

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

The Burden of Genocide in European Political Discourse
BACHELOR THESIS

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis is a work of my own and has not been published in whole or in part elsewhere. All literature sources used in this thesis are attributed and cited in references.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the process of creating a narrative of cultural trauma and how this narrative of trauma can be misused for current political goals. The thesis examines the French political discourse, specifically the draft law of genocide bill in 2006 that criminalized the denial of the Armenian genocide. The bill was put forward by the Union for Popular Movement (UMP) party, which based its explanation of the proposal on the concept of human rights and justified it on the basis of European historical development. However, the bill was proposed a year before the election therefore the paper focuses on analyzing abuse of trauma in favour of the Union for Popular Movement (UMP) party. The thesis concentrates on the role of emotions and studies the narrative of the trauma of the Armenian genocide that was committed in the years 1915-1917 in the Ottoman empire. The Armenian diaspora initiated the mobilization of society living in the European Union. Armenian Diaspora's effort to achieve their own symbolic recognition of the committed genocide stems from fundamental values of European culture that are enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Examining the creation of collective trauma, supported by the theories of dignity, memory, history, power of language and emotions in politics, the thesis aims to describe the existence of the narrative of cultural trauma and how this narrative can be politicized and abused to mobilize society.

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Abstrakt

Táto práca sa zameriava na proces vzniku kultúrnej traumy a spôsob, ako tento naratív traumy vie byť zneužitý na súčasné politické ciele. Práca sa zaoberá francúzskym politickým diskurzom, konkrétne návrhom zákona o genocíde z roku 2006, ktorý kriminalizoval popieranie Arménskej genocídy. Návrh zákona predložila strana Únia za ľudové hnutie (UMP), ktorá postavila svoje vysvetlenie návrhu na koncepte ľudských práv a odvôvodnila ho prostredníctvom európskej histórie. Zákon o genocíde bol však navrhnutý rok pred voľbami, preto sa práca zameriava na analýzu zneužitia traumy v prospech strany Únia za ľudové hnutie. Práca skúma úlohu emócií v politike a študuje naratív traumy z Arménskej genocídy, ktorá bola spáchaná v rokoch 1915-1917 na území Osmanskej ríše. Arménska diaspora žijúca v Európskej únii iniciovala mobilizáciu spoločnosti. Snaha Arménskej diaspóry o symbolické uznanie spáchanej genocídy pramení zo základných hodnôt európskej kultúry, ktoré sú obsiahnuté v Charte základných práv EU. Skúmanie kolektívnej traumy podporovanej teóriami dôstojnosti, pamäti, histórie a emócií v politike si práca kladie za cieľ popísať existenciu naratívu kultúrnej traumy a to ako vie byť tento naratív politizovaný a zneužívaný na mobilizáciu spoločnosti.

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Introduction

Human beings usually encounter the past with the political and public discourse, which is concerned with grievances, needs, reparations and interests of those people whose rights were violated by the past events. But if we look closely at the actors and agenda and their means of the treatment of the past, we realize that their main concerns are the present problems they have to face, therefore actors can use the past for their benefit in the present. The governments of 33 countries have formally recognized the Armenian genocide by claiming that the Young Turks¹ – The government in the Ottoman Empire committed several international crimes on the Armenian population living in Eastern Anatolia in 1915. The Armenians were the second largest minority group in the Ottoman Empire. The mass killing and deportations conducted on the Armenian subjects were an attempt to destroy the Armenian people as a whole. Such an act is understood in today's world as genocide (Sunny, 2020). Nevertheless, the Turkish government repeatedly rejected the recognition of the genocide and they have apologized for the deaths of Armenians by claiming it was a necessary deed of the policy of national security. Turkey asserts also that the killing was done by both actors – Armenians and Young Turks as it took place during a First World War (Zayas, 2020). The Turkish side also claims that the recognition of genocide would fall into a trap of historical anachronism, that can give Armenians the opportunity to seek for compensation through official trials and courts (Ulgen, 2021).

The consequences of the atrocities resulted in international organizations defining them as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, however, they lack the official recognition of the genocide by Turkey (even if some historians claim that genocide was committed). The policy of national security was implemented during the era of the Ottoman Empire, not the present-day Turkey. Undoubtedly, the driving fuel of the massacres was the policy of securitization within the state that was unfortunately implemented by the Ottoman Empire. Securitization occurs when an issue is presented as an existential threat that requires emergency measures and

¹ political reform movement, seeking to replace the Ottoman absolute monarchy with a constitutional government.

justifies actions outside of political procedure or in democratic nations it indicates a violation of Human Rights (Krasteva, 2018).

To comprehend the issue rightly, some of the key concepts have to be defined correctly. This introduction aims to differentiate the moral aspects of the recognition of any crimes as genocide from the legal ones and is keen to explain the challenge of retroactivity within the legal international documents and to understand why legal tools cannot solve the conflict. To look at the issue from the moral perspective is in a democratic world presumed as the right step, thus those 33 countries that have recognized the Armenian genocide followed the morals whose roots are embodied in the human rights concept, especially the EU countries. On the contrary, the legal perspective that is founded on negotiations, treaties, and conventions cannot apply the principle of retroactivity. None of the conventions that have been already ratified can be applied in a retroactive way. They can be applied only from the time they have entered into force after ratification. Even in the case of the Armenian subjects, the outside powers such as the UK, the U.S, France or Russia, could have applied certain pressure after the war on Turkey to implement a treaty that would seek responsibility for the killings. The treaty was created, signed but unfortunately never ratified, therefore it cannot enter the legal area (Zayas, 2020).

From the moral perspective, however, the Armenian genocide has to be officially recognized and needs conciliation and compensation for the descendants of the Armenian survivors and victims in order to function as a nation. The committed atrocity is the total opposite of democratic principles, which are based on human rights. To recognize the horrendous event or at least create an open dialogue could reconcile and fix the bilateral conflict between Armenia and Turkey. “Notwithstanding the fact that the Treaty of Sèvres never entered into force, the text of the Treaty remains eloquent evidence of the international recognition of the crime of “massacres” against the Armenian population of Turkey” (Zayas, 2020, p. 14). Clearly, the smoking gun is hard to miss, however, the treaty has not been ever ratified, thus it has never entered the legal sphere. Even though the General Assembly of the United Nations made the Genocide Convention (1948), entitled Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which treats genocide to be a crime under international law, does not work retroactively and therefore, from the

legal perspective, it is inappropriate to use the term genocide in this context (Genocide Convention, 1948).

Today, the EU relations with Turkey are strained in relation to peaceful resolution of the committed atrocity. Since the Armenian diaspora living in the EU mobilized the societies in support of their interests, the EU has been pushing towards peace resolution even more. The means of recovery and reconciliation as transitional justice² cannot be left behind in a society that has experienced genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes and could be seen as the possible journey towards a peaceful resolution (ICTJ, 2009). However, this seems to not be a plausible approach, because Armenians do not want to discuss it but they ask uncompromisingly to recognize the Armenian genocide by Turkey. Additionally, genocide is the legal term that can gain a specific meaning if it enters the legal sphere and is used in a legal context, e.i. an event that resembles the genocide meets the conditions to achieve the designation of being genocide. Therefore, to make a clear legal statement in regard to the Armenian genocide seems to be out of the question if no means as - official treaties cannot be applied retroactively. Simultaneously, the cultural trauma narrative has been created among the Armenian diaspora living in Europe. In the European collective memory is the Armenian genocide strongly supported by emotions stemming from European history. Memory, in this context, functions as a means to connect the past with the present.

The outcome of atrocities such as the Armenian genocide is the cultural trauma and wounded identity on an individual and collective level. As Pace and Bilgic (2018) stated, the past traumatic experiences are institutionalized in the process of identity construction in the present time and translated into foreign policy through the emotional performances of the EU's representatives and institutions. Even though emotions and feelings are usually considered to be personal matters, they are reconstructed into the collective memory that shapes the whole society (Pace & Bilgic

² “Transitional justice is a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights. It seeks recognition for victims and promotion of possibilities for peace, reconciliation and democracy” (ICTJ). They include initiatives as criminal trials, truth commissions, reparation programmes, gender justice, security system reform, memorialization efforts.

2018). Emotions are tied to bodies—through psychological and biological processes, while feelings are matters of social and cultural aspects (Hutchinson and Bleiker, 2014). Feelings and emotions, according to Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014), can be approached from a macro and micro perspective—macro explains how emotions are institutionalised and used by representatives of governments, while micro looks at emotions from different angles and records its specific positions that are according to Hutchinson and Bleiker central to politics and international order.

The voices that have been raised in Europe by the Armenian diaspora—notably in France, Germany and Great Britain, have been aiding in blocking Turkey's entry into the European Union. The European Parliament made a decision on 18th of June 1987 concerning the Armenian genocide titled “Political Solution of the Armenian Problem” that refers to events committed during 1915-1917 as genocide according to the United Nations Agreement that reports that the denial of the Armenian genocide by Turkey would create obstacles for the Turkish membership in the EU (Derman, n.d.). Abundant evidence of creating an “obstacle” for Turkish membership in the EU is captured in the European Parliament Resolution on the opening of the negotiations with Turkey. In article 5, the resolution “calls on Turkey to recognise the Armenian genocide; considers this recognition to be a prerequisite for accession to the European Union” (Opening with negotiation with Turkey, 2005). In the end, these resolution has no legal impact, so to recognize the Armenian genocide by Turkey is not binding but it put certain political pressure on them and to a certain degree, it has disrupted Turkey's perspective trajectory towards democracy.

