the first time in the Russian post-communist history pro-presidential party United Russia emerged as the dominant force in the electorate in 2003 national legislative elections.[343] By winning 37.6% of the popular vote and absorbing independent deputies and small parties, United Russia gained constitutional majority.[344] I should remark that the UR was founded only two years earlier, in 2001.

Further on, in 2005 the membership requirement was increased from 10 000 to 50 000 members and branches of 500 and more mebers at least in half of regions of RF; the state registration body had to monitor all parties on their ability satisfy all the new requirements.[345] The central authorities efforts turned out to be very effective: out of 37 parties that existed by the end of 2005, only six parties left by the end of 2009.[346]

The federal center also stregthened its capacity to control regions by the introduction of propotional representation in regional parliamentary elections in 2003 which opened doors to regions for United Russia. At least half of deputies of regional parliaments had to be elected by proportional voting system.[347]

Directly elected governors used to have strong autonomy and were pivotal actors of regional politics in 1990's.[348] Their independence and isolation from the Kremlin are the most probable

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[341] (Golosov 2014, 1)
[342] (Golosov 2012, 4)
[343] (Golosov 2014)
[344] (Results of elections to the Duma of the IV convocation 2003)
[345] (Golosov 2012, 5, 2014, 12)
[346] (Golosov 2014, 12)
[347] (Federal Law "On the Introduction of Additions and Amendments to Article 4 of the Federal Law "On the General Principles of Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Bodies of State Power of the Subjects of the Russian Federation" n.d.)
[348] (ORA JOHN Reuter 2010; Söderlund 2005)

causes of new centralism of Putin's politics. Experts on Russian politics saw regionalism, specifically, regional coalitions as the crucial obstacle to pro-governmental party's United Russia (Edinaya Rossiya) control over regional legislatures.[349] Thus, the federal center applied lots of efforts to tame unpredictability of regional elections.

To conclude, Polity IV describes the process of Putin's centralization:

> He has used this majority (United Russia majority) to reassert central control over Russia's wayward regions and diminish the constraints on the presidential authority from regional leaders. He relieved regional leaders (governors) of the right to sit in the Federation Council thus reducing their influence over federal policy and also stripping them of their immunity from criminal prosecution. Putin also introduced legislation empowering the president to dismiss democratically elected governors and regional legislators if they violated federal law.[350]

New centralism or recentralization are the terms that describe Putin's 2000's. Decentralization of federal powers took place during the Medvedev's term whose presidency "the game of musical chairs".[351] President Medvedev restored elections of the heads of constituent entities of the RF in 2012. The reason behind these steps lies in the failed 2011 national legislative elections which resulted in unprecedented protest rallies against widespread fraud in elections. The peak of protesters numbers were at 100 000 people who gathered at the Sakharov avenue.[352] Interestingly, ex-Minister of Finance Kudrin, first and only president of the USSR, M.Gorbachev, participated in the protest rally.[353] Protesters called for the cancelation of election results, the investigation of alleged violations and the repeat elections.

The authorities took a series of steps in the aftermath of these protests in 2012: party registration rules and governor selection rules. Gubernatorial elections were restored in 2012, however, with some important stipulations. A candidate of any registered party or self-nominee was eligible for running in gubernatorial elections.[354]

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[349] (Gel'man 2006; Golosov 2014)
[350] (Polity IV Country Report: Russia 2010, 3)
[351] (Baturo and Elkink 2014, 860)
[352] (Rallies for fair elections gathered tens of thousands of Russians 2011)
[353] (Rallies for fair elections gathered tens of thousands of Russians 2011)
[354] (Federal Law No. 40-FZ of May 2, 2012 "On Amendments to the Federal Law 'On the General Principles of Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Bodies of State Power of the Subjects of the Russian Federation' and the Federal Law 'On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right to Participate' in the referendum of citizens of the Russian Federation" n.d., Article 1.3.)

To be registered as a candidate, a prospective candidate had to collect 5-10% signatures of deputies of all regional parliaments. In addition, signatures had to be collected from no less than three-fourths of the municipal councils. Considering that United Russia nominated the majority of regional deputies (mostly because of proportional system in the regions), a prospective candidate had to be informally supported by the municipal executives.[355] To conclude, in spite of the return of gubernatorial elections, the risk that an unexpected candidate would run for governor's office were minimized.

I conclude that regional factors in the political development of Russia play a substantial role in contrast to the Kazakhstani politics. Kazakhstan as a unitary state has never had experience other than vertical hierarchy of state power. All 17 regions of the country are run vertically by the central authorities. Governors of regions (*oblasts*) are appointed by the president himself. When Putin came to power in 2000, the lack of control over federational units by the Moscow facilitated new legislation on political parties and elections. As a consequence, the federal center gained control over the regions of Russian Federation.

2.3.3. Party system and legislative branch of Russian Federation.

Perspectives on political parties in Russia are quite diverse. Sakwa (2020) supports this argument from the very onset of Putin's presidency genuinely oppositional parties were effectively neutralised either by adopting new restrictive legal acts on parties or by co-optation: "With remarkable speed Putin eliminated genuine sources of autonomy in society: the governors in Russia's regions, the 'oligarchs' in the economy and independent parties with the capacity to achieve governmental turnover in political society."[356] Golosov (2012) mentions that at the end of 1990's political parties were "fluid, unsustainable, and lacking stable societal bases; and the country's inability to create a viable party system was generally—and justly—considered to be a critical obstacle to democratic development".[357]

National political parties were necessary to stop political disintegration of the 1990s. Gandhi & Przeworski (2006) and Reuter (2010) agree on the opinion that a dominant party emerges when the rulers face opposition from the elites and need to co-opt while these elites hold or held

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[355] (Golosov 2012, 12)
[356] (Sakwa 2020, 60)
[357] (Golosov 2012, 4)

enough political resources. So, initially, regional powers threatened the regime stability and needed to be co-opted with when Putin came to power.

So, what are the advantages of dominant party in the non-democratic regime for the leader? Probably, the most vivid reason for the Russian case is the party as a mechanism for co-opting elites, particularly regional, and securing their loyalty.[358] Reuter (2010) describes the role of the United Russia party in the sense that:

> The party is increasingly being used as a forum for distributing rents, patronage, spoils and influencing policy. This is accomplished chiefly through intra-party vote trading. Voting discipline among pro-presidential Duma deputies rose precipitously with the creation of the United Russia fraction after the 2003 elections. With ironclad discipline the party has now become the primary channel for patronage distribution in the State Duma… he fourth and fifth Duma, the party supplanted the 'zero-reading' (a consultative, pre-floor intra-party vote trading mechanism where individual deputies bargained with the government) with closed door meetings of the fraction Presidium.[359]

To conclude, dominant party rule in Russia does not imply traditional understanding of dominant party regime when a ruling council or a politburo wields decision-making authority. Dominant party is just an instrument for a personalist ruler. The same is true for Kazakhstan.

The evidence from Kazakhstan and Russia suggests that dominant party increase resilience of autocracies because "parties provide ideal organizational mechanisms for the coordinated execution of decisions, not necessarily their collective formulation."[360]

Since recently, the central authority has evolved into such power that any threat towards the center is violently curbed. The recent story with the governor of the Far Eastern Khabarovsk krai, Sergei Furgal, poses a good example. The president dismissed a governor for the reason of the loss of trust. Being a member of the LDPR, Furgal was elected against a candidate supported by United Russia. The ex-governor was charged with murders which allegedly took place more than ten years ago.[361] Citizens of the region rose to never seen before in Khabarovsk protest marches. According to estimates, in a city with the population of only 600 000 people,

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[358] (Brownlee 2007; Magaloni 2008)
[359] (Reuter 2010, 296)
[360] (Slater 2003, 97)
[361] (Khasina and Coalson 2020)

between 5000 – 35 000 people took part in the demonstration.[362] In addition, it was one of the long-standing protest rallies in the country. We can judge it from the multiple journalist reports: 78th consecutive days of protest, and so on.[363] Co-optation of the early 2000's transformed in direct repression and violence of the rare cases of independence. Chain of events such as arrest of the orthodox priest for publicly backing the convicted governor, mass arrests of protesters confirm the repressive character of the political regime.[364]

Furthermore, after summarizing the information provided by regional offices, I found that currently, in 2021, 60 heads of federal units out of 85 in total are coming from United Russia. Besides, 14 heads of federal units were proposed by United Russia.

Today the elections are narrowed down to the choice between different "different facets of the hegemonic regime bloc": the matter is in the title of the party – United Russia (UR), Communist Party of RF(CPRF), or Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR).[365]

Undoubtedly, UR fit the definition of a hegemenic party. The party occupies 324 seats out of 450 in the State Duma in 2021. Table A.5. in the Appendices provides information on the results of all national legislative elections and seats taken in the State Duma of Russia.

In 2007 and 2011 national legislative elections to the State Duma proportional system was used: all 450 deputies were elected by party lists. In 2003, 2016, and 2021 both proportionate and majoritarian systems of voting were used. It was Putin's first term when the introduction of the proportional representation electoral system was made.

The data provided shows that the lowest share of seats taken for United Russia were in the very first elections – 49.4%. In 2007, 2016, and 2021 United Russia achieved a two-thirds constitutional majority (70%, 76.2%, and 72% correspondingly).

In spite of electoral fraud all opposition partied increase their percentage of votes in 2011, whereas United Russia has not reached 50% which is much less than 64% in 2007 elections. Experts estimate that the real numbers are more significant – by rough estimates UR support should be below 40%.[366]

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[362] (Reuters 2020)
[363] (Current Time 2020)
[364] (Siberia.Realities 2021)
[365] (Sakwa 2020, 60)
[366] (Trenin et al. 2011)

The OSCE observers assessed the vote count as bad or very bad in every third polling station: namely, serious departures from counting procedures of the Central Election Committee such as marked ballots not shown to the observers, unused ballots not counted, ballot box stuffing, signatures of those who voted not counted, the number of ballots found in mobile boxes exceeded the number of applications but these ballots were not invalidated as was required by law. [367]

What are the reasons for the Russian soicety to succumb to these autocratic trends? Petrov et.al. argues that the Russian regime has been ruling by disengaging society through several methods: censorship and manipulation of media and the provision of certain public goods, some economic growth, and minimal volumes of governance.[368]

As a result of outright frauds in the 2011 national parliamentary elections, the year 2011 had a turbulent december when massive protest rallies against rigged and fraudalent elections took place all over the country and, particularly, in Moscow. December 4 and December 10 gathered largest numbers of people in Moscow which I mentioned in the previous section. These events spurred the amendments to legislation initiated by president Medvedev.

In the aftermath of these protests, in 2012, the authorities took a series of steps: party registration rules and governor selection rules. I discussed the changes to the regional governors' elections in the previous subsection on russian federalism. Here I touch upon the changes in legislation on political parties.

Namely, law on political parties was liberalized: the membership requirement was decreased from 10 000 to 500 people and some other technical requirements were eased.[369] However, Golosov highlights that there were many other reasons for refusing registration to a new party: "Now the window of opportunity is wider, but players who can assure the government of their relative harmlessness will be the primary beneficiaries. Against anyone unwilling to provide this guarantee, the Ministry of Justice has an entire armory of possible injunctions."[370]

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[367] (Russian Federation, State Duma Elections, 4 December 2011 2012, 18)
[368] (Petrov, Lipman, and Hale 2014, 2)
[369] (Federal Law No. 28-FZ of April 2, 2012 "On Amendments to the Federal Law 'On Political Parties'" n.d.)
[370] (Golosov 2012, 7)

In addition, this law prohibited the formation of electoral blocs. Party was allowed to fill its lists with only its own members or independents (not members of other parties). According to Golosov (2012) it restricted the opportunities for coalition politics for opposition.[371]

United Russia has turned not just into dominant party but a hegemonic party. Sartori in his seminal book *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* defines hegemonic party systems:

> The hegemonic party neither allows for a formal nor a de facto competition for power. Other parties are permitted to exist, but as second class, licensed parties; for they are not permitted to compete with the hegemonic party in antagonistic terms and on an equal basis. Not only does alternation not occur in fact; it cannot occur, since the possibility of a rotation in power is not even envisaged. The implication is that the hegemonic party will remain in power whether it is liked or not. While the predominant party remains submissive to the conditions that make for a responsible government, no real sanction commits the hegemonic party to responsiveness. Whatever its policy, its domination cannot be challenged.[372]

However, United Russia is undoubtedly far from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in its penetration into social and everyday life. Historically, dominant parties differ in how much they are imbibed into social and political life.

To sum up, the birth of a hegemonic party system started during the first incumbency of president Putin.

The constitution of Russian Federation proclaims a democratic and federal state with the republican form of governance.[373] Pluralism and multi-party system if officially enshrined in the article 13 of the Constitution. Two chamber parliament consists of the upper chamber Council of Federation and the lower, State Duma.

According to the Constitution, the upper chamber of parliament, the Federation Council, consists of two representatives from each constituent entity of RF (sub'ekt RF): one from regional legislature and one from executive organ. Representative of the executive organ is appointed by the head of the constituent entity. Representative of regional legislature is elected

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[371] (Golosov 2012, 7)
[372] (Sartori 2005, 205)
[373] (Constitution of Russian Federation n.d., Article 1)

by this legislature. Needless to say that since the overwhelming majority of governors are members of United Russia, at least one representative from each region in the Federation Council is expected to come from United Russia, too. The majority of regional legislatures (as was stated earlier in this section) are nominated and endorsed by United Russia which also leaves no room for "error".

The formation of the upper chamber of parliament in Kazakhstan is similar to the one in Russia which also leaves no choice but the pro-presidential party Nur Otan.

1.7. Kazakh sultanism and Russian neopatrimonialism.

Among earlier classifications and theories, I pay particular attention to Linz (1978, 2000).

For many years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, academics classified former soviet countries as transition democracies. It is clear by now which countries have actually moved ahead towards democracy and which have slid into authoritarianism.

Long-standing autocracy in Kazakhstan allows to delve deeper into understanding the nature of its autocracy. Russia as per political regimes datasets mentioned in Chapter 1 experienced some period of competitive authoritarianism with more or less meaningful elections in the end of 1990's – beginning 2000's. However, the Russian system has grown out of competitive authoritarian into a hegemonic authoritarian.

Taking into account current political institutes, executive-legislative disbalance and other factors discussed above, I conclude that the political regime in Kazakhstan resembles the sultanistic regime and Russia demonstrates neopatrimonialism features propounded by Linz in his seminal books (Linz 2000; Linz and Stepan 1996).

Patrimonialism and its extreme level, sultanism, were first conceptualized by Weber in *Economy and Society* (1920).[374] Linz developed the group of sultanistic political regimes as separate from authoritarian and totalitarian regimes in early 1970's: "Difference between these and authoritarian or totalitarian regimes are not merely a matter of degree but lie in their rulers' overall conception of politics, the structure of power, and the relation to the social structure, the economy, and ultimately the subjects of such rule."[375] Thompson (1995) studies in detail one of the stark examples of sultanistic regimes, Marcos regime in Philippines.

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[374] (Weber 2013)
[375] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 4)

In this section, I argue that the Russian political system demonstrates the signs of neopatrimonialism and the Kazakhstani system – signs of sultanism.

Sultanism as the extreme degree of neopatrimonialism means that it includes all features of neopatrimonialism and adds some extra characteristics. The concept of neopatrimonialism coincides with earlier term patrimonialism: the only difference is the prefix neo- referring to modern patrimonial elements and mechanisms.

It is very entertaining to observe how theoretical conclusions realize practically almost 50 years after the first distinction of sultanistic regimes as separate from the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.

The presence of democratic institutions is not uncommon to sultanistic regimes: elected president, parliament and even multi-party system. As Linz noticed: „Sultanistic rulers also often turn to plebiscites to prove their democratic legitimacy; heedless to say, they never lose one. Plebiscites are part of the democratic facade that sultanistic rulers like to erect, but they also create the image of a charismatic leader who rules by popular acclamation."[376] Strong single party rule of the Soviet times basically transformed unstoppably into single person dictatorship with the regularized multi-party elections in Kazakhstan.

I will start with the first crucial characteristic of sultanistic regimes is "the sultanistic practice of regulating all relationships through individual privileges and bestowals of favor."[377] Legal base of the president's (and the first president's) power is constructed in such a way that the executive decides on all major appointments in the state. This way the ruler's patron-client relationships are cemented leading to strong neopatrimonialism.

As such Hale describes Nazarbayev's political regime as: "Kazakhstan supplies a classic case where a patronal president has sustained high popularity, has shown no signs of preparing to step down soon, and has accordingly presided over tight elite network coordination around a single- pyramid system."[378] In the same book, Hale points to strong patronage networks in Russia and describes Russian political system in a way that: "Already by 2003–4 and without question by 2007–8, therefore, Putin had effectively combined virtually all major networks into

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[376] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 19)
[377] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 10)
[378] (Hale 2014, 249)

a single patronal pyramid that was so tightly bound that few even thought a serious challenge was possible, marginalizing those who would not play along."[379]

Huskey is congruent with Hale highlighting some defree of technocracy and neopatrimonialism in Russia:

> All authoritarian regimes, of course, lack politicians in the Western sense, but what makes Russia noteworthy is the continuing embrace of discursive and recruitment patterns that represent an odd blend of technocracyand neopatrimonialism. Just as during the tsarist and Soviet eras, executive power in contemporary Russia rests in part on a complex and opaque network of family circles whose members occupy strategic positions in state institutions and in the commanding heights of the economy.[380]

Subsequently, neopatrimonialism is characterized by blurring the lines between state and regime: "Beyond the ruler himself, his immediate relatives, and his close associates or "cronies;' the sultanistic state is characterized by an absence or perversion of legal-rational norms that is unrelated to an ideological project, and by rampant corruption and venality."[381] Centralism politics facilitated by Putin's presidency is evidently had the purpose of constructing such relationships.

Another characteristic of neopatrimonialism is weak links with civil society – narrow social base – basically emerges as a result of patrimonial character. Chehabi and Linz state that:

> In the end the social bases of a sultanistic regime are restricted to its clients: family members of the rulers and their cronies. For these, however, loyalty to the ruler derives only from their own interests rather than from any impersonal principles, for which reason they do not constitute a distinct stratum, group, or social class.[382]

I suggest that "the sultanistic practice of regulating all relationships through individual privileges and bestowals of favor"[383] is also the reason of limited political participation in Kazakhstan.

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[379] (Hale, 2014, 275)
[380] (Huskey 2014, 119)
[381] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 11)
[382] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 20)
[383] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 11)

Next intriguing detail about the theory of sultanistic regimes is that armed forces play a specific role in the sultanistic regimes: "Often there is no unified command, and the commanders of each force report directly to the rulers."[384]

The president in coordination with the Chairman of the Security Council (the first president) appoints the commanders of virtually all kinds of armed forces in Kazakhstan. Thus, there is no doubt that military forces are concentrated solely in the hands of the executive power. Similarly, in Russia the president is the Commander of all armed forces.

Overall, the data by V-Dem project also points to strong neopatrimonial features in Kazakhstan and Russia.

In short, neopatrimonialism includes clientelism, unconstrained ruler and the use of public resources for legitimation. The index from V-Dem project consists of three subcategories: Clientelism, Presidentialism and and Regime Corruption. Most importantly, this measure describes the extent to which the president is free from constraints by other institutions.

Neopatrimonial Rule Index is represented in the figure below. Although the situation has always been similar in Kazakhstan and Russia, Russian system has shown less patrimonial character up until 2002. More overlapping can be observed between the two lines on the dynamics graph of Neopatrinominal Index. Since 2016 the regimes have acquired basically the same amount of neopatrimonial features.

Figure 2.3. The dynamics of Neopatrimonial Rule Index, 2000-2020.
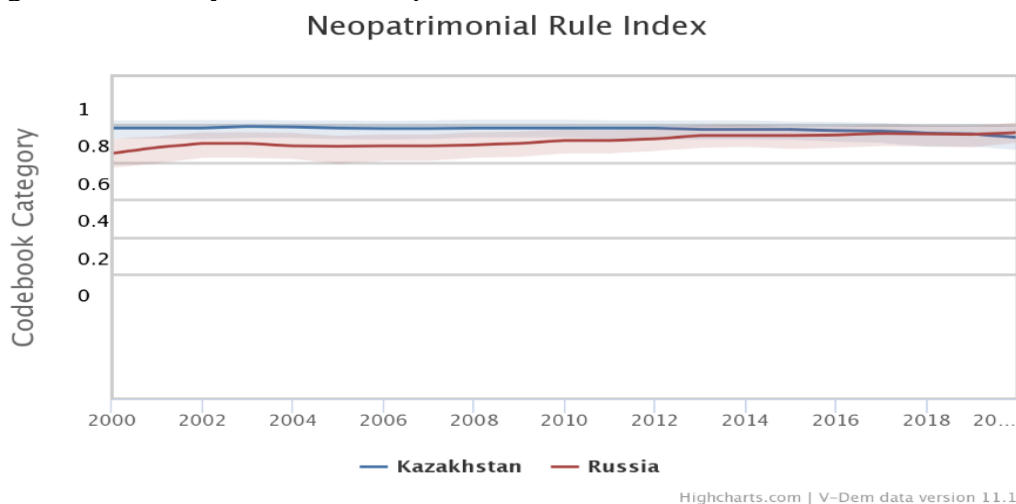
Source: (Variable Graph n.d.)

Corruption is another defining element for neopatrimonial regimes:

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[384] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 12)

The personalistic use of power for the essentially private ends of the ruler and his collaborators means that the country is run like a huge domain. The boundaries between the public treasury and the private wealth of the ruler become blurred. He and his collaborators, with his consent, freely appropriate public funds, establish profit-oriented monopolies, and demand gifts and payoffs from business for which no public accounting is given.[385]

The absence of secure private property rights, arbitrariness in the judiciary system are prospering while the conditions of the personalism and patrimonialism are set up in the institutional and legal frameworks. Numerous amendements to constitution and legal acts to institutionalize the centralization of power, provision for one person was discussed in detail earlier. That is why, I consider just enforcement of democratic values and struggle with corruption is useless in current political system with current political institutes.

Transparency International calculates Corruption Perception Index, data for Kazakhstan and Russia are available since 2012. Transparency International defines corruption as:

The CPI focuses on corruption in the public sector and defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gain… The CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people, risk analysts and the general public and ranges between 100 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt).[386]

So, according to the graph the corruption in Kazakhstan has started to reduce in terms of perception by business people and country experts since since 2016. The CPI graph shows less corruption in Kazakhstan than in Russia. In 2020 Kazakhstan got a score 38 and 98th rank out of 180 countries.[387] Russia scored 30 and was ranked 129th out of 180 countries.[388] So, the discrepancy is quite substantial. The CPI is steadily keeping up at the same pace in Russia which probably does not give much hopes for betterment in the future if the country lives at the present political conditions.

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[385] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 22)
[386] (Coppedge et al. 2021, 354)
[387] (2020 Corruption Perceptions Index - Explore Kazakhstan's results n.d.)
[388] (2020 Corruption Perceptions Index - Explore Russia's results n.d.)

According to the Transparency International, corruption and democracy are closely related; no full democracies score below the CPI average while the majority of authoritarian countries are below average Corruption perception index.[389]

Figure 2.4. Corruption Perception Index in Russia and Kazakhstan, 2012 – 2020.

Corruption perception index
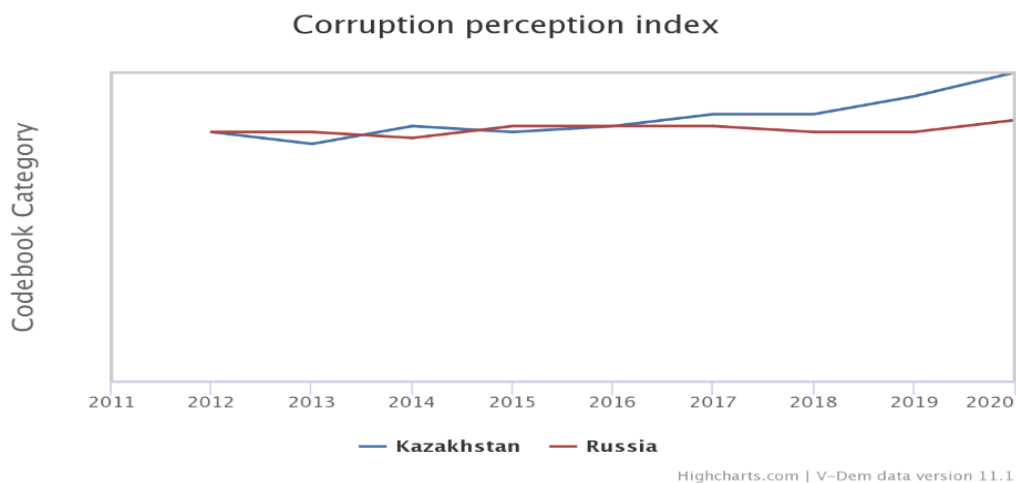
Source: (Variable Graph n.d.)

V-Dem project collects data and calculates its own Regime corruption indicator which consists of executive executive embezzlement, executive bribes, legislative corruption and judicial corruption.[390] Most importantly, the researchers state that this indicator complies with the concept of corruption inherent to neopatrimonial regimes, specifically, focuses on actors in political offices. Lower values of the regime corruption indicator elucidate a normatively better situation, while higher score a normatively worse situation. Regime corruption elucidates the opposite results to those of CPI by Transparency International. The possible reason is that the CPI by Transparency International covers more munane levels that businesses face during their activity.

Regime corruption in Russia and Kazakhstan overlaps most closely in 2019-2020. Corruption in neopatrimonial sense is stronger in Kazakhstan than in Russia. Overall, regime corruption has been at more or less constant levels in Kazakhstan throughout all years since independence in 1991. Again, the evidence of stability of neopatrimonial autocratic rule can be added to the analogical conclusions of political regimes classifications and datasets stating that Kazakhstan has been a personal autocracy through all the analyzed years and even more.

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[389] (Pring and Vrushi 2019)
[390] (Coppedge et al. 2021, 292)

Figure 2.4. Regime corruption indicator for Kazakhstan and Russia, 1990-2020.
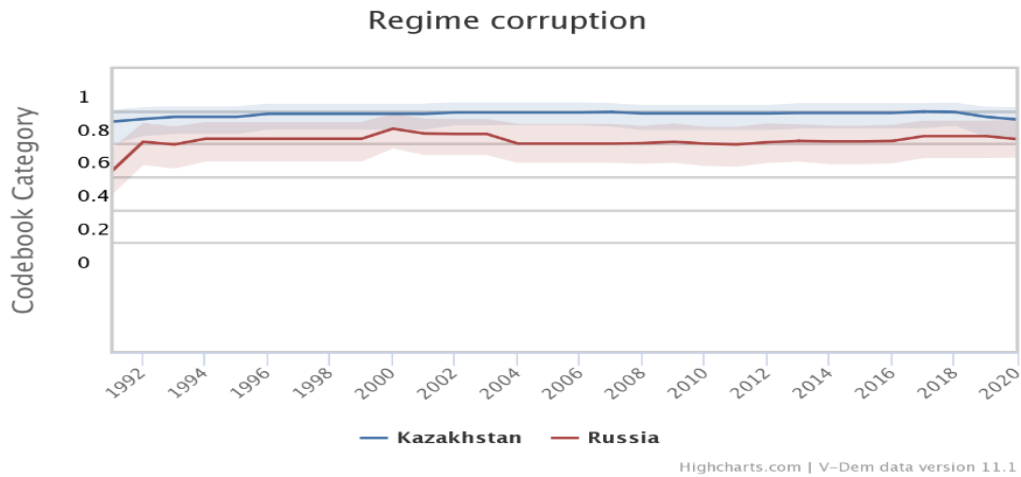
Source: (Variable Graph n.d.)

According to Chehabi & Linz (1998) the tendency that differentiates the sultanistic regime is:

> Oppositional activity against sultanistic regimes often concentrates abroad as sultanistic domination drives many citizens, especially intellectuals, into exile. These exiles can be a fertile base for oppositional undertakings, since they deeply resent not only the corruption and repression at home, but also the ideological vacuum behind it.[391]

This is the case of Kazakhstan: besides the leader of the movement "Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan" M.Ablyazov and ex-prime minister A.Kazhegeldin, there are several other dissidents in Ukraine who are active on youtube platform and other social networks. There have been several conferences organized by different Kazakhstani opposition activists living abroad. Thus, there is almost no true opposition left within the borders of Kazakhstan. Youth activists started their movement, for example "Oyan, Kazakhstan" (Wake up, Kazakhstan.) functioning mostly in one of the largest city, Almaty, but they are constantly repressed and threatened by police and local authorities. I consider it is hard to predict the future of social movements within current trends of continuous repression and intimidation.

Russian examples of exile politicians, journalists, and businessmen are numerous: Garry Kasparov, Russian chess grandmaster and former World Chess Champion (lives in the USA and actively participates in forums), Andrey Illarionov, Russian economist and politician,

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[391] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 25)

former Councillor to president Putin (2000-2005), journalists Vladimir Kara-Murza assassinated by poisoning several times, etc.

Interestingly enough, by 2020 constraints on the president in Russia have gotten weaker than even in Kazakhstan. Geddes argues that constraints on dictator are weak in two cases: either he has just recently come to power or "the wide dispersion of armed force among factions within the ruling group".[392] Putin's focus on defense matters and military expenditures have been known widely. President Putin has been in power for more than twenty years already. President Nazarbayev has kept the office for 29 years and still holds significant competences. In any way, the executives of both Russia and Kazakhstan are not 'burdened' by any domestic political constraints.

Figure 2.5. Contraints on executive power in Russia and Kazakhstan, 2000-2020.
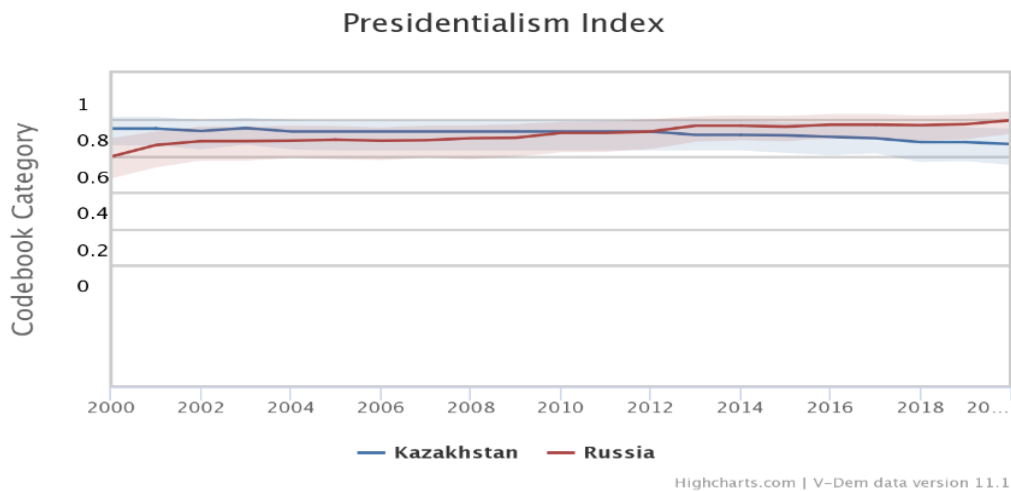
Source: (Variable Graph n.d.)

There are sultanistic characteristics which are currently relevant only to Kazakhstani political regime. Linz claims that "a pronounced cult of personality around the leader and a tendency toward dynasticism" as inherent in sultanistic regimes.[393] Naming cities, geographical places after themselves are one of the expressions of the personality cult of the sultanistic rulers. Even before renaming the capital city in honor of the first president, the government named the streets in many big cities, airport in the capital, newly established university after the first president. Another outstanding hallmark is the invention of new titles and names for the ruler. The examples are numerous: the Shah of Iran was Aryamehr "Light of the Aryans", Ceausescu's General Ion Antonescu's title of conducator, "architect of world peace", and "hero among the

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[392] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018, 116)
[393] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 13)

nation's heroes".[394] There are many other entertaining examples. In this fashion "the Leader of the Nation" and the founder of the Kazakh stateness emerged in Kazakhstan.

Moreover, "sultanistic rulers also like to be thought of as great thinkers and fill many beautifully bound volumes with their speeches, declarations, and proclamations in addition to their numerous (mostly ghostwritten) books."[395] There is a separate library of the first president, the archive of the first president and the Fund of the First President - Yelbasy. Library includes the museum of the first president. So, in this sense Kazakhstan is following the tradition of personality cult sultanistic regimes.

Dynasticism is the next outstanding feature which implies the prominent role of family members.[396] Stark examples are Haiti, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic where family members occupied high-rank governmental positions; in the first two countries sons took presidency from their fathers.[397] All the guarantees and provisions to the first president (except for the separate administration office) that are listed in the Table A.1. of the Annex are also applied to the family members living with him. I guess many of them can be included in this list. The eldest daughter of the first president is the Speaker of the Senate who is the second important official after the president in the state; and who is liable to the presidency in case of the resignation of the current president, Tokayev. Other relatives also occupy high-rank positions in politics. In addition to political careers, they often entertain themselves in the top executives of the sports associations like the Olympic Games Committee, Republican Football Association, etc. In addition, highest honour prizes and medals are systematically given to the family members of the first president. Relatives and friends of the ruling elite represent majority in the list of the richest businessmen of Kazakhstan according to Forbes Kazakhstan, some of the closest ones are present in the world billionaires of Forbes. I will not go into the details of the ruling elite structure as this is not main subject of research.

In conclusion, I can argue that Kazakhstan possesses all characteristics of the sultanistic regime as described by Linz (2000).

Russian case possesses main patrimonial characteristics. However, Russian system cannot be characterised as sultanistic regime for several reasons. First of all, the Russian president has not

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[394] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 14)
[395] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 14)
[396] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 15)
[397] (Chehabi and Linz 1998, 15)

started to enjoy personality cult as it had happened in Kazakhstan. Dynasticism also has not yet revealed itself in the Russian politics.

Conclusion.

Undoubtedly, the state activity towards autocratization in Kazakhstan and Russia is obvious. As I cited Slater (2003) in the first chapter, authoritarian institutions are engineered in such a way as to create "infrustructural power" to control or eradicate any potential opposition and alternative views. [398] In reality, it is manifested through multiple ways. On the one hand, democratic institutions are "reduced to façade status in practice."[399] For example, parliament acquires large shares of appointed deputies. On the other hand, in addition to these facade institutes, new bodies and institutes are created to insert direct control over the state apparatus (like it happened with the special envoys to regional governors in Russia, or the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan which directly selects its representatives in the parliament).

The analysis of Kazakhstani legal codes and norms reveal features of authoritarian governance in Kazakhstan. Insurmountable powers of the executive branch in Kazakhstan has become the cause of particular discontent in the recent years. Unsurprisingly, the grip of the first president has tightened so much that reached the level of personality cult and the increase in the number of political prisoners. But it is most important to analyze this process from the foundational level: governance structure and legal base. That is why I started from the historical analysis of the separation of powers and the analysis of power balance in Kazakhstan.

Outstanding feature of Kazakhstani political system today is the presence of "political innovations" as I called them in this study: the institute of the first president and the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan as the political institute with the competence of delegating its representatives in the parliament. Again, first president as the Chairman of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan decides on whom to appoint from the Assembly.

Current situation with the presence of the president and the first president (the Leader of the Nation) provides for heated debates on the dual executive in Kazakhstan. But I claim that in the legal framework as well as in practice this duality means just strengthening of the executive power.

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[398] (Slater 2003, 82)
[399] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)

It is clearly seen that separation of power is absent in the political system of Kazakhstan. Moreover, in spite of proclaiming itself democratic and social state, Kazakhstan strongly resembles autocracy. High concentration of power in the hands of one person unconstrained by any other branches is the main evidence of personalist rulership and neopatrimonialism.

The analysis reveals that strategic decision-making is in the hands of the first president. Here we can compare with Muammar Gaddafi who ruled in Libya 1969-1977. After officially stepping down in 1977, he continuted to rule until 2011. Features of personalistic regime are obvious in the political system of Kazakhstan.

Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) find that personalist dictatorships a political leaders faces death, imprisonment, or exile after ouster in the majority of cases (69%) which is much more than in other types of dictatorships. This is one of the possible explanations of engineering multiple legal lifelong guarantees after their tenure. As was noticed by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz: "The high probability of facing arrest or death after ouster helps explain why personalist dictators infrequently negotiate their transitions from power.[400] Devising titles, legalizing lifelong guarantees for provision for Nazarbayev and ensuring public posts for Putin are the examples of such preparations for their life in case of their ouster.

This power provided control over the judiciary and the Constitutional Council for Nazarbayev. In addition, the control of electoral processes are also in the hands of the president and the first president.

Moreover, the detailed analysis of the legislation on the president, the Security Council, the first president, the parliament shows that securing powers, privileges and safety has been main concern for the first president for many years.

In my opinion, current parliament is deprived of institutional autonomy. The leading party Nur Otan and two meek parties present in the parliament is an attempt to create the illusion of alternativeness in the eyes of international community. However, these attempts turned out to be futile as the OSCE, the Human Rights Watch started careful surveys on human rights in Kazakhstan. Mostly due to recent demonstrations and social movements, particularly during the presidential elections, repression and intimidation policies of the government became well-known by foreign journalists and observers.

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[400] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 321)

Current political institutions in Kazakhstan are strongly distorted in favor of the ruling executives which has to be significantly reformed. Some institutes could be completely uprooted. It is dangerous even for me as a resident of Kazakhstan to criticize the executives' powers and propose concrete political reforms which could be interpreted as the call for a change of governmental integrity. In addition, any words can be interpreted as denigration or insult of the ruling person or persons. Of course, such deep political reforms must be first conducted in the legislation, to insure the basic political freedoms of speech, assembly and expression. New legal framework should exclude all possible ways for the survival of unequal political rights of the elite. One vivid example of such inequality is that members of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan vote twice in the parliamentary elections: first time, when electing nine members of Majilis, the second time, when voting in parliamentary elections in their electoral districts.

In Kazakhstan the executive makes appointments in parliament, Constitutional Council, Supreme Court, and Central Election Committee. So, political constraints on the executve do not exist.

However, it is important to note the increase in the activity of social movements inside the country, particularly, the activism of younger generation. Due to the internet and communication technologies are able to get more information on modern democratic values and practices. The social media platforms became an important stage of the performance of oppositional movements which gives hope that the seeds of freedom would grow up in the hard soil of repression and intimidation.

Both states Kazakhstan and Russia are characterized by highly personalized control over decision-making procedures which is achieved by well-developed authoritarian institutions: dominant party, high shares of appointed members of parliament, institutional innovations (such as State Council in Russia, Leader of Nation title in Kazakhstan, Assembly of People of Kazakhstan).

So, in Kazakhstan and Russia personal rulership receives extra support from dominant party. The process takes after how Huntington described it: "Personalistic leadership particularly of the charismatic type, often plays a major role in the inauguration of one-party systems, but then declines as the operations of the system become formalized and institutionalized."[401]

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[401] (S. Huntington 1970, 7)

To conclude, dominant party rule in Russia does not imply traditional understanding of dominant party regime when a ruling council or a politburo wields decision-making authority. Dominant party is just an instrument for a personalist ruler. The same is true for Kazakhstan. The evidence from Kazakhstan and Russia suggests that dominant party increase resilience of autocracies because "parties provide ideal organizational mechanisms for the coordinated execution of decisions, not necessarily their collective formulation."[402] Moreover, I conclude that the definition of a hegemonic party politics can be applied in Kazakhstan and Russia.

Russian president utilized mechanisms of personalization: packing, rigging, and circumventing.[403] He defines packing as "the appointment of personal loyalists to top party and government posts while purging rivals, thereby converting institutional constraints into institutional weapons."[404]

Rigging strategies in Russia were traced in the analysis of amendments to the legislation on political parties: "Rigging is the strategic modification of institutional rules and procedures to forestall competition for leadership positions."[405]

Circumventing took place when president established the position of special envoys to federal regions. Circumventing is relevant to the regimes with existing institutions: "Circumventing tactics had redirected day-to-day decision making power from his chief rival to the hands of his chief loyalist. He thus maintained a tight grip on the institutional circuits through which patronage flowed."[406] Because of these events federalism has transformes significantly in centralized power over regions.

The main difference between Putin's way and Nazarbayev's way seizure of personalized power is that Putin started on existing democratic institutions and Nazarbayev was basically starting from scratch. At the same time, Nazarbayev had to play double game – autocratization process was going hand in hand with mimicking democratic institutions. Undoubtedly, Putin also justifies centralization of decision-making processes by various legitimation claims which will be discussed in chapter four.

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[402] (Slater 2003, 97)
[403] (Slater 2003)
[404] (Slater 2003, 88)
[405] (Slater 2003, 89)
[406] (Slater 2003, 93)

The analysis of Russian legislation allowed me to reveal hierarchic structure of the Russian governance. However, the comparative legal analysis does not reveal the concrete factors and mechanisms of emergence and maintenance of bad governance. I can conclude that mainly corruption, patronage, paternalism – factors inherent to neopatrimonial regimes lie in behind-the-scenes processes of authoritarian governance. Political power in Kremlin uses clientelist networks of loyalists like it happens in neopatrimonial regimes of sub-Saharan Africa according to Fukuyama[407].

Comparative legal analysis allows to characterise the political order of the country. Furthermore, it shows that a state-building process continued in 2000s with the establishing of new institutions often to mimick democratic practices like it happened with the State Council in Russia and National Council of Social Trust in Kazakhstan.

Comparative analysis of presidential powers in Russia and Kazakhstan shows extreme similarity in the competences of the presidents. Undoubtedly, road towards political monopoly of the Russian leader was much more bumpy due to the autonomous position of the regional elites at the end of 1990's when Putin first came to power. Russian federalism basically collapsed to the unitary formation in spite of formal return of the gubernatorial elections in 2012.

Kazakhstan as a unitary state has always had appointed governors of regions. Traditionally, regional agencies and subordinate tiers were highly subservient to the center.

