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MEDIA AND POWER: CONTROLLING RELIGION BY MANIPULATING
PUBLIC OPINION. THE CASE OF ISLAM IN KAZAKHSTAN
МЕДИА ЖӘНЕ БИЛІК :ҚОҒАМДЫҚ ПІКІРДІ БАСҚАРУ АРҚЫЛЫ ДІНГЕ
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ОБЩЕСТВЕННЫМ МНЕНИЕМ

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF MA PROGRAMS AT NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY:

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by

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Abstract

Controlling public opinion is a crucial talent of a dictator. Without the ability to softly change the moods of people in one direction or another, it is very difficult to pursue the intended policies. This is even more so, if such a policy would concern a potentially sensitive issue, such as religion. In this study, I explore the mechanisms of state propaganda in online news that allow Kazakhstani authorities to control public opinion of Salafism, an Islamic religious movement. I demonstrate that by properly framing political issues, the elites are able to manipulate the public opinion on this issue. After exploring the mechanisms of news framing, I test their effectiveness in a simple experiment that will reflect those mechanisms.

This research assumes that the legacy of the Soviet Union still strongly affects the leadership in post-Soviet states and informs the elites' negative perception of religion as well as the necessity to offer a counter-narrative. For this reason, the authorities are worried about the moderate religious revival in Kazakhstan, which opened the space for proliferation of both traditional and new religious movements. In addition, the 2016 terrorist attacks in Aktobe and in Almaty reinforced the elites' mistrust towards religion. The Kazakhstani president openly blamed followers of Salafism. This resulted in the increase of governmental control over religion that is manifested in the secularization of the state. In addition, the danger of the proliferation of Salafist ideas is being countered by the moderate and traditional to Kazakhstan version of Islam, which is the Hanafi School of Islamic jurisprudence officially endorsed by the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan that cooperates with the authorities. Followers of Salafism reject the authority of the Spiritual Administration, so the government does not have the control over them. However, the authorities think that control in the question of religion is very important.

First, I conducted a content analysis of the three most popular online news agencies in the period of 2015-2018 and identify how Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism are framed in

the mass media. The analysis identified three types of negative messages on Salafism: (1) followers of Salafism are morally bad, (2) Salafism is a threat to national security, (3) Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs. In addition, there is a message on Hanafi Islam: (4) Hanafism is native to Kazakhs. Besides, I found one type of message on secularism, however, this one was very persistent: (5) Kazakhstan is a secular state. This allowed me to support my proposition regarding secularization.

The experiment that I ran afterwards allowed me to measure the success of the government strategy to use media to manipulate public opinion. I tested the effectiveness of propaganda by giving the messages that appeared in real media to participants of the study, beforehand dividing them into several groups. Each group received one message discussed above and one of the groups received a message with no connection to religion. The results of the experiment demonstrate the statistically significant effect of propaganda, in particular negative messages.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Authoritarian regimes depend a lot on public approval (Gerschewski 2013, Lewis 2016, Omelicheva 2016a, Walker and Orttung 2014). To some extent, this might be counterintuitive, because people tend to associate authoritarianism with people having limited rights and state repressions. However, this is a very shallow understanding of autocracies, because as Levitsky and Way (2002) demonstrate, there are varieties of different authoritarian regimes. Some of these regimes are less reluctant to use coercion, but others try to use non-coercive means. In doing so, the regimes need to have a tight control over the media to shape the public opinion. Those regimes that learned this exercise are able to masterfully control almost any issue, even one as sensitive as religion.

In fact, controlling public opinion by using the media is a common practice of authoritarian governments. Unlike democracies, authoritarian governments cannot base their legitimacy on free and fair elections. For this reason, whenever they adopt policies, which are unpopular, they need to make legitimate their actions. Due to this, autocracies tend to be very sensitive when it concerns the messages in the media. They need to make sure that the media sends the right message to the public, because it will allow them to have public support.

In my study, I am analyzing how the government controls Islam by manipulating public opinion. The case of manipulating the public perception of Islam represents a radical version of public opinion manipulation because Kazakhstan is a Muslim-majority state. It does not necessarily mean that most people are straight followers of sharia and that pray five times a day (Louw 2007, Jalil 2017, Peshkova 2017). Being a Muslim in Kazakhstan is a cultural identity rather than a religious one. Moreover, religion is important and it is a very sensitive topic. Because of that, trying to influence people's opinion on religion might be problematic.

The authoritarian governments in the post-Soviet space tend to see religion as a threat due to the Soviet legacy. The atheist Soviet government was very mistrustful toward any religion. In saying this, I do not imply that the relationship between the Soviet Union and religion was always black and white, however, the mistrust was always present. For this reason, they first wanted to eradicate it at all, yet later realized that this practice only moves religion to the underground, where it cannot be controlled, so it represents an even bigger threat to the government. Modern post-Soviet states follow the same logic and due to this, they see it as necessary to control religion.

I would like to focus my research on soft authoritarian rule, which presumably prioritize persuasive strategies over coercive ones (Fukuyama 1992). I want to explore the ways in which the Kazakhstani government uses mass media to shape the public opinion of its citizens. Particularly, I am planning to research how governmental messages in mass media affect people's perception of Islam. Therefore, my research question is "How do soft authoritarian states use the media to control Islam in Kazakhstan?" Additionally, I will research: "To what extent the governmental strategy on shaping people's perception of Islam work?"

To answer these questions, I will use the methodology of both qualitative and quantitative research. Specifically, I will use content analysis to explore the messages within the news that appear in online media. The messages, as I define them, are the central ideas of the articles, which readers should take away from reading them. After that, I will conduct an experiment in order to test their efficiency. Intuitively, there should be a difference between the impact of various texts on people's perception.

This dissertation is divided into four major parts. First of all, I will provide the literature review on the subjects of studying religiosity in post-Soviet Central Asia. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the topic of Islamic revival either as a threat or as a possible central ideology to newly independent Central Asia states was heavily discussed by the scholars. I will review

the works that cover the very first periods of studying this issue to the last works done in the field, which are much complex and identify the diversity of religious interpretations.

After the literature review I will present my theoretical framework. I will provide evidence to illustrate that media is not free in Kazakhstan and that it is a soft authoritarian state. A soft authoritarian ruler mostly relies on non-coercive mean, and I will expand this discussion and the definition in the chapter. In addition, I will demonstrate that the origins of the contemporary policy come from the Soviet past and show the types of secular states, attribute Kazakhstan to one of them. Moreover, I will elaborate on the issues of religious control and the different ways it is achieved.

This is going to be followed by my first empirical chapter. In that, I will describe the results of the media analysis that I conducted on the issues of propaganda on Islam and secularism in Kazakhstani online media. The chapter will first demonstrate the methodology of the research, followed by the results of the study. In this chapter I will collect the dataset from the news that appeared on the topics of Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism in the period between 2015 and 2018. These results will enable to me to trace the extent of governmental propaganda on these topics. After that I will discuss how those findings correlate with my theory and why they are important.

The next chapter will describe the experiment that I ran in order to test the efficiency of different types of messages that appear in the news. First of all, I will describe the methodology and data collection process. The experiment will have six different messages, one of them being a control message randomized using the Qualtrics software randomizer. After that, I will describe the results and then discuss the findings of the chapter as well their importance to the whole work.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: The evolution of discussion on religion and control of public opinion

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union scholars increasingly started to turn their attention to the newly independent states in Central Asia. This global event raised a lot of questions concerning local political life, though with a broad set of implications. For instance, both policymakers and academics were interested in whether or not Islam could develop as a political ideology and whether it could lead to the radicalization of local populations. This interest sparked a huge debate on religion in Central Asia, which developed into a deeper understanding of the religious life of local people. In turn, this led to all kinds of new discussions concerning the relations between religion and politics in the region.

In addition, one of the important features of Central Asian politics is the fact that the governments in the region are very autocratic, with the exception of Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, the governments inherited some of the features of the Soviet Union, like organizing elites into one ruling party (though officially there are multiple parties) or the use of propaganda transmitted through controlled media.

In this literature review, I am going to discuss the works that have been written on the topics of religious control and the control of public opinion using media. In particular, the first part will focus on the works that examine religion in Central Asia, while the second part will discuss the literature on media control in general.

Governing Religion

Scholars studying religion in Central Asia generally agree that to understand the processes of religious policies now, first one needs to understand those processes that took place in the Soviet Union (Khalid 2007, McBrien 2006, Tasar 2017, Thibault 2018). The Soviet atheist government perceived religion as a threat, therefore it was keen on controlling it tightly. For this reason, they created the Spiritual Muslim Board of Central Asia, which promoted a

certain pro governmental version of Islam (Thibault 2018, 47). Yet, this remained marginal, as the main focus of anti-religious campaign was the idea to secularize people (ibid.).

Tasar (2017) uses recent archival evidence to demonstrate that Islam in the Soviet Union not only was able to survive but also to a certain degree participated in the policies concerning Central Asia. This demonstrates the resistance of religious practices that can confront various kinds of policies against religion. Thibault (2018, 47) develops this idea further, arguing that the Soviet Union failed to impose atheism on everyone, so it decided to adapt religion to Soviet norms. She describes this idea as the "Soviet secularization project." To perform this, Soviets created institutions like Spiritual Muslim Board of Central Asia (SADUM). As it will be discussed further, Muslims in Central Asia have their own views on Islam which may seem different from Muslims around the world, because they consider themselves religious without necessarily respective the five pillars of Islam. To some extent, it demonstrates that the secularization project ran by the Soviet Union was successful. In this regard, an interesting observation is done by Privatsky (2001), who studied the religious life in Turkistan in early years after the collapse of the Soviet Union. He argues that during the Soviet times Kazakhs were able to simultaneously retain their religion and participate in the public communist life, which was openly atheist (ibid., 268). The elders of the nation were practicing religion as it remained in collective memory, while the youth actively participated in communist institutions. The Soviet government indeed was able to remove religion from the public sphere, by, for instance, closing all 20 mosques in Turkestan except for one in the times of World War II, when Stalin allowed for some religious attributes to help the war effort (ibid. 50). However, in partially in private and partially in traditions and customs, but religion was able to survive this attack on religion.

Right after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the literature initially did not focus on religious revival, but on fundamentalism or the Islamic threat. Rumer (1993) analyzes the

potential geopolitical interests of various states towards post-independence Central Asia and maintains that important Muslim states like Iran and Saudi Arabia demonstrate their interest in the region. In this light, the potential threat of fundamentalism was on the agenda. Malashenko (1999) acknowledges the importance of Islam to the region, but warns that this "is not a factor of political stabilization." He also maintains that Islamic fundamentalism is present in both society and the politics. Menon (1995) further adds that Islam is a source of mobilization, but he also admits that in Central Asia Islam is diverse. For this reason, fundamental movements face challenges from other Islamic branches, which undermines their potential. Despite this, their presence is alarming.

Still, some researchers back then were already arguing that Islam is not a factor that can destabilize the region. Rashid (1994, 247) cautiously claimed that the traditional Sufi branch of Islam has more to offer than fundamentalists and that it can become a major obstacle to the spread of fundamentalism. Freedman (1996) argues that Central Asians are not susceptible to radical Islam, because of the underdeveloped nature of Islam in the region. He explains the fact that radicalism is a salient issue in political discourse in terms of political instrumentalization of the issue. As he maintains, political leaders talk about radical Islam on purpose in order to justify strongman-style rule in newly independent states (ibid.) Nevertheless, Freedman (1996) still warned that in the future this may become a problem due to a difficult socio-economic situation in the Central Asian states. Roy's argument (1994) on the failure of political Islam is classic. In his book, he argues that the political Islam of 1990s is more similar to the earlier "red" movements than to actual scholarly Islam. Though this idea is a very influential one, it is limited to the discussion of radical fundamentalist political Islam.

All the same, the issue of Islam and political violence remained in the sphere of scholarly interest. Polat (2000) agrees with Freedman's view that the bad economic situation and poor human rights record may lead to the radicalization of the local population in

Uzbekistan, which could lead to the destabilization of the region. In addition, he argues that there are tensions between followers of traditional Islam of Hanafi school and the those who call to purify religion both within and outside the country. The government supports the former one, albeit it connects it with Sufism. Akiner (2003) argues that Islam in the region is being increasingly politicized and she highlights the importance of Uzbekistan as well, because of its high population and geolocation in the region. Malashenko (2005) argued that when the Taliban in 1996 marked an important stage of the political Islam as Islamist activity began at that period. But later this activity was halted, when Taliban government was overthrown.

