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Emotions in parliamentary diplomacy: debating the Armenian genocide in the European Parliament

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ABSTRACT

Why do international institutions promote emotional norms? In order to answer this question, the article, first, maps the legitimizing arguments put forward by the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in promoting an emotionally loaded norm vis-à-vis Turkey, i.e., the recognition of the Armenian genocide. Second, the paper explores the reasons behind the promotion of this emotional norm by the European Parliament (EP) as justified by the MEPs. The article theoretically draws on the IR literature on emotions, and empirically, it relies on the data generated from the interventions by the MEPs at the plenary on the centenary of the Armenian genocide on 15 April 2015. Through claims analysis, it is demonstrated that the condemnation of genocide is a shared norm within the EP, which transcends national and ideological differences. Consequently, the MEPs aspire to render it an essential constitutive element of the emotional community at the EU level.

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Introduction

While the recent “emotional turn” in international relations (Hutchison, 2014, p. 492; Prior, 2018, p. 48; Van Rythoven & Solomon, 2020, p. 4) has given way to a rich literature on emotions¹ in world politics (Bially Mattern, 2008; Crawford, 2000; Danchev, 2006; Lebow, 2005; Marcus, 2000; McDermott, 2004; Ross, 2006; Saurette, 2006), the role of parliaments as public venues for constructing, channelizing or mobilizing emotions has remained unexplored. This empirical neglect is surprising as the study of parliaments, and in particular parliamentary debates, constitute an interesting field for advancing current research on the role of emotions in politics for three reasons.

First, parliaments are ideal sites for studying “the expression of emotions” (How emotions are expressed?) (Koschut, 2020a, p. 5) since parliamentary debates make emotions empirically observable for researchers. As noted by Koschut et al. (2017, p. 481) emotions become observable only through discourse, which “shifts the analytical focus from their internal phenomenological perception and appraisal by individuals to their representational and intersubjective articulation and communication within social spheres”. In other words, emotions become meaningful units of analysis

through utterance and when they are given explication through discursive frames (Hutchison & Bleiker, 2017). This is why argumentative exchanges among the parliamentarians on emotive issues provide us with a way to grasp how emotions are articulated and framed, hence to uncover their hidden meaning. Second, parliamentary debates enable us to study not only the individual level, but also group, or even international, dimensions of the expression of emotions. In parliamentary debates, while legislators express, interpret and make claims about an emotive phenomenon, their discursive legitimization towards publics, and vis-à-vis each other, provide empirical insights into the theoretical debate on “the processes through which emotions acquire a collective and political character” (Clément & Sangar, 2018, p. 5). While a member of the parliament makes a claim about a given emotional phenomenon, this micro-level articulation of emotion gains a public character and even an international dimension, in the cases of inter-parliamentary relations, since emotional topics are then discussed in an international setting. This helps us study questions related to the collective level of emotions (Bleiker & Hutchison 2008, 2014; Lupovici, 2020; Solomon, 2012), e.g. whether emotions are private, to what extent and under what circumstances they are shared, public or political (Mercer, 2014; Ross, 2006). Third, by bringing inter-parliamentary relations into the study of emotions in IR, one of the key questions of emotion research might also be answered: what are the consequences of emotion discourse (What do emotions do?) (Hall, 2015; Koschut, 2020a, p. 6). Parliaments are important settings for observing how the articulation of a micro-level emotion by a member of the parliament resonates with, or is contested, by other legislators either at the group level (perception by the other political groups) or at the international level (perception by the members of the parliament of a third country).

The European Parliament (EP) and its external relations with the parliamentarians of third states is an illustrative example of these considerations summarized above – namely how emotions are expressed, under what circumstances they are shared, and the consequences of talking about emotional phenomena in an international forum. Previous research (Gürkan, 2019) has already tackled the question concerning the consequences of addressing emotions in inter-parliamentary settings and has demonstrated that the overemphasis on emotional norms largely curtail the role of the EP in its external relations with Turkey. However, this finding raises an interesting puzzle: Why then do the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) actively promote emotional norms in EP’s relations with the parliamentarians of non-EU states despite this constituting a limitation to its role in norm diffusion internationally.

This article makes a distinction between emotional norms and emotion norms. Emotional norms are defined as norms that trigger emotions in the receiving end (norm receiver) because these norms are emotionally loaded. They are “assertions of collective emotions” that serve important political purposes such as “influencing or disciplining the behaviour of others” (Hall, 2017, p. 487). On the other hand, emotion norms refer to the appropriateness of norms in a given society or group. They are rules that guide the appropriateness of emotions in a social group, e.g. “what emotions are considered to be good or bad”, and in this way, they might be considered as the cement of society consolidating “social ties and stability of a particular group” (Koschut, 2014, pp. 536–537). Drawing on Rosenwein (2006), in both conceptualizations (emotion and emotional norms), emotions are considered to be “socially constructed

moral judgements” (Koschut, 2020b, p. 88; Van Rythoven & Solomon, 2020, p. 133). However, emotional norms are about the intergroup, rather than in-group, interactions. They denote culturally specific meanings attached to a norm in a specific society, context or institutional setting, which determine how norm receivers react to their invocation (Crawford, 2014; Lupovici, 2020). While the concept of emotional norm puts the emphasis on the properties (attributes, characteristics) of a norm, and in this way, on the consequences, implications of emotions (Hall, 2017) or reaction patterns (Wolf, 2017) in the international fora, emotion norm shifts the attention to the appropriateness of the norm in a given group. To put it differently, in the case of emotion norms, emotions embedded in the history or culture determine how nations, institutions or groups should behave (What is the appropriate behaviour?), whereas, in the case of emotional norms, norms trigger emotions depending on the socio-cultural legacy (What are the emotional implications of the norm?). Therefore, the emotion norms are about shared, commonly accepted norms, and as such, act as the glue of a group (Koschut, 2020b, p. 88) whereas emotional norms are about the meaning and impact of a given norm, which might be acceptable, contestable or simply different across societies or contexts.