Both political systems is characterized by high level institutional engineering. Petrov et.al. notices the dexterity of the Russian authorities and arrays all political innovations and devices that the Russian rulers use to maintain power:

> Since Russia is widely held up as a prime example of a country that subverts the democratic content of elections while still allowing some opposition on the ballot in major elections. These methods include the use of formal and informal mechanisms to: filter candidates; give pro-regime candidates campaigning advantages; hinder mobilization by opposition candidates; make ad hoc adjustments of rules, borders, and thresholds to favor preferred candidates; fill the political arena with "virtual" parties that may voice various points of view but are still loyal to the

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[407] (Fukuyama 2004, 16)

Kremlin; and in some cases employ ballot-box fraud and utilize indirect rather than direct elections.[408]

These informal devices and behind-the-scenes activities are hard to prove scientifically or legally which is in favour of the authorities.

The normative codes reflect the autocratization processes very well. Furthermore, the gap between the normative code and the reality of decision-making is stipulated in the legislation on political parties, legislative elections, gubernatorial elections.

The comparative analysis of political institutions and governance in the authoritarian regimes of Russia and Kazakhstan provided several important conclusions.

First of all, the role of democratic institutions such as political parties and elections are not merely façade but instruments for maintaining power. Specifically, the formation of dominant parties in both countries allowed for elite co-optation.

Authorities of both countries devise substitutes of democratic institutions such as the National Council of Social Trust in Kazakhstan. These are nonconstitutional organs which as a consequence do not have real effects on policy-making and governance. I suggest that on the one hand, these bodies allow for unsatisfied public figures and social activists to blow off steam. On the other hand, such substitutions allow to diverge public attention and show that democratic deliberation does exist in the country.

I described and provided evidence confirming the inclination of the authoritarian rulers towards institution engineering in both Russia and Kazakhstan. Since research on governance in Russia is much diverse, literature supporting the argument of Russian rulers being the innovators in non-democratic practices does exist.[409] However, there is no such studies on Kazakhstani governance.

I argue that along with ranking close on the indicators of governance effectiveness, Russia and Kazakhstan have been undergoing similar political changes. To be precise, the adoption of amendments extending presidential tenure for Putin till 2036 corresponds to the circumstances when Nazarbayev gained the status of the Leader of the Nation and, thus, unrestricted number of times to run for presidency. Subsequently, Nazarbayev gained the positions of lifelong chairman of the Security Council, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, etc.

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[408] (Petrov, Lipman, and Hale 2014, 4)
[409] (Carothers 2006; Walker 2009; Cameron and Orenstein 2012)

In Kazakhstan these processes took in more subservient manner: it did not even require plebiscite to make such changes to the constitution.

The overall analysis of two cases provide evidence that political regimes of Russia and Kazakhstan have undergone institutionalization process. So far, legal bases for strong center and legalized oppression have been constructed. Kooiman (2003) defines that a regime is strong if it is highly institutionalized; and if the regime strengthens the identity of its members.[410] So, the institutionalization for both Kazakhstan and Russia have been largely finalized.

I continue with qualitative assessments of political regimes in Kazakhstan and Russia which allows me to prove that Kazakh political system possesses features of sultanism and the Russian system exhibits neopatrimonial features.

First and foremost characteristics of neopatrimonial and sultanistic regimes is that the executive power rests upon a network of close associates and loyal circles to the level that the lines between state and regime are blurred meaning the perversion of legal and rational norms, rampant corruption.

Kazakhstan as a unitary state had a predisposition for sultanism. Russia's ruler strived to develop Centralism politics facilitated by Putin's presidence is evidently had the purpose of constructing such relationships.

Also, I provide evidence for rampant corruption in both countries. Corruption in neopatrimonial sense is stronger in Kazakhstan than in Russia. Overall, regime corruption has been at more or less constant levels in Kazakhstan throughout all years since independence in 1991.

Neopatrimonial features are exile opposition. The examples are numerous in both Kazakhstan and Russia.

This is the case of Kazakhstan: besides the leader of the movement "Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan" M.Ablyazov and ex-prime minister A.Kazhegeldin, there are several other dissidents in Ukraine who are active on youtube platform and other social networks. Russian examples of exile politicians, journalists, and businessmen are numerous: Garry Kasparov, Russian chess grandmaster and former World Chess Champion (lives in the USA and actively participates in forums), Andrey Illarionov, Russian economist and politician, former Councillor to president Putin (2000-2005), journalists Vladimir Kara-Murza assassinated by poisoning several times, etc. Sultanism in Kazakhstan adds features of personality cult and dynasticism.

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[410] (Kooiman 2003, 107)

Appendices.

Table A.1. Guarantees and privileges provided to the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Rights and guarantees of the first president.
1. Right to be elected as President unlimited number of times and spells,
2. Public insult or any other infringement upon the honour or dignity of the first president, profanation of his pictures are against the Law.
3. Security and inviolability of the first president: he cannot be detained, kept under arrest, searched or interrogated.
4. Inviolability is guaranteed for all the property belonging to him and members of family who are living with him, also on all the estate property used by him for both private and office purposes, transportation vehicles, communication facilities, correspondence and documents.
5. Inviolability is also guaranteed for the Fund of the First President and all the organizations established by him. No restrictions can be applied to all his property.
6. Bank accounts secrecy and inviolability are guaranteed to him all family members living with him.
7. The establishment of the separate administration of the first president and all necessary provision for that.
8. Nazarbayev and his family members (living with him) are guaranteed full provision of special security forces, transportation services, all kinds of medical services, etc.
9. All estate property given to his as president stays with him after resignation with full provision.
10. In addition, every family member living with him is liable to lifelong salary even after his death.
11. Any infringement on his honour and dignity is to be legally prosecuted and bears legal consequences.

Source: From the Constitutional Law on the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan-Elbasy. 2000.

Table A.2. Competences of president of Kazakhstan.

The president's competences.
Executive competences: ➤ President nominates a candidate for Prime-minister and appoints after the deliberation with the lower chamber of parliament;   ➤ The president dismisses the cabinet or any member of the cabinet;   ➤ After consultation with the Majilis the president appoints all members of cabinet except for three ministers (described in the next paragraph).   ➤ The president appoints the minister of international affairs, the minister of internal affairs and the defense minister without any consultations.   **Presidential competences in legislature:**   ➤ President has a right to dissolve parliament after the deliberation with the speakers of the upper and lower houses of parliament.   ➤ President initiates early or regular the parliamentary elections of deputies of both houses of parliament.   ➤ President appoints 15 members of Parliament (Upper Chamber, out of 47 in total)   ➤ President has a right to initiate and issue an act on amendments in Constitution and submit it to parliament.   ➤ President has a right of legislative initiative by submitting legal acts for consideration to lower chamber of parliament.   ➤ President has a right to prioritize legal acts under consideration in parliament meaning that high priority legislation must be considered within two-month period.   ➤ Every law enacted by the parliament is signed by the president. President has a right to return draft law for corrections.   ➤ President nominates the Speaker of the Senate who is then to be elected by the members of Parliament.   **Presidential powers in judiciary system:**   ➤ President appoints and dismisses the Public Prosecutor General, appointment take place after Senate agreement;   ➤ Public Prosecutor General is accountable to President at least once each quarter;   ➤ President nominates candidates for the post of the Chairman and the judges of the Supreme Court of Justice to the Senate;   ➤ President appoints and dismisses the judges of regional and other courts;   **Other competences:**   ➤ President appoints the Chairman and two members of the Constitutional Council;   ➤ President dismisses the Chairman the Constitutional Council.   ➤ Right to authorize war,   ➤ Right to authorize an emergency situation,   ➤ Authorize referendum,   ➤ Right to cancel the proposal of parliament on initiating referendum on the amendment to the constitution.   ➤ Right to grant a pardon,   ➤ Right to grant political asylum;   ➤ Appoints the Chairman of the Central Bank after the consultation with the parliament, etc.

Source: From the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995; Constitutional Law On the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995.

Table A.3. Competences of the parliament of Kazakhstan.

Parliament's competence.
1. Lower chamber of parliament (or parliament) has a right to a vote of no-confidence in government. Cabinet shall file for resignation in this case. But it is the president who makes a decision on resignation of the cabinet.
2. Parliament has a right to oust the president only in case of state treason. The investigation is started if the majority of the lower chamber (Majilis) vote for that. The final decision shall be made by at least three quarters of the members of the parliament given that the judicial decision of the Supreme Court of Justice and the report of compliance with the constitutional procedures (issued by the Constitutional Council) are present. In case the final decision is not made in two months, the charges are dropped.
3. Parliament enacts amendments to the constitution which are proposed by the president.
4. Parliament decides on the administrative and territorial structure of the country.
5. The parliament authorizes war and peace matters.
6. Parliament ratifies and denounces international treaties and agreements.
7. Parliament has a right to grant amnesty.
8. Parliament has a right to initiate a referendum.
9. Senate appoints the candidates nominated by the president for the Chairman of the Supreme Court of Justice and judges of this court.
10. Parliament gives consent to the appointment of the Head of the Central Bank, the Public Prosecutor General, the Chairman of the National Security Bureau (which is the former KGB).
11. Each house of parliament elects two members of the Constitutional Council, two members of the Central Election Committee.

Source: From the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995; Constitutional Law on the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995; Constitutional Law on the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the status of its deputies. 1995.

Table A.4. Comparative analysis of competences and rights of the leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia.

President of Russia	First President of Kazakhstan-Leader of Nation	President of Kazakhstan
Right to initiate amendments to the Constitution and legal acts.		President has a right to initiate and issue an act on amendments to the Constitution and submit it to parliament. President has a right of legislative initiative by submitting legal acts for consideration to lower chamber of parliament.
President has a right to dissolve the lower chamber, the State Duma		President has a right to dissolve parliament or the lower chamber of parliament after the consultation with the speakers of the upper and lower houses of parliament and prime-minister.
President has a right to dismiss prime-minister.		President dismisses the cabinet or any member of the cabinet
President nominates a candidate for Prime-minister and appoints the candidate after he/she is endorsed by the State Duma		President nominates a candidate for Prime-minister and appoints after the deliberation with the lower chamber of parliament;
President accepts the resignation of the Cabinet		President accepts the resignation of the Cabinet
President appoints and dismisses vice-Prime-ministers and federal ministers after consultation with the State Duma (except for ministers of defense, state security, internal affairs, justice, foreign affairs, emergency situations, and social security)		President appoints and dismisses all ministers after Prime-minister nominates the candidates and consults with the lower chamber of parliament (except for ministers of defense, internal affairs, foreign affairs)
President appoints and dismisses federal ministers of defense, state security, internal affairs, justice, foreign affairs, emergency situations, and social security after the consultation with the Federation Council		President appoints the minister of international affairs, minister of internal affairs and defense minister without any consultations.
President nominates the Chairman of the Central Bank to the State Duma for endorsement. Also, he proposes the dismissal of the Chairman of the Central Bank		President appoints the Chairman of the Central Bank after the consultation with the Senate.
President appoints and dismisses federal Prosecutor General and his vice-prosecutors, prosecutors of all federation units, prosecutors of military and other specialized structures equated to the regional level prosecutors after consultation with the Federation Council.		President appoints and dismisses the Prosecutor General after the consultation with the Senate. President appoints vice-Prosecutors after they are nominated by the Prosecutor General.

President appoints and dismisses deputies of the Federation Council (no more than 30 federative representatives/deputies in the Federation Council)[411]		President appoints 15 members of the Upper Chamber of Parliament (out of 47 in total)
President nominates candidates for Chairmen, vice-Chairmen, and judges of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court to the Federation Council. President appoints Chairmen and vice-Chairmen of all federal courts. Also, president makes a submission to the Federation Council on resignation of Chairmen and vice-Chairmen of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and cassation, appeal courts.		President appoints the Chairman and two members of the Constitutional Council; President dismisses the Chairman the Constitutional Council. President nominates candidates for the post of the Chairman and the judges of the Supreme Court of Justice to the Senate. President appoints and dismisses the judges of regional and other courts.
President nominates candidates for the Chairmen of the Court of Audit and half of the auditors to the Federation Council. President nominates candidates for vice-Chairmen of the Court of Audit and second half of the auditors to the State Duma.		President appoints and dismisses the Chairman of the Court of Audit and two members of the Court of Audit.
President appoints 5 members of the Central Election Committee (out of 15)		President appoints the Chairman of the Central Election Committee and two members (out of 4)
President forms the State Council	*This state organ does not exist in Kazakhstan	*This state organ does not exist in Kazakhstan
President forms the Security Council of RF. President is the Chairman of the Security Council	First president is the Chairman of the Security Council and forms the Security Council.	
*Gubernatorial elections are discussed in the subsection of Russian federalism		President appoints all regional governors after the consultation with regional legislatures. President dismisses regional governors at his will.
President has a right authorize war, Right to authorize an emergency situation, Authorize referendum, Right to cancel the proposal of parliament on initiating referendum on the amendment to the constitution. Right to grant a pardon, Right to grant political asylum.		President has a right authorize war, Right to authorize an emergency situation, Authorize referendum, Right to cancel the proposal of parliament on initiating referendum on the amendment to the constitution. Right to grant a pardon, Right to grant political asylum.

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[411] Federation Council, Status and Competences. http://council.gov.ru/structure/council/status/

President is the Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces		President is the Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces
President appoints and dismisses all commaners of the Armed Forces		President appoints and dismisses all commaners of the Armed Forces

Sources: Constitution of RF, Article 21 of the Federal Law "On main guarantees of voting rights and participation in referendum of the citizens of the Russian Federation" 12.06.2002 N 67-ФЗ; Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Articles 8, 63, Law on President of the Republic of Kazakhstan https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z950002733_

Table A.5. National elections to State Duma and number of deputies from political parties.

State Duma IV, 2003					
	% Vote	Seats (by proportionate system)	Seats (by majoritarian system)	Total Seats	% Seats
United Russia	37.56%	120	100	223	49.4%
CPRF	12.61%	40	11	52	11.5%
LDPR	11.45%	36		36	8.2%
Motherland (People's patriotic union)	9.02%	29	8	37	8.3%
People's Party			17	17	3.8%
Yabloko			4	4	0.9%
Russia Renaissance			3	3	0.7%
Union of Right			3	3	0.7%
Agrarian party			2	2	0.4%
Great Russia-Eurasian Union			1	1	0.2%
New direction-Automobile Russia			1	1	0.2%
Entrepreneurship development			1	1	0.2%
By self-nomination			71	71	15.9%
State Duma V, 2007					
United Russia	64.3%			315	70.0%
CPRF	11.57%			57	12.7%
LDPR	8.14%			40	8.9%
Fair Russia party	7.74			38	8.4%
State Duma VI, 2011					
United Russia	49.32%			238	52.9%
CPRF	19.19%			92	20.4%
LDPR	11.67%			56	12.4%
Fair Russia party	13.24%			64	14.2%
State Duma VII, 2016					
United Russia	54.2%	140	203	343	76.2%
CPRF	13.34%	35	7	42	9.3%
LDPR	13.14%	34	5	39	8.7%
Fair Russia party	6.22%	16	7	23	5.1%
Motherland		0	1	1	0.22%
Civil platform		0	1	1	0.22%
Self-nomination		0	1	1	0.22%
State Duma VIII, 2021					
United Russia	49.82%	126	198	324	72%
CPRF	18.93%	48	9	57	12.67%
LDPR	7.55%	19	2	21	4.67%
Fair Russia party	7.46%	19	8	27	6%
New people	5.32%	13	0	13	2.89%
Motherland			1	1	0.22%
Party of Growth			1	1	0.22%
Self-nomination			5	5	1.11%

Sources: Central Election Committee of RF. Election results. http://www.cikrf.ru/banners/vib_arhiv/gosduma/

Table A.6. Laws and other legal acts.

	Laws and other legal acts.
1.	Act on amendments and additions to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhsan "On political parties" by February 6, 2009, № 122-IV: https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z090000122_
2.	Act on the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2018. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z1800000178.
3.	Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/K950001000_.
4.	Constitution of the Russian Federation of December 25, 1993, as Amended on December 30, 2008. https://rg.ru/2009/01/21/konstitucia-dok.html.
5.	Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1995. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/U950002737_.
6.	Constitutional Law on the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan-Yelbasy. 2000. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z000000083_#z0>.
7.	Constitutional Law on the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Status of Its Deputies. 1995. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z950002529_.
8.	"Draft Law On Amendments to Articles 6 and 165 of the Family Code of the Russian Federation." https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/1036249-7 (February 6, 2022).
9.	Federal Law No. 28-FZ of April 2, 2012 "On Amendments to the Federal Law 'On Political Parties.'" https://rg.ru/2012/04/04/partii-dok.html.
10.	Federal Law No. 40-FZ of May 2, 2012 "On Amendments to the Federal Law 'On the General Principles of Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Bodies of State Power of the Subjects of the Russian Federation' and the Federal Law 'On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right to Participate' in the Referendum of Citizens of the Russian Federation." https://rg.ru/2012/05/04/gubernatori-dok.html.
11.	Federal Law No. 394-FZ of December 8, 2020 "On the State Council of the Russian Federation".
12.	Federal Law on the Amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of December 30, 2008 N 6-FKZ "On Changing the Term of Office of the President of the Russian Federation and the State Duma."
13.	Federal Law "On the Introduction of Additions and Amendments to Article 4 of the Federal Law "On the General Principles of Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Bodies of State Power of the Subjects of the Russian Federation." http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_37798/.
14.	Law on Amendments and Additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 1998. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z980000284_#z0.
15.	Law on Amendments and Additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2007. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z070000254_#z0.
16.	Law on Amendments and Additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2011. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z1100000403#z2.
17.	Law on Amendments and Additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2017. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z1700000051#z2.

18.	Law on the Amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of February 5, 2014 N 2-FKZ "On the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation." https://rg.ru/2014/02/07/popravka-dok.html.
19.	Law on the Amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of July 21, 2014 N 11-FKZ "On the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation." 2014. https://rg.ru/2014/07/23/sovfed-dok.html.
20.	Order of the Higher Council of the Kazakh SSR on the President of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. 1990. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/B900003300_.
21.	Order of the President on Some Issues of the Personnel Policies in Government. 2002. http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/U020000828_#z4.
22.	Regulatory Decree of the Constitutional Council of the RK on the Official Interpretation of the Article 5.42 of the Constitution of the RK. 2000. http://www.ksrk.gov.kz/solutions/np-ks-rk-ot-20062000-g-no122-ob-oficialnom-tolkovanii-punkta-5-stati-42-konstitucii.

Chapter 3. Governance and language style of modern authoritarian regimes: cases of Kazakhstan and Russia.

3.1. Conceptual framework: institutional quality and governance.

There is plethora of literature on governance in general as it is the foundational concept in the research on nation-state and beyond. Authors vary in their approaches towards statehood, governance, and institutions. In general, political scientists often construct notions which meanings overlap. As such, in chapter 1 the definition of a political regime by Schmitter and Karl in a famous article "What democracy is … and is not" marries the concept of political regime and the concept of governance. Also, Melville and Mironyuk (2016) use Worldwide Governance Indicators as a measure for quality of institutions in the analysis of post-Soviet regimes while Gel'man (2015) uses WGI in defining good governance.

Fukuyama (2004) differentiates between *state capacity* and *scope* of state. He defines the scope of state as "the different functions and goals taken on by governments".[412] To sum up, state scope constitutes *what* governments do. Authoritarianism should obviously imply a wide scope of stateness.

State capacity is defined similarly by both earlier scholarship and more recent one. Skocpol (1985) defines state capacity as the ability of state institutions to implement official goals and policies.[413] Fukuyama defines state capacity as "the ability of states to plan and execute policies and to enforce laws cleanly and transparently".[414] Hanson & Sigman noticed that state capacity, instititutional capacity, or the strength of state power, quality of government are often used interchangibly in research papers.[415] I concur with this practice and will follow it as well. Mainly, quality of institutions, institutional quality are most widespread notions. Governance is directly related to state capacity but reflects its specific aspect.

State capacity and governance overlapping can be shown by disecting state capacity. Hanson & Sigman (2021) distinguish between three dimensions of state capacity: extractive capacity, coercive capacity, and administrative capacity.[416] Extractive capacity is evidently the ability to collect revenues (taxes). Coercive capacity is directly related to the main aspect of statehood -

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[412] (Fukuyama 2004, 7)
[413] (Skocpol 1985, 8)
[414] (Fukuyama 2004, 7)
[415] (Hanson and Sigman 2021, 2)
[416] (Hanson and Sigman 2021, 3)

monopoly for the use of violence. It is described in a way that: "Coercion relates directly to the state's ability to preserve its borders, protect against external threats, maintain internal order, and enforce policy."[417]

Administrative capacity reflects traditional institutional quality as researchers define it: "the ability to develop policy, the ability to produce and deliver public goods and services, and the ability to regulate commercial activity."[418]

All three dimensions of state capacity by definition determine regime's ability to maintain power. So, state capacity impacts legitimacy of authoritarian regime.

In Croissant and Hellmann (2018) we can find a conclusion that in strong capacity states elections are used to stabilize authoritarian regime while in weak capacity states elections are more likely to destabilize an authoritarian regime.[419]

According to Croissant and Hellmann (2018) state capacity in multiparty electoral authoritarian regimes is most diverse in comparison to other types of authoritarian regimes. That is why qualitative case study analysis of state capacity is very important there.[420]

To put it simply, state capacity answers the question *how?*. It is a quality of delivering goods and services: it is how authorities fulfil their functions, i.e. effectively, transparently, responsively. Authoritarianism is different from democratic systems mainly in **how** authorities do what they do. 'How' issues are in competence of governance and public administration. This „how" issue is described by institutional capacity of a state: non-transparency of redistribution policies, unresponsivenes of authorities, etc.

One more argument for direct relationship between state capacity and governance can be found in in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by all UN member states in 2015. Meuleman differentiates between the concepts:

> Governance is less about the content of policies (the what?), or about the vision behind policies (the why?), but concentrates on how to achieve objectives. Governance therefore is not about policy, but includes polity (the institutions and instruments) and politics (the processes). In addition, governance is about the art of governing, and this includes the relations with those who are 'governed', regardless

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[417] (Hanson and Sigman 2021, 4)
[418] (Hanson and Sigman 2021, 4)
[419] (Croissant and Hellmann 2018, 11)
[420] (Croissant and Hellmann 2018, 10)

if they are considered as subordinates, partners or clients. Therefore, it is a relational concept.[421]

To conclude, I concur with Schmitter and Karl (1991) that the patterns of governance are constituent element of a political regime. Governance covers technical elements of a regime thus reflecting its democratic or autocratic character.

Fukuyama uses *state capacity*, *institutional quality,* and *institutional capacity* interchangibly.[422] Kaufman and Kraay, main methodologists of the World Bank, also treat "governance", "institutions", and "institutional quality" as synonyms.[423] Charron and Lapuente (2010) identify state capacity and the quality of government as equal notions and assess them by the International Country Risk Guide and the WGI.

The overwhelming majority of literature on authoritarianism covers "how" issues. Most prominent strand focuses on how modern authoritarianism uses elections, originally democratic institute, as a façade for democracy. That is why many synonymous concepts emphasizing the illusionary role of elections appeared: competitive authoritarianism by Levitsky and Way (2002; 2010), electoral authoritarianism and electoral autocracies by Schedler (2002; 2006), etc.. This research area is a definitely "how" issue: the description of the intentional failure of the institute of elections.

Another strand of research is more recent one: empirical studies on specific aspects of governance. For example, a field experiment in authoritarian China shows that authoritarian responsiveness in the Chinese counties increases with the threat of collective action or tattling to superiors.[424]

Studies on the longevity of authoritarian rule and survival of autocrats also imply the topics of institutional capacity. As I mentioned earlier in strong state capacity authoritarian states elections help to stabilize the regime, while in weak states they destabilize the regime.

Essentially, governance serves as either positive (in case of good governance) or negative factor (in case of bad governance) of state capacity. Pritchett and Woolcock (2004) claim what conventional governance represents: it is a hierarchical structure with a central decision-making. Basically, it is a model of Weberian bureaucracy with one important disclaimer for autocracies:

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[421] (L. Meuleman 2014, 2)
[422] (Fukuyama 2004, 21)
[423] (Kaufmann and Kraay 2007, 5)
[424] (Chen, Pan, and Xu 2016)

Decision-making is done primarily by government agencies and their agents, with the discretion of local agents, at least on paper, tightly controlled by rules, regulations, and mandates from the top. Delivery mechanisms are via line agencies that reach directly from center to the service provider. Accountability of the service providers flows internally and upward, with accountability to the citizens occurring only via whatever political mechanisms exist for expressing discontent (which are characteristically limited in autocratic, authoritarian, and totalitarian regimes).[425]

I highlight the fact that expressing discontent is considerably impaired, violated or nonexistent in authoritarian regimes.

There are some drawbacks in centralized public administration. Autocratic character surely adds more and, basically, immobilizes the system. However, success of some autocratic regimes like Hong Kong, Singapore, and the UAE imply that there should be some advantages. Although there are not many of such successful examples of autocracies: "For every Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, there are many like Mobutu Sese Seko of the Congo."[426]

To find out the reasons behind authoritarian state failures and successes I need to delve deeper into autocratic governance mechanisms. Before embarking on the discussion of authoritarian governance it is important to define the concept of governance in general.

What is the difference between government and governance? The answer is simple yet genious: while not being governmental agencies, more and more organizations are participating in the provision of public goods such as social work, single-mother supporting programs, and so on.[427] So, governing is implemented not only by government. Global tendency is that public and private sectors strive to embrace each other.

3.2. Governance and its elements.

The history of governance concept in all its aspects turns out to have followed a natural development. It is believed that modern concept of *governance* emerged as a result of a shift of British government in the 1980s towards the emergence of new "governing structures" or forms

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[425] (Pritchett and Woolcock 2004, 197)
[426] (Rodrik 2010)
[427] (Boyer 1990, 51)

of governing: in addition to buearacratic hierarchy, markets, quasi-markets and network forms of governing appeared.[428] Bevir (2012) describes that the state entered contracts with private sector participants to manage prisons, provide training to the unemployed, build roads and rail tracks, etc.[429] Also, scholars notice that during the 1980s welfare services started to be in competence of a network of organizations like the central department, local authorities, health authorities, agencies, private businesses and voluntary groups."[430] Obviously, control over such networks was reduced, the role of a steering or regulating actor diminished. Governmental accountability also got complicated. So, since 1980's specifically Washington Consensus, the Thatcher and Reagan politics, a shift towards governance beyond government was made.

I will not touch upon political philosophy of governance as it requires to touch upon the concepts of statehood, state-building and development policy which are out of scope of my research agenda. Plethora of literature focus their attention to the discussion of governmentality, the term devised by Michel Foucault.

Gerry Stoker defines governance as "the development of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors have become blurred."[431] This understanding of governance became classical which led to the reprint of the 1998 article *Governance as theory: five propositions* in 2018.

Classical understanding of government implies that it represents legitimate coercive institution which operates at the level of nation-state.[432] Government is occupied with public service delivery, strategic decision-making, and policy-making. It realizes its coercive power by enforcing these decisions. In turn, governance transcended beyond the scope of nation-state borders.[433]

Earlier on, Boyer (1990) also insisted on the unprecedented rise of nongovernmental organizations and transnational corporations and the decline of the role of nation-state in governing in the future because of the development of global technologies. The governance discourse has shifted towards framing the concept of global governance. The impetus was also

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[428] (Bevir and Gains 2011; Enroth 2014, 63; Rhodes 1996, 653)
[429] (Bevir 2012, 18)
[430] (Rhodes 1996, 662)
[431] (Stoker 2018, 15)
[432] (Boyer 1990; Stoker 2018)
[433] (Boyer 1990; Enroth 2014; Rhodes 1996)

given by newly emerged global problems such as climate change, transnational terrorism, and global financial crises.[434]

Furthermore, Stoker (2018) marks that governance has encompassed wider range of tools such as contracting, franchising, and other new forms of regulation. In the end governance is about achieving greater efficiency in delivering public services and goods.

Rhodes' (1996) viewpoint coincides with Stoker (2018). In one of his interpretations of governance he calls governance a socio-cybernetic system meaning interdependence among various social, political, and administrative actors; "blurred boundaries between public, private and voluntary sectors", new forms of intervention and control, and so on.[435]

Governance is further refined by Rhodes (1996) in his analysis of the events taking place in Great Britain in the late 1980's and the beginning of 1990's. I will mention elements of governance most relevant to my research. First, he implies governance as the trend for the reduction of government size, i.e. spending cuts. Second, governance means "the introduction of private sector management tools into the public sector which includes hands-on professional management, explicit standards and measures of performance; managing by results; value for money; and, more recently, closeness to the customer."[436]

In addition, Rhodes, as well as Stoker, notices that governance is a self-organizing network. He cites that "Deregulation, government withdrawal and steering at a distance . . . are all notions of less direct government regulation and control, which lead to more autonomy and self-governance for social institution."[437] Other researchers complement on this perspective about the rise of networks, see, for example, Bevir (2012).

Stoker's approach to defining governance became classical. Stoker (2018) includes the following aspects which basically describe the same point from different angles:

- Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government;
- Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues;

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[434] (Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan 1997, 1)
[435] (Rhodes 1996, 657)
[436] (Rhodes 1996, 654)
[437] (Rhodes 1996, 659)

- Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action;

- Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks of actors;

- Governance recognizes the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority.[438]

So, the intricacies of modern governance is quite complex and detailed. The role of civil society rises. Traditional tasks of government are taken over by a range of groups.

To summarize, the concept of governance outlined above is based on Western democracy governance, primarily British experience, as marked by the scholars themselves.[439]

Autocratic rulers, predictably, should go against such aspects of governance. However, if we take into account clientelism, inherent to authoritarian regimes, contracting out may be beneficial to the those close to the ruling elites.

Stoker's and Rhodes' perspective on governance diverges on one dimension. Rhodes (1996) includes 'good' governance as one of the interpretations of governance, while Stoker does not.[440]

Good governance concept was formulated and used by international organizations for making decisions to provide lending to Third World countries.

Moreover, Weiss (2000) marks differences between the approaches international institutions. For example, the United Nations Development Programme emphasizes empowerment, since the early 1990's – human rights, legislative support, judicial reform and corruption.[441]

One of the early approaches towards good governance by the World Bank (1994) incorporates "…predictable; open, and enlightened policymaking (that is, transparent processes); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law."[442] Accountability implies several processes: reporting of the administrative structures to the political level (which is called macrolevel accountability); microlevel

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[438] (Stoker 2018, 16)
[439] (Rhodes 1996, 653; Stoker 2018, 23)
[440] (Rhodes 1996, 656)
[441] (Weiss 2000, 803)
[442] (Governance: The World Bank's Experience 1994, VII)

accountability, involving decentralization, participation, and competition; financial accountability.[443]

It is seen from this definition that good governance is a normative concept which reflects what governance is recommended to be.

Cross-country governance indicators by different international organizations naturally reflect both good governance and bad governance. OECD guidebook *Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments* clearly explains on how governance and good governance concepts are used practically:

> Prescriptive governance definitions establish a clear norm or standard on how governance should be ("good governance") and measure against this standard. They often focus on measuring or describing the gap between the current governance reality and the prescribed reality, as well as identifying the problems associated with attaining this prescribed reality (e.g. "binding constraints"). Non-prescriptive approaches focus on describing and understanding how governance actually functions and why it functions as it does in a country or sector.[444]

So, governance has permeated not only the discourse on state-building and public administration but also development discourse. Weiss (2000) claims that the Human Development Index reflects an "acceptable way to measure a society with good governance."[445]

Discourse on development discusses governance within tackling development problems such as poverty alleviation, sanitation, clean water, sustainable resource management, inclusive education, healthcare in rural areas, and so on. Aid agencies use governance indicators to assess and monitor governance projects. Also, agencies establish benchmarks or objectives using these indicators to control the fulfilment of the project or in development context in general.

To conclude, governance is a complex and encompassing notion which is operationalized for constructing governance indicators according to the purposes of these indicators.

Since the term's definition is dependent on purposes it is used for, I summarize the definitions of governance from major international institutes in Table A.7. in the Appendices to this

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[443] (Governance: The World Bank's Experience 1994, 13)
[444] (Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook 2009, 11)
[445] (Weiss 2000, 802)

chapter. It systematizes seven definitions of governance from the World Bank 1992, Asian Development Bank, OECD, The European Commission, UNDP, IMF, WGI Project.

Still, the original definition that scholars usually stick to comes from the World Bank: "The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development".[446]

If we compare the definitions, all organizations emphasize *accountability* of governments to their citizens. OECD definition is different from others in a manner that they emphasize distinguishing between public governance and corporate governance. They approach governance from the perspective of investors and aid donors.

Asian Development Bank added corruption to the governance later than establishing their policy on governance, in 1998. However, I find that it continues reporting on corruption as a separate notion from governance.

So, approaches towards governance are diverse depending on the purposes. The OECD Sourcebook on governance assessments emphasizes the peculiarities of governance:

> Relative emphasis may vary between, e.g. public administration, the political system, social or economic governance. The focus may be on governance processes, formal rules or governance outcomes; governance may be examined on a general country level or in sectoral or thematic programmes.[447]

As I mentioned earlier in this section, good governance monitoring has become important for the purposes making decisions on lending, reduction of poverty, and other developmental goals in developing countries.

For the purposes of assessing and ranking over time and across countries indicators on governance are multitude. Published by the OECD *Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook* lists all contemporary measures of governance not only across countries but also within countries' assessments. All indicators are either based on data drawn from experts (expert surveys) or respondent surveys of citizens or enterprises.[448] It is important that governance indicators can be used for regular cross-national, within country and over time comparisons.

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[446] (World Bank 1992)

[447] ("Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook" 2009, 11)

[448] (Kaufmann and Kraay 2007, 30)

In addition, international organizations report on sectoral governance such as governance in extractive sector, education, rural areas, or governance for sanitation, i.e. most problematic areas of the world. The reason is that development programs and projects are mostly concentrated on developing fragile states. For example, International Development Association which is the part of the World Bank Groups puts it: "Capable, accountable and inclusive governance is at the heart of the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity" in their report in 2021.[449]

Most early and broad database on governance indicators is undoubtedly Worldwide Governance Indicators. The concept of the Worldwide Governance Indicators is founded on six major dimensions listed in the table above. The WGI report on over 200 countries for the years 1996-2006; indicators are based on hundreds of underlying indicators drawn from 30 organizations, which they constructed based on the responses from tens of thousands of citizens, enterprise managers, and experts.[450]

OECD guidebook summarized focus areas of governance indicators and revealed the following areas: Political system (Elections, Human rights, Conflict, Rule of law, Decentralisation, Public administration, Corruption), Public administration (Public financial management, Public procurement), Social and cross-cutting governance issues (Revenue mobilisation, Service delivery, Gender, Environmental sustainability), Market governance (Business/trade environment).[451]

3.3. Governance styles in the context of Sustainable Development.

Governance in the context of achieveing Sustaindable Development Goals is a large distinctly separate area which is closely linked to policy-making. Governance, particularly, in developing countries is closely analyzed by the World Bank within the realization of their developmental programs.[452]

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[449] (Governance and Institutions | International Development Association - World Bank | International Development Association - World Bank n.d.)

[450] (Kaufmann and Kraay 2007, 42)

[451] (Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook 2009, 15)

[452] See, for example, recent reports by the World Bank Group (Piattifuenfkirchen et al. 2021; Thapa, Farid, and Cristophe 2021). There are numerous reports of this kind on each direction of the development programs across different countries.

In 2015 all United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development consisting of 17 goals (SDG). The primary concern of these goals is eradicating poverty along with emphasis on climate change. The work on sustainable development has started since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 where Agenda 21 was adopted. The development community put governance as the most important in development and, particulaly, in achieveing SDGs.

The importance of governance is linked to the successful implementation of differentiated governance styles, i.e. mix of hierarchic, network, and market governance styles.[453] As a result, the concept of metagovernance emerged as combining different governance styles into a working and successful governance framework. Principles of good governance stay relevant. Governance styles determine how they are achieved.

In section one of this chapter I mentioned that hierarchic governance is the core of original concept of governance. Historically, the classical style of governance is hierarchy as defined by Max Weber. The core characteristics of an ideal bureaucracy according to Weber:

"1) It consists of a formation of offices with each office having a specified "span of control".

2) The offices are organized into a hierarchy with each lower office under the control and supervision of the next higher one.

3) Operations are governed by a system of rules and consist of the application of these rules to particular cases.

4) Each office is occupied by an iffical who conducts himself in a spirit of formalistic personality;

5) The occupancy of an office is based on technical competency, and the hierarchy is a career line for the office occupant."[454]

So, in hierarchic style of governance instruments are laws, regulations, and compliance. Government is an organization that governs from top down.

Modern developmentalist approach distiguishes in addition to a hierarchical style of governance, network and market governance and the mix of any of three.

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[453] (Niestroy and Meuleman 2015)
[454] (Nefzger, 1965, 166)

Market style of governance is nonbinding and voluntary; "steering is achieved by using market-based motivations to induce change such as prices, competition, and economic incentives."[455]

Network style of governance is defined as "flat organizational structures and networks to coordinate activities as well as benchmarking to motivate progress across a diversity of actors, especially civil society and nongovernmental organizations."[456] NGOs and civil society play a huge role in this style of governance. Basically, this is what current concept of governance represents.

Essentially, new styles of governance developed as a result of historical development of governance itself as a result of the transformation of government practices in Great Britain in 1980's which was discussed previously. The New Public Management mainstream of the 1980s implied the spread of corporate and private sector management tools and incentives such as market competition, efficiency, deregulation and performance contracts into the public sector.[457] Rhodes claims that good governance serves as a link between new public management and liberal democracy.[458] Direct link between good governance and liberal democracy is also supported by Weiss (2000). He states that democratization and political rights go han-in-hand with good governance.[459]

In spite of some scholars' agreement on these two institutes (liberal democracy and good governance) being the same, Norris (2012) diverts our attention to the cases of Singapore with strong state capacity but low democracy rating and Jamaica which is democratically free but has a poor state capacity according to international rankings. She highlights that today most treat good governance and democracy as separate phenomena.[460] To sum up, democracy is not enough for high social welfare, security, and peace.

Transitology scholars argue about the primacy of democracy promotion or quality of institutions. One of the most popular schools of thought propounds establishing effective governance first and only afterwards promotion of representative democracy (rushing into elections).[461] She refers to Samuel Huntington as one of the earliest scholars on state-building

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[455] (Olsen et al., 2021, 3)
[456] (Olsen et al., 2021, 3)
[457] (Louis Meuleman 2008, 3)
[458] (Rhodes 1996, 656)
[459] (Weiss 2000, 805)
[460] (Norris 2012, 33)
[461] (Norris 2012, 30)

with his *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968). Using the examples of the development of postcolonial states in 1950's, 1960's, Huntington argues that democracy, mass participation can be built only on the foundation of high quality of institutions, specifically, strong rule of law, legitimate authority and social order by modernizing authoritarianism.[462] Similarly, Fareed Zakaria mentions that elections without high quality institutions led to the emergence of a new generation of autocrats and illiberal democracies in post-Soviet region like it happened in Kazakhstan.

The literature on the reforms' failure in transition of post-Soviet region is immense. Unfortunately, rushing with market reforms and democracy promotion led to the emergence of oligarchic structures.[463]

3.4. Is bad governance equal to autocratic governance?

I have uncovered views on good governance and liberal democratic practices. More pertinent to this investigation is the question of whether bad governance is associated with autocratic regimes. Research on bad governance in authoritarian regimes is minute. However, in face of democratic backsliding and autocratization in the world, authoritarian governance should acquire more attention. The investigation of bad governance in post-Soviet region is mostly concerned with the transition period from planned economy towards market economy, from communism towards democratization.[464]

Moderns times autocratic regimes of Eurasia are under focus particularly, in terms of corruption, kleptocracy, human rights violations.[465]

I plan to shed light on the most important questions on bad governance:

- What does bad governance constitute?
- What are the causes of bad governance in post-Soviet region?
- What are the ways to overcome bad governance?

It is a normative approach when good governance is defined as what governance must look like, and bad governance as the opposite to that. Gel'man defines bad governance as the opposite to

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[462] (Norris 2012, 31)

[463] (Braguinsky 2009)

[464] (Åslund 2007; Beissinger and Kotkin 2014; Hedlund 2005; Upadhyay 2021)

[465] (Enikolopov, Makarin, and Petrova 2019; Gel'man 2015; Goldman 2008; Petrov, Lipman, and Hale 2014; Radnitz 2012; von Soest and Grauvogel 2016)

good governance by taking the definition of good governance from the Worldwide Governance Indicators project. One of the main characteristics of the order with bad governance or low state capacity is that "rent extraction is the major goal and substantive purpose of governing the state at all levels of authority."[466]

Political scientists agree on the statement that bad governance is not necessarily equal to autocratic governance; there are examples of competitive regimes with truly bad governance.[467] Carothers (2002) on the contrary incorporates "persistently poor institutional performance by the state"[468] into the definition of hybrid regimes. Conceptually, it is considered benificial for autocrats to preserve low quality of institutions and bad governance because higher quality of instiutions may prevent political and economic rent extraction for the ruling elites.[469]

Bad governance definition as the opposite of good governance is not sufficient. So, Gel'man defines bad governance as consisting of the following elements:

- lack and/or perversion of the rule of law;
- corruption;
- poor quality of regulation;
- ineffectiveness of government.[470]

Bad governance is unsurprisingly attributed to post-Soviet Eurasian countries by multiple world rankings and databases collected and constructed by international non-governmental organizations and scholarly institutes. The persistence of bad governance has become the common assertion of scholars on post-Soviet region.[471]

Quality of institutions and good governance essentially incorporate the same characteristics. On the one hand, mighty Soviet state capacity is admitted by scholars.[472] The Soviet collapse caused the decay of state capacity in the whole region: along with demise of Soviet institutions and practices, institutional constraints on rent-seeking weakened. On the other hand, newly independent states set on building new democratic institutions which effectiveness in the economic growth had been proved and unquestioned in the world. The stakes depended on the

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[466] (Gel'man 2015, 4)
[467] (Gel'man 2015; Olson 1993; Way 2016; Wintrobe 1998)
[468] (Carothers 2002, 10)
[469] (Gel'man 2015; Melville and Mironyuk 2016)
[470] (Gel'man 2017, 3)
[471] (Taylor 2015)
[472] (Gel'man 2015, 8)

ability to build strong democratic and participatory institutions, rule of law, institutions of judicial system, and democratic procedures. The result is obvious today.

Poor quality of institutions is a characteristic of bad governance which in turn implies poor state capacity. Insitutional quality decay is regarded as the consequence of the lack of rule of law and low regulation quality because the institution-building results from rent-seeking behavior.

