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Master Thesis by

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The Road to Sorrow:
From State Crime to State Apology

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THE ROAD TO SORROW

State Apologies and why they -and why they don't- happen

WHY IS THIS RESEARCH HERE

State apologies seem to be having a moment, they have become a tool for politicking that goes beyond the expression of remorse. It has been cited as crucial to the betterment of foreign relations and as a key foreign policy tool.

The author is looking to contribute to the understanding of the process of state apologies and contribute to the field of Geopolitics of Peace, a field that Megoran (2013) calls often ignored.

The main research question is to discover why State Apologies happen in some cases and they don't in others.

METHODOLOGY



The methodology chosen was Process Tracing through the development of case studies. The methodology combines qualitative and quantitative methods.

Sources were varied and wide. Historical archives, academic papers, newspaper reports and speeches from the leaders of the countries involved. A "Road to an Apology" model was created to follow through this Process Tracing.

CASE SELECTION



Three cases were selected: one with a complete apology cycle and two with an incomplete apology cycle. The complete apology cycle selected was the US involvement (and apology) in the Guatemalan Civil War and the incomplete apology cycle cases selected were the US involvement (and non-apology) in El Salvador's Civil War and the Turkey non-apology for the Armenian Genocide. The cases were selected because they offer different interpretation possibilities for the "Road to an Apology" and they involve similar-sized offending-victim country relationship.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTION & HYPOTHESIS

By following a theoretical review and concept operationalization with a preliminary study of the cases, the following hypotheses were spearheaded:

- That for an apology to happen, there has to be a strong *pressure to act* that comes from both within the offending country and from the international community;
- That for an apology to happen, the victim country should be perceived as offering economic advantages for the future;
- That for an apology to happen, the gravity of the crimes has to be considered high and grave enough to merit one.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

Through a careful process tracing of both cases, the following results were gathered:

Denial of the crime seems to be a default MO for states that commit crime. In Guatemala and El Salvador's cases, it involved outright turning a blind eye to the human rights abuses that the local military forces were perpetrating against the populations and the United States still continuing the military aid to these countries despite the fact that this had been declared illegal by Congress.

Through a combination of domestic and international pressure (but mostly domestic), the United States turned into a period of reckoning and recognizing the crimes. The pressure from the media, the opposing parties and scholars in general created the right moment for a Bill Clinton apology tour that saw the Guatemala apology happened and an incomplete statement of regret in the case of El Salvador.

Turkey, on the other hand, has lacked that internal pressure (apart from some small campaigns by intellectuals and lawyers) to apologize and sees the denial as part of their "psyche" and national pride. A 2015 expression of regret by Erdogan has been as far as the government has come but still denying the worst of the crimes—therefore ignoring the gravity of the events as a reason to apologize.

CONCLUSIONS

Following the revelations of the process tracing and case comparison, it can be summarized that for an apology to happen, the most important factor is a measure of domestic pressure into apologizing: by the government, by local institutions or by the media. How big the crime was, how big the economic opportunities are seem to be less relevant as long as there is a willingness to apologize.

iii.Introduction

State Apologies seem to be having a moment. They have been rising in number and frequency in the last century as they are appearing more and more frequently each year. As noted by Mihai (2013) an unmistakable rise of state apologies for past crimes has been notable and a clear trend in recent years. These apologies can be traced back to an anti-geopolitical school of thought that stresses the need to pay attention to, and emphasize, ideas, values and human agency (See: Drulak, 2006). They are also part of the study of what Megoran (2010) calls the *Pacific Geopolitics*, he himself pointing out that we can even call our time “the age of apology”. He describes these pacific geopolitics as a way states are working towards “more harmonious relations” and that, at least at face value, seems to be central to the study of apologies. To contrast this, some authors such as Thompson (2000) have acknowledged that the present popularity of apology might not last. They cite some resistance and describe the practice of apologizing as meaningless and as a gesture that doesn't indicate that victimizing powers will refrain from wrongdoing in the future. Other authors like Verdeja (2010) offer an argument against apologies saying that “(they) often seem insincere, given more for the belief that the past can be passed over quickly or even left unexamined, rather than as an attempt at confronting the moral consequences of earlier violations” (page 565). They still offer that apologies have value; and discounting them altogether is not wise.

