

What can a name reveal under repression?

Open political expression is costly under authoritarian rule, so the behavior that survives is often **ambiguous by design**. Naming a newborn is one such act: it enters official records and everyday life, yet it never declares an allegiance.

- *Deniz* is the ordinary Turkish word for *sea*, one of the secular names the 1934–35 language reform brought into use.
- Its association with the revolutionary **Deniz Gezmiş**, sentenced to death in **October 1971** and executed in May 1972, gave an established name a recognizable political meaning.

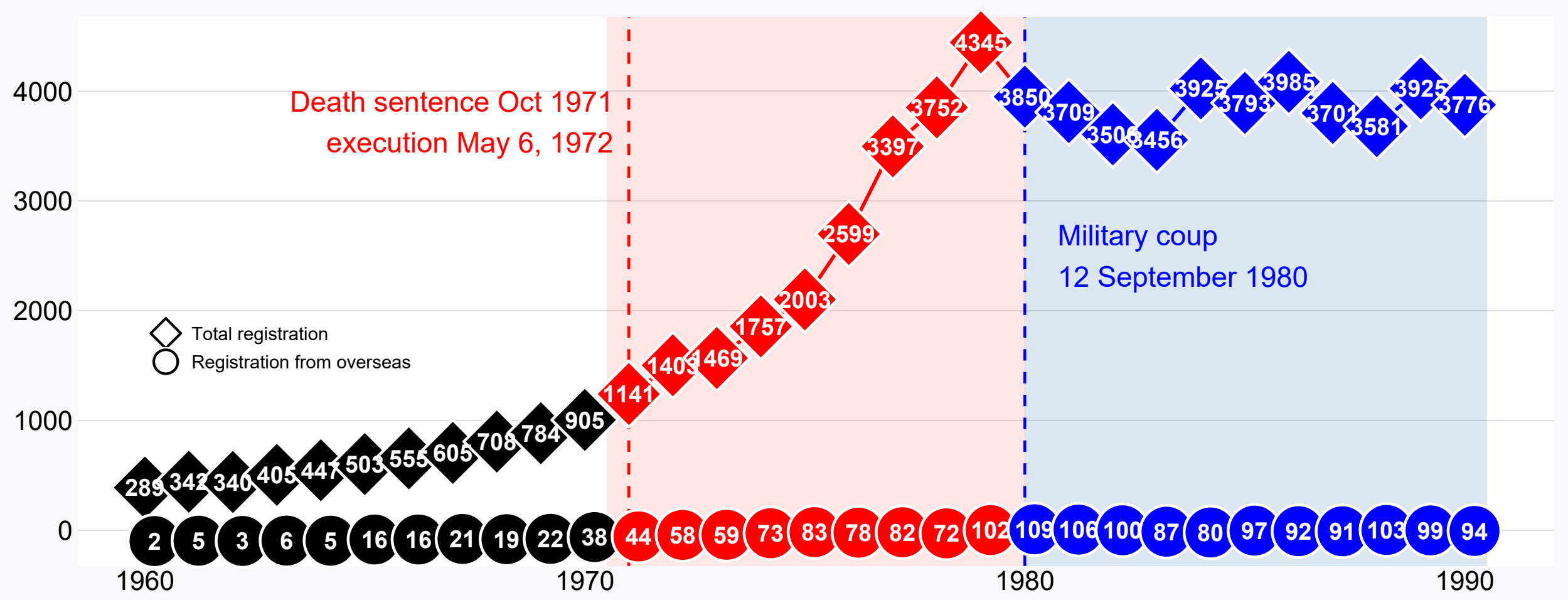
The political signal hypothesis. Events can lend a name a political association that makes its adoption expressive; later repression can raise the perceived cost of carrying it. **Naming itself remained legal throughout.**

The findings in numbers

Registered births, 1960–1990, in 636 districts	28 million+
Matched comparison names in the pool	40, pool of 41
Deniz above its benchmark, 1971 → 1979	+27.4% → +219.7%
Extra Deniz births through 1979	11,309
Modeled response above projection, 1979 → 1982	≈311% → ≈234%
Rank on the growth-and-contraction signature	1 of 41, both models
Exact permutation level, (m + 1)/41	p = 0.024
Ninetieth vs tenth percentile of 1969 TİP support, 1979	+59%

The contraction reduces the earlier divergence without erasing it, and no other name of the same vintage both rose and fell this way.