Most pressing question for people in countries sickened by bad governance state is the way to overcome bad governance. However, the problem lies in the possibility that "Under conditions of bad governance, political systems may not fail but rather continue a hopeless and useless existence, experiencing long and deep decline and decay, worsening and complicating the lives of their citizens and increasing risks for other states and societies."[473]

To summarize, I support defining bad governance as consisting of lack and/or perversion of the rule of law; corruption; poor quality of regulation; ineffectiveness of government.

Bad governance cannot be equated to autocratic governance. Instead, I argue that authoritarian governance would contain more hierarchic style of governance and less of network and market styles of governance.

3.5. Governance in authoritarian regimes: effectiveness and fragility.

The World Development Report 1997 highlights that the improvement of state capabilities is possible only if the incentives of states and state institutions are changed.[474] Incentives of autocratic leaders are obvious and taken for granted. It is generally considered that the purpose of an autocrat is maintain power for as long as possible.[475]

Institutions that have been designed and operated for the purposes of autocrats would presumably be less efficient and less accountable than these same institutions in democracy.[476]

To sum up, political institutions in authoritarian regimes instead of fulfilling their direct functions serve the purposes of autocrats: "Institutions are essential for understanding authoritarian politics, because they shape bargaining between the dictator and his ruling

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[473] (Gel'man 2015, 17)
[474] (World Development Report 1997 : The State in a Changing World n.d., 28)
[475] See, Magaloni (2008): "In my account, all dictators are presumed to be motivated by the same goal—survive in office while maximizing rents." (Magaloni 2008, 717)   Also, see Gandhi: "Leaders want to survive in office either to reap the benefits of being in power or to implement policies." (Gandhi 2008, 74)
[476] (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, 1293)

coalition. Institutions are also the instruments through which dictators spy, co-opt, or repress opponents."[477]

Svolik defines power sharing as the central problem of authoritarian governance.[478] He proves the claim by providing the results of his analysis that more than two-thirds of autocrats „were removed by government insiders, such as other government members or members of the military or the security forces, an event typically referred to as a coup d'´etat."[479] Gandhi concurs and claims that basic problem of authoritarian ruler is to achieve cooperation with the elites and neutralize potential opposition.[480]

Svolik (2009) develops a model of power-sharing with two modes of power-sharing between the dictator and the ruling coalition: *contested dictatorship* and *established dictatorship* which terms are self-revealing. Each mode affects the longevity of a dictator and the concentration of power.

Power sharing mechanisms influence accountability in authoritarian regimes, thus, affecting institutional capacity.

Most importantly, political institutions are used to facilitate power sharing among the ruling elites.[481]

Magaloni (2008) shows that political parties play a role in credible power sharing deals between a dictator and the rest of the ruling elites.

In Przeworski & Ghandi (2006) political institutions serve to solicit cooperation with oppositional forces. Depending on the context and current conditions of a nation, there are various institutions in non-democratic regimes: royal family council, junta, or political party committee.[482]

To sum up, political institutions in authoritarian settings serve purposes other than the original one: to allocate resources.

Definition of effectiveness of state is well explained by Lipset: "By effectiveness is meant the actual performance of a political system, the extent to which it satisfies the basic functions of

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[477] (Magaloni 2008, 718)
[478] (Svolik 2009, 492)
[479] (Svolik 2009, 478)
[480] (Gandhi 2008, 74)
[481] (Svolik 2009)
[482] (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, 1293)

government as defined by the expectations of most members of a society, and the expectations of powerful groups within it which might threaten the system, such as the armed forces."[483]

In its essence Freedom House rating also describes institutional capacity of states because it surveys questions on electoral process, political pluralism and participation, functioning of government, freedom of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, rule of law, etc.[484]

So, even rough look at the authoritarian governance and governance allows to see a difference. First and foremost, incentives and purposes of authoritarian governance are fundamentally different. As I showed earlier, in authoritarian systems these are power-sharing or cooperation between the ruling elites and the neutralization of opposition. In democracies it boils down to the efficiency of public management.

However, it does not imply that non-democratic regimes do not exercise governance in its traditional understanding. For example, public-private partnerships exist in authoritarian states. Still, in authoritarian regime even this tool of public-private partnership or contracting out will most probably be used with the rent-seeking intentions.

So, if we add the problem of rent-seeking behavior common for autocracies, the future of authoritarian governace does not look optimistic. According to Gel'man, major component is that rent extraction is present at all levels of authority in states with bad governance. Gel'man gives a comprehensive concept of bad governance and lists all components which are derivatives from rent extracting behavior.

In spite of authoritarian governance does not automatically imply bad governance, signs of weak governance are typical to authoritarian regimes. (For example, neopatrimonial regimes of South Africa with rampant corruption, rent-extraction, etc.) Weak governance combined with poverty may produce a *fragile* state or even failed state.

I conclude that there are three pathways for authoritarian regimes:

1) Build effective political institutions and governance, economic growth,
2) Slide into fragility or even state failure,
3) Stay where they are.

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[483] (Lipset 1959, 86)
[484] (Freedom in the World Research Methodology n.d.)

Why am I referring to fragility in the context of authoritarian governance? Weak governance undermines the principle of sovereignty on which the post-Westphalian international order has been built.

Bad governance in its highest degree is leading to a dysfunctional state. Ghani and Lockhart (2009) point to a "sovereignty gap" when "de jure sovereignty that the international system affords such states and their de facto capabilities to serve their populations and act as responsible members of the international community."[485] Basically, it means that state institutions are not able to provide even basic public goods to their citizens. Among the rest, failure to maintain the basic order threatens with daunting consequences not only to the country itself but also to the international community. Fukuyama adds to these human rights abuses, humanitarian crises, terrorism, and uncontroled immigration.[486] These are the issues of global security and stability. Crocker (2003) in his discussion of the responses to the terrorism attacks of 9/11 also highlights that these failing states represent the most important problem for the international community. Collier (2008) in his discussion of fragile states defined bad governance in small countries as one of four traps that fragile states get stuck in. Other development traps are the conflict trap, the natural resources trap, the trap of being landlocked with bad neighbors. The overwhelming majority of African and some Central Asian countries are the ones that Collier (2009) included into the "bottom billion", Africa being the core of the problem. Central Asian countries, Laos, Cambodia, Yemen, Burma, and North Korea are on his list of the poorest and failing states. As I go through the countries Paul Collier analyzes in his book *The Bottom Billion:Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It,* all of them are non-democratic states.

Fragile states are considered to be a central problem of development studies. Numerous development studies confirm that there is no growth without effective state institutions.[487] Economists Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson presented famous empirical study to show the direct relationship between institutions and income per capita.[488]

In general, a plethora of literature focus on the role of state institutions in the development and, particularly, economic development.

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[485] (Ghani and Lockhart 2009, 4)
[486] (Fukuyama 2004, 93)
[487] See, (World Development Report 1997 : The State in a Changing World n.d., 25)
[488] (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001)

At the same time, a reverse causality exists. Martin Lipset traces the hypothesis that well-to-do nations are able to sustain democracy from the ancient philosophy:

> From Aristotle down to the present, men have argued that only in a wealthy society in which relatively few citizens lived in real poverty could a situation exist in which the mass of the population could intelligently participate in politics and could develop the self-restraint necessary to avoid succumbing to the appeals of irresponsible demagogues.[489]

Institutions are formed on the basis of material wellbeing of the nation.

At the same time, the existing literature on the quality of authoritarian governance is minute. There are mostly case studies on specific features of governance in authoritarian regimes. For example, Harris (2013) demonstrated how social welfare institutions work in Iran. It allows authorities to consolidate the support of the poor layers of population.

China is in the focus of a multitude papers on public administration and governance. First perspective is that authoritarian governance is based on alternative mechanisms than classical governance in general. "China paradox" is an outstanding example of this representation of authoritarian governance: when low institutional quality (corruption, disregard for the rule of law, and not following the Weberian model of bureaucracy) still endeavors high economic growth.[490] The trick is that China has a specific type of public administration known as the cadre organization.[491]

Another comprehensive empirical study of the Chinese counties by Chen, Pan, and Xu showed that authoritarian responsiveness does exist but mechanisms have their own special features: there are both top-down and bottom-up mechanisms.[492] The practice is the following: "Upper-level authorities use citizens as an oversight mechanism on subnational officials, which imbues citizens with the ability to sanction lower-level officials and generates responsiveness among local officials to citizen demands.[493]

Second perspective claims that the quality of authoritarian governance is still defined in the same way as governance in democracies: good governance implies high responsiveness and the

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[489] (Lipset 1959, 75)
[490] (Rothstein 2015)
[491] (Rothstein 2015, 16)
[492] (Chen, Pan, and Xu 2016)
[493] (Chen, Pan, and Xu 2016, 398)

use of methods involving citizens and civil society. Hussin Mutalib (2000) in his article *Illiberal Democracy and the Future of Opposition in Singapore* came to conclusion that governance in Singapore is about to experience more citizen participation in the future largely due to the young generations of Singaporeans who are better educated, cosmopolitan, and bold.[494]

So, in case of partly free Singapore governance undoubtedly includes the components of democratic governance.

3.6. Language of authoritarian leaders: research questions and research hypotheses.

Chapter two of my thesis investigated authoritarian institutionalization on case studies of Kazakstan and Russia. I used statistical indicators WGI, V-Dem projects indices to estimate autocratization processes in these countries.

In the theoretical part of this chapter I elaborated on the concept of governance and governance styles: hierarchic, network and market.

Development scholars started a new strand of literature: using textual analyses to reveal governance styles of political leaders. Their dictionary is more than about communication style. Since governance concept stresses "institutional structures that shape how policies are formulated and implemented."[495]

According to Meuleman (2008), the concept of "governance styles" defines "the roles and lines of responsibility of public sector and societal players in different ways: hierarchical, network and market governance."[496] These theoretical constructs are pure forms. Style of governance describes decision-making processes and how the structures who make decisions use language to influence public opinion.

Hierarchical governance means a state-centered approach from top-down: clear hierarchical relations and uniform rules.[497] This governance was based Weber's bureacracy:

> A carefully defined division of tasks; Authority is impersonal, vested in rules that govern official business; Employees are recruited based upon proven or at least potential competence; Secure jobs and salaries, and promotion according to

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[494] (Mutalib 2000, 336)
[495] (Olsen et al. 2021, 4)
[496] (Louis Meuleman 2008, 3)
[497] (Olsen et al. 2021, 3)

seniority or merit; A disciplined hierarchy in which officials are subject to the authority of their superiors.[498]

Hierarchic style of governance does not imply autocratic governance. Hierarchic governance can be found in the hierarchical cultures of Germany and the European Commission.

Market governance essentially means new public management approach to governance mentioned in the theoretical part of this chapter when market approaches are applied in public administration.

Network governance started developing from the 1980s in the Netherlands and 1990s in most other western European public administration.[499] Meuleman defines network governance "as the 'management' of complex networks, consisting of many different actors from the national, regional and local government, from political groups and from societal groups (pressure, action and interest groups, societal institutions, private and business organisations)."[500] So, I can conclude that network governance implies variety of actors, strategies, network co-operation, complex interactions, expertise networks in public administration, and so on.

In this chapter I merge two strands of research based on textual data: governance styles in general and language styles of authoritarian leaders. The literature on quantitative text analysis and the rhetoric of authoritarian leaders is currently at the nascent stage. It has acquired more attention since recently due to the development of automated text analysis methods. Seminal paper in this field is by Laver & Garry (2000) which extracts the policy positions of political actors in Britain and Ireland from election manifestos to find out conservative or liberal position in regards to the fields like culture, economy, environment, institutions, groups (women and minorities), and so on. In this example, researchers are extracting narratives and discourses.

Usually, scholars do not clearly demarcate a border between public discourses and styles of language. For example, Omelicheva (2016) used content analysis to explore public discourse of the leaders of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Several contributions assess public discourses and the language of autocrats in one or a small number of cases.[501]

Another strand of research attempts to see if the autocratization can be revealed from the language of political actors. Maerz (2019) using quantitative text analysis determines

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[498] (Louis Meuleman 2008, 22)
[499] (Louis Meuleman 2008, 31)
[500] (Louis Meuleman 2008, 32)
[501] (March 2003; Megoran 2008; Omelicheva 2016; Maerz 2018).

communication styles: autocratic or democratic styles of language. Maerz and Schneider (2021) conclude that the public rhetoric of political leaders reflect the values incorporated in the political institutions of a political regime: both democratic and authoritarian ones.

Similarly, Guriev & Treisman (2018) posit the question of how autocratic leaders present themselves in public discourses: whether an autocratic style of governance can be seen in the rhetorics of an autocrat. Guriev and Treisman (2018) accomplish this task by comparing violence, economic performance and social provision terms in the political texts. Violence was the marker of Stalin's addresses, the Prosecutors' speeches.[502] According to their results, modern autocrats are not different from democratic leaders like ex-president Obama.

Third strand of research, like Windsor et al. (2018) is doing sentiment analysis and come to conclusion that positive standpoints and perspectives of a leader also make the public more optimistic which contribute to authoritarian persistence.

In my empirical analysis I combine two approaches. Using the general scheme of dictionary developed by Maerz (2019), I fill it in with different aspects. Substantially, I merge the literature on styles of language (as in Maerz (2019)) and styles of governance (as in Olsen et.al.(2021).
As a result, I attempt ot anwer two main research questions:

3. What style of governance dominates in the discourse of political leaders of authoritarian Kazakhstan and Russia?

4. What style of language do the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia demonstrate?

Governance styles and styles of language of authoritarian actors are analyzed separately. Styles of language indicator includes the hierarchic and decentralized styles of governance within itself. Democratic style of language is determined by the ratios of decentralized and hierarchic styles of governance in the texts, the rations of liberalism values and power maintanence-illiberalism. Next section on methodology clarifies the procedure. To reveal democratic or autocratic style of language I follow Maerz and Schneider (2021) and construct Illiberal Speech Index (ISI) and Autocratic Speech Index (ASI). This argument's core point is to rank the speeches of the heads of government on authoritarian scale.

On the one hand, initially, I expected that autocratic governments like Russia and Kazakhstan should exhibit more hierarchical governance style than market and network governance because they imply participatory government. For example, Russian government gained control over the

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[502] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 29)

activities of NGOs when in 2006 the new legal act required all NGOs to inform the government in advance about every project they plan to implement. So, hierarchical governance should dominate in the language of the Russian president and decentralization rhetoric should be less in comparison. Although hierarchic governance does not imply authoritarian governance, still, I use key terms of hierarchic governance to reveal directiveness in the speeches of dictators.

On the other hand, one of the contemporary trends is that modern dictators adopt a rhetoric of performance rather than inspiring fear or promoting ideology. I advance the proposition of Guriev & Treisman, that today's autocratic leaders' rhetoric is not different from the rhetoric of democratic leaders. To clarify, Guriev &Treisman's argument was built on assumption that dictators should reveal the rhetoric of violence. Instead, I employ the concepts of styles of governance: hierarchic or decentralized (network and market governance). I compare the shares of hierarchic and decentralized modes of governance for the analysis of governance style.

My main hypothesis is related to the overall language style of authoritarian actors. It suggests that the style of language of hegemonic authoritarian leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia is not different from the style of language of democratic leaders, specifically, Barack Obama and Emmanuel Macron. Presumably, the autocratic leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia will use the rhetoric of participatory government and use the terminology of participatory governance.

At the same time, modern autocrats like Russian and Kazakh president are different from overt dictators of the past. To test this hypothesis I compare the discourse of these leaders with the discourse of Josef Stalin and Saddam Hussein.

So, I develop my theoretical arguments and state hypotheses for further quantitative testing. Consequently, I estimate governance styles by using mixed methods approach: quantitative text analysis and qualitative case studies (Kazakhstan and Russia).

Further research hypotheses include: I argue that president of Russia increased his authoritarian accents of language in 2000-2021; president of Kazakhstan has kept the similar rhetoric throughout the years 2000-2021. The analyses in previous sections revealed stronger autocratization in Russia, while Kazakhstan has remained stable in its authoritarianism. Now I attempt to trace autocratization process in the public discourse of the leaders.

I use dictionary based quantitative text analysis on the corpus of speeches of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia through 2000-2021. Advantage of automated text analysis is the

capacity to analyze large quantities of text. The corpus of speeches is provided in the Appendices section.

In substance, I attempt to extend the toolkit of empirical approaches to measuring authoritarianism.

First, I implement a supervised technique, dictionary-based textual analysis, to scale autocratic features in the discourse of the president of Kazakhstan and the president of Russia. Based on validated key terms I measure whether their rhetoric is more democratic or more autocratic. The special structure of dictionary allows me to construct the Illiberalness indices.

The novice contribution is the analysis of the illiberalness of two political leaders in the long-term. Another contribution is the analysis of autocratization process through the public discourse of two authoritarian leaders: can we see autocratization of the states in the rhetoric of their leaders? I continue with the comparative analysis of the public discourses of the leaders of two hegemonic authoritarian states, Russia and Kazakhstan. This qualtitative analysis is aimed at illustrating the difference in the rhetoric of modern autocrats by looking at the most frequent terms and phrases of the official political speeches of the presidents.

As I mentioned in the Terminology section, terms public communication, public discourse, and public rhetoric are used interchangibly throughout the text.

So, I attempt to answer my research question of how heads of government in Russia and Kazakhstan publicly depict their position vis-à-vis liberal and illiberal principles and practices. This subsection explores what styles of language authoritarian leaders of Russia and Kazakhstan use. My methodology follows the steps: quantitative text analysis followed by a qualtiative comparison of two case studies.

3.6. Methodology for evaluating styles of language.

3.6.1. Dictionary building.

My conceptualization of autocratic and democratic styles of language partially adopts from the dictionary deveoped by Maerz (2019). Democratic style of language is measured by word frequencies in the subcategories of democratic procedures and liberalism. The measurement of an autocratic style of language refers to the frequencies in the subcategories of autocratic procedures and illiberalism.

The general structure of the dictionary was adopted from Maerz (2019). Specifically, the divide into two broad categories Autocratic style and Democratic style of language.

Democratic style of language includes two subcategories in Maerz (2019):

- Liberalism;
- Democratic procedures.

Autocratic style of language in Maerz (2019) includes:

- Illiberalism;
- Autocratic procedures.

Actually, two papers (Maerz 2019; Maerz and Schneider 2021) utilize the same dictionary. I modified the structure of the dictionary. To be precise, autocratic procedures in my interpretation include subtopics: Hierarchic style of governance and Maintenance of power. Democratic procedures instead of institutional reforms as in Maerz (2019) include Decentralized governance.

The reason is that I try to catch the directiveness in the speeches of autocrats by incorporating dictionary which originally comes from Olsen et. al. (2021) on hierarchic, network, and market modes of governance. Hierarchic style of governance is a subcategory of Autocratic procedures category. Decentralized governance subcategory which unites market and network modes of governance) is included in Democratic procedures category.

In the table below I demonstrate the structure of my dictionary used for the analysis of language styles of the leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia. Full dictionary is provided in the Appendices section to this chapter.

Table 3.1. Dictionary structure for styles of language analysis.

Autocratic style of language	Number of words or phrases
1. Autocratic procedures	
a. Hierarchic style of governance	33
b. Maintenance of power	77
2. Illiberalism	
a. Nationalism, paternalism	31
b. Traditionalism	21
Democratic style of language	
3. Democratic procedures	
a. Democracy	35
b. Decentralized governance	21
4. Liberalism	
a. Liberal values	36
b. Women, minorities	26

Source: Author

By illiberal practices the author means "all practices that infringe on autonomy and dignity" which in turn include nationalist, paternalist, and traditionalist values.[503] Autocratic procedures imply "official disinformation campaigns and other anti-pluralists communication strategies of regimes to flood, manipulate, and control the public sphere of their countries."[504]

Maerz's dictionary in the paper *Simulating pluralism: the language of democracy in hegemonic authoritarianism* originally includes 241 key words. However, the author provides a modified dictionary for Liberal and Illiberal practices in the working paper in co-authorship with Schneider.[505] The modified dictionary is undoubtedly of higher quality because vague and overly comrehensive terms such as *principle*, new, comission* were removed.

After multiple rereading and using KWIC analysis I also removed such vague terms such as obstacle*, etc. employed by Maerz (2019).

Liberalism and Illiberalism categories were adopted from the modified version of Maerz and Schneider (2021). However, I adjusted this dictionary by additional checks using Keyword-in-Context Analysis.

Liberal rhetoric is egalitarian and non-discriminatory: it includes political rights and freedoms such as fair*, individual freedoms and civil liberties. Specifically, I added several phrases as my software provides a greater advantage because of the capacity for accounting not only words but also phrases in the dictionary.

As can be observed from the table with the structure of the dictionary, Liberalism subcategory consists of *liberal values* and *women, priorities*. I find it specific enough and up to the point. For example, V-Dem project which constructs and provides dataset on the Liberal Democracy Index accounts for liberalness as "the importance of protecting individual and minority rights against both the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority."[506] To account for these elements in my index I include key words *inter-ethnic* (as it is a synonym for their multiethnic), phrases *human rights, civic freedoms, civil society, political rights* in the subcategory Liberal values.

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[503] (Maerz and Schneider 2021, 5)

[504] (Maerz and Schneider 2021, 5)

[505] (Maerz and Schneider 2021)

[506] (Alizada et al. 2021, 42)

Regarding liberal values subcategory, I am a proponent of delineating political liberalism terms from economic freedom notions because, otherwise, non-democratic and democratic values might get mixed up. For example, Lee Kuan Yew's economic reforms made him stand among famous democrats in the study of Guriev & Treisman (2018). They find that Singapore's ex-leader had most insistent discourse of economic performance and very little about violence so that he sounded like an IMF briefing.[507]

The category of Autocratic procedures was compiled of two dictionaries. Maintenance of power is based on the original paper of Maerz (2019). Hierarchic mode of governance key words come from the dictionary of hierarchic governance of Olsen et al. (2021). However, both maintenance of power and hierarchic governance subcategories were substantially enhanced by including more key words and removing vague terms as per my KWIC analysis. Final dictionary is presented in the Appendices section. For example, unitarity, suppress, instruct (e.g. on my instruction) are the terms I found important in describing hierarcgic mode of governance. The terms in the dictionary on hierarchic governance describe centralized, directive government.

In Maintenance of power subcategory Maerz (2019) draws attention to the fact that terms like unlawful and order are widely used by dictators when referring to political activists who in their language distort social peace, violate social norms and engage in various illegal activities. Basically, all political prisoners are referred to as perpetrators who are engaged in extremist or terrorist activity.

Dissidents, political activists are usually accused of extremism and terrorism. According to the FH report on transnational repression, in 58% of the analyzed cases individuals were accused of terrorism in their home countries.[508]

I added extremis* term into Maintenance of power subcategory because autocratic leaders use the fight against extremism as a way towards eradicating oppositional movements. Maintenance of power also includes such key words as anarchy, chaos because the justification for opression of activists is usually "coping resolutely with urban terrorists who threatened the nation with chaos."[509]

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[507] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 29)
[508] (Schenkkan and Linzer 2021, 6)
[509] (Geddes and Zaller 1989, 325)

I added key words bluff, war*, extremis*, collapse, destroy, unfriendly. For example, in 2021 annual press-conference president Putin blames Western intelligence services in attempts to destroy the Russian stae from the inside. The collapse of the Soviet Union and division into independent states is also blamed for the Western benefit by the president. So, these words are important for understanding the politics of the dictator in his rhetoric for the military presence. Term *security* is very often used by democratic leaders so it was removed from the subcategory of maintenance of power.

Also, I reread randomly picked texts for understanding used terminology, first, and then for validation of chosen dictionary words for their meaning. Repeated qualitative checks on the dictionary key words and phrases, the dictionary should be valid representative of categories. Topic modelling does not suit for the dictionary on autocratic and autocratic measures as it was relevant for themes extraction in the chapter on legitimacy.

Ideology or anything ideological were removed: modern autocrats underscore their negative attitudes towards state ideologies. It is particularly true for post-Soviet States because ideology has a negative connotation to communism and socialism.

Hierarchic mode of governance dictionary was enhanced substantially in comparison to Olsen (2021) after rereading political texts of presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia to find common patterns. Every nation-state has a political regime with formulated governance style due to legal conditions, traditions, culture, political practice, etc. Moreover, styles of governance are differentiated between areas of development, e.g. environmental governance, governance in education or healthcare. For example, president Nazarbayev liked to use such phrases as "At my instruction", for example, "At my instruction, in Astana first ever in the country innovative cluster of medical services is being created." ("По моему поручению в Астане сегодня создается первый в республике инновационный кластер медицинских услуг.")

Dictionary validation is an ongoing process which allows to finegrain the accuracy of the analysis. So, I elaborate on further corrections and additions to the dictionary. The dictionary of Maerz (2019) included one overlap: term equal* was included in two subcategories simultaneously liberal values and in democracy. I kept it in Liberal values subcategory. Also, I added key word elect*: although, the concept election* is present in the dictionary, often I could observe the emphasis is made on the verb that people elected etc. using verb elect* not noun election*.

From network and market modes of governance dictionary in Olsen (2021) I utilized key words: incentive, promote, partnership*, private sector, corporate governance, participation, co-creation, cooperation.

Nationalism and paternalism subcategory include notions of defence, protection *(protect*)*. As was described in Chapter 1 nationalism is "the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit".[510] This allegiance to a particular group, particularly characterized as having a great history, heroic people and glorified as being the primary winner of the WWII may be utilized for instigating aggression.

Creating enemies is one of the directions political psychology on power structures:

> The power seat that seeks to perpetuate itself accomplishes this partly by creating definite categories of "enemy" and "ally," attributing to the latter all the qualities the culture considers good: honesty, integrity, cleanliness, and loyalty. The "enemy" category becomes the receptacle for the antitheses of these same virtues. Edelman points out that the assignment of attributes is often arbitrary and bears no resemblance to any demonstrable reality, but the mechanism behind categorization is one that draws clear battle lines; the individual's devotion to the protection of the seat in power thus arises from an appeal to his own culturally instilled beliefs.[511]

As a consequence, I include references to creating enemies to the subcategory of nationalism and paternalism along with mentions of homeland, patriotism, heroism, pride.

Democracy subcategory represent classical features such as eletions, polotical parties, voice, ballots, etc.

In total, my dictionary comprises 280 key words and phrases.

3.6.2. On selection of speeches.

Grimmer and Stewart (2013) notice that large corpuses are prerequisite for automated text analyses because it increases the robustness of the results. That is why I collect all speeches addressed to the general public, parliament (who are representatives of the general public), and other broadcasted live or televised speeches.

Overview of speakers and speech corpus for both countries is provided in the Appendices.

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[510] (Orwell 2018, 362)
[511] (Volkan 1985, 224)

Selection of speeches for the president of Russia includes annual national addresses to the Federal Council, Direct line with president, speeches made at the United Russia political party congresses, annual press-conferences of the president, inauguration speeches. In total, there are 5 types of political texts. There were 15 press-conferences between 2001-2019. President Medvedev held annual press-conference only once during his four-year tenure, in 2011. In addition, there was an internet-conference in 2006 with people from all over regions of Russia. In total, I collected 70 speeches of president. During the period 2008-2011 speeches were made by D.Medvedev. For the rest of the analyzed years all speeches were made by Vladimir Putin. Unsurprisingly, Medvedev made less public speeches during his presidency. Moreover, Putin continued with his annual Direct Line with regions that had been started during his first term: it was titled as the Direct Line with Prime-minister. However, I account for only speeches made by the institute of president not persona. The list of speeches is provided in Table 4 of the Appendices section.

Selection of speeches of the president of Kazakhstan consists of annual addresses to the parliament, speeches made at the openings of parliamentary sessions, speeches made at the congresses of Nur Otan political party, speeches at meetings of the National Council of Social Trust, televised addresses to the people of Kazakhstan, speeches made at the congresses of the Assembly of people of Kazakhstan, speeches made at the inauguaration of the president, speeches made at the Independence Day official meetings. In total, there are 8 types of political texts for the president of Kazakhstan. Obviously, number of speeches varies each year for both cases. In total, I collected 98 political speeches of the president of Kazakhstan. Speeches by N. Nazarbayev were made during the period 2000 - June 2019. Speeches by K.Tokayev were made during the period June 2019 – 2021. The description of the corpus of speeches of the president of Kazakhstan is provided in the Appendices, Table A8 and Table A9.

In spite of the fact that president of Russia seems to be making less public speeches than his Kazakhstani counterpart, his (Putin's) press conferences and Direct Lines usually last more than two hours. It means that almost for all years there are more words in the Russian text corpus than in Kazakhstani. Since I use indicator of rate per 10 000 I can do comparative analysis regardless of total frequencies.

For this study I translated all speeches of both presidents Russian and Kazakhstani in English. The main advantage is that political texts in English are comparable across other political

leaders' texts. Translation was done by embedded in Word document translation software. Most importantly, according to the latest studies by Vries, Schoonvelde, and Schumacher (2018) text analysis methods on texts generated from human-translated and machine-translated texts highly overlap.

The difference in political speeches of president Tokayev and first president Nazarbayev is in the fact that Nazarbayev delivers the same speech in both Russian and Kazakh while Tokayev jumps between Russian and Kazakh so that information in each language is different.

Data contain the speeches of the president of Kazakhstan. Nazarbayev's speeches constituted the corpus during the period between 2000-2019. For the second half of 2019 till 2021 Tokayev's speeches were collected.

Priority was given to the speeches addressed at the citizens in general, then the speeches to the Parliament, the speeches to the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, speeches to the newly created body National Council of Social Trust which includes social activists, civil society representatives, finally to the Extended Meetings with government.

Another reason for the translation of political speeches is comparison with the speeches of the heads of democratic regimes' actors.

In addition, for comparative analysis I use speeches of overt dictators: Josef Stalin and Saddam Hussein. They represent ideologically and culturally different dictatorships. Saddam Hussein comes from islam dominant country. Stalin is expected to be more secular and violent.

To compare Kazakh and Russian autocrats with democratic leaders, I utilize speeches of Barack Obama, 44th president of the USA, and Emmanual Macron, president of France. Corpus of speeches for Saddam Hussein, Josef Stalin, and Barack Obama were taken from supplemental materials of Guriev & Treisman (2018). Obama's speeches consist of a random sample of 40 (out of his roughly 400) weekly radio addresses. Description of speeches selected for analysis is provided in Table 5 in the Appendices section. Macron's corpus of political speeches were collected by me according to the same criteria as for Kazakhstan' and Russia's presidential texts. It includes his speech at European Parliament in 2018, his victory speech in 2017 and Sorbonne speech in 2017.

3.6.3. Constructing Illiberal Speech Index and Autocratic Speech Index.

Using WordStat9 software, I was able to produce raw frequency of key words in the four subcategories: autocratic procedures and democratic procedures, illiberal practices and liberal practices. To get comparable across cases measurements of liberalness and authoritarianism I adopt Lowe's (2011) logit scaling as was implemented by Maerz (2019); Maerz and Schneider (2020).

The advantage of logit scaling is that we get continuous scales from counts of key words ranging from negative values – democratic procedures to positive values – autocratic procedures. As a result, I produce the Illiberal Speech Index and Autocratic Speech Index for both Russia and Kazakhstan for each year between 2000-2021. So, I calculate a symmetrical left-right scale of Illiberal Speech Index with endpoints in purely liberal and purely illiberal texts; Autocratic Speech Index with endpoints in purely democratic and purely authoritarian practices texts. Dictionary-based indices allow me to conceptualize *authoritarian public rhetoric*: what it means practically.

The resulting indicators are estimates of the position on democratic-autocratic procedures scale and liberal-illiberal scale.

Following Lowe (2011), the formula for logit scaling is:

$$ISI = \ln\left(\frac{I+0.5}{L+0.5}\right),$$

Where ISI – Illiberal Speech Index,

I – raw frequency of illiberalism category key words,

L – raw frequency of liberalism category key words.

Constant 0.5 is used for increasing the lags between the values of the index which is a Jeffreys prior as described by Lowe. (Lowe et al. 2011, 134)

Similarly, Autocratic Speech Index formula would be:

$$ASI = \ln\left(\frac{A+0.5}{D+0.5}\right),$$

Where *A* – autocratic procedures category count,

D – democratic procedures category count.

Scaling continuous autocratic-democratic styles of language from political text coded into distinct categories is based on the method of Lowe (2011). In addition, I calculate confidence intervals for every new estimate.

3.7. Comparative analysis of the Kazakh and Russian leaders' language.

3.7.1. General comparative analysis

From previous chapters I concluded that Kazakhstan has a longer history of hegemonic authoritarianism than Russia. However, it is Kazakhstani rhetoric that boasts success in nurturung democratic values. The concentration of key words on democratic proceccesses and values is higher in the speeches of Kazakhstani leader than in other all other analyzed countries. (See Figure 3.1.)

For general comparison I present the concentration of four subcategories (rate per 10 000 words in autocratic procedures, democratic procedures, illiberalism, and liberalism) in the discourses of the presidents, Russia and Kazakhstan and other political leaders in the figure below. Kazakhstani president's democratic accents substantially exceed autocratic usage: he is demonstratively democratic.

This figure is the first clear illustration that contemporary hegemonic authoritarian leaders cannot be somehow substantiated from democratic Macron and Obama. Moreover, Obama also demonstrates excessive use of autocratic procedures and illiberal language even more than the Russian president.

Figure 3.1. Comparative analysis of political discourses of six political leaders.
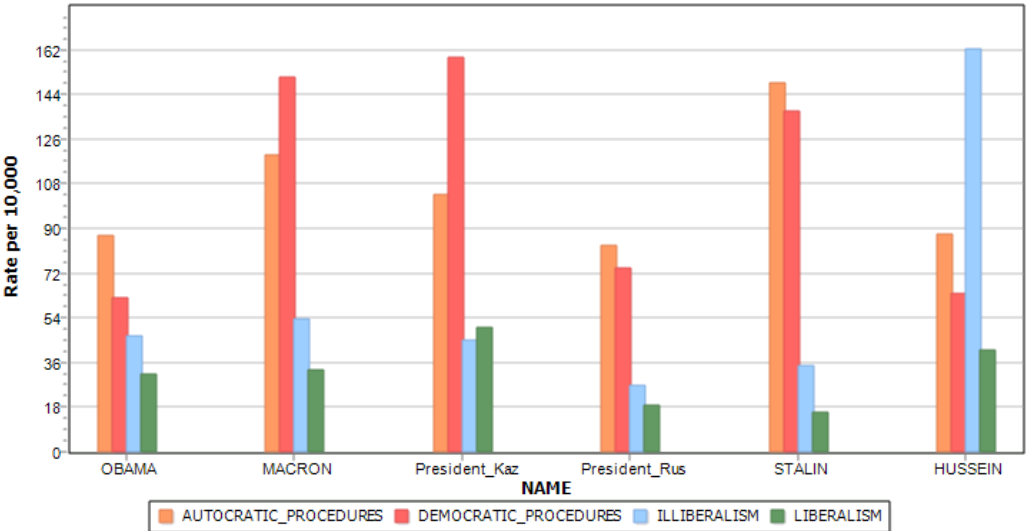
Source: Author.

To delve deeper into comparative analysis I use relative indices. The core result of the text analysis is the illiberalness scale (Illiberal Speech Index) and autocratic scale (Autocratic Speech Index). Based on the calculated ISI and ASI for both countries throughout all analyzed

years I provide a figure illustrating continuous scale of democratic-autocratic procedures and liberal-illiberal practices.

Figure 3.2. Comparing language style of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia, 2000-2021.
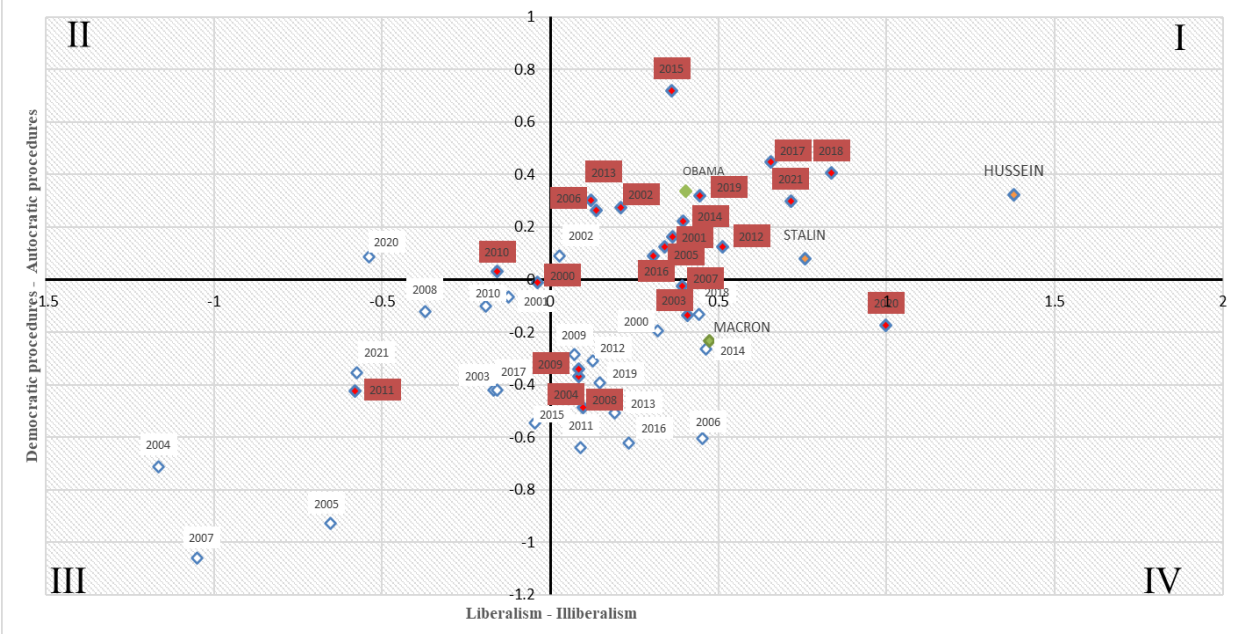
Legend: red diamonds are the speeches of the president of Russia,
white diamonds are the speeches of the president of Kazakhstan.
Source: Author.

Quadrant I elucidates a combination of autocratic procedures and illiberal values. Russian president's speeches are larlgely situated in the first quadrant characterized by high illiberalness and autocratic procedures. Surprisingly, Barack Obama speeches are located in the quadrant I. Emmanuel Macron's discourse is in quadrant II meaning accent on democratic procedures and illiberalism. Moreover, Macron's nationalism and paternalism rhetoric is higher than in Kazakh and Russian presidents' speeches. (See Figure 3.3. below.) Kazakhstani president speaks in democratic style most of the times, sometimes with the combination of illiberal and democratic accents or liberal practices with autocratic style. So, not only modern Russian and Kazakhstani autocrats speak similarly to democratic leaders, but also the assumption that leaders of stable democracies convey democratic and liberal discourse is to be seriously questioned.

So, the evidence confirms the hypothesis that modern dictators' language is not that different from their democratic counterparts. Moreover, the evidence shows autocratic accent is present in the discourse of democratic leaders.

Old school overt dictators like Saddam Hussein and Joseph Stalin's political speeches are also in quadrant I. However, their discourses have drastic differences from modern authoriarian leaders' speeches if we delve deeper into comparison of specific subcategories.

To compare political speeches of current presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan as opposed to overt dictators Saddam Hussein and Josef Stalin, first, and democratic leaders, second, I will continue with the assessment of quantitative textual data.

Since my dictionary contains four subcategories Autocratic procedures, Democratic procedures, Illiberalism, and Liberalism, it is instrumental to disect the political discourses in detail.

First of all, Saddam Hussein's discourse is extremely illiberal in comparison to all other political leaders. (See orange column on Figure 3.3. below.)

Specifically, Saddam Hussein's nationalism, paternalism and traditionalism emphasis is extremely high in comparison to other analyzed actors. (See the yellow column on the graph below.)

Figure 3.3. Comparative analysis of autocratic subcategories of six political actors.
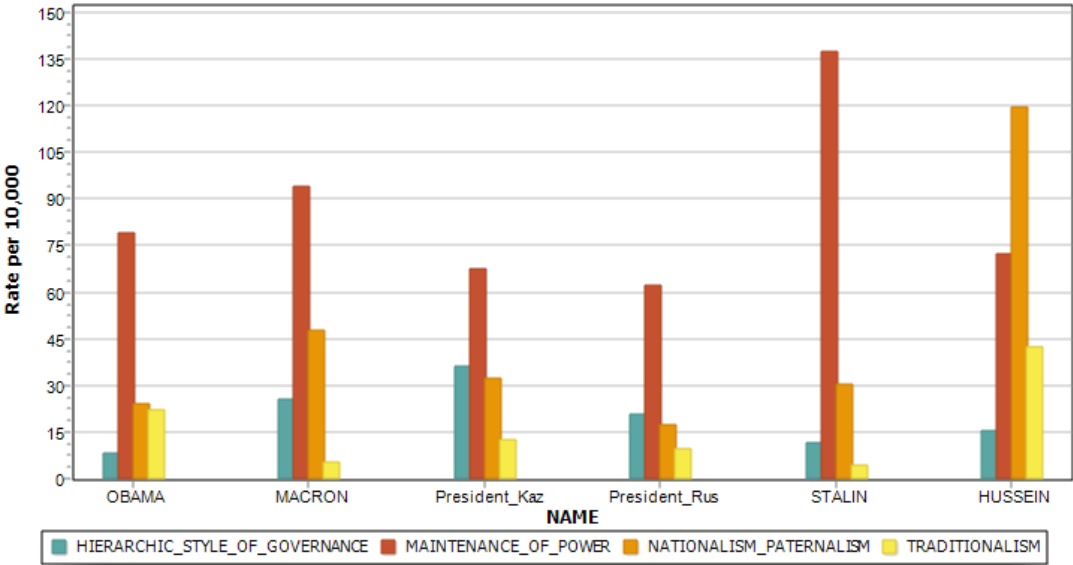
Source: Author.

To be precise, Hussein's reference to 'God' is twenty times more than in other political actors' rhetoric under comparison. Along with that, he more often than modern autocrats refers to 'almighty', 'glorious', 'homeland', 'evil', 'honor', 'brothers' – all the terms coming from nationalism, paternalism and traditionalism subcategories. The table below provides rate per 10 000 for 'war', 'enem*', 'motherland', 'god', 'almighty', 'homeland', and others for

comparative analysis. For general reference I provide rates for all key words from nationalism/paternalism and maintenance of power subcategories for all analyzed political leaders.

