The Forgotten Genocide: The Influence of Diasporas on the Recognition of Genocides

Strohmeyer, Anne

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Anne Strohmeyer

s2171910

Leiden University

Bachelor Project: Social Movements & Political Violence

Supervisor: Dr. C. Jentzsch

Second Reader: Dr. J. Masullo

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1. Introduction

"In this case, we Germans […] share responsibility, perhaps even guilt, in the genocide committed against the Armenians."[1] (Gauck, 2015). Those were the words of the German President, Joachim Gauck, the evening before the centennial of the Armenian genocide on the 23rd April 2015. A year later, a proposal passed the Bundestag recognising the genocide.

Between 1915-1917, around 2 million Armenians were deported by the Ottoman Empire. Around 1.5 million[2] Armenians died either through systematic killing or starvation (Alayarian, 2008; Cohen, 1996, p. 512). About 80-90% of the Armenian population was annihilated, and many of those which survived the genocide emigrated. Among some academics, the Armenian genocide is considered to be not only one of the first genocides of the 20th century, but also the prototype for those yet to come (Cohen, 1996, p. 512; Smith, 2006).

Historically, the Armenian genocide has not received a lot of attention and recognition compared to other genocides such as the Holocaust. The denial of the Armenian genocide marked it a non-event, as can be seen in the speech by Adolf Hitler in 1939 before invading Poland, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" (Alayarian, 2008; Smith, 2006). Recognition not only serves as a means of justice for the victims and survivors, but also decreases the likelihood for recurrence (Ringrose, 2020; Smith, 2006).

As of 2021, 30 countries have recognised the Armenian genocide. This progress has been fostered partly, as seen in the case of France (2001), by an active Armenian diaspora which lobbied for the recognition (Kebranian, 2020). Other countries which have recognised the genocide include Russia (1995) and the Netherlands (2004) (Armenian National Institute, 2021). Turkey (previously the Ottoman Empire) to this day has not (Hofmann, 2006; Szabo, 2018). Germany, a former ally of the Ottoman Empire, only passed a proposal in the Bundestag in 2016 where the events were

[1] All translations from German are done by the author

[2] The exact figure is unknown and contested. Alayarian (2008) considers that "1894–1896, around 300,000; in 1909, around 30,000; between 1915 and 1916, 1.5 million; from 1918 to 1922, about 300,000" Armenians died. 1.5 million is the number most commonly referred to when describing the events between 1915-1917.

explicitly referred to as a "genocide". Raising the question, why Germany recognised the genocide so late as opposed to its European counterparts.

This thesis proposes the argument that the movement of the Armenian diaspora influenced the recognition of the genocide in Germany. The aim will be to explore the influence of the diasporas on genocide recognition in the host-state. Therefore, the following question will be posed: "*What explains a diaspora movement's influence on the recognition of genocides?*".

To answer this research question, major contributions on the recognition of genocides as well as on diasporas and their mobilisation will be outlined. Following this, two theories that can explain the connection between a diasporas movement influence and the genocide recognition will be presented. The first is based on the social movement theory using Tarrow (2011) and Koinova's (2019) work, and the second examines foreign policies based on Godwin's (2018) work. These will then be tested by means of a qualitative single-case study using process tracing. To do this, various resources such as parliamentary speeches, policy briefs as well as websites and the engagement of the Armenian diaspora will be used. Finally, conclusions will be drawn based on the findings to answer the research question and to provide suggestions for further research.

2. Literature Review

Throughout history, diasporas have played a considerable role in lobbying for the recognition of genocides internationally, as well as in their host-states (Baser & Toivanen, 2017). This section will outline a brief overview of the existing literature.

Defining Genocides

The conceptualisation of genocides differs. The word itself is derived from the Greek prefix *geno* (race or tribe) and Latin suffix *cide* (killing) (United Nations, n.d.). In the 1940s, the lawyer Raphael Lemkin intended to criminalize genocides on an international level in order to stop the annihilation of human groups and entire ways of life with ethnic traditions by introducing the concept of genocide. Lemkin considered it to be politically and socially motivated, rather than a mass killing - as it was regarded by, for example, John Cooper (Irvin-Erickson, 2016, pp. 3, 4, 7).

The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Article II defines genocide as:

> ...any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: Killing members of the group; Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

This definition has been widely recognised and by 2019 152 states have adopted it. Thereby, this is a widely accepted definition and will be adopted for this thesis (Akhavan, 2016; Catic, 2015; Aram, 2014; Kebranian, 2020; Ringrose, 2020).

A Brief History of Genocides

Though Winston Churchill referred to a "crime without a name" in 1941, genocide as a concept is first mentioned in 1942 by Raphael Lemkin in an attempt to make it an international crime (Irvin-Erickson, 2016; Ringrose, 2020). In 1948, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide codified the term. Yet, it was only in the 1960s when Jewish and Armenian diasporas referred to Lemkin's work, that it started to take precedence. Through the atrocities in the 1990s in Rwanda and Yugoslavia, the term eventually became more known among the civil public. The scholar John Cooper argued that the Holocaust started a new chapter in the world, of state-organized and intentional killing, considering it to be the first genocide. Contrastingly, Lemkin terms the 1932-33 Ukrainian Great Famine, European settler colonialism and the Armenian Genocide as 'genocides', which occured prior to the Holocaust (Irvin-Erickson, 2016).