Thirty years of registrations

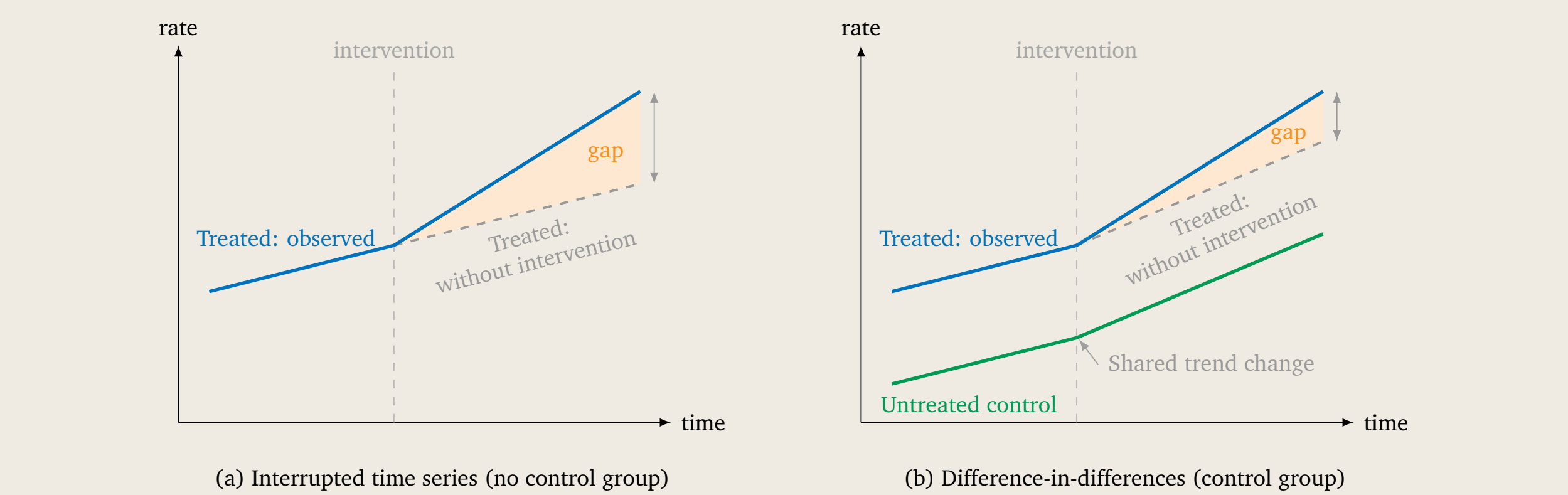


Annual counts of newborns registered as Deniz, 1960–1990. Diamonds are total registrations and circles those recorded abroad; shading marks the **diffusion window** (1971–1979) and the **post-coup era** (1980–1990).

The counts rise through the 1970s, turn down around the **coup**, and remain far above their 1960s level. *Counts, not rates: the series shows the practice at the scale the register actually recorded it.*

Why this needs a design, not a trend

A nationwide shock reaches **every district at once**, so there is no unexposed region to serve as a control, and a name’s popularity can move for reasons that have nothing to do with politics.



(a) Projecting a name’s earlier trend gives a counterfactual from its own history; (b) a difference-in-differences instead borrows the change in an unexposed control group under parallel trends, which a nationwide shock does not provide.