Yemelianova (2010) brings in the idea that Islamic radicalization is a global phenomenon, not unique to the post-Soviet space. Some recent scholars write about this issue as well. Khamidov (2017) discusses Kyrgyzstan and explains why in some places conflicts between secular and religious communities led to violence, whereas at the other places they did not. Particularly, he focused on two towns in Osh, Nookat that did not experience violence and Kara-Suu that did as a response to the same issues in the period of 2005 to 2009 (ibid., 201-202). According to him, the strength of the tie between local groups was the major determinant of conflict, so if they were strong, violent did not occur and vice versa. Exnerova (2017) applied ethnographic research to the study of radical Islam in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. She argues that followers of Mujahiddiya and Hizb ut-Tahrir, unlike followers of other religious groups, acted as if religion was the only source of authority. In addition, the members of these groups were not influenced by the official discourse of Islamic authority and it delegitimized the state in eyes of supporters of these groups (ibid.). Finally, Heathershaw and Montgomery (2015) demonstrate that the assertion of the active and urgent radicalization of Central Asian Muslims is a myth, as it does not have the empirical basis. However, this rhetoric can be used by governments to create a perception of danger and it legitimizes efforts to institute strong secular values. In their later article, they argue that political Islam is not

necessarily equated with radicalism, but the problem arises when elites limit Muslim political participation (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2016). This discussion demonstrates that scholars progressed from a simplistic view that Islam may cause a rise of radicalism to a more sophisticated understanding that underlines how politicians instrumentalize the threat to legitimize their rule.

In the beginning of 2000, the abundance of literature focused more on religious revival. The religious revival in Central Asia revealed itself in the public manifestation of Islamic practices, which varied depending on the region and time period it was gone underground in the Soviet Union. This should not be necessarily analyzed through the prism of political Islam. Tazmini (2001) argues that Islamic revival must be analyzed in the framework of the revival of national culture. He contends that Islamic practices in Central Asia are mainly apolitical, thus it is unlikely that the revival will give birth to radical Islam. Thus, apart from political and radical Islam, the potential place for Islam becoming a central ideology in the daily life of Central Asian people need to be understood. Moreover, this idea is closely intertwined with policies on religion, as the idea of Islam being a central daily ideology permits the discussion of Islam getting a strong ground in political life. A different view on the prospects of political Islam is held by Karagiannis. He describes the rise of new Islamic political forces in Central Asia (Karagiannis 2016). The author focuses on Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, and argues that in each of these states, there is a political leader, who can be categorized as an Islamo-democrat. He regards a person as Islamo-democrat if it is a political leader that acknowledge the official political process and engage in it, at the same time supporting the presence of public Islam (ibid.). Karagiannis argues that this trend was provoked by the success of the Turkish Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (AKP). These new leaders are not viewed as a threat by political regimes in light of their non-radical views and, as author claims, because the states do not want to deteriorate their relations with Islamic Turkey.

Tabyshalieva (2000) measured the spiritual life of Kyrgyz people and identified that divisions among ethnic and geographical lines in Kyrgyzstan serve as a source of instability, and at some points, religion is also such a factor. Mainly, it is evident by contrasting the cooperation between traditional religions that existed during Soviet rule, that is Orthodox and Muslim, with new religions that penetrated the state after the independence. In addition, there is an ongoing trend among some Muslims that deny the diversity within Islam and identify only one strand as correct. This demonstrates that divisions along religious lines have the potential to become strong social cleavages and that this includes divisions even within one religion as well. In other words, the divisions between proponents of various interpretations of Islam may trigger social cleavage when such ideologies get a stronger ground. For Tabyshalieva (ibid.), the democratization has not been able to solve the problems, because this process is new and it is still necessary to work on the promotion of tolerance and conflict prevention.

Karim (2005) has different views on the connection between the role of Islam and democracy. He connects the prospects for Islam becoming a central ideology to the prospects of the creation of civil society in Post-Soviet states and maintains that the lack of democratic reforms mitigates the civic engagements in various spheres of society. The author argues that the prospects for Islam becoming a central ideology are fairly low due to harsh policies on religion and a highly authoritarian way to manage affairs in the region (Karim 2005). But the relationship between religious participation and regime type is questionable, because even in relatively more democratic compared to other Central Asian states Kyrgyzstan religion is not in at center of public life. The idea that religion may become a central ideology for people and get strong political grounds is also associated with an influx of foreign ideas and the economic situation in the state. Karagiannis (2007) demonstrates that socio-economic hardships may lead to the rise of fundamentalist ideas, as it was the case in Southern Kazakhstan, when Hizb Ut-Tahrir Al Islami, a politically motivated Islamic group, rose up and quickly gained followers.

Jalil's (2017) findings demonstrate that religious participation, i.e. the observance of five pillars of Islam, is relatively low in Central Asia. This is particularly striking, because a high number of people identify themselves as Muslims, believe in God, in the divine origins of the Quran, and, importantly, consider themselves religious. In addition, the study reveals that most people remain religiously illiterate. Thus, even if people consider themselves religious, they do not learn much about religion, which implicitly illustrates that religion is still on the periphery of the daily ideology of common people.

The idea that Muslims in Central Asia, in general, do not strictly observe the five pillars of Islam is common in the literature. Ro'i and Wainer (2009) studied Islamic practices in Central Asia to understand whether there was a change in these practices since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and they argue that people in general do not observe the five pillars of Islam. Nevertheless, they maintain that for people in Central Asia, Islam is an important part of their identity. According to Kehl-Bodrogi (2006), this is also the case in Turkmenistan. Ro'i and Wainer (2009) conducted their study in four Central Asian states excluding Turkmenistan due to the impossibility to conduct interviews there. Kehl-Bodrogi (2006) bases her findings on secondary sources with the addition of her own observations during a short-term visit to the country. She writes that the state propaganda endorses 'Turkmen Islam' as a central religious idea acceptable in the state. Thus, she maintains that the Turkmenistani authorities converted religion into a propaganda tool that serves the state. McBrien and Pelkmans (2008) argue that low observance of five pillars of Islam in Central Asia is a consequence of the Soviet ideas that promoted secular understandings of religion and this understanding is common in the literature. Because of that, there is a considerable portion of the population that disregard the practice of religion, yet consider themselves religious. Despite its secular form, it is still a form of religiosity or rather certain interpretation of religion, which in this case leads to a secular form of religious behavior.

Still, some scholars tend to argue that the "Muslimness" of Central Asian people should not be understood through their observance of five pillars, but rather through self-identification and the role they ascribe to Islam. Louw (2007) studies the way people perceive Islam in the Uzbek city of Bukhara and she argues that for those people Islam means a lot in terms of the way the address their problems. Moreover, for those people Islam is a source of morality, thus they judge the behavior of others through lenses of Islam. This argument persists among many scholars who study the daily life of Central Asians. Peshkova (2017) argues that the understanding of piety is personal. She describes two people, one of them is a traditional healer that uses her bioenergy to heal people and the other considers that she has the ability to resurrect souls. Their understanding of piety differed from the official discourse and the one that was being popularized among people, yet it did not distract them from considering themselves pious Muslims.

The literature demonstrated that the levels of religious participation are not necessarily on the rise. In fact, a low observance of Islamic practice is a peculiar feature of Central Asian Muslims. However, this does not show that Islam is not important to people there, it shows that their understanding of Islam is different to Muslims from other parts of the world. In this sense the idea that Central Asia is experiencing not religion revival, but the transformation is interesting (Jones 2017). This is because the religious landscape of Central Asia is not being restored to the form it had prior to the Soviet Union, but it is changing. According to Jones (2017), analyzing the contemporary practices of Islam reveals their diversity, thus the form of Islam practiced has altered which disallows to title the reemergence of religion as a revival. This changed the religious context of the region, thus the right term for this change is religious transformation.

This brings the literature into the discussions of various interpretations of Islam. Before that, there was a trend dividing the interpretations into two camps: traditional and radical. The

kind of arguments, presented by, for instance, Polat (2000) oversimplify what is really happening in the religious marketplace of Central Asian states. Abashin (2006) argues that it is wrong to use the lenses of traditionalism versus fundamentalism to understand this religious context because this conception distorts the true complexity of the situation. He bases his findings on the microanalysis, the study of an Uzbek village in Tajikistan and demonstrates that even at this scale the religious context is very complex. Heathershaw and Megoran (2011) argue that the Western academic discussion is making too much emphasis on this divide when talking about Central Asia, misrepresenting the region to the Western audience. In addition, this facilitates the discussion on the danger of Islam, which is then reflected in the policies. Thus, the whole idea of oversimplifying religion leads to policy implications, that are not necessarily positive for the region.

The diversity of Islamic interpretations means the conflict of those, as proponents of each are convinced that their understanding is the right one. This idea was also part of Tabyshalieva's argument (2000) discussed above. Somfai Kara (2016) demonstrates that local forms of Islam are important for local people and that there is a conflict between the popular practices of Islam that existed in a pre-Soviet era with modern day practices. The argument is that religious clerics who are trained in Middle Eastern countries regard the popular forms of Islam as leftovers of shamanic pagan rituals, thus getting the "orthodox" version of Islam. Nonetheless, as the author maintains, people following the popular forms of Islam consider this as a part of their heritage as these traditions come from the Sufi branch of Islam with a thousand-year history. As Kara explains, those people are faithful Muslims that pray five times a day and follow the path of their ancestors. These works demonstrate that initial arguments that were centered around Islamic fundamentalism failed to acknowledge the diversity of Islam in Central Asia. For the literature, this is a positive development, as deeper analyzes allows for a more nuanced understanding of the context.

An analysis of contemporary trends in governing religion also demonstrates the tendency to promote secularism. Scholars provide various interpretations for this policy. For example, Tatari and Shaykhutdinov (2010) argue that the explanation for the secularist turn is threefold. First of all, they point at the authoritarian nature of the regime; secondly, they argue that this is because of institutional legacy, and lastly, this allows the political leaders to prevent opposition from coming to a power. In fact, all three explanations are in line with the idea that Central Asian states pursue Soviet-style policies. Lemon and Thibault (2018) agree that the counter-terrorist secular narrative provides elites with a weapon against the Islamic opposition. Using the case of Tajikistan, they demonstrate how government imposes particular secular way of life on people. In addition, the imposed worldview promotes the ideas of loyalty to state and it helps the government to legitimize itself.

Kuru (2007) provides a theoretical framework, which divides secularism into two groups: passive and assertive. The first group is exemplified by the US, where the country does not interfere in religion in any way. The second group, though, interferes in religious affairs, for example, it can ban some public attributes of religion like headscarves or ban one religious movement or another. In doing so, the states of this group impose a secular lifestyle on its citizens, moving the religious attributes away from a public life. In fact, among these two groups the latter one prevails, which means that much more countries define their secularism in terms of driving away public demonstrations of religious belonging. As Fox (2011) demonstrates, most states do not follow their Constitutional separation of religion and state and interfere in religious affairs. In a previous work, he also argued that the US was the only state that avoided interfering in religion at state level (Fox 2006).

In addition to ascribing secularism, there are many other ways in which the governments manage religion. Bissenova (2016) demonstrates that Kazakhstani authorities use the Friday sermons in the Central Mosque to promote the "right way" of being Muslim.

Another powerful tool at government's disposal is the public discourse. In addition, earlier works noted that the governments in Central Asia made their legislation on religion increasingly harsh over time (Peyrouse 2007). The elites in Kazakhstan use it to promote a certain version of Islam that they deem appropriate for the state, for instance Sufi traditions (Jessa 2006). The author describes the movement called Aq Jol that originated after the collapse of the USSR in Kazakhstan in 1997 and puts this movement in the broader context of religious revival in the region. The author interprets this as a phenomenon of "rediscovered tradition" (ibid. 368). Omelicheva (2016a) also argues that in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan leaders used three types of discourse on religion. First, they use the rhetoric of national religion to emphasize their nationality and support for that, the rhetoric of radical Islam to rationalize authoritarian measures, and moderate rhetoric to demonstrate their belonging to modern culture. One other aspect of religious politics in Kazakhstan is the securitization of religion, because the national security rhetoric allows the governments to the law on religion (Omelicheva 2011).

It is also important to mention that religion is not only working in top-down vector, but it comfortably operates on the ground levels. Rasanayagam (2006) argues that the state is not the sole actor shaping the religious environment in the state and he brings the idea of the atmosphere of "everyday vulnerability", which is though generated by the state, creates an environment in which religious views other than those officially endorsed are getting sanctioned. But, he demonstrates that despite the strict control of religion, various sources of religious knowledge appear and people trust them. He later develops this idea in his own book. There he argues that (Rasanayagam 2011) despite the fact that the government is imposing a certain view of Islam on the population and is very strict about religious practices, people are able to develop their own understanding of Islam that is different from official discourse and sometimes even condemned by official clergy. The government uses the history of Sufi tradition by restoring the shrines and claiming the "Uzbekness" of this historical heritage to

strictly control religious emotions of the people. In contrast to the official discourse, people follow the tradition of baksi and healing practices, thus discovering other ways of being Muslim. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the strategy of imposing some religious beliefs or highlighting some religious doctrines over another does not necessarily mean that this will have a necessary effect.

