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ARTICLE

Three Routes to Autocratic Rule: Market Reforms, Politics, and Masculinist Performance in the Making of Right-Wing Regimes

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Abstract: *How do the economy, right-wing legacies, and personal style shape today's autocracies? Analysts have commented that especially three contemporary autocrats—Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Narendra Modi, and Rodrigo Duterte—have similar styles, motivations, or bases of support. Yet, this paper will show that the paths that took them to their thrones are quite distinct. Neoliberalization had disorganized society in Turkey, India, and the Philippines. The rule of "strongmen," in response, showed the way out of this disorganization. The main divergence, however, is that Erdoğanism introduced statism and mass organization as against the disorganizing thrust of neoliberalization. Modi parallels Erdoğan in the civic-paramilitary aspects of rule, but not in statism. Other than a weak infrastructure thrust, Duterte did not make the economy into a central issue in the way Erdoğan and Modi did. Moreover, he did not deploy civic activism at all. These three routes have thoroughly shaped and differentiated the autocrats' styles too, even though all involve a heavy resort to masculinity. Coming from a thick tradition of mass politics and moving in a state-capitalist direction, Erdoğan's performance incorporates women's civic mobilization and heavily emphasizes fertility and productivity. Shorn of such anchors and bedeviled by a fragmented polity, Duterte's rule sexualizes violence rather than production. Modi's celibate masculinity is similar to Erdoğan's in its dramatization of size and production but downplays reproduction, except for deepening the ethnic divide his party relies on. These differences have culminated in hegemonic autocracy in Turkey, ethnic autocracy in India, and oligarchic autocracy in the Philippines.*

Keywords: hegemony, autocracy, oligarchy, neoliberalism, masculinity, right-wing movements, statism

How do the economy, right-wing legacies, and personal style shape today's autocracies? Sweeping generalizations regarding contemporary authoritarian leaders lead us to neglect some core differences between them. After listing a dozen autocrats including Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Narendra Modi, and Rodrigo Duterte, one scholar states: "These individuals are *cut from the same cloth*, sharing an approach, an agenda, and a style. They

sound the same notes, appeal to the same followers, and advocate the same policies" (Hibbing 2022, 48, emphasis added). Some less sweeping generalizations point out commonalities between authoritarian populists of the Global South that distinguish them from those of advanced capitalist countries: Erdoğan, Modi, Bolsonaro, and Duterte all represent the winners of globalization rather than its losers (Foa 2021; Kumral 2022), the alleged backers of Trumpism.[1] By contrast, this paper calls for a more differentiating analysis of the dynamics of autocratic rule in the Global South.

Both journalists (Heydarian 2017) and academics (Arsel, Adaman, and Saad-Filho 2021; Contractor 2017; Kaul 2021) have commented that especially three of these autocrats—Erdoğan, Modi, and Duterte—have quite similar styles of rule, motivations, or bases of support (Larres 2022, xix). Yet, this paper will show that the paths that took them to their thrones are quite distinct. Moreover, one of them, Duterte, was also markedly different in terms of the way he ruled. In a nutshell, Erdoğan and Modi come from right-wing social movements and have relied on them to consolidate their rule. Duterte, by contrast, had no movement history, even though he has a special relationship to the anticommunist traditions of his country.

Some more commonalities do run across these cases. Neoliberalism has disorganized society in all three countries. The rule of "strongmen," in response, showed the way out of this disorganization without disrupting the entirety of neoliberalization. The main divergence, however, is that Erdoğanism introduced statism and mass organization as against the disorganizing thrust of neoliberalization (Tuğal 2022; Yabanci 2016). Modi parallels him in the civic-paramilitary aspects of rule but not in statism, even though presenting an economic vision was central to his appeal too (Chacko 2018; Jaffrelot 2015a). Other than a weak infrastructure thrust, Duterte did not make the economy into a central issue in the way Erdoğan and Modi did. Moreover, he did not deploy civic activism at all, even though he expanded the paramilitary reach of the state (Curato 2016; Rafael 2022; Rodan 2021).

We can tentatively, and with some caveats, call these three routes to autocracy (1) hegemonic,[2] (2) ethnic, and (3) oligarchic. Erdoğanism has thoroughly transformed Turkey's social, political, and economic structure. The analogous "Dutertismo," by contrast, has led to very little structural change and mostly reproduced entrenched oligarchic patterns of rule. Modi's regime stands somewhere in between but has so far been reactive rather than constructive like Erdoğan's. Whereas the contrast between

I would like to thank the editors and two anonymous referees for their ample critical feedback, comments, and criticisms.

1 The loose term "populism" obscures fundamental differences between these leaders. Even though they all voice hostility to the elite and to minorities in the name of a virtuous people (which constitutes the definition of populism as a logic of politics, see Laclau 1977), this paper will show that the reason they voice this hostility, their manner of expressing it, and the way structural dynamics shape these reasons and manners are dissimilar.

2 I use hegemony in Gramsci's (1971) sense: the unification, driven by "force plus consent," of state and civil society around a common set of (still contested) ideas and practices.

Erdoğan's rule and Duterte's is clearly one of "kind," that between Erdoğan's and Modi's is partially of kind, and partially of degree. Modi's ethnic autocracy is unapologetic and unwavering in its exclusion of Muslims. Erdoğanism, by contrast, is now ethnic, now cross-ethnic. Although Erdoğan's *Islamic* stance is explicit, the *Turkish-Sunni* basis of his rule is frequently denied or semi-denied in public, unlike Modi's explicit and public stance for "Hindutva" (a Hindu nationalist line based more explicitly on the exclusion of large minorities).

A similar differentiation is needed regarding these rulers' gendered performances. Whereas many analysts have emphasized the shared masculinism of "strongmen" (Gökarıksel, Neubert, and Smith 2019; Kaul 2021), this paper draws attention to what differentiates their gendered populism. This difference, although it has its own dynamics, is shaped by and reinforces other structural differences of these autocracies. Arguelles and Gregorio (2020, x–xi) state that "[p]opulism is a global phenomenon and its gendered nature is one of the elements most common to all cases. Similar to Duterte, casual sexism and promotion of sexual violence against women are prominent features of the speeches of populist politicians. . . . Despite the diverse socio-political contexts of these countries, a feminist analysis reveals a striking similarity among these populist leaders: a shared and deeply embedded ethos of hegemonic patriarchal norms." Problematic generalizations of this kind gloss over crucial contrasts, such as the active and organized women's support for autocratic masculinism in Turkey (Yabanci 2016), which did not have a counterpart in the Philippines (where most Duterte supporters are not civically organized). Moreover, Erdoğan's "fatherhood" is meant to unite the good citizens and increase their fertility (and thereby the population's productivity); by contrast, Duterte sexualized violence rather than production. Modi is much more similar to Erdoğan than to Duterte in the realm of masculinity, too, but relatively speaking, his celibate masculinity emphasizes development more than reproduction.

These differences and similarities in gendered performance become more interpretable when they are discussed in the context of the three countries' political and economic differences. This article therefore seeks to integrate performativity studies (Goffman 1959; Moffitt 2016) with more institutional and political-economic ones. In contrast to some of the literature, which is too leader- and performance-centered, I treat these performances more as *core components* rather than *causes* of authoritarianism. However, these do have strong trickle-down effects (as they further strengthen the parties and the regimes) and cannot be treated simply as "dependent variables." In other words, the primary forces that differentiate these regimes are political and economic, but this should not lead us to ignore gendered performance, as some political economists have done. The masculine performances of these leaders cannot be handled as curious side effects either, since they are quite intentional.

The following case analyses all start with mapping out the basic socioeconomic structures of each country before the rise of its autocrat. The sections on Turkey and

India then discuss how right-wing movements have interacted with these structures, and the section on the Philippines explores the implications of its oligarchic structure for (the paucity of) mass organization and mobilization. The third part of each case study focuses on structural changes induced by autocratic rule. Each case narrative ends with a study of how the autocrat's persona enables, reflects, and reorganizes his rule.

Turkey: Hegemonic Autocracy

Pre-Erdoğan Neoliberalization

The import-substituting industrialization (ISI) model in Turkey entered its terminal crisis at the end of the 1970s, under the pressure of not only stagflation but also increasingly militant labor movements. A military intervention in 1980 repressed labor and ushered in an era of market-oriented growth with high inflation. This new economy created many winners from across multiple classes, but it also resulted in growing inequalities. Market reforms got stuck in the 1990s as even centrist labor organizations remobilized to fight against them (Karataşlı 2015).