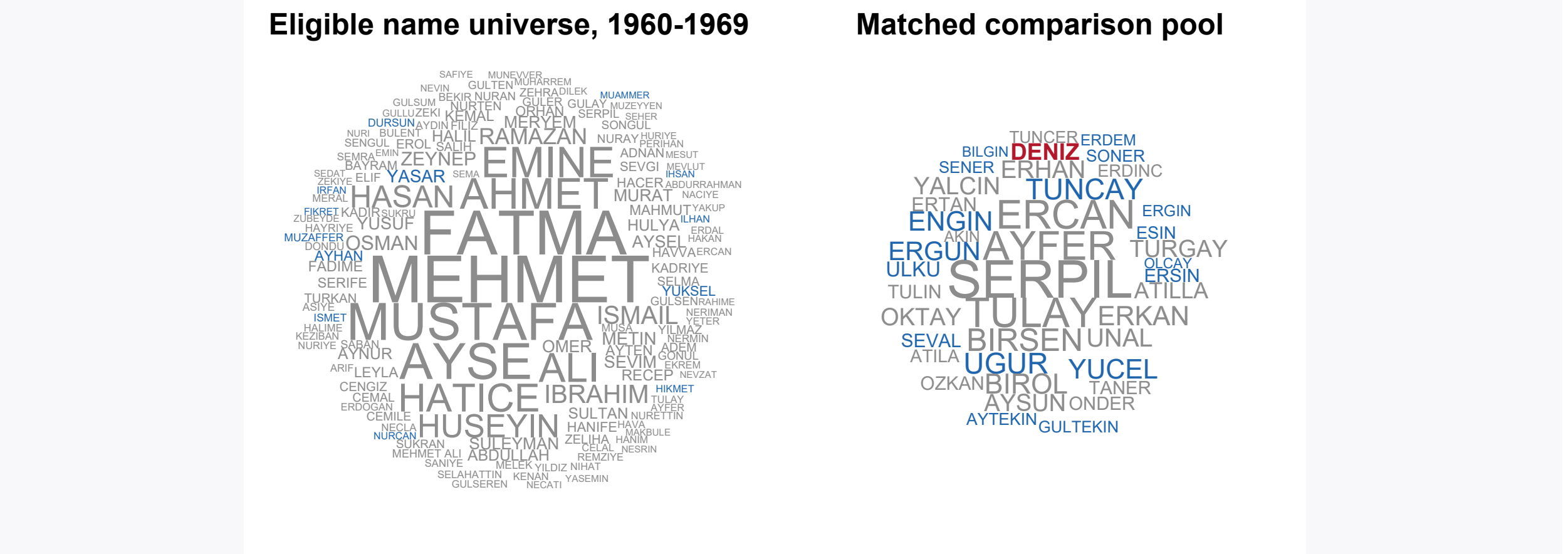
The register supplies its own comparison. The same 1930s language reform that coined *Deniz* coined a cohort of secular names sharing its era and its modernizing tailwind. From that cohort I build a **matched pool of forty non-revolutionary names**, frozen **before any estimate is formed**.

The design pairs a **projected continuation** of each name’s own earlier trajectory with **comparisons across names**, and states the assumptions under which each identifies diffusion and suppression.

A counterfactual built from inside the data. When a shock reaches every region, matched names of the same vintage supply the comparison that geography cannot.

Building the pool, and how inference works

Evidence. Turkish civil birth registrations, **1960 to 1990**, more than **28 million** births assigned to **636 districts**, with 1969 vote shares for the TİP, the leftist party banned in 1971.