Mass media and Public Opinion

Scholars agree on the idea that autocrats have control over media in their states, this is necessary for the regime. However, the effectiveness of this control is evaluated differently. In addition, scholars research the various ways in which elites use media as an instrument of control of the public opinion. One of the most influential studies looks at the effectiveness of media as a source of creating a popular support for the authoritarian regime in the case of Brazil during the military dictatorship (Geddes and Zaller 1989). They conclude that political awareness is the key, because if a person is exposed to media and is not politically aware, she has a higher probability to support the regime, while the person with the same exposure, but with a high political awareness would be critical to the regime. Stein (2012) follows this analysis to demonstrate that after the media in Brazil was liberated in 1974-1979 and 1979-1985 it started to critically cover the regime, people gave up the support that they previously had. Still, the level of acceptance of the messages depends on both the person's probability to be exposed to the media and the ability to critically evaluate the information. Kennedy (2009) uses the same model to explain the high support for the Communist Party in China. He argues that the difference in education between urban and rural citizens has a high effect on their support of the party. Stockman and Gallagher (2011) analyze public support in China, using the message that the government supports workers in legislation. They found out that this

message in the media successfully reassures people's participation in the law-making arrangement.

Another widespread idea among scholars studying the authoritarian control of public opinion is that when autocrats use media to legitimize their regime, their rule tends to be longer (Gerschewski 2013, Lewis 2016, Omelicheva 2016a, Walker and Orttung 2014). Coercion and cooptation are very important tools of an authoritarian regime, however, without the legitimization it is difficult to sustain the regime for a long period of time (Gerschewski 2013). Walker and Orttung (2014) demonstrate that controlled media not only praise the regime but also discredit the opposition. One of the ways to legitimize the regime is the Presidential discourse, as it was the case in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (Omelicheva 2016b). According to this argument, the Presidents in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were able to set the definitions of legitimate power and then convince their citizens that they abide with these definitions. For example, the Kazakhstani President usually emphasizes the progress that has been done since the 1990s, when the country was very poor, and demonstrates that Kazakhstan received the international recognition for these efforts (ibid., 7). Lewis (2016) researching the aftermath of Zhanaozen events in Kazakhstan demonstrate that the government not only controls the conventional media like news agencies, but also seemingly independent blogs. For autocracies, this kind of political manipulation of the public opinion is a routine, because they have to legitimize the regime on an every-day basis either using media or by constructing various national symbols (Matveeva 2009).

Schatz (2009) argues that the Kazakhstani government is very capable of using the media to control public opinion, which makes it much more resilient than the Kyrgyzstani. According to this argument, the ability of the former to use the information flow to its own benefit and preemptively constructing the narratives helped the elites to avoid the scenario that happened in Kyrgyzstan, during which political leadership lost their power. One example of

such success is the narrative of democratization that was used by the elites, though there was never a true attempt to democratize (ibid., 211). The another example is the skillful presidential campaign in Kazakhstan in 2005, during which the authorities were able not only to discredit the opposition, but also to cope with the expected Western criticism (ibid., 212.)

In a subsequent study, Schatz and Maltseva (2012) demonstrate how the Kazakhstani government is able to set the agenda in three cases: OSCE, global financial crisis, and Rakhatgate. The authors demonstrate how the elites were able to manipulate the informational flows, so that criticism would turn to their benefit, for instance, turning the accusations in human rights violation into the rhetoric of democratization. The authors conclude that the messages in the media are in line with the public opinion about the issues, which demonstrates that the campaigns were successful.

The impact of media on the way people perceive various ideas and events is studied in the framing theory. The first and the most influential work in this area was published by Goffman (1974), where he argued that people perceive the information through primary frameworks, which can be either natural or social. Natural frameworks are understood literally at first being meaningless, but social frameworks convey the meaning to them.

Scholarly works discuss the way people's perception can be affected in various ways. In an effort to put together various works in the field Entman (1993) provided a common definition for framing, arguing that it is a way to make some ordinary issues more salient in a certain way. Following that work, Scheufele (1999) provided a theoretical framework for the research that differentiated between media framing and individual framing. The function of media frames is to turn meaningless events into meaningful, whereas individual frames are the way people interpret the information. In this regard, he proposes to treat those differently when either of two types of frames serve as independent or dependent variable.

Scholars who study media framing apply it to various questions. For instance, Brewer, Graf, and Willnat (2003) studied the effect of media framing on people's attitude to foreign countries. They found out that when people are given the information about the foreign country together with some issue, they tended to associate this issue with that country. Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) conducted an experiment, where one group received a positively framed messages about Ku Klux Clan rally, they were said that this is an issue of free speech. While the other received a negatively framed message about the same event, they were told that this is a public order disruption. As a result, the first group had more positive attitude towards Klan that the second group. Smith and Petty (1996) had a similar study that, but they chose the persuasiveness as a dependent variable. They found out that the both negatively and positively framed message may be persuasive, if a person expects a different type of message before being imposed by a treatment. Schatz and Levine (2010) tested the effect of the person on the persuasiveness of the frame. They provided the same message to the participants of the experiment, but attributing that message to various persons to various groups. They found out the strong results for the effect of the identity of the speaker on the perception of people.

To conclude, the scholarly literature on religion in Central Asia evolved from regarding the region as a potentially fertile place for radical recruitment to a more nuanced understanding of religious behavior in the region. Scholars realized that there are many various interpretations of Islam in the region, and despite the fact that governments instrumentalize religion to their own benefits and try to impose certain versions of Islam, people still use various sources of religious knowledge. In addition, scholars were able to deconstruct the myth that the Soviets were able to suppress Islam, arguing that at most they could impose secular understanding of religion. Academics discuss various sources of restrictive policies on religion. First, this could be a remnant of Soviet suspicion on religion and desire to control it through subordinate

institutions. Second, this is the case of creating a danger out of nothing in order to legitimize the securitization. Third, the scholarly works and consecutive policy recommendations that focused on the security issues might have affected the policies of new governments. However, looking at the broader context of state interference in religious affairs gives the understanding that internationally almost all the states practice interference policies even if their constitution says they do not.

In addition, the literature review demonstrated that the governments around the world feel comfortable manipulating public opinion using media. In fact, the longevity of the regime depends on its ability to use the propaganda. Some of the works like Shatz (2009) and Schatz and Maltseva (2012) provided clear mechanisms how the Kazakh government masterfully applied the propaganda to its own benefit. The framing literature presents various arguments demonstrating that the way an event is presented to the audience can greatly affect their perception of this event.

Despite the fact that that the Kazakhstani government uses the media to promote certain propagandistic messages, it is unclear to what extent this is successful. Moreover, existing studies on governing religion do not adequately address the idea of public opinion manipulation using the media. They discuss various other tools, yet there is no demonstration of particular mechanisms of control of religion in the media. For this reason, I am planning to fill this gap in my thesis project with a particular emphasis on framing.

Chapter 3: Theory: soft authoritarianism and framing

Media in Kazakhstan is not free. According to the 2017 freedom of the press report produced by Freedom house, Kazakhstan has a score of 85 out of 100, where 100 is the least free (Freedom of the Press 2017). Reporters without borders rate Kazakhstani media freedom as 158th in the global ranking out of 180 countries, with North Korea being 180th ("2018 World Press Freedom Index | Reporters Without Borders" 2018). Previous studies, in particular by Schatz (2009) and by Schatz and Maltseva (2012) demonstrate how the government uses the media to control and manipulate the public opinion on various issues. In my thesis project, I am approaching a similar strategy to explore the mechanisms through which the government controls the media agenda on religion in Kazakhstan. Additionally, I am going to use the framing theory to analyze the effectiveness of the messages. The Framing theory investigates how the presentation of an event in various forms affects a person's perception. This will allow me to discover whether the governmental control of religion using the media is successful or not.

I define the Kazakhstani regime as soft authoritarian. Unlike hard authoritarianism that relies only on brutal force, soft authoritarianism mostly relies on other measures such as manipulation of media messages. Since I partially follow Schatz's (2009) strategy to examine the propaganda, I will use his definition of soft authoritarianism. According to him, the soft authoritarian government rests on five pillars: (1) it has the core of "true believers", (2) it is able to mobilize outside this core using promises or threats, (3) it controls opposition by irritating or force, (4) it successfully controls the information, (5) it is good at using propaganda preemptively (Schatz 2009, 206-207). The ability to convince the true believers using in the legitimacy of its actions using the media flows and simultaneously beat the opposition, again legitimizing its actions or even concealing them using successful management of information is what truly makes up the successful soft authoritarian regime.

As it was demonstrated in the literature review, there is an agreement between the scholars studying religion in the region that the Soviet past strongly affects the religious policies undertaken now. I build my theory on this understanding of the dynamics of religious policies in Kazakhstan. The legacy of the Soviet Union greatly affects the elites' perception of religion, since they were a part of the Soviet bureaucracy and they were to a great degree affected by the governmental narrative. For this reason, post-Soviet governments continue to aggressively promote secularism. In 2017, president Nazarbayev approved a document that outlines the strategy on religious policies for the years 2017-2020, which indicates that the government should maintain its secularism. This reflects Kuru's (2007) assertive secularism framework, as there are lines that argue the necessity to promote secular nature of the state ("Ob Utverjdenii Koncepcii Gosudarstvennoi Politiki V Religioznoi Sfere V Respublike Kazakhstan Na 2017 – 2020 Gody – IPS "Adilet" 2017). This understanding of secularism differs from the idea that the government should be separated from religion. Rather, this means that religion should play a marginal role in people's public life.

One important aspect of the Soviet legacy is the fact that the governments heavily rely on propaganda. Even the word propaganda has a Russian etymology. The Soviet Union used propaganda to control the public opinion on many issues (Lasswell 1951). Propaganda served as a universal tool, it could not only help to convert people into atheism (Stone 2008), but also serve as a tool of foreign policy (Hazan 1976, Barghoorn 2015). As it was discussed before, the governments need to control the media in order to legitimize their actions. The authorities in Kazakhstan may follow the same strategy to legitimize the harshening of the legislation on religion and ideally make people non-religious.

At the same time, the government is pragmatic and it understands that it is impossible to make everyone non-religious. There are various mechanisms of state control of religion. The state controls religion by harshening the legislation (Omelicheva 2011), commanding religious

education, setting the agenda of sermons (Bissenova 2016), and using the media to manipulate public opinion. In addition, the authorities employ a strategy that is similar to the one used by the Soviet Union, which created the Spiritual Muslim Board of Central Asia (SADUM) (Thibault 2018, 47). Kazakhstan controls religious practice through the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan (SAMK). This institution serves as an agency that includes all important Muslim figures. Legally, one cannot be an imam in the mosque, without being a part of the SAMK. The SAMK proclaims itself as part of the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence and it endorses Hanafism.

However, not all Muslims in Kazakhstan accept the legitimacy of SAMK. There is an Islamic religious movement, known as Salafism, which advocates the religious purification and the lifestyle of the first followers of Islam (Wiktorowicz 2006). Some of the followers of Salafism even accuse SAMK to not abide with the true Islam that they advocate. The government has a great degree of mistrust towards Salafism. After the 2016 Aktobe terrorist attacks, president Nazarbayev publicly claimed that followers of Salafism were responsible for this (Kaipova 2016). In addition, the terrorist attack in Almaty was also presumably blamed on the follower of Salafism (Zubov 2016). Apart from this, one of the main reasons of governmental mistrust towards the Salafism is that followers of Salafism lie beyond the governmental control of religion. It is unclear why Salafism is not legally banned if this is considered as a threat to national security. To some extent, it could be the case that the government is not risking to ban this religious movement before it gains public support. This accords with the logic of legitimizing governmental policies, particularly sensitive ones. As it was argued above, the soft authoritarian states can manage the information preemptively, so in this case the propaganda against the Salafism could be the preparation of this potential ban.

For this reason, I argue that the government uses the media to promote a negative image of Salafism. At the same time, the government promotes a positive image of Hanafism

endorsed by SAMK. This is because the authorities are able control SAMK, so they are interested in supporting this institution in the struggle against Salafism. The preliminary analysis demonstrates that there are several different messages in the media that portray Salafism in a negative light. At the same time, there is only one general message that supports Hanafism. This accords with the logic that the authorities are very anxious about Salafism, yet at the same time are reluctant to promote Hanafism, because they favor assertive secularist strategies at first place.

This is in line with my argument because the government emphasizes secular messages. I argue that the governmental use of media in control of religion consists of promoting positive messages about state secularism and Hanafism, as well as negative messages of Salafism. I theorize that this is a part of state's broader nation-building strategy, in which the government underlines the "Kazakhness" and which intensified in the recent years. The government ascribes Kazakh identity to various symbols, including religion. According to this logic, there cannot be just an Islam, it should be a Kazakh Islam. For this, promoting only one version of Islam and describing it as something inherent, primordial to Kazakhs is a necessary step in nation-building.

