

FURKAN Y. BENLIOGULLARI

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EDUCATION

University of California, San Diego

Expected 2027

Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science

Fields: International Relations, Qualitative Methods, Comparative Politics

Committee: David A. Lake, Benjamin J. Appel, Branislav L. Slantchev, Emilie Hafner-Burton, and Stephan Haggard

University of California, San Diego — M.A., Political Science

2022

University of Minnesota Law School — LL.M.

2017

Istanbul University Law School — LL.B.

2016

RESEARCH

Dissertation (Book Project)

Territorial Disputes in the Shadow of Law: Effect of International Law on Use of Force and Third-Party Responses

How the strength of legal claims shapes the use of force in territorial disputes and third-party responses. The first two papers examine the use of force and peaceful resolution between disputants; the remainder of the dissertation draws on an original third-party intervention dataset to show that the disputants' legal claims shape the probability and severity of the third-party interventions.

Job Market Paper

[“Territorial Disputes in the Shadow of Law: Legal Claims and the Use of Force”](#)

Asks when legal claims to disputed territory restrain—or license—military force, using dispute-year analysis of an original extension of the Huth–Croco–Appel data on post-1945 territorial disputes. Finds that a challenger's stronger legal claim emboldens it where the challenger holds a clear military advantage and pacifies it at or near military parity, and that a target's stronger legal claim deters the use of force.

Best Graduate Paper Award, ISA-West (2026).

Work in Progress

“Legal Claims and Peaceful Resolution: How Strong Legal Claims Facilitate or Prevent Resolution.”

Second dissertation paper.

Finds that a challenger's strong legal claim facilitates the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes, while a target's strong claim hinders or stalls it.

“AI Writes the Dissenting Opinion: Why AI Agents Systematically Disagree with Legal Claims Datasets.” *Abstract submitted to A Field Guide to Using AI Agents in Political Science (eds. Sarah Dreier and Charles Crabtree).*

Replicates the Huth–Croco–Appel legal claims coding with AI coders (GPT and Claude) across 168 territorial disputes, 1945–2025. AI coders produce internally consistent claim-strength values that systematically diverge from the human-coded values and adhere more closely to ICJ case law, while under-

performing at independent fact-finding and at restricting themselves to the law applicable at the time.
Develops a structured, repeated-run API protocol for stable AI coding of legal variables.

“Upsetting Allies and Adversaries Alike: Reactions to Russia’s Conquests in Ukraine.” *In progress*.

“The United Nations Security Council and International Crises” (with Benjamin J. Appel). *In progress*.

“Help Me: Why Do Leaders Appeal to the United Nations Security Council in International Crises?” (with Benjamin J. Appel). *In progress*.

Original Datasets

Legal Claims and Third-Party Interventions in Territorial Disputes

Intervention-level data on third-party diplomatic, economic, and military responses across 94 post-1945 territorial disputes; coding designed and supervised across two six-member undergraduate research teams (twelve coders) over two years.

Territorial Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1945–2014

Identifies and codes territorial MIDs directly from the Gibler and MID 5.0 narratives and independent sources, matching each MID to its underlying territorial dispute—recovering territorial MIDs that existing MID projects code as non-territorial.

AI-Coded Legal Claim Strength in Territorial Disputes, 1945–2025

Claim-strength codings and full legal-reasoning transcripts for 168 territorial disputes, generated through a structured and repeated-run protocol (OpenAI and Anthropic APIs) that replicates the Huth–Croco–Appel coding scheme and presents a parallel scheme based on ICJ jurisprudence.

Public Writing

- “What Is At Stake in Turkey’s Election?” *IGCC Blog*, 2023.
- Four essays (in English and Turkish) on Turkish constitutional law, separation of powers, and checks and balances, *Tanik Legal Association Blog* and *Tanik Law Magazine*, 2012–2016.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

American Political Science Association (APSA)	2025, 2026
International Studies Association (ISA), Annual & Global	2025, 2026
ISA-West	2025, 2026
ISA International Security Studies Section (ISSS)	2025, 2026
Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)	2026
Western Political Science Association (WPSA)	2026

Invited Workshops & Talks

- Graduate Student Workshop on International Conflict, University of Alabama, 2026
- Bridging Asia Conference, 2026
- Emerging Scholars Conference in Public Law, University of Texas at Austin, 2025

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & GRANTS

U.S.–Asia Grand Strategy Predoctoral Fellowship, <i>University of Southern California</i>	2025–26
Best Graduate Paper Award, 2025 ISA-West Annual Conference	2026
TA Excellence Award, Department of Political Science, UC San Diego	2024–25
First Generation Scholars in the Profession Travel and Accessibility Grant, APSA	2025
Graduate Student Travel Scholarship, MPSA	2026
LL.M. Achievement Scholarship, University of Minnesota	2016–17
Graduation with High Honors, Istanbul University	2016
High Academic Merit Scholarship, Fatih University	2011
Top 100 Scholarship, Prime Ministry of Turkey	2011

TEACHING & MENTORING

Instructor of Record, UC San Diego (undergraduate)

• International Law	Summer 2025, Summer 2026
• Introduction to Legal Reasoning: Reading and Writing	Summer 2026
• International Organizations	Summer 2025

Teaching Assistant with Discussion Sections, UC San Diego (undergraduate)

Designed and led weekly discussion sections for introductory courses:

• Introduction to International Relations	Spring 2025
• Introduction to Comparative Politics	Fall 2023, Fall 2024
• Political Inquiry (introductory research methods)	Winter 2023

Additional Teaching Assistantships, UC San Diego 2020–2025

18 further teaching assignments (including repeated offerings) across international relations, comparative politics, political economy and development, and pre-law curricula, at the undergraduate level. Full course list at furkanbenliogullari.com/teaching.

Mentoring

- Designed and led two six-member undergraduate research teams through the department’s Research Apprenticeship Program (twelve students, 2024–2026), training them in qualitative methods, international law, territorial disputes, and dataset construction.
- Mentored undergraduates applying to law school and graduate programs on applications, research, and professional development.

Pedagogical Training

- Specialist in Student-Centered College Teaching (Advanced), UCSD, Spring 2025
- Practitioner in Student-Centered College Teaching (Intro), UCSD, Winter 2025

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Advocates for Human Rights , Minneapolis, MN	2017–18
<i>Research Intern, Women’s Rights and International Law</i>	
Dorsey & Whitney LLP , Minneapolis, MN	2018
<i>Legal Translator</i>	
Tanik Legal Association , Istanbul, Turkey	2012–16
<i>Secretary-General (2014–16); Board Member (2012–16)</i>	

SERVICE

Reviewer: <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>	
Discussant, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2026
Discussant, Workshop on Authoritarian Regimes, Democratic Backsliding, and International Organizations, UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC)	2022
Mentor, Research Apprenticeship Program (RAP), UC San Diego	2024–26
Member, Pre-Law Board, UC San Diego	

SKILLS

Methods: qualitative and multi-method research (Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, Summer 2024) — case analysis, archival and legal-documentary research, structured coding of disputes; game-theoretic and formal modeling; quantitative analysis of conflict data (panel and dyadic designs, survival analysis).

Programming: R, Python, L^AT_EX; LLM-assisted data coding and annotation pipelines (OpenAI and Anthropic APIs).

Legal: Attorney, New York Bar (admitted 2023); legal research on treaties and international jurisprudence (ICJ, PCA).

Languages: Turkish (native), English (fluent).

MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association; International Studies Association; Peace Science Society (International); WPSA, MPSA, SPSA; IO/Democracy Group, UC San Diego.

REFERENCES

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