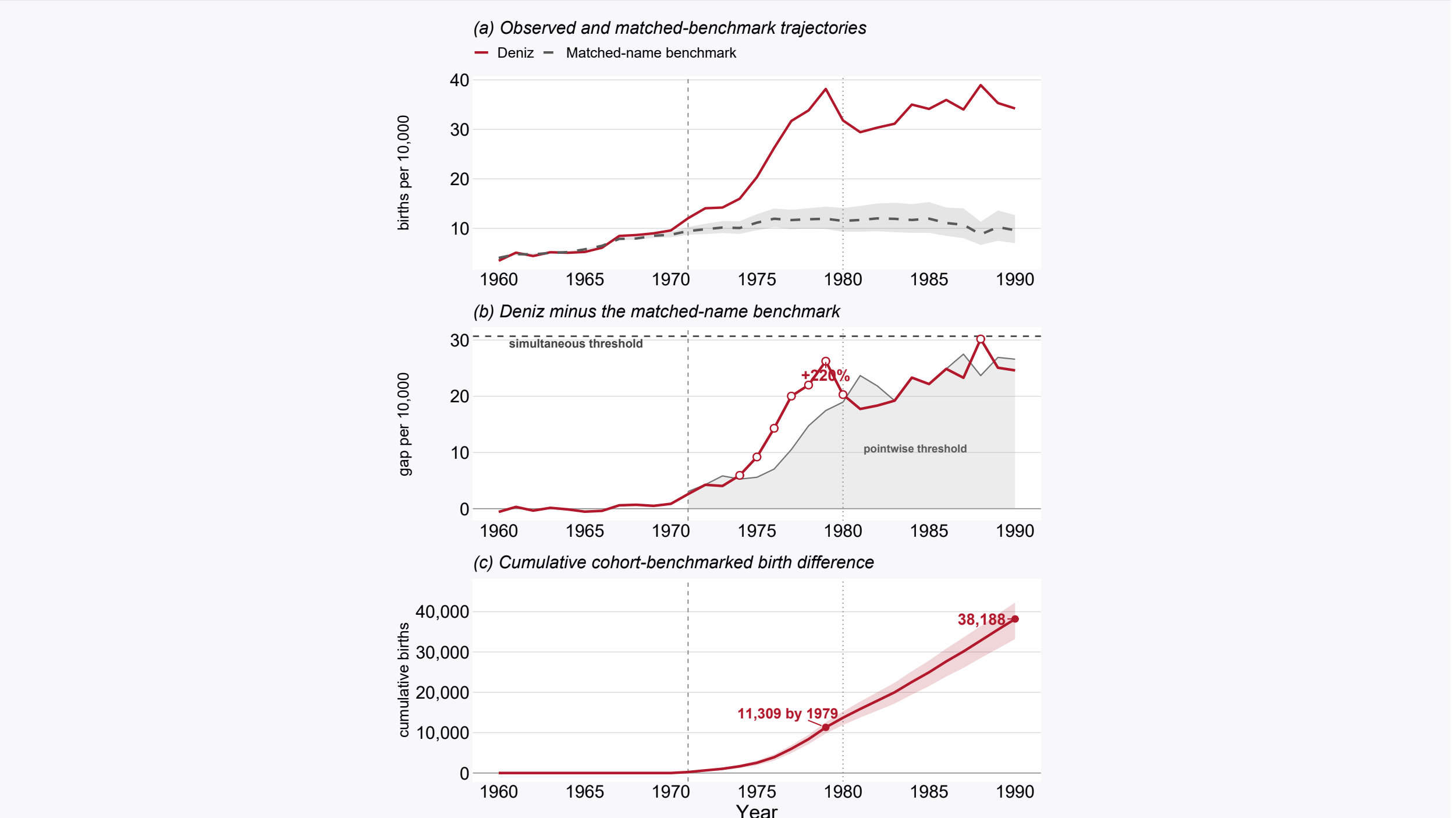


Eligible language-reform names (left) and the **matched pool** (right). Size reflects 1960s frequency; Deniz is red.

Matching. Mahalanobis nearest-neighbor matching *without replacement* on pre-1971 features selects **40 donors**, giving a pool of **41 names**. Donor ranges bracket Deniz on all four matching features.

Permutation inference. Each name is refitted through the *same* model, changing only the focal outcome. The joint statistic is a **leave-one-out Mahalanobis distance** on the pair (post-1971 diffusion, 1980 coup response); with *m* donors at or beyond Deniz, the exact one-sided level is $p_{\text{exact}} = (m + 1)/41$, **with no Monte Carlo error**, under exchangeability within the pool. The floor is $1/41 = 0.024$.