However, since the government is assertively secular, it could be logically inferred that it does not promote religion. Instead, it promotes the messages about the positive effects of secularism and will try to convince people that they are living in a solid secular state. For this reason, there cannot be a promotion of positive message about secularism and Hanafism together in an equal form. In its place, the authorities will overwhelmingly use the messages that promote secularism and only marginally mention Hanafism, since they understand that they cannot secularize everyone. As it was stated, there are already other ways to control religion that are being used, like the control of Friday sermons. Therefore, it is reasonable to

expect only the marginal promotion of Hanafism in order to appeal for certain public as a way of controlling religion.

As I demonstrated in the literature review, various research on framing focused on different parts of the framing: positive and negative framing of the same issue (Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley 1997), the person sending the message (Schatz and Levine 2010), and the effect of positive and negative framing on the effectiveness of persuasion (Smith and Petty 1996). Following this kind of analysis, I want to research whether there is an effect of media message on the public perception of religion. As the literature on control of public opinion demonstrated that there is indeed an effect of governmental propaganda, I theorize that the messages that I am going to test will indeed have an effect on people's comprehension of religion. From the discussion above it follows that there are various messages on Salafism and various messages on secularism and Hanafism. Moreover, the messages on Salafism are negative, while the latter two topics are covered positively. Following Scheufele's (1999) propositions of differentiating between the media frames and individual frames, this research focuses on the media frames, and treats them as an independent variable. He also proposes that in this kind of analysis the research should focus on how different types of framing affect "audience's perception of certain issues" (ibid., 108). I argue that the differences in the type of article framing, i.e. whether they are positive and negative, and the difference in the message should give the different results on the perception of religion.

In the context of the literature on religion discussed in the previous part, I see myself in the school of institutional approach to the study of religion. This theory treats religion as a social concept, the views on which can be manipulated by framing it in various ways. Goffman argued that social frameworks convey the meaning to natural primary frameworks, where an object is meaningless to a person or it is understood literally depending on the type of object. Using the language of Goffman (1974) the views on religion can be expressed as a natural

primary framework, meaningless in its own sense, because it is an abstract notion. This research contributes to the theory with this understanding of religion. However, people's perception of religion changes in accordance with the information they receive through social frameworks. In the context of political science, propaganda is the way to frame messages, so it acts as a social framework that provides the meaning to natural primary frameworks, like views on religion in this case. This research studies the effect of media as this kind of social framework.

To conclude, in this part I presented the theory of the dissertation. I argued that media in Kazakhstan is not free and that this is a feature of the soft authoritarian state to which Kazakhstan belongs. The legacy of the Soviet Union affects not only the authorities' negative attitude towards religion, but also the way they are dealing with this. I claimed that they are using propaganda to secularize people, a strategy very similar to the one that was used in the Soviet Union. In addition, the government is tightly controlling the religious life of the citizens by controlling the SAMK, religious education and even religious sermons. However, followers of the religious group known as Salafism do not belong to SAMK and in this case the government feels that it can use another strategy, namely the propaganda via media. In addition, the government blames the followers of this religious movement to be responsible for terrorist attacks that happened in 2016, so it is the indication of the threat. For this reason, the government promotes negative images of Salafism and its followers, while promoting a positive image of secularism and Hanafism. This is called framing of the message. However, the positive propaganda needs to say more about secularism than about Hanafism, because the government wants to secularize people and abstains from promoting any religion. Finally, I theorized that the type of the message frame will affect the way it accepted by the people. I am going to test these proposition in the next chapters of this work.

Chapter 4: Media Analysis: framing Islam

Introduction

Today, mass media is the most important channel of state propaganda. Every day people watch, hear, and read news from various sources. Whoever controls those sources, controls the messages, and in authoritarian states, where the government is very strong, it is usually the regime that controls these sources. This is because legitimacy is a key ingredient in staying in power, and propaganda is a great tool to acquire legitimacy (among others Matveeva 2009, Shatz 2009, Walker and Orttung 2014).

In this chapter I will test the propositions of my theory regarding the policies of the government on using media as a tool of propaganda. In particular, I will analyze the messages that are being published on web news portals and since the media in Kazakhstan is not free it is fair to assume that those websites are following the governmental orientations. My theory proposes that since Kazakhstani authorities represent a form of an assertive secularist regime, the government is inclined to aggressively impose secularism to people, so the messages in the media should reflect this tendency.

In addition, the government tries to discredit Islamic fundamentalism, known today as Salafism (Wiktorowicz 2006). This is occurring because the government sees a threat in this branch of Islam. After the 2016 terrorist attacks in Kazakhstan, the president of the country openly blamed the followers of this religious movement to be responsible for the attack in Aktobe (Kaipova 2016). Another reason is that followers of Salafism generally do not accept the legitimacy of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan (SAMK), the official body responsible for Islamic affairs in the state (Bissenova 2016, 213). Due to that, the government feels that unlike SAMK, it cannot control Salafism, so the popularity of this religious movement is a threat. Finally, the Kazakhstani government is in the process of strengthening the nation-building efforts, so a foreign fundamentalist Islamic group is a threat

for the goals of this policy. Due to all these reasons, my theory predicted that media will reflect the governmental mistrust towards Salafism, which are revealed in the attempts to discredit this religious movement.

This chapter provides the analysis of the six web news portals in both Kazakh and Russian languages. It will present the hypotheses I built on my theory and test them using qualitative media analysis. First of all, I will demonstrate the methodology of my work in this analysis. This is going to be followed by the results section, where I will present the evidence for my hypotheses and statistics on news articles collected across the six web news portals. In addition, this part will discuss the dynamics of news coverage year to year and will also talk over the special and interesting cases that I was able to find during the data collection. After the results part, I will shortly discuss the place of these findings in my greater work and demonstrate the importance of these findings. The chapter will end with a conclusion, where I will summarize the key points and provide the transition to the next chapter.

Methodology

I decided to investigate news outlets in both Kazakh and Russian languages. For this reason, I analyzed three of the most popular Kazakhstani online news agencies in Russian and three in Kazakh. This is because Kazakhstan is a bilingual country and some people read the news in Kazakh, whereas others do it in Russian. In this effort, I am covering both languages to account for this important matter.

For this reason, I approached various ratings that provide the statistics on the number of visitors. There are two ratings that I was able to find: zero.kz and liveinternet.ru. I sorted the websites by the number of visitors from Kazakhstan for the last 30 and 31 days respectively and chose the category of media. Among the two aforementioned websites, I decided to use the statistics by liveinternet.ru, because zero.kz does not have the statistics for nur.kz and

tengrinews.kz, which are one of the most popular websites regardless of the category on the other website. Three of the most visited websites, according to liveinternet.ru are nur.kz, tengrinews.kz and zakon.kz ("Liveinternet: Site Rating" 2018). The number of visitors for the last 31 days are 6 137 641, 4 874 277, and 4 473 853 respectively for those three websites. The metrics were accessed in December 1, 2018. These figures demonstrate the overall amount of visitors and not the number of unique visitors.

The Kazakh news websites were far more difficult to choose. Neither liveinternet.ru, nor zero.kz have precise statistics on the websites that publish news in Kazakh only or mainly in Kazakh. The main obstacle was that some of the most prominent of such websites for some reasons do not put any counters to calculate the number of visitors. In the absence of such objective information, I decided to choose the sources based on my experience of their popularity. As a result, I chose three news websites: abai.kz, qazaquni.kz, and qamshy.kz.

I am analyzing the contents of the media news that talk about Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism to identify the main messages. I decided to cover the period beginning from January 2015 as the time before the 2016 Aktobe and Almaty terrorist attacks. On 5th June 2016 in Aktobe a group of people attacked a gun store, captured a bus and then assaulted the military base (Kasenova 2016). Some terrorists were eliminated and others were caught after the events. Later this year, on July 18 in Almaty one individual committed an attack on police forces and was captured (Zubov 2016). The time period will allow me to analyze whether there is a change in media coverage regarding these topics. The analysis ends with December 2018, thus, analyzing the media coverage for a period of 4 years or 48 months. This time spectrum will not only help me to see whether there is a change of rhetoric before and after terrorist attacks, but also will allow to build a strong comprehensive understanding of the topic.

To collect the data, I created a table with variables such as topic, negative/positive message, type of message (one of the five discussed below), language, and date. I am putting

the articles that contain the information on Salafism or followers of this religious movements in the "Salafism" topic. Then, based on the content of the message, I identify the type message of the news article. The same applies to Hanafism. When it comes to the messages on secularism, I analyze the news articles on religion, and when I see that it endorses the secularism in Kazakhstan, I code its topic as secularism.

During the analysis, I am organizing all the news into three groups, based on the topic: Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism. After that, I am analyzing the contents of the messages and classify type of messages according to the text in the article and the main idea I find in them. My preliminary analysis, which was a necessary step for my next, quantitative part, demonstrates that there are three negative messages regarding Salafism and one message each for Hanafism and secularism. Three negative messages of Salafism are: (1) Followers of Salafism are morally bad people, (2) Salafism is a threat to national security, (3) Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs. Two messages regarding Hanafism and secularism are: Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs, Kazakhstan is a secular state. In the type of message column, I coded the news in the following way:

- Followers of Salafism are morally bad people as 1

- Salafism is a threat to national security as 2

- Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs as 3

- Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs as 4

- Kazakhstan is a secular state as 5

- If the news article contained a different type of message that does not belong to either of the listed categories as 0

As my theory attributes Kazakhstan to be an assertive secularist state, I expect that there will be more positive messages on secularism than on Hanafism. The government is not interested in promoting Hanafism itself, even if the government is confident that it is able

control followers of Hanafism through the SAMK. Rather, it can be occasionally used as a tool against Salafism, which is not under control and which is not seen as Kazakh Islam. From this I derive my first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: There are more articles with positive messages on secularism than on Hanafism.

Since I am analyzing the articles in both Russian and Kazakh it would be interesting to see in which terms they might differ. In fact, I expect that there definitely will be a difference in prioritizing the coverage of some topics over another. This leads me to the second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The articles on Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism in Russian language stress different topics than they do in Kazakh language.

That being discussed, I have to acknowledge that my way of analyzing the news have some obvious and latent limitations. The obvious limitation is that I can only analyze a portion of the media. First of all, I am limiting myself to only news platforms in internet, dismissing the TV, radio, and newspapers. Secondly, I am investigating only some of the websites, albeit the most popular ones. However, these limitations can be explained by the fact that I lack either a team of assistants that could collect the data for me or time to collect everything by myself only. Moreover, since I collect the news from the most popular sources, it is safe to assume that they cover most important topics and other sources replicate them. In addition, the most important media messages appear in all type of news, be it TV, radio, newspapers, or internet. Thus, this limitation should not significantly affect the research results. The latent limitation is the fact that I have to use imperfect search engines to collect the data using keywords. I am using either "news search" by Yandex or the site search. This is because manual collection of news would again require either a team of assistants or too much time of work. Due to this

limitation, I may overlook some news. However, it still should give me a generalizable broad picture of media coverage.

Results

The media analyses of the six sources for the period of four years from 2015 to 2018 allowed me to collect 393 articles. Table 1 demonstrates the number of collected news articles with regards to the source and the language of the source. As you can see, one of the first pattern is that the number of news in Russian language is way higher than the number of news in Kazakh language. I think the difference is due to overall higher demand for the Russian-language news across the country. Moreover, the news in Russian language may be accessed not only by the people in Kazakhstan, but also by people in other post-Soviet countries as well, since they are more likely to speak and understand Russian language than Kazakh.

Table 1: The distribution of articles by source

Language	Source	Number of articles
Kazakh	Abai	46
	Qamshy	65
	Qazaq uni	47
	Total	158
Russian	Nur.kz	36
	Tengrinews	48
	Zakon	151
	Total	235
Grand Total		393

The careful analysis of the news in the dataset allowed me to construct an overall picture of the media propaganda on religion. The general trend is that there is much more news with a negative message on Salafism than there are positive messages on Hanafism and secularism combined. The table 2 demonstrates the systematic analysis of this finding.

Table 2: The distribution of articles by topic and year

Topic	Message	Year				Grand Total
		2015	2016	2017	2018	
Hanafism	Negative	1	1			2
	Positive	6	8	16	3	33
Salafism	Negative	10	147	62	29	248
	Positive		5			5
Secularism	Negative			1		1
	Positive	11	20	46	27	104
Grand Total		28	181	125	59	393

There are 248 negative articles on Salafism in total for a period of four years. Compare it with just 96 positive news on secularism and 33 positive articles on Hanafism. Combined, this gives just 129 news, which is almost twice less than the number of news on Salafism. I think that this is an interesting finding as it demonstrates the prevalence of negative propaganda over a positive one. In addition, there are two interesting points in this analysis that deserve a wider discussion.