Against this backdrop, the purpose of this article is twofold: First, it aims to map the legitimizing arguments put forward by the MEPs in promoting emotional norms in their relations with the parliamentarians of Turkey. To do so, the paper concentrates on an issue that is highly emotional for Turkey, namely the Armenian genocide. Second, the paper explores the reasons behind the promotion of emotional norms by the EP as justified by the MEPs. The data for this study come from the plenary debate preceding the adoption of the Resolution of 15 April 2015 on the centenary of the Armenian genocide (EP, 2015a). The empirical part demonstrates that while this emotional norm largely limits the EP’s normative actorness vis-à-vis Turkey, internally it is a shared (emotion) norm within the EP. Consequently, the MEPs aspire to render it an essential constitutive element of the “emotional community” at the EU level, which rests on shared “fundamental assumptions, values, goals, feeling rules, and accepted modes of expression” (Koschut, 2014; Koschut, 2020b, p. 88; Rosenwein, 2006, p. 24).

The article is structured as follows. The first section, drawing on previous research, introduces the research puzzle. Under this section, it is shown that norms which trigger emotions in the receiving end (Turkey) largely limit the EP’s normative role. The second section presents the data and method. The third (empirical) part analyses the data with a view to answering the research puzzle. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and discusses their implications for future research.

Research puzzle: Why does the European Parliament promote emotional norms?

The literature on parliamentary diplomacy has shown that the EP has an important role to play in EU external action (Petrova & Raube, 2016; Raube, Müftüler-Baç, & Wouters, 2019; Stavridis & Irrera, 2015), especially through the promotion of dialogue between the parliamentarians of the EP and their peers in third countries (Stavridis & Jančić, 2016). The EP’s relations with Turkey is a case in point since in recent years, and especially during the eighth legislative term (2014–2019), the EP increased its institutional engagement with Turkey by keeping the accession process of Turkey high on the parliament’s

agenda. Since the start of the ninth term, the EP has been equally active and has appeared to be a flagbearer of EU norms and values in relations with Turkey. However, this institutional activism has led neither to the socialization of Turkish political elite into these norms nor to a constructive dialogue between the norm promoter (the EP) and norm receiver (Turkey). Several scholars have highlighted the limited normative impact of the EP through inter-parliamentary cooperation on the political elite of third countries in the EU neighbourhood in general (Glahn, 2019; Kostanyan & Vandecasteele, 2013), and vis-à-vis Turkey in particular (Nas, 1998; Scotti, 2016; Wódka & Cianciara, 2019).

While several factors might hinder an institution's normative role, recent research has demonstrated that the properties of the norms promoted by the EP have important repercussions for its diplomatic/normative agency (Gürkan, 2019). The EP's ability to engage the Turkish political elite in a dialogue has varied according to the content of norms² or values the EP has aspired to promote vis-à-vis Turkey (Gürkan, 2018). The analysis of inter-parliamentary relations highlighted that while, the EP could engage in a constructive dialogue with legislators when it conveyed fundamental norms and values as embedded in the Copenhagen political criteria, it has mostly remained a marginal actor in cases where it has promoted new, controversial conditions which triggered emotions in the receiving end (*ibid.*). An illustrative example of this has been the case of the Armenian genocide. The interactions between Turkey and the EP reached a historical low point when the EP adopted the resolution on the centenary of the Armenian genocide (EP, 2015b). From there, the Turkish side ceased to recognize the EP as a legitimate actor, accused the EP of "instrumentalizing history for political aims" (Ministry of EU Affairs, 2015) and started returning EP resolutions declaring them void on the grounds that they included a reference to the Armenian genocide.

The Armenian genocide, which refers to the tragic events of 1915 is not among the formal Copenhagen membership criteria and there is no consensus among the EU member states³ nor the EU institutions on whether the massacres committed by the Ottoman Empire constitute a genocide or not. From the EP's perspective, the tragic events in 1915–17 constitute genocide (EP, 1987). Furthermore, in its resolution adopted two months after Turkey's formal membership application to the European Economic Community, the EP directly linked Turkey's accession process with the recognition issue and stated that the refusal of the Turkish government to acknowledge the genocide was among the "insurmountable obstacles to consideration of the possibility of Turkey's accession" (*ibid.* paragraph 4). Since 1987, the EP has adopted several resolutions mentioning the Armenian genocide, including the EP Resolution on the 1999 Regular report on Turkey or the EP Resolution on the EU's relations with the South Caucasus, in which, the EP called on Turkey to publicly recognize the genocide (EP, 2000; paragraph 10 and EP, 2002, paragraph 19 respectively). Subsequently, in its resolution on the opening of negotiations with Turkey, the EP overtly stated that the recognition was a prerequisite for the accession of Turkey to the EU (EP, 2005, paragraph 5) and called on all the member states to acknowledge the Armenian genocide ahead of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide (EP, 2015c, paragraph 77). Therefore, despite the reluctance of the Commission and the Council, from the EP's perspective, the recognition constitutes a *de facto* condition for Turkey's accession process (see the EP, 2015a for divergences between the Commission and the Council on the one hand

and the EP on the other hand). However, according to the verdict of the Court of First Instance (2003, paragraph 19), the 1987 resolution is of a “purely political nature, which may be amended by the Parliament at any time”, and therefore, “cannot have binding legal consequences”. This implies that the EP has set an additional informal condition vis-à-vis Turkey and promoted its adoption among the other institutions and member states while the EU abstained from adopting a formal stance on this issue.