Hodgepodge coalition governments shifted the attention away from the economy and to struggles against Kurdish and Islamic mobilization. A military intervention in 1997 was backed by most business and labor organizations due to its promise that it would nip Islamization in the bud (Akça 2014, 24, 28). The bitter military fight against the Kurdish movement was also crowned by the arrest of its leader, Abdullah Öcalan, which resulted in a temporary cessation of hostilities. Centrist parties' hope that the mismanagement of the economy would be excused given these "victories" panned out only until the rise of a new Islamic market-oriented party (Keyder 2004): the Justice and Development Party (AKP). The establishment was taken by surprise since Islamist politics had thus far been (mistakenly) associated with backward-looking provincial forces. That perception was based on an ignorance of the country's quite rich right-wing legacies. These legacies are among the primary determinants of Erdoğanism's rise and persistence.

Right-Wing Traditions

Under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his Republican People's Party (CHP), ethnic, class, and religious organizations were repressed in the 1920s and 1930s. Religious networks did, however, lead a clandestine life in these decades and then resurfaced with abundant vitality especially after the 1940s (Mardin 1989). Initially, rather than constituting a far-right alternative to the secular republic, they supported the centrist-conservative parties (DP, AP, and in the 1980s and 1990s, ANAP and DYP).[3]

3 These were the Democrat Party (DP), the Justice Party (AP), the Motherland Party (ANAP), and the True Path Party (DYP).

To the right of these conservative forces was an emergent ethnic nationalist line. Along with Alparslan Türkeş, an officer who was influenced more by Franco's Spain than by the Nazis, a few politicians gradually broke ranks with both the Kemalist center and the conservative main opposition. These forces coalesced into the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) in the 1960s. Even though the nationalist far right had solid sociological bases in modernity's existential and structural crises (Bora and Can 1991), it focused mostly on defeating the left rather than offering a program of its own. The main social bases of the MHP included rural to urban immigrants who mostly worked in the informal sector, small businessmen, traders and merchants, and peasants. The party's program and manuals offered only jumbled solutions to their problems (see, for example, Türkeş 1977).

The "left" they were reacting to initially consisted of anti-imperialist and antimarket interpretations of Atatürk's legacy. Nevertheless, growing mobilization gave rise to many splinter groups with more Marxist tendencies. From a right-wing point of view, all of these groups came to be framed as "communist." Militants dubbed "Grey Wolves" got organized under *Ülkü Ocakları* (Ideal Hearths), where paramilitary training was intertwined with anticommunist indoctrination. By the end of the 1970s, Grey Wolf–led ethnoreligious and political pogroms (as well as clashes between the Grey Wolves and several far-left factions) had culminated in a full-scale civil war, leading to thousands of deaths (McDowall 2007, 414–16).

It was in this atmosphere of paramilitary violence that a new actor emerged on the right. In contrast to the MHP, the emergent religious intellectuals and politicians were more motivated to challenge the established business interests, which were mostly represented by the conservative party (AP) of the time and business associations such as TÜSİAD. This challenge, and its attempted suppression, led to the founding of the religious-right National Order Party (MNP, afterward named the National Salvation Party, or MSP) (Sarıbay 1985).

This is also when a distinctively Islamic economy entered the public debate, even though neither the ideas nor the organization for this were yet mature. Despite sharing much of the conservatives' and the MHP's concerns regarding creeping "communism," the MSP's anti–big business stance led to a short-lived coalition between the Islamists and the CHP in 1974. By the end of the decade, however, the MSP participated in "national front" governments with the MHP and AP, even while the Grey Wolves were starting to target (and even kill) Islamist activists along with leftists (Albayrak 1989).

The harshest military coup in Turkish history, that led by Kenan Evren in 1980, closed down all existing parties and most associations, using left-right clashes as an excuse. The coup's not-so-hidden agenda, however, was implementing the market reforms formulated by planning bureaucrat Turgut Özal. The generals also commissioned a new constitution along anti–social rights lines (Parla 2016). MHP leaders exclaimed in amazement during their military trials: "We are in prison, but our ideas are in power!" (Doğan 2012). While permitting new parties in a controlled way after 1983, the

generals also staffed the military and civil bureaucracy with religious orders that had remained loyal to the conservative party.

Islamists regrouped under the Welfare Party (RP), which—as the name hints—aimed to steal the fire of social justice from the left. At this point, the left was disorganized by the military, and then demoralized due to the breakup of the Eastern bloc. Inspired by socialist-minded Islamists, the RP now formulated an economic program called the Just Order. Before its appropriation by the party, "the Just Order" was the motto of Owenite Islamists who were building Islamic communes. These included cooperative housing and allegedly exploitation-free, communally owned factories. Despite several instantiations, the party's version of the Just Order never went beyond an inconsistent combination of these Owenite ideas with the party's 1970s version of small business–friendly national developmentalism. Moreover, due to the increasing size and power of some provincial businessmen within the Islamist movement, free-market ideas were also added to this already inconsistent mixture. The RP shared power in a short-lived coalition government, but rather than attempting to implement any part of this program, it served as a prop for the conservative DYP (True Path Party). Nevertheless, a few (mostly symbolic) religious moves by the RP drew the ire of the secularist military, which again intervened in 1997 to ban the party and end the coalition government (Tuğal 2009).

This repression led to further emboldening of the business wing of Islamism. The post-coup religious party, FP (Virtue Party), shelved the Just Order. It downplayed economic issues and focused on religious liberties. Still, its coyness and incomplete break with the past encouraged business-friendly politicians to split and establish the AKP. The AKP's credibility was mostly based on the RP and FP's municipal record, especially in Istanbul. Erdoğan had been the city's elected mayor since 1994. Even though he was elected by promising an Islamic city much in line with the Just Order vision, he had quickly shifted to a pro-business line within his first year (Tuğal 2008). The repression of the left and of old-style Islamism, as well as the effectiveness of the new pro-business Islamism in municipal power, paved the way for the election of Erdoğan.

Inclusive Neoliberalization, the Statist Turn, and Their Mass-Organizational Underpinnings

As the previous subsection showed, Islamism's hegemonic capacity relied on appropriating many themes and strategies from the left and from neoliberalism. This subsection will show that Erdoğan intensified his capacity for both force *and* consent by also absorbing techniques and cadres from international financial institutions, competing growth strategies, and Turkish far-right nationalists. A severe financial crisis in 2001 terminated the era of relatively pure neoliberal parties that had ruled in the 1980s and 1990s (Karataşlı 2015; Keyder 2004). This removed another impediment in Erdoğan's path. The economy crashed after almost all of these establishment parties' market reforms got stuck. Kemal Derviş, a prominent World Bank technocrat, rushed

to formulate a novel aid package, which reflected the IMF's and (more so) the World Bank's turn to what has been labeled the "Post-Washington Consensus" (Öniş and Şenses 2005). This more inclusive version of neoliberalization mobilized state agencies to bring under control the most destructive results of market reform. Although this was a morale boost for the ruling coalition, and garnered hope among both educated and business circles, the governing parties had lost their credibility. The yet-unblemished AKP defeated them by a wide margin in 2002. Lacking a program, however, it mostly relied on the blueprint created by Derviş. The result was a steady growth rate for more than ten years, as well as health policies that generated support for marketization even among the poor, laying the groundwork for Erdoğan's hegemonic (i.e., mass consent–based) autocracy.

What was less noticed in this golden decade of the Turkish economy was the growing productive role of the state, which was not entirely in line with the World Bank–stamped Derviş version of inclusive marketization. This statism remained mostly under the radar for much of the 2000s but became more noticeable in the 2010s. State and state-guided investment in privileged sectors, direct state support to strategic firms, the development of sovereign wealth funds, import substitution measures, and abrogation of central bank independence came to be defining features of the economy. These were used to fight established interests *and* build more support among diverse strata (Tuğal 2023), deepening the hegemonic nature of Erdoğan's autocracy.

These inclusive and statist revisions of neoliberalism were not simply technocratic decisions. They were fused with Islamic and nationalist meaning, thanks to the mass organizations and patterns of mobilization that the AKP inherited from its Islamic past and then from its integration of the MHP into the regime. Unlike the technical way in which the failed coalition parties communicated the Derviş program, the AKP framed it in an Islamic way. Protecting the poor from the destructive aspects of marketization was not just an economic but an Islamic mission. Moreover, this appeared to be an almost natural part of the emerging Islamic regime, since the cooperation of civil society and state that the Post-Washington Consensus posits as a necessary part of good governance (Öniş and Şenses 2005) was organically built under the AKP, rather than only resulting from policy decisions. That is, the charitable Islamic organizations that had been spreading for decades (partially as a way to combat the secularist elite's weak hold over civil society) were now integrated into the welfare agencies and policies of the central government. These organizations also provided the government with a logistical basis for mass mobilization in its fights against secular and other opponents, as for instance during referenda (Tuğal 2017). In short, expanding mass organizations also helped deepen hegemony.