Table 3.2. Comparative analysis of separate key words in the speeches of 6 political actors.

	Stalin	Macron	Obama	President_Kaz	President_Rus	Hussein
WAR* (Maintenance of power)	102.56	4.78	3.59	0.38	3.19	6.14
ENEM* (Nationalism, paternalism)	17.33	0.43	0	0	0	6.14
MOTHERLAND (Nationalism, paternalism)	5.78	0	0	2.27	0.48	0
DEFEN* (Maintenance of power)	5.78	1.3	2.39	2.65	3.35	5.86
GOD (Nationalism, paternalism)	2.89	0	1.6	0	2.07	58.85
GLORIOUS (Traditionalism)	0	0	0	0.08	0.02	16.18
HOMELAND (Nationalism, paternalism)	0	0	1.6	1.51	0.16	11.71
EVIL (Maintenance of power)	0	0	0	0.14	0.16	8.93
HONOR (Traditionalism)	0	0	4.79	0.99	0.2	9.2
BROTHERS (Traditionalism)	0	0	0.4	0.14	0.06	6.97
ALMIGHTY (Nationalism, paternalism)	0	0	0	0	0	6.14
PRIDE (Nationalism, paternalism)	0	0.8	0	0.59	0.18	6.14

Source: Author.

Stalin's rhetoric also exhibits specific traits which differs him a lot from modern autocratic presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia. XXth century overt dictator Stalin is distinct in his extreme focus on maintenance of power. (See Figure 3.3. above) Stalin refers to 'war' seventeen times more than even S.Hussein (see the table below for comparative analysis). Considering the fact that Stalin's speeches were selected from several years before the World War II and a year after WWII, his use of war-focused rhetoric is meaningful.

Creating enemies is another factor differentiating brutal dictator Stalin. As is well-knowm, the title "The Enemy of the People" often meant death by firing squad or banishment into labor camps. I can suggest that S.Hussein also uses the tool of creating enemies according to the data from the table. It is one of negative consequences of nationalist politics. Analyzed democratic leaders and modern autocrats almost never use the word "enemy".

S.Hussein is a representative of Muslim world, Stalin is a representative of a secular or even atheist country. Both are extremely violent and brutal in their executions, repressions and wars. Being within muslim tradition, S.Hussein applies 'god' and 'almighty'. Stalin intensively uses violent rhetoric such 'enemies' and 'war'. I suggest that cultural factors explain how overt dictators justify their policy choices and activities.

Glorifying 'motherland', 'homeland' and developing a feeling of superiority is another trait of old dictators Stalin and Hussein. Another negative consequence of nationalism is inherent to these old autocrats. Finally, defence of this motherland against enemies is a logical consequence of brutal dictators.

Nationalism and traditionalism can be considered most conspicuous dictionaries: they reveal overt neopatrimonial dictators like Saddam Hussein.

In my case overt dictators differ in their discourse from modern authoritarian presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia. These earlier dictators are different from modern autocrats in their emphasis on nationalism/paternalism and maintenance of power. If we narrow down the analysis to specific key words, we'll see extreme exaggeration of specific terms of nationalism and power maintanence subcategories.

Kazakhstani president exhibits autocratic and illiberal rhetoric only in 2002, basically, the year of the active cleaning of opposition fields which are discussed in details in the chapter on legitimacy. The Kazakhstani speeches are located in II, III, and IV quadrants on Figure with either fully democratic and liberal values or combinations of two.

In contrast to Kazakhstani leader, the Russian president had only one fully democratic and liberal year in the history of political speeches - 2011, during Medvedev's term.

Russian president emphasized democratic procedures only in 2003, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2016, 2020. Focus on democratic practices in 2003-2004 can be explained by massive amendments into the legislation on political parties which were thoroughly discussed in the second chapter.

The period of 2008-2011 represent president Medvedev's incumbency. (2010 is also close to equal emphasis on democratic practices) In spite of his rather formal presidency, he was seen more into democratic and market oriented reforms: at the same time, according to multiple experts, Medvedev paid lip service to his declarations. Foreign policy magazine experts describe Medvedev's incumbency: "Medvedev would often utter liberal-sounding ideas — his anodyne comment that "freedom is better than non-freedom" caused quite a flutter of excitement, briefly — but the follow-through on his proposals was never there. He had the power only to speak, not act."[512] Guardian columnist concurs with the previous statement: "By 2010, hopes that Medvedev might preside over a partial liberalisation of Russian society had vanished. His

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[512] (Kramer and Shevtsova 2012)

progressive-sounding speeches and attacks on "legal nihilism" failed to translate into concrete political deeds."[513]

To sum up, the quantitative text analysis provides evidence on Medvedev's more democratic rhetoric.

Figure 3.4. illustrates the concentration of four subcategories (autocratic procedures, democratic procedures, illiberalism, and liberalism) in the political speeches of presidents. Kazakh president's rhetoric is concentrated with illiberal terms almost twice as high as the Russian's. However, his liberal rhetoric is more than twice higher than the Russian's president.

In general, Kazakhstani president's overall language style is substantially more democratic and liberal than the Russian's president. Russian president uses more autocratic and illiberal style of language.

Figure 3.4. Comparing public discourses of Russian and Kazakhstani presidents, 2000-2021.
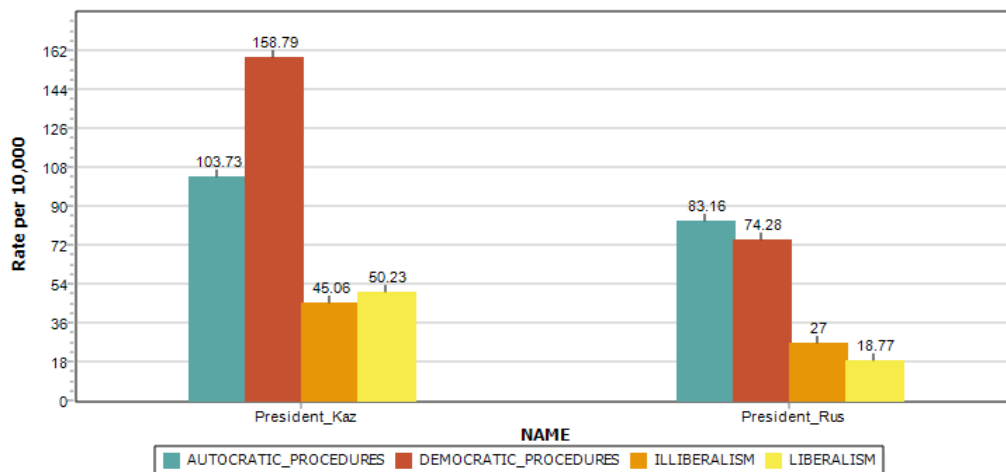
Source: Author.

Throughout all the 21 years of de-facto Putin ruling, his illiberal vocabulary was 44% larger than liberal, and autocratic vocabulary was almost half times larger than democratic procedures vocabulary (by 12%).

Total textual data for Kazakhstani president confirms that he creates an image of a democratic ruler rather than autocratic leader. Liberal and illiberal amounts of discourse are almost equal.

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[513] (Harding 2020)

3.7.1. The evolution of language styles of the Russian and Kazakhstani leader.

My next purpose is a comparative analysis of the dynamics of the language styles of the Kazakhstani and Russian presidents.

ISI and ASI indicators were computed for the last 22 years. My purpose was to observe the dynamics of public discourses of the presidents. The dynamics of the ISI illustrated in Figure 3.5. shows that illiberal discourse of the Russian president has been increasing in the last 22 years. Kazakhstani president illiberal discourse is almost stable: Kazakh president's ISI linear trend line has a minute slope. For now, Tokayev, new president, has maintained rather liberal rhetoric (2019-2021).

Figure 3.5. Illiberal Speech Index.

1) Illiberal Speech Index, president of Kazakhstan.
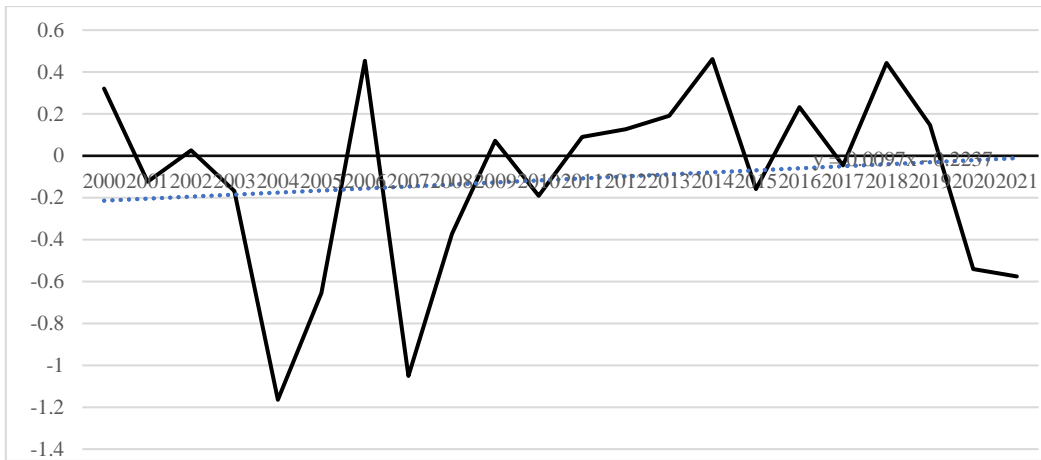
2) Illiberal Speech Index, president of Russia.
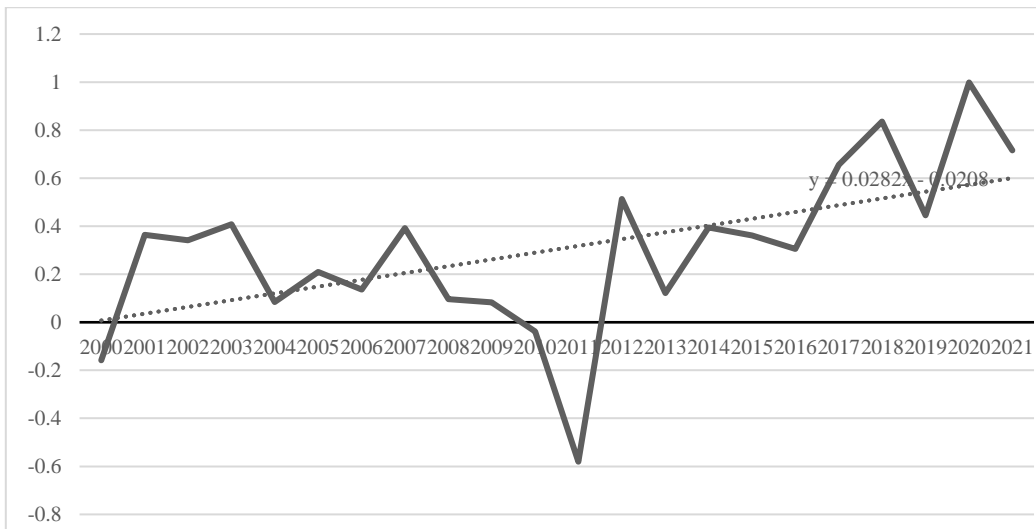
Source: Author.

In Russia, only 2000 (the first year of Putin's presidency) and 2011 (the year of most massive protests against rigged parliamentary elections) were marked by president's by strong liberal discourse.

What kind of liberal or illiberal ideas are propounded by the presidents? High liberalness scale of Kazakhstani president is almost competely contained in his multi-ethnic diversity, harmony and peace. Kazakhstani president has been pertinent in his public communication: 'the model of interethnic unity'. President reiterates that the model of interethnic harmony, implemented over the years of independence, is one of the foundations of international prestige of Kazakhstan. However, key word 'unity' which belongs to the subcategory of nationalism and paternalism is the most frequent term in the president's speeches in comparison to other dictionary entries.

President Nazarbayev in his 2000 address to the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan highlights:

> We constitutionally affirmed the principle that Kazakhstan's sovereignty is based on the integrity and unity of the entire population, not of individual nationalities. This ensures the equality of rights and freedoms of all citizens, regardless of their nationality. There is not a single law in Kazakhstan that could be regarded as infringing on anyone's national rights. However, this is not the case in many newly independent States.[514]

Identical statements were being made annualy. In the Appendices section I provided the excerpts of the speeches of president Nazarbayev from 2003 address to the Congress of People. The same rhetoric is maintained all the way towards the formal end of Nazarbayev's presidency. In his 2019 address to the Congress of Nur Otan political party, Nazarbayev declared that national unity was the first component of "national idea" which should serve as a guidance for the party.[515] Also, he reminds of the Doctrine of National Unity which was signed by him in 2010. Furthermore, in 2019 president Tokayev reiterated the discourse of Nazarbayev by stating that "Our unchanging principle remains the winged words of Elbasy[516] "The **unity** of the people

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[514] (Nazarbayev 2000b) Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A.Nazarbayev to the VII Congress of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan

[515] (Nazarbayev 2019)

[516] Elbasy – Leader of the Nation, title given to the first president of Kazakhstan, N.Nazarbayev

is our most valuable asset". Harmony and **unity**, wisdom and mutual understanding contribute to our movement forward." [517]

Undoubtedly, a high level of stability in the discourse on interethnic harmony and national unity of the president can be observed.

Illiberal accents of the Russian president differ from Kazakhstani. Illiberal ideas of Russian president are also reflected in most frequent key words: family, principle*, tradiition, and moral. Family belongs to the subcategory of traditionalism. Large share of this term concerns the topic of financial provision of families in Russia often in terms of strengthening families. As such, in 2016 president Putin talked about measures to strengthen families: he refers to financial support and promotion of traditional family values: "The meaning of our entire policy is the saving of people, the multiplication of human capital as the main wealth of Russia. Therefore, our efforts are aimed at supporting traditional values and the family, demographic programs, improving the environment, people's health, developing education and culture." [518]

In the last three years Putin's mentioning of family surged which can be seen from Figure 3.6. below.

Figure 3.6. Raw frequency of key word 'family' and 'families' by the Russian president.
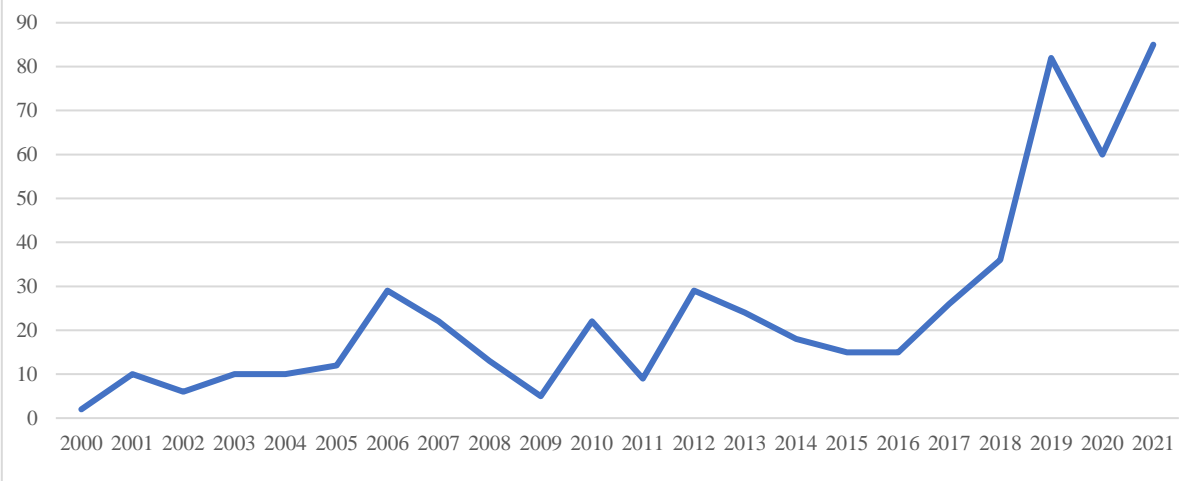
Source: Author.

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[517] (Tokayev 2019)
[518] (Putin 2016)

Sometimes in his discourse traditions, moral and family come along, for examplle, in the National address of 2007: "Real art carries a serious educational charge, forms the beginnings of patriotism, develops moral and family values, respect for work and for older generations." [519]

To sum up, rhetoric on liberal values of two presidents vary. In it essence, it means that legitimation claims are also different. If Kazakh president propounds the doctrine of multiethnic unity and friendship in his politics, Russian president emphasizes his support for families and traditions.

Nationalism accents are increasing in the Russian president's discourse.

Figure 3.7. Nationalism in the discourse of the Russian president, 2000-2021.
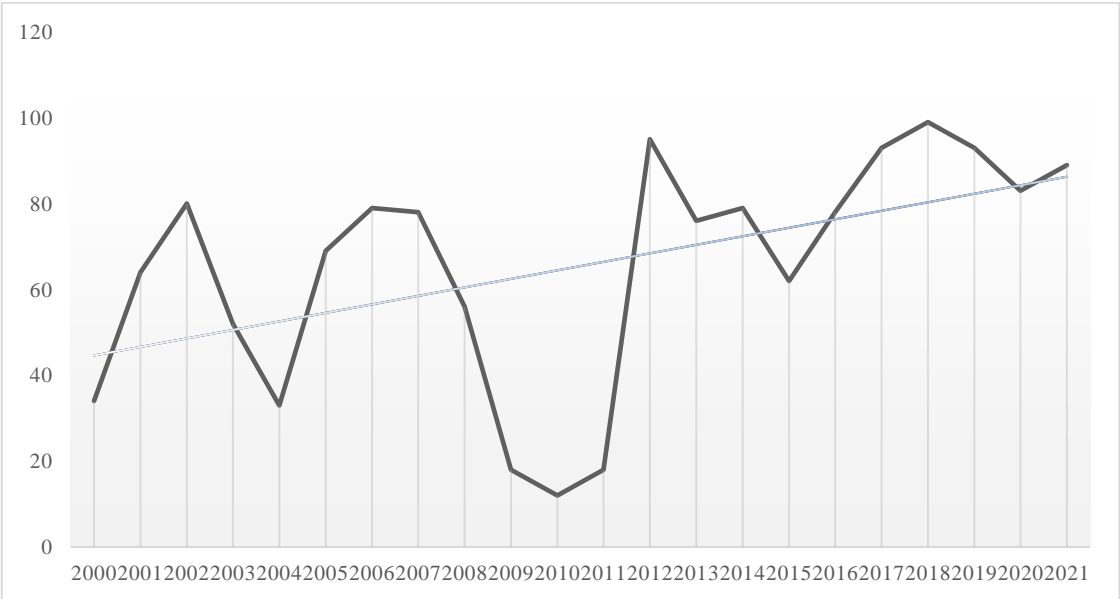
Source: Author.

Next figure illustrates ASI for Kazakhstan and Russia which includes subcategories on democratic practices. Interestingly enough, the focus on democratic practices has been almost constant in the last 22 years in the discourse of president of Kazakhstan (insignificant slope coefficient of the trendline).

Russian president's autocratic discourse has been increasing: the trendline for ASI has a positive slope. Democratic procedures were accentuated only in 2004, 2008-2009, 2011.

To sum up, Kazakhstani president is concerned with maintaing democratic façade more than the Russian president.

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[519] (Putin 2007)

Figure 3.8. Autocratic Speech Index.

1) Autocratic Speech Index, president of Kazakhstan.
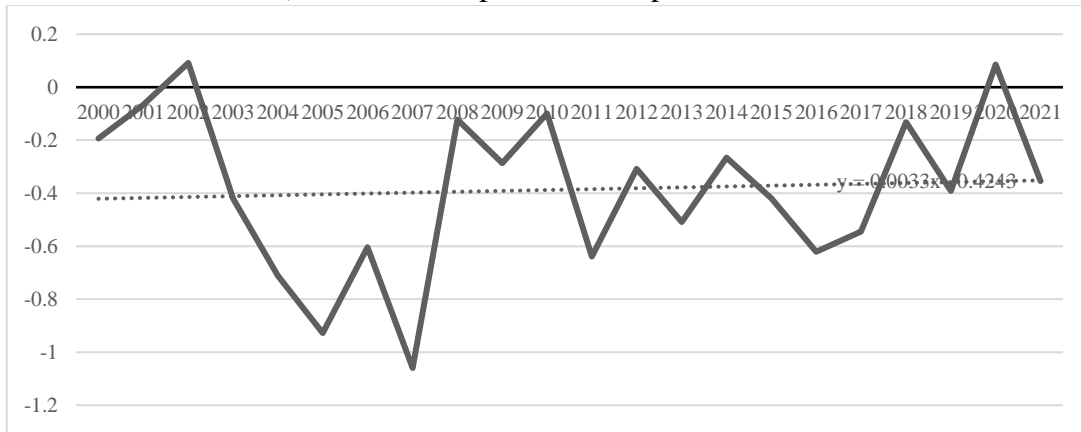
2) Autocratic Speech Index, president of Russia.
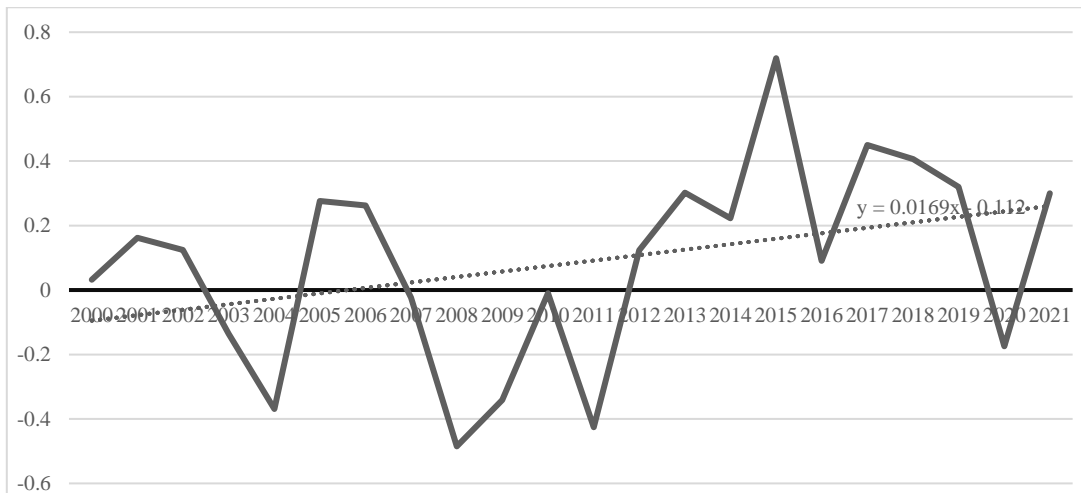
Source: Author.

ASI of the Russian president speeches shows that the longest period of stronger emphasis on democratic values (democratic procedures like elections etc. and decentralized governance) was in 2008-2012. Remembering that ISI in 2011 also elucidated purely liberal discourse and relatively smaller ratios of illiberal rhetorics in 2008-2010, we can once again point to president Medevedev's more liberal incumbency.

3.9.3. Styles of governance analysis.

ASI relates hierarchic mode of governance language and decentralized mode of governance. But it is instrumental to compare original rates of hierarchic and decentralized styles of governance. In the Russian president's communication hierarchic governance style has started

to prevail on a permanent basis since 2012, the year of Putin's return to presidency. The graph below is designed to compare between hierarchic governance and decentralized governance styles.

Figure 3.9. Hierarchic vs. Decentralized mode of governance in the speeches of the Russian president.
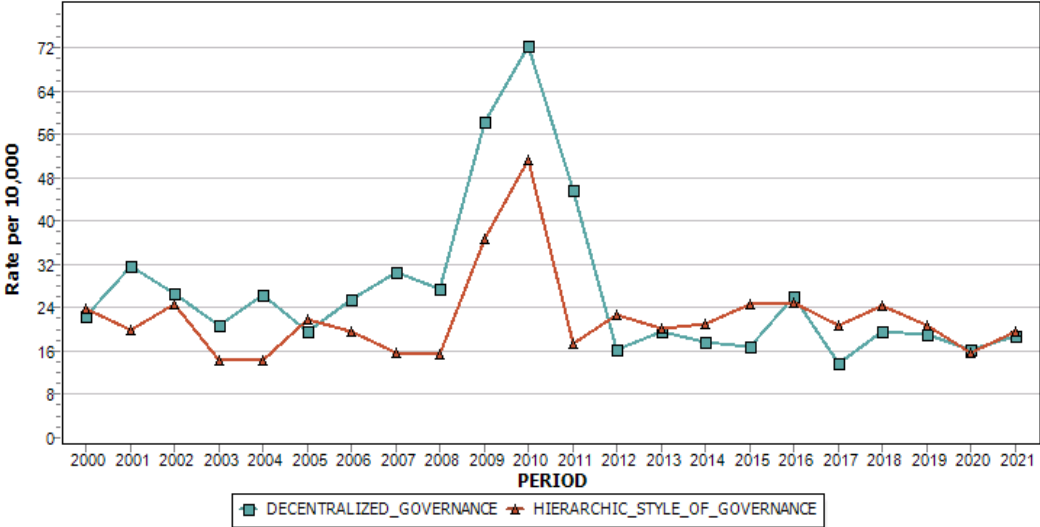
Source: Author.

During Medvedev's presidency we can observe a relatively high decentralized mode of governance compared to hierarchic governance style (his speeches are in 2008-2011). When Putin came back in 2012 with the Annual National Address to the Federation Council, hierarchic governance vocabulary rocketed even higher than before.

Kazakhstani president's rhetoric is described by higher concentration of decentralized governance key words than hierarchic except for 2002, 2014, and 2020. (See Figure 3.10.) Though, in comparison to his Russian counterpart, Kazakh president uses much more often strong directive terms such as instruct*, control*, regulat*, and enforce*. (See the graph below for rates per 10 000.) For example, concentration of the term 'instruct' in the Kazakhstani president's speeches six times higher than the Russian's president.

Figure 3.10. Hierarchic vs. Decentralized mode of governance in the speeches of the Kazakhstani president.
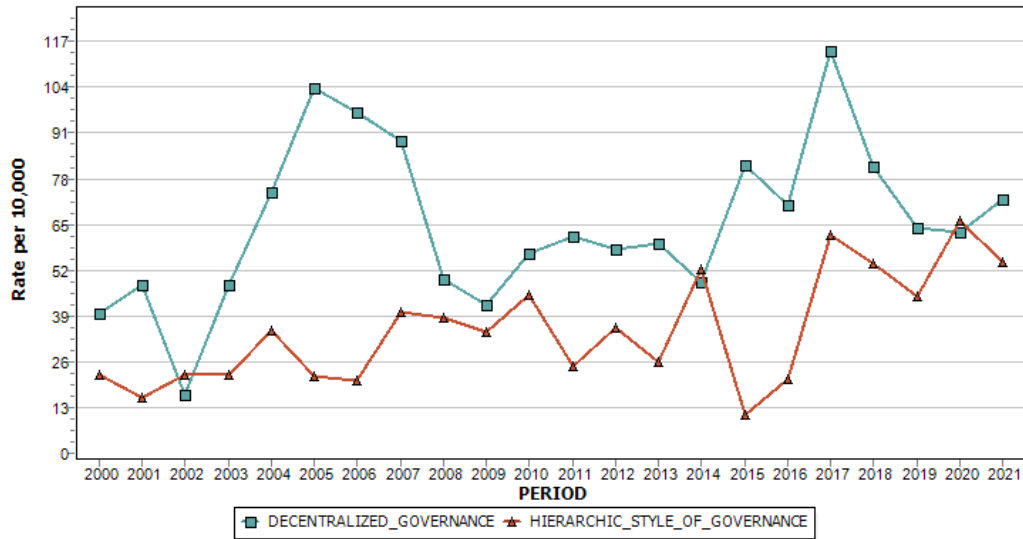
Source: Author.

Figure 3.11. Distribution of most frequent hierarchic governance terms in the speeches of the presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan (rate per 10 000 words).
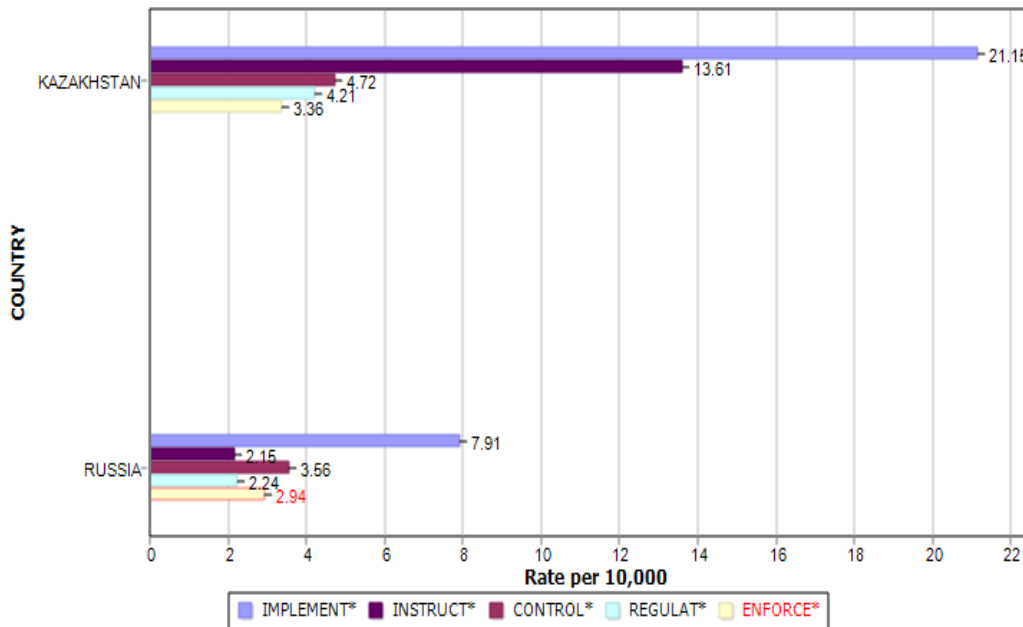
Source: Author.

Textual data analysis points to directiveness in the governance style of the Kazakh president. Furthermore, "instruct the government" ("поручаю правительству") is the second most frequent phrase of the Kazakhstani leader.

Figure 3.12. Distribution of key phrases, president of Kazakhstan (2000-2021).
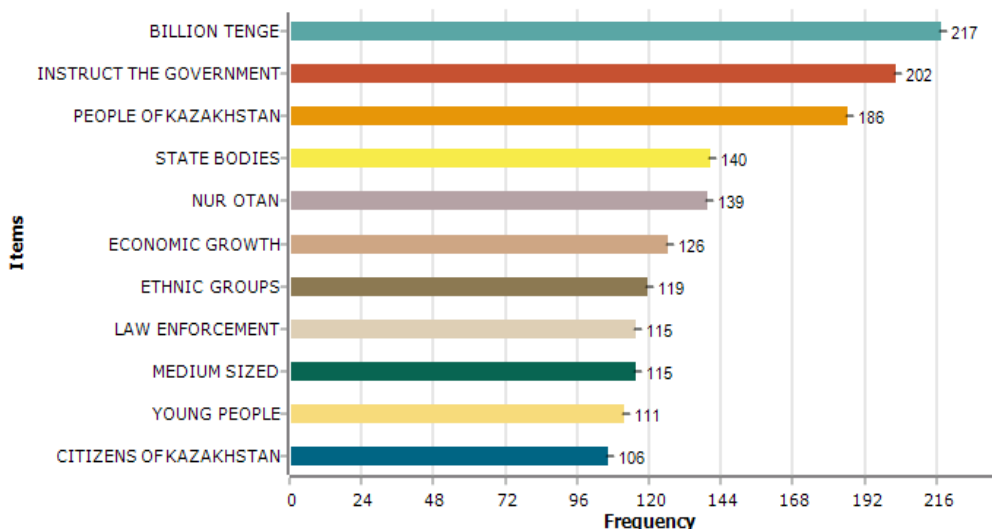
Source: Author.

The president constantly instructs government, National Bank, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, dominant party Nur Otan. For example, Nazarbayev stated in his 2014 Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan: "I instruct the presidential administration, the government, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan together with the national movement "Kazakhstan-2050" to organize the development and adoption of the patriotic act "Mangilik El" ("Eternal country"-Author)."[520]

President uses 'instruct' in relation to the propresidential party Nur Otan: "I instruct the party to work out the issue of creating a new system of children's organizations, calling it, for example, "Zhas Kyran"."[521]

President instructs regional governors and regional legislatures: "I instruct akims (governors – *Author*), together with local maslikhats (local legislatures- *Author*), to ensure the direction of half of these funds to co-finance the modernization of housing and communal services and solve urgent social problems of regional residents."[522]

President's numerous instructions reveal autocratic character of the Kazakh leader. In this way, president seems to reassert authority in his public rhetoric.

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[520] Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan, January 17, 2014.

[521] Speech of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the 13th Assembly of people's democratic party "Nur Otan", February 11, 2011.

[522] Address of the Head of state Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan, September 2, 2019.

Conclusion.

I started this chapter with an overview of governance and state. Governance concept has transformed since the introduction of new actors into public service delivery and decision-making in Great Britain in 1980s and 1980s. These transformations were natural and organic in democratic states because they meant the rise of participatory government.

Governance in authoritarian regimes has not been the subject of particular interest because modern understanding of governance primarily includes tools of democratic polities not authoritarian. Still, earlier general concept of governance stipulates that the patterns of governance are constituent elements of a political regime.[523] Governance covers technical elements of a regime thus reflecting its democratic or autocratic character.

At the same time, it does not imply that non-democratic regimes do not exercise governance in its modern understanding. For example, public-private partnerships exist in authoritarian states. Still, in authoritarian regime even this tool of public-private partnership or contracting out will most probably be used with the rent-seeking intentions.

Governance answers the question *how*? Specifically, how public services are provided and how public decision-making goes on. So, I started with an assumption that how question should be revealed in public communication of political leaders – rulers or head of states are the ones who set the scene in hegemonic authoritarian regimes.

First and foremost, incentives and purposes of authoritarian governance are fundamentally different. International institutes develop the concept of metagovernance and emphasize that traditional hierarchical governance is not enough for efficient policy making and development. Participatory government is essential in tackling global developmental issues. In addition, governance is associated with new public management. In authoritarian systems governance is built on power-sharing or cooperation between the ruling elites and the neutralization of opposition.

Bad governance definition as the opposite of good governance is not sufficient. I support the way Gel'man defines bad governance as consisting of the following elements: lack and/or perversion of the rule of law; corruption; poor quality of regulation; ineffectiveness of government.[524]

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[523] (Schmitter and Lynn Karl 1991)
[524] (Gel'man 2017, 3)

As a result of tracing the evolution of governance concept, I concluded that modes of governance or styles of governance reflect the essence of the current approach towards governance. International institutes dealing with development issues emphasize the importance of network and market styles of governance. I incorporated market and network styles of governance into the category of decentralized governance in the Autocratic Speech Index. Similarly, I constructed and calculated Illiberal Speech Index for all the analyzed years for the political texts from presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia, for democratic leaders Barack Obama and Emmanuel Macron and overt dictators Josef Stalin and Saddam Hussein for comparative analysis.

My original purpose was to observe governance styles and styles of language, in general, in the official public communication of hegemonic authoritarian leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia.

The methodological sections started with an overview of academic literature which analyzes the language of authoritarian leaders. Guriev and Treisman investigated the differences between old-style dictators (20th century totalitarian and authoritarian leaders) and modern autocrats. Among other differences, they reveal that the language of modern informatiocal autocrats' language is the same as democratic leaders.

My analysis inquired whether difference between the rhetoric of modern democratic and hegemonic authoritarian leaders exists. On the other hand, I investigated whether modern hegemonic authoriatian Russian and Kazakhstani leaders share similarities with earlier overt dictators like Stalin and Hussein.

I provide a qualitative comparative analysis of the speeches of the presidents of Kazakstan and Russia.

First of all, the hypothesis that modern autocratic leaders' rhetoric is not different from democratic discourses is supported by the cases of Kazakhstani and Russian presidents. Moreover, Barack Obama and Emmanuel Macron largely use nationalism/paternalism and maintenance of power rhetoric. The concentration of nationalism and paternalism key words in the political texts of Macron is higher than its average concentration in the speeches of Kazakhstani and Russian presidents. In addition, Obama uses more traditionalism key words than both analyzed autocratic leaders.

As a result, I conclude that the language of authoritarian political leaders is misleading. Long-standing autocracy like Kazakhstan has a leader portraying himself as the one who was successful in building a democratic society - a demonstrative democratic image.

The discrepancy between modern Kazakhstan and Russia's leaders and overt dictators like Stalin and Saddam Hussein is substantial. First and foremost, stark differences can be found at a deeper levels of subcategories. Saddam Hussein demonstrates massive overemphasis on traditionalism in his speeches: the table provided data for his frequent usage of the concepts 'god' and 'almighty'. Stalin has extraordinary exaggeration of maintenance of power subcategory, specifically he focuses on 'war'.

Maerz (2019) also noticed that the leaders of hegemonic regimes use an ostentiously democratic style of language in contrast to competitive authoritarian regimes. This finding is true for Kazakhstan. Data from textual analysis of confirms that a long-standing hegemonic regime of Kazakhstan leader overemphasizes democratic procedures to fake pluralism. However, Russia's newly hegemonic authoritarian regime has clearly demonstrated strengthening autocratic discourse.

Nationalism and traditionalism subcategories can be considered most conspicuous dictionaries: they reveal overt neopatrimonial dictators like Saddam Hussein.

On the technical part I can conclude that the measures on specific subcategories are more accurate because they reveal stronger differences between overt dictators' language and modern autocrats.

However, I consider that the indices ASI and ISI are reliable for estimating dynamic changes. Autocratic and illiberalness indices (ASI and ISI) were constructed and calculated for both country leaders and for the period of 22 years. They show that Kazakh president has been reducing autocratic elements in his discourses. Russian president on the contrary is not trying to reduce his discourse on power maintenance and nationalism.

Hierarchic mode of governance prevails in the language of the Russian political leader. Kazakhstani leader exhibits more decentralized style of governance than hierarchic most of the years (19 out of 22 years) in his addresses to the public. Kazakh president's usage of decentralized governance key words is almost three times higher than the Russian's president. While simulating a strong democratic society, president of Kazakhstan extensively demonstrate hierarchic style of governance. President of Kazakhstan discourse is focused on reasserting

authority by repreating "instruct the government" and 'instruct' all other state bodies and even regional legislatures.

Comparative analysis of presidents of the analyzed countries show that Russia's president propounds autocratic procedures and illiberal practices while Kazakhstani president emphasizes democratic procedures and illiberal ideas. Liberalism and illiberalism are present in equal proportions in the discourse of the president of Kazakhstan. Russian president uses more illiberal vocabulary than liberal.

Further research questions may touch upon issues on the reasons for high autocratic scales of the discourses of democratic leaders.

Conclusions made from hegemonic authoritarian Russia and Kazakhstan can further be tested on more cases of hegemonic regimes to be able to make any generalizations.

Appendices.

Table A.7. Governance definitions used by international organizations.

World Bank 1992	"The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development". Source: World Bank. (1992). Governance and Development. https://doi.org/10.1596/0-8213-2094-7
Asian Development Bank	"The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's social and economic resources for development… It encompasses the functioning and capability of the public sector, as well as the rules and institutions that create the framework for the conduct of both public and private business, including accountability for economic and financial performance, and regulatory frameworks relating to companies, corporations, and partnerships." Four elements of good governance: (i) accountability, (ii) participation, (iii) predictability, and (iv) transparency. Source: (Bank 1995, 3) https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/32027/govpolicy.pdf p.3
OECD	"Public governance refers to the formal and informal arrangements that determine how public decisions are made and how public actions are carried out, from the perspective of maintaining a country's constitutional values when facing changing problems and environments. The principal elements of good governance refer to accountability, transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness and rule of law. There are clear links between good public governance, investment and development. The greatest current challenge is to adapt public governance to social change in the global economy. Thus the evolving role of the State needs a flexible approach in the design and implementation of public governance." "Public governance is currently more participative and transparent. Regulatory clarity and certainty are valued by businesses and citizens. Innovative mechanisms to monitor and evaluate public management are commonly used to improve transparency and build credibility, important determinants of investment." There are two key dimensions of public governance: i) regulatory governance and the rule of law; and ii) public sector integrity, including the contribution of international co-operation. Source: Policy Framework for Investment User's Toolkit, Chapter 10. Public Governance. https://www.oecd.org/investment/toolkit/policyareas/publicgovernance/
The European Commission	Governance refers to the rules, processes, and behaviour by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in society. The way public functions are carried out, public resources are managed and public regulatory powers are exercised is the major issue to be addressed in that context. Today governance is generally used as a basic measure of quality and performance of any political/administrative system. EC, 2003. Communication on Governance and Development, COM 2003 615, p.3 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2003:0615:FIN:EN:PDF
UNDP	"Governance is the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions—achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action. It comprises the mechanisms and processes for citizens and groups to articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations. It is the rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms. Governance, including its social, political and economic dimensions, operates at every level of human enterprise, be it the household, village, municipality, nation, region or globe." Source: UNDP Strategy Note on Governance for Human development, 2000

IMF	"Governance: The process by which decisions are made and implemented (or not implemented). Within government, governance is the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. Good governance refers to the management of government in a manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law." Source: IMF, 2007. Manual on Fiscal Transparency, IMF: Washington DC, p. 128, onhttp://imf.org/external/ np/pp/2007/eng/051507m.pdf Good governance refers to the management of government in a manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law. Source: IMF, 2007, Manual on Fiscal Transparency, IMF, Washington DC, Glossary.
WGI Project	"Governance consists of the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them." Six dimensions of governance are covered: (1) Voice and Accountability; (2) Political Stability and Absence of Violence; (3) Government Effectiveness; (4) Regulation Quality; (5) Rule of Law; and (6) Control of Corruption. Source: The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project, https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/

Source: Author.

Table A.8. Dictionary for styles of language analysis.