Notwithstanding the EU’s reluctance to recognize that the acknowledgement falls under the Copenhagen criteria, the recognition has been a highly emotional issue in Turkey. As noted by Akçam (2004, ix) “political parties and even individuals with diametrically opposed ideas nevertheless maintain a common mindset” when faced with the Armenian problem. This is mainly because the historical narrative in Turkey concerning the events of 1915 has considerably diverged from the Western approach and the Armenian narrative (Bloxham & Göçek, 2008). While several EU members, the EP and the majority of the States in the USA have recognized these events as genocide, since the beginning of the Turkish Republic, Turkey has considered the large loss of life among Ottoman-Armenians during World War I as the “result of the relocation made necessary because of the treasonable activities of the Turkish revolutionaries as well as a consequence of a famine that afflicted Muslims as well as Armenians” (Lewy, 2015, p. 135).

These differences in narratives, and in particular the pressure to recognize the genocide, have generated several negative sentiments among the Turkish political elite and society at large (Dixon, 2018, pp. 67–94). These sentiments range from *distrust* about Western aspirations in instrumentalizing the recognition issue (Bahçeli, 2015; Chrisafis & Hopkins, 2011; Erdoğan, 2015; Yavuz, 2014, pp. 117–118), to *fear* that the recognition of the genocide might lead to claims about sovereign rights of the Republic of Turkey over the lands on which the massacre occurred, and to *nationalistic backlash* (de Waal, 2015, p. 145) as embodied in the Article 301 of the Turkish Criminal Code,⁴ which formed the basis for charging and arresting individuals who used the word “genocide” when speaking of the events of 1915. These emotions are best summarized in the 2007 Court ruling against two Turkish Armenian journalists, who had used the term genocide:

Talk about genocide, both in Turkey and in other countries, unfavorably affects national security and the national interest. The claim of genocide [...] has become part of and the means of special plans aiming to change the geographic, political boundaries of Turkey. The acceptance of this claim in the future could lead to questioning the sovereign rights of the Republic of Turkey over the lands on which the events alleged to constitute genocide occurred. (quoted in Lewy, 2014, pp. 136–137)

Besides these fears expressed by many Turkish policymakers, the moral charge of accepting the heavy burden of genocide (de Waal, 2015, p. 145, 147) contributed to the continuation of the official narrative on the acknowledgement of the genocide (Dixon, 2010, p. 2018). This is not to say that the Armenian question continues to be a taboo for the whole society. On the contrary, in recent years, a “postnationalist critical narrative” has started to emerge among Turkish scholars (Göçek, 2006), and activists as well as political figures have begun to challenge the dominant narrative on the Armenian question (Belçim Galip, 2020). However, this emotional issue continues to constitute red lines for Turkish diplomacy and one of the few issues on which all major political parties,

with the exception of HDP (People's Democratic Party), agree. This is evidenced by the joint statements adopted by the main political parties in the Turkish Parliament rejecting the EP (Hürriyet Daily News, 2015a) or the U.S. Senate (Duvar, 2019) or Bundestag's decision to recognize the Armenian genocide (BBC, 2016). HDP abstained from signing these statements and its members attempted to initiate a debate on the Armenian genocide in the Turkish parliament (Tarcan, 2020). However, the emotive power of the word genocide, unified the ruling party, the main opposition parties and the public at large and reinforced the conviction, often voiced by the government, that the EP/EU/West was biased against Turkey (on this see in particular Hürriyet Daily News, 2015b; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015 and the Ministry for EU Affairs, 2015). This has arguably curtailed the normative role of the EP in the promotion of pro-democracy norms vis-à-vis Turkey as the fact that the EP, unlike the other EU institutions, set a new and emotional norm vis-à-vis Turkey has given the much-needed argument to the government for turning a blind eye to the EP's well-grounded criticisms on Turkey's authoritarian drift on the basis that the EP is a biased institution.

In light of these observations, the question asked here is why does the EP chose to keep Armenian genocide high on its agenda, which, in return, has thus far limited EP's normative role in its relations with Turkey? The next section summarizes the methodological considerations before addressing this puzzle in the empirical part.

Data and claims analysis

The analysis draws on the data generated from the computer-based manual coding of 75 interventions delivered at the EP plenary on 15 April 2015 by the MEPs who argued in favour of the adoption of the Resolution calling on Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide. The parliamentary debate – rather than the text of the final Resolution – was analysed as the research interest is understanding political justifications given in supporting the promotion of an emotional norm.