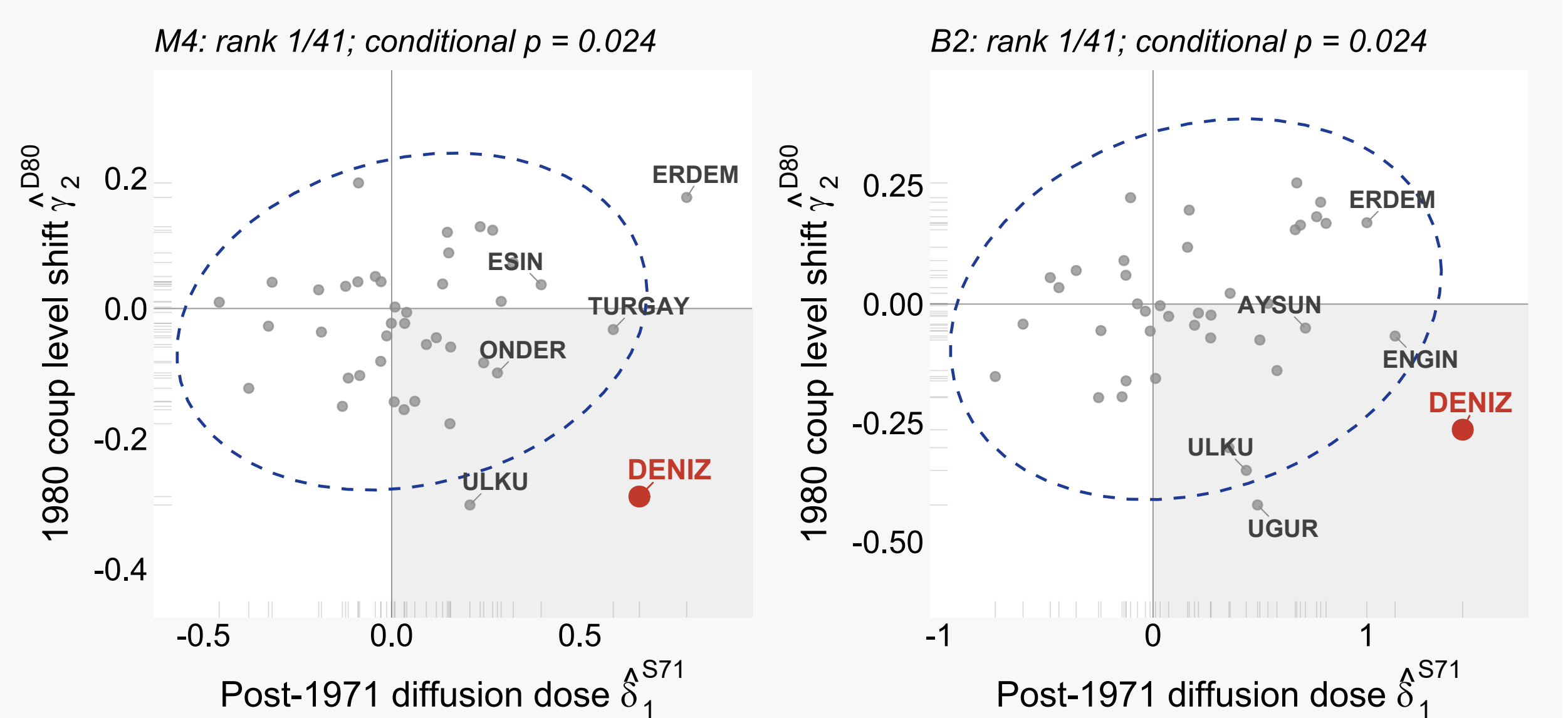
Deniz against its matched benchmark



(a) Deniz and the comparison names per 10,000; (b) annual gaps with pointwise five-percent references; (c) cumulative birth differences.

In 1971 Deniz exceeded the benchmark by **2.59** per 10,000, or **27.4 percent**. By 1979 the gap reached **26.24**, or **219.7 percent**, a cumulative **11,309** births. It contracts after 1980 **without returning to the benchmark**.