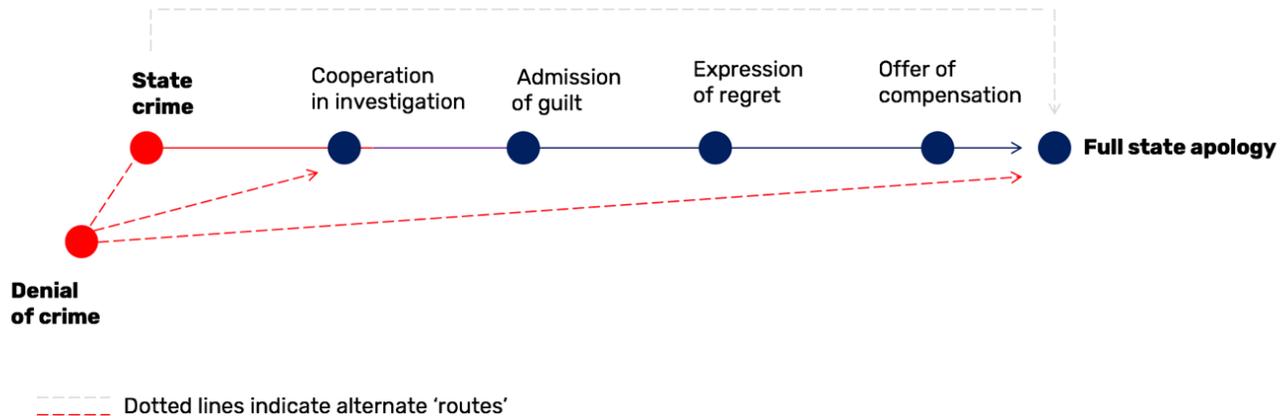
State Apologies, apart from having a moment, are also wide in scope. Dodds (2003) compiled a fairly thorough list of apologies issued by states since 1894. And we can see them everywhere: they can be seen and exchanged between big political powers (see: Japan’s multiple apologies to South Korea and other countries for its actions during World War II), small countries

to big countries (Nicaragua to the United States in 1989) for small and big crimes (see: the United States apologizing for a relatively minor military accident that caused the death of vacationers in Italy in 1999) and for one-off (downing of military planes) and systematic human rights violations (see: various states apologizing to Israel and the international Jewish community for the Holocaust).

This Master Thesis, though, it's not concerned with a historical review of apologies and whether they are or not in a resurgence or downward spiral. Rather, it aims **to trace the process between state crime and state apology with the purpose of understanding why it happens in some cases and why it doesn't happen in others.** This question has been asked by previous authors (see Daase, Engers et al, 2015) but what makes this study different is the selection of cases, which is focused more on usually ignored countries in the geopolitical sphere. It will try to contrast two little-studied cases (Guatemala and El Salvador's intervention by the United States during their civil war) and a far more 'important' case: the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by (and mostly denied) by Turkey.

To answer this question, I propose a categorisation in **Complete and Incomplete State Crime to State Apologies cycles.** The first one is considered closed and the full road from state crime to state apology has been 'walked'. That means that a state crime was recognized as such and the state or a high representative of the state expressed an apology to the victim state. The second one, the incomplete cycle, means that for some reason a state apology has not been issued. This is all contained in what I call the model of a "Road to an apology" and it can be represented in the following model:

FIGURE 1 THE ROAD TO APOLOGY MODEL



Source: Author.