Specifically, the thesis aims to look at the French genocide bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian genocide that was proposed in the French National Assembly in 2006, accompanied by responses to it from Brussels, which to a certain level shaped the EU and French relations with Turkey. First and foremost, this paper is not questioning the suffering of the Armenians, how they were massacred or how they felt insecure when they were forced to flee away in fear during and after the First World War. Their lives and fate in the hands of Turks were terrible and they have been treated indecently. The European community should be acquainted with the history of the Armenians or any other traumatic atrocity because it should be embodied in our upbringing and value systems to never repeat it. But adopting a law such as the

French genocide bill that makes denial of the Armenian genocide to be criminal is not only depriving the freedom of expression of Turkey or the French population but also the whole European community whose freedom of speech is a basic principle.

The EU representatives who embody what the EU stands for, notably shape the collective European identities that influence foreign affairs. The foundation of the European identity has its origin in the desire to prevent events like the First World War and the Second World War, especially the Holocaust. Thus the motto “never again” belongs among the foundational values of the EU. That is also embodied in the European moral code, especially the human rights instruments such as the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 which later directly shaped the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Thus every case of genocide denial is an especially sensitive matter. Therefore, the denial of the Armenian genocide by Turkey is strongly judged by the EU and its members. The narrative of cultural trauma—as the concept of genocide is viewed in the EU—is always a matter of public discourse (Pace and Bilgic 2018, p. 504).

Thesis Statement

The experience of genocide leaves behind open wounds and it's a spark that ignites a narrative of cultural trauma. The Armenian genocide committed during the Ottoman Empire had a horrendous impact on the Armenians in Turkey and across the world. Connection to those events is an inseparable part of history and memory for the Armenians living in the European Union. After hundred years since the genocide was committed, humans can relate to those events only through memory, not via personal experiences. However, the inherent trauma is still present and supported through cultural identity. Emotions play a significant role in politics even though their importance is not coherently recognized by scholars in the field of international relations. Narratives of emotions, trauma and identity are politicized in public international discourse. The path towards the reconciliation of Armenian–Turkish relations can be easily changed towards extending the abyss within the relationships.

The purpose of this thesis is to look at how past traumatic experiences in the process of identity construction are institutionalized and transformed into foreign

policy via the emotional performances of the carrier groups. Particularly, it looks at how the discourse of the Armenian genocide shapes relationships between the EU, especially its member state France, and Turkey. Emotions are embodied in action, thinking, politics and they can be reflected in the pillars of statehood, such as the constitution or legislation through which the representatives of states (carrier groups) sometimes misuse the traumatic past emotions to mobilize society for the pursuit of their own goals. The impact is reflected within international relations, specifically the EU—Turkish relations. The thesis is portraying the narrative construction of cultural trauma that through emotions is reflected in pillars of statehood – legislation. The paper focuses on the usage of the narrative of cultural trauma in French and European political discourse during Turkey's accession to the EU. The thesis argues that more than repairing the painful past, actors use the narrative of trauma for current political goals.

Methodology and Research Design

The Armenian genocide and politicizing the narratives of collective trauma and identity will be studied through a case study based on an analysis of the political discourse through the theory of cultural trauma and its formation supported by the model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Alexander's (2004) theory explains that collective trauma is a socially constructed narrative, through which collective identity is reconstructed. The reason for the single-case study is based on the unique position of the Armenian diaspora in the European and especially French discourse that has the influence to mobilize society living in the European Union. Armenian diaspora effort to achieve symbolic recognition of the committed genocide stems from fundamental values of the European culture that is importantly oriented around the shared collective memory of the Holocaust. Furthermore, the nature of the problem offers to examine the whole process of the creation of collective identity. Even though the atrocity was committed hundred years ago, the conflict is still ongoing among the Armenian diaspora and Turkey. As described by Alexander (2004), the process of construction and maintenance of cultural trauma contains the following steps:

- a claim has to be made,
- by national or institutional carrier groups,
- through a speech act to an audience,
- through the narrative that holds the nature of the victim, nature of perpetrators and the whole attribution towards responsibility;
- It is supported within religious, legal or scientific approaches influenced by mass media; through mediation; in order to reconstruct collective identity.

(Alexander, 2004, p. 10 – 27)

The focus of the analysis is on the question of how collective trauma and identity are created and how those narratives are politicized on a national or even international level. The theory of the emergence of collective trauma is used to ground the analysis—this thesis specifically examines the process of politicization of the issue of the Armenian genocide within the public and political discourse of the EU, especially in France—for explaining the connection between political and public discourse with power, the model of critical discourse analysis (CDA) ground the

analysis sufficiently. However, the supportive arguments of scholars on the topic of cultural memory, emotions in politics, history and the power of language are necessary to comprehend the issue. The primary sources the paper uses are the official documents and resolutions – as “Political Solution of the Armenian Problem”; resolution entitled The Armenian Genocide and European Values; European Parliament resolution on the opening of negotiations with Turkey refer to deeds committed during 1915-1917 as genocide according to the United Nations Agreement (Barseghyan, 2020). Specifically, the paper analysis the French genocide bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian genocide. These resolutions and the French genocide bill can prove the thesis by appointing the importance of European identity that is deeply rooted in human rights principles and how actors may use the narrative of trauma for their political goals. The paper is also distinguishing the difference between the interpretation of the genocide bill and the power of the sociocultural environment to intervene in decision-making processes. That is supported by the secondary sources as consultations of experts with expertise in international public law and international conflicts—JUDr. Sylvia Tiriyaki, PhD., politics of memory—Philip Gamyghelyan, PhD. and development studies—Jakub Csabay, PhD. The thesis also uses articles, news, and academic works about emotions in politics, cultural trauma, etc.

The central theory for this thesis is the theory of Alexander (2004) that contextualizes the aim of restoring collective health by lifting societal repression and restoring memory through the public act of commemoration supported by Fairclough's (1995) model of Critical Discourse Analysis. The thesis focuses on the French political discourse on the Armenian genocide recognition in 2001 and the genocide bill presented at the French National Assembly in 2006, which aimed to criminalize the denial of the Armenian genocide (Aydin & Cerrera & Geyer, 2006). The claim was made by institutional carrier groups, in this context by the French lower house, supported by President Sarközy. The genocide bill was a follow-up of the recognition of the Armenian genocide in 2001, which proposed one year in prison and 45.000€ in fines if someone denied the Armenian genocide. Furthermore, the focus of this analysis researches who essentially is the audience, victims, and perpetrators in the process of cultural trauma, especially in the context of the proposed bill. Religious, legal and scientific approaches can influence and manipulate the emotions of humans

through mass media and their subsequent perceptions of the conflict that leads to the reconstruction of collective identity that can be easily politicized and determines international relations. The thesis does not try to investigate the factual reality of the Armenian genocide. Morally is justifiable to sympathize with victims and recognize their suffering. While using legal terms such as genocide is not a plausible approach. But even so, the thesis argues that more than repairing the past, actors can use the trauma for political goals in present.

Chapter 1-Emotions in Global Politics

The narratives of collective trauma, cultural identity, memory, and emotions in politics are covered by scholars sufficiently. Alexander (2004) expressed that cultural trauma does not naturally exist but is a narrative constructed by society. Public discourse considers trauma to be imagined as if it really existed on the level of the collective groups according to Alexander (2004). Practices of representations as habits, speech acts, etc. give sufficient meaning to traumatic past on collective or international dimensions. Even though emotions are usually neglected by scholars of international relations, they play a significant political role. The thesis explains how efficient representation of emotions through trauma narrative by institutional carrier groups is a drive for decision-making processes. It concludes by suggesting that the importance of these narratives and their powerful function to mobilize society should be acknowledged by international relations scholars in order to not politicize trauma caused by genocide in the political and public spheres and its subsequent consequences on the international scale.

Dignity

From the perspective of the evolutionary roots of dignity, a human being is considered a feeling being. Some scientists have pointed out that human connection/cooperation is crucial for survival which is inevitably linked to the quality of our relationships (Hicks, 2011). There are two different approaches to human nature: some consider human beings innately cooperative or uncooperative. The first one holds that humans are naturally altruistic—claiming that humans are born helpful and cooperative (e.g. Rousseau), while the other one sees human's natural condition to be in constant conflict (e.g. Hobbes) (Tomasello, 2009). Tomasello's anthropological research shows that the reason why humans are bound to cooperate is that they hold three important traits—sharing, informing and helping. However, conflicts and genocides are present if someone's identity or dignity are threatened. The inevitable aspect that is crucial to highlight in regard to our cooperative trait is that human beings hold emotions such as anger, fear, anxiety, etc. as well. Thus one can incline towards Rousseau's perspective which indicates that humankind is cooperative, but should admit that at the same time humans are full of hatred and anger. Tomasello in

his second chapter - From Social Interaction to Social Institutions, argues that people are keen to cooperate and hold the element of empathy towards one's own, within kin groups. As stated we-ness feeling support conformity and collaboration. But across groups, we compete (Tomasello, 2009).