In order to analyse this data, the method of claims analysis is used. This method, as developed by Koopmans and Statham (1999, 2010), focuses on political actors' policy positions and how they frame claims in the public sphere (de Wilde, 2013, p. 279). Political claims are defined as “purposeful expressions of political opinion made in public communication” (Gora & de Wilde, 2019, p. 9). This method, as further elaborated by de Wilde (2013) and Gora and de Wilde (2019), includes detailed definitions and operationalizations of key variables, including the claimant (who is making the claim?), the form of the claim (how is the claim communicated to the public sphere?), the issue/demand (which policy or political issue does the claimant refer to? What is the claimant demanding?), an object (whose interests are being represented?), a justification (why? What justification does the claimant provide?), and an addressee (to whom is the claim directed?). A claim would ideally, but not necessarily, contain all these aspects. As the data for this research included interventions by the MEPs during the same plenary session, the form of the claim (plenary intervention), the demand (the recognition of the Armenian genocide by Turkey) and the addressee (Turkey) are considered to be identical for the whole dataset, hence were not included in the analysis as separate variables. I only identified as a claim those extracts that contain at a minimum a claimant (an MEP), a demand related to the adoption of the Resolution calling on Turkey to

recognize the genocide, and a justification concerning why Turkey should recognize the genocide. If one of the two aspects (claimant or justification) of the claim changes, I coded it separately as a new claim.

Claims analysis is apt for the current study for two reasons. First, an essential component of the claims analysis, is the “frame” or the justifications given by the claimant for a given course of action, which constitutes the main research focus of this study (de Wilde, 2013, p. 287). Through the analysis of frames, I was able to grasp the discursive justifications provided by the MEPs, hence analyse the content of their justifications for the promotion of an emotional norm, rather than determining only the correlation between nationality/political group on the one hand, and support for the promotion of the norm on the other hand.

Second, the representative strand of the claims analysis serves to understand how far claimants (MEPs) “present themselves to an audience as the legitimate representatives of a certain cause and/or constituency” (de Wilde, 2013, p. 278) because the claim analysis systematically includes in the analysis the object, e.g. the “actors whose interests are materially affected by the (implementation) of the claim” (Koopmans, 2002, p. 43). In this way, I was able to trace not only what the justification was per each MEP/political group, but also whose interests were at the centre of the MEPs’ justifications regarding Turkey’s recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

The claims are identified in the transcripts of parliamentary debate and coded in accordance with the closed code list (see Appendix 1). The discursive justifications of claims have been classified in accordance with the discourse-theoretical distinction used in previous research about EU enlargement (Habermas, 1991, pp. 101–110; Sjursen, 2002), which is also compatible with claims analysis (Wendler, 2014, p. 550). According to this analytical distinction, justifications are coded across three arguments concerning the recognition of the genocide by Turkey: pragmatic, ethical-political and moral. Pragmatic justifications are “strategic explanations of actor behaviour”, which are based on a consequentialist logic of action. In the case of pragmatic justifications, arguments are made in terms of their “utility in relation to externally defined interests” (Wendler, 2014). Ethical-political arguments are framed around the conception of the collective “us” and reflect the constitutive values of a social community. Therefore, they emphasize the rights, duties, obligations emerging as a result of belonging to a specific community (Sjursen, 2002, p. 494). Moral arguments, are embedded in the universal values such as justice or fairness (Sjursen, 2002, pp. 494–495; Wendler, 2014, p. 551). These moral arguments, rather than reflecting the values of a particular community, derive their force from “being universally acceptable to all participants of a discourse” (Wendler, 2014, p. 551). In other words, they are acceptable to different social/political groups regardless of the boundaries, interests, values of a given group as these arguments are embedded in the universal conceptions of justice and rights. Unlike pragmatic justifications, both ethical and moral arguments are based on “the assessment of the appropriateness of political actions”, hence on the logic of appropriateness. Therefore, both ethical and moral types of arguments give norms-based explanations of actor behaviour, and provide normative justifications, rather than strategic explanations of actor behaviour. This analytical distinction in coding claims is useful for uncovering the stated motivation behind the promotion of emotional norms by the MEPs: whether/how far emotional norms serve to construct EU’s normative identity

around constitutive values of the EU or universal principles *or* whether their promotion is rational based on the attainment of a specific goal hence unideological.

In the light of this threefold classification, the MEPs' justifications for demanding Turkey to recognize the Armenian genocide were coded across three themes and nine subtopics: (1) *ethical-political justifications* comprising of code.1/European values, code.2/Europeanness of Turkey, code.3/Turkey's guilt/punishment; (2) *moral justifications* comprising of code.4/honouring the memory of victims, code.5/universal values related to human rights or the prevention of genocide, code.6/learning lessons from history to prevent genocide in future; (3) *pragmatic justifications* comprising of code.7/opening the border between Armenia and Turkey, code.8/peace and stability in the region, code.9/reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey (see Appendix 1 for the description and examples of codes/subcodes). Only those statements including one of these nine labelled codes were selected to be coded. The coding unit in this research is the idea, rather than a word, sentence or paragraph. Therefore, a claim could include a few words or span the entire intervention by a given MEP. The dataset generated in this way include a total of 117 claims on the adoption of the Armenian Genocide delivered by 75 MEPs from 23 different nationalities and belonging to seven political groups and non-attached members (*non-inscrits*, NI).

Empirical analysis: Why does the European Parliament promote emotional norms?

In order to interpret the claims made by the MEPs, I analysed the data by focusing on the interplay of the discursive justifications for the promotion of emotional norms with the political group and the nationality of the claimants (MEPs). Nationality and political ideology are considered to be two important variables as, in this paper, emotions are accepted to be subjective experiences, whose meanings are “culturally construed and constructed” and they are learned/taught “*both* similarly and differently across cultures” (Crawford, 2000, pp. 124–125). Therefore, emotion(al) norms are accepted to be embedded in the collective memory of a given community, and as such, prior belief systems (ideology) or socio-cultural context (nationality) have the potential to determine the socialization into emotions and norms of the community (Crawford, 2014; Koschut, 2020a, pp. 7–8; Mercer, 2014).