Genocide recognition

Genocide recognition is vital for the prevention of its repetition and to bring justice to those who fell victim as well as to the survivors (Alayarian, 2008; Ringrose, 2020). It is a question of justice, as well as one of liability (Baser & Toivanen, 2017). According to Catic (2015) the labelling of genocides is motivated by two main factors; the first being morality, and the second being taking

responsibility and recognising injustices of the past. Ethno-nationlist groups are considered to be crucial agents in the process of recognition (Catic, 2015, pp. 1691-1692). The United Nations (UN), historically prefer terms such as “ethnic cleansing” and “genocidal acts" avoiding the term for legal reasons, as euphemisms inevitably alleviate the obligation to take action and intervene (Akhavan, 2016; Avedian, 2012; Ringrose, 2020, p. 125).

Moreover, political incentives can also explain recognition, whereby local conditions can be a motivator, influenced by the historical memory of events and consequently the public perception (Nienass, 2020). Additionally, geo-political motivations as well as global perceptions, rather than domestic perceptions, can also play a role through performative law. These are laws which have an effect beyond the law itself through meaning or interpretation. Yet, they are also subject to political agendas or bias stemming from local conditions (Kebranian, 2020, p. 253).

Diasporas

Adamson and Demetriou (2007) consider diasporas to be a cross-border social collectivity which is maintained throughout the years to firstly, sustain a “collective national, cultural or religious identity” through links with the homeland (real or imagined) through a sense of “internal cohesion”, and secondly build transnational links and internal organisational frameworks to meet the demands of the social collective (p. 497).

Diasporas were already present in Ancient Greece, and have been forming for centuries (Cohen, 1996, p. 508). Both the Armenians and Jewish diaspora have faced genocides in history, as both were minority religions in their respective countries or areas at the time. (Berdichevsky, 2007). According to Sökefeld (2006) diasporas form through mobilisation. Therefore, identities and communities are the product of a process of mobilisation.

For this paper, the aforementioned definition of Adamson and Demetriou (2007) will be used. Building on previous definitions, they consider diasporas to come in waves, while not always acting unitarily (Cohen, 1996; Esman, 1986; Koinova & Karabegović, 2017; Safran, 1991). Their

definition has also been recognised by other notable scholars of diaspora studies, like Koinova & Karabegović (2017).

Diaspora mobilization

Using social as well as transnational movement theories and concepts as a basis, the literature has found various conditions to explain the mobilization of diasporas (Keck and Sikkings, 1998; McAdam et al., 2001; Tarrow, 2011). These may include networks, political opportunities, critical junctures, narratives, and transformative events (Chernobrov & Wilmers, 2020; Godwin, 2018; Koinova & Karabegovic, 2017; Koinova, 2018a; Liberatore, 2018; Mutlu-Numansen & Ossewaarde, 2019). These concepts are considered as applicable to the study of diaspora mobilization, and scholars have developed frameworks to explain diaspora mobilisation both nationally and transnationally (Sökefeld, 2006). Recent work has also linked diaspora mobilization and foreign policies, with a greater focus on the context under which diasporas mobilise (Godwin, 2018; Koinova, 2018b).

The influence of diasporas on a state's policies vary. In some instances, the diasporas influence current situations by referring to the past, in order to exert pressure on their host-state in hopes to incite an intervention by the host-state abroad (Shain, 2002). Diasporas may also influence collective memory, and therefore construct a narrative to gain leverage and influence on an occurring crisis (Nikolko, 2019). Furthermore, diasporas serve as a communicator between the host-state and another state (Baser & Toivanen, 2017). Additionally, regarding genocides, diasporas may pressure governments to intervene and end violence (Godwin, 2018). As outlined, the influence - as well as motivations - of diasporas is diverse both regarding the host-state and homeland.

3. Theoretical Framework

The influence of diaspora movements, as outlined above, has been discussed in various contexts. To investigate the potential of this influence, this thesis aims to explain the impact of a diaspora movement on the recognition of genocides.

Emergence of Social Movements

Tarrow's (2011) framework is most suited for the research of genocide recognition, as it encompasses a variety of factors including grievances and common identities that allow us to highlight the multifaceted nature of diasporas. The framework provided by Tarrow (2011) discusses four factors for the emergence of social movements: repertoire of contention, networks and mobilising structures, constructing contention and political opportunities and threats (pp. 29-33). Tarrow (2011) proposes that contention can be connected with themes which can either be linked to newly invented, connected to the culture or are partly merged with "new frames of meaning" (p. 29). Collective action is then activated and sustained through these social networks (Tarrow, 2011, pp. 29-30).

Through repeated interaction, the contention is further shaped where grievances, for example, can be used to create a bigger claim. This is done by finding collective identities, as well as building new ones. Political opportunities - "*...consistent [...] dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting people's expectations for success or failure*" - can then trigger collective action leading to engagement with contentious politics (Tarrow, 2011, pp. 76-77). These are often encouraged among others by political realignment, divided elite, influential allies, splits within the elite, and the state losing the capacity to work against the disagreement (Tarrow, 2011, p. 76).