As important was the integration of a reconstructed MHP into the Erdoğanist regime. In contrast to the 1970s, when street fights were its main domain of activity, from the 1980s onward many MHP ex-activists became state personnel, and others became the leaders of a burgeoning criminal mafia (Karimov 2021), even if the party did not abandon ideological paramilitary organization. The MHP also gained popularity as

the Kurdish national struggle fomented fears of separatism and terrorism among many Turks. The MHP received its highest vote ever in 1999 (18 percent, whereas it had been stuck below 9 percent for thirty years). It joined an anti-Islamist and anti-Kurdish governing coalition (1999–2002) but fell into temporary irrelevance after the rise of the AKP. Especially following the resumption of hostilities with the Kurdish movement in 2015, the MHP offered its full support to the AKP regime, but the merger did not happen just at the top. Long before this official merger, the far-right nationalist tradition's street activism became a part of the regime's repertoire, as "Ottoman Hearths" (modeled after the MHP's Ideal Hearths) and other paramilitary organizations such as SADAT sprouted throughout the country (Bashirov and Lancaster 2018). After the merger at the top, the initially conflictual relationships between these pro-AKP organizations and the nationalist far right became brotherly (Oda TV 2016). The erstwhile MHP-connected criminal mafia (Bellut 2021) and nationalist trade unions, too, intensified their activities and increased their membership. The government also provided more bureaucratic positions and business tenders to MHP members after 2015 (Yılmaz, Shipoli, and Demir 2021).

As a result of the merger of civil society and state along both Islamic and nationalist lines, the AKP could present its fight against vestiges of pre-AKP economic policies and interests as a struggle of the people and the nation against privileged elites and their global connections (Öniş and Kutlay 2021; Tuğal 2022). While building on consent fueled by economic policies and mass organizations, this fight also had strong doses of force, as Gramsci's formulation of hegemony as "force plus consent" would lead us to expect. Not only previous elites but also labor activists, socialists, environmentalists, feminists, and later on center-right conservatives were severely repressed, with increasing help from paramilitaries.

Erdoğan: The New Father of the Nation

Masculinist performance has not created the AKP's hegemonic autocracy, but it strongly contributes to sustaining it. The Islamist movement in Turkey has developed as a reaction to the figure of Mustafa Kemal, who took the last name "Atatürk" (Father of the Turks).[4] This self-naming resonated with, transformed, and reproduced the "father state" (*devlet baba*) trope in Turkish political culture (Zürcher 2012). The state has been called a "father" for centuries, a naming that instills both fear and respect for authority *and* expectations of just provision among its subjects. The Islamist movement now upholds Erdoğan as the ultimate father and the masculine figure to model oneself after (Ozbay and Soybakis 2020). Erdoğan's biography is a point of inspiration for his followers. He comes from Kasımpaşa: a poor, rough neighborhood of Istanbul with legendarily tough young men. He played soccer in his youth and still poses with soccer jerseys.

4 See Özyürek (2006) for the Atatürk myth.

Even throughout the "moderation" phase of the Islamist movement, he preserved his tough posturing, which acted as a persistent magical reaffirmation of the movement's distinctiveness despite its integration into the system (Tuğal 2009, 175–78).

Erdoğan sets a model not only with his bodily comportment and aggressive language but also his family life. He has four children and frequently advises families to have at least three (Yazici 2012). He is also against abortion and has called it a massacre and murder. Erdoğan clearly links his own authority to a strong, virile, and vibrant population (Gökarıksel, Neubert, and Smith 2019). This pronatalist position is inseparable from his desire to create a huge pool of cheap labor in order to increase Turkey's competitiveness in the global economy. The government has developed intricate techniques (such as religious edicts, political speeches, financial incentives, provision of reproductive technologies, and informing husbands of positive results on pregnancy tests without the consent of women) that encourage especially married women to bear children (Korkman 2015). As Erdoğan "performs" masculinity, therefore, he is not only building on the economic path Turkey has taken but is further solidifying it. Production and reproduction are inseparable. In other words, a proper understanding of masculinism and performativity cannot be divorced from an analysis of the regime's political economy. Likewise, a thorough interpretation of both the hegemonic and autocratic nature of Erdoğanism is impossible without a scrutiny of his masculinist performance.

Erdoğan's metaphorical fatherhood also grants him the right and the responsibility to monitor sexual and gendered behavior. He portrays antigovernment protestors as sexually deviant (Korkman and Açıksöz 2013) and valorizes progovernment demonstrators as valiant people. His depictions of the latter are masculinized and imply that it is mostly up to men to fight on the streets. As he has repeatedly emphasized, a woman's natural place is the home, as a mother, even if she has a successful career (Ekşi and Wood 2019).

Erdoğan and his male followers are not alone in their monitoring of proper gender and sexual roles, or their encouragement of population growth. Several pro-AKP women's organizations were established to promote Erdoğan's discourse and policies.[5] These associations fight abortion, bolster patriarchal gender norms, and struggle against feminism. They argue that the latter is a Western import and an official imposition, alien to the Turkish people. They frequently repeat Erdoğan's arguments about women and the family, almost verbatim (Yabanci 2016). In short, Erdoğan's image and role as the father is not solely dictated from above but also endorsed by civic organization and mobilization from below. Along with complex economic policies that create and sustain a

5 Although women from all backgrounds are heavily active in almost all Islamist organizations and the AKP, emergent pious upper-middle-class women (especially professionals, see Aksoy 2015) and emergent upper-class women (the wives of the new pious capitalist class) are the primary activists (Tuğal 2009, 2017).

multiplicity of economic interests, and mass organizations that back them, such bottom-up embrace of the new father has put Turkey on a hegemonic path. A comprehensive solidification of this hegemonic autocracy has required complex economic policies, mass organization and mobilization, and a specific kind of masculinist performance.

India: Ethnic Autocracy

Inclusive Neoliberalization and Jobless Growth

Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) echoes Erdoğan's AKP in many ways but has not yet built as hegemonic a path, relying rather more on unifying the Hindus by dramatizing the "Muslim threat." The reason for this can be found in India's and the BJP's different engagement with neoliberalization, as well as Hindu nationalism's contrasts to Islamism.

Balance of payment crises at the end of the 1980s, IMF pressures, and ultimately the collapse of the Soviet bloc led to a decisive neoliberal shift in the India of the 1990s. Service and technology became the drivers of growth after these changes. Agriculture and industry suffered. Reliance on services and technology started to institutionalize a pattern of jobless growth, which would bedevil India for several decades (Chacko 2018). The first Hindu nationalist government (the BJP-led "National Democratic Alliance") only deepened these policies from 1999 to 2004 (Chacko 2018; Kaur 2016).

In 2004, the UPA (a "left-wing" coalition) came to power and ushered in a decade of inclusive neoliberalism. It both deepened market reforms and institutionalized many social policies, especially targeted at the poor, lower castes, and minorities (Nielsen and Nilsen 2015). The Congress Party–led UPA, however, did not implement an industrial, job-generating developmental strategy or land reform (Desai 2015, 165–69). Growth significantly slowed down toward the end of the UPA's tenure. The coalition also failed to bring inflation down and was rocked by corruption scandals (Torri 2015). Even when growth was stronger in the UPA's initial years, it did not generate many jobs (Sridharan 2014), though it delivered social-economic rights and relief. Especially among right-wing Hindus, the overall state of the economy started to be blamed on social justice policies, which intensified Hindu nationalism's turn away from its prior dedication to its particular brand of vague anticapitalism (Kaur 2015). One core difference between India and Turkey, then, was that the center-left (rather than the far right) implemented "inclusive neoliberalism," which was the World Bank–sanctioned model of the 2000s. Since the Hindu right remolded itself in reaction to inclusive neoliberalism, its hegemonic capacity was dented.

The balance sheet of this decades-old neoliberalization is quite complex. On the one hand, India significantly increased its overall rate of growth when compared to its 1950s–1970s ISI era. The average rate of growth was 6.3 percent between 1980 and 2015 compared to 3.6 percent between 1950 and 1980 (Varshney 2017). Also, since 1980, India's growth rates have fared significantly better when compared to OECD

nations overall, to the EU, and to high-income OECD nations (Kumral 2022). These developments have improved India's place in the hierarchy of nations (Karataşlı and Kumral 2017). They have also led to an extreme concentration of wealth within India (Varshney 2017).

Organized labor has lost most of its rights and welfare gains (Agarwala 2013). The rural poor have suffered from land dispossession (Levien 2018), as well as cuts in governmental aid (Topalova 2007). However, along with the top billionaires, there have been other winners. Urban middle and upper-middle classes have expanded in absolute numbers (Jaffrelot and Van der Veer 2008). Also, some of the displaced rural poor have found informal urban jobs, which has actually improved their welfare, leading some scholars to dub them the "neo-middle class" (Jaffrelot 2015a). These were the possible carriers of a new hegemony, which is still unfulfilled.