The analysis proceeds in two ways. First, in order to trace the correlation between the motivations behind the promotion of an emotional norm and the ideology, I calculated the salience score (or emphasis score see Gürkan & Coman, 2021; Wendler, 2014) for each discursive justification per political group in the EP. The salience score is calculated as the percentage of all the statements made by the members of a given group on a given theme to all the statements delivered by the same group (see Table 1). These scores reveal not only the connection between a given political ideology and a certain type of justifications, but also differences/similarities between the political groups' stances on the promotion of emotional norms (Figure 1).

Second, in the same vein, I calculated the salience of each discursive justification per nationality. The weight of the preferred justification per nationality has been calculated as the percentage of the statements made by an MEP of a given nationality on a given code in relation to all the statements delivered by his/her colleagues of the same nationality

Table 1. The salience of discursive justification of emotion(al) norm by the political groups in the European Parliament*.

Discursive justifications	Subcodes/dimensions	EPP	S&D	GUE	ECR	ALDE	Greens	EFDD	NI	All political groups	N
Ethical-political	European values	9.4	8.3	20	6.7	15.4	28.6	0	10	11.1	13
	Europeanness of Turkey	12.5	8.3	20	20	0	0	33.3	60	16.2	19
	Punish Turkey	0	4.2	10	6.6	0	0	0	0	2.6	3
	All ethical-political	21.9	20.8	50	33.3	15.4	28.6	33.3	70	29.9	35
Moral	Honour victims' memory	12.5	12.5	10	20	7.7	28.6	0	0	12	14
	Universal values	6.3	8.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.4	4
	Learning lessons from history	28.1	25	20	13.3	38.4	28.6	33.3	20	25.6	30
	All moral	46.9	45.9	30	33.3	46.1	57.2	33.3	20	41	48
Pragmatic	Opening the borders	0	0	0	13.3	0	0	0	0	1.7	2
	Peace in the region	3.1	4.2	0	0	7.7	16.6	16.7	0	3.5	4
	Reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey	28.1	29.1	20	20	30.8	16.6	16.7	10	23.9	28
	All pragmatic	31.2	33.3	20	33.3	38.5	14.2	33.4	10	29.1	34
Number of claims (N)											
		32	24	10	15	13	7	6	10	100%	117

*The percentage of all the statements made by the members of a given group on a given code to all the statements made by that group.

(Figure 2). These values help to observe whether the MEPs of the same nationality are more prone to mobilizing a certain type of claim, hence to investigate the interlinkage between nationality and the promotion of an emotional norm.

Three main conclusions stem from this analysis. First, the promotion of an emotional norm from the EP’s perspective is motivated by normative rather than pragmatic arguments. While pragmatic arguments represent only 29.1% of all the claims made by the MEPs, normative justifications (ethical and moral together) amount to 70.9% (see

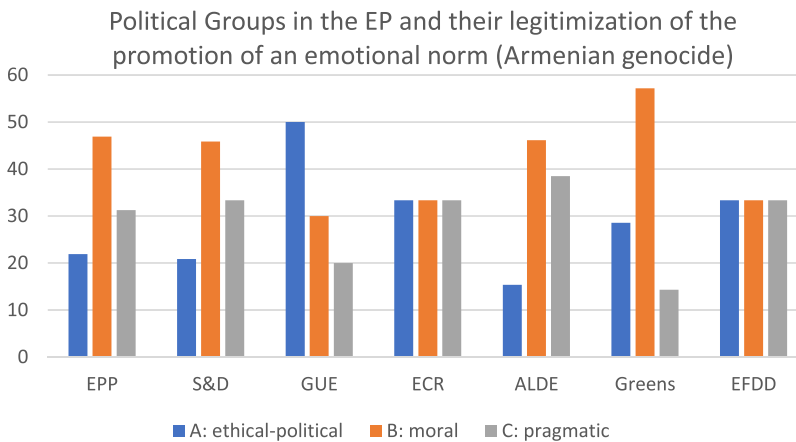


Figure 1. The interplay of ideology and the promotion of an emotion(al) norm.

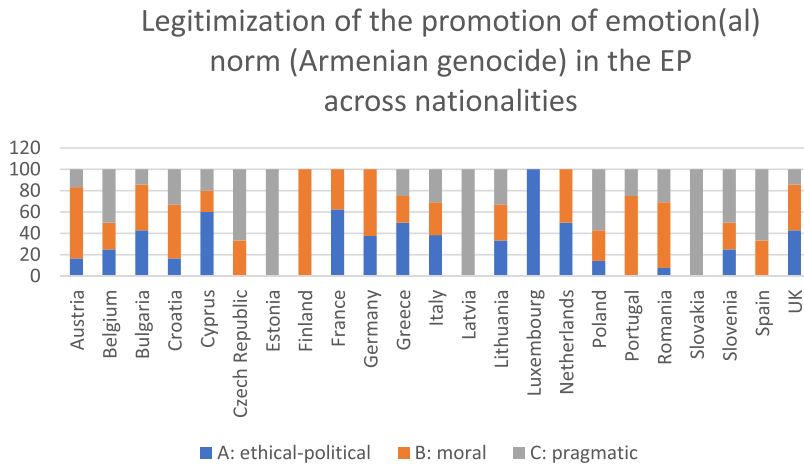


Figure 2. The interplay of nationality with the promotion of emotion(al) norm.