Although Tarrow (2011) encompasses vital aspects of mobilization, Koinova (2019) - building on Tarrows framework - provides a theory for coalition-building. Koinova's framework sees coalitions for the recognition of genocides to be effective if: a common adversary is present, there is a transitional justice claim for a specific issue and the host-land context is conducted in line with human rights (p. 1891). She draws on Levi and Murphy's (2006) work for this, arguing that in order to achieve a long-lasting coalition, one political issue needs to be identified (Koinova, 2019). Since often more than one diaspora group in a host-country struggle for genocide recognition this is suited. Therefore, Tarrow's emergence of social movement theory will be used as a base, and Koinova's framework will allow to expand on Tarrow's focus on networks.

Based on the theories on social movement emergence, the following argument will be made: *through contention, networks, political opportunity and coalition-building, a diaspora movement's influence on the recognition of genocides can be explained.*

Theory on foreign policy

Diaspora research has been criticised for the lack of focus on the context (Koinova, 2018b). Considering that the topic of genocides is a sensitive matter, the foreign policy might influence a country's decision for recognition. Through role theory, Godwin (2018) provides a framework to assess the effect diasporas in combination with the role of a country have on the intervention in foreign countries. According to role theory, the decision-making of actors (states) is not only influenced by their own intentions and self-image but is also restricted by the perception of other actors. That is because states consider themselves to fulfil a role not only for themselves but in this regard also to other states on the international stage. Therefore, the expectations of other states may influence behaviour (Godwin, 2018, p. 1327). Godwin´s (2018) findings in the study showed that slight contextual variation can lead to different outcomes (p. 1325). Although this is done in relation to foreign policy outcomes, the theory can also be applicable for domestic outcomes. Instead of arguing that states behave "internationally", the focus is on how international constraints influence their actions "domestically". Here, the role of a country's perception on the world stage might affect internal decisions, including those of genocide recognition.

Therefore, based on the influence of foreign policies I also propose that *a foreign actor's interest in the diaspora movement influences the recognition of genocide.*

4. Methodology

This section will first outline the research design method chosen for the single-case study which is process tracing. Then, the case selection of the Armenian Diaspora in Germany will be elaborated. At the end of the section, data collection will be briefly outlined in order to address the research question.

Qualitative Research design

The research evolves around diaspora mobilization, the independent, and genocide recognition, the dependent variable. To analyse this, a qualitative analysis has been chosen. Since it can explain the relation between diaspora movement's influence and genocide recognition, as opposed to a quantitative study which could find a relationship but could not explain the influence further. Therefore, in order to find what explains the influence of diasporas, a *qualitative single case study* will be carried out using *process tracing* (PT).

A single-case study allows for an in-depth inquiry, which may contribute beyond the case and engages with wider academic debates. Using a single-case study will help assess how the variables shaped the outcome. With PT, a sequence of events is traced back to find a causal mechanism. More specifically, the causal relations of the hypothesized mechanisms and outcomes will be investigated. (Halperin & Heath, 2017; George & Bennett, 2005). As PT goes beyond searching for a simple correlation, deeper connections can be analysed, which will be done through means of deduction. To do this theory- testing will be used to see how social movement theory - using Tarrow (2011) and Koinova's (2019) framework - explain the recognition (Beach, & Brun Pedersen, 2013).

Case selection: The Armenian Diaspora in Germany

To investigate the research question, a case is chosen where the genocide has been recognised, and the Armenian diaspora is active. For this, the case of the recognition of the Armenian genocide[3] in Germany was chosen as the Armenian diaspora is a vital one. Germany, being responsible for leaving around six million murdered in concentration camps in WW2, was allied with the Ottoman Empire at the time of the Armenian genocide. Germany, is known for its *Verantwortungspolitik* (politics of accountability) of *Aufarbeitung* (historical reappraisal) in dealing with WW2, yet it did not recognise one of the first major genocides of the 20th century until 2016. The European Union (EU) counterparts, such as France, had already recognised the genocide since 2001 (Ghazanchyan, 2021). Considering that The Armenian diaspora has been present for decades, raising the question

[3] The genocide was also committed against other ethnic groups. Notably "Christians (Arameans/Assyrians, Greeks of Asia Minor and East Thrace)" (Hofmann, 2005). However, the focus for the study will be on the Armenians.

of what had changed which led them eventually successfully mobilize in 2016.

Data collection

The analysis will be conducted through the chronological tracing of events from the 19th century (when the Armenian diaspora first began mobilising) to 2016 (the year Germany officially recognised the genocide). To do this, the events have been split into four time periods; 19th century to 1991 (Early Formation of the Diasporas), 1991 to 2001 (The independence of Armenia to the first petition in the Bundestag), 2001 to 2006 (Effects of the petition to the 2005 proposal in the Bundestag), and 2006 to 2016 (After first Bundestag proposal to final Bundestag proposal recognising the genocide). This enables us to explore the diaspora's influence when the topic is brought to the Bundestag and understand with more nuance before and after the recognition.

For the analysis, primary as well as secondary sources will be used. The existence of *contention* will be indicated by democratic instruments such as petitions or protests. Organisations, including the organisation of activities - as announced on the societies platforms and on websites - will be utilized to illustrate whether *networks* have been established. Additionally, for *coalition-building,* correspondence between the diaspora and institutions will be indicated by posters, official events, speeches or newspaper articles that refer to the diaspora directly. Lastly, protests, newspaper coverage, statements of politicians or events suggest *political opportunity*. For the second argument, the influence of *foreign policy* will be elucidated by political statements, newspaper articles and policy briefs. The arguments that social movement theory and/or foreign policy can explain the recognition of genocides is supported if the aforementioned evidence is provided in line with the framework of the theories. The influence of the diaspora movement on the proposal will be indicated by direct democratic repertoires such as petitions and by the addressing of the diaspora by politicians or parliamentary members.