Other than protests against pension and insurance reforms, and sporadic farmers' protests against removal of tariffs, neoliberalization in general and labor market deregulation in particular did not meet much resistance in the two initial decades of market reform (Desai 2015, 156–57). Democratization deepened in India in these same decades, but the masses engaged mostly in ethnic-, religious-, and caste-based politics instead of fighting market expansion (Desai 2015, 158). Between 1991 and 2009, this communalization of politics resulted in the shrinkage of votes for national parties, and in the rise of state-level parties. The former ultimately came to depend on the latter in order to build governing coalitions. These smaller, state-level parties typically lack programmatic visions. They are mostly caste based and are nonideological. For two decades, then, what characterized India was the corrosion of hegemony: no active, national unity got organized around a common platform (Desai 2015, 169–72). It was this erosion that the Modi-controlled BJP would ultimately attempt to fix, starting with the state of Gujarat. In Gujarat, it had already subordinated caste identities to a unifying vision of anti-Muslim, Hindutva, national neoliberalism long before the 2014 elections.

Hindu Nationalism

It is only by looking at the Hindu right's similarities with and differences from the Turkish right that we can understand why Turkey ended up with a relatively more hegemonic autocracy and India with a more ethnic one. Despite certain discontinuities with the past, Modi's BJP has grown out of a peculiar right-wing legacy: that of Hindu nationalism. Colonial and precolonial India did not have an integrated Hindu-ness that could be cleanly separated from other traditions. The Hindu right, over a century, mimicked earlier, colonialist-inspired Western scholars' simplifying portrayal of Hinduism (as an integrated yet inferior religion) but reversed their moral judgment (Hansen 1999; Jaffrelot 1996). It strove to create a culture as unified as it perceived monotheist cultures to be in order to combat them and other challenges (the Christian-secular challenge from without/above and the communist and Muslim challenge from within/below).

Hansen (1999) points out that these attempts led to "contingent articulations": the ideas and practices of the main right-wing organizations, Hindu Mahasabha (under V. D. Savarkar's initially spiritual and, after 1937, political leadership) and M. S. Golwalkar's National Volunteer Organization (RSS), overlapped in many regards with Gandhi's more syncretic populism and even with Indian secular nationalism. The lines between the RSS (Hindu nationalism's most cadre-based and durable organization) and Gandhi's outlook were not as thick as they were later construed to be (cf. Jaffrelot 1996).

Golwalkar's views on the economy were thin and confused. Although he claimed to espouse an Indian path against both communism and capitalism, he stood for free enterprise, but not in a consistent or principled way. Savarkar was more elaborate, but not much more consistent (Iwanek 2014). Deendayal Upadhyaya contributed to the maturation of Hindu nationalism's economic doctrine. He was a full-time RSS organizer commissioned to craft the Hindu nationalist party's economic stance, and later the general secretary of the BJS (the main Hindu nationalist party of the time, and an RSS affiliate). His "integral humanism" fused Golwankar with Gandhi and promised an egalitarian, spiritual economy. The core ideas of this program were national manufacture, small-scale industrialization, and decentralization. Indigeneity, antimaterialism, and human-centeredness, argued Upadhyaya, differentiated integral humanism from both capitalism and communism. These ideas resonate strongly with what Turkish Islamists call the "Just Order." This new program led to Hindu nationalism's first public breakthrough—the rise to electoral prominence in northern India in the early 1970s (Hansen 1999, 185–86)—and created dynamics for a potentially hegemonic path. In the late 1970s, however, the BJS became reactive again. As the Congress Party emphasized "socialism," the BJS shifted back to upholding private property.[6]

After the mediocre electoral performances of BJS, BJP was established in 1980, invigorating the formal political muscle of Hindu nationalism (Jaffrelot 1996, 315–18). As a response to the Congress Party's market-oriented turn, the new Hindu nationalist party emphasized Gandhian socialism in its charter (Iwanek 2014; Jaffrelot 1996, 316, 336), but shifted away from it in practice. Even though mass organizations affiliated with it (such as SJM, "Forum to Awaken Swadeshi," and BMS, "The Union of Indian Laborers") still endorsed Gandhian socialism and fought against market reforms, the BJP came to favor trade liberalization throughout the course of the 1980s (Iwanek 2014). By the early 1990s, this shift became more systematic: the party published its most consistent economic program ever in 1992. Swadeshi (self-reliance) was still held up, but in a way that opened up room for foreign direct investment (FDI). The 1992 massacres, where two thousand people perished, culminated in the temporary banning of the RSS, but BJP's activities intensified. BJP led a coalition government from 1999

6 The BJS had a staunchly pro-property position in the late 1950s and 1960s, as a reaction especially to Nehru's farm cooperatives agenda (Jaffrelot 1996, 172–77).

to 2004. This government failed in delivering most of its campaign promises. These fluctuations, inconsistencies, and failures were apparently not moving the BJP in a hegemonic direction.

However, as the BJP's first term ended in disappointment and the UPA experimented with inclusive liberalism, a more Turkish-like path was emerging in one state of India. A BJP governor in Gujarat, Narendra Modi, was achieving high growth rates. A big part of this growth was in the construction industry. He had also overseen a pogrom against Muslims in 2002 and otherwise supported the RSS agenda, but he had turned the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat into a strength by presenting Hindus as the victims of a media campaign that allegedly exaggerated the violence (Bobbio 2012). He was himself indeed a lifelong RSS organizer. His policies had intensified income inequalities, but his Hindutva stance ensured the growing support of lower- and lower-middle-class Hindus (Chacko 2018), a pattern similar to the AKP's first two terms.

Modinomics: Religio-national Neoliberalism

Gujarat's success led to Modi's rise to national power in 2014. Much like the Turkish AKP's economic agenda, the BJP's post-2014 economic record needs to be interpreted as a religious-nationalist response to the strengths and limits of the secular coalition it replaced, and an uneven integration of that response with the legacies of the far right. But the differences are as telling.

Modi's rise has been frequently interpreted as a rebellion against the "inclusive neoliberalism" of the Congress Party (Sinha 2017a). In his national election campaign, he promised to ratchet up privatization and deregulation, cut subsidies, and remove environmental barriers. However, these privatizations would be politically and ideologically controlled, unlike much of the privatizations of the 1980s–2000s throughout the world. As in Erdoğanist Turkey (Madra and Yılmaz 2019), the defense sector was opened up to Modi-connected capitalists, who were heavily cushioned through massive land giveaways, subsidies, and tax breaks. Shopkeepers, small traders, and merchants were not favored in the same way, and were even left prey to foreign competition, which made them resist this new turn in economic policy (Sinha 2017a).

In his couple of initial years, Modi was careful enough not to push too publicly against farmers, since the latter are perceived as the soul of the Indian nation (Sinha 2017a). However, he eventually attempted to liberalize agriculture (e.g., through lifting tariffs). In late 2020, such agricultural policies ultimately led to one of the biggest uprisings of the twenty-first century (Baviskar and Levien 2021). However, even after that uprising, the BJP won elections in a state where the rebellions were exceptionally strong, mostly due to Hindus voting as a bloc to preserve the exclusion of Muslims (Biswas 2022). In other words, ethnoreligious fault lines became so clear cut and deep that they can easily override economic concerns (unlike in Turkey, where Erdoğanism

is still dependent on hegemonic politics that blend religious with economic concerns).[7] This episode further solidified the ethnic character of Modi's autocracy.

In short, though clearly moving in a similar direction especially starting with the 2010s, the BJP is not as hegemonic as the AKP. Its economic messages and policies do not foster the same level of consent. In the absence of as strong an economic inclusivity, the party has fallen back on thickening ethnic boundaries to shore up consent. The BJP's mass organizational bases are at least as strong as the AKP's (which bolsters the party's capacity for hegemony), but these mass organizations do not line up behind its economic program in the way the AKP's do. As a result, Modi's autocracy has a more ethnic than hegemonic character in comparison to the Erdoğan regime.

Modi's Persona: The Celibate Mass Organizer

Modi's appeal is not interpretable without studying masculine self-presentation, but that self-presentation is socially conditioned. This section will draw attention to strong parallels as well as stark differences between Modi's and Erdoğan's masculinities, and the economic and political determinants of these overlaps and contrasts. BJP's historical roots were in the upper castes and classes (Jaffrelot 1996). It opened to lower castes only after the 1970s. Modi's personal background, as a child of the lower castes, has provided the far right's populist refashioning with further credibility. Modi takes great care to emphasize the cosmopolitan and refined ways of the Gandhi family, and to contrast them with the ways of the "common man." He worked as a teaboy in his childhood (Jaffrelot 2015b). The parallels to Erdoğan, who in his childhood sold cheap pastries on the streets (Cumhuriyet 2018), are clear.