Autocratic style of language	
5. Autocratic procedures	
Hierarchic style of governance	ABOLITION* BAN BANNED BANNING BUREAUCRAT* BUREAUCRAC* CONSERVATION CONSTITUTIONAL_ORDER CONTROL* DIRECTIVE DUTIES DUTY ENFORCE* FEE FINE* FORBID GRANT* HINDRANCE* INSTRUCT* MONITOR* PROHIBIT* PUNISH* REGULAT* PENALT*

	RULES
	SANCTION*
	SAFETY
	SCRUTIN*
	SUPPRESS
	UNAUTHORIZE*
	UNITARITY
	WELFARE
	SYSTEMATIC
Maintenance of power	ANARCH*
	ASSAULT*
	AUTHORITY
	BANDIT*
	BETRAYAL*
	BLUFF
	BOYCOTT*
	CHAOS
	COLLAPSE
	CRIMINAL*
	CROWN
	CUSTOD*
	DANGER*
	DEFEN*
	DELINQUEN*
	DESTABILI*
	DESTROY
	DESTRUCTIVE
	DISORDER
	DISRUPT*
	DRUG*
	EVIL
	EXTREMIS*
	FIGHT*
	FRAUD*
	GUARD*
	ILLEGAL*
	IMMUNIZE
	INSTABILITY
	INSULT*
	KING*
	LAWLESS*
	LAW_ENFORCEMENT
	LEADER*
	LOYALTY
	MAINTAIN*
	MANIPULAT*
	MILITAR*
	MONARCH*
	OFFENCE*
	PENAL*
	POLICE
	PRESER*
	PRINCE
	PRISON*
	PROSECUTION
	PROTECT*

	REBELL*
	REIGN
	RESTOR*
	RIOT*
	ROYAL*
	SEDITION
	SEIZ*
	SENTENCE*
	SEPARATIST*
	SLANDER
	SOLDIER*
	SOVEREIG*
	STABIL*
	STABLE
	STRENGTH
	SUBVERSIVE
	TERRORIST*
	THEFT*
	THREAT*
	THUG*
	TRAFFICK*
	TRUST
	TURBULENCE
	UNCERTAIN*
	UNFRIENDLY
	UNLAWFUL
	UNREST
	VANDAL*
	VIGILAN*
	WAR*
6. Illiberalism	
Nationalism, paternalism	ALLAH
	ALMIGHTY
	CHRIST
	CHRISTIANITY
	CHRISTIANS
	CHURCH
	ENEM*
	FATHER*
	FATHERLAND
	GOD
	HERO*
	HOMELAND
	IMMIGRA*
	INTERFER*
	INVINCIBLE
	ISLAM
	JESUS
	MIGRANT*
	MIGRATION*
	MINARET
	MOTHERLAND
	MUSLIM*
	PATRIOT*
	PRIDE
	PROUD

	RELIGI*
	SOVEREIGN*
	SPIRITUAL
	TERRITORY
	UNIQUENESS
	UNITY
Traditionalism	ANCESTORS
	BROTHERS
	DISCIPLINE
	FAMILY*
	FOREFATHER
	GLORIES
	GLORIOUS
	HERITAGE
	HONOR
	HONOUR
	INHERIT*
	MAJESTY
	MORAL*
	OBSCEN*
	PERVERT*
	PORNOGRAPH*
	PROBITY
	RECAPTURE*
	RELIAB*
	SHAMEFUL
	TRADITION*
Democratic style of language	
7. Liberalism	
Liberal values	AUTHORITARIAN*
	AUTOCRA*
	CIVIL_FREEDOMS
	CIVIC_FREEDOMS
	CIVIL_SOCIETY
	CRUEL*
	DEMILITARIZATION
	DICTATOR*
	DISARMAMENT
	DISCRIMINAT*
	DIVERSE
	DIVERSITY
	EQUAL*
	FASCISM
	FREEDOM
	HARASSMENT
	HUMAN_RIGHTS
	INCLUSION
	INCLUSIV*
	INNOCENT
	INTERFAITH
	INTERRELIGIOUS
	LIBERAL*
	MULTICULT*
	NEGOTIATION
	OPPRESSION
	PLURALIS*

	POLITICAL_RIGHTS CORRUPT* REPRESSI* SUPRESS* TOLERANCE TOLERAT* TRANSPAREN* VIOLAT* VOLUNTARY
Women, minorities	DIALECT* ETHNI* GAY* GENDER GENOCIDE GIRLS HANDICAPPED INDIGENOUS INJUSTICE* INTERETHNIC INTOLERANCE JUSTICE LESBIAN* LGBT MARGINALIZE* MINORITIES MULTIETHNIC MULTI-ETHNIC QUEER* RACIST* RIGHTS SISTERS TRANSGENDER UNFAIR* WOMAN WOMEN
8. Democratic procedures	
Democracy	BARGAINING CAMPAIGN* CHOICE COMPETITIVE CONSENSUS CONSTITUTION CONSTRUCTIVE CONSULTATION CREDIBILITY DELEGATION DELIBERATE* DEMOCRA* DIALOGUE* ELECT* FAIR* FREE FRIENDSHIP LEGISLAT* LEGITIMA* MEDIAT*

	MULTILATERAL* NEGOTIATION* OPINION* PARLIAMENT* PEACE* POLITICAL_PARTIES POLLS REDISTRIBUTION REFEREND* REPRESENTAT* SECURITY SOLIDARITY VOICE* VOTE* VOTING
Decentralized governance	CO-CREATION CONCILIATION COOPERATION CORPORATE_GOVERNANCE DECENTRALIZATION ENGAGE* HARMONIZATION IMPETUS IMPLEMENT* INCENTIVE MODERNIZ* NETWORK* PARTICIPATION PRIVATE_SECTOR PROMOTE PARTNERSHIP* RECONCILIATION REEXAMINE* REFORM* TRANSITION* TRANSFORM*

Table A.9. Corpus of speeches of the president of Kazakhstan. President Tokayev since June 9, 2019.

Year	Speech. President Tokayev.	Words
2021	Address of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan. September 1, 2021. Speech of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the expanded meeting of the Council of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. October 21, 2021. Speech of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the XXIX session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. April 28, 2021. 4) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan at the 4th meeting of National Council of Social Trust. 5) Speech of the President at the opening of the first session of the VII term parliament of Kazakhstan. Januray 15, 2021.	26 422

	6) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan at the 4th meeting of National Council of Social Trust.	
2020	**7**) Address of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan. September 1, 2020. 8) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan at the 3rd meeting of National Council of Social Trust. May 27, 2020. **9) Official Statement of the president. March 31, 2020.** 10) Speech of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the Extraordinary XX Congress of the Nur Otan Party on November 25, 2020 11) Television address of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev March 16, 2020.	23 826
2019	**12) Address of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan. September 2, 2019.** 13) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan at the 2d meeting of National Council of Social Trust. December 20, 2019. **14) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the joint session of the Chambers of Parliament. March 20, 2019.** **15) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the XIX Extraordinary Congress of the Nur Otan Party on April 23, 2019.** 16) Address of the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the citizens of the country on April 9, 2019.	**20 901**

Table A.10. President Nazarbayev 2000- June 2019.

Year	Speech. President Nazarbayev.	Words
2019	17) Address of the Head of State Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. March 19, 2019. 18) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XVIII Regular Congress of the Party "Nur Otan" on February 27, 2019	
2018	19) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. October 5, 2018 20) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the solemn event dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan December 14, 2018 21) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people "Five social initiatives of the President" on March 5, 2018 22) Speech of the Head of State at the XXVI session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. April 28, 2018	12 356
2017	23) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. January 31, 2017 24) Appeal of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the issues of redistribution of powers between the branches of power on January 25, 2017 **25) Statement of the Head of State on the Annual Address to the People of Kazakhstan. January 30, 2017** 26) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the third session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the sixth convocation. September 4, 2017	8 464
2016	27) Speech of the Head of State at the solemn meeting dedicated to the 25th anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan on December 15, 2016 28) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the second session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the sixth convocation on September 1, 2016 **29) Manifesto. "Peace. XXI Century». April 2, 2016.** 30) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the first session of the Parliament of the sixth convocation on March 25, 2016	14 862

	31) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XVII Congress of the Party "Nur Otan" on January 30, 2016 32) Address of the President of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people in connection with the signing of the Decree on the dissolution of the Mazhilis of the Parliament of the 5th convocation, as well as the appointment of early elections of deputies to the Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan. January 20, 2016.	
2015	33) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan on December 18, 2015. 34) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate on September 11, 2015. 35) Speech of the Leader of the Nation N.Nazarbayev at the inauguration ceremony of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on April 29, 2015 36) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XXII session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan on April 23, 2015 37) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the forum of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan "The fate of the country is my destiny" on March 16, 2015 38) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Chairman of the Nur Otan Party N.Nazarbayev at the XVI Party Congress on March 11, 2015	11 031
2014	39) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan December 15, 2014 40) Speech of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the fourth session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the fifth convocation. September 2, 2014 41) Speech by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the extended meeting of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. August 6, 2014. 42) Speech by president of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XXI session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. April 18, 2014. 43) Address of the Head of State Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. January 17, 2014	16 196
2013	44) Speech at the solemn meeting dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan. December 14, 2013 45) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Chairman of the Nur Otan Party Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XV Party Congress. October 18, 2013 46) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the third session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the fifth convocation. September 2, 2013. 47) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Leader of the Nation Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan on pension reform. June 7, 2013. 48) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XX session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan "Strategy "Kazakhstan - 2050": one people - one country - one destiny". April 24, 2013.	10 786
2012	49) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the second session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the fifth convocation. September 3, 2012 50) Address of the participants of the XIX session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan to the citizens of the country. April 27, 2012 51) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XIX session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. April 27, 2012. 52) Speech of the Head of State Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the first session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the V Convocation. January 20, 2012	24 400

	53) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Leader of the Nation N. A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan on strategy "Kazakhstan-2050"	
2011	54) Address of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. 55) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Leader of the Nation N.A.Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan. December 15, 2011. 56) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the 13th Congress of the NDP "Nur Otan" on February 11, 2011 57) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Chairman of the NDP "Nur Otan" N.A. Nazarbayev at the XIV Party Congress.25.11.2011 November 25, 2011 58) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A.Nazarbayev at the opening of the 5th session of the Parliament of the fourth convocation.01.09.2011 September 1, 2011 59) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Chairman of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XVII session of the APK. April 18, 2011 60) Speech of the Leader of the Nation Nursultan Nazarbayev at the inauguration ceremony of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. April 8, 2011 61) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the 13th Congress of the NDP "Nur Otan". February 11, 2011	23 880
2010	62) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan "New Decade – New Economic Recovery – New Opportunities for Kazakhstan". Astana, January 29, 2010 63) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan. December 15, 2010. 64) October 20, 2010 Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the fourth session of the Parliament of the fourth convocation. Astana, September 1, 2010 65) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XVI session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. October 20, 2010.	11 424
2009	66) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XV session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan "National Unity - Our Strategic Choice". Astana, October 26, 2009 67) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. 6 March, 2009. https://www.parlam.kz/ru/presidend-speech/22 **68) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the opening of the III session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the fourth convocation, September 1, 2009.** https://www. parlam. kz/ru/presidend-speech/23	10 670
2008	69) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the XIV session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. Astana, October 23, 2008. 70) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the opening of the II session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan 71) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. February, 2008. https://www.parlam.kz/ru/presidend-speech/20	12 522
2007	72) Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XIII session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. Astana, 20 August 2007. 73) Speech by President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the first session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the fourth convocation. 74) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan The Strategy "Kazakhstan-2030" at the New Stage of Development of Kazakhstan https://www.parlam.kz/ru/presidend-speech/17 75) Speech by President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan	23 959

	76) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the joint session of the Chambers of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan. A new stage of democratization of kazakhstan – accelerated development of free democratic society. Astana, 16 May 2007.	
2006	77) Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the XII session of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan. Astana, 24 October 2006. 78) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the opening of the third session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan 79) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. 80) Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the 15th anniversary of independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan way: from stability – through modernization – to prosperity. Astana, December 15, 2006 81) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the Extraordinary IX Congress of RPE "Otan". Astana, July 4, 2006. 82) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the joint meeting of the Chambers of Parliament Strategy of Kazakhstan's entry into the list of the 50 most competitive countries in the world. Astana, January 18, 2006.	18 006
2005	83) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the opening of the second session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, September 1, 2005 84) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan on the path of accelerated economic, social and political modernization. February, 2005 85) Speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev on the national channel "Kazakhstan". Astana, December 2, 2005.	18 393
2004	86) Speech by the President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev at the opening of the first session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the third convocation. 87) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. March 19, 2004. 88) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the Extraordinary VII Congress of the Republican Political Party "Otan". Astana, June 15, 2004.	17 040
2003	89) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the session of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan model of interethnic harmony: experience, practice and prospects Astana, December 23, 2003 90) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. April 2003.	10 276
2002	91) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the ninth session of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan. Astana, 15 November 2002. 92) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. April 2002.	8 487
2001	93) Speech by N.A. Nazarbayev at the solemn meeting dedicated to the 15th anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan 94) Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the VIII session of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan. Astana, October 24, 2001. 95) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. September 2001.	17 072
2000	96) Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. October 2000. 97) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the seventh session of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan. December 15, 2000.	14 416

| | 98) Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the opening of the 2nd session of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the 2nd convocation. Astana, September 1, 2000. | |

Source: Author.

Table A.11. Corpus of speeches of president of the Russian Federation.

Year		Words
2021	1) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. April 21, 2021. 2) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 3) Speech at 20th United Russia party congress, June 2021, 4) Vladimir Putin's big press conference on December 23, 2021 http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67438	62 473
2020	5) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. January 15, 2020. 6) Annual press-conference of Vladimir Putin, December 17, 2020. http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/64671	36 282
2019	7) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. February 20, 2019. 8) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 9) Speech at the congress of the United Russia Party. 10) Annual press-conference of Vladimir Putin. December 19, 2019.	54 942
2018	11) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 12) Annual press-conference of Vladimir Putin, December 21, 2018. 13) Speech at United Russia party congress. 14) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 15) Inauguration speech of President of the Russian Federation.	54 289
2017	16) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 17) Speech at United Russia party congress. 18) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	42 897
2016	19) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 20) Speech at United Russia party congress. 21) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. December 1, 2016. 22) Vladimir Putin's big press conference http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/53573	49 125
2015	23) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 16 April 2015. http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/49261 24) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. December 3, 2015. 25) Vladimir Putin's big news conference http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/50971	46 033
2014	26) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 27) President's Address to the Federal Assembly. December 4, 2014. 28) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	46 628
2013	29) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 30) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. December 12, 2013. 31) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	57 450
2012	32) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. December 12, 2012. 33) Inauguration speech of President of the Russian Federation. (V.Putin) 34) Speech at United Russia party congress. (by V.Putin) May, 2012.	41 109

	35) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	
2011	36) Speech at United Russia party congress. (by D. Medvedev) 37) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. December 22, 2011, 38) Press conference of the President of Russia, May 18, 2011. http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/11259	24422
2010	39) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. November 30,	8 937
2009	40) Speech at United Russia party congress. (D.Medvedev) 41) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. November 12, 2009.	13 496
2008	42) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. November 5, 2008, 43) Speech at X United Russia party congress. (D. Medvedev) 44) Inauguration speech of President of the Russian Federation. (D.Medvedev) 45) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	37 419
2007	46) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 47) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 48) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	45 791
2006	49) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 50) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 51) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation. 52) Internet conference of president of the Russian Federation. http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/press_conferences/23701	46 602
2005	53) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 54) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.	22 861
2004	55) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 56) Inauguration speech of President of the Russian Federation. May 7, 2004. 57) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	24 868
2003	58) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 59) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 60) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	37 113
2002	61) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 62) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 63) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	34 659
2001	64) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 65) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 66) Annual press-conference of president of the Russian Federation.	30 731
2000	67) Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. 68) President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. 69) Televised address of Vladimir Putin. 70) Inauguration speech of President of the Russian Federation.	12 837

Source: Author.
Direct Line with Vladimir Putin is annual political event, a television program, and a Q&A with Vladimir Putin broadcasted live.

Table A.12. Corpus of speeches analyzed in addition to the speeches of presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan.

Leader	Speeches	Sources	Words
Josef Stalin	- Speech Delivered by Comrade J. Stalin at a Meeting of Voters of the Stalin Electoral Area,	Josef Stalin, Works, Vol. 14, Red Star Press Ltd., London, 1978. J. Stalin,	6 995

	Moscow, December 11, 1937. -Speech Delivered by J.V. Stalin at a Meeting of the Voters of the Stalin Electoral District, Moscow, February 9, 1946.	Speeches Delivered at Meetings of Voters of the Stalin Electoral District, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1950.	
Saddam Hussein - Revolution Day Speech, July 1996.	-Revolution Day Speech, July 1996. -Revolution Day Speech, July 1995. -Revolution Day Speech, July 1994. -Revolution Day Speech, July 1993. -Revolution Day Speech, July 1992. -Revolution Day Speech, July 1989.	Baghdad Iraq Television Network, texts translated in FBIS Daily Report.	35 788
Democratic Leaders			
Barack Obama	-Weekly radio addresses (40 randomly selected from out of c.400)	https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/weekly-address	24,480
Emmanuel Macron	1. Speech by Emmanuel Macron, president of the republic at European Parliament. 17 April, 2018. 2. Emmanuel Macron's victory speech to supporters. May 7, 2017. 3. Initiative for Europe. Speech by M. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic. September 26, 2017	https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2018/04/17/speech-by-emmanuel-macron-president-of-the-republic-at-european-parliament https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39842084 http://international.blogs.ouest-france.fr/archive/2017/09/29/macron-sorbonne-verbatim-europe-18583.html	16 161

Sources: (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 37–38) and author compilation.

Quotes by N.Nazarbayev.

Excerpt from the Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A.Nazarbayev to the X Congress of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (2003):

"For centuries cohabitation of different ethnic groups in Kazakhstan has led to the development of a special Kazakh mentality.

Emotional extremes and ethnic isolation are alien to this mentality. It is based on the desire for civil unity, fusion of folk traditions and values.

The uniqueness of modern Kazakhstan lies in the ethnic variety. This is a huge wealth, a common heritage of our society, giving Kazakhstanis the opportunity to exchange valuable cultural achievements with other nations.

It should be emphasized that the Russian language still remains the language of interethnic communication in Kazakhstan, and this is right.

The diversity of cultures and languages is an invaluable gift which makes possible real creative mutual enrichment, genuine development of each nation of our country.

Our principled approach to the formation of Kazakhstan's identity is time-tested.

We need to continue to move in this direction calmly and without emotional overlaps, reviving kazakh culture and preserving the cultures of all national groups in our society."

Chapter 4. The politics of legitimation in the language of authoritarian rulers: Kazakhstan and Russia.

4.1. Legitimacy in comparative authoritarianism studies.

Literature on authoritarianism even at the onset of the 21st centure the issues of legitimacy of autocracies have been controversioal. Dukalskis and Gerschewski (2017) notice that "The idea that autocratic regimes aim to create a following among the people or that they are able to legitimate their grip to power is rarely taken into account except with reference to co-optation or material interest."[525] Legitimation topic in comparative authoritarianism studies started to appear quite recently.[526]

Legitimacy shapes power relations ("structures of dominatioin"), a regime's means of rule and stability.[527] Dukalskis and Gerschewski (2017) note that autocratic legitimation affects "regime resilience, challenger-state interactions, the procedures and operations of elections, and the texture of everyday life in autocracies."[528] As noticed by Kailitz (2013), legitimation patterns affect the ability of the regime to sustain itself for long periods. So, legitimacy of any political regime is directly linked to the resilience of this regime.

The crises of legitimacy help to explain the breakdown of social and political order.[529] Contentious collective actions, revolutions, and coup d'etat can be looked at as the breakdown of legitimacy of governments. The legitimacy breaches are seen in actions of citizens: "Actions ranging from non-cooperation and passive resistance to open disobedience and militant opposition on the part of those qualified to give consent will in different measure erode legitimacy, and the larger the numbers involved, the greater this erosion will be."[530]

While legitimation in democracies is universally based on free and fair elections, free and fair elections are in general the minimal definition of democracy. Legitimacy in authoritarian regimes is built on the variety of instruments. That is why the electoral process in autocracies varies substantially starting from the complete absence of elections till multi-party elections although with several peculiarities. Characteristics of authoritarian elections are quite obvious:

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[525] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 6)
[526] (See, Gilley 2009; Maerz 2020; Tannenberg et al. 2021; von Soest and Grauvogel 2017; 2016; Kailitz 2013)
[527] (Tannenberg et al. 2021, 80)
[528] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 2)
[529] (Beetham 1991, 6)
[530] (Beetham 1991, 19)

... elections are marked by an uneven playing field, based on: formal and informal rules that construct prohibitively high barriers to participation; sharply unequal access of competitors to financial and media resources; abuses of power by the state apparatus for the sake of maximizing incumbent votes irrespective of voter preferences; and (often but not always) multiple instances of electoral fraud.[531]

Gel'man defines the uneven playing field as the major factor in delineating electoral democracy from competitive authoritarian regime.

As a consequence, investigation into the legitimation of authoritarian regimes can be approached from various perspectives.

In the first chapter of my thesis I mentioned the theories that aim to explain authoritarian longevity: political institutions used for the preservation and durability of the regime, strategic behavior of autocrats, specifically, power sharing with the purpose to maintain power for an autocrat. This scholarship has been numerous.

Since recently literature on authoritarian resilience has started to include legitimacy concept. The erosion of legitimacy may lead to revolutionary mobilisation, riots, protests, coup d'etat. In the section on authoritarian governance I elaborated on the relationship between institutional capacity and legitimacy. Fukuyama marks that adjective *weak* refers to state strength and not scope, meaning "a lack of institutional capacity to implement and enforce policies, often driven by an underlying lack of legitimacy of the political system as a whole."[532]

Good governance builds on the concepts of legitimacy, effectiveness, transparency, control and efficiency.[533]

In my perspective, it is possible to analytically differentiate legitimacy of two distinct objects: legitimacy of a ruler and legitimacy of government as a whole. First, the rulers must be seen as legitimate. Stoker (2018) claims that legitimacy deficit „undermines the ability of power-holders to mobilize resources and promote co-operation and partnership."[534] If a ruler has come to power through legitimate means in this community, he automatically should become a legitimate head of state.

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[531] (Gel'man 2015, 7)
[532] (Fukuyama 2004, 96)
[533] (L. Meuleman 2014, 2)
[534] (Stoker 2018, 18)

Belarus presidential elections of 2020 put under strong pressure the regime of Alexandr Lukashenka. Officially he won elections with a vote share of 80.1%.[535] However, hundred of thousands people showed up at the Independence square against fraudalent and rigged elections. The situation came to a heated point when the newly elected president appeared with his son and Kalashnikov rifle probably fearing of state turnover. So, in this case, citizens protested against the illegitimacy of a powerholder.

One of the sources of legitimacy, rational-legal procedures failed dramatically in 2020 in Belarus when in the aftermath of presidential elections massive antigovernment protest marches started in Belarus. Demonstrators set forward requests "the organisation of new free and fair elections, the resignation of Lukashenko, the investigation of violence committed against protesters and the release of all political prisoners."[536] Future history of Belarus will show us whether the illegitimacy of a powerholder will impact the regime survive for long. Legitimacy of a head of state or an executive power comes as a result of legal-procedural processes.

The second object of legitimacy is the exercise of power or governance. On the one hand, legitimacy of a political leader is so closely intertwined with legitimacy of government that practically they cannot be disected from each other. Johnson refers to government as "the formal political and administrative institutions that make and execute decisions for the society — that is to say, the institutionalized expressions of the statuses of authority. Resorts to violence in order to cause changes at this level will be simple rebellions; they seek to replace persons who are believed to be occupying various authority positions illegitimately."[537]

An interesting question is whether legitimacy of two objects can be sustained separately. Russian political culture may serve as an example that it is possible in the beliefs of citizens to delineate legitimacy of authoritarian leader and government. As the Russian proverb says about the good tsar and the bad courtiers. (Царь хороший, бояре плохие.) The picture below shows an election campaign banner of a candidate from the party Fair Russia ("Spravedlivaya Rossiya") which says "Let's tell Putin the truth" from 2016 .

Sociological surveys confirm my conjecture. In 2016 Levada Center, the largest research center in Russia, found that 48% of Russians agreed that "Putin is thwarted by bureaucracy and the

[535] (Report of the Central Committee of the Republic of Belarus on Elections and Republican Referenda "About Election Results of the President of the Republic of Belarus in 2020". n.d.)

[536] (Krawatzek and Sasse n.d.)

[537] (Johnson 1982, 140)

absence of a good team"[538]. So, I suggest that in autocratic regimes legitimacy of a regimes depends on the legitimacy of a ruler for personalist dictatorships.

Picture 1. Election campaign banner of a cadnidate from Fair Russia party in 2016 parliamentary elections.

Source: K.Martynov, 2016. Geniuses of Political Technologies, Newspaper Novaya Gazeta https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2016/09/02/69727-genii-polittehnologii

In personal dictatorships people associate the concrete authoritarian regime with a ruler. In case of the most massive protest in Kazakhstan since its independence which was dubbed "Bloody January" (January 2022) protesters pulled off and trampled street signs with the name Nazarbayev. Moreover, Nazarbayev's statue was toppled with triumphant cheering.[539] The protest which started with economic requests against the increase in gas prises in the Western regions outgrew into political protest against the de-facto ruler N.Nazarbayev and his cronies.

4.2. Conceptualizing political legitimacy.

Pioneer of political legitimacy concept is undoubtedly Max Weber. Many political scientists and sociologists start the discussion on the topic by referring to his original definition of legitimacy.[540]

Max Weber defined the concept: "the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising

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[538] (Vladimir Putin 2016)
[539] (Video n.d.)
[540] (Beetham 1991; Gerschewski 2018; Smith 1970)

authority are lent prestige".[541] Gerschewski underscores Weber's descriptive approach to legitimacy as opposed to normative concept of legitimacy.[542] So, in Weber's perspective, citizens hold certain beliefs about authority.

He then defines the types of legitimate authority or three sources of legitimacy: the traditional, the charismatic legitimate rule and the legal-rational (under c and d):

"(a) By tradition: a belief in the legitimacy of what has always existed;

(b) by virtue of affectual attitudes, especially emotional, legitimizing the validity of what is newly revealed or a model to imitate;

(c) by virtue of a rational belief in its absolute value, thus lending it the validity of an absolute and final commitment;

(d) because it has been established in a manner which is recognized to be legal."[543]

Only rational-legal bases for legitimacy belong to democratic procedures.

Weber's approach that legitimacy is determined by people's beliefs in legitimacy is criticized by Beetham (1991) for the absence of objectiveness and incomprehensiveness which makes it hard to measure and test. He asserts that actual characteristics of a political regime are not considered in this definition of legitimacy.

Beetham (1991) essentially claims that people's beliefs are derivative from how a political system functions:

> Such an explanation appears particularly plausible in an age of propaganda and public relations, when the public sphere is dominated by an emphasis on presentation over reality. If people believe in the legitimacy of power, is this not because the powerful have been successful in the public relations campaign, because they have managed to convince people that they are legitimate, because their legitimations' have been accepted?[544]

However, he does not deny the importance of societal beliefs. In Beetham's perspective legitimacy is a complex notion which must include several aspects: "There is the legal validity of the acquisition and exercise of power; there is the justifiability of the rules governing a power relationship in terms of the beliefs and values current in the given society; there is the evidence

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[541] (Weber, Parsons, and Henderson 1964, 382)
[542] (Gerschewski 2018, 654)
[543] (Weber, Parsons, and Henderson 1964, 130)
[544] (Beetham 1991, 9)

of consent derived from actions expressive of it. These factors, successively and cumulatively, are what make power legitimate. To the extent that they are present it will be legitimate; to the extent that they are absent, it will not."[545] The first dimension is that power is acquired and exercised according to some rules implying legal validity of a regime. The example of the third dimension – expressive actions, legitimation through expressed consent, voting in elections which is an action that demonstrates consent of people. So, Beetham insists on multi-dimensionality of legitimacy concept.

Sociologists counterpose a normative view on legitimacy: some norm by which political authority can be justified.

Obviously, terms legitimacy and legitimation can be defined in a way that "… legitimacy is an ascribed attribute and a property of an object (e.g., a regime), while legitimation refers to the process of gaining legitimacy."[546]

Technically, legitimacy implies obedience "legitimacy provides them (subordinates) with moral grounds for cooperation and obedience. Legitimate power or authority has the right to expect obedience from subordinates, even where they may disagree with the content of a particular law or instruction…"[547]

Martin Lipset (1959) elaborates in the same vein as Weber by defining: "Legitimacy involves the capacity of a political system to *engender* and *maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society*."[548] According to Lipset, people consider the political system legitimate if its' values fit with their own values.

Usually, legitimacy and the support of the people are treated as synonyms. Easton uses synonymous term *support* which in his book implies that legitimacy serves "as a basis of support for the authorities and regime".[549]

Easton (1965) distinguish between diffuse support and specific support. Specific support is the product of the fulfillment of demands.[550] Such demands as high economic growth, publicly financed healthcare - "specific support flows from the favorable attitudes and predisposition stimulated by outputs that are perceived by members to meet their demands as they arise or in

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[545] (Beetham 1991, 13)
[546] (Gerschewski 2018, 655)
[547] (Beetham 1991, 26)
[548] (Lipset 1959, 86)
[549] (Easton 1965, 278)
[550] (Easton 1965, 268)

anticipation."[551] The provision of decent economic conditions and popularizing these as achievements can also be regarded as economic populism. As Dimitrov (2009) noticed that "Populist policies are easiest to implement in countries such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan, where natural-resource wealth fuels economic growth and provides funds that can be used for redistribution."[552]

Diffuse support comes from ideological premises:

> Support that is not directly linked to specific material rewards and satisfactions or coercion (negative rewards) may be generated through responses of the following types: first, those that seek to instill a deep sense of legitimacy in the members for the regime as a whole and for individuals who act on behalf of it; second, those that invoke symbols of the common interest; and third, those that promote and strengthen the degree to which members identify with the political community.[553]

Diffuse support is similar to identity based legitimation strategies developed by von Soest & Grauvogel (2017) that will be discussed later in this section.

Burnell's (2006) theorizing is similar to that of Easton (1965), he distinguishes internal and external sources of legitimacy. Internal sources include economic performance, material well-being of the people – same as specific support. External legitimacy is played out when the rulers make up a common threat to the nation which requires people to unite and support state which is a diffuse support. Also, hereditary traditions like those in Iran and Saudi Arabia, political ideology like communism and rigged elections, or in other words, imitation of democratic processes also constitute legitimacy in nondemocratic regimes.[554] One of the most outstanding examples of the internal source of legitimacy can be observed through the Arab spring events: "For a long time, these populist authoritarian states were said to rely on a "social contract": a reciprocal relationship that guaranteed political acquiescence in return for relatively acceptable economic performances. Due to growing disillusionment, the ruled people in Tunisia and Egypt withdrew from this "social contract" and protested."[555] Often, autocratic regimes promote their "claimed ability to secure order and stability in society rather than prosperity"[556] as the reason

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[551] (Easton 1965, 274)
[552] (Dimitrov 2009, 79)
[553] (Easton 1965, 277)
[554] (Burnell 2006, 548)
[555] (Gerschewski 2013, 19)
[556] (Burnell 2006, 558)

for staying in power, thus, being the only savior for the nation." They demonstrate that only the current autocratic regime is capable of sustaining such security. This is a matter of public communication and propaganda, also.

In addition, Burnell (2006) talks about the role of legitimation strategies in autocratic systems in opening to democracy.[557]

In practice, support means voting for a political candidate, paying taxes willingly, voluntarily join the armed forces.[558] On the contrary, refusing to pay taxes, engaging in riots, resistance movements, separatist movements, migration to another country, participating in a revolution, violations of laws are the examples of the absence of support for political regime.[559] Support can be measured by the "the numbers belonging to organizations; the regularity with which citizens or subjects perform their obligations; manifestations of open hostility such as breaches of the law, riots, or revolutions; and expressions of preferences for other systems through emigration or separatist activities… violations of laws, the prevalence of violence, the size of dissident movements, or the amount of money spent for security."[560]

Many researchers[561] differentiate between claims to legitimacy and legitimacy itself which is in my opinion warranted. It is no surprise that procedure-based and legal validity do not work in autocracies: as a rule, elections are fraudulent in authoritarian regimes. Dukalskis and Gerschewski (2017) conclude:

> …We assume that the concepts of the legitimacy claim of the rulers and the legitimacy belief of the people are the proper concepts for understanding autocratic legitimation. In this sense legitimacy is something that autocracies attempt to acquire or cultivate through their legitimation claims, symbols, narratives, and/or procedures.[562]

In this research I investigate legitimacy claims of two authoritarian leaders (Kazakhstan and Russia).

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[557] (Burnell 2006, 558)
[558] (Easton 1965, 159)
[559] (Easton 1965, 159)
[560] (Easton 1965, 163)
[561] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017; von Soest and Grauvogel 2016; Tannenberg et al. 2021)
[562] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 3)

Von Haldenwang (2017) highlights that legitimacy claims are issued by 'rulers', 'political leaders' or 'representatives of the political regime'.[563] It means that the sources of legitimacy claims should come from the rulers and government directly, through state-owned media and e-government.

Tannenberg et al. (2021) extended Weber's three ideal types of legitimacy and constructed four legitimacy claims:

1) rational-legal rule,
2) the qualities of the leader,
3) political ideology,
4) performance.

Tannenberg et al. (2021) surveyed country experts and constructed indicators on four legitimacy claims. The surveys confirmed that closed autocracies relied more on ideological and personalistic claims than electoral autocracies.

Empirical research of von Soest and Grauvogel (2017) develops 6 dimensions of legitimation in authoritarian regimes: ideology, foundational myth (like nationalism, specific societal order, and religion), personalism (a ruler is a charismatic leader), international engagement, procedural mechanisms, and performance.[564]

So, literature review on the legitimacy of political systems elucidate that researchers treat legitimacy as a multi-dimensional concept.

As I mentioned earlier, authoritarian legitimation is rarely under investigation. Dukalskis and Gerschewski (2017) approach autocratic legitimation by elaborating on the mechanisms of how authoritarian regimes legitimate their rule: indoctrination, performance, passivity, and democratic-procedural. Indoctrination basically means the spread of ideology. Performance legitimation implies that "there exists a hidden social contract between the ruled and the ruler that as long as the regime delivers and provides public and private goods, there is no need for the ruled to protest and attempt to change the political situation."[565] Passivity also means distraction and demobilization of citizens by discrediting political alternatives and oppositions as unrealistic.[566]

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[563] (Von Haldenwang 2017, 7)
[564] (von Soest and Grauvogel 2016, 2017)
[565] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 6)
[566] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 9)

Legitimacy in democratic states is relatively clear and easy: we have "the centrality of the rational-legal type".[567] Undoubtedly, legitimacy claims in authoritarian regimes are more diverse.

Guriev and Treisman (2018) notice that legal procedures such as elections may render secondary to other legitimation strategies in moden "informational autocracies": "If information manipulation has successfully inflated the autocrat's reputation, elections can be used to distill popularity into legitimacy. The appearance of democracy can be added to the image of competence."[568]

The distinctive feature of Von Soest and Grauvogel (2016; 2017) studies on legitimacy is focus on non-democratic political regimes. So, they investigate the six dimensions of legitimation (mentioned above) in authoritarian regimes. Ideology, foundational myth, and personalism are identity based claims: these are concepts which develop sense of community and association.

Foundational myth is also referred to by Levitsky and Way (2013), Clapham (2012), and Schedler (2013), Schatzberg (2001). Foundation myth may include narratives propagated by the ruling elites that the incumbents were essential in state-building. Della Sala (2010) emphasizes that "Every form of social organization requires narratives to give it meaning and to provide a reason for being. Political authority is no different and has a narrative that frames who can govern, why, how and over whom."[569]

Ideology is defined as "narratives regarding the righteousness of a given political order… belief system intended to create a collective identity and, in some cases, a specific societal order".[570] Nowadays, ideology includes references to nationalism, religion. Nationalism is a wide concept. In its extreme level it implies ethnic exclusiveness. However, all examples of nationalism are mentioned in the codebook. Specific characteristic of ideology is that its ideas are used in concrete policies, measures even in such areas as art, music, science.[571]

Personalism means reference to two factors. The ruler, ruler's qualities, extraordinary personality, leadership qualities, charisma and other glorifying descriptive features are emphasized. In addition, references to the ruler's centrality to achievements, .

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[567] (Tannenberg et al. 2021, 80)
[568] (Guriev and Treisman 2018b, 122)
[569] (Della Sala 2010, 1)
[570] (von Soest and Grauvogel 2017, 4)
[571] (Linz 2000, 21)

Procedural legitimacy is the one inherent to democratic systems. In terms of (Beetham 1991, 4) it is legal validity which means that power acquisition takes place according to legal rules accepted by all citizens.

Performance legitimacy was developed from the notion of specific support of (Easton 1965) which implies satisfying the needs and requirements of citizens. This category emphasizes achivements in the analyzed sector, increase in corresponding indicators of performance, economic growth. It is important that the text should contain not just statement of the fact, particularly, in figures. The emotional stress or verbal expressions such *as increased, improved, expanded, implemented more than before, plan to expand* shoul be present. This indicator includes mentioning both current achivements and future successes and promises of the government.

International recognition and engagement: I consider that both the recognition from other states and the state's international role, engagement in international and regional negotiations, humanitarian acts are important.

Furthermore, Kailitz (2013) focuses on classifying political regimes based on the patterns of legitimation.

Legitimacy beliefs as a supply side of legitimation process depend on multitude of factors. Research on legitimacy beliefs by citizens have more difficulties as these are more nebulous processes to measure. However, such studies exist. Researchers use number of protests, migration patterns, petitions to evaluate beliefs of citizens.[572] Most direct assessment of legitimacy beliefs can be extracted through comprehensive surveys like in Mazepus (2017) *What makes political authorities legitimate? Students' ideas about legitimacy in five European democracies and hybrid regimes.* However, in authoritarian regimes the problem of collecting true public opinions is huge, sometimes even insurmountable. (Dimitrov 2015b) So, researchers devise other tools to collect public opinion. Dimitrov (2015) used petitions to estimate the quality of governance in China. In his viewpoint, they reveal information about problems of public policy, corruption and "monitor the level of trust in the regime". One of the most outstanding studies was made by King, Pan, and Roberts (2013). Scholars assessed millions of social media posts before they were censored and compared to the censored posts using

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[572] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 11)

computer-assisted text analysis methods. They found out that the purpose of censorship is not to eliminate criticisms of governments but to forestall possible collective actions.

In legitimacy, public communication and the role of political leaders become of utmost importance. Beetham (1991) claims that: "If people believe in the legitimacy of power, is this not because the powerful have been successful in the public relations campaign, because they have managed to convince people that they are legitimate, because their legitimations' have been accepted?"[573]

4.3. Research Design.

4.3.1. Methodology and operationalization.

Previous sections employed various theories to conceptualize legitimacy in the authoritarian context.

In this section I explore how autocrats legitimize their rule and how legitimacy claims contribute to authoritarian persistence.

Political rhetorics of authoritarian rulers has become the subject of research since only recently.[574]

Around the world, one of the curious characteristics of modern authoritarian regimes is a genuine support for autocrats, particularly, during first years of incumbency. The stark examples are Hugo Chavez of Venesuela, Putin mostly in his first years of incumbency, N.Nazarbayev except for several recent years.

So, we can observe a rise of autocratic leaders who claim to be legitimated by their people. Popular support for autocratic regime at least at the initial stages of presidency may imply that the rulers use successful legitimation strategies or actually perform effectively by producing economic growth and social conditions.

In case of autocratic leaders of natural resources abundant regimes, "petrodollars" allowed for adequate economic development and autocratization of the state.[575] Scholars conclude that resource abundance does postpone the autocratic regime breakdown.

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[573] (Beetham 1991, 9)

[574] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a; Maerz 2019; Omelicheva 2016)

[575] (Sachs and Warner 2001; Wantchekon 2002)

The effectiveness of legitimacy strategies of the regimes lie in the "the degree of congruence, or lack thereof, between the presentations of what constitutes legitimate rule and the broader spectrum of beliefs, values and expectations held by the population."[576]

In this sense, public communication and the discourse of political leaders attain a crucial importance. In my research I refer to discourse as to what meanings and narratives political actors are trying to convey with their public speeches.

In Kazakhstan, president Nazarbayev gained genuine support and love according to Isaacs (2010) which he highlights in "the Discourse of Charismatic Leadership and Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan".[577] In Russia, Putin has maintained the reputation of a strong leader since the very beginning. According to Levada Center (given a title of "foreign agent" in 2021 according to the new "Russian foreign agent law"), one of three research centers, Putin's approval rating has kept around 70-80% during his first two terms of presidency.[578]

Why is political communication important in dictatorships? Chilton and Schaffner (2002) argue that "doing politics is inevitably rooted in language".[579]

Guriev & Treisman developed a theory of authoritarian resilience. The authors call modern dictators "informational autocrats". Citizens of the country can be perceived as two groups: "informed elite" as those who observe a true competence of a dictator and the public as those who are not able to observe competence directly. The logic is the following: if a state can effectively dominate political communications to the public convincing the public in the competence of a ruler then the regime lives.[580]

Language or political speeches turn out to be one of the best sources of legitimation claims of authoritarian leaders.

One of the reasons is that the discourse propounded by a leader in authoritarian regimes is obviously grasped by state-controlled media, political actors subservient or loyal to the ruling elites and further disseminated to the public masses. Essentialy, a personalist dictator defines legitimation strategies.

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[576] (Omelicheva 2016, 5)
[577] (Isaacs 2010)
[578] (Rejting doverija Putinu s 1999 goda. VCIOM, Levada i FOM — Rossija v dannyh [Rating Trust in Putin since 1999. VCIOM, Levada i FOM - Russia in data]. n.d.)
[579] (Chilton and Schäffner 2002, 3)
[580] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 16)

Moreover, although, mostly in closed autocracies and sultanistic regimes, the discourse of a leader is presented as ultimate truth. Multiple books, monographs and speeches are studied at schools. Excerpts and quotes of an autocrat are put on the walls of public offices as slogans. They are massively discussed by propagandist media, journalists and in talk shows.