Small initiatives might be overlooked here, however, by focusing on coalition-building where many initiatives often come together, the research aims to encompass these as well (Koinova, 2019). Nevertheless, it is important to note that bias can be found in the literature and source,

particularly with a topic as sensitive as genocide, as countries still debate over who bears responsibility. Therefore, focusing on sources from the state as well as the diaspora is vital.

5. Analysis

Before analysing the case of the Armenian diaspora in Germany, this section will provide a brief historical background of Armenia and the Armenian genocide. It will then expand on the Armenian diaspora and migration in general, to lastly outline the recognition of the Armenian genocide by countries.

Historical Background

The Republic of Armenia is a country in Southwestern Asia, with a population of approximately 2.9 million people, 97% of these being Armenian ("Armenia and Karabakh.," n.d.). The nation of Armenia was one of the first to adopt Christianity in 300 AD and has been surrounded by Muslim neighbours for decades (Berdishevsky, 2007, p. 121). Throughout the years, Armenia has seen itself under the rules of many foreign entities including the Russian, the Ottoman and Persian empires. Christians (Armenians) as well as Jews were often treated as second class citizens under the rule of the Ottoman empire (Alayarian, 2008, p. 9). Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after WW1, Armenia briefly became independent before becoming a member of the Soviet Union in 1922 (Bolsajian, 2018). In 1991, following the fall of the Soviet Union, Armenia declared independence (Alayarian, 2008, p. 7).

The Armenian Genocide

From 1894 to 1922 over two million Armenians were killed in an attempt to exterminate the Armenian nation (Alayarian, 2008, p. 9). When the Ottoman Empire joined WW1 in 1914, the Armenians were seen as an internal threat, planning revolts and sympathising with the Russians (Ihrig, 2016, pp. 162-163). When in 1915, in Anatolia, Armenians (and other groups) were sent into the Syrian Desert, it was considered to be the "definitive solution to the Armenian Question" by Tâlât Pasha, the leader of the Committee of the Union and Progress[4] (Dündar, 2011, p. 277).

[4] The Committee of the Union and Progress, also known as the Young Turks, overthrew the Turkish government in 1908. With the aim to "Turkify" the Ottoman society (Alayarian, 2008).

Either through concentration camps, severe hunger or drought, the deportation was an ultimate death sentence. Many Turkish researchers describe this event to be one of relocation, however foreign scholars largely agree that this was a tool of the government to carry out their genocide (Dündar, 2011, p. 276).

The Ottoman Empire and Germany formed an alliance in August 1914. The extent of Germany's knowledge of an of its involvement in the genocide has been subject to debate, however, consensus emerged that Germany knew "enough" (Anderson, 2011, p. 207). In July 1915, as the deportations were taking place also in areas which were not under threat of occupation, the German chancellor Theobald von Bathmann-Hollweg was informed of the "aim of destroying the Armenian race" (Anderson, 2011, p. 205). In December 1915, he stated: "Our only goal is to keep Turkey by our side until the end of the war, regardless of whether the Armenians perish or not." (Berlin, 2014). As articles were banned under which the Ottoman Empire may be portrayed negatively, it is clear Germany censored their media (Anderson, 2011). As Ihrig (2016) concludes, Germany decided to "sacrifice the Armenians as the price of preserving Ottoman goodwill toward Germany" (p. 38). Following the genocide about 80-90% of the population did not survive (Gust & Gust, 1918).

Armenian Migration and Diasporas

Diasporas have been in existence for centuries, and the Armenian diaspora - also referred to as *spjurkahajer* - is no exception (Hofmann, 2006). Although diaspora communities existed prior to the genocide, in reaction many fled to neighbouring Middle Eastern countries, or to other countries like the US. Consequently, more ethnic Armenians live outside Armenia today than inside. It is estimated that about 2.3 million live in Russia, 1.5 Million in the US, and half a million in France as well as other countries (Bolsajian, 2018). The Armenian Diaspora have fought for decades for the recognition of the genocide (Alayarian, 2008, p. 6). In 1985 the UN Commission on Human Rights report took on the subject in its report. When the European Parliament stated "the tragic events of 1915–1917 [...] constitute genocide" in 1987, it was a milestone for international recognition (Alayarian, 2008, p. 26). Resolutions recognising the genocide were then adopted by countries including Russia (1995) and France (2001). As of 2021, 31 nations have recognised the Armenian genocide, excluding Turkey (Armenian National Institute, 2021). Although domestic

rules have become more lenient for talking about the genocide, the state formally dismisses it (Hofmann, 2006).

Theoretical Analysis of the case

In order for a diaspora to be established, mobilization needs to take place (Sökefeld, 2006). This analysis will focus on how the German Armenian diaspora mobilized around genocide recognition in the Bundestag. To do so, Tarrow's (2011) framework, along with Koinova's (2019) concept of coalition building will be used to test for the social movement theory. Additionally, to examine whether the foreign policy of Germany played a role Godwins (2018) role theory will be analysed.