First of all, there are almost no news on the topic that I am analyzing in 2015, while 2016 is the peak year of the number of articles devoted to the three topics. This number jumps from 28 to incredible 181 in just one year, and then slowly diminishes over the next two years. The reason for such a boost in the number of articles is obvious, and it comes from the 2016 terrorist attacks in Aktobe, after which president Nazarbayev claimed that the attack was carried out by the followers of the religious movement knows as Salafism (Kaipova 2016). In addition, there was a terrorist attack in Almaty (Tengrinews.kz 2016). At the same time this attack is not being linked to the followers of Salafism as it was in the case of Aktobe, though

sometimes it is discussed in this framework. In addition, in 2017 there was an active discussion of the new law on religion, which has not been adopted and this may explain the greater number of articles in that year compared to the following one. In 2018 there was no trigger for a massive media coverage of religious issues as it was in the previous years.

Secondly, there are some news that go right against my logic that Salafism is covered only negatively, while Hanafism and secularism deserve only positive coverage in the media. Though their very limited amount demonstrates that they are rather an exception of a rule. Table 2 demonstrates that there are 5 news with positive message on Salafism, 2 news with negative messages on Hanafism and 1 article that has a negative depiction of secularism in the country. I will discuss each of this outlier articles in a greater length at the end of the results part.

Going back to my hypotheses, the first one stated that:

Hypothesis 1: There are more articles with positive message on secularism than on Hanafism.

Clearly, the table demonstrates that this hypothesis is fully supported. The overall number of positive news on secularism is 104, while there are only 33 news with positive coverage of Hanafism. The articles tend to stress the importance of secularism in the country and usually the type message is clearly identifiable, as the articles give right away sentences like: "Kazakhstan is a secular state." Thus, the fact that Kazakhstani people are traditional followers of Islam, in this case particularly Hanafi school of jurisprudence, is stressed, but it is stressed at the very much lower rate than the other messages.

This is not entirely novel. Omelicheva (2016) studied the discourse of Kazakhstani and Uzbekistani leaders on Islam for the period between 1992 and 2007 and identified key categories of themes. According to her findings, the most used propaganda narrative in Kazakhstan was the demonstration of Islam as a threat, this narrative was used around 400

times. The second one was the narrative that Kazakhstan is cooperating with Muslim states that appeared almost 200 times, while in Uzbekistan the second popular message was depicting Islam in the narrative on counterterrorism. The narrative of traditional Islam was used around 100 times; thus the government sees the importance of demonstrating Islam is traditional to Kazakhs. At the same time, though, this was not the main narrative regarding the Islam as the threat narrative appeared almost four times more often. This is similar to my findings that negative messages are used more often, and that the authorities not promoting Islam, even Hanafi branch, but instead tend to promote other messages.

Moreover, my main assumption that the media narratives are guided by the authorities, as media is not free in Kazakhstan, this demonstrates the rightness of my initial argument. The results of my analysis demonstrate that indeed the government is interested in promoting and maintaining the secular nature of the state, and that it does so in an assertive way. The government uses the media narrative on Hanafism as a traditional way of practicing Islam to counter Salafism, the latter not being under strict governmental control. While, as it was discussed above, the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence is part of the official doctrine of SAMK, and the authorities are able to intervene and control the institution, which means that they can control followers of Hanafi branch of Islam. The discussion above regarding the huge number of negative news on Salafism demonstrate that the government is indeed worried about this religious movement.

The second hypothesis predicted the different nature of articles in two different languages, precisely, I claimed that:

Hypothesis 2: The articles on Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism in Russian language stress different topics than they do in Kazakh language.

As I described in the methodology part, I coded the type of message as 1,2,3,4,5 or 0 with regards to the central message of the article:

- Followers of Salafism are morally bad people as 1

- Salafism is a threat to national security as 2

- Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs as 3

- Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs as 4

- Kazakhstan is a secular state as 5

- If the news article contained a different type of message and does not belong to either of listed category as 0

Table 3 contains a total of 393 articles coded in this way and it also demonstrates the language of the article collected in the dataset. In addition to the numerical table, I provide a table 4 with percentages, this is because the total number of Russian and Kazakh news differ very much, and the percentage table can better demonstrate the difference with regards to the overall number of news in each lingual category. The percentages are calculated to the total number of articles within a lingual category, so that, for example, the number 29.36% in the "Kazakhstan is a secular state" message in the Russian articles column demonstrates the number of the articles in this message with regards to the total number of articles in Russian language.

Table 3: The distribution of articles by message type and language

		Language		
Type of message	Message	Kaz	Rus	Total
Does not belong to the either of listed category	Negative	16	22	38
	Positive	3	8	11
Followers of Salafism are morally bad people	Negative	15	26	41
Salafism is a threat to national security	Negative	60	84	144
Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs	Negative	18	10	28
Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs	Positive	17	16	33
Kazakhstan is a secular state	Positive	29	69	98
	Total	158	235	393

Table 4: Percentage wise distribution of Table 3

Type of message	Message	Kaz	Rus
Does not belong to the either of listed category	Negative	10.13%	9.36%
	Positive	1.90%	3.40%
Followers of Salafism are morally bad people	Negative	9.49%	11.06%
Salafism is a threat to national security	Negative	37.97%	35.74%
Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs	Negative	11.39%	4.26%
Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs	Positive	10.76%	6.81%
Kazakhstan is a secular state	Positive	18.35%	29.36%
	Total	100.00%	100.00%

The messages 1 and 2 are almost identically represented within their language categories. The "followers of Salafism are morally bad people" message appeared 15 times in Kazakh news and 26 times in Russian, but percentage wise the numbers are very close to each other, 9.49% and 11.06% respectively. The same applies to "Salafism is a threat to national security" message that concerned 37.97% of Kazakh and 35.74% of Russian articles. The difference appears when it comes to the third message, "Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs" appeared 18 times in Kazakh media and 10 times in Russian, but in percentages the difference is striking 11.39% against 4.26%. The "Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs" message appeared 17 and 16 times in Kazakh and Russian media respectively, and in percentages this is 10.76% against 6.81%. The last message "Kazakhstan is a secular state" is used 29 times in Kazakh sources and 69 times in Russian, which is 18.35% and 29.36% in percentages respectively.

Thus, the difference in the content of the articles between sources in Russian and Kazakh languages appears in three messages: "Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs", and "Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs", and "Kazakhstan is a secular state". The one topic that unites the former two categories is an appeal to being a Kazakh. This makes sense, because in both cases there were more messages of these sorts in Kazakh language news, so the readers may be expected to be more patriotic than those, who read news in Russian. Since Kazakhstan is a

bilingual country, most people understand both languages, so people who read Kazakh news may do this intentionally, not because they cannot read Russian news, but because they refuse to do so. In this regard, it is logical to appeal to such feelings of the audience, thus we see the difference between the frequency of Kazakh and Russian messages in the media. From this discussion, it follows that the second hypothesis is also supported. However, the weak numerical difference slightly weakens the argument.

The difference in the "Kazakhstan is a secular state" message between Russian-language and Kazakh-language sources appears due to the previous difference discussed. In addition, in Kazakh sources, positive messages add up only to 29.11% of all messages, while Russian positive messages constitute 36,17% of all messages (disregarding those coded as 0). This, combined with the fact that, though slightly, Kazakh sources still tend to appeal more to "Kazakhness" of the readers give a wider room for Russian articles to appeal to secularism message. This is how the difference between the two message appears. The difference in the "Kazakhstan is a secular state" message supports the hypothesis 2.

In addition, it is worth to discuss the overall messages. In only 49 occasions there are news articles that lie beyond those categories that I built up. Out of remaining articles, the most used type of message was "Salafism is a threat to national security" that constituted more than third of all messages in two languages combined, 144 out of 393. This heavily contrasts with only 28 messages in "Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs" category. I coded 41 articles with the "Followers of Salafism are morally bad people" message in my dataset. The difference between the first and the third message is that the first one demonstrates Salafism overall as a threat. This confirms Omelicheva's (2016) article, where "Islam as a threat" rhetoric was the most prevalent. Unlike the first message, the third message describes not Salafism itself, but the followers of this movement, and they are depicted as having socially inappropriate behavior. I think it is logical that the government is more willing to promote the first message, as they are

more interested in people believing in the bad image of Salafism itself rather than if they started to hate all followers of Salafism, which is a potentially dangerous social issue.

I will now discuss the outlier articles. All in all, there are 8 of such articles. I will start from the articles that mention Salafism in a positive way, there are 5 such articles. The first one appeared in zakon.kz. The minister of foreign affairs argued that people make illegal actions, stating that they do for religious motives (Kovaleva 2016). He said that they knew that Salafism is an official way of practicing Islam in some Muslim countries and they respect that. A very similar article appeared at nur.kz, the only difference being that the latter mentioned Nazarbayev's claim that the Aktobe terrorists were followers of Salafism. At the same time, the title of the article of at nur.kz was more openly positive about Salafism, as it stated (translation) "Idrisov: We respect Salafism, but we will counter illegal actions." (Nur.kz 2016) Whereas the title on zakon.kz was (translation): "Idrisov: The biggest problem is that Islam is under attack." (Kovaleva 2016). In these articles, the media presented a different view on the events in the state, as they allowed to think that not all followers of Salafism are potential threat. At the same time, Nazarbayev's accusations may have been too harsh, and indeed countries that regard Salafism as their official branch of Islam may have been concerned with such accusations, so it was an important signal to send for foreign actors. In a one more positive article that appeared in abai.kz, the head of Kazakhstani Islamic channel "Asyl Arna" argued that people tend to label other people as Salafi, if they do not like them (Aljan 2016). In the remaining two articles, Kazakhstani religious expert Asylbek Izbairov questions Salafism as the reason behind Almaty terrorist attacks, arguing that the crucial factor there was the terrorist's criminal past (Zakon.kz 2016), and tries to calm people down by demonstrating that there is a difference between the peaceful branch of Salafism and the violent one, which he calls Takfirism (Zakon.kz 2016). Both of these articles appeared in 2016 few months after the terrorist attack in Aktobe. Indeed, these articles do not fall into the general trend demonstrated

above, and it is hard to find a logic in their presence. Perhaps, they could serve as a stabilizing factors at points where social hatred to Salafism went too far, but this claim is impossible to test.

The first negative article on Hanafism is just a recitation of the short verse of prominent imam, who wrote that people who become as followers of Hanafism end up being followers of Salafism (Qamshy.kz 2016). The other article described that one of the caught terrorists was the former fighter in Syria, where he fought in the squad known as "Jamaat of Abu Khanifa." (Tengrinews.kz 2015). In the last outlier article the author argues that the Constitution should state that the Kazakhstani religion is Islam, but other religions are acceptable (Ainabekov 2017). The second article on Hanafism was written in 2015, when, probably, there was no need to tackle Salafism with Hanafism. However, the other two articles are very difficult to explain with my theory, because it is abnormal to see such articles in the press.

All in all, there are only 8 articles out of 393 that do not match the positive and negative messages trend. Three of them may be explained, and other three cannot be fully explained without the inclusion of variables that I possibly did not think of. This is puzzling, but due to the fact that there are only five news that are truly unexplainable, they may be disregarded for now.

Discussion

I think that the findings are important for several reasons. First of all, one of the important goals of this study was to analyze how the government uses media to influence the public opinion in the country. This chapter demonstrates such an analysis, and as theory predicted the Kazakhstani authorities are indeed worried about Salafism. Moreover, the fact that there are much more articles on secularism than on Hanafism demonstrates that the authorities indeed favor to assert the secularism on the citizens of the state. As I discussed, it

is easy to tell that many of the articles on the latter topic are propagandistic. They usually give their message right away by proclaiming that Kazakhstan is a secular state.

In my opinion, this is the demonstration of the old-fashioned, almost Soviet style propaganda. As my theory discusses, the Soviet legacy has very much to do with the current affairs in Post-Soviet states, in particular in Kazakhstan. The Soviet Union heavily relied on propaganda to achieve various kinds of goals. In fact, propaganda was used to such a massive extent that "Glasnost", which revealed a lot of information and opened the eyes of people, was one of the crucial reasons that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union (Beissinger 2009). Kazakhstani authorities, as one of the successor states of the Soviet Union appreciates its importance, and sometimes they go back to use obvious, clear and recognizable propaganda.

Secondly, the time period that I chose to my study very well reflects the governmental shift towards adopting policies that demonize Salafism and endorse secularism. The time period starts at the year 2015, one year before terrorist attacks in Aktobe and Almaty, and the difference in the numbers of the news articles in 2015 and 2016 demonstrates the change. The overall picture also demonstrates that after 2016 the number of articles decreased. I attribute this decline to the fact that in 2016 and 2017 the authorities were going to pass a new law on religion, which they needed to support by propaganda. However, for some reason, they backed down and, because of that, the topic of religion received much less attention.