Maerz (2019) studies the differences in the rhetoric of the closed, competitive, and hegemonic authoritarian regimes. Her conclusion is in agreement with Guriev &Treisman (2018) but different in specificity: she narrows down the conclusion about democratic style of language to hegemonic authoritarian regimes not just to current time autocracies: "The rhetorical strategy of talking like democrats and faking a participatory style of government helps them to promote elite cohesion, gain national and international legitimacy and thereby prolong their rule."[581] Moreover, she states that these autocrats claim "democratic procedures as their legitimacy foundation".[582]

Performance legitimacy or 'specific' support as coined by Easton (1979) is undoubtedly exercised by both democracies and autocracies. However, Dimitrov emphasizes that autocrats more oftern refer to the claims of achievements of their rule.[583] Geddes (1989) describes political communcation of 1964-1985 military dictatorship in this way:

> During this period the government-controlled media depicted the military regime in glowing terms. The regime was portrayed as leading the nation to spectacular economic growth, providing for the laboring poor more effectively than the "demagogic" politicians of the past, and coping resolutely with urban terrorists who threatened the nation with chaos. The implication of this coverage was that the military and its stern policies were, after all, good for Brazil.[584]

International recognition of achievements and engagement in international affairs are also a marker of authoritarian rule.[585] Satisfactory economic growth, political stability and improved social provision, nominal democratic institutions have been used to support for legitimacy claims by the leaders of both countries. Guriev & Treisman (2018) argue that modern dictators

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[581] (Maerz 2019, 2)
[582] (Maerz 2019, 3)
[583] (Dimitrov 2009)
[584] (Geddes and Zaller 1989, 325)
[585] (Schatz 2006)

strive to aim for "a reputation for competence" in contrast to 20th century overt dictators ruling with fear and ideology.[586]

Economic growth was buttressed by natural resource endowment in both Russia and Kazakhstan. However, rulers have been able to capitalize on that for many decades. The main difference between two regimes is a religious composition.

What is more inherent to Central Asian states is the reference to an outstanding personality of the leader such as the case in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan. The aptitudes of the president, personal qualities and charisma are the topic of political speeches of the elites in parliament, government and other political arenas.

First and foremost, I draw a comprehensive picture of legitimation efforts of the leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia.

> Research hypothesis 1: Economic performance based legitimacy play the most important role in the rhetoric of Russian and Kazakhstani leaders.
>
> Research hypothesis 2: Russian legitimacy is based on defence and military discourses more than in Kazakhstan.

In view of Putin's aggressive behavior on the international arena I suggest that he must legitimate his actions in front of his own people, that is why defence issues should be of high importance to him.

In addition, within my study I will investigate if legitimacy claims change over time and are influenced by any external events.

I argue that these regimes developed similar legitimacy claims which demonstrate a high stability over time.

Content analysis is the most appropriate for studiyng legitimation claims. While expert surveys may mix up legitimacy claims and the perception/acceptance of these claims, content analysis looks purely at what is stated by a political leader or governments. Neuendorf (2001) insists that a content analysis can only describe substance characteristics of the content of the messages and relationships among these characteristics.[587] Dukalskis and Gerschewski (2017) claim that

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[586] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 12)
[587] (Neuendorf 2001, 53)

discourse and text analysis allow to evaluate legitimacy claims in a systematic, valid and reliable way.[588]

To analyze legitimacy claims of the leaders of the two post-Soviet countries, I apply quantitative computer-based content analysis.

No doubt, operationalizing the concept of legitimacy is a subjective and cumbersome process. For such concepts like legitimacy, case studies are useful: they help to reveal the mechanics of legitimation within a particular institutional context. Also, confining the analysis to two states provides a comprehensive framework of the dimensions of legitimacy. The wider the range of analyzed cases, the less specific becomes a dictionary.

I use quantitative and qualitative techniques of text analysis to examine the language of autocrats. The analysis of large quantities of speeches from authoritarian contexts for investigating the categories of legitimacy claims, this mixed-method approach is most suitable and enables me to cross-validate the results.

One of the pioneers in textual analysis of political speeches are Laver and Garry (2000) who applied a predefined dictionary to each word in a political text and then determined word counts in predefined policy dimensions (dictionary). In general, there is a saliency theory proposing that political parties reveal their policies by relative mentioning (emphasising) certain policy areas more than others, particularly, in debates and public documents.[589]

Using quantitative content analysis along with automated text analysis methods I draw a picture of legitimation efforts of the leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia. Computerized content analysis uses dictionary-based approach.

For automated text analysis I use Wordstat9 software which allows for using both key words and key phrases in dictionary which allows to be specific in defining categories and variables for the analysis.

Quantitative content analysis means supervised techniques of quantitative text analysis. Supervised technique implies the construction of dictionary beforehand to scale legitimation claims in political speeches.

4.3.2. Dictionary building.

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[588] (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017, 11)
[589] (Lowe et al. 2011, 133)

Constructing a well-crafted dictionary which is most appropriate to a particular context is an intensive and important step according to Laver et al.[590]

General purpose dictionaries might be insensitive and non-specific. Sensitivity in the text analysis answers the question of whether this dictionary identifies all the content I need. Specificity means if it identifies only the content that I am asking about: there is nothing superfluous.

To my knowledge there is no firm rule how to build dictionary. Earliest paper that showed methodology on dictionary building was a study by Bengston & Xu (1995) Changing National Forest Value: a content analysis. The paper that specifically addresses the question on building a dictionary is *Inside the Black Box of Dictionary Building for Text Analytics: A Design Science Approach* by Deng et al. (2019).

Dictionary building has several challenges. The same word may have multiple meanings which is called polysemy. Therefore I scanned the speeches for how frequently a given word had an irrelevant meaning. I implemented Guriev & Treisman's rule: if there are more than two irrelevant meanings of this word, then it was excluded from the list. Bengston & Xu (1995) used criterion that a term in dictionary should be at least 80% true positive.

For the purpose of achieving validity of the dictionary additional analyses are performed. Initially, I adopted some of the terms from the famous Laver and Garry's (2000) dictionary for estimating policy positions from political texts. Afterwards, I implemented manual review of words and phrases using Keyword-in-Context-Analysis and then placed each into single category. Qualitative assessment of all terms (starting from most frequent ones) using KWIC was a long and tedious process but very important for ensuring the validity of dictionary for 7 categories due to their high context dependence.

Maerz (2019) also ensured the validity of her dictionary at the initial stage of analysis by qualitatively assessing a stratified sample of speeches to collect key terms. My approach to use Keyword-in-Context analysis helps with disambiguation of words. KWIC allows to build a valid dictionary since each word is checked for its validity at the very first stage.

Textual data (political speeches) are in Russian. In Russian, new words are created by adding multiple morphems to determine their meaning (gender, etc.). That is why the constructed dictionary contains several words that have the same meaning (differ in gender only).

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[590] (Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003, 312)

Sometimes stemming does not help because stemming may shorten the word to the level that it starts to count terms with wrong meaning. That is why for some cases each concrete key word was included separately in the dictionary unstemmed. As a result, number of entries in the Russian dictionary exceed the number of actual terms with differing meanings.

Texts were not translated into English for analysis because legitimacy analysis is limited to only two political leaders whose speeches are fully available in Russian. Accordingly, the dictionary is also in Russian.

President Nazarbayev makes speeches in both Kazakh and Russian with the same content. President Tokayev mixes Kazakh and Russian in his public communication. So, the excerpts in Kazakh were translated into Russian using Word add-on translation services. As I mentioned before in Chapter 3, recent studies indicated that the reliability of results do not change as a result of translation of texts for dictionary-based methods.

My dictionary also included phrases: the cut-off criteria is that a phrase occurring in no less than half of the documents with maximum number of words of 3. As a result, almost half of my dictionary consists of key phrases.

My innovation to dictionary-based content analysis is the use of phrases. Including phrases in the dictionary increases specificity. For example, term *political* comes in many different collocations and implies diverse concepts, thus, different categories. For example, phrases *political system, political will* are included into Governance category; while phrases *political equality, political struggle* are included into Democracy and Liberalism category. In addition there are some phrases that are specific to a country. For example, National Welfare Fund in Kazakhstan or Stabilization Fund in Russia serve the same function of saving oil export revenues.

In addition, the advantage of using phrases is to account for the possibility of double counting. There are phrases which consist of words that themselves represent key words of the dictionary. For example, phrase *intercontinental ballistic missiles*: if I include rockets, intercontinental, and ballistic separately in my dictionary, it will mean that I count the same thing three times. Instead, including the full phrase allows to take into account this important concept into Defense category while escaping triple counting.

Wordstat9 allows to use phrases in dictionary due to the fact that it follows order of precedence: phrases are counted first, then words and then a proximity rule can be used.

In addition, I removed the addresses such as "Dear Parliament Deputies" and "Dear Assembly Members" because they represent standard addresses and do not carry any particular intent. Moreover, the repetition of the word "assembly" may cause bias towards overemphasis on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and on the national minorities politics and, thus, category identity-based legitimation in my dictionary.

In addition, to test validity I performed a structural topic modelling (STM), an an unsupervised text analysis technique.[591] It groups terms by different topics addressed in the speeches by finding which terms go together most often. If I observe similar topics, I have extra evidence for the validity of my categories.

There are quite a few validated, published, and ready to use dictionaries on many areas of research. Undoubtedly, most famous dictionary in political science is by Laver & Garry (2000) for estimating policy positions in political texts.

Why is text used for estimating policy position? Lowe marks that "Text is a direct by-product of political activity by the political actors whose positions we wish to estimate, whether this text takes the form of speeches, debates, written submissions, written rulings, or—by far the most commonly used in the profession for estimating party policy positions—election manifestos issued by political parties."[592]

To sum up, for dictionary building I used a mixed-method approach which is most prevalent method for constructing a dictionary. It combines qualitative and quantitative methods. Manual or qualitative means reading and rereading through the corpus and deriving categories. Automatic method of construction implies hierarchical cluster analysis or topic modeling that will derive the structure of your corpus and find words that match into these categories. These are automatic methods of unsupervised machine learning.

Automatic textual analysis was made in WordStat9 software. Pre-processing data includes removing stop words and checking spelling.

Developing the category structure in my case is both theory and data driven. As I mentioned earlier, the categories of the variables were constructed based on the studies of von Soest and Grauvogel (2017), Tannenberg et al. (2021), and Guriev & Treisman (2019). Instead of a broad category Performance as was done by von von Soest and Grauvogel (2017) I elaborated

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[591] (Roberts et al. 2014)
[592] (Lowe et al. 2011, 124)

categories for economic performance, social provision and governance. Also, my dictionary includes Identity-based legitimation and International engagement categories. Full dictionary can be provided upon request as it contains 31 pages.

As a result, I developed categories that are comprehensive and mutually exclusive in my case. Identity-based legitimation claims include nationalism, religion, anti-western nationalism, and glorifying history of a nation.

Economic performance legitimation category is the most crowded one: it contains 331 iterms. The category constitutes key words and phrases describing economy, budgets, national funds, banking sector, investments, financial markets. As the analyzed states' economies are natural resource dependent, terms related to oil and gas, mineral resources and other extractive sectors are included. The category does not account for infrastructure such as roads, water supply, electrical grids, and so on. Some of the words have many inflected terms. Usually, they are indicated with asterisk in the dictionary. But some inflected forms of words are of particular interest to me that is why they ater listed separately in the dictionary which increases the total quantity of words in the category. Obviously, the first stage analysis shows that achivemensts in economy are most widely discussed. Total count of all categories are represented in the table below: dictionary entries are counted.

Table 4.1. Category count of the dictionary.

CATEGORY	Total
DEFENSE	144
DEMOCRACY AND LIBERALISM	150
ECONOMIC_PERFORMANCE	331
GOVERNANCE	283
INTERNATIONAL_ENGAGEMENT	39
IDENTITY-BASED LEGITIMATION	134
SOCIAL_PROVISION	151
Grand Total	1231

Source: Author.

Democracy and liberalism category does not imply any reference to economic policies and economic liberalism. It basically comprises reference to political pluralism, and includes such terms as "elections", "democratic", phrases like "rights and freedoms", "civic rights", "constitutional rights", etc.

Identity-based legitimation category includes terms that stress traditions, language and language policies, national minoritites, multiethnicity, culture, history with emphasis on heroism and legends, religion. Due to the facts, that my analysis includes only two cases I am able to

construct a comprehensive dictionary that takes into account all nuances of national identity. For example, victory in the Second World War is always discussed as "a sacred war" and in the context of Russian greatness and "masculine image of Putin", russian people as heroes who defended the Motherland.[593] In Kazakhstan, the Great Motherland War and the Victory day is also celebrated as an exceptional heroism of the Kazakh soldiers, life-saving food provisions to the frontier of the war. Both perceptions of WWII are attributed to the category of nationalism. Therefore, shared legacy of Sovietness and shared history allow me to be context-specific and comprehensive at the same time. In addition, the Soviet legacy of the Russian language excludes probability of vagueness of terms, particularly, relating to state dimensions and economic performance.

Defense category includes vocabulary on military topics, kinds of armament, fight against common threat, such as terrorism, extremism, and so on.

Social provision includes references to social equality, unemployment benefits, support for small businesses.

As a result of dictionary-building stage of my research, I found evidence that automated text analysis largely depends on national context.

For example, there are specific names and titles inherent to Kazakhstani political system or to Russian political system. Propresidential part Nur Otan which wins all parliamentary elections with the overwhelming majority of seats which was described in the previous section cannot be placed into legal-procedural legitimation. According to current realities, this party is now a part of bureaucratic machine. Citizens often place their complaints not to state organs but to the party representative offices. So, I included phrase Nur Otan into the category Governance.

In Russia, political party United Russia is the central power in federal-regional relationships, thus, it is important in governance category. Federalism is the concept inherent to Russian political system but not to Kazakh: so, if the term is omitted, a vital part of governance process is lost. Therefore, I make a conclusion that qualitative assessment of dictionary is an important step towards building valid analysis.

Based on qualitatively validated dictionary terms, I assess the proportion on each category of legitimacy claims in the political leaders' speeches.

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[593] (Wood 2011)

4.5. On selection of speeches.

My main strategy for collecting corpus of speeches is that the speeches should address the public in general in order to reflect and deliver their legitimacy claims to the citizens. National addresses to the parliament and speeches that are televised live on main TV channels are a good example. This property ensures that data are representative. Corpus of speeches for analysis is the same as in Chapter 3 which are provided in the Appendices section to the chapter.

Maerz (2019) study comprises texts officially provided in English for the international audience by autocratic regimes which might be cause bias towards inflating democratic styles. I follow a different route.

In my research I treat the public communication of a head of state not as a specific person (N.Nazarbayev, K.Tokayev, or V. Putin and D.Medvedev) but as an instituttion.

Overall, the text corpus for Kazakhstan consists of 98 speeches: first president, Nazarbayev till 2019, and Tokayev from 2019 till 2021. I selected the speeches of president of Kazakhstan directed at the general public rather than specific groups or elites. That is why, my data included National Annual Addresses of the president, speeches at the opening of the first palriamentary sessions (which are televised), speeches at the National Council of Social Trust, speeches at the congresses of the Assembly of People, speeches made at the congresses of the propresidential party Nur Otan. National Council of Social Trust was established in 2020 and included human rights activists, people considered to be social opinion influncers. These Councils were conceived to be intermediaries between general public and authorities as these activists usually reported on these sittings on their social media accounts. Full list of speeches is in the Appendices section.

The speeches of the president of Kazakhstan for the period 2005-2021 were collected from the official websites of the president and parliament. Speeches up to 2005 were retrieved from the online database https://online.zakon.kz/.

For Russia I selected speeches: National Annual Address to the Federation Council, Direct Line with President, speeches made at the Congresses of United Russia (which are only few). Russian president's speeches for all years were collected from the official website of the president.

In case of Russia, I used broadcasted live Direct Lines with President where the leader answers questions from the citizens from all over the country. These transcripts were cleaned and the questions and the speeches of other people had been deleted. Usually, such direct lines included

his short prepared narrative on economic and social situation in the country in general. The program is televised live on federal channels. In total, corpus of Russian texts consist of 70 speeches made during 2000-2021.

The speeches of each head of government in my corpus vary a little in number and length. President Kazakhstan (both Nazarbayev 2000-2019 and Tokayev 2019-2021) prefer to make long speeches in the representative organs, specifically, at the opening sessions of parliament and the congresses of the Assembly. Nazarbayev has never spoken in front of general public meetings or direct lines with the citizens in these years. President Putin holds annual direct lines with citizens from all over Russia. Although, I suggest that some of requests and questions of citizens are prepared in advance, these meetings have ad hoc nature also.

4.5. **Discussion of legitimacy claims in the speeches of the political leader of Kazakhstan.**

To provide a nuanced analysis, I combine quantitative and qualitative analysis of legitimation strategies in Kazakhstan.

As was expected economic performance discourse dominates the rhetorics of the leader of Kazakhstan. It constitutes 40.1% of all legitimation in public speeches.

Figure 4.1. Legitimacy claims in the public discourse of the President of Kazakhstan, 2000-2021.
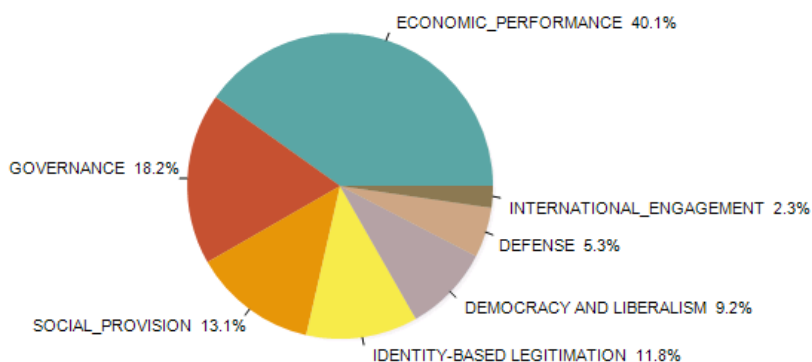
Source: Author

Governance issues are second most important topic in the president's speeches. President underscores the efforts of government and state bodies in implementing state programs. Devising state programs of socio-economic development, setting goal indicators have been a

distinctive feature of president Nazarbayev and his follower president Tokayev: strategy "Kazakhstan-2030", strategy "Kazakhstan-2050", Business Roadmap, State program of industrial and innovative development, State Program for the Development of Regions for 2020-2025, state program "Digital Kazakhstan", order of president On the Concept for Kazakhstan's entry into the 30 most developed countries in the world, etc.. The tradition of setting up plans of development and goal indicators resemble Soviet social planning system. Being the offspring of Soviet legacy Nazarbayev continued with the practices used in command economy.

Scholars highlight that the rhetoric of autocratic leaders is different in their strive to highlight their own achievements. Such achievements are mostly related to economic performance and social policy areas in the speeches of president Nazarbayev. For example, while making the speech at the opening session of the Parliament in 2006, he states his succes in creating favorable conditions for local business: "Meeting in the fields with many businessmen, I caught myself thinking that the persistent and consistent policy that I pursued all these years created the conditions for the emergence of a wholegalaxy, mostly young, owners. I didn't work in vain. And I'm proud of it."[594] President Nazarbayev often underscores his premier role: "Never before housing has been like that!" ("Так в Казахстане жилье не строилось никогда!"). [595]

Identity-based legitimation discourse hovers around the same ideas through all the last 29 years of president Nazarbayev: tolerance, multiethnic peace and stability, friendship and unity, multi-confessional and multinational peace. The figure below demonstrates most frequent terms are related to national identity. (See Table 4.2.) These are Assembly of People, ethnic, ethnicity, unity, patriot*, interethnic, national, tolerance, interconfessional or interreligious. Islam is presented by president in his discussion of terrorism and extremism. National policy should distinguish between true islam and the one propounded by international terrorist groups: "Thus, we need a clear line between Islam as a world religion and the actions of extremists who call themselves Muslims. If there is no understanding of this, then Islamophobia may appear in society, which is not only impossible to allow, but offensive to a country where the overwhelming majority of the population is Muslim by origin. This should not be allowed

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[594] Speech of president Nazarbayev at the opening session of Parliament, September 1, 2005.
[595] Speech of president Nazarbayev at the 15th Independence Anniversary, 2006.

because religious peace in our country is the most important condition for cultural dialogue, its necessary and sufficient condition.[596]

Table 4.2. Most frequent terms in the category Identity-based legitimation.

	FREQUENCY
Assembly (АССАМБЛЕ*)	487
Ethnic (ЭТНИЧЕСК*)	124
Ethnicity (ЭТНОС*)	122
Unity (ЕДИНСТВА)	120
Unity (inflected form, ЕДИНСТВО)	116
Patriot*(ПАТРИОТ*)	106
Interethnic (МЕЖНАЦИОНАЛЬН*)	98
National (НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ)	87
Interethnic (МЕЖЭТНИЧЕСК*)	79
Tolerance, tolerant (ТОЛЕРАНТ*)	78
interconfessional (МЕЖКОНФЕССИОНАЛЬН*)	69
Language (ЯЗЫК)	64
Islam (ИСЛАМ*)	59
Elbasy – Leader of the nation (ЕЛБАСЫ)	56

Source: Author.

So, identity-based category does not imply any negative connotation in my dictionary. It consists of terms describing cultural, national politics and national programs and projects in the country. For both Kazakhstan and Russia national ideas meant multiethnicity, multiethnic and multicultural unity and peace. However, these ideas of multiethnic friendship have been accentuated by Kazakh president four times more often than by the Russian president.

This multinationalism approach has been the core idea in Nazarbayev's politics since the very start when the country gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. This strategy of N.Nazarbayev, first president, was underpinned by the ethnic composition of the country after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

During the Soviet times multiple ethnic groups were relocated to Kazakhstan as of "unreliable". From the Ukraine, people were relocated to develop agriculture on new vast lands of Kazakhstan. Particularly, the Russian people constituted large share of people: the number of kazakh and russian ethnicities were almost equal at the times of the demise of the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, president Nazarbayev's policies towards ethnic groups has been strategically insightful: he sought to find support of ethnic groups. Comparative table below shows the ethnic composition in Kazakhstan in 1989, 1999, and 2020.

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[596] National Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2000.

Table 4.3. Ethnic composition of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

	Ethnicity	Percentage, %
1989	Kazakh	39.6
	Russian	37.8
	Uzbek	2
	German	5.8
	Ukrainian	5.4
1999	Kazakh	53.4
	Russian	30
	Uzbek	2.5
	German	2.4
	Ukrainian	1.4
2021	Kazakh	68.5
	Russian	18.9
	Uzbek	3.2
	German	0.9
	Ukrainian	1.4

Source: (Ethnic composition of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2000), Official website of the National Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan. https://stat.gov.kz/

In addition, Nazarbayev's political strategies towards the russian language as the offical second language in the country require public bodies and enterprises to submit documentation and respond to the citizen in both languages Kazakh and Russian are also a part of Kazakh stateness. Furthermore, to strengthen the role of the multiethnic peace and unity the Assembly of People was established in 1995 highlighting the importance of multiethnic diversity, support for national minorities. The Assembly unites 818 ethnic associations, 46 ethnicities established their ethno-cultural centers.

In 2003 Nazarbayev initiated the construction of the Palace of Peace and Unity and annual Congress of World and Traditional Religions. The first Congress took place in 2003.[597] In his speech at the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev emphasized his pivotal idea that "The architecture of this palace will be a symbol of the unity of our people where 130 nations live in peace and harmony."[598]

As a culmination, in 2003 address to the Assembly of People Nazarbayev coined his policies towards national minorities and ethnic groups as "Kazakhstani model of social consensus and all-national unity" ("Казахстанская модель общественного согласия и общенационального единства Н.А.Назарбаева").[599]

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[597] (Nazarbayev Center for the development of interconfessional and intercivillizational dialogue: About Congress n.d.)

[598] Speech of the president of RK N.A. Nazarbayev at the X Congress of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan.

[599] (Kazakhstan model of social consensus and national unity of N.A. Nazarbayev n.d.)

Furthermore, president Nazarbayev in his 2005 speech in parliament claims that his politics is a role model for the OSCE:

> In turn, I am fully convinced that the unique experience already accumulated by Kazakhstan in strengthening tolerance, peace and stability, interfaith and interethnic harmony in a society that has both European features and Asian traditions will help the OSCE to significantly enrich its understanding of the diversity of the modern world and various ways to build an open democratic society.[600]

Moreover, Nazarbayev attributes the claim on the worldwide recognition of his model of tolerance and multiethnic peace to Cofee Annan, the Secretary General of the UN: "It is thanks to this activity, according to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Kazakhstan has become "an example of interethnic harmony, stable, sustainable development for other states."[601] Furthermore, the Doctrine of National Unity was approved by the president and parliament in 2010 which reiterated the Nazarbayev's statements.

The political discourse of president Nazarbayev on multiethnic and interreligious peace has grown and evolved into 'a Kazakhstani way' of democracy. As a result, the discourse on democratic mechanisms of legitimation of the president of Kazakhstan is quite different from the traditional understanding of democracy. He is propounding a special 'Kazakhstani way' of democracy meaning multiethnic diversity, unity and harmony: "Assembly has turned into one of the main institutes of Kazakhstani democracy, and interethnical consensus has turned into one of the main principles of democratic constitutionalism, the formation of legal state, the realization of human rights and freedoms."[602] Von Soest & Grauvogel find that Kazakhstani elites are using this trick to leverage procedural democracy which is in deficit.[603] To promote this kind of democracy, he has to restrict "political extremism" which led to the restriction of legal acts on political parties in 2002.

The term Elbasy (identity-based legitimacy) which means the Leader of the Nation emerged in the presidential discourse in 2019 after first president Nazarbayev had stepped down. New president Tokayev after being elected as president started to stress the role of the leader of the

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[600] Speech of president Nazarbayev at the opening session of Parliament, September 1, 2005.
[601] Speech of president Nazarbayev at the opening session of Parliament, September 1, 2005.
[602] Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. A. Nazarbayev at the XIII session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. August 20, 2007.
[603] (von Soest and Grauvogel 2017, 11)

nation as the founder of independent Kazakhstan. This rhetoric had been prominent among the political elites during all the years of Nazarbayev's incumbency, particularly, after 2000, particularly, after the Law on the first president was adopted in 2010 and amendments to the constitution introduced in 2011.
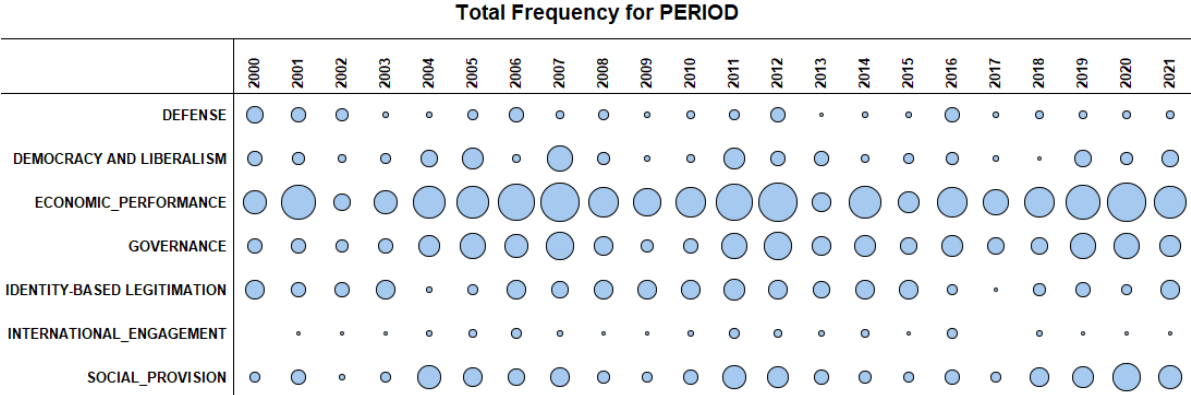
For example, Tokayev praises first president: "Constructed by Elbasy the model of peace and social consensus was acclaimed globally as the example of harmonious development of society".[604] First president was titled as the founder of Kazakhstan state.

Moreover, new president assured that "All portraits and photographs depicting the First President, Elbasy will remain as an indispensable attribute of public premises, offices of civil servants, buildings of educational institutions."[605]

In general, international engagement to my surprise does not constitute much of the rhetorics of the Kazakh presidents. Mostly, both first and second presidents underscore the recognition of the successful development of Kazakhstan: "The whole world is a witness to our responsible, balanced and balanced policy, which Kazakhstan demonstrates in the broad context of the problems of ensuring international and regional stability and security." [606]

If we look at the legitimacy claims dynamics per each category, we will see a similar pattern. The bubble figure below demonstrates that an increase in all categories of legitimation took place in 2005-2008 and 2010-2011. However, 2019-2021 are also marked by the increase in the categories of economic performance, social provision, governance and democracy and liberalism.

Figure 4.2. Legitimacy claims dynamics per category, 2000-2021.

Total Frequency for PERIOD

Categories (rows): DEFENSE, DEMOCRACY AND LIBERALISM, ECONOMIC_PERFORMANCE, GOVERNANCE, IDENTITY-BASED LEGITIMATION, INTERNATIONAL_ENGAGEMENT, SOCIAL_PROVISION. Years (columns): 2000–2021.

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[604] Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the joint session of the Chambers of Parliament. March 20, 2019.

[605] Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the joint session of the Chambers of Parliament. March 20, 2019.

[606] Speech of president Nazarbayev at the opening session of Parliament, September 1, 2005.

The analysis of the dynamics of the legitimacy claims' categories shows that the legitimation discourse is of cyclical nature.

Period of 2007-2008 is marked by global financial crisis which hit Kazakhstan economy quite vehemently. Kazakhstan's economy main characteristics are what made it vulnerable to that crisis: it is very FDI-intensive (in comparison to other largest post-Soviet economies Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine)[607]; crude oil is its key export commodity.[608] Banking sector borrowed from foreign institutions immeasurably while these international lenders and investors were eager to provide loans to a fast growing economy up to the last quarter of 2007.[609] Dependent on oil prices and cross-border capital inflows Kazakhstani economy suffered intensively. So, unsurprisingly, president discussed economic situation most extensively in 2007.

Figure 4.3. Frequency dynamics of Economic performance and Governance categories.
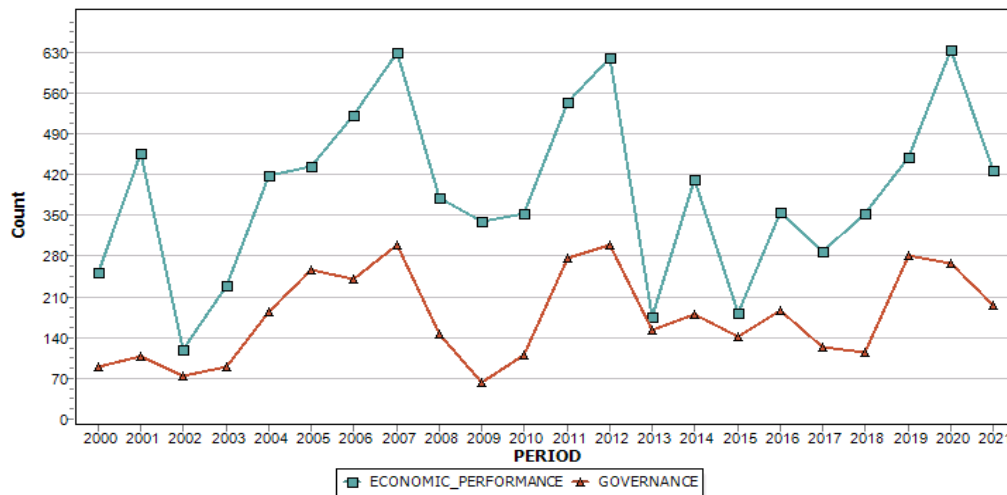
Source: Author.

The textual analysis shows that economic performance and governance legitimation claims are closely related. The graph above illustrates that economic performance and governance lines follow almost identical pattern. Furthermore, cooccurrence matrix shows that economic performance cooccur with governance category 903 times (cooccurrence of both in one paragraph), more than with any other legitimation claims.

Table 4.4. Cooccurrence statistics for economic performance.

	ECONOMIC_PERFORMANCE

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[607] (Barisitz et al. 2010, 48)
[608] (Ruziev and Majidov 2013, 695).
[609] (Ruziev & Majidov, 2013, p. 699)

GOVERNANCE	903
SOCIAL_PROVISION	610
IDENTITY-BASED LEGITIMATION	277
DEMOCRACY AND LIBERALISM	270
DEFENSE	163
INTERNATIONAL_ENGAGEMENT	151

Source: Author.

The government launched an anti-crisis plan in 2009 which was financed by the National Welfare fund. Such stabilization funds are usually established in natural resource abundant countries: they are filled with export revenues and intended for emergency situations. So, to mitigate credit crunch the government inflowed commercial banks with money from the National Welfare Fund. The discourse of Nazarbayev emphasized that banks were helped out in crisis and it was their turn to help small and medium businesses.

For example, president elaborated on anti-crisis measures and used such directive phrases as "on my instructions" (term revealing hierarchic mode of governance):

> Taking into account the fact that banks have reduced lending, large-scale state support - both financial and institutional - was provided to small and medium-sized businesses.

> More than 2,000 projects of small and medium-sized businesses were financed by 48.8 billion tenge which had been allocated at the end of last year.

> This year, 95.5 billion tenge were also allocated to small businesses by the local and republican budgets.

> 50 billion tenge of this amount is allocated through the Kazyna Fund, and banks will allocate another 50 billion tenge.

> In addition, on my instructions, the Government is working to reduce administrative barriers, eliminate unnecessary and formal bureaucratic procedures. This work must continue.[610]

Due to the fact that the president's discussion of economic issues is often connected to public policies and governmental projects, it implies an important role of the state in economy.

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[610] Speech of the president of RK at the opening of II session of the parliament of the RK. September 2, 2008.

Still, most prominent changes took place in 2011-2012: economic performance and social provision legitimacy claims rocketed. (See, Figure 4.3. for economic performance dynamics and Figure 4.4. below for social provision dynamics.)

Figure 4.4. Dynamics of social provision legitimacy claims, 2000-2021.
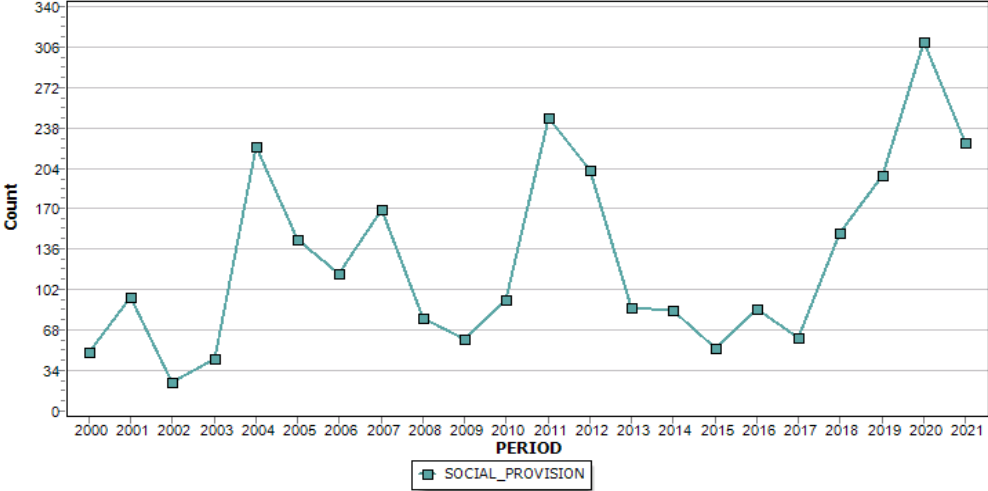
Source: Author.

If we delve deeper into the causes of 2011-2012 sharp changes in legitimation efforts, we can find evidence for such tendencies.

The reason for stark changes in the rhetoric of the president are labor strikes and social unrest in the Western region of the country which reached the boiling point in December 2011.

The Mangistau region (West Kazakhstan) is extremely important for the economy of the whole country as oil and gas producer: most oil and gas fields are located there.

The dramatic events took place in 2011 in a town located at one of the largest oil fields in Kazakhstan, Zhanaozen. Most importantly, social unrest started brewing since 2009 when oil and gas workers of the national oil-drilling company KazMunaiGaz started to put forward their demands regarding salaries, work overload, etc.[611] Presumably, the ruling elites of the country underestimated the discontent of miners and workers at the beginning, in 2009.

The data confirm that the discourse on social provision and social support almost tripled in 2011 in comparison to 2010.

Full-scale strike consisting of several thousand miners against changes in salary quotients started in Zhanaozen in March 2010 and lasted for 19 days.[612] The Court found the strike

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[611] (Maitanov 2009)
[612] (Maitanov 2010)

illegal.[613] Also, in October 2010 workers went on strike demanding to stop prosecution of activists.

Strikes spread to the workers of other oil-drilling companies and towns nearby, workers of another oil field Karazhanbas went on hunger strike in May 2011.[614]

Since May 2011 strikes were taking place nonintermittently in other cities of Mangistau region and Zhanaozen specifically: estimates of workers on strike vary between 2500-16000. They demanded increase of salaries, the improvement of social conditions and working conditions, independence of their Trade Union. The lawyer of "Karazhanbas" workers Trade Union Natalya Sokolova was sentenced for 6 years imprisonment in August 2011 for social discord and the organization of illegal protest rallies.[615] The company OzenMunaiGas fired hundreds of employees for participating in the strikes.[616] Even singer Sting who was expected to come for the celebration of the Capital day cancelled the concert for the reasons of repressions towards oil and gas workers in Kazakhstan. [617]

Unfair redistribution of petrodollars has been a hot issue in the country for a long time and still remains this way today. The Westeners felt it more acutely as they produced oil, and oil revenues increased while salaries remained the same. People complained that they had lower wages than the ruling elites of oil company had claimed. The opinions exacerbated at the time as the Chairman of the national oil company was the son-in-law of the first president of Kazakhstan, Timur Kulibayev.

The peak of the ongoing strikes, protests, and social unrest took place on Kazakhstan's Independence Day, December 16 2011. Protest movements escalated and transformed into mass revolts at the central square of Zhanaozen which resulted in the death of 17 people and many more wounded.[618] Workers claimed that the policemen used lethal weapons against unarmed people. According to the statements of government, police and military forces were allowed to shoot: all actions of police were rendered warranted.[619] Unofficial sources claim more killings of unarmed protesters. Government announced emergency situation and blamed the protesting

[613] (Maitanov 2010)
[614] (Maitanov 2011)
[615] (Akkuly 2011)
[616] (Human Rights Watch 2011)
[617] (Michaels 2011)
[618] (Asautaj 2012)
[619] (Radio Azattyq 2011c)

workers in provoking violence and insurgencies of which they refused to admit.[620] According to official data, 70 people were detained: fired oil workers were the instigators of mass disturbances.[621] All communication with the town Zhanaozen was shut down and journalists were banned from visiting Zhanaozen during those days. Human Rights Watch in their statement confirmed that they could not reach workers by mobile phone, access to social media and other news agencies websites had been blocked by the authorities. [622]

In Aktau, regional capital, people attempted to support Zhanaozen oil and gas workers and rallied with banners: "Do not shoot people".

Picture 2. Rally against the activities of authorities in the aftermath of bloodshed in Zhanaozen, December 18, 2011.

Source: Akkuly, S. (2011) Murder of your own citizens is not a recepie of stability. Radio Azattyq. https://rus.azattyq.org/a/zhanaozen_kazakhstan_mangystay_neftyaniki_masimov_akorda_ertysbaev/24428724.html

These events confirm that economic conditions and distribution of economic resources are main disruptors of state legitimacy.

Protests and strikes of 2010-2011 have been most intense and prolonged in the history of the independent Kazakhstan up to January 2022. No doubt, that the president's political discourse was heavily affected by the social unrests of 2010-2011.

Interestingly enough, president Nazarbayev made public appearances (in front of parliament, Nur Otan party) more often during the years 2011 and 2012. I collected 8 public speeches in 2011 and 7 in 2012 in contrast to usual 3 to 4 speeches per year.

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[620] (Radio Azattyq 2011b)
[621] (Radio Azattyq 2011a)
[622] (Human Rights Watch 2011)

Moreover, the data show that emphasis on defense legitimation soared in 2012. In the aftermath of the December 2011 bloodshed when state military forces were allowed to use lethal force in Zhanaozen, president Nazarbayev emphasized defense in his public discourse.

Figure 4.5. Defence category in legitimacy claims of the president of Kazakhstan.
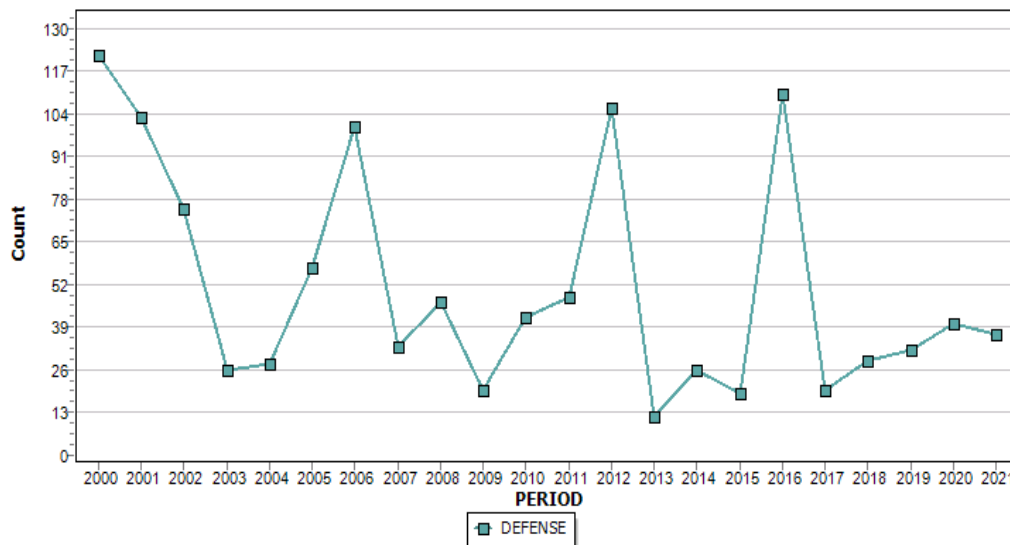
Source: Author.

However, emphasis on defense in absolute numbers rose as much in 2000-2001, 2006, and 2016. It turns out that these years are closely connected to the rise either of strong opposition leaders or social protests.