The growth-and-contraction signature

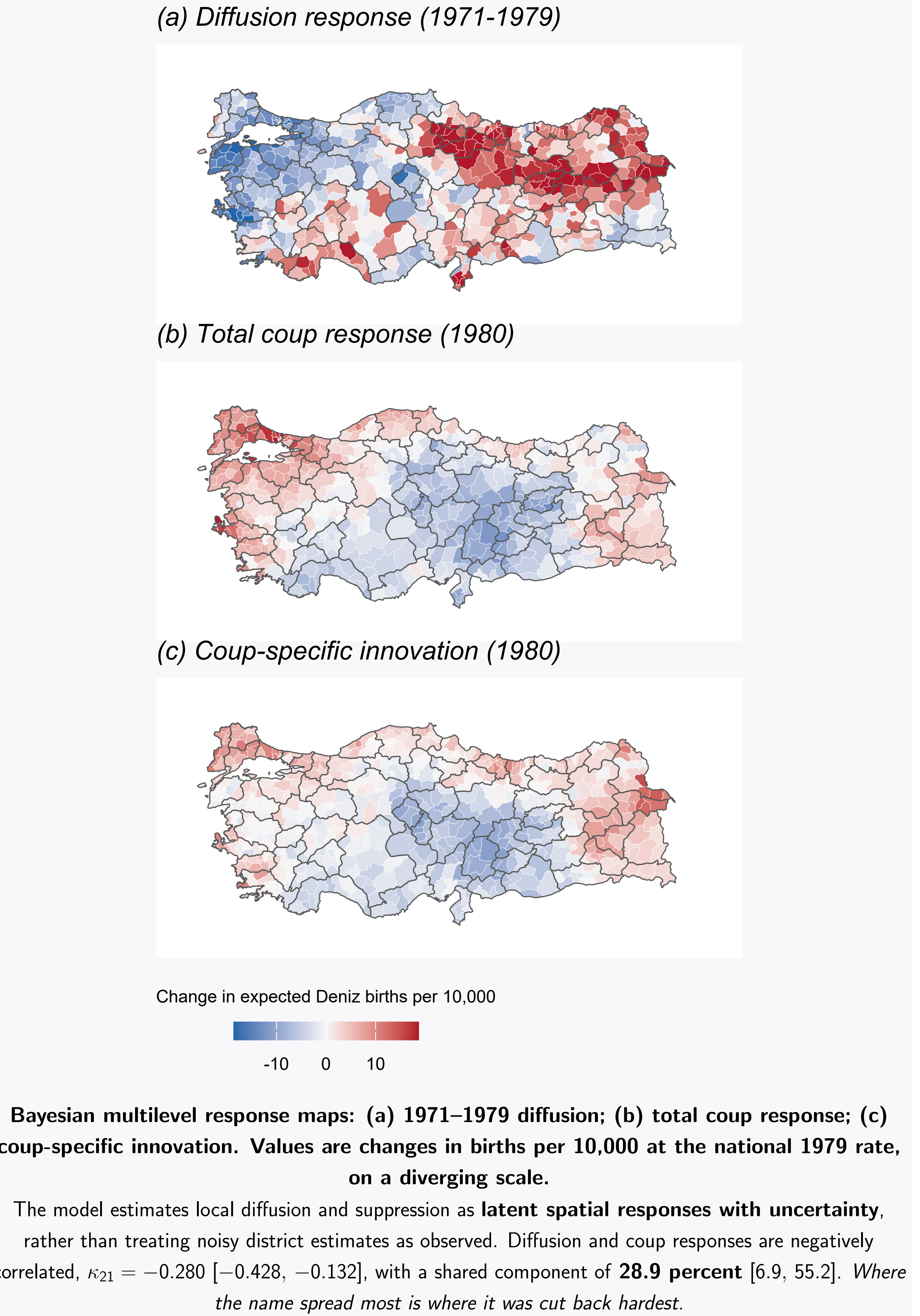


Deniz and the forty matched names on the plane of diffusion against coup response, under province and district models. Ellipses describe donor distributions.

The signed contrast **ranks first among all forty-one names under both** analyses, with Mahalanobis distances of **15.92** and **12.53**, and first place persists across five comparisons with rank-one frequencies of **42.1 to 95.4 percent**.

One name behaves unlike its cohort. Deniz ranks first on the joint growth-and-contraction signature among forty-one names, under both analyses.