One way to explain the "evil part" of human behaviour can be done through phenomenons of deindividuation and dehumanization of one's dignity. In the process of deindividuation, one requires the feeling of anonymity in a group, in which, in such a state of mind, one is inclined to say or do things in an inhuman way. Because if one reaches the essence of groupness, where he/she acquires the status of anonymity, they do not feel to be persecuted or judged for their unjust/immoral action (McRaney, 2011). Dehumanization is the phenomenon through which certain groups of people are seen to be sub-human (Maese, 2003). By claiming that someone is sub-human, it violates one's dignity that can lead to a mutual conflict between two parties, two groups, and in the worst-case scenario, a genocide can occur. Humans hold an inborn desire to be treated with respect because we are psychologically programmed to believe we depend on it but at the same time we held the competitive trait within us. As Hicks (2011) states, some scientists explained that our limbic system in our brain functions in two ways: it might disconnect us or flood us with feelings of love and empathy. Human beings have inborn ways to ensure safety: self-preservation instincts which instruct us to alienate ourselves from those who hurt us; self-extension which makes us reach out to others with the aim to find security (Hicks, 2011).

The notion of the dignity of humans is being threatened and violated in any kind of crime, where human security is threatened or broken. The concept of violated dignity is inevitably intertwined with the process of humiliation. It can be understood as a relational violation, in the sense that someone assaults one's essential need for relationships. Therefore, if there is a lack of recognition of a certain group, people are flooded with the feeling of humiliation, a violated dignity (Hartling, 2007/8). After that human's tendency is to feel traumatized. Among other things, Hartling (2007/8) described that social pain occurs when one's social relationships are seen to be damaged or lost, which can increase the risk of violent behaviour (Hartling, 2007/8). Violent behaviour produces only another violence and it can be observed in two different ways - as an act of vengeance or self-defeating behaviour. This was

described on the basis of the neurobiological research of the brain, on the individual level. The process is triggered by such conditions in a society where the status of one group is endangered or the group is discriminated against or even physically attacked. Because our collective identity can be experienced individually, it is the negative emotion such as humiliation that directly associate these collective harms with the survival of individual social pain – they are thus connecting bridge of collective policies or acts with individuals. That's the reason why acts and narratives that trigger strong emotions are the political mobilizers.

Emotions and feelings

The transition of emotions or trauma as shared and collective phenomena are examined by many scholars. It can be easily approached by claiming that people belong to various social groups in which they associate with each other on the basis of common beliefs and identities. If emotions embedded in their shared memories and history are shaped around emotionally strong events or experiences, they might admittedly be institutionalized on the level of the state in a form of resolutions or legislation (Mercer, 2010, 2014; Sasley 2011; cited in Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014). According to Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014), emotions play an important role at the level of collectives, due to the fact that communities are the core for emotions to attain meaning. They can become intersubjective if they relate to social issues such as power, justice, reconciliation of the past etc. “Intersubjective consensus” is incorporated within constructivist theorists in International Relations, whose claim is based on shared values and beliefs that are socially constructed (Wendt, 1992). Socially constructed values involve the emergence of collective trauma. However, the question that remains is whether it is possible for such a strong emotion that emerged from genocide to be interpreted and used justly and coherently in the political and public discourse?

Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014) introduced the key approaches to emotions in global politics: the macro theoretical approach to political emotions—how fear and empathy are institutionalized on a national or transnational level, while the micro approach is focusing on the investigation of emotions in specific situations. In order to describe the significance of emotions in politics and to comprehend the creation of

collective emotions, one has to understand the processes of how emotions become collective and political through the means of representations, and how emotions are inevitably interconnected with power. The relevance of emotions in world politics signifies that there is a certain collective dimension to emotions. The feelings and emotions are strictly tied to living bodies. There is no proof that artificial commodities nor socially constructed realms are capable of feeling something. How, then, can a state (social construct) - in forms of legislation and laws be shaped or changed by emotions? However, the link between individual and collective emotions together with macro and micro approaches can help comprehend the notion of emotions in global politics for international relations scholars (Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014).

Certain situations within international relations are perceived to be highly emotional phenomena. For instance, terrorism or genocide reveal anger and fear in public discourse. Trust is seen as a liberal vision within cooperative international order (Booth & Wheeler, 2007, cited in Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014). However, for a long period of time, emotions were out of international relations theories due to international relations theorists' perception of emotions as irrational. Political decisions were meant to be done without any emotions or passions because it was believed it would lead to harm and unnecessary violence (Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014). On the contrary, it has resulted in a gap in understanding of social phenomena. The behaviour of society is shaped by the emotional performances of representatives of institutions and their will to use the power to achieve their goals. Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014) support their argument by using Mercer and Crawford's theories that are focused on macro and micro approaches towards the definition of emotional politics. Mercer (2005, 2006) examined the role of emotions in decision-making processes and what effect they have on the reconstruction of collective identities. Crawford (2000, 2009) raised the critique for international relations scholars to redefine and rethink how certain emotions function in world politics.

Macro and Micro Approach

Both macro and micro approaches consider emotions to be more than individual concerns. Crawford's argumentation in a macro approach suggests how fear and empathy are institutionalized, for example, how the Visegrad Four countries'

political representatives used fear to mobilize their population by threatening them that the inflow of migrants in 2015 would cause unpredictable harm. Empathy, too, is raised through the emotional performances of representatives of states (Gruszczak, 2021). Fear and empathy are the inherent way to manipulate people. Mercer offers an understanding of how particular emotions differ from one cultural and political context from another. For instance, anger caused by a financial crisis differs from the anger that justifies humanitarian intervention in third world countries. Fear caused by the COVID19 pandemic differs from fear of migrants. The macro approach analyzes emotions in general while the micro approach is taking specific cases and analyzes the emotions in detail (Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014). On the other hand, micro approaches were examined from the angle of analyzing a specific range of emotions within the social and political contexts. For instance, diplomatic negotiations or defence policies are inevitably associated with emotions such as trust, honour, or anger (Mercer & Crawford, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2009, cited in Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014).

The specific mechanisms through which emotions are institutionalized and become the cornerstone for social and political life in particular circumstances enable us to theorize the politics of emotions. For instance, Alexander's (2004) "trauma process" describes the specific steps of how trauma is transferred into collective and political spheres. There are multiple ways to conceptualize the whole issue due to the complexity of emotions expressed through the means of language or non-linguistic processes which are claiming value over it. Even though emotions emerge from bodies and are strictly tied to them, feelings are formed within social and cultural environments (Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014). Language, habits, memories serve as a "connecting bridge" for the mass population to understand certain feelings collectively.

According to Fierke (2013), the issue at stake was demonstrated through civil disobedience or suicide terrorism. Injured bodies evoke particular emotions that have become a political matter by reaching various audiences (Fierke, 2013, cited in Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014). Genocide has the same effect, those dead or injured bodies connect physical and emotional particulars with history, culture, and memory. The linking pattern between individual and collective emotions is the representation.

Firstly, the representation in itself is expressed through various means such as gestures, speech, sounds, music, images etc. Secondly, and more importantly, representation can be used by carrier groups to evoke specific emotions to unite society. Mass media depicts horrendous events like terrorist attacks or genocide, which cultivates certain emotions how the audience will collectively feel about it. These processes through which emotions are manifested, shape identities, attitudes and behaviours of communities (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990, 13–16; Scheff 1990; Lutz 1988, cited in Hutchison & Bleiker, 2014).

Emotions in Constructivist Theory

The constructivist theory in international relations has introduced the concept of identity into international relations. According to Wendt (1992), the constructivist theory assumes that the behaviour of humans is determined by their identities. Those identities have emerged from assumptions of collectivizing emotions which are oriented around the creation of sameness and society that share habits, culture and history. Constructivists claim that institutions, states, etc., are socially constructed phenomena that reflect “intersubjective consensus” of shared beliefs, values of society. In a sense, the representatives of institutions hold the power to constantly construct the reality from which policy decisions are made (Wendt, 1992). According to Ross (2006), constructivist theorists hold a promising position that can prove the multiple channels via which identities are reproduced in global politics (Ross, 2006, p. 214). Even early writers such as Aristotle, Hobbes, or Machiavelli incorporated emotions into their perceptions of statehood and international order. They argued that emotions helped to understand human nature and behaviour, and international behaviour as well (Crawford, 2000).

Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014) state that emotions in politics are inevitably intertwined with power in regard to international relations or domestic politics. Emotions shape how individuals and collectives are socialized and how they interact with each other on the social or diplomatic level. For instance, empathy is the core of successful peacebuilding processes. Trust serves as a heart for diplomatic negotiations, etc. There is a link between emotions and power—” to talk about

emotions is simultaneously to talk about society— about power and politics... about normality and deviance” (Lutz 1998, p.6, cited in Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2014).