At the very beginning of the 2000s independent or oppositional media still existed in Kazakhstan, namely, 'Tan' TV Channel was considered oppositional as it belonged to M.Ablyazov, ex-minister of Transport and businessman. TV channel and newspaper "Vremya Po" published the first news about "the multimillion-dollar "Kazakhgate" bribery scandal" which claimed million dollar bribes to the president of Kazakhstan for oil fields[623].

So, in 2000 and 2001 first repressions unfolded, ex-prime-minister A.Kazhegeldin who had fleed the country earlier was sentenced to 10 years in his absence.[624] Within less than two years TV channels who disseminated these news were shut down centrally and the state publishing

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[623] (RFE/RL 2010)
[624] (Amanzhol 2019)

company refused to print the newspaper.[625] The editor-in-chief E.Bapi was sentenced to one year imprisonment for defamation after publishing materials about "Kazakhgate".[626]

Crucial turning point in the political life was the announcement of the the foundation of the political movement Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan in November 2001 by M. Ablyazov, G.Zhakiyanov (who was a regional governor at that time). Their program declared the need for democratic changes, specifically, the expansion of the role of parliament, legal reforms, direct lections of regional governors, and so on.[627] Furthermore, in 2002, they were arrested for various charges and sentenced: Zhakiyanov for 7 year imprisonment Ablyazov for 6 years imprisonment.

Unsurprisingly, in 2002 new legislation on political parties was introduced. The minimal number of members for registration as a political party was raised from 3 000 people to 50 000 people.[628] President justified new restrictions on political parties by mitigating the risks of parties with nationalistic inclinations: "There are issues that are long overdue: introduction of legal norms not allowing for political extremism in the activity of parties; exclusion of party creation based on ethnical and confessional principles; financial transparency in their activities."[629]

The story continued with the temporary release of Ablyazov in 2003 and his fleeing to France. Many years after his first detention, in April 2017 Ablyazov, living in France, announced the foundation of the Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (DCK) which program aims at the change of authoritarian regime of Kazakhstan and building a parliamentary form of government. Still, in March 2018, Kazakhstani court found this movement "extremist". Basically, the only meaningful opposition on the political arena in Kazakhstan exists only on social media platforms. In 2019, this grassroots activity was able to produce massive social protest rallies. Althohugh, year 2019 was prominent for the increase grassroots activity and social protests, due to the consistent repressive measures the grassroots movements subsided. Last calls for protest were made in November 2021. However, for example, noone in Nur-Sultan participated: "invisible protests" as it was jokingly titled by the public.

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[625] (Political Freedoms in Kazakhstan 2004)
[626] (Political Freedoms in Kazakhstan 2004)
[627] (Political Freedoms in Kazakhstan 2004)
[628] (Political Freedoms in Kazakhstan 2004)
[629] Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan. April, 2002.

Struggle with extremism is the standard justification discourse and toolkit of the autocratic states against unwanted protest movements. For example, in 2000 president Nazarbayev stated: "We need a legislative barrier to the spread of extremist religious movements that destabilize society and fight for power under religious slogans. It is necessary to strengthen control over the education of our youth in foreign educational institutions and prevent them from being infected with the ideas of extremism and religious fanaticism."[630]

Next stage of autocratization turned out to be more violent: in 2005-2006 two popular political leaders were murdered. First victim was Z.Nurkadilov ex-governor of Almaty (first capital of Kazakhstan) and Almaty oblast', a very popular politician. He was shot three times in November 2005 while the investigating comittee concluded suicide.[631] In March 2005, Nurkadilov organized press-conference where he requested president Nazarbayev to step down, accused him of multibillion wealth of his family obtained illegally, threatening to publicize all available materials.[632] Importantly, in 2004 a political journalist, A.Sharipzhanov, who took a comprehensive interview from Z.Nurkadilov, died in strange circumstances after severe head injury. The interview has never been published as the recording had disappeared from his dictophone.

Another famous politician, A.Sarsenbayev, ex-ambassador of Kazakhstan in Russia, ex-minister of information, was murdered in February 2006 along with his two assistants. The same political journalist, A.Sharipzhanov, also interviewed him: similarly, the recording of the interview was erased and the interview never got to be published.

Kazakhstani political scientist, A.Chebotarev, highlights that the second half of 1990s – 2006 period was characterized by the transition of some of the political elites into political opposition.[633]

Next surge in defense category can be observed in 2016 when protest against the land reform took place: the government planned to allow foreign citizens to take land for long-term lease.[634] Again, civil activists were sentenced: most active ones got imprisoned for five years.[635] The

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[630] (Nazarbayev 2000a)
[631] (Toguzbaev 2020)
[632] (Toguzbaev 2020)
[633] (Toguzbaev 2020)
[634] (Zhojamergen 2020)
[635] (Zhojamergen 2020)

authorities attempted to justify these detentions in the public communication for the reasons of protecting public security and peace.

Violence and repressions rendered to be effective with both leaders of opposition and grassroots social movements. I can conclude that the consolidation of autocratic regime has finished by today. Media outlets are totally dependent. Today any information regarding social protests in Kazakhstan can be found only on the pages of the international news agencies such as RFE/RL, Sputniknews. Major political opponents of the president Nazarbayev are either in exile or killed. Propresidential party constitutes the overwhelming majority in the parliament. Legislation is characterized by legal and constitutional engineering tailored for one person, his full provision and security: step by step the legal acts enshrined the unrestricted capacity to be elected president (in 2007), the status of 'Elbasy' (in 2010), which imposed the state protection of the ruler and the members of his family from any insult, prosecution, and so on. Moreover, it guaranteed full life-long provision not only for the first president but for his whole family.

The nature of the protest actions has changed in 2018-2021. Strikes of oil and mining industries were more common in the country. As discussed earlier, oil and gas workers went on strikes of 2010-2011. Also, mining industry workers went on strikes and hunger strikes. Usually, strikes never spilled over one region. In 2018-2019 a general social unrest reached a boiling point: number of the mass protests with economic, political and social grievances as the main focus, increased, particularly in 2019. Since the start of the activity of the DCK, number of protests of more than 100 participants increased considerably. Most importantly, these rallies took place in at least five big cities of Kazakhstan.

It should be highlighted that protests and uprisings at all levels take place in spite of tightening control over freedom of expression and freedom of association: more and more activists are detained, arrested and fined; social media and internet started to experience blockages and massive shutdowns. The third outstanding feature is that all organized protests extend to multiple cities. The first organized protest movement which took place in May 2018 expanded to eight cities.

The table below summarizes my collections of all contentious collective actions mentioned by the news agenices in 2015-2019 (specifically, by Azattyq Radiosy - Radio Freedom branch).

Table 4.5. Forms of contentious collective actions present in Kazakhstan, 2015-2019.

Form of collective action	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Strikes, total:	5	4	6	2	2

Strikes, <100 participants	3	2	4	2	2
Strikes: >100 participants	2	2	2	0	1
Protests, total:	14	14	8	>13	>18
Protests >1000 participants	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Protests (100;1000)	**2**	**2**	**0**	**4**	**8**
Single pickets	**3**	**6**	**9**	**8**	**>15**

Source: Author, data collected from https://rus.azattyq.org/.

Encouraged by the successful crackdown of oppositional forces throughout the early 2000's, the authorities started to arrest, detain, and oppress all protest rallies freely and more openly than it had happened in 2011 Zhanaozen. Since 2018, 2019 activists are detained on the charges of being the members of the extremist Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan movement and crying out slogans such as 'Freedom!' and for the critique of the first president.[636]

Furthermore, a person with an empty banner at the local square in Uralsk city was detained in May 2019.

Picture 3. A man with an empty banner arrested.

Source: Власть. Internet-journal with its own view. https://vlast.kz/novosti/33246-zaderzannogo-za-pustoj-plakat-zitela-uralska-vyzvali-v-voenkomat.html

Places announced as the location of protest marches are surrounded by police forces beforehand. Recent collective actions have several outstanding features: they represent grassroots activity organized through social media platforms, there is no political leader in the protests, civil activists are detained and sentenced for such convictions as a member of an extremist organization, rallies are oppressed and mitigated by police forces openly and brutally.

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[636] (Radio Azattyq 2021)

To sum up, I suggest that the rise of defense legitimation claims have always been connected to either opposition rise or social protests. However, successful extermination of political opponents and independent media, crackdown of long-standing strikes, effective oppression of grassroots activity, and repression of civil activists have probably brought relief so that these activities do not represent much of a threat for the ruling elites.

In spite of severe limitations to freedoms of speech, expression and association, modern authoritarian regimes are very different from 20th century overt dictatorships. Guriev & Treisman use term informational autocracies to describe modern authoritarian regimes and, firstly, mention the decrease in state violence, less 'state-sponsored killings'.[637] The authors highlight that "International linkages, the global human rights movement, and new information technologies have raised the cost of visible repression."[638]

Still, political killings and targeted prosecution of activists are very much in use. I suggest that targeted political killings of potential candidates for popular support were practiced in Kazakhstan. So that today there are no potential alternatives to the president position than the one determined by the first president. Democratic procedures do not fulfil their legitimation roles.

Open Dioalogue foundation published a study *The list of Kazakhstani political prisoners and other victims of politically motivated prosecution (updated)* in 2018. The authors counted 42 cases of politically motivated criminal prosecution.[639] In Kazakhstan political prisoners are held in prisons and detention facilities, subjected to measures of restraint, or under punitive psychiatry.

The emphasis on democracy and liberal values increases during election times both presidential or parliamentary. According to the figure below peaks of democratic justifications of the ruling fall on 2005, 2007, 2011, 2019, 2021.

The share of democratic and liberal values in the discourse of the president constitutes more than 10% of all legitimacy claims in 2000, 2004 (parliamentary elections), 2005 (presidential elections), 2007 (parliamentary elections), 2011 (presidential elections), 2019 (presidential

[637] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 103)
[638] (Guriev and Treisman 2018a, 102)
[639] (Savchenko, Osavoliuk, and Savchenko 2018)

elections), 2021 (parliamentary elections). The frequency of this category was highest in 2005, 2007, and 2010-2011. (See Figure 4.6.)

Figure 4.6. Democracy and liberalism category in the discourse of president of Kazakhstan.
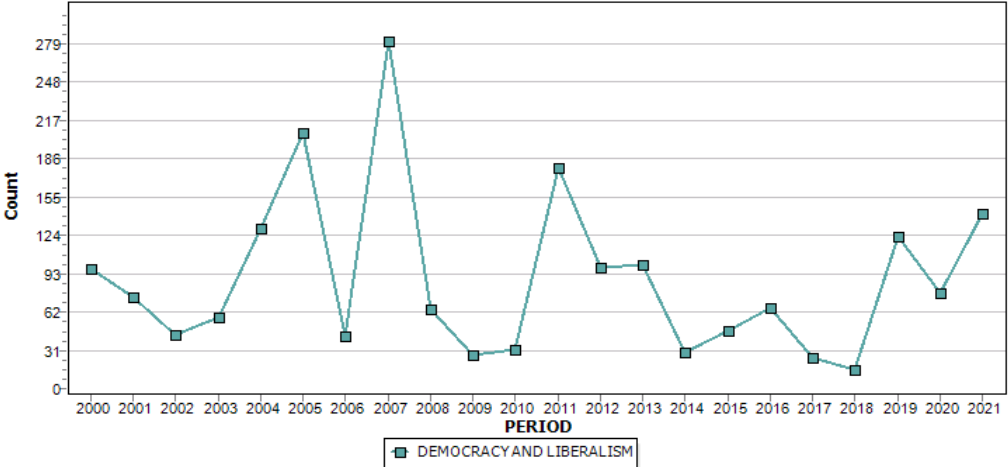
Source: Author.

Table 4.6. Election dates for comparison.

Presidential elections	Parliamentary elections
December, 2005 (early)	September, 2004
2011 (early)	August, 2007 (early)
2015 (early)	January, 2012 (early)
2019 (early)	March, 2016 (early)
	January, 2021

Source: Author.

To sum up, this section is focused on the analysis of the legitimacy claims in the public discourse of the president of Kazakhstan. In the next section I proceed with the analysis of legitimation strategies of the president of Russia.

4.9. Discussion of legitimacy claims in the speeches of the president of Russia.

Public communication of the president of Russia is different from the president of Kazakhstan. Putin likes to communicate with people directly: that is why Direct lines with people from all regions of the country are organized annually. Kazakh president addresses the general public via the closer circles: parliamentary deputies, the members of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, or with televised monologue. Nazarbayev gives interviews to a few journalists from a narrow circle of the state TV channels.

In comparison to Kazakhstan's leader, president of Russia accent on economic performance is stronger: 50% of all legitimacy claims.

The largest difference between the Russian president and Kazakhstani legitimation strategies lies in defence category: it constitues only 5.3% in the speeches of the Kazakh leader, it is 13.9% of total legitimation claims in the speeches of the Russian leader.

Figure 4.7. Legitimacy claims in the public discourse of the President of Russia, 2000-2021.
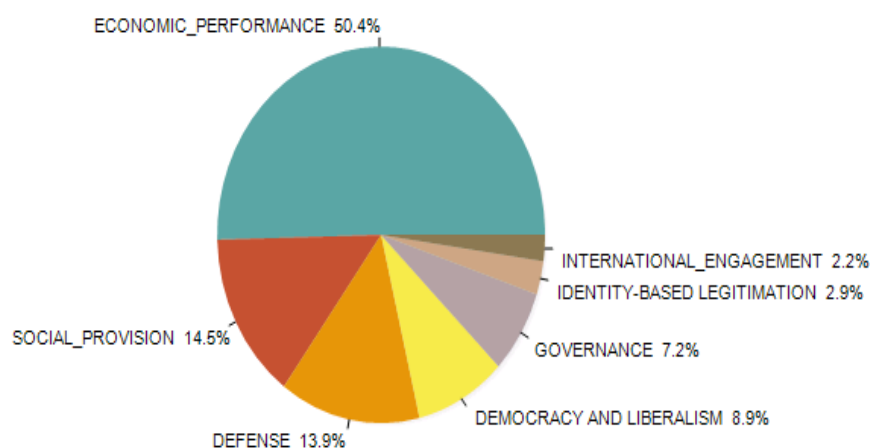
Source: Author.

Similarly to Kazakh autocrat, Putin boasts Russia's with achievements that has never been before: "Important macroeconomic indication: we have a record low inflation during the all new history of Russia. For today, it is 4.2% which has never been before."[640]

However, Russian president does not emphasize the link between his government and successful economic policies. His discussion of economic situation is rather general and unsubstantiated. Usually at the beginning of his Direct lines with regions he gives overview. For example, in 2018 Direct line he set the goal without further explanation on how he is going to achieve it: "Russia should not only firmly gain a foothold in the top five largest economies in the world, but also increase GDP per capita by one and a half times by the middle of the next decade. It's a very difficult task. I am sure that we are ready to solve this problem."[641]

Second most important topic for president of Russia is social provision. The majority of discourse is devoted to children and education, then to healthcare. President's reference to children increased considerably in 2021. President in 2021 highlighted that supporting families

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[640] Direct Line with President, 2017.
[641] President's Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, 2018.

with children and childhood is included in five most important vectors of development.[642] Support for children and families is warranted in his terms by poor demographic situation in the country.

In comparison to Kazakhstani president, Russian president talks much less on governance issues (7.2% in contrast to 18.2%) and identity-based legitimation (2.9% in contrast to 11.8%). Defence legitimation claims can also be considered as the second most important portion of Russian president's communication. (For comparison, Social provision – 14.5% and Defense-13.9%) The importance of defense discourse increased in 2006, 2014-2015, 2018.

Figure 4.8. Defence legitimacy claims in the speeches of the Russian president, 2000-2021.
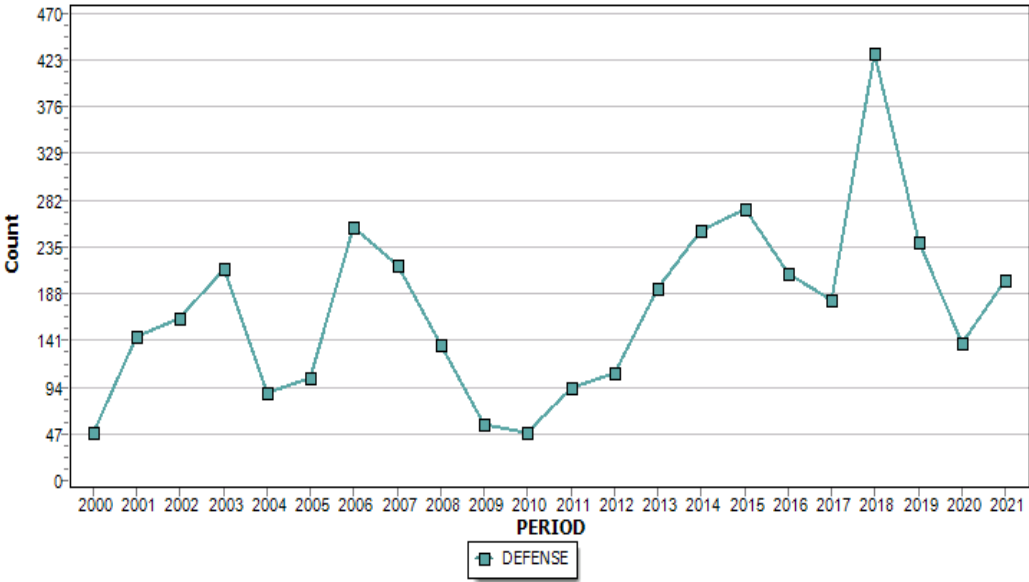
Source: Author.

In his discussion of defence issues Russian president pays a decent amount of attention to the United States. Furthermore, 'United States' is the second most frequent phrase in president's speeches. (See, Figure 4.9.)

Figure 4.9. Distribution of phrases in the speeches of the president of Russia, 2000-2021.

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[642] Speech at 20th United Russia party congress, June 2021.
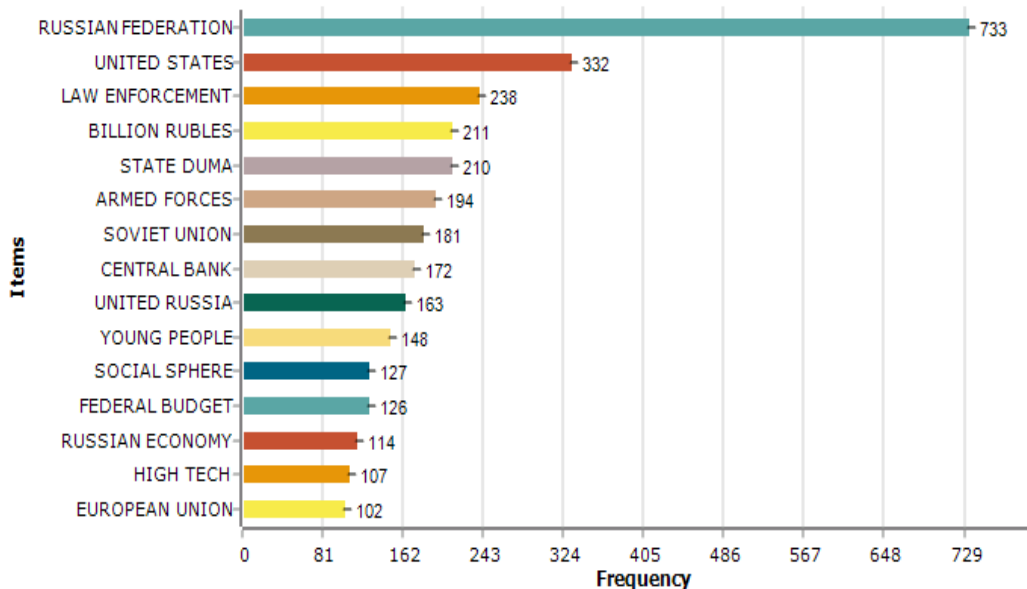
Source: Author.

It can be observed on the graph below, "United States" count also rocketed in 2018 when emphasis on defense was highest. To clarify, Russian president's rhetoric was full of condemnation and concern that the US was quitting the Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty). The official website on the U.S. Department of State defines it: "Treaty, required the destruction of U.S. and Soviet ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles ("GLBMs" and "GLCMs") with a range capability between 500 and 5,500 kilometers, and their associated launchers, support structures, and equipment, within three years after the Treaty entered into force in 1988." [643] According to the data provided, multiple reports on the violations of the Treaty from the Russian side were detected, reported and addressed to the Russian authorities. So, in October 2018 president Trump announced the exit from the INF Treaty "in response to Russia's longstanding violation of its obligations under the Treaty."[644]

The 'United States' has been discussed along with defence key words such as missiles, nuclear, weapons. (Cooccurrence table is provided in the appendices.) President Putin blamed the U.S. for violating strategic parity at the international arena and, basically, threatens with Russian modern missiles in response. For example, in 2018 Direct line he states:

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[643] (The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty n.d.)
[644] (The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty n.d.)

"Back in 2004, I said that we began developing such new systems as our response to the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. And I spoke then about the system that we have now called Avangard. This is a missile system of intercontinental range, not ballistic, which goes along a flat trajectory and changes course in direction and height. This is an absolute weapon, if we talk about today. More than 20 movements and more than 20 speeds of sound. I do not think that any other country will have such weapons in the coming years, although, of course, someday they will appear, and, as I have already said, we are not concerned about this, because we already have them."[645]

The decrease of the United States mentioning can be observed during Medvedev's presidency (i.e. his speeches are attributed to 2009-2011).

Figure 4.10. Distribution of 'United States', 2000-2021.
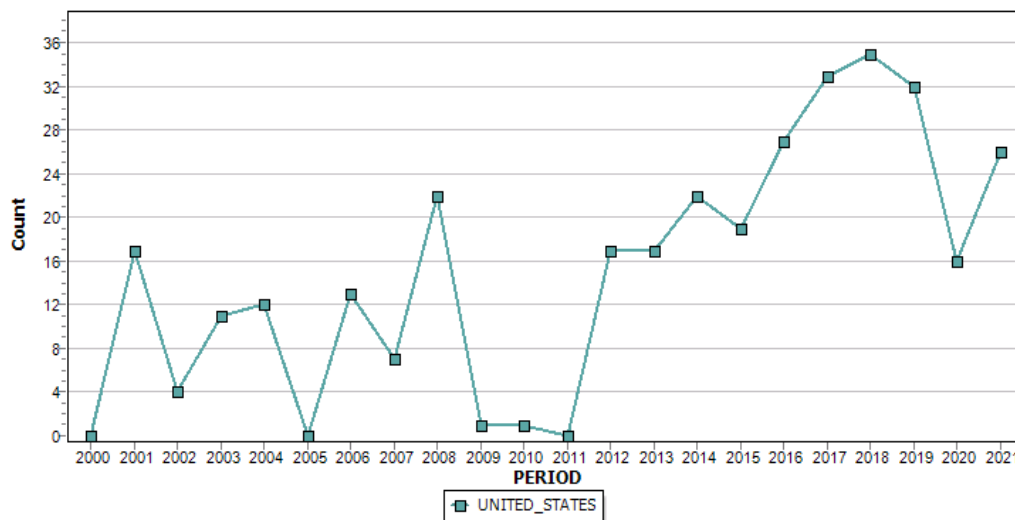
Source: Author.

Moreover, mentioning the U.S. in relationship to weaponry, missiles, he posits himself as the potential competitor to the U.S or even winner of the title of the world superpower. For example, in 2016 he claims:

To be honest, I was a little surprised by the statement of other official representatives of the current Administration, who for some reason began to prove

[645] Direct Line with Vladimir Putin, 2018.

that the armed forces of the **United States** are the most powerful in the world. And no one was arguing with that.

If you listened carefully to what I said yesterday, I spoke about strengthening the nuclear triad and concluded by saying that the Russian Federation today is stronger than any potential – attention! - Aggressor. This is very important. It's no coincidence that I said that.

What is an aggressor? This is the one who could potentially attack the Russian Federation. Here we are stronger than any potential aggressor, and I can repeat this now.

And I said why. Both because of the modernisation of the Armed Forces, our history and geography, and the current internal state of Russian society. There are a complex of reasons. Of course, the modernisation of the Armed Forces, both its usual component and the nuclear triad, plays an important role.[646]

Furthermore, when responding to the criticism of domestic public policies in Russia, president has the tendency to point to the US and show that they also have flaws. For example, answering the question on elections, he cannot help but to refer to the 'flawed' U.S. elections. Similar arguments can be found in relation towards taxes, corruption, social provision and other public policies. . (See the quotes in the Appendices to this chapter.)

Undoubtedly, the Russian president's discourse on defence is particulary directed at the external threats towards the country both real and fictional. United States has kept the position of the state to compete with in the eyes of V.Putin even today. See the appendices for 2021 Putin quote on the monopoly of the US.

Ukraine is another point of affection for president Putin. Mostly since 2014, Ukraine is also discussed in the framework of defence and military topics. As such, the Ukraine issue constitutes a substantial portion of his reference to the protection of the Russian speaking population in other CIS countries.

Unsurprisingly, the frequency of president's discussion of Ukraine rocketed in 2014, the year of Crimea annexation. (See Figure 33 below.) Also, in 2014 the share of defence legitimacy claims was second highest after 2018 (17% in 2014 and 25% in 2018, see the graph in the Appendices section).

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[646] Vladimir Putin's big press conference, 2016.

Figure 4.11. Distribution of 'Ukraine' key word, 2000-2021.
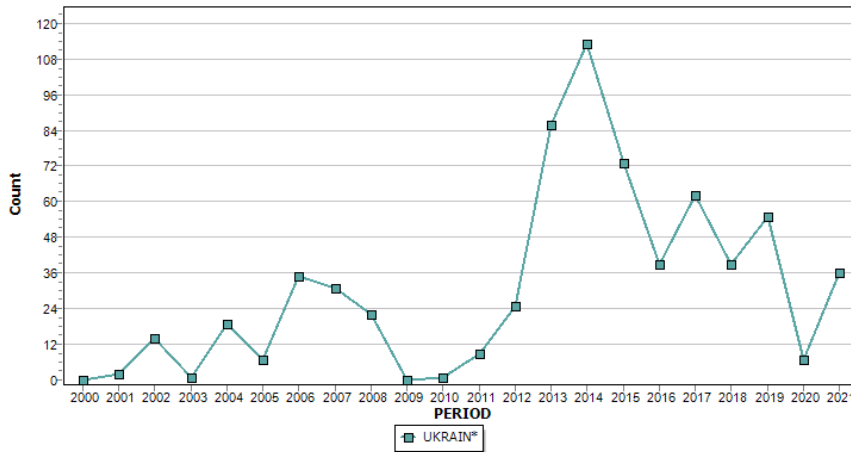
Source: Author.

Most importantly, the politics of V.Putin towards Ukraine has undergone substantial change since his arrival in Kremlin. Notably, the discourse of Vladimir Putin in 2006 was radially opposite to his actions in 2014. To be precises, he talked about non-interference into internal affairs of the Ukraine. In his 2006 Direct Line with the regions he stated that:

> We are well aware of what happened at the turn of the 90s, in the early 90s, how the fate of Crimea developed in connection with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today we need to proceed from the realities that have developed to date. Crimea is part of the Ukrainian state, and we cannot interfere in the internal affairs of another country. We need to be aware of this. Of course, we are not indifferent to what is happening there, and we think that our contribution can be made only by means of a kind of personal example of solving issues of this kind. Or, if the Ukrainian leadership deems it possible and turns to us for help, we will be ready, without plunging into these problems, without dragging Russia into solving problems of this kind, to assist our closest neighbor and, without any exaggeration, the fraternal republic of Ukraine, in order to protect it, if anyone has such a temptation, from interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine from the outside, and to enable the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian leadership to solve these problems on their own.[647]

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[647] Direct Line with president in 2006.

In 2014, Putin reveals his drastically different perspective on Ukraine where south-east part of Ukraine is a part of Russia:

> Another thing is the center, east, south-east of Ukraine. I have also just spoken about this, about Novorossiya, which, of course, is rooted in the Russian state, and these are people with a slightly different mentality. Once part of today's Ukraine, assembled piece by piece in Soviet times, of course, it is quite difficult for people to establish relations with each other and it is difficult to understand each other. But we need to help them do it as much as possible.[648]

Furthermore, in 2014-2015 the discourse went on blaming Ukrainian authorities for nationalism. (See the Appendices for the quotes of V.Putin about Ukraine in 2015.) In addition, he refers to the poor living conditions and incompetence of the authorities. By referring to these failures, the Russian president justifies his direct influence and interference into the affairs of the neighbouring country.

As such, V.Putin explains in his 2015 Direct Line:

> Look, when there was a previous crisis in Ukraine, which was also quite acute, then Mr. Yushchenko and Tymoshenko came to power. As a result of what? The third round of presidential elections not provided for by the Constitution. It's a quasi-coup. But at least without weapons then they did it, without bloodshed. But we accepted this, in general, and worked with everyone and cooperated. But now it's come to a coup. *We can no longer accept that. It has come to such a rise in extreme nationalism – this is unacceptable.*
>
> I want to emphasize this: we do not have the goal of reviving the empire. We have no imperial ambitions. But we can ensure a decent life, including for Russian people living abroad today, in the CIS countries close to us, by developing interaction and cooperation.
>
> You know, first of all, of course, we need to think about restoring normal life in Lugansk and Donetsk, in these territories called the LPR, the DPR, so that the flow of refugees from their native places is stopped, and those people who left can live normally in their native home.[649]

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[648] Direct Line with Vladimir Putin, 2014.
[649] Direct Line with Vladimir Putin, 2015.

Basically, Putin affirms that he deems himself responsible for the Ukrainian territotires Lugansk and Donetsk.

To conclude, the discourse on defence category can be regarded as second most important after economic performance for the president of Russia. Defence notion constitutes first of all missiles and weapons, army and other military forces.

The importance of defence issues for president Putin can be characterized by another statement. For the first time V.Putin made his famous statement about the only allies of Russia in December 2015 during the Big press-conference of Vladimir Putin: "In this regard, I would like to remind you – I think you will be pleased to hear this – I would like to remind you of the words of Alexander III, our Emperor, who said that Russia has only two allies: the army and the navy. And in parting words to his son, he later said that everyone is afraid of our enormity. This, by the way, also has certain grounds. "[650]

He reiterated his statement in November 2017 at the opening of the statue of Alexander III, Russian Emperor in annexed Crimea. This statement is inscribed on the statue of Alexander III, the Russian Emperor which was erected in Yalta, a resort town at the southern part of the annexed Crimean peninsula: "Russia has only two allies – the army and the navy." («У России есть только два союзника — ее армия и флот»."[651]

First time Putin was elected president, May 2000, his emphasis on democracy and liberalism and governance were highest than all the next years till present day. (See Figure 34.) Democracy and liberalism legitimation categories constituted 19.4% and governance legitimation claims – 18.8% of all legitimation efforts.

Again, the period of Medvedev incumbency elucidates higher focus on liberal and democratic legitimation as opposed to next Putin's years. Medvedev's presidency lasted from May 2008 till May 2012. During his incumbency he made annual national addresses and made speeches at the congress of the United Russia party in 2008, 2009, and 2011.

So, the decrease in democratic and liberal discourse can be confirmed by using two approaches: by legitimation claims and by Illiberal Speeches Index and Autocratic Speech Index.

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[650] Big press-conference of Vladimir Putin. December 17, 2015.
[651] (Sozaev-Gur'ev 2017)

Figure 4.12. Democracy and liberalism and governance legitimation claims in the speeches of the president of Russia, 2000-2021.
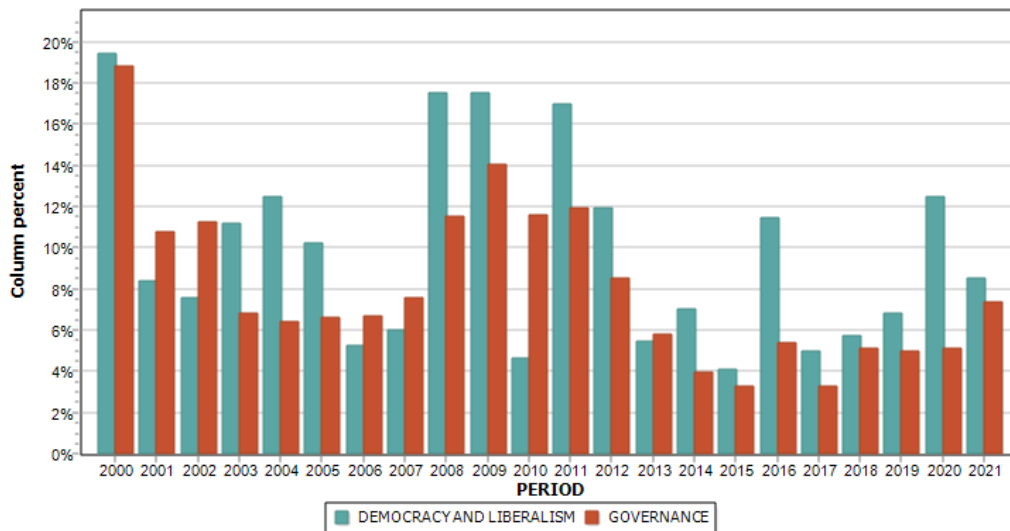
Source: Author.

4.10.   Dictionary validation by Topic Modelling.

The additional analyses for cross-validation of dictionary I perform are unsupervised text mining methods, i.e. topic modeling.

For the data on Kazakhstan and Russian structural topic modelling results are presented in the Appendices. Obviously, this automatic categorization does not provide pure non-overlapping categories. However, it clearly illustrates major blocks of discourses on which presidents draw attention.

The groups produced as a result of topic modeling procedure can be systematized into the topics of my dictionary:

1. "Small and medium sized businesses", "billion tenge", "oil and gas production", "increased" can be attributed to economic performance legitimacy.
2. "Nur Otan" (dominant political party) – democracy.
3. "Ethnic groups, harmony", "XXI century" – national issues
4. "Instruct the government", "law enforcement, state bodies" – governance.
5. "Health care, education" – social provision.
6. "Central Asia" – international engagement.

So, constructed 10 clusters can be grouped into my 6 categories. Only defense issues are not distinguished as a result of unsupervised methods which is warranted because defense issues consitute small amount in the speeches of Kazakhstani president.

Topics constructed by WordStat9 for Russian president are also provided in the Appendices. They can be attributed to the following categories of legitimation claims:

1. "Missile" – defense.
2. "Child", "medical care, education" – social provision.
3. "Incomes of the population", "oil and gas products", "billion rubles, federal budget" – economic performance.
4. "Law enforcement", "state duma" – governance.
5. "United States, Soviet Union" – international engagement.
6. "Country, political" (contains key words POLITICAL; SOCIETY, DEMOCRATIC, PARTY) – democracy.

Only national issues are not distinguished into a separate topic because Russian president does not elaborate much on these terms.

Overall, topic modeling produces similar results to my categorization which allows to confirm a worlking level of operationalization of my dictionary.

Also, extra check on validity can be implemented by displaying empirical relationship between topics. I expect that economic performance, governance, and social provision topics should be related. I test this hypothesis using cooccurrence table which is a part of Wordstat9 program. In my case it shows that most often the following categories occur in one paragraph:[652]

Economic performance and governance (6.4%),

Economic performance and social provision (4.2%),

Governance and democracy and liberalism (4%).

Cooccurrence of these categories add to the justification of my dictionary: since qualitative analysis also assumes that they should be more related than other categories.

Conclusion

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[652] See full table in the Appendices.

In the theoretical review I attempted to elaborate on several questions. What does the concept of legitimacy represent? What are the sources of legitimacy or what makes authorities legitimate?

Literature review showed that earlier studies like Easton (1965), Beetham (1991) does not lose its relevance.

In the first section I review several important theories on legitimacy, specifically, by Easton (1965), Beetham (1991), von Soest and Grauvogel (2017), Von Haldenwang (2017), Tannenberg et al. (2021).

The discussion of legitimacy comes down to similar conclusions: they distinguish two groups of legitimacy sources. First one is based on the ability of state to satisfy societal needs; second is identity-based legitimacy - the capacity to identify with state.

In defining legitimacy I conclude that it is warranted to distinguish between legitimacy of a ruler and legitimacy government in general. The examples of Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan convince that in personal dictatorships people associate the concrete authoritarian regime with a ruler. There are common sayings like Lukashenka's regime, Putin's regime, Nazarbayev's regime.

In the studies of authoritarianism modern day research largely focuses on instrumentalist approach by constructing formal models (like models of power sharing in Svolik (2012), Bueno de Mesquita, 2003; Gandhi, 2008; Magaloni, 2008). In these models we have abstract utility-maximizing actors which make rational decisions.

While legitimation is a standard and universal process for democratic systems, it is not so for non-democracies. It puts national context to the forefront of legitimacy issues in authoritarian regimes.

I consider that national context is extremely important in finding out factors of legitimacy in authoritarian regimes. However, I find the deductive conclusions of the abovementioned models to be very useful in explaining peculiarities of specific nondemocratic regimes.

My argument on the importance of the national context was confirmed during the process of dictionary-building for quantitative content analysis. Delving into political speeches of Putin, Nazarbayev showed that categories for analyzing legitimacy claims developed by von Soest and Grauvogel (2016, 2017) are far from enough.

The empirical examinations in this article compare the language of political leaders by applying quantitative and then qualitative text case by case analysis. Quantitative textual analysis on estimating policy positions in party manifestos, legislative speeches or generally in the political communication of political actors of democratic states was successfully used before. See, for example, Laver and Garry (2000) estimate the policy positions of political parties in Britain and Ireland; Laver, Benoit, and Garry (2003) estimate in legislative speeches of German political parties. Even the political communication in authoritarian regimes were analyzed before in (Guriev and Treisman 2018a; Maerz 2019). However, dictionary in Guriev & Treisman was crafted to compare violence, social provision and economic performance in authoritarian regimes as opposed to democracies. Maerz (2019) analyzed political speeches of 40 leaders made between 1999-2019 to determine the scale of their liberalness. However, I find that the dictionary for comparing large datasets (consisting of 4740 speeches) coming from diverse political regimes (both democracies and autocracies were included) presupposes the use of a very general dictionary. The meaning of each word in the dictionary should be universal. That is why the dictionary in heterogeneous settings cannot be context-based which produces the problem of insensitivity to the context.

My research is innovative in terms of building a comprehensive dictionary for post-Soviet region and thus, effectively, extracting legitimacy claims of authoritarian leaders. My dictionary reflects common ways of authoritarian rulers like stressing common enemy or threat, the exclusiveness of a political leader.

As well known, computerized content analysis treats texts not as discourses as in coded content analysis but words as data: the concept of bag of words.

Bases on semi-automatic methods I built a dictionary to identify legitimacy claims. Semi-automatic implies finding appropriate entries for your dictionary with the assistance of software. Validation of my dictionary was performed at the stage of dictionary-building when every word was included after checking the context by using Keyword-in-Context tool in WordStat9 software.

My innovation to dictionary-based content analysis is the use of phrases. Wordstat9 allows to use phrases in dictionary due to the fact that it follows order of precedence: phrases are counted first, then words and then a proximity rule can be used.

The dictionary is built for finding legitimacy claims of authoritarian leaders. This study distinguishes seven dimensions of legitimacy claims: economic performance, social provision, governance, identity-based legitimation, defense, democracy and liberalism, international recognition.

For Kazakhstan and Russia shared legacy of Sovietness and shared history allow me to be context-specific and comprehensive at the same time. In addition, the Soviet legacy of the Russian language excludes probability of vagueness of terms, particularly, relating to state dimensions and economic performance.

Textual data provide evidence that the authoritarian leaders of Kazakhstan discuss most extensively economic performance and economic conditions and achievements. (40% of discourse for Kazakhstani president and 50.4% for Russian president.)

Moreover, textual analysis shows that economic performance and governance legitimation claims are closely related. Annual changes in economic performance and governance has been very similar. Data in cooccurrence matrix shows that economic performance cooccur with governance category 903 times (cooccurrence of both in one paragraph), more than with any other legitimation claims.

Governance issues are second most important topic in Kazakh president's speeches. President underscores the efforts of government and state bodies in implementing state programs. Devising state programs of socio-economic development, setting goal indicators have been a distinctive feature of president Nazarbayev and his follower president Tokayev: strategy "Kazakhstan-2030", strategy "Kazakhstan-2050", Business Roadmap, State program of industrial and innovative development, State Program for the Development of Regions for 2020-2025, state program "Digital Kazakhstan", order of president On the Concept for Kazakhstan's entry into the 30 most developed countries in the world, etc..

In the discourse of Kazakhstani president identity-based legitimation plays an outstanding role. Most frequent terms of identity-based legitimation claims are the Assembly of People, ethnic, ethnicity, unity, patriot*, interethnic, national, tolerance, interconfessional or interreligious.

The political discourse of the president Nazarbayev on multiethnic and interreligious peace has grown and evolved into 'a Kazakhstani way' of democracy. As a result, the discourse on democratic mechanisms of legitimation of the president of Kazakhstan is quite different from the traditional understanding of democracy. He is propounding a special 'Kazakhstani way' of

democracy meaning multiethnic diversity, unity and harmony: "Assembly has turned into one of the main institutes of Kazakhstani democracy, and interethnic consensus has turned into one of the main principles of democratic constitutionalism, the formation of legal state, the realization of human rights and freedoms."[653] Classical meaning of procedural democracy is blurred and replaced by ethnic diversity and peace. Moreover, it is used as warrant to restrict "political extremism" which led to the restriction of legal acts on political parties in 2002.

As a culmination, in 2003 address to the Assembly of People Nazarbayev coined his policies towards national minorities and ethnic groups as "Kazakhstani model of social consensus and all-national unity" ("Казахстанская модель общественного согласия и общенационального единства Н.А.Назарбаева").[654]

Another explanation of multiethnic policies may be in seeking to find support of ethnic groups. During the Soviet times multiple ethnic groups were relocated to Kazakhstan as of "unreliable". From the Ukraine, people were relocated to develop agriculture on new vast lands of Kazakhstan. Particularly, the Russian people constituted large share of people: the number of kazakh and russian ethnicities were almost equal at the times of the demise of the Soviet Union. The ethnic composition changed by today, still Russian population constitutes a considerable share, 19% in 2021.

The analysis of the dynamics of the legitimacy claims' categories shows that the legitimation discourse is of cyclical nature. External events largely affect legitimation effort of the president of Kazakhstan.