Table 1). Furthermore, a closer analysis of MEPs' interventions shows that pragmatic arguments are often used as secondary arguments in connection with normative claims, whereas normative justifications are not necessarily stated together with pragmatic ones. Moreover, the salience of normative justifications, in particular moral justifications is similarly high for all the political groups regardless of their ideology (moral justifications: 46.9/45.9/33.3/46.1/57.2/33.3 for EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens and EFDD respectively, see **Table 1**). Main political groups (EPP, S&D, ALDE and Greens) embrace identical preference sets, which grant the outmost importance to moral justifications, followed by pragmatic and ethical arguments (**Figure 1**).

The breakdown of discursive justifications into subcodes also indicates that the most frequently voiced argument by all the MEPs concerning the adoption of the Resolution is the necessity of learning from history in order to prevent future atrocities (code.6/25.6). This is followed by the MEPs' attempt to push for a reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey (code.9/23.9), and their conviction that the recognition of the genocide is proof of Turkey's Europeanness (code.2/16.2) and a fundamental European value (code.1/11.1).

These observations highlight that for the EP the promotion of an emotional norm is above all motivated by normative reasons and, in particular, by moral concerns. In this respect, while code.6/learning lessons from history appears to be the most salient justification for all the political groups (with the exception of S&D and ECR), the consideration of the recognition of genocide as a constitutive norm of the Union emerges as the prevailing motivation for all the MEPs (code.1/European values/11.1 and code.2/Europeanness of Turkey/16.2 amount to 27.3 in **Table 1**).

The qualitative review indicates that for several MEPs the prevalent emotional impulse in supporting the Resolution has been the trauma rooted in the emotional history of Europe. While several MEPs referred to the genocide as being part of Europe's "shared" (Jarosław Wałęsa, PPE/Poland) and "tragic and bloody history" (Ivan Jakovčić, ALDE/Croatia), several others established a link between the recognition of the genocide and its non-repetition in the future by giving examples from Europe's history (see for example Jean-Marie Cavada, ALDE/France, Josef Weidenholzer, S&D/Austria). A

typical example of references to Europe's own emotional heritage is voiced by Barbara Spinelli, GUE/Italy, who explicated the reasons of her support to the Resolution in connection with the Holocaust: "The Union would not have been born without this [German] recognition [of the Nazi genocide], which is full acceptance of the legacy of the past." Besides MEPs' emphasis on Europe's common heritage and its emotionally loaded memories, the thematic salience of the constitutive values of the (European) community reveals MEPs' intent to build a community of shared emotion norms. While for several MEPs the recognition was a fundamental European value (see for example the interventions by Alojz Peterle, PPE/Slovenia; Gerolf Annemans, NI/Belgium; Iuliu Winkler, PPE/Romania; Knut Fleckenstein, S&D/Germany; Sajjad Karim, ECR/UK), others considered the Resolution as a way of promoting a "culture of remembrance" in Europe (Arne Lietz S&D/Germany) or building a community of norms as exemplified in the excerpt of Iuliu Winkler's intervention (PPE/Romania):

We have a duty to look for those meanings that bring the peoples of Europe closer together, that highlight the common values that we all share. We will thus be able to contribute to overcoming the deep moral and trust crisis that is grinding our societies, finding the energy needed to build the European common house.

The prominence of these two justifications (learning from history and European values) among all of the MEPs regardless of their ideological differences is indicative that the recognition of the genocide is part of the cultural/historical repertoire of the EU, and also, a collectively shared emotion norm among the MEPs (Assman, 2014). The similarity of preference sets of justifications across political groups, as well as the resemblance of discursive expressions among the MEPs (references to European history and shared values, usages of emotional expressions, such as "trauma", "atrocities", "suffering", "blood", etc.), point to the manifestation of an emotional community in the EP. This emotional community is distinguishable by the "presence of emotional bonds among members of a social group [which] generates collective meaning and identity" and a sense of "we-feeling" and a "sense of boundary toward outsiders" (Koschut, 2014, p. 537, 539). In other words, the MEPs experience common emotions because they "share a collective identity and a common understanding of the situation" (Wolf, 2017, p. 492). In the EP, the condemnation of the genocide and resisting this crime against humanity in Europe and elsewhere, emerges as an essential norm for both maintaining the bonds of an emotional group (the European Parliament) and establishing an emotional community beyond the Parliament in the EU.

The second set of conclusions relate to the interplay of the nationality of the claimant with the arguments put forward for the promotion of an emotional norm vis-à-vis Turkey. Unlike ideology (affiliation to a particular group), nationality appears to have an impact in determining both the style and the content of the emotional expression by the claimant in promoting these norms. As for the content of justifications, extreme values in the preferred discursive justifications have been noted in three groups of nationalities. First, the MEPs belonging to a member state traditionality known to be critical of Turkey's membership (France) or of a specific issue relating to its accession process to the EU (Greece and Cyprus) embraced ethical-political arguments. These interventions frequently framed the recognition as a *sine qua non* of Turkey's Europeanness as exemplified in the intervention by Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/Cyprus): "The European Parliament is

dealing with [the Armenian genocide] because Turkey, if it wants to join the European space, has to solve its problems” (for similar statements see Kostas Chrysogonos, GUE/Greece; Mireille D’Ornano, NI/France). A closer look at the interventions made by this first group of MEPs reveals not only a hostile tone in the expression of emotions, but also an attempt to draw on the Armenian genocide for listing problematic areas in Turkey’s accession process, such as problems with the Kurds, with Greece, with Iraq, with Iran and with Cyprus (Takis Hadjigeorgiou, GUE/Cyprus). Expressions such as “bloodthirsty Ottoman Empire” (Eleftherios Sinadinos, Greece/NI), “Turkey’s continuous ethnic cleansing in Cyprus” (Manolis Glezos, GUE/Greece), “Turkish barbarism” (Lefteris Christoforou, EPP/Cyprus), “sick negationist and inhumane [Turkish President] Erdoğan” (Edouard Ferrand, NI/France), or utterances of shaming/blaming Turkey for a set of massacres, other than the Armenian genocide, including the “genocide” of Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans of Asia Minor (Eleni Theocharous, EPP/Cyprus), Pontians (Demetris Papadakis, S&D/Cyprus) correlate with the nationalities of these MEPs.