The Early Formation of The Diaspora - 19th century to 1991

Armenians began migrating to Germany in the 19th century, though the biggest wave came in the 20th century. The 19th century Armenians were mainly students from East-Armenia, previously the Tsar Russia (*Allgemeine Information*, n.d.). Small student organizations have formed ever since, one of the first being in Leipzig 1885 (Dreusse, 2008). Following the Armenian genocide, the *German-Armenian Society* in 1914 and the *Verein der Armenische Kolonie* - now *Armenische Gemeinden zu Berlin* - was founded in 1923.

As only a few genocide survivors settled in Germany it was not until the 1960s-70s that larger structures and institutions were set up in Germany (Anderson, 2011; Dreusse, 2008; Grigoryan, 2018). In the 1960s when the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* (Guest-workers) came to Germany, several Armenians which were previously located in Turkey joined (Dreusse, 2008). In the 1970s-80s, a second wave came to Germany that fled the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in Azerbaijan, the Islamic Revolution in Iran or the Lebanese civil war (*About Armenians in Germany*, n.d.). Among those were also many families (*Armenische Gemeinde zu Berlin e. V.,* 2021). Considering the variety of motives for the Armenian migration to Germany - economic, prosecution, refuge, they were diverse also in their cultural backgrounds (Armenische, 2021). Hyphenated identities and loyalties started to form. For example, one may identify as a "Russian-Armenian" or "Turkish-Armenian" (Hofmann, 2005, p. 17). This also led to a variety of customs and languages (Pauli, 2015).

Consequently, although all shared the identity of being Armenian, they differed in many other aspects sharing a variety of sub-identities.

Although the first commemoration event was noted in 1965 in Germany, and the first protest - of four students - for recognition of the genocide in 1975, had not yet created bigger mobilisation (Nikoghosyan and Göğüş, 2020). Since the 1960s, the Armenian diasporas started to use the term genocide on a global scale (Ihrig, 2016). Additionally, in 1987, the situation with Turkey started to be strained as they were trying to join the EU, for which one of the conditions was the recognition of the Armenian genocide (Kebranian, 2020, p. 257). Though not fully encapsulated yet, the political power of a shared grievance became more relevant.

Building a network - 1991 to 2001

In 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed, Armenia as a nation became independent. With the collapse, Armenian emigration to Germany commenced. This time, many young Armenians migrated directly from Armenia, including academics, writers and those seeking an education. Consequently, the Armenian Diaspora in Germany was, and still is to this day, young (*Armenische Gemeinde zu Berlin e. V.*, 2021.; Dreusse, 2008).

In 1993, the *Zentralrat der Armenien in Deutschland e.V. (*ZAD) was founded as the Umbrella Organisation under which several other organisations were formed - including the *Armenische Gemeinde zu Berlin*. It was founded to foster cultural interactions and raise awareness about the Armenian genocide (*Der Zentralrat*, n.d.). The ZAD also works in collaboration with the Armenian Republic, supporting a variety of social and cultural associations and building an Armenian community (Grigoryan, 2018). The Armenian Diaspora is building a network here, which is considered by Tarrow (2011) as a key component for the activation (as well as sustaining) of a movement. By having cultural and social associations the in-person contact is increased building community among the diaspora, which advances the collective action of the movement.

As the network grew throughout the years, organisations started to become more vibrant, and new societies emerged. This inevitably activated collective action. One of them is the *Arbeitsgruppe*

Anerkennung - Gegen Genozid, Für Völkerverständigung e.V. (AGA) which was founded in 1999. In cooperation with a variety of organisations, they aimed for Genocide recognition (*Arbeitsgruppe Anerkennung.,* n.d.). Its abbreviation, AGA, stands for "Auskunft - Genozidforschung - Aktion" (Information - Genocide research - Action), highlighting that through awareness and established research, they were pursuing action and appeared to be effective. In 2000 the AGA, along with the *Verein der Völkermordgegner*, handed in a petition to the *Petitions Committee of the German Bundestag* demanding recognition by Germany as well as their invocation for the Turkish Republic to follow (*Es ist Zeit.*, 2000). The petition collected approximately 16,000 signatures, of which about 10,000 coming from Turkish citizens in Germany, as well as from abroad (*Arbeitsgruppe Anerkennung.*, n.d.). The vast number of signatures exemplify the momentum the movement had built.

Among the signatures were also other (minority) groups, notably the Sinti and Roma (Zentralrat deutscher Sinti und Roma e.V.) The signature of Sinti and Roma showcase a central component of Koinova´s (2019) coalition-building, notably a common adversary, as both groups advocate for the recognition of genocides. This is partly due to the movement making a broader claim beyond grievance, one of genocide-recognition as aforementioned. As Levi and Murphy (2006) highlight, a single collective goal is crucial for a movement. By using genocide recognition this was done and allowed not only for collective action among the Armenian diaspora, but also with other groups. Although these were in the early stages, the mobilization of the movement successfully handed in a petition to the Bundestag.

However, the *Petitionsausschuss* advised against a parliamentary decree. The reason given is the *Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC)* which was considered to be efficient to meet the demands of the petition by the Bundestag (Hofmann, 2006, p. 48). This did not suffice with the demands of the movements. However, the petition was the first time a proposal for the genocide recognition was brought to parliament (Nikoghosyan & Göğüş, 2020). Therefore, even though the petition failed, it showcased the collective action (activated and sustained through the network) of the diaspora.