From Individual to Collective Trauma

According to Alexander (2004), individual trauma is an empirical and scientific concept that is tightly connected with our individual experiences. Collective trauma is not naturally existing, but is constructed by society; in a sense, members of a group collectively feel to be subjected to horrendous events that occurred in the past. As Jeffrey Alexander explains, the lay trauma theory suggests that trauma is a sort of event that shatters an individual or collective sense of well-being. Two different ways of thinking about collective trauma originate from the lay trauma theory - “Enlightenment” and psychoanalytical approaches. Enlightenment thinking argues that being traumatized is a rational response to an abrupt change whether it is on an individual or social level (Alexander, 2004, p.3). Memories of the past guide and determine the future and lead to progress. (Alexander, 2004, p. 9). However, not always. Progress is made considering how to avoid such events as genocide. But probably not in peaceful cooperation within diplomatic relations. If a human being experiences a shattering event such as genocide, it leads to the violated dignity of a person. Dignity can be violated if a person is considered to be a sub-human or is perceived as a threat to a state, where a state implements a procedure through which the person is treated. In the case of genocide, it refers to “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group” (Genocide Convention, 1948). Once the dignity is breached it produces the feeling of humiliation on the individual level. Violated dignity and feeling of humiliation can survive through generations due to constructed narrative of cultural trauma. The narrative of cultural trauma restores memory through the act of commemoration, widens the circle of empathy and social cohesion and deals with conflict resolution. The narrative of cultural trauma constantly seeks recognition and from the lack of recognition of violated dignity, the relationships between two people can be damaged or totally lost (Hicks, 2011; Hartling, 2007/8; Alexander, 2004). Unless the peaceful resolution is made, the progress is not visible between the two actors, in the thesis context between Armenians and Turkey. Events in themselves do not create collective and cultural trauma, but it is socially mediated attribution (Alexander, 2004, p. 8).

Socially mediated attribution is a form of representation that raises the meaning of emotions to be the core of political decisions. (Edkins, 2011 cited in Hutchinson and Bleiker, 2014).

Alexander (2004), in his work, described the state of victimhood connected to cultural trauma and claimed that it is morally justifiable but it cannot be seen as a natural and automatic response. To be deeply traumatized is considered a real phenomenon according to Alexander (2004). However, cultural trauma does not emerge because the past is itself harmful but because the event emerges into collectivity and is believed to be harmful to societal identity in the present time. It opens a space for creating a gap between the actual event and the presentation of the event, the so-called “trauma process”. The process contains the following steps: A claim has to be made through carrier groups that are embodying it via speech act or implementing official documents to an audience. Through that carrier groups – who can be elites, marginalized classes, religious leaders or whoever has the influence to persuade the population, are specifying the victims and perpetrators. The crucial aspect of the (re-)construction of collective identity is done through religious, legal or scientific statements, and influenced by mass media (Alexander, 2004, pp. 10–27).

The narrative of cultural trauma according to Alexander (2004) restores memory. Assmann and Czaplicka (1995), approached collective memory in two different ways. The first one is through communicative memory or “everyday memory”, which forms oral history. It is the oldest way to store knowledge and history through generations. However, it is very unstable within storing the truth of exact events. Such a memory can be easily changed and “corrected” for one’s benefit. The fact that individuals belong to various social groups, constitutes the essential issue of having multiple collective self-images. (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). On the contrary, besides communicative memory, Assmann and Czaplicka describe the cultural memory, characteristics of which are set in fixed points as historical documents, pictures, historical monuments, etc. It exists in two modes: whether the historical event has a potentiality to be remembered or actuality considering the state’s position (Assman, 1995). A good example is embodied in France’s perceptions of history. The French memory laws’ mission is to present a universality of truth and protection of human rights—as are The Gayssot Act of July 13, 1990, that punishes

the denial of the Holocaust; The law of January 29, 2001, that recognizes the Armenian genocide; The Taubira Act of May 21, 2001, that recognizes slave trade. Memory laws are state-approved historical events that raise the promotion of a narrative about the past (Council of Europe, 2018). France introduces a mode of actuality to these events mentioned above to be recognized and protected under laws. The actuality mode of certain events gives a meaning of the past to have a still significant impact on the present. The French history of the colonialization era is presented as a contribution with a positive impact under article 4 of French law (Act no. 2005-158 of 23 February 2005 on the recognition of the nation and the national contribution in favour of the repatriated French people), even if their colonialization was certainly not only positive (Wartanian, 2009). The relevance of the memory of the past and history differ from the presentation of them in the political sphere owing to their beneficiary features for the state.

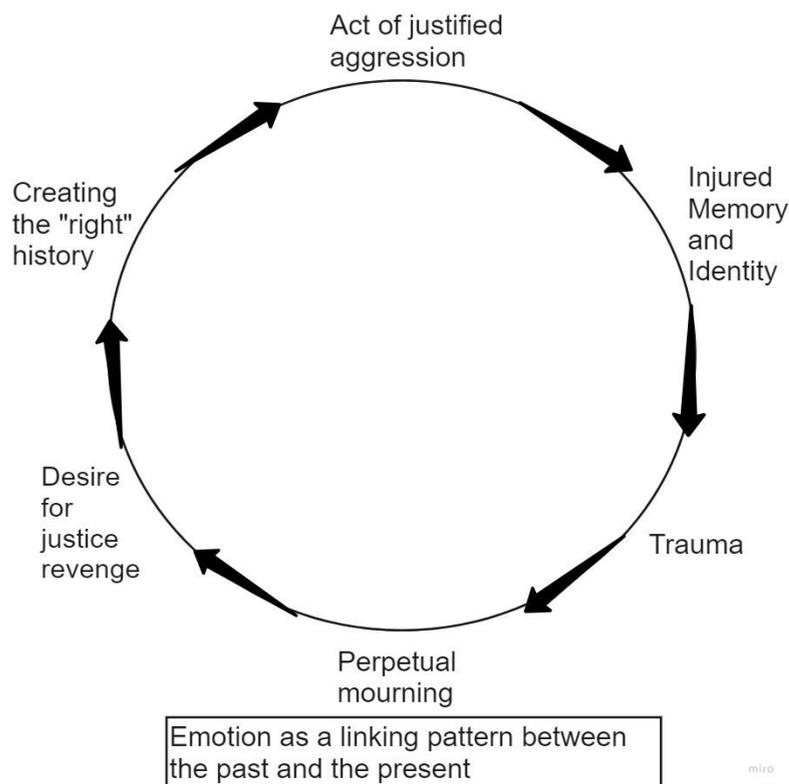
History and Memory

Assmann (2008) in his piece of work – Transformation between History and Memory wrote that the notion of collective memory was denied by many academics with the argument that memory is not a real term because is not consistent, stable and certain; in a sense that society chooses which memories are important to remember. If we look at memory laws in France, one can understand that academics that were mentioned in Assmann (2008) work, were right. As was mentioned above, Assmann (1995) explained that cultural memory can function in two ways – the memory has potential or has actual relevance in regard to the state position. Memory has the power of identifying, naming or legitimating things around us (Eagleston, 2004). Bell (2009) claimed that the essential product of conflicts is memory. He stated that memory is a construct itself but has also the ability to construct certain narratives as trauma (Bell, 2009. p. 351). Zehfuss (2007) described a relationship between memory and politics, explaining that memory can help to construct the past but one should acknowledge that memory is uncertain (Zehfuss, 2007). “No memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their recollections” (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 43, cited in Assman, 2008). Thus, memory is connected with the social frame. The social frame is the structure of shared experiences, values, concerns and narratives, therefore to be part of a nation one has

to adopt the group's history which exceeds one's individual life span (Assmann, 2008, p. 52). That refers to the fact that human identity has a connection with the memory of historic events that have the ability to shape our values. Specifically, to be a part of the European identity, one has to adopt a history that exceeds his/her life span. Even if men/women did not experience the Holocaust, they adopted it as their history that shaped their values. Hidden bias can be found within it due to the fact we live in a world mediated by representations in the forms of texts and images that we have chosen to be important for our institutions. Eagleston (2004), a literary theorist, suggested that "identity without memory is empty, memory without identity is meaningless (Eagleston, 2004, p. 125; cited in Auchter, 2017, p. 7).

Said (n.d.) stated that collective memory is past events that are selected, reconstructed, modified with political meaning. However, one cannot refer to collective memory as "fiction" because the term is quite misleading and obtains various interpretations. Collective memory depends on transition from history and involves historical events in the shape of charged narratives and mobilizing symbols. Nevertheless, the process of memory is always mediated, changed and interpreted in many ways for purposes in the present (Said, n. d. cited in Assmann, 2008).

Figure 1: Cultural and Collective Identity



Note: based on Botcharova: Implementation of Track Two Diplomacy

The narrative of cultural trauma can be depicted in the endless circle that has the power to survive through generations and construct the collective identity. According to Alexander (2004), it does not emerge from individual trauma but is constructed. The connection among all those terms that has been explained above in this context can be imagined in a circle. The act of justified aggression refers to a victimized group of people who feel aggression, helplessness, and uncertainty in relation to the past traumatic events that as Alexander (2004) suggested is morally justifiable. Such an act or feeling can either shape or change one's identity based on his/her past that reflects injured memory. Among others, memory can produce trauma that breeds emotions that link the past with the present and help the narrative of trauma to be alive and strong through generations. Because collective identity is experienced on the individual level as well, it is negative emotions such as violated dignity, humiliation, that connect collective harms with the survival of individuals. Along with emotions such as fear, hatred, etc., victims desire justice revenge through various means – as was the proposed genocide bill in France. Moreover, the creation

of the “right” history is reflected in chosen memories that are selected and interpreted differently considering the benefit of the carrier groups and victims as well. Cultural trauma as constructed narrative survives even it does not hold traits of effectiveness.