The second group of MEPs who, most frequently raised moral arguments, and in particular, emphasized the importance of learning from history, e.g. “keep[ing] the memory of the past in order to construct the future”, belong to Germany and Austria, where the emotional memories of the holocaust play a significant role in the emotional socialization. Furthermore, those MEPs who overwhelmingly embraced identity-related arguments (ethical-political and moral justifications) belong to a country whose parliament has already recognized the Armenian genocide (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands). This might also be indicative of the importance of prior (national-level) emotional socialization in shaping the content of claims. However, the fact that the recognition of the genocide is supported by both groups of MEPs, regardless of their national parliaments’ position on the issue, lends support to the existence of a shared (emotional) norm among the MEPs. In other words, while nationality shapes the content or the style of the expression of claims, neither the ideology nor the nationality appears to be decisive factors in determining MEPs’ ultimate support for this emotional norm.

The third group of MEPs who cited pragmatic arguments with an extreme value are nationals of member states known to be in favour of Turkey’s membership to the EU (Spain, Poland, Slovakia, Estonia and Czech Republic). Although further research is needed to confirm this hypothesis, it might be tentatively concluded that the MEPs coming from those states whose attitude towards outsiders (non-EU countries) is positive are more likely to mobilize pragmatic arguments rather than identity-related arguments. On the other hand, the representatives of member states with a more critical stance on Turkey are more likely to overwhelmingly embrace arguments related to the constitutive values of the in-group (European values). For this group, the “emotional othering” and stigmatization emerge as a tool to naturalize the self and to consolidate the moral boundaries of the community (Koschut, 2020a, p. 11).

The last finding relates to the object actors (Whose interests are represented by the claimants/MEPs?). Through qualitative analysis, three object actors were identified to be explicitly mentioned by the MEPs: the victims of the genocide, their descendants and the Armenian people at large. While only 12% of all the MEPs who took the floor on 15 April 2015 justified the adoption of the Resolution on the grounds that it would honor the memory of the victims of Armenian genocide and comfort subsequent generations

(Table 1/code 4), at least one representative per political group, with the exception of the EFDD, paid tribute to the victims and their families in identical emotional terms as illustrated in the intervention of António Marinho e Pinto, ALDE/Portugal: “What is at issue is simply an elementary gesture of justice towards the memory of one and a half million Armenians who were deliberately exterminated in the early twentieth century” (see also the interventions by Charles Tannock, ECR/UK; Csaba Sógor, EPP/Romania; László Tóké, EPP/Romania; Richard Howitt, S&D/UK). For the rest of the MEPs, although the object actor is not overtly mentioned in the claimants’ statements, it is clear that the demand (the recognition) is made on behalf of Armenia and Armenian people. This is in line with the role the EP assumed as the EU’s normative voice and “constant defender” of people’s basic rights in Europe and beyond ([European Parliament official website](#)).

Conclusion

The article has investigated the reasons behind the promotion of emotional norms by the EP through the analysis of parliamentarians’ deliberations on the adoption of the Armenian genocide Resolution. It has revealed two main hypotheses which need to be tested in future research. First, prior emotional socialization (at individual or national level) has implications on how and why the emotions are expressed at the institutional level. Although this observation is not new, the article has suggested a hierarchy of factors affecting MEPs’ emotional expressions. The analysis of the nexus of nationalities/political affiliation with the types of claims made by the MEPs shows that while ideology is less relevant for subscribing to a certain type of justification, as shown by similar preference sets for the main political groups, nationality is an important factor in determining the style and content of emotional justifications. This indicates that although the recognition of the (Armenian) genocide is a shared and essential value for the EP, the illocutionary acts, the style and the content of emotional expressions are determined by prior knowledge, long-term socialization at national level and cultural context of the claimants (MEPs).

Second, emotional norm promotion is a complex process, the efficiency of which depends on the resonance between emotion norms and emotional norms. The EP’s attempt to construct an emotional identity (through blaming/shaming or stigmatization) is resisted and resented by Turkey where a diverging emotion norm about the massacres of the 1915 prevail. This mismatch renders the EP’s emotion norm an emotional norm in the eyes of the Turkish political elite and society. This explains the gap between the illocutionary acts of the MEPs on the Armenian genocide and the perlocutionary effect in Turkey. Therefore, in cases when the emotion norm of a given community is perceived (by the norm receiver) as involving negative connotations, this is highly likely to consolidate the contestation over these norms. The challenge for future work would be to investigate the mechanisms and conditions under which contested emotional norms become shared, unifying emotion norms through international diplomacy in general, and parliamentary diplomacy in particular.

Notes

1. In this article, following Clément and Sangar’s (2018) conceptualization “emotions” is used as an umbrella term to include affect, feeling and sentiment.