Constructing contention and making use of political opportunity - 2001 - 2006

With the petition, awareness was raised among politicians. For example, the *Deutsch-Armenische Gesellschaft (DAG)* in April 2002, received a response from the Member of Parliament (MP) Cem Özdemir where he explains: "However, a resolution by the Bundestag to us does not seem to be the appropriate form of commemorating the murdered Armenians." and explains that he will take part in a church service instead to remember the victims (Özdemir, 2002). Furthermore, he considered a German parliamentary solution to be counterproductive for recognition. Though the demands of recognition were not met, the movement gained confirmation that their demands were heard.

In the following years, the Armenian Diaspora started to organise more protests. This can be seen on the website of the AGA which documents regular protests since the 24th April 2004. Under the words "NEVER AGAIN!" protestors gather in Berlin in front of the Turkish embassy and the Bundeskanzleramt yearly demanding for the genocide recognition. Maintaining awareness for the genocide became a central component of the organisation. This contention of the genocide has turned into an organisational point for the diaspora, through a shared history. Using a term such as "never again" frames the demands beyond the genocide itself, as it is considered injust. This process of building contention, according to Tarrow (2011) allows the movement to expand further.

Simultaneously, historic documents were published by an Armenian institute from Yerevan which searched through Germany's Archives. Also involving Germany's responsibility in the genocide, released in 2004 and published on the AGA website (Institute of history academy of sciences et al., 2004). This brought legitimacy, but also highlights Germany's role, challenging comments that the resolution would not be suitable in the Bundestag. The scope is expanded to include Germany's role.

Throughout the process, interactions not only among Armenians but also others, were taking place on the 24th April. Thus, the Memorial Day did not only foster the network, but also provided a consistent political opportunity. For example, on the 24th April 2005 the *Evangelische Kirche*

Deutschland (EKD) used *Aram I* (The Catholic Aller Armenier) in their statement as a reference, calling for the recognition of the genocide. This was done in remembrance of the 90 years since the genocide. Hereby appealing to the German government to take responsibility and calling for Turkey to do the same as well as asking for a conciliation between Turkey and Armenia. The church aided the network of the movement because "Churches and academies offer a forum for encounters and conversations between Turks, Armenians and Germans." (EKD & Vetter, 2005). As Tarrow (2011) considers a host-setting as an influential factor for movements to germinate (p. 30). The church increasingly started to establish itself as a host, as can be seen by the quotation.

A political opportunity was emerging as, with the church, the movement was working with an influential ally. This is considerably beneficial for the advancement of a movement as it encourages collective action by raising the expectations for success among its members (Tarrow, 2011, p. 80). Additionally, considering that in 2005 around 53 million (of 82 million) people affiliated themselves with the church, this carried weight. Of those, around 25 million with the Evangelical Church, by whom the address was made (Ferk, 2019). Hereby raising more awareness as a large part of the civil society is reached.

Attention was given to the movement, which further intensified the importance and identification with the Remembrance Day. As an anonymous interview put it; "The people who come from different countries have experienced different socialization. And from this socialization different needs develop. But we will all get together on the 24th" (Dreusse, 2008). The shared and common history was taking more precedence. The 24th developed a meaning beyond just a day of remembrance. It was a day the diaspora came together and were able to interact with one and another strengthening their ties.

A few months later, a proposal brought forward by the CDU/CSU was passed on the 16th June 2005, four years after the petition (Der Deutsche Bundestag (*15/5689*), 2005). Though considered a step forward, many were disappointed that through euphemism the word "genocide" once again was avoided (*Arbeitsgruppe Anerkennung., n.d.*). Although the demands were not directly met, it gave a "positive signal" (Nikoghosyan & Göğüş, 2020). Following that, there was increased

expectations within the movements for a future success, where a resolution used the term genocide. This was a political opportunity, as the expectations for future success were increased, providing an incentive to continue their actions. Through, successfully building a network, and acting on contention through petitions and protests, the opening of and then making use of opportunities, the atrocities (although not the genocide) were recognised by the Bundestag.

An alternative explanation to the 2005 proposal - Germany's Foreign Policy

However, the interests of foreign actors also influenced the process of genocide recognition. Considering that the Turkish government supported the denial of the genocide of intellectuals, the issue was highly politicised (Erbal, 2012). This becomes evident, for example, in an interview with the chief historian - Hikmet Özdemir - where he concluded "The Armenians fought against us and their deportation was necessary for military reasons" (Kalnoky, 2005). With approximately three million Turks living in Germany it brings a considerable voting weight to the table (Szabo, 2018).

Additionally, Germany and Turkey share a special relationship due to the *Gastarbeiter*, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation weapon sales since the 1980s, and EU accession talks (Szabo, 2018). Here, Role Theory might offer an alternative explanation (Godwin, 2018, p. 1327). In an attempt to align itself with the diaspora and other European countries - like France - which recognised the genocide, but to not sour relations with Turkey, the proposal could have been the compromise.

Mobilising further - 2006 - 2016

Previous activism showcased positive results. A proposal passed the Bundestag, although it did not meet the sufficient demands of the Armenian diaspora as it was missing the explicit recognition of genocide. In the following years, the movement was able to draw on the previous established mobilization and further it.