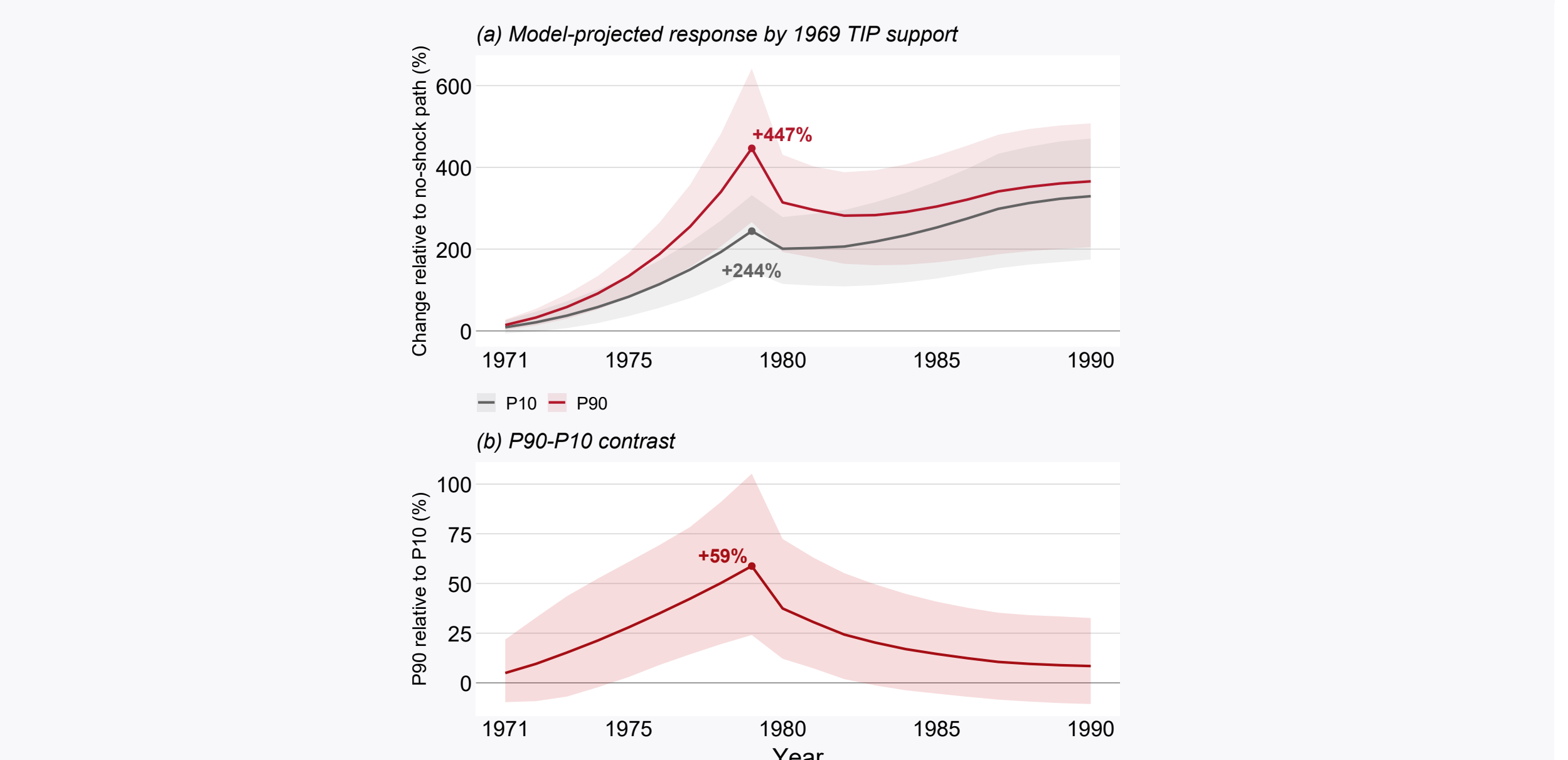
Where the practice spread, and where it was cut



Bayesian multilevel response maps: (a) 1971–1979 diffusion; (b) total coup response; (c) coup-specific innovation. Values are changes in births per 10,000 at the national 1979 rate, on a diverging scale.

The model estimates local diffusion and suppression as **latent spatial responses with uncertainty**, rather than treating noisy district estimates as observed. Diffusion and coup responses are negatively correlated, $\kappa_{21} = -0.280$ [−0.428, −0.132], with a shared component of **28.9 percent** [6.9, 55.2]. *Where the name spread most is where it was cut back hardest.*

Prior left support conditions the response



Province responses by 1969 TİP support: (a) change from the no-shock path at the tenth and ninetieth percentiles; (b) their draw-wise contrast with a 95 percent band.

In 1979 the modeled ratio is about **59 percent higher** at the ninetieth than at the tenth percentile, with bands excluding zero **from 1975 through 1982**.

What the records cannot settle

Intentions are unobserved: the design shows aggregate departures, not motives. **Events within an episode are not separable**, so the turns cannot be assigned to the sentence, the memorandum, or the coup individually. **Findings are conditional** on the projection rules, the comparability of the selected names, and registry coverage.

The contraction has a political geography. It runs deepest where the name had spread most and where the left had polled strongest, without erasing the earlier gain.