Again like Erdoğan, Modi has a street-hardened masculinity that is a central part of his appeal. Both Modi himself and the pro-Modi media frequently refer to his large chest (Srivastava 2015). For instance, Modi once lashed out at a Congress politician: "[D]o you know the meaning of converting to Gujarat? It means 24-hour electricity in every village and street. [Congress] can't do it. It requires 56-inch chest" (quoted in Jaffrelot 2015b, from the *Hindu*, January 23, 2014). Jaffrelot (2015b, 154) emphasizes the embodied and discursive nature of Modi's self-presentation, as well as its roots in the prime minister's organizational history:

> Modi, besides his organisational skills (inherited from his past role as a Pracharak [RSS organizer and propagandist]), is a gifted orator who knows how to galvanise large crowds by resorting to sarcastic formulas and plays on words. He cultivates his body language in the most expressive manner and

7 As I will show in more detail, the growing identification of right-wing Hindu-ness, both ethnically and religiously, with a single party (Chatterji, Hansen, and Jaffrelot 2019) also remains a feature that distinguishes India from Turkey. In Turkey, especially the ethnic/racial aspects of right-wing legacies remain more contested, and the ethnic and religious aspects of the far right more unevenly integrated.

systematically, as evident from the way he wore the typical hats of the local culture when he visited different regions of India.

Size is key to this masculinity, as it is to that of Erdoğan, who is venerated as "the Tall Man" by his supporters. Such obsession with size-based masculinity cannot be reduced to "Indian culture." The history of Hindu nationalism clearly shows that aggressive, muscular masculinity was not always the lynchpin of Indian politics, and its salience even among radical rightists was contested (Hansen 1999). That size is neither simply a physical attribute nor a cultural obsession is demonstrated by its links to capitalist venture in both countries: the size of roads, buildings, and bridges is central to Modi's symbolic strength as much as it is to Erdoğan's (Tuğal 2023). To repeat, even though masculinist performance is central to these autocracies' appeal, it is conditioned by their political economies, rather than acting as the prime mover that explains the paths of these regimes.

Although they converge on the glorification of size, Modi's personalization of politics diverges from that of Erdoğan. The latter's masculinity is based also on having many children, a behavior that should be modeled by other upstanding citizens. Modi's popular appeal, by contrast, is based precisely on *not* having a family and avoiding sex:[8] he emphasizes how the Gandhi dynasty corrupts the Indian state, and due to not having any offspring, he would never replicate their ignominy (Jaffrelot 2015b). Hindu nationalists take Modi's abandonment of his wife very early in the marriage as proof of self-sacrifice for the nation. By choosing not to be a biological father of any children, Modi has reserved the ascetic right of becoming the father of entire India (Kaul 2017).

Modi's abstention from sex (Jaffrelot 1996, 36, 40–43, 124, 132, 149) is perceived to be the overcoming of a bodily weakness only highly spiritual people can achieve (Hansen 1999; Copeman and Ikegame 2012). Despite Modi's rhetorical attacks against the Gandhi family, this perception has roots in a longer tradition of celibacy in India, of which Gandhi was a part (Chakraborty 2022, 198–200). Some Hindu and secular nationalists had developed a celibate and ascetic model of masculinity. Gandhi and Hindutva icons such as Golwalkar further sharpened the contours of this trope (Chakraborty 2022; Hansen 1999, 80–84). At the same time, the less aggressive aspects of this understanding of masculinity were actively challenged within the Hindu nationalist movement by the likes of Savarkar, who put more emphasis on the paramilitary training and activities of the organization. Although causing occasional tensions throughout the decades, these disparate conceptions of masculinity could sometimes be embodied in the same person, as in Modi's integration of both celibacy and asceticism on the one hand and aggression against Muslims on the other.

8 Such avoidance of *sex* by no means implies an abandonment of *sexuality*, since Modi's and his supporters' emphasis on size and their aggressiveness have obvious sexual undertones.

These performative moves have increased Modi's salience, but not to the detriment of mass organization. Despite increasing reliance on social media (Sinha 2017b), which creates the impression that the BJP has become identical with the person of Modi, Modi's populism still relies on organized mobilization. RSS activity has peaked during his second term. On top of that, RSS and kindred organizations have decided to keep on supporting his rule, even after Modi apparently turned his back on some of their core principles (Mukhopadhyay 2019), for example through further liberalization of the economy. As importantly, the still disciplined party organization kept on expanding, even into eastern India, where it has been historically weak (Hall 2022). This mass organizing ethos is not necessarily at odds with Modi's personalization of politics, since he is known as the RSS *Pracharak* to his base. Erdoğan had also worked as a mass organizer and mobilizer in his youth, but what truly differentiates Modi is the depth, level, and temporal duration of his role as a street-level leader. He was the main organizer of numerous protests and ceremonial processions in Gujarat at the end of the 1980s. These culminated in serving as the organizer of the Gujarat leg of the 1990 national procession to grab the Babri Masjid's site from Muslims (Outlook 2022), a turning point in Hindu nationalism. The cycle of mobilization that started with that procession culminated in the killings of more than two thousand in 1992 and the temporary banning of the RSS. Modi neither played an active role in the 1992 massacres nor worked as a street-level mobilizer after the 1990s. Nevertheless, he still embodies the aggressive and determined *Pracharak* who projects an air of invincibility. We should keep in mind that even Modi's celibacy is presented as the choice of a *Pracharak*: Allegedly, he abandoned his wife only in order to dedicate himself to RSS activities. He sacrificed sex for his nation *and his organization*.

Nevertheless, this stark contrast between the place of reproductive sexuality in Erdoğan's and Modi's self-presentations should not hide from view broader similarities and differences between Turkish Islamism's and Hindutva's obsession with reproduction. The latter has been crucial to Hindu activism ever since the end of the nineteenth century. However, what distinguishes Hindu nationalism's obsession with reproduction is its racialized rather than capitalistic orientation. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, Hindu activists emphasized the need to produce more babies as a way to fight off the perceived threat from increasing numbers of Muslims (Sarkar 1998, 90–91), despite lack of solid evidence that there was ever any concerted, conscious, and durable Muslim strategy to outpopulate Hindus (Jeffery and Jeffery 1998, 139). The tales of Hindu women abducted by Muslims, which started to spread at that time, remained central to right-wing mobilizing appeals throughout the rest of the century (Katju 2022, 154; Sarkar 1998, 97–98) and into the next (Saluja 2022, 174). In 2020, the BJP codified this fear into law by placing unprecedented restrictions on interreligious marriage (Sarkar 2022, 19–21).

Even though the Hindu right initially expected a simple, nonactivist acceptance of their role from women, with the growth of the RSS following the 1930s, women's activism became essential to the mobilization of reproduction-related fears (Sarkar 1998,

95). Already in the 1990s, the number of women involved in the most activist kinds of work, including the use of arms and ammunition, was estimated in the thousands (Basu 1998, 167). Hindu women became so central to anti-Muslim mobilization that they were in leading positions during the campaign to demolish the Babri Masjid, including the street actions and pogroms (Basu 1998; Sarkar 1998, 102–4). Throughout the 2010s, women also became key to electoral machines and success (Williams 2022, 61–65) while, however, still expanding women's sphere of minority-targeting militant street action (Katju 2022, 156–57). For instance, activist women monitored cafes and ice-cream parlors to make sure that Hindu girls did not date Muslim men. Hindu organizations still trained activist women militarily so that they would be able to wield weapons during possible riots (Saluja 2022, 176–77). Throughout, fear of Muslims and the desire to keep them subordinated were at the core of women's embrace of Hindutva, rather than any scripturally or clerically guided spiritual renewal (Basu 1998, 170–73). This, too, presents a clear contrast to Turkey. Transgendered Hindus have become central to anti-Muslim mobilization as well, with trans women especially gaining more protection and privilege within the movement (Loh 2022, 225, 243). As a result of these decades of mobilization, Modi and the BJP are supported by women, even though traditionally their support has not been as strong as men's (Stokes 2016).[9] In short, despite all parallels with Erdoğanism, Hindu masculinity and women's active embrace of their place in right-wing mobilization have further entrenched the strongly ethnic characteristics of Modi's autocracy, as the disproportionate focus on subordinating Muslims has marginalized other aspects of the construction of masculinity and femininity.

What does all of this flexible deployment of masculinity tell us? Primarily that Modi and the BJP regime are heavily invested in this performance, but that the *specifics* of masculinism are heavily shaped by economic dynamics, organizational legacies, and dictates of the political conjuncture. Analyses that remain restricted to emphasizing Modi's commonalities with masculinist "strongmen" are misleading. Even though no full understanding of the Indian autocracy is possible without a focus on Modi's masculinity, any analysis of the latter that does not bring in the Indian economy and Hindu nationalism's mass organizational legacies would have little meaning.