Although support of the church was exhibited already in 2005, organisations started to expand their networks further. Tarrow (2011) indicates that building on existing institutions is often more beneficial for the advancement of a movement. Here, the diaspora was able to build on the afore established institutions and the previously built networks. The church provided a space for

remembrance, not only by Armenians but also by political figures. For example, in 2007 Norbert Lammert, Bundestagpräsident at the time held a speech at the French Cathedral in Berlin (Lammert, 2007). The websites of the *ZAD* and *DAG*, for example, list several remembrance days and events organised through the church. The church became a forum, and another means to sustain interaction. Armenian organizations also became more active in coordinating events. For example, the *Armenischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* is open every Friday evening as a general communication centre. Here events, such as Armenian dinners, language courses, dance courses and concerts are offered (*Armenische Gemeinde zu Berlin e. V.*, n.d.). Here, the preservation and development of the Armenian identity is considered as a central component, where memorial events are key. Previous established networks are expanded, and greater use is made of them.

Institutions - especially the cultural ones - became a host setting for the people drawing on "*inherited collective identities and shaping new ones*", which according to Tarrow (2011) is vital for a movement (p. 31). This idea is furthered in an interview for *Die Zeit* with Mihran Dabag from the *Institut für Diaspora- und Genozidforschung der Universität Bochum.* He claims that "The diaspora, on the other hand, share the certainty that returning to their homeland is out of the question" (Pauli, 2015). Here, the interviewee Ayda Abgaryian also explains that "We cultivate this victim identity in our church" (Pauli, 2015). Cultivating the "victim identity", fostered by contention, exemplifies the common identity the diaspora share. These inherently help the formation of further collective action as this victim identity is linked to the broader claim of genocide recognition, as outlined by Tarrow (2011). These were inevitably often fostered by the networks built throughout the years.

The expansion of the networks and common identity of the diaspora led to further collective action and intensified the building of coalitions. This can be seen through protests taking place more regularly and expanding their scope. For example, at a protest in 2013 the banner lists four distinct events. These being "Genocide of Armenians in Turkey, 1914-1918: Genocide of Aramaic / Assyrians, 1912-1922: Genocide of Greeks of East Thrace, Asia Minor, Pontus and 1939-1945: Genocide of Jews and Roma Europe" (*Termine und Veranstaltungen., 2013*). All of these share a common adversary as well as transitional justice claim, which are deemed as effective means for

genocide recognition by Koinova (2019). Although this was done previously through, for example, signatures the poster exemplifies that this is now done in a more organised and obvious way. A greater sense of community was established and through collaborating with other groups, the size of the network was expanded as well.

The recognition of the Armenian genocide took a turn on its 100th anniversary. On this day, 12th of April 2015, Pope Francis used the word "genocide" in his message, putting it in the same conversation as other notable modern genocides perpetrated by Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia (Francis, 2015). On the 16th April 2015, a letter was handed to the Bundestag *Anerkennung jetzt – Keine Relativierung des Genozids an den Armeniern,* where 150 academics demand the recognition of the genocide (Anerkennung Jetzt, 2015). They used the opportunity of the Memorial Day, especially the centennial, as the public attention was on them.

When on the 23 April 2015, German President Joachim Gauck used the word 'genocide' in his speech at the eve of the centennial, three political opportunities as described by Tarrow (2011) emerged. Gluck's speech paved the way for Norbert Lammert and other members of parliament to use the word in the discussion on the 24th April 2015. Gauck said: "In this case, we Germans as a whole must also take part in this process insofar as we share responsibility, perhaps even guilt, in the genocide committed against the Armenians." (Gauck, 2015). Although the following proposals in 2015 did not recognise the genocide as a "genocide", it was done so in discussion (Der Deutsche Bundestag (*15/4335*; *18/4684*; *18/4687*), 2015). The Bundestag was increasingly under pressure, now not only by the diaspora but also by state officials. This marked a massive turning point. A clear s*plit formed within the governing elite*, where ongoing discussions in the Bundestag about the genocide formed a stark contrast with a proposal which still lacked the term "genocide". Additionally, the government was increasingly *losing capacity to dodge the dissent*, as more *influential allies* were supporting the movement's demands.

A year later, in June 2016, a resolution was finally passed recognising the genocide fully by the Bundestag (Der Deutsche Bundestag *(18/8613)*, 2016). It was drafted by CDU/CSU, SPD and Alliance 90/The Greens. The Green MP Cem Özdemir used the opportunity of the continental and

handed in a proposal earlier demanding for the recognition (Özdemir, 2016). This further pressured the coalition and an agreement was made that the coalition would bring forward a proposal. The proposal largely mirrors the one of 2005 but also involves Germany promoting awareness and reconciliation. The demands for recognising the genocide by the movement were met with the 2016 proposal. This pronouncement made Germany the first state to voluntarily accept its partial responsibility for these genocidal crimes (Kebranian, 2020, p. 263). The coalitions built over the years, and continuous advocacy brought an effect. By expanding on the previously established networks as well as identities, coalitions and opportunities established before the 2005 proposal, the movement successfully mobilised for an expansion of the increasing proposal in 2016.