For example, period 2010-2011 were marked by a substantial rise in all categories of legitimation in the rhetoric of the president. Such substantial surge in legitimation efforts was driven by massive strikes of oil and gas workers going on most actively in 2010 and 2011. Unfair redistribution of petrodollars has been a hot issue in the country for a long time and still remains this way today. The Westeners felt it more acutely as they produced oil, and oil revenues increased while salaries remained the same.

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[653] Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. A. Nazarbayev at the XIII session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. August 20, 2007.
[654] (Kazakhstan model of social consensus and national unity of N.A. Nazarbayev n.d.)

President also emphasized defence legitimation efforts in 2000-2001, 2006, and 2016. These periods are characterized by the rise either of strong opposition leaders (some were murdered and some fleed abroad) or large-scale social protests.

In spite of perverted 'Kazakhstani way' of democracy, reference to classical terms of democratic and liberal practices is present in the rhetorics of the president of Kazakhstan. The data show that the frequency of democracy legitimation claims increase during presidential and parliamentary elections.

Public communication of the president of Russia is different from the president of Kazakhstan. Putin annually speaks for more than two hours at the Direct lines with people from all regions of the country, at the big press-conferences broadcasted live.

Kazakh president addresses the general public via the closer circles: parliamentary deputies, the members of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, or with televised monologue. Nazarbayev gives interviews to a few journalists from a narrow circle of the state TV channels. In comparison to Kazakhstan's leader, president of Russia accent on economic performance is stronger: 50% of all legitimacy claims.

The largest difference between the Russian president and Kazakhstani legitimation strategies lies in defence category: it constitues only 5.3% in the speeches of the Kazakh leader, it is 13.9% of total legitimation claims in the speeches of the Russian leader.

Russian discourse on defence constitutes first and foremost external threats towards the country. Specifically, president is focused on the United States and blames its attempts to break the world peace by distorting strategic parity in the world. Furthermore, discourse which mentions the US is usually full of the discussion of the Russian new advanced missiles and rockets which no other country possesses.

When responding to the criticism of domestic public policies in Russia, president has the tendency to point to the US and show that they also have flaws. For example, answering the question on elections, he cannot help but to refer to the 'flawed' U.S. elections. Similar arguments can be found in relation towards taxes, corruption, social provision and other public policies. (See the quotes in the Appendices to this chapter.)

Ukraine is another point of affection for president Putin. Mostly since 2014, Ukraine is also discussed in the framework of defence and military topics. As such, the Ukraine issue

constitutes a substantial portion of his reference to the protection of the Russian speaking population in other CIS countries.

Putin's discourse on Ukraine has undergone substantial change since his arrival in Kremlin. If in 2006 Putin talked about interference he talked about non-interference into internal affairs of the Ukraine, in 2014 he states that 6 Ukrainian cities (Kharkov, Lugansk, Donetsk, Kherson, Nikolaev, Odessa) had not been a part of Ukrain during tsarist times. So, his discourse changed into the striving to bring order the south-east Ukraine.

Creating enemies is a standard characteristic of nationalism according to Volkan (1985). Putin makes use of this quite intensely by stating that threat is coming from the US and threats to the Russian-speaking from Ukraine.

Social sphere and defence are approximately eqully important for president of Russia. Particularly, he emphasizes that state would take care of families with children, state kindergartens and state schools.

To summarize, legitimation strategies of the president of Kazakhstan and Russia are very different.

However, there is one thing in common as was hypothesized before that economic performance constitues the largest share of presidents' public speeches.

Appendices.

Figure A.1. Distribution of defence category, 2000-2021.
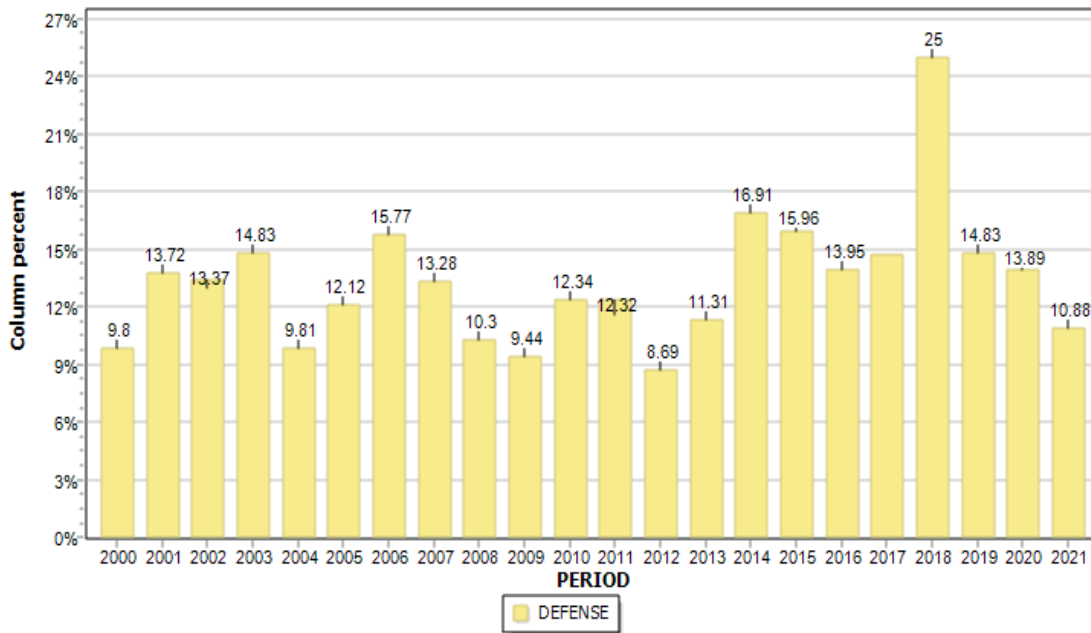
Source: Author.

Table A.13. Cooccurrence table for "United States' in the speeches of the Russian president.

	UNITED_STATES
PARTNER*	36
MISSILE	23
NUCLEAR	20
UKRAIN*	17
DEFENSE	16
MILITARY	14
BALLISTIC	10
ARMY	6
PROTECT*	4
NAVY	2
PARITY	2
ANTI-RUSSIAN	2

Source: Author.

Quotes of presidents Putin and Nazarbayev.

President Putin about the U.S.
2004: As for different opinions on various issues, including, for example, the attitude of the administration or the American public to our political processes, I must say that we are also not enthusiastic about everything that is happening in the United States. Do you think that the US electoral system is devoid of any flaws? Do we need to remind you how the elections were held, or what, one or the other in the States? You know that the OSCE Commission, when it monitored the elections in Ukraine, Afghanistan and the United States, made the same claims, including to the United States when organizing the elections. For example, the non-admission of observers to all polling stations was a claim from the OSCE to the organizers of the elections in the United States. Even voter intimidation was there and then. What about unequal, unequal access to the media? Yes, the incumbent politician always has a head start, because he is always on the screen in the performance of his official duties.
2013: By the way, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that in the United States these prices are slightly higher than here. True, there the incomes of citizens are higher. And therefore, in general, for the consumer based on the general basket, it is cheaper. But in the United States, the state practically does not take a tax on petroleum products, it is minimal. There, the state receives taxes in other areas, there is a very high transport tax and other components.

President Putin about corruption, 2019:
I repeat, this should not stop us from fighting this phenomenon. By the way, this topic exists in many countries, almost in all. Look, in the United States, both business and corrupt officials are given 70, 100, 150 years in prison. This is pointless, but this work is also going on quite harshly and publicly. And we're going to do the same thing.

President Putin about Ukraine.
2014: Russia did not annex Crimea by force. Russia has created conditions, with the help of special formations and the Armed Forces, I will say frankly, but it has created only conditions for the free expression of the will of the people who live in Crimea and Sevastopol. And the decision to join was made by the people themselves. Russia responded to this call and accepted Crimea and Sevastopol into its family. This is natural,-it could not have been otherwise. As for the power factor in international affairs, it has always been, always is and, I am sure, will always be. This is not the question, the question is that, understanding that force is essential in international affairs, States in the international arena would be able, on the basis of common sense, to develop and strengthen such rules of conduct that would be stable and would make it possible to negotiate, seek compromises, balance the interests of the state and people in the international arena, without resorting to this force. It's not about the events in Crimea. Let's remember what happened in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and other regions of the world. So, in my opinion, when the world becomes or-someone tried to make the world unipolar, then this single pole had the illusion that everything can be solved only with the help of force, and when there is a balance of force, then there is a desire to negotiate. I hope that we will move along this path – along the path of strengthening international law.
2014: Everyone insists on the exchange of prisoners of war. I believe that it is necessary to change everyone to all without any conditions. But life is more complicated. When the lists appear, it turns out that - at least, as representatives of the Donbass militia tell us - in these lists on the Ukrainian side there are persons who were detained not at all in connection with the hostilities in the south-east of Ukraine, but somewherein Kherson or Odessa, it is necessary to check these-lists. Nevertheless, we insist. I believe that it is necessary that people before the New Year, before Christmas, they found themselves in their families – regardless of any other circumstance.
2015:

What happened? What happened was that people were tired of poverty, of theft, of the rudeness of the authorities, of their irrepressible greed, of corruption, of the oligarchs who climbed into power. People are tired of it all. And when society and the country slide into such a state, then people begin to look for ways out of this situation and, unfortunately, partially turn to those who, speculating on the current difficulties, offer some simple solutions. Among them are nationalists. Didn't we have that in the '90s? There was no "parade of sovereignties", there was no nationalism, which then broke out in a bright color?

Yes, all this was, we went through it all! And it's really happening everywhere. This is what happened in Ukraine. These nationalist elements took advantage of this and brought everything to the state that we are witnessing now. Therefore, this is not our failure, this is a failure within Ukraine itself.

You have just made a reservation, as they say, according to Freud. You said: we missed the separation of Ukraine from Russia. There was no rejection. Ukraine is an independent independent state, and we need to treat this with respect…

Quote of president Nazarbayev about extremism, 2000. (Nazarbayev 2000a)

We need a legislative barrier to the spread of extremist religious movements that destabilize society and fight for power under religious slogans. It is necessary to strengthen control over the education of our youth in foreign educational institutions and prevent them from being infected with the ideas of extremism and religious fanaticism.

Conclusion.

While I was finalising my thesis in the beginning of January 2022, massive social unrest erupted in authoritarian Kazakhstan. Starting from famous West Kazakhstan, it spread all over the country. Unfortunately, riots escalated into violent and insurgent activities. President called upon The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) by claiming that 20000 terrorists are attempting coup d'etat. CSTO implies mostly Russian military forces.

The internet is shut down, landline telephones are not working, only state TV channels are broadcasting – this is what an authoriatrian government does when peaceful protest marches start.

Being detained and imprisoned for 15 days for criticizing government actions;

Being detained and charged with criminal offence for pulling down Nazarbayev's statue;

Being tortured with iron, boiling water, having a cigarette put out on your body, in addition to being beaten to force confession of terrorist actions, - what an authoritarian government does in the afterwards of protest rallies.

Being shot or wounded at the central square while holding a banner: "We are peaceful people! We are humble people! We are not terrorists!"

Unfortunately, words do not reflect real suffering and tears of men and women living in authoritarian regimes.

Picture 4. Protest march at the Republic Square in Almaty, January 2022.

Source: (Abdurassulov 2022)

I listed only a small share of government policies and actions in Kazakhstan that made the whole world talk about the country in January 2022.

However, the precursor to the bloody January events are multitude: centralized control over executive, legislative, and judiciary branches of power, massively rigged elections, constitutional engineering, state controlled media, prosecution based on social media activity, dynasticism, patronage networks, high corruption rates, abhorring personality cult (capital city is Nursultan, Nazarbayev University, Nazarbayev intellectual schools (state-owned), all major cities in regional centers bear names Nazarbayev street, Nazarbayev statues in regional capitals opened almost annually), etc.

Now we can compare the above mentioned events with a demonstratively democratic language of hegemonic autocrat, N.Nazarbayev and his follower K.Tokayev. In the discourse of both presidents, the country achieved worldwide recognition for its particular model of democracy. Most importantly, the same discourse is pouring out of state-controlled media and news agencies. Propaganda has entered the forefront of political arena.

To summarize, I cannot agree more with Bueno de Mequita that "a Leviathan proves to be possibly the worst political system for promoting *peace, prosperity* and *human dignity…*"[655]

Democratic recession has become evident and were first reported by Freedom House reports since 2006. V Dem project highlights that "the level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen in 2020 is down to the levels around 1990."[656]

Along with different interpretations of this global trend, the discussion on hybrid regimes rocketed. Also, comparative authoritarianism attracted more attention because of the increasing role of autocratic powers such as China, Russia.

The world today observes a rise of authoritarian leaders who claim to be legitimated by their own citizens and, moreover, at least at some point in time have been widely popular. Russian president, V.Putin, and Kazakhstan's first president Nazarbayev are stark examples of such leaders.

Political scientists insist on the role of legitimacy in the functioning of the state, specifcially, legitimate rule leads to enhanced order, stability, and effectiveness – as stated by Beetham

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[655] (Bueno de Mequita 2003, 713)
[656] (Alizada et al. 2021, 9)

(1991).[657] Furthermore, the impact is mutual. Effectiveness of government, stability and order are used as legitimating factors by political leaders.

So, governance through performance legitimation affects legitimacy of a regime and legitimation. Weak or fragile states can be considered as the main consequence of a bad governance.

Why is it important to investigate legitimation processes in authoritarian regimes? As was stated by Levitsky & Way (2010) democratic procedures such as elections do not serve traditional democratic functions but serve for enhancing regime legitimacy in full authoritarian regimes.[658] Basically, securing legitimacy for the political elites is a central issue to solve. The success will determine the longevity and resillience of the regime.

The longevity of any political regime, be it democratic or authoritarian depends on legitimacy. Research on the sources of authoritarian resilience and longevity is growing. There are comprehensive literature reviews on the topic such as Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009; Magaloni and Kricheli, 2010; Brancati, 2014. In the first chapter I also provided an overview of literature on authoritarian regimes: main subjects of research and research questions.

My research seeks to contribute to the comparative authoritarianism studies on post-Soviet region. I selected political regimes of Russia and Kazakhstan as object of study. My choice is warranted by several factors.

Usually, Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and the Caucasian and Central Asian are included in the region of Post-Soivet Eurasia.[659] However, among others Kazakhstan and Russia share a lot of identical features. First of all, the similarity of the two states are supported by statistical indicators on government effectiveness which analysis is provided in the chapter on authoritarian governance. Insitutionalization of authoritarianism follows a similar pattern which analysis is provided in chapter two on governance.

Common feature of two autocracies is the genuine support of the leaders by the general public during initial years of incumbency which is supported by both scholars and sociological research (for case of Russia by Levada Center).

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[657] (Beetham 1991, 25–37)
[658] (Levitsky and Way 2010, 7)
[659] (Brusis, Ahrens, and Schulze Wessel 2016, 2)

Economic development of both countries demonstrate similar characteristics: GDP per capita and gross national income per capita. Furthermore, both countries are natural resource-abundant. Thus, natural resource curse scenario played out there, the dependence of oil and gas, mineral resources export is high.

Aso, the states share the common legacy of the former Soviet Union. Particularly important for my research is the Russian language. For political communication and making speeches political leaders in Kazakhstan are still largely using Russian language.

However, there is one important difference – cultural predispositions. The majority of population in Kazakhstan is muslim. The majority of population in Russia have Russian orthodox beliefs.

First of all, after systematization of studies on authoritarian regimes, I attempted to define the type of Kazakhstani and Russian political regimes in Chapter 1.

My first research question was to determine a type of political regime in Kazakhstan and Russia according to theoretical frameworks provided by Geddes (2014), Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010), Levitsky and Way (2010), V-Dem Democracy Score, Global Freedom Score by Freedom House, and Polity5 project. In addition, I discussed in detail theoretical implications of Linz (1978, 2000) for Kazakhstan and Russia.

As can be observed, I utilized not only conceptual frameworks developed by separate scholars but also empirical datasets of Freedom House, Polity5, and V-Dem project.

Firstly, this chapter focused on review of classifications of political regimes is important for several reasons.

The overwhelming majority of literature on authoritarianism includes typification of regimes from the perspective of a very general characteristics of a political system such as one party or multi-party, free and fair elections or no elections, the process of transfer of power (hereditary, by coup d'etat or by elections).

The majority of scholarship typifies political regimes on democracy-autocracy scale. Usually, the difference between types of nondemocratic rule is determined by how the incumbent came to power or how power is transferred. Also, important determinants are the presence of one party rule and other characteristics of power structures or the ruling elite . Rare scholarship, among which Wright (2021) makes one step further by describing so called "latent fimensions

of autocratic rule". He adds on government accountability, the features like the ruler has right to dissolve the legislature, veto legislation, and dismiss ministers.

Scholarship on classifications of political regimes is important as a basis for future studies. Multiple questions can be answered if we know specific characteristics of one or another authoritarian regime. For example, such questions as:

- What type of authoritarian regimes is more durable or resilient?

- What is the relationship between type of autocracy and quality of government?

- What is the relationship between type of authoritarian regime and style of language of the rulers?

- What is the relationship between type of authoritarian regime and legitimation strategies?

One of the well-known results is the evidence by Geddes (1999) that one-party regimes live longer than other types of authoritarian regimes. Ulfelder (2005) concludes that some types of autocracies are more vulnerable in the face of contentious collective actions than others. Most importantly, scholars research about what types of regimes are more likely to democratize? Geddes concludes that "… personalist dictatorships are less likely to democratize than dominant-party regimes, which suggests baseline expectations about the countries in which dictators have already fallen: a 67 percent prob- ability of democracy after the dominant-party regimes (Tunisia and Egypt) and 50 percent after the personalist (Libya and Yemen), all else equal."[660]

Operationalization of regimes by Geddes (2014) is determined by satisfaction of several criteria. Both Kazakhstan and Russia are rated as personalist dictatorships in Geddes (2014). In Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) perspective, they possess indicators of dominant party rule and are categorized them as civillian dictatorships. Their classification does not separate a strong personal power based regimes from others.

I consider empirically relevant a combination technique by Roessler & Howard (2009) which concludes that both Kazakhstan and Russia are hegemonic authoritarian.

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[660] (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014, 328)

Levitsky & Way (2010) also classify them both as hegemonic authoritarian. The crucial point in hegemonic authoritarian regimes: election results are not meaningful as they do not demonstrate uncertainty.

To conclude, political scientists converge in the view of hegemonic authoritarian regimes as the systems where the uncertainty of electoral outcome is ruled out, or in other words, the probability for the people to vote the ruler or the ruling party out of power is zero.

Why not competitive authoritarian regimes for Kazakhstan and Russia? Kazakhstan allows for multi-party elections and multi-party legislature. However, the overwhelming majority in parliament belongs to the pro-presidential party Nur Otan. Personalist regime in Kazakhstan however has a dominant political party Nur Otan. Personalist regime of Russia also operates through the dominant party United Russia. Although United Russia was established and came to power later than in Kazakhstan, the party possesses central position in the Russian parliament and plays a strong redistributional function among loyalties. V-Dem describes both states as a single party controlling the executive and legislative branches of the government.

The amendments to legislation on political parties and elections, results of all parliamentary and presidential elections in Kazakhstan demonstrate that the probability of participating let alone winning for any opposition force is virtually zero.

Russia followed the same path by restricting legislation on political parties and elections started in the first term of Vladimir Putin. Historically, since 1990's political participation in Russia reached such a level that even resembled electoral democracy. Even PolityIV project ranked Russia as democracy up 2007. In 2008 Russia shifted into anocracy category. However, cancellation of gubernatorial elections, creating favorable conditions for Russia in regional legislative elections, banning true opposition forces in the face of Naval'ny largely determined hegemonic character of authoritarianism in Russia. Even such attempts such as 'Smart Voting' devised by the team of Alexey Navalny which is a tactical voting strategy with the purpose of diverting the United Russia party of votes in regional elections have not given much results because of election results manipulations.

The process of removal of oppositional leaders finished early 2000s in Kazakhstan (2000-2006). In Russia oppositional leaders were still combatting the system in 2011 of which massive protest at Bolotnaya square in the aftermath of parliamentary elections signalled. Murders of political opponents (Boris Nemtsov in 2015), poisoning attempts and arrests (A.Navalny in 2020), exile

activists (such as G.Kasparov, V.Karamurza) also cleared up political arena in Russia by today. So, hegemonic character of authoritarian regime is warranted by the uncertainty regarding the stakes for political parties have been reduced to zero.

Although, Kazakhstan has been a personal autocracy for longer period of time, it exhibits a little better situation with corruption and constraints on the executive. Civil liberties are better protected in Kazakhstan according to both Freedom House and V-Dem project data (liberal component index is higher). Undoubtedly, autocratization process in Russia accelerated substantially with the Putin's presidency.

Theoretical framework of Linz (1978, 2000) does not lose its relevance. Neopatrimonialism envisages a strong personal rule. So, Kazakhstan and Russia are already candidates for this type. However, sultanism being an extreme level of neopatrimonialism, is relevant to Kazakhstani political system due to the presence of personality cult. Neopatrimonialism aldo implies high corruption rates and unconstrained personalist ruler.

I conclude that empirical research like the one by Freedom House and V-Dem Project better reflect dynamic changes in authoritarian regimes than theoretical works typifying regimes. The important advantage of V-Dem project indicators is the availablity of wide range of indicators which allows to measure autocratic governments comprehensively. I suggest that using V-Dem project indicators and Freedom House scores are most applicable for empirical research.

What gives out autocracy is its constitutional engineering, to be precise the evolution of constitutional engineering and legislative history. Institutional design is being changed in such a way as to centralize power in one hands, in the hands of a president in case of both Kazakhstan and Russia. In Chapter 2 of my thesis I developed a comparative analysis of the evolution of political institutions in Kazakhstan and Russia. I utilize comparative legal research and focus on legal acts adopted since 2000.

In case of Kazakhstan, country was established with semi-presidential form of government which presupposes the existence of both president and prime-minister. Gradually, president acquired multiple rights: starting from appointing members of parliament, appointing members of parliament indirectly (through the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan), appointing members of the Central Election Committee, members of the Constitutional Council, members of the Supreme Court. The unitary structure was envisaged from the date of independence, and in

Kazakhstani political actors' understanding it meant that the president appoints governors of all regions. The centralization

Personalization factors revealed as early as in 2000 when the Law on the First President of Kazakhstan was adopted bestowing on him significant powers after leaving office.

Next step in autocratization process are 2007 amendments electoral legislation so that to remove restriction on the number of times a person is eligible for election to the office of president. This restriction was demolished for only one person – the first president due to his status as the founder of Kazakh nation.

The next stage in autocratization is the establishment of a title – "The Leader of the Nation", the first president in 2010 ") which allowed him to veto any policy initiatives even after his ouster. Also, he acquired immunity against prosecution and investigation at all times along with the lifelong financial and all kinds of provisions for him and his family. Obviously, the notion of "family" was inscribed broadly to include anyone who lives with him. This stage comes along with undisguised personality cult promoted into the society by political elites.

To conclude, codified form of law in Kazakhstan determines extensive powers and competences of a single person, initially president and, consequently, the first president and the "Leader of Nation", Nazarbayev, who had stepped down in March 2019 after 29 year rule. Kazakhstani legislation is specific with its detailed provisions for the first president as the founder of Kazakh stateness. In addition, tailored for the powers of former president (up to 2019) legal base reveals the evolution of legislation towards power personalization and the development of dominant party. Furthermore, the signs of autocratization are demonstrated through the electoral history in Kazakhstan. Sartori (1994) considers electoral system an integral part of constitution.[661]

The history of autocratization via redesigning institutes and amending legislature in Kazakhstan and Russia is very similar. The difference is only in timing. Since 1990's were rated as more or less democratic in Russia, the 2000s started with some pluralism and political participation. Kazakhstan has been characterized as autocracy since getting independence in 1991. However, Nazarbayev started securing his power since the beginning of 2000s.

President Putin's evolution has been less outstanding, although, it shows signs of personalization:

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[661] (Sartori 1994, 202)

2000 – an institute of regional envoys was established and a set of seven federal districts led by Putin's appointed envoys. As a result, regional legislation was harmonized in accordance to federal legislation. As Hale highlights, the center "reestablished a significant degree of federal control over local prosecutors, ministries, and courts in most regions."[662]

2004 – direct gubernatorial elections were replaced by appointments by president.

The comparative analysis of political institutions and governance in the authoritarian regimes of Russia and Kazakhstan provided several important conclusions:

- First of all, the role of democratic institutions such as political parties and elections are not merely façade but instruments for maintaining power. Specifically, the formation of dominant parties in both countries allowed for elite co-optation.

- Elections are used only as an extra tool for legitimation.

- I described and provided evidence confirming the inclination of the authoritarian rulers towards institution engineering and constitutional engineering in both Russia and Kazakhstan.

- Dominant party rule in Russia does not imply traditional understanding of dominant party regime when a ruling council or a politburo wields decision-making authority. Dominant party is just an instrument for a personalist ruler. The same is true for Kazakhstan.

- The evidence from Kazakhstan and Russia suggests that dominant party increase resilience of autocracies because "parties provide ideal organizational mechanisms for the coordinated execution of decisions, not necessarily their collective formulation."[663]

The operationlization of types of authoritarian regimes implemented in Chapter 1 and detailed analysis of authoritarian institutions and governance in Chapter 2 allowed me to describe the cases of Kazakhstan and Russia not only by definitional indicators of authoritarian regimes but how authoritarian regimes build its institutes, function and operate.

Concrete characteristics of the political system should reveal more important facts which might allow to foresee the behavior of authoritarian governments and explain their failures. That is why I dedicated Chapter 2 to defining authoritarian institutions and governance in Kazakhstan and Russia.

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[662] (Hale 2014, 270)
[663] (Slater 2003, 97)

When discussing governance political economy mingles with public administration. Political economy is trying to answer the question on the scope of state intervention in the economy: regulation of prices, trade, and so on. Public administration is the field responsible for the design and implementation of public policies. Institutional capacity is an indicator of the successful public administration. Are state institutions able to provide public services transparently, comprehensively, and effectively? So, I conclude that governance answers the question *how*? Governance basically covers public administration issues but goes further by encompassing the issues of state effectiveness and methods of new public management. Governance is looking at the issues of state effectiveness. State capacity, institutional quality, and institutional capacity are used interchangibly.

Governance is not only about government. Governance takes place at schools, church, farm, or any other organized community. Bevir (2012) demonstrates that "Governance refers, therefore, to all processes of governing, whether undertaken by a government, market, or network, whether over a family, tribe, formal or informal organization, or territory, and whether through laws, norms, power, or language."[664]

As a consequence, legitimating political regimes takes place at all levels, among all social groups.

To conclude, authoritarian governance impacts legitimacy of authoritarian regime in two ways:

- Through specific support (as defined by Easton (1965) defined in the section on legitimacy);
- Through state capacity.

In addition to being both hegemonic authoritarian, Russia and Kazakhstan exhibit similar levels of government effectiveness.

I use this division between governance styles in the analysis of the political leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia.

Modern understanding of governance was largely formulated by international institutes, paricularly, development institutes such as World Bank.

In the context of sustainable development metagovernance concept emerged. The importance of governance is linked to the successful implementation of differentiated governance styles, i.e. mix of hierarchic, network, and market governance styles.

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[664] (Bevir 2012, 17)

Historically, the classical style of governance is hierarchy as defined by Max Weber. Instruments of hierarchic style of governance are laws, regulations, and compliance. Government is an organization that governs vertically from top down. Market and network modes of governance I united into decentralized governance style.

Development scholars started a new strand of literature: using textual analyses to reveal governance styles of political leaders. Their dictionary is more than about communication style. So, I combine their approach with the method of Maerz (2019), the construction of Illiberal Speech Index and Autocratic Speech Index.

Automated textual analysis include a quantitative content analysis which means the construction of dictionary beforehand and getting counts of categories (variables) of the dictionary. It is a supervised techniques of quantitative text analysis. Quantitative analysis was implemented using WordStat9 software.

To incorporate hierarchic and decentralized governance styles, liberalism and illiberalism, I adopted the structure from Maerz (2019) study.

General structure of my dictionary includes Democratic style of language and Autocratic style of language which are then divided into subcategories.

Democratic style of language:

- Liberalism (Liberal values and Woman, minorities subcategories);
- Democratic procedures (Democracy and Decentralized governance).

Autocratic style of language:

- Illiberalism (Nationalism, paternalism and Traditionalism);
- Autocratic procedures (Hierarchic governance and Maintenance of power)

So, modes of governance are inside of styles of language categories.

Chapters 3 and 4 represent empirical research using textual data. The same corpus of data is used for the analysis in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. So, the description of the corpus applies to both chapters.

In the empirical parts of my thesis, I attempted to capture persistent patterns in public rhetoric of political leaders. So, I collected a pool of public speeches of the heads of states Kazakhstan and Russia, specifically, speeches addressed at the general public, citizens.

Selection of speeches for the president of Russia includes annual national addresses to the Federal Council, Direct line with president, speeches made at the United Russia political party

congresses, annual press-conferences of the president, inauguration speeches. In total, there are 5 types of political texts. In total, I collected 70 speeches of president. During the period 2008-2011 speeches were made by D.Medvedev. President Medvedev held annual press-conference only once during his four-year tenure, in 2011. For the rest of the analyzed years all speeches were made by Vladimir Putin. Unsurprisingly, Medvedev made less public appearances and speeches during his presidency. Moreover, Putin continued with his annual Direct Line with regions that had been started during his first term: it was titled as the Direct Line with Prime-minister. However, I account for only speeches made by the institute of president not persona. Selection of speeches of the president of Kazakhstan consists of annual addresses to the parliament, speeches made at the openings of parliamentary sessions, speeches made at the congresses of Nur Otan political party, speeches at meetings of the National Council of Social Trust, televised addresses to the people of Kazakhstan, speeches made at the congresses of the Assembly of people of Kazakhstan, speeches made at the inauguaration of the president, speeches made at the Independence Day official meetings. In total, I collected 98 political speeches of the president of Kazakhstan. Speeches by N. Nazarbayev were made during the period 2000 - June 2019. Speeches by K.Tokayev were made during the period June 2019 – 2021.

In addition, for comparative analysis I use speeches of overt dictators: Josef Stalin and Saddam Hussein. They represent ideologically and culturally different dictatorships. Saddam Hussein comes from islam dominant country. Stalin is expected to be more secular and violent.

To compare Kazakh and Russian autocrats with democratic leaders, I utilize speeches of Barack Obama, 44th president of the USA, and Emmanual Macron, president of France.

Although, Kazakhstan has a longer history of hegemonic authoritarianism than Russia, country's leader boasts success in nurturung democratic values most intensely. The concentration of key words on democratic processes and values is higher in Kazakhstan than in other all other analyzed countries, most importantly, than democratic Obama and Macron.

Illiberal Speeches Index and Autocratic Speeches Index support the hypothesis that modern dictators' language is not that different from their democratic counterparts. Moreover, the data show autocratic accent is present in the discourse of democratic leaders.

To conclude, modern Kazakhstani and Russian presidents are not different from their democratic counterparts US president Obama and UK ex-prime-minister Cameron.

At the same time, Kazakhstani and Russian leaders are distinctly different in their discourse from overt dictators Saddam Hussen and Josef Stalin. Hussein's discourse is extremely illiberal in comparison to all other political leaders. He intensively uses the rhetoric with reference to 'God' 'almighty', 'glorious', 'homeland', 'evil', 'honor', 'brothers' multiple times more often than modern autocrats. So, nationalism, paternalism and traditionalism are more specific to violent dictators of the past. XXth century overt dictator Stalin is distinct in his extreme focus on maintenance of power.

Among all the analyzed 22 years period Kazakhstani president exhibits autocratic and illiberal rhetoric only in 2002, basically, the year of the active cleaning of opposition forces. In contrast to Kazakhstani leader, the Russian president had only one fully democratic and liberal year in the history of political speeches - 2011, during Medvedev's term.

Medvedev's presidency can be characterized as more into democratic and market oriented reforms: at the same time, according to multiple experts, Medvedev paid lip service to his declarations.

In general, Kazakhstani president's overall language style is substantially more democratic and liberal than the Russian's president. Russian president uses more autocratic and illiberal style of language.

In addition, illiberal discourse of the Russian president has been increasing in the last 22 years. Kazakhstani president illiberal discourse is stable at low values. For now, Tokayev, new president, has maintained rather liberal rhetoric (2019-2021).

Lliberal rhetoric of Kazakhstani president is based on propounded multi-ethnic diversity, interfaith harmony and peace. President reiterates that the model of interethnic harmony, implemented over the years of independence, is one of the foundations of international prestige of Kazakhstan.

Illiberalism in the public communication of Putin (mostly) are reflected in most frequent key words: family, principle*, tradiition, and moral. Traditionalism attract attention of the president. President talks about financial provision of families in Russia often in terms of strengthening families. Furthermore, Putin increased this rhetoric substantially in the last three years.

Regarding governance styles revealed through presidents' communication. Hierarchic governance style has started to prevail on a permanent basis since 2012 in Putin's rhetoric after his return to presidency.

Medvedev's term can be described as more decentralized mode of governance. When Putin came back in 2012 with the Annual National Address to the Federation Council, hierarchic governance vocabulary rocketed even higher than before.

Overall, Kazakhstani president's rhetoric is characterized by higher concentration of decentralized governance key words than hierarchic ones except for 2002, 2014, and 2020. However, in comparison to his Russian counterpart, Kazakh president uses more often strong directive terms such as instruct*, control*, regulat*, and enforce*. President's most favourite one is to 'instruct': its concentration is six times higher than in the Russian's president texts.

Kazakh president constantly instructs government, National Bank, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, dominant party Nur Otan. For example, Nazarbayev stated in his 2014 Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan: "I instruct the presidential administration, the government, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan together with the national movement "Kazakhstan-2050" to organize the development and adoption of the patriotic act "Mangilik El" ("Eternal country"-Author)."[665]

As a result, I conclude that the language of political leaders is misleading. Long-standing autocracy like Kazakhstan has leader portraying himself much more democratic than leaders from well-established democracies like the USA and France.

In Chapter 4 the textual data were used for the analysis of legitimation claims. Political texts collected for 22 years allows to investigate recurring patterns and strategies of the presidents.

How do modern autocrats of Kazakhstan and Russia legitimate their rule? Language or political speeches turn out to be one of the best sources of legitimation claims of authoritarian leaders.

One of the reasons is that the discourse propounded by a leader in authoritarian regimes is obviously grasped by state-controlled media, political actors subservient or loyal to the ruling elites and further disseminated to the public masses. Essentialy, a personalist dictator defines legitimation strategies.

Moreover, although, mostly in closed autocracies and sultanistic regimes, the discourse of a leader is presented as ultimate truth. Multiple books, monographs and speeches are studied at schools. Excerpts and quotes of an autocrat are put on the walls of public offices as slogans. They are massively discussed by propagandist media, journalists and in talk shows.

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[665] Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan, January 17, 2014.

Existing studies which are minute observe and attempt to find out more about public discourses and thus language style of autocratic leaders.[666] There is even less research that focuses on revealing legitimation strategies in the language of modern dictators.[667]

In general, research legitimation in autocracies is usually based on comprehensive expert surveys such as in von Soest and Grauvogel (2016, 2017); Tannenberg et al. (2021).

Developing the category structure of legitimation dictionary in my case is both theory and data driven. I elaborated legitimation claims into 7 categories: economic performance, social provision, governance, defence, democracy and liberalism, identity-based legitimation and international engagement categories.

As a result, I developed categories that are comprehensive and mutually exclusive in my case.

Both leaders focus the majority of their legitimation efforts towards economic performance. In comparison to Kazakhstan's leader, president of Russia accent on economic performance is stronger: 50% of all legitimacy claims. Both autocrats in relation to high economic indicators like to highlight that such indicators have never been achieved before.

Governance issues are second most important topic in Kazakhstan's president texts. President underscores the efforts of government and state bodies in implementing state programs. Devising state programs of socio-economic development, setting goal indicators have been a distinctive feature of president Nazarbayev and his follower president Tokayev: strategy "Kazakhstan-2030", strategy "Kazakhstan-2050", Business Roadmap, State program of industrial and innovative development, State Program for the Development of Regions for 2020-2025, state program "Digital Kazakhstan", order of president On the Concept for Kazakhstan's entry into the 30 most developed countries in the world, etc.. I suggest that the tradition of setting up plans of development and goal indicators is coming from the Soviet social planning system.

Identity-based legitimation discourse hovers around the same ideas through all the last 29 years of president Nazarbayev: tolerance, multiethnic peace and stability, friendship and unity, multi-confessional and multinational peace. Furthermore, political discourse of president Nazarbayev on multiethnic and interreligious peace has grown and evolved into 'a Kazakhstani way' of democracy. As a result, the discourse on democratic mechanisms of legitimation of the president

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[666] (Dowell, Windsor, and Graesser 2015; Guriev and Treisman 2018a; Maerz 2019; Maerz and Schneider 2020)
[667] (Omelicheva 2016; Windsor et al. 2018)

of Kazakhstan is quite different from the traditional understanding of democracy. To promote this kind of democracy, he has to restrict "political extremism" which led to the restrictions in legal acts on political parties in 2002.

The analysis of the dynamics of the legitimacy claims shows that legitimation effors of the president are impacted by external events. An increase in all categories of legitimation took place in 2005-2008 and 2010-2011.

Period of 2007-2008 was marked by global financial crisis which substantially hit Kazakhstan economy. Kazakhstan's economy main characteristics are what made it vulnerable to that crisis: it is very FDI-intensive (in comparison to other largest post-Soviet economies Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine)[668]; crude oil is its key export commodity.[669] The discourse of economic performance increased considerably during those years. President elaborated on anti-crisis measures and used such directive phrases as "on my instructions" (term revealing hierarchic mode of governance).

Economic performance and governance lines are closely related in the rhetoric of Kazakh leader.

Period 2010-2011 happen to be the the years of labor strikes and social unrest in the Western region of the country which reached the boiling point in December 2011. The peak of dramatic events took place in 2011 in a town located at one of the largest oil fields in Kazakhstan, Zhanaozen. Protest movements escalated and transformed into mass revolts at the central square of Zhanaozen which resulted in the death of 17 people and many more wounded. Most notably, the data show that defense legitimation soared in 2012. In the aftermath of the December 2011 bloodshed when state military forces were allowed to use lethal force in Zhanaozen.

Most importantly, emphasis on defense in absolute numbers rose as much in 2000-2001, 2006, and 2016. The analysis of political events support an argument on the impact of external event on the legitimation efforts of the president. For example, 2000-2002 first oppositional politicians were detained and sentenced to prolonged terms. Later, in 2006 famous politicians were murdered. In 2016 second massive social protests against land reforms took place.

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[668] (Barisitz et al. 2010, 48)
[669] (Ruziev and Majidov 2013, 695).

The fact that democracy and liberalism claims increase during election times both presidential or parliamentary corresponds to the increase in democracy discourse of language styles dictionary of Chapter 2. This correspondence serves as an extra validation of my dictionaries. The share of democratic and liberalism in the discourse of the president increased and constituted more than 10% of all legitimacy claims in 2000, 2004 (parliamentary elections), 2005 (presidential elections), 2007 (parliamentary elections), 2011 (presidential elections), 2019 (presidential elections), 2021 (parliamentary elections).

Russian president's legitimation rhetoric is substantially different from his Kazakh counterpart. The largest difference between the Russian president and Kazakhstani legitimation strategies lies in defence category: it constitues only 5.3% in the speeches of the Kazakh leader, it is 13.9% of total legitimation claims in the speeches of the Russian leader.

Interestingly enough, in his discussion of defence issues Russian president pays a decent amount of attention to the United States and Ukraine. 'United States' is the second most frequent phrase in president's speeches.

In 2018 president's reference to defence terms rocketed. To clarify, Russian president's rhetoric was full of condemnation and concern that the US was quitting the Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty). The 'United States' has been discussed along with defence key words such as missiles, nuclear, weapons. President boasts new techonological missiles and weapons which no other country possesses. Furthermore, when responding to the criticism of domestic public policies in Russia, president has the tendency to point to the US and show that they also have flaws.

Mentions of the US decreased during Medvedev's term which is warranted as his discourse is more liberal.

The discourse on Ukraine changed considerably. In 2006 Putin talked about non-interference into the internal matters of Ukraine. In 2014 he refers to the south-east part of Ukraine as a part of Russia historically. Furthermore, in 2014-2015 the discourse went on blaming Ukrainian authorities for nationalism.

Unsurprisingly, the frequency of president's discussion of Ukraine rocketed in 2014, the year of Crimea annexation. Also, in 2014 the share of defence legitimacy claims was second highest after 2018.

Putin's discourse on defence is well described by his favourite quote originally attributed to Alexander III that he often reiterates: "Russia has only two allies – the army and the navy."

Second most important topic for president of Russia is social provision. The majority of discourse is devoted to children and education, healthcare. President's reference to children increased considerably in 2021. President in 2021 highlighted that supporting families with children and childhood is included in five most important vectors of development. Support for children and families is warranted in his terms by poor demographic situation in the country. The same evidence was observed in Chapter 3 on language styles. It showed that Putin emphasized the role of a family.

To conclude, there are crucial variations among autocratic leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia concerning their use of formal language, particularly, the leaders' claims to legitimacy.

Chapter 4 elaborated on the narratives by which a ruler justifies his rule. Legitimacy is the basis of any political system. If legitimacy for democratic systems are clear and largely unquestionable, legitimacy of autocracies are built on various foundations.

My research contributes to comparative authoritarianism by providing empirical comparative analysis of governance styles, language styles and authoritarian legitimacy of the leaders of two largest countries in post-Soviet region.

To summarize, main questions investigated in my thesis include:

1. What kind of political regimes are in Kazakhstan and Russia? By the analysis of international rankings and ratings.

2. Can we trace authoritarianism via comparative legal analysis in legislation?

3. Can autocratic style of language be observed in the public communication of authoritarian leaders?

4. What kind of governance style is prevalent in the discourses of Kazakhstani and Russian presidents?

5. How do autocrats legitimate their political regimes? I assume that through legitimacy claims.

6. What kind of legitimacy claims are prevalent in the speeches of the president of Kazakhstan?

Most importantly, I conclude that the language of authoritarian leaders reveals a lot about legitimation strategies of contemporary autocrats but does tell the truth about autocratization processes.

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