In sum, Modi's blending of nationalist posture and celibate masculinity, combined with growing Hindu nationalist activity and organization, has resulted in resilient autocratic rule. However, due to a thinner set of consent-generating economic policies, Modi's BJP is not yet as hegemonic as the AKP. The party makes up for this shortcoming primarily by drawing a thicker line between Hindus and Muslims, i.e., ramping up the far right's cultural agenda at the expense of its historical economic agenda. So far, this has resulted in an ethnically more solid, but hegemonically not as settled, autocracy.

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9 Nevertheless, the BJP has significantly closed the gender gap in the 2019 elections (Chhibber and Verma 2019).

The Philippines: Oligarchic Autocracy

Neoliberalization in the Absence of Right-Wing Movements

The texture of Filipino market reform is different than that of Turkey and India due to its embeddedness in oligarchic structures that have persisted without assistance from right-wing mass movements. In their absence, death squads have played a similar structural role. Both a quite different path of neoliberalization and the contrasts between the civic-paramilitary legacies of the Philippines and those of India and Turkey explain the distinct shape of the Filipino autocracy.

Spanish and American colonialisms created local and national elites who owed their wealth to direct (i.e., nonmarket) forms of exploitation. These elites were structurally uninterested in developmental programs and/or creating employment at large scales because their bases of support were local and national patronage networks (Rodan 2021). As a result, political parties and the conflicts between them came to be built around dynasties and their game of allegiance switching, rather than on competition between programmatic differences (Teehankee 2012). Since this oligarchy also monopolized the electoral system, peasants could only resort to rebellions and insurgencies to make their voice heard and get their interests represented (Webb and Curato 2019, 52–53). Communists became the main leaders of these uprisings (Rodan 2021, 238), further locking in American support of the oligarchy throughout the Cold War (Hutchcroft 1991, 421–22). Even the arguably most dramatic episodes in the country's history, the Marcos dictatorship and its overthrow through popular rebellion, further reproduced these patterns (Hutchcroft 1991, 446–48; Hutchcroft 1998, 10–13, 236–40).

Marcos was first elected in 1965. He was reelected in 1969, declared martial law in 1972, and ruled until 1986, when he was overthrown by a popular uprising (Teehankee 2016). Although Marcos consolidated his one-man rule precisely with the promise that he would bring the oligarchs under control, he centralized and "streamlined" the oligarchic plunder of resources rather than upsetting the social order, let alone creating a non-oligarchic system (Hutchcroft 1991, 416, 442–43). Marcos's dictatorship also consolidated both Maoist and Muslim insurgencies—because it resorted to extreme repression, it acted as their "best recruiter"—and the coup-mongering factions within the military (Rafael 2022). The latter's division into Marcos cronies and professional soldiers was one of the factors that led to the removal of Marcos. However, neither the splits nor the coup-mongering tendencies subsided after his removal. Factions resisted peace with communists and stopped the negotiation process by threatening coups d'état on more than one occasion. Corazon Aquino, who initially wanted a peace process, ultimately tolerated the formation of anticommunist death squads in order to appease the military (Rafael 2022, 15). These anticommunist death squads would later morph into antidrug death squads through a quite complex process. Many former communist rebels themselves first joined the anticommunist death squads and then became core to the antidrug ones. They were disgruntled by the level of corruption and disintegration in

Duterte's hometown of Davao (including the widespread use of drugs and the frequent collaboration between the police and drug dealers), as much as by the communists' methods of fighting them. Former drug dealers and police officers also swelled the ranks of the antidrug death squads. The bitter fighting in Duterte's hometown inspired many in the rest of the country, who modeled their activities on Davao's paramilitaries (Human Rights Watch 2009).

EDSA (the People Power Uprising) ended the Marcos dictatorship and ushered in liberal democracy, but neither the uprising nor the administrations that followed it came to terms with military domination, torture, summary executions, and the plundering of public assets under Marcos. EDSA also brought back to power the oligarchs Marcos had fought and sought to control, starting with the landowning Aquino family (Rafael 2022, 21–22; Webb and Curato 2019, 55–56). This reproduction of oligarchic structures under liberal democracy also extended the shelf life of the death squads and indirectly facilitated their transmogrification into antidrug units.

The Marcos dictatorship relied on excessive debt, which was mostly used not for ISI-style development as in many comparable countries but for the enrichment of families and groups connected to political power. The Aquino presidency (1986–1992) that followed Marcos consisted of a broad coalition of industrialists, financiers, and left-wing groups, but the redistributive policies favored by the latter were repetitively thwarted by military coup threats (Ramos 2021). The Aquino years culminated in half-hearted liberalization rather than in any solid, sustainable path. The Ramos presidency (1992–1998), by contrast, was aggressive in its privatizations and more consistent in its liberalization, and it put the country on a relatively more straightforward neoliberal route.

On the surface, the Philippines became a typical case of semiperipheral neoliberalization after that point. Pro-market reforms "saved" the economy from political divisions that disrupted it in the 1980s. Starting with the early 1990s, the country embarked on a path of (apparently) sustainable growth, thanks to central bank independence, foreign remittances, and a booming business-processing and call-center industry. As in other cases, this has meant more poverty, more inequality, and joblessness. Just like in India, inclusive neoliberalism has only deepened "jobless growth."

Yet, oligarchic influences slowly recolonized the economy, turning public attention away from neoliberalization to corruption and resulting in a series of unstable governments in the 2000s. Throughout these decades of post-Marcos democracy, then, neither neoliberal hegemony nor resistance to it, but rather the persistence of oligarchy and the instabilities propelled by that, put their stamp on the Philippines.

The Turn to Inclusive Neoliberalism

Benigno Aquino III's presidency (2010–2016) focused on institutional reforms, including both growth planning and redistribution (Mouton and Shatkin 2020). His economic reforms led to the country's best rates of growth ever since the 1980s, with

gross national income increasing steadily 6 percent per year (Batalla 2016; Webb and Curato 2019, 57). These years could have established some potentials for a consent-based economic system.

Nevertheless, the attempt at inclusive neoliberalism was only partly successful. Initially, signs of victory abounded. While sustaining market reform, Aquino III also expanded direct and conditional cash transfers. He even involved poor communities in local budgeting, appropriating an important strategic item from the twenty-first-century left. Again lacking an employment-producing strategy under Aquino III, a liberal-left coalition focused on rooting out corruption and integrating popular participation (bottom-up budgeting) as the primary ways to alleviate poverty and inequality. It was hoped that community participation would prevent looting by the privileged. However, neither poverty nor inequality diminished, despite consistent GDP growth. In fact, Ramos (2021) shows that compared to similar countries in its region (Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia), the Philippines not only scored worse in terms of poverty and inequality but actually had lower rates of growth over three decades. Malaysia, the most heterodox in its economic policies, was the fastest-growing country among these four. These developments undermined the trust of the people in the established institutions and prepared the scene for Duterte (Rodan 2021, 243–45). What this shows us in light of the Turkish example is that neoliberalism, especially under oligarchic conditions, has very little chance of sustaining consent.

The semi-successful reforms had an even more pernicious under-the-radar result. The perception of disorder and chaos already had a particularly heavy place in Filipino politics, due to the geographically and culturally fragmented nature of the country (Contreras 2020; Kusaka 2017; Rafael 2022). Communist and Islamist insurgencies, and afterward drug wars, further reinforced this perception. With inclusive neoliberalism, World Bank policies created a new kind of perception of disorder: to the usual troublemakers—criminals, militant Muslims, and communists—were added, in the new "law and order" imaginary, the lazy and drinking poor, who were envisioned as new sources of disorder, allegedly nourished by misguided welfare policies. In other words, under oligarchic conditions, unsupported by right-wing mass organizations, even inclusive neoliberalism dynamited consent-based rule rather than acting as a policy package that led to hegemony.

Autocracy and Violence as Remedies for Fragmentation and Perceived Disorder

Enter Duterte. His populism was not explicitly a reaction to growing inequalities, but it was not independent from them either. As in Modi's populism, it expressed concerns about the disruptive consequences of inequality. These concerns were condensed in perceived "crime" in the Philippines (for India's parallels and differences, see Chatterji, Hansen, and Jaffrelot 2019, 6–9). Yet, in contrast to India, these concerns and their expression took shape in an oligarchic context, with no right-wing hegemonic tendencies in sight.

Before Duterte, populist leaders had rhetorically challenged the Filipino oligarchy. However, unlike in India and Turkey, this populism never mobilized *organized* followers. On the contrary, Garrido's (2019, 172, 177–78) research reveals that the poor supported Estrada (president between 1998 and 2001) independent of their organizational ties, and indeed, frequently, *despite* their organizations' opposition to this populist leader. Thompson (2010), who differentiates between "reformist" and "populist" leaders, also pointed out that Estrada's opponents had much better organizational links, and they did not come close to his popularity. According to Thompson, reformist leaders in the Philippines oriented programs and promises around "good governance," which populist leaders lack. Along the lines of this populist tradition, Duterte did not offer any consistent economic and developmental promises in his 2016 presidential campaign (Curato 2017). Strangely claiming socialist credentials during the campaign, Duterte in fact broke with the pro-poor populist tradition of the country, embodied in Estrada (Thompson 2016), and relied on the upper and middle classes as his (relatively more) solid bases of support.