An alternative explanation to the 2016 proposal - Germany's Foreign Policy

However, Germany's relations with Turkey may have also played a role. This can be interpreted in two ways. The 2015 discussions took place in the middle of the refugee crisis in which Turkey was a vital partner (Szabo, 2018). Passing a resolution, which would anger Turkey would not have been in Germany's favour considering the negotiations. Therefore, the delay for a year after the centennial, can be considered as waiting for the negotiations to be completed. An indicator of Germany's caution can be seen by prominent political figures, such as the German chancellor Angela Merkel, abstaining from the vote (Sudholt, n.d.). On the other hand, giving a statement as such was interpreted by the MP Özdemir, who pushed for a proposal, as favourable. As he explained in 2015 in a interview “In Ankara, renouncing this is interpreted in such a way that the Turkish government believes that threats can even influence Germany.” (Gottschlich, 2015). Either way, foreign policies whether to avoid confrontation or to make a statement were present.

Following the vote in 2016, the Turkish government recalled some of their diplomats from Berlin and questioned the loyalties of the Turkish MPs heritage declaring that “Their blood should be tested in a lab” (Kebranian, 2020, p. 264). Additionally, approximately 2000 protestors gathered in front of the Bundestag criticising the decisions (Smale & Eddy, 2016). This led to the Regierungsprecher Steffen Seibert clarifying that the vote was not legally binding on the 2. September 2016 (Sudholt, n.d.). The statement confirmed Germany's concern of Turkey's perception of their decision, as well as concerns over future relationships.

Discussion

It becomes evident that the mobilisation of the Armenian diaspora played a crucial role in the genocide recognition in Germany. Although being a young diaspora in Germany, with a variety of backgrounds, they all shared a common standpoint which was the remembrance of the genocide. The Armenian diaspora joined with other Christian communities which faced a similar fate over the years and were supported by the church by providing venues and memorial events. The petition in the early 2000s brought the issue to the political stage, where the movement was able to act collectively through previously established networks.

Political opportunities arose in several ways. This can be seen by the example of Gauck and Özdemir. Moreover, the annual memorial events provided a consistent environment for collective action as it was considered a neutral ground and became a space for interaction. Following the first petition and the passing of the 2005 resolution, the expectations for change rose as it gave a positive signal. Though the mobilization of the diasporas, which became more organised over the years, was vital, it was ultimately Germany's fear of its perception from Turkey that delayed the acceptance. The Armenian diaspora provided a base, raising the issue to the parliament, steering a discussion and making their voice heard. However, the final decisions were often hampered by Germany's interest in its foreign policies.

Alternative explanation

Besides the influence of the movement and Germany's foreign policy, an alternative factor might have played a considerable role. This could be the domestic politics, more specifically the genocide of the Herero and Namaqua in German South West Africa (known as Namibia today) under the colonial rule of Germany between 1904 to 1908 (Sarkin & Fowler, 2008). In parliamentary speeches, these were also often mentioned in the discussion of the Armenian genocide. With recognising the Armenian genocide, discussions of the reparation and recognition of the Herero and Namaqua were raised again. In an attempt to avoid this, politicians might have tried to dodge the recognition at the beginning.

Emergence of social movements and role theory

The findings of the analysis support the argument that *through contention, networks, political opportunity and coalition-building a diaspora's movements influence on the recognition of genocides can be explained* and that *a foreign actor's interest in the diaspora movement influences the recognition of genocide.* The qualitative analysis found that both theories - of social movement and foreign policy - can explain the influence of a diaspora´s movement on the recognition of the genocide. The increased advocacy by the diaspora not only brought the claim to the Bundestag, but also to other influential actors. These efforts were met with reluctance, which can be associated with Turkey's interests. Tarrow (2011) and Koinova's (2019) theory stood true as the movement was successful; it nevertheless took considerable time. Godwin's (2018) role theory aided to explain the reluctance by which the efforts were met.

6. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to understand the research question: What explains a diaspora movement's influence on the recognition of genocides? Through a qualitative PT analysis and provision of a historical background, the findings revealed that the theory of movement emergence - using Tarrow (2011) and Koinova (2019) - as well as role theory - as formulated by Godwin (2019) - explain the influence of diaspora. This was showcased by the case of the Armenian Diaspora movement in Germany, where the Armenian genocide was recognised by the German Bundestag in 2016. The process for recognition was influenced by foreign policy interests, in this case those of Turkey.

To further the research, a greater focus could be placed on the internal structures of Germany. These being political parties in power as well as the backgrounds of key governmental stakeholders, for example members of parliament, which might provide a greater insight into the response from the political realm. To test this further, Godwin's (2018) full framework may be most suitable, since it indicates actor characteristics and structural factors; which can be an influential means for a diaspora's influence. Focus is placed on the influence on homeland, however, the same factors might be applicable for the influence on the host-states. Additional research would need to be carried out to investigate this.

An implication drawn from this research is the cruciality of a strong foreign policy so as to not allow for foreign interests' interference. The political interests of a foreign actor had taken precedence over a question of justice. The weak stance allowed the overriding of domestic decision-making to avoid the "antagonising" of an external actor. Inevitably, a country's own judgement is hampered by this, which may lead to breaching a country's own fundamental values. As recognition is a key step for justice, aiding the healing of survivors and victims' - foreign politics should not take precedence here. Contrarily, this might also bring forward genocide recognition. The role of a country to push for genocide advocacy, supporting a diaspora movement, might have an influence. Future research would have to be done to investigate this. The research has shown that the influence of diaspora movements can be explained both through the emergence of social movements, as well as foreign policy interests.

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