This also demonstrates the nature of the governmental actions. Despite the rise of ISIS in the mid-2010s that officially endorses a violent version of Salafism the government did not take any means to create the resistance towards this branch of Islam among the citizens of the country. Only in 2016, when terrorists hit Kazakhstan, the government decided to take action. This demonstrates the reactive and not proactive policy-making strategy of the government. This accord with previous findings that suggested that Kazakhstani authorities understate the threat coming from ISIS (Tucker 2016).

These messages were reflected in the political situation in the studied period. The salience of Salafism and the public discussion around it led to the creation of the brand new ministry in September 2016, called Ministry of Religion and Public Development (Akorda.kz 2016). The following year in April president Nazarbayev met with SAMK leaders and urged the government to ban beards and short trousers, arguing that these attributes do not belong to core tradition of Kazakh people. This proposal was due to the fact that beards and short trousers are one of the most noticeable features of the followers of Salafism (Azattyq.org 2017). In addition to that, the newly created Ministry worked on a harsher legislation on religion. For example, it included substantial fines for the demonstration of attributes of destructive religious movements (Gorbunova 2018). However, already in 2018 the salience of the Salafi threat decreased and the aforementioned Ministry was renamed the Ministry of Public Development with a department of religious affairs in it (Akorda.kz 2018). Interestingly, the law has not been adopted ever since (Toguzbayev 2019). This might be one of the reasons for a decreased number of news articles in 2018, or more probably some other reason that affected both the decrease and law being not adopted.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the results of the media analysis. I collected news articles from six web news portals, three of which were in Russian and three in Kazakh languages. This allowed me to compare and contrast the messages and determine the key differences in the narratives. In the process of data collection, I was able to collect 393 news articles, 158 of which are in Kazakh and 235 in Russian. As I suggested, this difference is probably there due to a higher demand on news in Russian than in the Kazakh language. The study covered the articles that appeared in news from January 2015 to December 2018. This time frame allowed

me to trace the difference in the number of news in a given year and the dynamics of state policy with regards to the 2016 terrorist attack as a probable trigger.

Based on my theory, I proposed two hypotheses. The first one stated that there are more articles with positive messages on secularism than on Hanafism. This was explained by the fact that Kazakhstan is an assertive secularist state, so it prioritizes narratives that aim at removing religion from the public life. The second hypothesis related to the languages and it suggested that there is a difference in the content of articles in Russian and Kazakh news articles on Salafism, Hanafism, and secularism. This is because Kazakh language and Russian language readers may perceive information differently, so some topic are more sensitive for one public than for the other.

The results confirmed both of the aforementioned hypotheses. In the first case, the difference between the articles on secularism and Hanafism was considerably large. The secularism messages amounted for as large as three times the Hanafism messages. The second hypothesis, though is somewhat weaker, is also confirmed. Percentage wise there is indeed a notable difference between in the themes of Kazakh and Russian news articles. Thus, Kazakh sources were more inclined to use messages that emphasizes the "Kazakhness" of religion. In particular, they appealed to the messages, which I categorized as "Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs", and "Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs". However, in numbers the difference was very small, because the themes at hand did not appear in the news.

In addition, the results demonstrated that the 2016 events were indeed a trigger for the policy on discrediting Salafism and endorsing secularism, since in 2015 I found a very little number of articles dedicated to the topics of this analysis. In fact, most of the articles appeared in 2016 and then there was a steady decline in the number of articles in the following years, which I attributed to declined need in propaganda, since the government decided to back down

from adopting a new law on religion. The reasons for this decision are beyond the scope of this work, but there is an intriguing correlation between these two facts.

Finally, when the mechanisms of the propaganda use are clear I am able to test its effectiveness. Analyzing this without a value judgement about the morality of the use of propaganda, students of political science have to admit that propaganda is one of the most important political techniques. The propaganda in online media discovered in this chapter will provide a basis for a statistical experiment in which I will analyze the effectiveness of this tool, albeit simplifying it to control for the differences in the text. This will be discussed in length in the next chapter of this work.

Chapter 5: Experiment: viewing religion negatively

Introduction

My theory ascribes Kazakhstan to a type of assertive secularist regime. As I described, this is a type of secularist state that instead of abstaining from interfering into religious affairs at all tries to ostracize religion, removing it from public life (Kuru 2007). This may manifest itself in a partial ban of some religions or religious movements, the prohibition of various types of religious clothing or restrictions to pray or other actions that make religious practice visible. I demonstrated that the Kazakhstani government adopted the plan to manage the religious affairs, so this is a demonstration that Kazakhstan is indeed an assertive secularist regime ("Ob Utverjdenii Koncepcii Gosudarstvennoi Politiki V Religioznoi Sfere V Respublike Kazakhstan Na 2017 – 2020 Gody – IPS "Adilet" 2017).

In addition to that, I argued that the Kazakhstani authorities are able to control the media and they use it in order to manipulate the public opinion on religion. In particular, they want to discredit the religious movement known as Salafism in the eyes of its citizens. One of the main reasons for this decision is the legacy of the Soviet Union that regarded religion as a threat and controlled all aspects of social and political life, so since the government is not able to control the followers of Salafism, it thinks that it should be discredited. This is not the case with the official Islam under the authority of Muslim administration – SAMK, because SAMK cooperates with the authorities. For example, the authorities are able to set the agenda of religious sermons in the mosques that are under the control of SAMK (Bissenova 2016).

The previous chapter allowed me to identify the frequency of the key messages that appear in online media in Kazakhstan. In this chapter I want to analyze to what extent are those messages effective in regards to altering people attitude towards Salafism. I hold the firm belief that negative messages regarding the Salafism should negatively affect people's attitude toward Salafism. However positive messages may or may not necessarily have the same impact,

because they are not discrediting Salafism, but trying to impose a certain view on people. This chapter will demonstrate whether it is the case or not.

In the beginning I will provide the methodology of my work. This part will contain the exact hypotheses that I am going to test, the description of my variables as well as the setup of the experiment. I will describe the ways I recruited the participants, the way they were randomized, and other nuances of the experimental design. In the next section I will present the results of the study. In that, I will first demonstrate whether the randomization was successful or not, meaning that I will check if the groups are similar to one another. After that I will perform the results of statistical tests of my hypotheses. This will be followed by the discussion part, where I will discuss the findings, putting it into a larger perspective, demonstrate some limitations and show the importance of the results. The chapter will end with the conclusion that will summarize the presented arguments and the results of the study.

Methodology

From my theory and media analysis, it follows that the authorities employ the strategies of media propaganda as a tool of religious control. Since I want to test the effectiveness of propaganda, in this section I will present the hypotheses, variables, and experimental design of the analysis of this chapter. I will follow the framing theory, testing how variously framed messages affect public opinion. In particular, I will test the effects of positive and negative framing identified in the previous chapter, the one that can be found in real news.

Hypotheses:

In this work, I stressed that propaganda is an important political technique, and it was demonstrated that it is indeed used in the state. This is what follows from my theory, which demonstrates that the legacy of the Soviet Union was one of the reasons that the government

is so content with this political tool. Some previous studies (Schatz 2009, Schatz and Maltseva 2012) also indicate that authorities in Kazakhstan were able to masterfully used propaganda in order to achieve the necessary results. Therefore, first of all, I will test whether the messages have any effect at all.

To take a deeper look into the question, it is possible to test the effectiveness of variously framed messages on the person's attitude toward Salafism. Previously, I divided the propaganda used by the authorities into two main groups: negatively framed and positively framed. I argued that negatively framed propaganda consists of three messages: (1) Followers of Salafism are morally bad people, (2) Salafism is a threat to national security, (3) Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs; while positively framed propaganda covers two messages: (1) Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs and (2) Kazakhstan is a secular state.

After I will analyze the overall effectiveness of propaganda, which as I predict will have an impact, I am going to analyze whether the type of message has an effect. It is important to notice that since it is propaganda against Salafism both negatively and positively framed message should have a negative impact, but the effectiveness might differ. Therefore, my second and third hypotheses apply to these variation of effectiveness:

Hypothesis 1: Negatively framed messages have a negative impact on the person's attitude toward Salafism

Hypothesis 2: Positively framed messages have a negative impact on the person's attitude toward Salafism

Variables:

Dependent variable (Y): Attitude toward Salafism

This is an ordinal variable that I will measure on the scale from 0 to 10. The question will measure the participants' attitude toward Salafism after the treatment comparing the treatment groups to control groups. This is measured using three different questions:

1. How would you feel if your new neighboring family were Salafists?

2. What would be your reaction if your close relative adopted Salafism?

3. How would you feel if your friend adopted Salafism?

The first question will appear in results as Q1 or Question 1, the second one as Q2 or Question 2, and the third one as Q3 or Question 3. After measuring this I will combine the variable into one by summing up the results.

Independent variable (X): Type of messages in the media

This is a categorical variable that consists of 6 groups. The first five groups are: (1) Followers of Salafism are morally bad people, (2) Salafism is a threat to national security, (3) Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs (4) Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs and (5) Kazakhstan is a secular state. The last (6) group is a control group message with no connection to religious issues. For each group in the list I made up a short article that is similar in the context to the ones that people truly observe in the media. To control for unexpected variables inside the articles, I wrote all of them in a similar manner. The basic skeleton was: a short introduction followed by a story regarding the particular message. All of the articles were tested in a simple pretest, in which participants were asked to read through the all texts and identify whether they are positive, negative, or they do not know. Since articles are available in both Russian and Kazakh languages, there were two groups of participants in pretest, the first one filled the questionary in Russian and the second in Kazakh. In the first group there were 10 participants, and 11 in the second group. The participants of the pretest were not invited to participate in the experiment.

Experiment:

To test my hypotheses, I designed a simple experiment using Qualtrics software. I recruited participants within Nazarbayev University using email advertisement. In particular, I was able to reach the undergraduate students of SHSS. In addition, I distributed the link to the survey on my Facebook page, which was then reposted by several of my friends. Everyone from 18 years and above were able to participate in the research. The recruitment period began on March 6 2019 and lasted until March 13. In this period, I collected the responses of the participants who used an anonymous link to participate in the survey. The software did not collect IP-addresses of the participants in order to provide the anonymity. This makes the experiment double-blinded, which reduces subjective bias of the researcher. None of the respondents were offered incentives and this was clearly stated in the consent form. In addition to that, all the instructions were provided on the consent page. It stated that people first answer demographic questions and then they are given an article to read, after which they are asked to answer the questions about religion. After the experiment, I asked whether they knew about the Salafism before the experiment and allowed an open-box answer if the participants wanted to comment on the experiment.

Before the experiment, I collected the demographic information of the participants. After that, they were automatically assigned to one of the sixth groups that contained a different message of my independent variable. The randomization was done by the Qualtrics software randomizer tool, which was programmed to evenly distribute the participants among the groups. Then, the participants were asked to answer three questions regarding Salafism, which measures my dependent variable:

1. How would you feel if your new neighboring family were Salafists?

2. What would be your reaction if your close relative adopted Salafism?

3. How would you feel if your friend adopted Salafism?

As I described above, these questions are responded on the scale from 0 to 10.

The experiment was conducted in two languages: Kazakh and Russian. Before starting the experiment, the participant could choose the language. As a result, there is a high chance that a participant took the experiment in the native language, which increases the chance that he or she understood the articles and questions very well. This, in addition to the fact that my depended variable is measured with three questions instead of one, increases the reliability of the experiment. The following table shows the way groups are allocated to the message.

Table 5: Experimental set-up

Group	Notation	Message
Group 1	**G1**	Followers of Salafism are morally bad people
Group 2	**G2**	Salafism is a threat to national security
Group 3	**G3**	Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs
Group 4	**G4**	Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs
Group 5	**G5**	Kazakhstan is a secular state
Group 6	**G6**	Control group message with no connection to religious issues.

To identify the required number of the participants in each group I ran the power analysis. The require power was set at standard 0.8 level and similarly alpha at standard 0.05. The effect size was of question here, so I consulted the literature on the effect of media. This

allowed me to identify that scholars say that the media have a significant effect on people's behavior (DellaVigna and Kaplan 2007; Islam 2008; Reeves, McKee, and Stuckler 2016). Numerous findings of natural experiments report that, for instance, voting is heavily affected by the media (Enikolopov, Petrova, and Zhuravskaya 2011, Gerber, Karlan, and Bergan 2009). Due to this, I tried to set a high effect size at the level of 0.4. The result of this test demonstrated that the minimum number of participants in each group should be equal to 15. However, I then decided to set a lower effect size of 0.3 to increase the power of the experiment, which required me to collect 25 people in each group.