Along with reaction against drugs and disorder, Duterte built especially on middle-class (but also poor) anger against bottom-up budgeting. The middle class felt it was being ripped off by conditional cash transfer institutions. And the poor found them redundant and ineffective. Duterte appealed especially to young, educated employees but also emerged as a protector of the heretofore neglected overseas Filipino workers (Rodan 2021, 245–46). None of these classes were organized, and Duterte's rule further discouraged them from organization, since they were "directly" represented by his discourse and actions. No institutional "mediation" was necessary. Rather than counting on organized supporters,[10] Duterte built on disorganized supporters' assumption that efficiency—ensured by an iron fist—was the way to prosperity. Across class divides, supporters perceived Duterte's discipline and harshness as the best remedy against the (allegedly) increasing laxity, illegality, and chaos in the country (Kenny 2019, 127–28; Kenny and Holmes 2020; Webb 2017, 91–93). Nevertheless, nonparticipatory aspects of inclusive neoliberalism continued under Duterte, which also partially accounts for the popular support behind him. His administration further expanded the highly conditional cash transfers, which involved monitoring the behaviors of the poor and eliciting their cooperation against insurgents (Rafael 2022, 27–30). His was a further pacifying and disempowering version of inclusive neoliberalism, and it helped appease middle-class concerns. The Turkish case clearly demonstrates that the political right is not necessarily against welfare and inclusiveness, especially when its mass organizations

10 In the initial months of his term, Duterte did attempt to bring some top leaders of the country's armed and nonarmed leftist actors into his cabinet. Among them, especially Leoncio Evasco helped build mass mobilization in favor of the regime's welfare and other policies. Once Duterte felt he had consolidated his rule, however, the left's organizational base was once again declared terrorists, and leftists either resigned from or were prevented from joining the cabinet (Ramos 2020, 492–93).

can steer them in a desirable direction. It was specifically the lack of mass organizations in the Philippines that sharpened right-wing reactions to a more inclusive neoliberalism, and thereby rendered the path to a hegemonic autocracy unimaginable.

A fundamental aspect of Dutertonomics was the departure from earlier neoliberalism, without, however, setting sails to a comprehensive state capitalism. In that sense, Dutertismo was an in-between case (i.e., between classical neoliberalism and Erdoğanism). Duterte did in fact develop statist policies in the realm of infrastructure. But unlike in the case of Turkey, these were not paralleled by statist policies in economic realms unrelated to infrastructure. Moreover, even his infrastructure push, arguably initiated under the "inclusive neoliberal" Aquino III's administration (Santiago 2019), remained more reliant on the private sector when compared to Erdoğanism. Duterte's market-reliant infrastructure projects also contrast with others in his region, such as Joko Widodo's in Indonesia, which have more clearly shifted in the direction of state capitalism (Wijaya and Camba 2021). Another weak spot of Duterte's infrastructure push was dependence on Chinese funds and expertise. Toward the end of his term, many of these projects were stuck "due to the Philippines' lack of experience in certain technology such as railway construction, the bickering among regional-local elite over train stops, and the ongoing negotiation to settle differences between Manila and Beijing," as well as resistance from the military to cooperation with China (De Castro 2019, 224).

The social result of these policies has been the persistence of the oligarchy. Even though Duterte came to power with the promise of quickly eliminating the oligarchy, both quantitative indicators and his relations to specific oligarchs show that he perpetuated it by transferring wealth from some to other oligarchs (Mendoza and Jaminola III 2020, 271–72). Since the wealth of the oligarchy was not redistributed or expropriated, Dutertismo failed to deliver on one of its primary infrastructural promises: free irrigation, in a country where access to irrigation has been one of the primary agricultural problems (Mendoza and Jaminola III 2020, 272–74). Even though the Filipino state made major strides in this direction, progress was ultimately thwarted by lack of funds. In short, *inclusive neoliberalism and a semi-statist infrastructure push remained under the shadow of oligarchic fragmentation* in the Philippines. In the absence of a party-movement nexus organized around an economic platform, many citizens' only hope was (and arguably, still is) for an autocrat to put an end to oligarchic divisions and smoothly implement the promised development. Such hopes, however, further entrench oligarchic autocracy and prevent hegemony.

The resultant "felt" and "experienced" politics on the ground had a flavor quite distinct from that among Erdoğan's and Modi's supporters. Ethnographic observations emphasize both regular voters' and the more active campaigners' strong identification with the president (Arguelles 2019; Curato 2016). Identification with Duterte led to spontaneous action among the poor, the middle class, and even overseas Filipino workers. These actions gave people a sense of agency: they felt they mattered, and they looked to the future with hope. In these regards, they were similar to Erdoğan and

Modi supporters. However, Duterte supporters did not feel any deep identification with his party, his ideas, his policy paradigm, or his cause. These were lacking *even among the activist campaigners* (Arguelles 2019). This is very different from many Erdoğan enthusiasts who fuse neighborhood activities with the cause, the party, and the ideology they *share* with the Turkish president (Doğan 2016; Tuğal 2009). Duterte's autocracy therefore reproduced the clientilistic relations between the power holders and the people rather than uniting them around a common program, ideology, or lifestyle. Such unification happened in India's autocracy along ethnic lines and in Turkey across ethnic divides.

The upshot of the above discussion of economics, party, and ideology is that Duterte did not drastically change patterns of accumulation and distribution, or their everyday experience among the population. Whereas Erdoğanism is based on an economic and organizational appeal to the masses, and Modi's BJP combines a strong organizational appeal with a relatively weak economic mass outreach, Dutertismo, by contrast, had weak ties to the masses both organizationally and economically. No wonder, then, that analyses of Duterte's mass appeal have turned mostly to his theatrical performances, and economic and political analyses mostly to his reproduction of older oligarchic structures. Duterte's economic reforms cannot be the reason for his disproportionate popularity in comparison to his predecessors, whose policies he merely tweaked. The scholarship on his popularity has therefore focused on the change Duterte *did* make: his resort to dramatic violence. To properly interpret his performance of violence, we need to situate it in both Duterte's biography and in the country's entrenched oligarchic path. It is not simply and only Duterte's performance that explains his autocracy. The oligarchic structures of the Philippines, which neoliberalization and the lack of right-wing mass movements have reproduced, thoroughly shaped that performance.

Duterte's Persona: The Predator and His Death Squads

If the obsession with fertility defines Erdoğan and celibate masculinity distinguishes Modi, sexual violence jokes were the signature move of Duterte. Commenting on a past prison riot where a missionary social worker got raped and killed, Duterte famously said he (as the mayor back then) should have been the first to rape her, since she was so beautiful (Curato 2016, 93). The ease with which Duterte could joke about sexual violence, and get popularly endorsed for it (Rafael 2022), was due to the specific ways in which oligarchy and neoliberalization intersected and reinforced each other in the Philippines. In other words, performance is not something actors simply choose. A study of the economic structures and organizational legacies that make some performances more likely and appealing than others is necessary.

Duterte hails from a local elite family. Instead of coming to politics from mass organization and mass mobilization, he first parachuted into politics as appointive vice mayor of Davao City in 1986, before he was elected as mayor in 1988. Even though Duterte built his credentials through local rule (Webb and Curato 2019, 61), just

like Modi and Erdoğan, his skill set was very different from those two. It was much less development centered and focused instead on crime (Kenny and Holmes 2020; Teehankee 2016, 293–94). During his local rule, he deployed vigilantes to kill suspected criminals (Breuilm and Rozema 2009). Duterte embraced the death squads on many occasions and once declared: "I am the death squad" (Curato 2017, 150). As president, he waged a brutal "war against drugs," culminating in five thousand deaths in his first two years (Ramos 2020). The number was close to thirty thousand toward the end of his term. Both the official police and the death squads were central to this campaign of violence, and the brutality of the death squads was at least implicitly sanctioned by the authorities (Kenny 2019, 126). Even though it is next to impossible to come up with reliable numbers due to systematic distortions by authorities, one study has disclosed that unofficial actors carried out close to half of the killings (Atun et al. 2019).

Several analysts have emphasized that not just violence itself but its manner of execution and popular reception were central to Duterte's rule. The cheering for the death of drug dealers at mass rallies, the video recordings and photographs of their killings (along with images of their frightened families), and the display of their mutilated corpses turned death into a "spectacle" (Reyes 2016). As importantly, these spectacles highlighted the manhood of the punisher. Masculinity and violence are important to Modi and Erdoğan also, but they combined under Duterte in a quite specific way.