2. “Norm” is defined as “a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 891). Norms draw on the shared value system of the community, but constitute specific rules or standards of appropriate behaviour. As noted by Habermas (1996[2017], p. 256), “from the standpoint of conceptual analysis, the terminological distinction between norms and values loses its validity *only* in those theories that claim universal validity for the highest values or goods”. Therefore, I refer to norms and values interchangeably when I discuss Copenhagen political criteria, whereas “coming to terms with past” (recognizing Armenian genocide) constitute norms of action obligating addressees to “satisfy generalized behavioural expectations” (Habermas, 1996[2017], p. 255).
3. As of December 2020, 16 EU member states’ governments or parliaments have recognized the Armenian genocide: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden (Armenian National Institute).
4. Following the amendments in 2008, the article reads as follows: “A person who publicly denigrates the Turkish Nation, the State of the Turkish Republic or the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the judicial institutions of the State shall be punishable by imprisonment from 6 months to 2 years. A person who publicly denigrates the military and police organizations of the State will too receive the same punishment. Expressions of thought intended to criticize shall not constitute a crime. The prosecution under this article will require the approval of the Minister of Justice”.

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Appendix 1. Key aspects of political claims made by the EP during the parliamentary debate on the adoption of the Resolution of 15 April 2015 on the centenary of the Armenian genocide (adopted from Gora & de Wilde, 2019; Koopmans 2002)

Form	Interventions/Speeches at the EP plenary		
<i>Claimant (who is making the claim?)</i>	Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)	Claimant nationality: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, UK Claimant political affiliation (political group in the EP):- EPP (the European People's Party),- S&D (The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats),- GUE/NLG (Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left),- ALDE (The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe),- ECR (The European Conservatives and Reformists Group),- The Greens,- Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD),- NI (non-inscrits, non-attached)	
<i>Addressee of the claim (at whom is the claim directed?)</i>	Turkey, Turkish government		
<i>Issue/demand of the claim (what is the claim about? What is the claimant demanding/how is the policy/proposal or status quode-legitimized?)</i>	The recognition of the Armenian genocide		
<i>Object actor (who would be affected by the claim if it is realized?)</i>	The victims, their descendants, Armenian people, Armenia		
<i>Justification for the claim/ Frame (why should this action be undertaken?)</i>	Normative arguments/ethical-political justifications: justifications that rely on the	Code Label and Definition Code.1/European values: References to European values (and not to the universal values),	Examples With this resolution, we are not changing history, but taking a stand on it in accordance with our values, principles

(Continued)

Continued.

Form	Interventions/Speeches at the EP plenary	
constitutive values of a social community.	representing the recognition of the genocide as a constitutive element of being European, of European identity	and positive European experiences of reconciliation.
	Code.2/Europeanness of Turkey: Statements which make a connection between Turkey's accession process and the recognition of the genocide or statements which consider the recognition as a formal criterion for Turkey's accession.	Turkey aspires to be a member of the European Union, which means a commitment to comply with European standards. Without recognition of the crimes against the Armenians, the declarations of the Turkish authorities remain empty words.
	Code.3/Punish Turkey: Statements which not only compel Turkey to recognize the genocide, but also to compensate for the genocide through political or material means	This monstrous genocide must be strongly condemned. The Turkish government, the successor to the Ottoman Empire, must be forced to admit its guilt, take political responsibility and compensate the heirs of the victims.
Normative arguments/moral justifications: justifications that are based on the universally accepted values or principles that can be accepted as fair or just across different communities or groups.	Code.4/Honour the memory of the victims: arguments embedded in the conceptions of justice for the victims and their families	[...] sensitive to the emotions which are still felt today by relatives and descendants, we support today's debate and resolution to honour the memory of all who died.
	Code.5/Universal rights and values: references to the universal principles related to the protection of human rights, human dignity, including those related to the prevention of genocide	We rightly call this genocide. We feel a moral responsibility for this. Only through awareness of universal human rights, through our a collective memory, and through the consistent application of legal norms and international law, this kind of crimes can be prevented or stopped in the future.
	Code.6/Learning lessons from history: statements that include references to the moral responsibility to prevent further tragedies (genocides)	I believe that it is fundamental that we all recognize, remember and condemn this kind of tragedies, if we want to avoid them in the future.
Pragmatic arguments: Justifications that are based on the strategic explanations of actor behaviour, e.g. on the consequentialist logic of action. The actors justify their political action in relation with the externally defined interest.	Code.7/Opening the borders: references concerning the reopening of the land border between Armenia and Turkey	This centenary offers an opportunity for Turkey to reach out, to recognize the genocide and to seek dialogue with regard to reopening the international border.
	Code.8/Peace in the region: statements in support of the recognition, which would contribute to the	Armenia and Turkey must get back on track with the normalization of their relations, which would

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<i>Form</i>	Interventions/Speeches at the EP plenary				
	<table><tr><td data-bbox="592 196 894 253">normalization, peace and stability in the region</td><td data-bbox="894 196 1155 253">contribute to the overall security and stability of the South Caucasus.</td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="592 253 894 512">Code.9/Reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey</td><td data-bbox="894 253 1155 512">I support the resolution as a contribution to strengthening the reconciliation process between Armenia and Turkey, which is essential in the interests of peace and good neighbourliness to bridge the era of pain and tense relations.</td></tr></table>	normalization, peace and stability in the region	contribute to the overall security and stability of the South Caucasus.	Code.9/Reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey	I support the resolution as a contribution to strengthening the reconciliation process between Armenia and Turkey, which is essential in the interests of peace and good neighbourliness to bridge the era of pain and tense relations.
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