Results

Overall, 183 people participated in the experiment. However, I decided to drop the responses of two categories with regards to key objectives, that is people who either (1) had less than 100 points in progress variable, i.e. did not finish the survey by clicking through all of it and (2) those who did not answer the main experimental questions. In the group (1) there were 10 observations, and only one observation in group (2). After dropping those observations, I left with 172 observations overall.

First of all, due to these issues with incomplete answers and dropped observations there was a small variation between the number of participants in each group. Table 6 describes the distribution of gender as well as the number of participants in each group.

Table 6: The distribution of participants in groups

Gender	Group						
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5	Group6	Grand Total
Female	10	9	10	6	8	7	50
Male	19	21	22	20	19	21	122
Female percent	34.48%	30.00%	31.25%	23.08%	29.63%	25.00%	29.07%
Male percent	65.52%	70.00%	68.75%	76.92%	70.37%	75.00%	70.93%
Grand Total	29	30	32	26	27	28	172

From the table you can see that the distribution of people across groups by gender is similar, so is the number of observations in each group. More demographic characteristics about the distribution of participants in groups is attached to the appendix in the original dataset.

I report the results of randomization check in Appendix. To test if the randomization was correct, I ran a pairwise T test comparing each group with each other on the number of control variables. Those variable include gender, the year in which participants were born, their nationality, religion, as well as two more questions measuring religiosity, which is the role of religion and the frequency of attending religious services. In addition, I measure the birthplace, trust to media, income, education level, highest education level of a parent, marital status and whether they knew about Salafism before the experiment. The last question is given after the treatment, but it is can be regarded as a pretreatment measure.

The results show that the randomization procedure went well. I increased the reliability of the test by additionally correcting the p values using Bonferroni adjustment. There is a methodological reason for this adjustment since I compare 6 groups to each other. In both cases, the results of the test demonstrated that randomization was very good. The only exception was that the religion variable seemed to differ between the groups, but after the adjustment this variable as well demonstrated that there is no evidence to argue that group means are statistically different from each other.

Table 7: the baseline means of demographic characteristics for each group

	Group					
Group	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5	Group6
Gender	1,344828	1,3	1,3125	1,230769	1,296296	1,25
Year born	1992,724	1992,897	1992,433	1991,692	1992	1993,038
Nationality	1,103448	1,2	1,125	1,192308	1,296296	1,107143
Religion	3,551724	3,133333	3,125	4,076923	2,481481	2,464286
Religion's role in life	3,380952	3,47619	3,571429	3,421053	3,333333	3,15
Attending religious services	3,047619	3,190476	3,285714	2,526316	3,142857	2,7
Birthplace	2,62069	2,666667	2,53125	2,538462	2,444444	2,259259
Media trust	3,310345	3,733333	3,125	3,769231	3,814815	3,107143
Income	1,793103	1,833333	2,033333	1,923077	1,923077	1,851852
Education	4	4,2	4,1875	4,192308	4,153846	4,142857
Education of parent	4,137931	3,866667	4,125	4,230769	4	3,821429
Marital status	1,758621	1,7	1,612903	1,884615	1,592593	1,785714
Prior knowledge about Salafism	1,689655	1,633333	1,625	1,769231	1,592593	1,714286

In addition to the discussion of comparability of the two samples above, I provide Table 7, which reports the baseline means of demographic characteristics for each group. From the table you can see that groups are indeed comparable, since means between the groups are similar to one another.

First of all, I combined the three questions that measured the attitude toward Salafism into one new variable. To remind my reader, Question 1 refers to the question: How would you feel if your new neighboring family were Salafists? Question 2 refers to the question: What would be your reaction if your close relative adopted Salafism? Question 3 refers to the question How would you feel if your friend adopted Salafism? The Cronbach alpha value is 0.92, which makes this action acceptable.

After that I checked normality of the distribution of the dependent variable. To check this, I used the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, which tests the Null hypothesis that my sample came from a normally distributed population. The null hypothesis of this test state that samples come from normal distribution.

Table 8: Shapiro-Wilk normality test

Group	Number of Observations	W	P-value	
Group 1	29	0.81859	0.0001833	*
Group 2	30	0.87677	0.002379	*
Group 3	32	0.92232	0.02405	*
Group 4	26	0.84031	0.0009281	*
Group 5	27	0.93183	0.07664	.
Group 6	28	0.88947	0.006542	*

* significant at alpha = 0.05

The results of the test demonstrate that in most cases we reject the null hypothesis, since our p-values are lower than alpha. This means that the results are not normally distributed.

As a result, I decided to use non-parametric Kruskall-Wallis Rank sum test of one-way analysis of variance to test the hypotheses outline in the methodology. Before that, it is necessary to test one of the main assumptions of this test, which is the homogeneity of variances of groups, each one of them being an independent sample. In order to account for this, I used two tests: Bartlett's test and Levene's test. Both of them test the Null hypothesis that all variances among groups are equal. I test this hypothesis on each of my measurements of the dependent variables separately. Table 9 reports the results of Barlett's test and Levene's test respectively.

Table 9: Homogeneity of variances tests

Test	Chi-squared/F value	Degrees of freedom	P-value
Bartlett's test	3.5603	5	0.6143
Levene's test	0.5247	5	0.7574

The P-values of both tests represented in tables above allowed me to decided that we cannot reject the Null hypothesis. Therefore, I can assume that the variances of my samples, each group being an independent one, are homogenous.

Meeting the assumption discussed above allowed me to test whether messages have any effect using Kruskall-Wallis test.

Table 10: The results of Kruskall-Wallis test

Test	Chi-squared	Degrees of freedom	P-value
Kruskall-Wallis	55.138	5	1.223e-10***

The results of the Kruskall-Wallis test are presented in Table 10. The P-values are very significant, and I reject the Null hypothesis. Therefore, the results demonstrate that propaganda has an effect on people's attitude toward Salafism, but the next hypotheses to be tested will clarify the differences between them.

My second and third hypotheses were:

Hypothesis 1: Negatively framed messages have a negative impact on the person's attitude toward Salafism

Hypothesis 2: Positively framed messages have a negative impact on the person's attitude toward Salafism

To test these hypotheses, it is enough to run a post-hoc test after first Kruskal-Wallis, so I used Dunnett's test for multiple comparisons with Bonferronni adjustment. Table 11 demonstrate the results of this test. The Null hypothesis of this test is that there is no difference between the selected groups.

Table 11: Post-hoc Dunnett's test

	Comparison	Z	P.unadj	P.adj
1	Group1-Group2	-0.7260840	4.677873e-01	1.000000e+00
2	Group1-Group3	-1.7063494	8.794304e-02	1.000000e+00
3	Group2-Group3	-0.9774325	3.283551e-01	1.000000e+00
4	Group1-Group4	-4.2464058	2.172271e-05	3.258406e-04***
5	Group2-Group4	-3.5745851	3.507838e-04	5.261756e-03**
6	Group3-Group4	-2.6868109	7.213778e-03	1.082067e-01
7	Group1-Group5	-4.6188836	3.858102e-06	5.787153e-05***
8	Group2-Group5	-3.9436685	8.024457e-05	1.203668e-03**
9	Group3-Group5	-3.0528178	2.267035e-03	3.400553e-02*
10	Group4-Group5	-0.3215735	7.477758e-01	1.000000e+00
11	Group1-Group6	-5.6753304	1.384213e-08	2.076319e-07***
12	Group2-Group6	-5.0027939	5.650534e-07	8.475800e-06***
13	Group3-Group6	-4.1201204	3.786744e-05	5.680116e-04***
14	Group4-Group6	-1.3100135	1.901913e-01	1.000000e+00
15	Group5-Group6	-0.9951878	3.196449e-01	1.000000e+00

Significance: *** at 0.001; ** at 0.01, * at 0.05

The table above demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the groups that received a negative message with the groups that received a message on secularism. Furthermore, there is a statistically significant difference between the group that received a negative "Followers of Salafism are morally bad", and "Salafism is a threat to national secuirty" message and the group that received a positive "Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs" message.

Most importantly, there is a significant adjusted p-values for the difference between groups that received a negative message and control group. Yet, adjusted p-values in case of groups 4 and 5 comparisons with control are higher than alpha, so there is no statistically significant difference.

As a result, based on the post-hoc Dunnett's test, I can reject the Null hypothesis that groups 1, 2, and 3 are equal to control group 6. However, I cannot reject the Null hypothesis that groups 4 and 5 are equal to control group 6. This means that hypothesis 1 is supported, whereas hypothesis 2 is not confirmed.

To further confirm or reject the findings I ran a multiple linear regression model. In this model I control for all the demographic characteristics. I also use control group as a reference group in coding. The results are reported in Table 12 and the average treatment effect can be also seen visually in Figure 1.
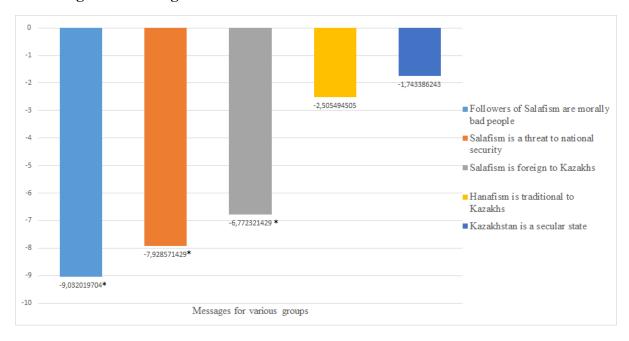
Figure 1: Average treatment effect

*Fig. 1 The effect of message on the person's attitude toward Salafism. * denotes statistically significant at p < 0.05.*

Table 12: The regression results

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)	143.43546	283.99371	0.505	0.6147
G1	-9.52770	1.74393	-5.463	4.04e-07***
G2	-9.54573	1.78628	-5.344	6.68e-07***
G3	-7.66952	1.75216	-4.377	3.20e-05***
G4	-3.20739	1.79486	-1.787	0.0773.
G5	-4.07562	1.77021	-2.302	0.0236*
Gender – male	0.23945	1.12019	0.214	0.8312
Year born	-0.06565	0.14203	-0.462	0.6450
Nationality – Russian	-1.44899	3.06462	-0.473	0.6375
Nationality – Other	2.82515	2.87765	0.982	0.3288
Religion – Orthodox Christian	0.07201	4.12284	0.017	0.9861
Religion – Protestant Christian	-0.58387	3.50573	-0.167	0.8681
Religion – Other	2.56660	2.94627	0.871	0.3860
Religion – Don't know	1.24945	1.98309	0.630	0.5302
Religion's role in life	-0.33582	0.74740	-0.449	0.6543
Attending religious services	1.12576	0.66799	1.685	0.0954.
Birthplace – Almaty	-2.04773	2.01480	-1.016	0.3122
Birth – Other	-0.11093	1.92892	-0.058	0.9543
Media trust	0.38553	0.27688	1.392	0.1672
Income	-1.04939	0.61815	-1.698	0.0930.
Education	-0.23868	1.03182	-0.231	0.8176
Education of parent	0.73310	0.73758	0.994	0.3229
Marital – Single	-1.83128	1.19935	-1.527	0.1303
Marital – Divorced	-4.53203	3.33674	-1.358	0.1778
Marital – Cohabiting	-4.98732	4.92624	-1.012	0.3140
Prior knowledge about Salafism – yes	-2.07859	1.23298	-1.686	0.0953.

Signif. codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1

Multiple R-squared: 0.4318, Adjusted R-squared: 0.2757

F-statistic: 2.766 on 25 and 91 DF, p-value: 0.0002294

The results of the regression model demonstrate that I rightly accepted hypothesis 1. This is because for all three groups with negative messages, shown as G1, G2, and G3 above the results are statistically very significant. In addition, the table demonstrates that the signs of all those variables are negative, so messages worsen a person's attitude to Salafism. In addition to that, the table shows that the results for Group 5 are also statistically significant at alpha 0.05. This last finding contradicts the main findings of the ANOVA test. To further check these results I ran the regression without control variables, as the results for randomization check demonstrated that the randomization was done very well.

Table 13: The regression without controls

	Estimate	**Std. Error**	**t value**	**Pr(>|t|)**
(Intercept)	12.9286	0.9532	13.563	< 2e-16***
G1	-9.0320	1.3364	-6.759	2.25e-10***
G2	-7.9286	1.3254	-5.982	1.31e-08***
G3	-6.7723	1.3052	-5.189	6.12e-07***
G4	-2.5055	1.3737	-1.824	0.070.
G5	-1.7434	1.3605	-1.281	0.202

Signif. codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1

Multiple R-squared: 0.3183, Adjusted R-squared: 0.2977

F-statistic: 15.5 on 5 and 166 DF, p-value: 1.678e-12

When running the regression without the control variables, the significance of Group 5 message is not verified, while messages of groups 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate the same statistically significant results. This confirms the findings of ANOVA, and I can report that there is mixed results for hypothesis 2, which is most likely not accepted.