Cultural Trauma in Politics

The manipulation of the traumatic past is presented on the national and international level through carrier groups, such as the leaders within the Armenian community or representatives of governments. The past traumatic experiences are institutionalized in the process of identity construction in the present and translated into foreign policy through the emotional performances of the political representatives. The case study of the Armenian genocide in French political discourse aims to refer to how representatives of institutions embody what the EU stands for and their ability to shape the collective identities that can influence foreign affairs, Turkey’s accession to the EU. (Pace and Bilgic, 2006).

Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014) said that emotions have a significant role in remembering traumatic past and they cannot be separated. Policymakers use emotional performances and narratives of trauma to construct institutional identity. In a way, it is constituted by a discourse that refers to norms and values within society. Discourse is generated through representations such as habits, customs, language, a practice that is the manifestation of cultural identity as well (Hutchinson and Bleiker, 2014). Pace and Bilgic (2006) have created the triangle emotions-representation-discourse, which offers a better understanding of how emotions are institutionalized and how they are becoming part of international relations. Language is the specific form of representation because its critical role lies in exercising the power. Obtaining power is not the outcome of language only but also non-linguistic features as well. As Odell (n. d.) states, the power of language is hidden in its opposing functions. It might be used to inform, teach, discuss, record history, praise but as well to mislead, deceive, harm, control or manipulate. Humans may use a variety of means to gain power over others. The force that motivates it is emotions, specifically: fear, love, hope, hate (Odell, n. d.). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) serves as a critical theory of language and uses language as a form of social practice. Social practice is a link between practice and context in social situations. Any kind of

social practice is tied to historical context and serves as a means through which social relations are reproduced. The analysis is trying to understand how discourse is connected with power and how constructed narrative as cultural trauma in public and political discourse can serve as a conditional reason to establish policies or enact laws. The paper uses this analysis to point out how French political discourse used the cultural trauma that has emerged from the Armenian genocide for gaining power and to win the upcoming election (Janks, 2006). Fairclough's (1995) model of Critical Discourse Analysis consists of three processes of analysis and is connected to three dimensions of discourse – i. text analysis (description of genocide bill in France); ii. processing analysis (interpretation - demonstrated in the protection of human rights); iii. social analysis - the social environment considering anti-Turkishness in French political discourse (Fairclough, 1995).

European Values

Pace and Bilgic (2006) explained how the EU's representatives express their emotions by claiming it has derived from institutional discursive contexts. The member states of the European Union present a set of values, interrelated identities that are constructed through different means and mechanisms. It is based on identities, processes, communications, and socio-political networks. Emotions in performances are about the construction of the self-identity; the EU representatives' emotional performances are political, definitely not private, in a sense, they are institutionalized in the EU's foreign policy (Pace and Bilgic, 2006). The bases of European identity and values as was described by Abraham (2012) are based on these pillars—philosophical and political, art, and religion. Democracy, justice, freedom and Judaeo-Christian contributions are the cornerstone of the European ideological values according to Abraham (2012). Christianity in general consensus is considered to be one source that has contributed to human rights, but not the only one. The EU Charter of Fundamental rights is a substantial pillar of European values. The mentioned “carrier groups” are not merely obliged to adhere to those principles but are fully required to present them within political and public discourse. However, the members of the states and institutions sometimes use the narrative of trauma that functions as a political mobilizer for their own benefits. Therefore, the International relations theorists have to redefine and rethink these narratives of trauma and

emotions; understand their power in the state realm, through which emotions or trauma become collective; and their power to unite, mislead, influence the whole society and international relations.

It is necessary for democratic nations to reconcile the past traumatic experiences that emerged from genocide. The sensitivity of the topic is understandable, however, to use the narrative of trauma for political goals goes beyond moral understanding. Even though bringing the issue into public discourse is undoubtedly inevitable, one needs to carefully approach the issue. In regard to the Armenian genocide, the claim for the recognition of the act of genocide was made by third-parties interventions. Even if legal recognition of genocide cannot be stated due to the Genocide Convention, outside countries symbolically recognized the atrocity as the deed of genocide. The controversy of the topic emerges when carrier groups politicize the trauma for their current political purposes, not only in domestic ones but also in a foreign society. Hatred is the strongest emotion that can easily mobilize people and the language functions as one of the means for manipulating the emotions of humans through representatives of public institutions. The burden of genocide creates a gap among different groups of people, in this context among the Armenian and Turkish society. Speaking of bilateral issues, this particular bilateral conflict has become of great interest to international organizations by creating and subsequently politicizing the narrative of trauma, emotions, and identity in public. International discourse is only extending the gap that was already created.

Chapter 2-The Armenian Genocide in the European Union Context

The international actors have a tendency to intervene in bilateral conflicts with the aim to solve the issue efficiently. From the historical perspective, it has not always had a positive impact on the solution for both sides or for their relations—in this context, the Armenian-Turkish relations. National and international politics had a significant role considering the recognition of the Armenian genocide. The issue has become more relevant when Turkey has formally started the process of accession to the European Union as a full member. The same year, 1987, as Turkey filed the application, the European Union adopted the resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide (European Commission, n.d.), entitled the European Parliament Resolution on the Political Solution to the Armenian Question, adopted on June 18, 1987. The text states that the European Parliament, which represents the whole population of the European Union, believes that the atrocity committed in the years 1915-1917 on the Armenian population living in the territory of the Ottoman Empire constitutes the act of genocide. The resolution was supported by the Convention on the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1948. The resolution is not only about the recognition, but it further refers to the implementation of democratic reforms that Turkey should fulfil. Particularly, articles 5 to 9 state the protection of civil and minority rights as are defined and described in the European Convention of Human rights and 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. Nevertheless, article 2 states that:

Believes that the tragic events in 1915-1917 involving the Armenians living in the territory of the Ottoman Empire constitute genocide within the meaning of the convention on the prevention and the punishment of the crime of genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948; Recognizes, however, that present Turkey cannot be held responsible for the tragedy experienced by the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and stresses that neither political nor legal or material claims against present-day Turkey can be derived from the recognition of this historical event as an act of genocide. (European Parliament resolution on the political solution to the Armenian question, 1987, article 2)

As Alexander (2004) has described, for collective trauma to emerge the social crises must become a cultural one. According to all resolutions they have adopted concerning the Armenian genocide, they have decided to present the social pain of the

Armenians as a fundamental threat to their European identity, which is well-enshrined within the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Resolutions require and at the same time limits Turkey to “remember” its predecessor's horrendous crimes as an act of symbolic recognition for victims, in this context, for Armenians. Even though the European Union has stated that Turkish acceptance of the Armenian genocide is not a condition for Turkey's entry into the EU, it set certain standards for the EU–Turkish relations and to some extent disrupted Turkey's accession to the block. Subsequent 2005 and 2015 resolutions have remained as an attempt for the essential requirement for Turkey's recognition of the Armenian genocide as a condition to enter the European Union. The position of the EU is to push Turkey to recognize the genocide but do not insist on any financial reparations for victims or aim to block Turkey's accession. Nonetheless, one member state of the EU—France tried to criminalize the denial of the Armenian genocide that even deepened the Armenian–Turkish relations and in itself did not help anything.

Chapter 3-The Armenian Genocide in French Law

The main function of laws is to create harmonious life in a secure state. The memory laws seem to be more of symbolic gestures rather than a practical legal tool assuring the country's security (Wartanian, 2009). Therefore, making the memory law enter into a force and punish human beings with imprisonment of one year and a financial fine of 45,000€, as was proposed in the genocide bill in France, can create more obstacles than solutions. On 12 October 2006, the French National Assembly passed the genocide bill that proposed criminalization of the denial of the Armenian genocide, entitled *Proposition de Loi Tendante à Réprimer la Contestation de l'Existence du Génocide Arménien*. The draft of the genocide bill was a follow-up of the previous law from 2001 that declares the official French recognition of the Armenian genocide (Aydin & Cerrera & Geyer, 2006). The bill was approved by the French Senate (the upper house) and supported by President Sarkozy. However, President Sarkozy could not have had the final approval because the bill was ruled unconstitutional by the French top judicial body (BBC, 2012 & France 24, 2012). The decision of the Constitutional Council claimed that the controversial bill angered Turkey and violated the freedom of expression—the main principle of democracy.

The political tension between France and Turkey deepened in 2006 when the genocide bill was adopted by the French National Assembly. By adopting the genocide bill and four other memory laws –The Gayssot Act of July 13, 1990, that follow-up the freedom of the press law from 1889 by adding a new article that punishes the denial of the Holocaust; the law of January 29, 2001, that recognizes the Armenian genocide; The Taubira Act of May 21, 2001, that recognized the slave trade and slavery; and the article four of the French law on colonialism that decrees teaching of the history of the French colonialism in a positive light—French legislators essentially pressured for the “correction” of historical terminology, focus on what other nations have done but downplaying their own atrocities (Wartanian, 2009; Ash, 2006; Kebranian, 2020; In an article for the Guardian, Ash (2009) claimed that “[t]his bill... has no more moral or historical justification” (Ash, 2009, pp. 4). Tiryaki (2006) argued in Turkish Daily News against the French genocide bill as well by stating that “the bill is not only in breach of the human rights convention

but at the same time is contrary to the basic principles on which the EU was established” (Tiryaki, 2006, p. 9). The year before Timothy Garton Ash and Sylvia Tiryaki published the articles criticizing the French genocide bill, a group of French historians and intellectuals have gathered under the petition *Liberté pour l’Histoire*. They have appealed to the French government by claiming that, “in a free state, it is neither a matter of the parliament nor the judiciary authority to define the historical truth” (Liberation, 2005; Kebranian, 2020). In a democratic state, laws should be established objectively and should not signal any features of biases. History and collective memory are a significant part of social development and are some of the main instruments to secure justice. But historians cannot be deprived of freedom of expression to define truth.