Since pro-Duterte mass organization was so thin, the autocrat relied mostly on performance in the crassest sense of the term, again highlighting the relationship between organizational legacies and performative choices. He owed much of his popularity to joking about his erections, organ size, and his sexual pursuits, as well as about "sharing" beautiful women with police officers and the rape of his opponents (Parmanand 2020, 12; Rafael 2022, chap. 3). The jokes were not context free and "harmless," as his allies argued (Parmanand 2020, 15). For instance, he publicly encouraged anti-insurgent combatants to ignore human rights concerns and "joked" that each could rape up to three women (Parmanand 2020, 13). On more than one occasion, he also boasted that he ordered, and would keep on ordering, soldiers to shoot female communist militants "in the vagina" (Parmanand 2020, 22). Police, military, and death squad activities delivered on the promise of these jokes.

The payoff of violence for the upper and middle classes is obvious: they put the poor in their place. However, some studies have documented the acceptability of Duterte's drug war even in poor neighborhoods. Death squads and extrajudicial killings were embraced by many poor people, sometimes including drug users themselves, as well as their friends and families (Arguelles 2019, 2021; Kusaka 2017, 70–71). This violence built on and reproduced patronage (Jensen and Hapal 2022, 11–15, 18ff.). The older men and sometimes women who have patronage links with the police and politicians upheld local notions of generosity and reciprocity, and saved many people from hunger and sickness (in the absence of proper welfare mechanisms). But these people also enforced traditional morality and monitored the behaviors of their neighbors. They separated the good from the lazy drunkards and the criminally inclined. They even

provided information to violent actors regarding the poor who deserved punishment. In other words, the lack of welfare mechanisms, along with the absence of a hegemonic actor that promised them, prepared the social scene for a specific kind of masculine performativity and violence, and their favorable reception on the ground.

Finally, at first sight, Duterte's violence also seemed to reduce the fragmentation within the oligarchy. Duterte's mother had been among the top opponents of Marcos, although his father served in a Marcos cabinet (Rafael 2022, 15; Teehankee 2016). The family dynasty was among the peripheral members of the oligarchy, and their dissent was one the factors that spurred the EDSA revolution. Duterte's violent policies over his tenure appear to have mended this rift: the son of Marcos cooperated with Duterte's daughter and the duo won a resounding victory in the elections of 2022.

But even the 2022 elections were a mixed success for Dutertismo. Duterte initially tried to ensure the continuity of his rule through handpicking successors (Gera and Hutchcroft 2021). The election of his daughter as vice president could be read as the successful culmination of this effort, but the failure of his earlier attempts to have her run for the presidency showed the limits of Duterte's power. More broadly, the return of the Marcos clan to the presidency prevented any smooth entrenchment of Dutertismo. It is doubtful that there will be any Dutertismo beyond Duterte's six years in power. The situation is clearly very different from Erdoğanism's twenty-plus-year grip over Turkey. However, even though Duterte could not anoint his successor, through aiding the Marcos clan he was able to prevent an opposition figure from winning the presidency, which could have landed him in jail.

An institutionally focused analyst could object that variations between the resilience of these regimes is more readily traceable to differences in their institutional designs. Modi is not term limited. Reelected, Erdoğan will have five more years to serve, after the parliamentary system was conveniently presidentialized to serve his purposes. Duterte stepped down after one term, abiding by the no reelection principle that every post-1986 president has followed. But this possible objection actually lends further support to my argument. Erdoğanism became so hegemonic that the regime felt comfortable enough to alter entrenched institutions: the office of the presidency had been merely symbolic—with governmental power invested in the prime minister especially from the late 1940s onward—until Erdoğan quit the position of prime minister to become the president in 2014. By contrast, despite his apparently extreme arrogance and machismo, Duterte could not even attempt to meddle with the entrenched institutions of post-Marcos liberal-oligarchic government (which also rules out decontextualized versions of the performativity explanation of the rise of autocracies). Therefore, institutions cannot explain the variation: Erdoğan's power to alter institutions comes from the mass movement, as well as his regime's tampering with neoliberalization.

Conclusion

Can autocratic rule in India and the Philippines be as sustainable as in Turkey, if the parameters that have defined them so far do not change? Erdoğan has been able to hold on to power for more than twenty years thanks to a fluctuating combination of pro-market and statist policies, as well as a strong combination of state, civic, and paramilitary activity. Modi's rule integrates the latter, but not so much the former aspect of Erdoğanism. Will Modi's autocracy be as entrenched as Erdoğan's in the absence of a neoliberalism-statism hybridization?

In other words, can Modi's BJP become hegemonic? Contrasting today's autocratic tide with classic populism, Sinha (2017b, p. 4,178) asserts:

> [T]oday's populism cannot become hegemonic, and we will not have the long-duration rule by populists as seen in the days of classic populism. [T]he crises to which populism is a response are continuous, and newer dimensions of it are revealed daily. In Modi's case, the crises of growth, jobs, and agricultural productivity have deepened due to his own policies, such as demonetization. That the leader who promised to resolve the crisis, and to compose a people around such a promise, is unable to fulfill his promise is testing Modi's capacity to maintain his hold over the people and prevent their disintegration into alternate compositions.

Indeed, as stated earlier, Modi's rise was partially due to politicized grievances with inclusive and statist aspects of Congress-led rule. Nevertheless, Sinha's argument does not apply to Erdoğan, who has stayed in power *longer than* classical populists such as Lázaro Cárdenas, Juan Domingo Perón, José María Velasco Ibarra, Atatürk, and Getúlio Dornelles Vargas (who respectively ruled for six, ten, thirteen, fifteen, and eighteen years). Erdoğan's surpassing of the classical populists is already remarkable, and the 2023 elections did not terminate his spree. What sustains popular support for Modi's reversion to a less inclusive and less statist version of neoliberalism is primarily ethnoreligious, organized populism, but as Sinha points out, this might cause crises as much as solidify the BJP's base (cf. Manor 2019, 128). This article has therefore argued that "ethnic autocracy" is a fitting label for this regime. By contrast, the AKP's more hegemonic autocracy incorporates (albeit in inconsistent fashion) inclusive neoliberalism, statism, and relatively more classical neoliberal reactions to both. The Turkish ruling party's record of experimentation with all of these allows a more hegemonic domination. Despite this contrast, it would be rash to conclude that Modi's BJP is bound to stick to a bland neoliberalizing program and thereby remain less hegemonic than the AKP. The BJP can revive and reinforce Hindu nationalism's rich antimarket strands in the coming years, just like the AKP first appeared to forgo and then flexibly remobilized the Turkish Islamist tradition's antimarket tendencies.

The BJP therefore has the potential to move "toward hegemony" (Palshikar 2019), even if it still faces many impediments on this road (Manor 2019).

Autocratic rule in the Philippines faces challenges of a different kind. Duterte's shift away from the economic policies of the relatively democratic (post-Marcos) era was almost negligible. What constituted his appeal was rather a spectacular increase in police and paramilitary violence, and a populist framing thereof. Duterte's political heirs (Marcos's son and Duterte's daughter) might choose to perpetuate the economic, military, and paramilitary aspects of Duterte's rule, but it is dubious that they could replicate his populism, which (unlike in the Turkish and Indian cases) is attributable more to Duterte's (still socially conditioned) biography than to party- and civic-based legacies. It is too early to tell what a violent regime shorn of stylistic-personalistic populism will look like, but it is quite possible that its popularity will not be as intense as that of Duterte, which might push his heirs to marginalize electoral politics in a way Erdoğan and Modi have not had to, or to change other structural aspects of the regime.

The comparative analysis of these cases problematizes both globally comprehensive statements regarding the links between neoliberal crisis and the rise of strongmen, and case-specific statements regarding the weight of masculinity in each regime. Performance of masculinity, even though itself creative and generative, is largely shaped by the specific paths of liberalization and deliberalization, and by the repertoires of social movements and political parties in each nation. Rather than treating dramatized masculinity as a constant feature of contemporary autocrats, scholars need to study the social and political-economic making of these performances, and the differences generated by these variegated makings.

In short, it is the mass organizational attributes of these regimes that account for their differences from each other, along with their economic dynamics. The more amorphous differences in masculinities create a lot of analytically meaningful variations among these cases. However, these do not shed as much light on the *core differences* between the regimes this article has explored (e.g., dissimilarities in their capacities for consent-generation and their resilience). Those contrasts can more readily be traced back to variations in their mass organizational attributes and economic characteristics.

In conjunction with comparative studies of other twenty-first-century right-wing elected autocracies (Tuğal 2022), the analysis here suggests that the most fruitful way forward for the study of the right integrates political-economic, organizational, institutional, and performative dimensions of social experience. Each of these levels informs us even when handled separately. Still, their multipronged analysis across several cases gives us the deepest insights into the rise and resilience of right-wing autocracy.

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