Discussion

One of my major basis for this work is the understanding that propaganda is an important political tool. This chapter aimed to test the significance of propaganda by checking

whether the messages have an effect on people's attitude towards religion. The theoretical basis for this analysis lied in the framing theory, which argues that the way the event is presented to the audience influences the way this issue is perceived.

The previous chapter demonstrated that the authorities use media to send negative and positive messages in order to alter people's perception of religious issues. In particular, I argued that the authorities are interested to alter the view on Salafism using the negative messages on it and that they want to secularize the people in the country. However, due to the fact that they cannot secularize everyone they are trying to keep the people resilient to secularization under control using the message that Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs. This is because Hanafism is the official doctrine of Islamic jurisprudence of SAMK, which is controlled by the state. However, since the authorities do not want people to become religious, the messages on Hanafism appear much rarer and the main emphasis is made on secularism.

From this discussion, it appears that negative messages should directly negatively affect citizens' perception on Salafism. The results of the analysis in the section above demonstrate that this is the case. Indeed, the messages were able to alter citizens' views on Salafism in a negative way. This demonstrates that propaganda is indeed effective, and therefore, that the control over media is very important for political survival. This is in line with the previous literature on the subject of the logic of political survival in Kazakhstan (Schatz 2009, Schatz and Maltseva 2012).

On the other hand, both positive messages are not necessarily able to convince people that Salafism is bad, instead creating the impression that either religion is peripheral in the case of secularization message or the central role of Hanafi school as in Hanafism message. However, indirectly they can also affect people's attitude toward Salafism. Nonetheless, the results of my analysis demonstrated that this is not the case. I believe that this could demonstrate that the government uses this type of propaganda not to try to immediately change

citizen's opinion on Salafism. However, since my experiment is not testing the long-term effect of such propaganda, I cannot check this proposition.

My research does not accurately assess the difference between positive and negative propaganda, because positive propaganda in my case is not directed to alter people's perception about Salafism, but it is directed to alter people's attitude towards any religious group. For this reason, I am not measuring the difference between these two in this work.

These findings are important, because they allowed me to test the effectiveness of propagandist message that I observed in the real world. Particularly, since I observed that the real propaganda uses positive and negative framing of the religious issues, I implemented this in the experiment. The setup of the experiment, namely the necessity to control for the difference did not allow me to make various passages, which could better reflect the actual messages. However, even with this limitation I was able to demonstrate that negative propaganda indeed has an effect on people's attitude toward Salafism. The fact that it was not the case with the positive propaganda does not mean that it not effective at all, it just means that it does not have the short-term effective on the attitude towards Salafism, but it may have an effect on other issues.

Conclusion

To summarize, this chapter analyzed the efficiency of the messages that replicate real governmental propaganda on the issue of religion. In particular, I tested if and how the messages are able to change a person's attitude towards Salafism. The experimental design of this chapter included six groups, three of which had a negative message: 1) Followers of Salafism are morally bad people, (2) Salafism is a threat to national security, (3) Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs; two groups were given a positive message: (4) Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs, (5) Kazakhstan is a secular state; and the last was the control group with the message

that had (6) no relation to religion in it. After dropping some observations, I left with 172 of them in total in six groups.

First of all, I theorized that the messages in general has an effect and the statistical test demonstrated that this was the case. After that I tested the hypothesis that negative messages on their own have an effect on a person's attitude towards Salafism. The statistical test allowed to reject the Null hypothesis in this case, so this hypothesis was also supported by the findings. Finally, I tested whether the positive messages will have an impact, but in this case I did not have the evidence to reject the Null hypothesis, so the third hypothesis was disproved. This could be the case because this type of propaganda could be aimed at having a long-term effect instead of short term, tested here. The limitations of this type of experimental design did not allow me to check for this, but the future works on this issue may test this prediction.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Among various tools available to political authorities, propaganda is one of the most important. This is because any regime needs the support of the domestic public, be it democratic or authoritarian. If the former is interested in obtaining the votes and incumbents or candidates therefore need to send their message to the audiences, the latter usually need to create a positive image of self to prolong its reign (Gerschewski 2013, Lewis 2016, Omelicheva 2016a, Walker and Orttung 2014). This image cannot be sustained without the popular support for the initiatives and the regime needs to use propaganda to demonstrate that the initiatives are worthy. In particular, this applies to soft authoritarian regimes, that prefer to use persuasion over coercion, usually by masterfully controlling the information flows (Schatz 2009).

The Kazakhstani government is a good example of such a regime (ibid.). Previous studies of the use of propaganda in Kazakhstan demonstrated that the authorities are able to confidently play with various messages and that the persuasion works (Schatz 2009, Schatz and Maltseva 2011). I attributed this ability and, in fact, a habit to use propaganda to the legacy of the Soviet Union, and it was known for its ability to use it. As I claimed in the theory, even the word propaganda has its roots in the Russian language.

This thesis is concerned with the question of controlling religion by the means of propaganda. As one of the successors of the Soviet Union, its legacy affected not only the authorities' bid for propaganda, but also their way to manage religion. The Soviet Union attempted to secularize people after they tried to enforce atheism in the state, which led to mixed results (Thibault 2018). I argued that the authorities of Kazakhstan decided to follow the same path and that they are on the track of secularizing people. But here, the word secular does not mean just the separation of religion and state. In fact, I argued that Kazakhstan is an assertive secularist state, which understands secularism in terms of the necessity to remove religion from a public life (Kuru 2007).

In addition, the Soviet past greatly affected the attitude of the authorities towards religion, which perceived it as a threat. Due to this, the authorities feel the necessity to control religion tightly. The Soviet Union controlled religion by creating the Spiritual Administration of Muslims, and Kazakhstan inherited this institution from it. The Kazakhstani SAMK acts as a kind of official clergy, supporting the state policies. However, there is a fundamentalist puritan Islamic movement known as Salafism that rejects the authority of SAMK (Wiktorowicz 2006). After the 2016 terrorist attacks in Aktobe, the Kazakhstani president Nazarbayev claimed that this attack was performed by the followers of this movement (Kaipova 2016). This marked an important turning point in the authorities' strategy to control Salafism. I argued that the authorities have a strategy to use the controlled media to create a negative image of Salafism and promote secularism in Kazakhstan. However, since not every person can be secularized, according to the logic from the discussion, the government decided to push them towards Hanafism, which is the official doctrine of SAMK. In other words, by pushing people towards Hanafism, the authorities are pushing people to SAMK, which is under their control.

The research in this dissertation attempted to check these propositions. First of all, I conducted a media analysis and explored the messages found in the articles of six online media portals, three of them in Russian and three in Kazakh languages. This analysis considered the period from the beginning of 2015 till the end of 2018, the time spectrum that allowed to trace the reaction of 2016 terrorist attacks in Aktobe and Almaty. The findings of the research illustrated that indeed the government uses both negative propaganda that directly discredits Salafism and positive propaganda aimed at Secularism and Hanafism. In addition, more messages appear on Secularism than on Hanafism, which reflects the proposition that the authorities prioritize non-religious identities, as they try to impose a secular lifestyle on the citizens. In addition, I checked whether messages in Kazakh and Russian stress various messages and I found out that indeed articles in Kazakh language appeal more to patriotism

and the feeling of belonging to Kazakhs than articles in Russian language. However, this analysis could not demonstrate whether the propaganda of this type was effective or not.

For this reason, I designed a small statistical experiment. In this experiment that I conducted online using Qualtrics software I divided people into different groups, each group receiving only one message similar to the one that appear in the news. Each of this messages reflected one type of message in propaganda: (1) Followers of Salafism are morally bad people, (2) Salafism is a threat to national security, (3) Salafism is foreign to Kazakhs, (4) Hanafism is traditional to Kazakhs, (5) Kazakhstan is a secular state and (6) message with no relation to religion as control. The first three messages reflected the negative propaganda that was directly discrediting Salafism and the other reflected the positive propaganda aimed at strengthening the Hanafism in (4) and secularism in (5). The results of the statistical tests illustrated that propaganda have an effect on a person's attitude towards Salafism. Thus, after reading the articles people were less likely to approve Salafism. However, a closer look demonstrated that it is a negative propaganda that has such an effect. In all tests, it gave the statistically significant results. The positive propaganda did not give such results and this is possibly because it is not aimed at short-term persuasion on the issue of Salafism, it is interesting to note that 106 people in experiment said that they never heard about Salafism before. Instead, that type of propaganda may have a long-term effect on secularization and moving people away from Salafism to Hanafism or even making people Hanafi when they do their first steps in religiosity or even other issues that are beyond the scope of this work.

In my opinion, the future studies of propaganda may focus on the long-term effects of this tool. My study focused only on short-term or immediate effect, but it does not show the whole picture. This is due to the fact that propaganda is a tool that needs to be applied systematically for a long period of time. In this way it could alter citizens' view on many subjects and this is probably true because propaganda helps autocrats to stay in power for a

longer period of time. Without this long-term effect, it is very improbable that this could be the case. In addition, the efforts to control religion may focus on the inner dynamics of SAMK-state relations and the relations of within SAMK, because in this study I regard it as simple and unitary, but this is a large structure, possible with various and competing parties. The research on this subject may greatly increase our understanding of the religious politics or policies on religion in Kazakhstan.

Appendix 1 – randomization check results

P values of T test comparison of groups for randomization correctness

Gender					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.71	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.78	0.92	-	-	-
Group4	0.36	0.58	0.5	-	-
Group5	0.69	0.98	0.89	0.61	-
Group6	0.44	0.68	0.6	0.88	0.71

Year_born					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.88	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.8	0.69	-	-	-
Group4	0.39	0.32	0.53	-	-
Group5	0.54	0.45	0.71	0.8	-
Group6	0.79	0.91	0.61	0.28	0.4

Nationality					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.44	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.86	0.53	-	-	-
Group4	0.49	0.95	0.59	-	-
Group5	0.13	0.45	0.17	0.43	-
Group6	0.98	0.46	0.88	0.51	0.1

Religion					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.579	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.566	0.991	-	-	-
Group4	0.502	0.225	0.214	-	-
Group5	0.168	0.397	0.396	0.046	-
Group6	0.158	0.38	0.379	0.042	0.982

Religion role					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.72	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.48	0.72	-	-	-
Group4	0.88	0.84	0.58	-	-
Group5	0.86	0.59	0.37	0.75	-

Group6	0.39	0.23	0.12	0.33	0.5

Religion_atte nd					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.666	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.472	0.774	-	-	-
Group4	0.127	0.052	0.027	-	-
Group5	0.774	0.886	0.666	0.071	-
Group6	0.301	0.145	0.082	0.613	0.188

Birth					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.792	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.603	0.427	-	-	-
Group4	0.649	0.475	0.967	-	-
Group5	0.326	0.212	0.62	0.61	-
Group6	0.045	0.023	0.121	0.131	0.31

Media trust					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.35	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.68	0.17	-	-	-
Group4	0.33	0.94	0.16	-	-
Group5	0.28	0.86	0.13	0.92	-
Group6	0.66	0.17	0.97	0.17	0.14

Income					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.86	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.3	0.38	-	-	-
Group4	0.59	0.71	0.64	-	-
Group5	0.59	0.71	0.64	1	-
Group6	0.8	0.94	0.44	0.77	0.77

Education					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.17	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.19	0.93	-	-	-
Group4	0.2	0.96	0.97	-	-
Group5	0.3	0.76	0.82	0.8	-
Group6	0.33	0.69	0.76	0.74	0.94

Education parent					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.221	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.953	0.232	-	-	-
Group4	0.685	0.111	0.637	-	-
Group5	0.543	0.554	0.573	0.323	-
Group6	0.16	0.839	0.168	0.078	0.436
Marital status					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.716	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.362	0.582	-	-	-
Group4	0.451	0.266	0.1	-	-
Group5	0.316	0.513	0.901	0.087	-
Group6	0.869	0.598	0.284	0.557	0.248
Salafism_know					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	0.71	-	-	-	-
Group3	0.66	0.95	-	-	-
Group4	0.61	0.38	0.35	-	-
Group5	0.53	0.79	0.83	0.27	-
Group6	0.87	0.59	0.55	0.73	0.44

With Bonferroni adjustment

Gender					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1
Year_born					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-

Group6	1	1	1	1	1

Nationality					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1

Religion					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	0.7	-
Group6	1	1	1	0.63	1

Religion role					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1

Religion_atte nd					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	0.79	0.4	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1

Birth					
	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	0.67	0.34	1	1	1

Media trust	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1
Income	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1
Education	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1
Education parent	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1
Marital status	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1

Salafism_know	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group4	Group5
Group2	1	-	-	-	-
Group3	1	1	-	-	-
Group4	1	1	1	-	-
Group5	1	1	1	1	-
Group6	1	1	1	1	1

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