French Identity

According to Moore (2010), the birth of a new French identity is rooted in their revolution. *Liberté, égalité, fraternité*—these three words of the 1789 French Revolution summarize the ideas of universality that functioned as the foundation for the French politics and, at the same time, it has brought a liberal flow into Europe. Language and history are the cornerstones of national identity, especially since the French revolution became a part of their shared history that shapes the French national identity (Moore, 2010). David Fraser and Sevené Garibian (2008, 2011) have seen the French legislation as one that adopts the commitments to human rights and values. In a way, France need for recognition of memory laws can be associated with French ideological vision-oriented around human rights. Fraser (2008) even pointed out how a certain burden is placed on France to protect those universal rights and truth (Fraser & Garibian, 2008, 2011; cited in Kebranian, 2020). The French relationship with Turkey goes far back in history. In relation to the French collective memory, the First World War is important, in which France together with Great Britain and Russia won the war over Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. As moral victors, the governments of France, Great Britain, and Russia have pronounced the joint declaration that stated that the Ottoman Empire committed a massacre on the Armenian subjects, denouncing the Turkish government, and demanding that it would be held responsible (Zayas, 2020). In the context of European identity, the First World War, the Second World War, and the Holocaust refer to the past traumatic experiences that were institutionalized in the process of identity construction through the narratives of cultural trauma. It was translated into policies of member states as in France, which is strongly oriented around the universality of human rights and their protection. The notion of the French genocide bill and other memory laws were inspired by the constructed European and French identities (Pace & Bilgic 2018).

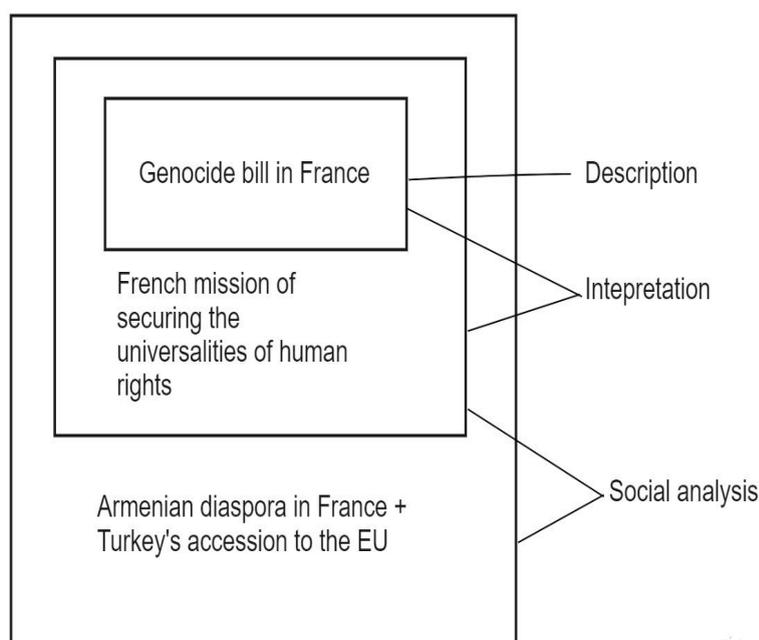
There are pieces of evidence that manifest French identity based on human rights protection and their relationships with Turkey: i) in regard to the topic of this thesis – in 1915-1917, France sent ships to rescue Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and those who were migrating came to France because it was the most welcoming country in Europe; ii) The memory laws France has adopted into their legislation remains as evidence of their identity that is based on the ideas of universality and

human rights (Gamaghelyan, 2022). As Hicks (2011) explained, humans have an inborn need to secure their safety, one of them—the self-extension principle was revealed in the Armenian population when they migrated to France. Armenians reached France with the aim to find security. However, article four of the French law on colonialism entitled: *loi n° 2005-158 du 23 février 2005 portant reconnaissance de la Nation et contribution nationale en faveur des Français rapatriés*, remains as undeniable evidence of Assmann & Czaplicka's (1995) theory of collective memory. Assmann (1995) claimed that cultural trauma functions among two poles whether the traumatic event has potentiality or actuality mode. For instance, whether the French colonization era is relevant and beneficial for them as a nation to openly admit their atrocities or not in the present time, here and now.

The Genocide Bill in France

France has not made any similar statements regarding atrocities carried out by other EU members states, only concerning the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide. Ash sarcastically remarked?: “Let’s criminalize denial of the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition. Let’s make a mandate of a minimum of 10 years imprisonment for anyone who claims that the Serbs did not attempt genocide against Albanians in Kosovo” (Garton Ash, 2006, p. 2). The list of horrendous events committed by the EU member states is quite long. Therefore, even if the French identity is rooted centrally in human rights concepts, there could be special intentions why they have chosen to criminalize the Armenian genocide. Why is the Armenian genocide that important to the French legislators? What was the attempt behind the effort to criminalize the denial of the Armenian genocide? The reasons for proposing the genocide bill can be explained in four ways: i) French national identity that is based on human rights; ii) the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) party’s opportunistic move before the election, iii) the largest Armenian diaspora in Europe resides in France, and iv) Turkey’s perspective EU accession.

Figure 2: Critical Discourse Analysis



Note: based on Fairclough (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis

Alexander's theory of cultural trauma (2004) and Fairclough's (1995) critical discourse analysis explain how the carrier groups—representatives of institutions—can effectively decide to present social pain as a fundamental threat to their society to create a narrative of trauma. The non-recognition of the Armenian genocide was/is perceived as a fundamental threat to their society, which had experienced genocide as well. The aim of the process of creating the cultural trauma can be approached through Assmann's (2008) definition of commemoration rites that are able to reactivate the memory and strengthen collective participation. The first step of the process of cultural trauma was depicted in the context of adopted resolutions concerning the Armenian genocide and the proposed genocide bill in France, which is a claim that the carrier groups have made.

By proposing the genocide bill, there is a clear distinction who essentially is the **speaker**—the French government that upholds their truth of universalities around shared memory of the atrocity and underscores the moral position of France as the initiator of the human rights story in Europe. The genocide bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian genocide was put forward by Sarközy's Union for the Presidential Majority (UMP) party, which was later renamed the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) party. Namely, it was put forward by the UMP party member Valerie Boyer and supported by the President Nicolas Sarközy himself (BBC, 2011). After the genocide bill was held unconstitutional by the top judiciary body, President Sarközy stated he would submit a new law considering the Armenian genocide that undeniably refers to Sarközy's support of the bill (Sayare, 2012; Irish & Aydinli, 2012).

Audience. The genocide bill was proposed and passed in the lower house—the National Assembly—in 2006, a year before the election. It is important to highlight that the French government did not push the motion but the ruling UMP party gave its members free votes (Tran, 2006). For the UMP party, the audience was mainly their voters because 600,000 Armenian votes can seem to be important for the next election but at the same time, it plays a negligible role. The more important electorate was focused on anti-Turkish, anti-EU sentiment and conservatives (Kebranian, 2020).

Situation—historical, cultural, and institutional. The UMP party has followed the concept of the Holocaust denial that could be perceived as a situational strategic move before the election, which was connected with anti-Turkish sentiments within the UMP party and its electorate. The interpretation of the bill was explained by the member of the UMP party, Valerie Boyer, as “inspired by European law, which says that people who deny the existence of the genocide must be sanctioned” (BBC, 2011, p.18). Patrick Devedjian, a lawmaker of Armenian descent, expressed himself in regard to the genocide bill, that the UMP party are not trying to write history but make necessary political acts (Hurriyet Daily News, 2011). Sen. Herve Marseille, a French politician, member of the Centrist Union Group party (UDI), supported the bill by claiming that when we contest the Holocaust, we can be punished, however when we contest the Armenian genocide, there is no punishment. Thus we should have equality in front of the law (CNN, 2012). The interpretation of the event was described and supported through European values. Policymakers use the emotional performances and narrative of cultural trauma to either construct or re-construct their identity. The goal is to constitute the discourse that refers to norms and values in society (Pace & Bilgic, 2006). The justification behind the genocide bill was to protect the principles of the EU and France due to their identity, which is deeply rooted in the French Revolution, seeking to protect it. The fact that the bill was proposed a year before the election can be presented as a situational or opportunistic move. Such a statement can be confirmed by the fact that the bill did not, in essence, solve anything.

For cultural classification, Alexander (2004) has made four dimensions of representations of creating a narrative of cultural trauma. **The nature of the pain** refers to the conceptualization of the pain behind the traumatic event. By an attempt to criminalize the denial of the Armenian genocide, France has shown their sympathy with victims. Emotions played an important role in that as well. As Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014) pointed out the role of emotions in global politics, one can understand that fear and empathy were constituted in the process, particularly fear from repeating the act and empathy from similarly committed atrocity in Europe. Both of them arose from European history.

The nature of the victim refers to the moral standing of the victim. The UMP party has perceived the atrocity committed during the First World War as a human tragedy that should be punished and the perpetual mourning of Armenians should find relief. The authors of the genocide bill perceive the Armenians as the primary victims of the cruel Ottoman Empire, but even the wider audience can relate to it due to the emphasis placed on the act of genocide and its strong recall in European and French memory

Relation of the trauma victim to the wider audience. Cultural trauma narrative is enlarging the circle of empathy within a society. By establishing victimhood, the only question that remains is to understand to what extent the members of the audience for trauma representations experience the pain of the victimized group. The audience represents primarily the UMP voters, but the topic touches the whole French population. Is the wider French audience also a part of a victimized group? Certainly, the EU population can relate to the victims—the Armenians, because the EU history has shared memories of the Holocaust event. The collective identity can be experienced individually through the negative emotions which associate us with others. The story full of emotions is easily remembered in our memory and function as a strong mobilizer of political behaviour.

The last dimension of representation of a particular event is **the attribution of responsibility**. In the creation of a trauma narrative, it is important to clarify the perpetrators. Who committed the Armenian genocide? Was it the Ottoman Empire or can we punish present Turkey for that? By adopting the resolutions in regard to the Armenian genocide, the victims have been marked as Armenians, perpetrators were the Ottoman Empire, however, the responsibility was required from the present-day Turkey (Alexander, 2004). Additionally, the genocide bill stated that every person who denies the Armenian genocide would be sanctioned and put in prison that would indicate their failure to perceive the moral framework “correctly” and thus he/she is attacking to basic rights and values of the society that is arising from memory.

Alexander’s (2004) dimensions of cultural trauma narrative entering the legal area, scientific area, and the mass media world strengthen the narrative and serve as a supportive element of raising awareness. Letting the French genocide bill enter into

the legal sphere could cause problems because it would legally bind responsibilities and distribute punishments and financial repayments to potentially innocent people and it would deprive historians of researching the event thoroughly. Letting the genocide bill enter into mass media brought polarization in population within the state because mass communication allows traumas to gain enormous persuasive power over some, and elicit strong emotional rejection in others. At the same time, the bill has angered Turkey and set certain standards for the EU–Turkey relations later on (Alexander, 2004; Assman, 2008).

The power of language has a major role in this process of cultural trauma because it is inevitably interwoven with Alexander's (2004) mass media communication canal and Fairclough's (1995) model of critical discourse analysis. Through mass media, the UMP supported the genocide bill by referring to the EU values and human rights that aimed to manipulate the population by presenting certain things as a threat to those values, evoking strong emotions like empathy and fear in human beings. That's the triangle that was described by Pace and Bilgic (2006) that says that emotions are used in representations by carrier groups through which discourse is shaped or even changed. Emotion, as Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014) explained, play a sufficient role to attain the sense of collective dimension if they relate to social issues as a reconciliation of the past traumatic experience, as the Armenian genocide is. By criminalizing the denial of the Armenian genocide, the carrier groups are making the past non-negotiable, appointing every person that has doubts about the past to be unjust and depriving everyone of freedom of expression. This theory of Alexander's cultural trauma (2004) explained how the social pain of one specific group (Armenians) can become the great interest of the state (France). The interpretation of the bill was justified by European values but the sociocultural environment plays a significant role as well.

Sociocultural Environment

Another important factor that enters into proposing the problematic genocide bill lies within the sociocultural environment that cannot be left behind. As Alexander (2004) stated, there is a difference between the event and its representation. First of all, the largest Armenian diaspora lives in France, thus certain pressure could have

been applied to French politics with the purpose to protect their own citizens. But what could be more accurate to highlight is the hidden anti-Turkishness and anti-EU sentiment in UMP's agenda. Turkey's accession to the EU met noticeable disagreement from some French politicians. Their critical approach consisted of the denial of the Armenian genocide and Turkey's relations with Cyprus. Before the bill was proposed, the UMP party was quite divided on the perspective of the accession of Turkey into the EU. President Jacques Chirac suggested giving a chance to Turkey (Tekin, 2019). However, his minister of internal affairs—Nicolas Sarkozy remained against Turkey's membership, whose main arguments were reposed on geographical and religious terms. When France rejected the EU constitution in 2005, it gave Sarkozy and the UMP the opportunity to promote their own geographical categorizations of Europe and Turkey (Tekin, 2019). As Caulcutt (2014) wrote for BBC, some members of UMP consider Euroscepticism as a weapon to lure voters back from the far-right to anti-EU stance. Some of them are claiming the EU should be smaller, with only 6 members altogether (Caulcutt, 2014). After Sarkozy and his followers were confronted with the negative public opinion, under Chirac's leadership, they have agreed to give Turkey a chance, however under conditions that either Turkey would adopt European values or otherwise Turkey has no place in the EU (Tekin, 2019).

During Sarkozy's presidency, one could see specific actions he has taken that highlight the hidden anti-Turkishness. Firstly, he stated that Turkey is not a European country and his government considered blocking the negotiation of the EU on European Monetary Union with Turkey. Such a step could deprive Turkey of the status of a potential member (EveryCRSReport, 2007). Secondly, Sarkozy opposed Turkey's accession to Europe by emphasizing traditional European boundaries that ignore Turkey's European political and economic spheres and their membership in NATO. Sarkozy asserted that Turkey has no place in Europe because Turkey is part of Asia Minor, thus he proposed to have a partnership rather than a union with Turkey. (The Washington Institute, 2008; Hurriyet, 2007). Last but not least, President Sarkozy supported the proposal to amend the 2001 law on the recognition of the Armenian genocide in accordance with anti-denialist law 1990 Loi Gayssot. That also reflected his own and his conservative supporters' reluctance to see Turkey join the

EU even though they have officially agreed to give a chance to Turkey (Kebranian, 2020).

The Impact of the French Genocide Bill

The intentions of the bill can be interpreted as exclusively a matter of French domestic politics prior to an upcoming national election. Likewise, it can be interpreted as an attempt to protect the universality of human rights, that contains the narrative of cultural trauma coming from the European values, accompanied with elements of hidden anti-Turkishness. In spite of that, its impact goes beyond France and has consequences for the whole European Union. As was stated by Olli Rehn, European Commissioner for the Enlargement, “the French law on the Armenian genocide is, of course, a matter for French lawmakers, but there is a lot at stake for the European Union as well, and the decision may have very serious consequences for EU-Turkey relations” (Aydin & Cerrera & Geyer, 2006, p. 1). The topic of genocide is a strongly sensitive issue that is used in the domestic and international sphere for political purposes which in this particular issue of the Armenian genocide has severe consequences not only for the EU-Turkey relations but also for the essential principles of a democratic state.

The proofs are visible in the reactions of Turkey when Ankara froze political and military ties with Paris after the genocide bill passed the lower house (France24, 2012). The Turkish foreign minister, Abdullah Gul, said “If this bill is passed, Turkey will not lose anything, but France will lose Turkey” (Tran, 2006, p. 6). Later on, in 2012, Turkey’s Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told in an interview for FRANCE 24 that “This bill would punish me for having an opinion on a historical event. It goes against all European and French values of freedom of expression... The painful history of Armenians and Turks is being used ... for political opportunism and against the basic values of politics” (France 24, 2012). Similar statements by Tiryaki and Ash were noted above. Not to mention that a dialogue between Armenians and Turkey is necessary for the reconciliation, as stated by the EU spokeswoman Krisztina Nagy: “Should this law enter into force ... it would prohibit dialogue which is necessary for reconciliation on the issue,” (Al Jazeera, 2006, p.8). On the contrary, Gamaghelyan (2022) perceives the Armenian–Turkish relationship not as a bilateral conflict, but as

a one-country issue—a Turkish problem. He expressed himself in consideration with an effective solution of the issue in two dimensions: i) Turkish dimension – Turkey should recognize the Armenian genocide and according to him, reparations are required, ii) Armenian-Turkish dimension—that requires mutual understanding for re-opening borders for trading, communication, etc. (Gamaghelyan, 2022).

The French genocide bill was interpreted as an important act justified by human rights discourse. But if one looks at the relevance and effectiveness of the bill, one can understand that it did not hold any reconciliation process as a priority, and it did not attempt to solve the Armenian-Turkish relationship. Considering the French genocide bill, the freedom of expression plays a significant role in Turkey's perspective accession to the EU. As Aydin & Cerrera & Geyer (2006) explained, the EU has been applying a policy of “conditionality” on Turkey for a long time, considering their trajectory towards democratization, and emphasizing the right of free expression. In regard to the freedom of expression, the bill could strengthen the Euroscepticism in Turkey by making an impression that freedom of speech is only valid for member states. It might further damage the credibility of the EU rights and enlargement policy (Aydin & Cerrera & Geyer, 2006). Such a move can create a gap between France–Turkish and EU–Turkish relations. On the contrary, some may argue as Gamaghelyan (2022) that it also has a positive impact with respect to the Armenian diaspora in France and their reconciliation process.

Conclusion

Cultural and collective trauma is the trait of politics of memory in which political purposes adjust events in accordance with memories that are recorded and remembered from history. The Armenian genocide, within the French political and public discourse, remains a significant part of human history that needs to be symbolically recognized by Turkey. As Gamaghelyan (2022) mentioned, France is more involved in the reconciliation process itself than Armenia. That can be linked to the French national identity that is deeply rooted in the universality of human rights, accompanied by the European identity that is undoubtedly tied with the memory of the Holocaust. Along with the current situation in that region—the Armenian state has a tense relationship with Azerbaijan due to which Armenia has closed borders with Turkey. Therefore, Armenia-Turkey relations are in the present day notably broken for different reasons. However, the aim of this thesis was to look at the French political discourse, especially in 2006, when the French National Assembly proposed the genocide bill that criminalize the denial of the Armenian genocide.

The theory of cultural trauma introduced by Jeffrey Alexander (2014) described the whole process of creating the cultural trauma narrative and the process of keeping the narrative alive. The thesis aims to explain how the narrative of trauma can be easily used by politicians for their benefit. The paper used the model of critical discourse analysis with the purpose of the division between description and its subsequent interpretation and show the significance of the sociocultural environment. France used their memories that are reflected from the Holocaust event and tried to apply the universality of ideas on the Armenian genocide, notably due to these reasons: i) reference to French identity based on human rights and position of a moral victor in the First World War; ii) the UMP strategic move before the election; iii) the largest Armenian diaspora lives in France within Europe; iv) Turkey's prospective accession to the EU. None of those resolutions or proposed genocide bill has any legal impact on Turkish membership in the EU. But it has an impact on political and public discourse remaining in the slow trajectory towards democracy in Turkey. The French genocide bill, in essence, did not solve the Armenian-Turkish relations, did not implement any reconciliation processes and did not persuade Turkey to officially recognize the Armenian genocide. On the contrary, it has only angered Turkey and

slowed down their turn towards democratization, and it was against the principle of freedom of expression. The narrative of trauma consists of strong emotions that, through enlarging the circle of empathy, can be used as a mobilizer for achieving political goals—as the UMP party has done before the elections, which they have won.

The thesis would need analysis of further cases to confirm the mechanism of cultural trauma narrative used in French politics. To witness hidden Islamophobia in French politics, the paper has to look at parliamentary negotiations in regard to Turkey and the Armenian genocide and how specific members of various parties have voted. However, the case study of the French genocide bill supports the theory put forth by Jeffrey Alexander and helps to understand it on a concrete theory-affirming case study.

Resumé

Ľudia sa zvyčajne stretávajú s minulosťou v politickom a verejnom diskurze, ktorý sa týka krívd, potrieb, reparácií a záujmov tých ľudí, ktorých práva boli minulými udalosťami porušené. Ak sa však bližšie pozrieme na aktérov, agendu a ich prostriedky na zaobchádzanie s minulosťou, uvedomíme si, že ich hlavnou starosťou sú súčasné problémy, ktorým musia čeliť, a preto môžu aktéri v súčasnosti využiť minulosť vo svoj prospech. Táto bakalárska práca sa zaoberá vznikom kultúrnej traumy, a tým ako tento naratív traumy vie byť zneužitý na dosiahnutie politických cieľov. Práca sa zameriava na francúzsky politický diskurz a to konkrétne na návrh zákona z roku 2006, ktorý kriminalizoval popieranie Arménskej genocídy. Znenie zákona navrhovalo rok väzenia a pokutu vo výške 45 000€ pre tých, čo by popreli Arménsku genocídu. Dôvod, prečo sa práca sústreďuje na francúzsky politický diskurz spočíva v tom, že vo Francúzsku žije najväčšia Arménska diaspora v Európe a Francúzsko ako jediná krajina z členov Európskej únie navrhla zákon o genocíde Arménov. Zákon bol navrhnutý rok pred voľbami stranou Únia za ľudové hnutie (UMP), ktorá postavila svoje vysvetlenie zákona na koncepte ľudských práv. Avšak práca skúma aj aspekt sociálno-kultúrnych podmienok.

Prvá kapitola, ktorá je teoretická, vysvetľuje koncepty a naratívy ako: dôstojnosť, emócie, trauma a pamäť. Dôstojnosť je vnútorný stav mieru, ktorý prichádza s uznaním, prijatím hodnoty a zraniteľnosti všetkého živého. Je to hodnota, s ktorou sa každá ľudská bytosť narodí, a preto by sa malo s každým človekom zaobchádzať spravodlivo. Avšak aj napriek tomu je narušovaná dôstojnosť ľudí. Ak veríme, že ľudia sú prirodzene kooperatívni, musíme prihliadať aj na skutočnosť, že ľudia sú ochotní spolupracovať vo svojej komunite, ale zároveň sú súťaživí medzi rôznymi skupinami. Tu môže nastať ohrozenie súpera v prospech jednej komunity. Ak je tento prirodzený stav človeka ohrozený alebo zničený, ľudia sú zvyčajne zaplavení pocitmi hrôzy, hanby a poníženia, čo môže produkovať len ďalšie násilie.

Emócie sú psychologické procesy, ktoré zahŕňajú subjektívne zážitky, avšak ak emócie hrajú dôležitú úlohu v spoločných spomienkach, v histórii formujú emocionálne silné udalosti, ktoré môžu byť inštitucionalizované na úrovni štátu vo forme uznesení a legislatívy. Aj napriek tomu, že človek je racionálna bytosť, emócie zohrávajú dôležitú úlohu v našom bytí, a nedá sa im vyhnúť. Tieto emócie sú inštitucionalizované v politickom diskurze na národnej či medzinárodnej úrovni cez

emocionálne vystúpenia predstaviteľov inštitúcií. Emócie v politike sú nevyhnutne prepojené s mocou v národnej a medzinárodnej politike, ktoré taktiež ovplyvňujú aj to, ako sa jednotlivci či kolektívy socializujú a ako sa navzájom ovplyvňujú na sociálnej alebo diplomatickej úrovni.

Kultúrna trauma neexistuje prirodzene, ale je vykonštruovaná spoločnosťou, členovia skupiny sa v istom zmysle kolektívne cítia byť vystavení hrozným udalostiam, ktoré sa stali v minulosti. Kultúrna trauma nevzniká preto, že minulosť je sama osebe škodlivá, ale preto, že udalosť sa objavuje v kolektíve, ktorý verí, že minulosť škodí spoločenskej identite v súčasnosti. Naratív kultúrnej traume obnovuje pamäť prostredníctvom spomienkového aktu, rozširuje okruh empatie a sociálnej súdržnosti, a zaoberá sa riešením konfliktov.

Pamäť, kolektívna pamäť bola popieraná mnohými akademikmi s argumentom, že to nie je skutočný pojem, pretože pamäť nie je konzistentná a stabilná; v tom zmysle, že spoločnosť si vyberá, ktoré spomienky sú dôležité na zapamätanie si, čo značí subjektívnosť vo väčšine prípadov. Kolektívnu pamäť možno charakterizovať ako udalosti, ktoré sú vybrané, rekonštruované, modifikované, avšak závisia od historických udalostí v podobe nabitých príbehov a mobilizujúcich symbolov. Napriek tomu je proces formovania pamäte vždy sprostredkovaný, zmenený a interpretovaný mnohými spôsobmi na účely v súčasnosti.

Prvá kapitola teda vysvetľuje ako tieto pojmy a naratívy súvisia, nadväzujú na seba, a ako sú poprepájané v naratíve kultúrnej traumu. Táto kapitola poukazuje aj na skutočnosť týchto naratívov, a ich prítomnosť v politickom diskurze na národnej či medzinárodnej úrovni.

Druhá kapitola dáva čitateľovi možnosť spoznať pozadie Arménskej genocídy v európskom kontexte. Poukazuje na všetky rozhodnutia, ktoré boli prijaté európskym parlamentom v otázke genocídy Arménov. Táto kapitola hlavne vysvetľuje postoj Európskej únie, ktorý je odzrkadlený v tom, že tlačí na Turecko, aby uznalo Arménsku genocídu, ale netrvá na žiadnych finančných reparáciách pre obeť, a ani sa nesnaží blokovat' pristúpenie Turecka do bloku.

Tretia kapitola predstavuje originálnu prípadovú štúdiu, v ktorej sa aplikuje Alexandrova teória o kultúrnej traume spolu s kritickou analýzou diskurzu na návrh zákona z roku 2006, ktorý kriminalizoval popieranie Arménskej genocídy. Pomocou tejto Alexandrovej teórie definuje, kto je rečník – strana Únia za ľudové hnutie (UMP) a kto je publikum – voliči UMP strany. A v neposlednom rade poukazuje aj na

sociálno-kultúrnu situáciu v štáte, konkrétne skúma zámer zákona navrhnutý stranou Únia za ľudové hnutie, ktorý vykazuje znaky skrytej islamofóbie. Táto kapitola sa zaoberá aj tým, aký dopad to malo na medzinárodne vzťahy, konkrétne na vzťahy Európskej únie s Tureckom.

V závere tejto práce sa konštatuje, že sa potvrdila hypotéza. Naratív kultúrnej traumy vie byť zneužitý na dosiahnutie politických cieľov, ako to strana Únia za ľudové hnutie zneužila v roku 2006 navrhnutím zákona o Arménskej genocíde. V závere sa taktiež konštatuje, že práca by potrebovala hlbšiu analýzu skrytej islamofóbie vo francúzskej politike a to tým, že by skúmala parlamentné rokovania týkajúce sa Turecka a Arménskej genocídy a to, ako hlasovali členovia rôznych strán.

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