Consulting the model, there are two main stages: State Crime and Full State Apology. From there, a state can go in two directions: denial of crime or walk towards a full state apology by fulfilling a certain amount of steps to get there. This steps take a cue from the work of Ku (2015) in which he suggests three levels of apology: *no contrition*, *shallow contrition*, and *deep contrition*. Denial of crime will fall into the “no contrition” category, in which “the state issues official statements that justify, deny or glorify its past misdeeds” (Ku, 2015, page 246). From Cooperation in Investigation to Expression of regret, it falls into the stage of “shallow contrition”, where there are some statements that express regret or even an apology but are still somehow “ambiguous enough to raise doubts about its sincerity” (ibid, 2015, page 245). Finally, the Full State Apology concerns the stage of *deep contrition*, where there is a full commitment to the apology and compensation is offered directly to the victims and gesture such as monuments or other

commemorative events are put into the agenda. The pointed lines of the model represent the possibility of the road being altered or shortened to reflect a new direction. The final stage, Full State Apology, owes to the fact that State Apologies are considered to be complex and up for interpretation; as Blatz et al (2009) point out, “these harms are more severe than most interpersonal transgressions, a simple “sorry” is unlikely to suffice” (page 221), therefore, actions and compensation are necessary for an apology to be considered “full”.

But what drives states to follow these stages? What are the political motivations, the economical incentives or the ‘humanitarian’ engine that pushes the way towards a state apology? This leads me to the main research questions of this research. Through the use of case studies and their respective process tracing I would try to answer the central question of why states apologize in some cases and why they don't in others.

To conduct this research, I have chosen to focus, methodologically, on focus tracing and case studies under the scientific realist umbrella. To successfully conduct this research, we need to carefully select cases that will offer a deep review of facts, and that will allow us to connect the dots between each step of the road from state crime to state apology. These cases must offer a variety of outcomes that give us the chance to contrast and compare the different stages along the road. Following this criteria (which I expand on their respective sections), three cases were selected:

- For the complete apology cycle, I have chosen the United States Apology to Guatemala for intervention during this country’s civil war;

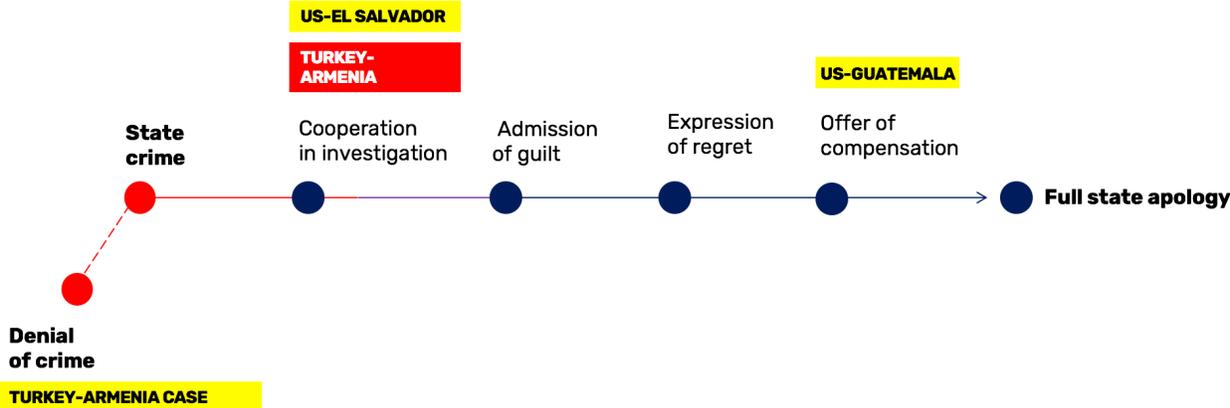
- And for the incomplete apology cycle, I have chosen United States Non-Apology to El Salvador for intervention during this country's civil war and the Turkey non-apology to Armenia for the genocide committed at the beginning of the 19th century.

The first two cases were selected because they are close in geopolitical and geographical importance; both wars were part of the global Cold War conflict so they have common roots; they are close to the author's life experience and archival resources; they have been documented fully and extensively; the apology/non apology cycle happened during the same fateful visit of Bill Clinton Central America when he issued the apology to Guatemala and he didn't to El Salvador; both countries are similar in economic size so it becomes a fair comparison and an answer can lead to conclusive results. It's almost surprising how close these two cases are, and how important it will be to determine why the apology happened in one case and why it didn't in the other. The third case was selected even though it's farther away in strictly geographical terms, but it offers us: (1) an interesting and well documented non-apology and previous flat-out denial of the events which offers a truly peculiar 'road from sorrow to apology' and (2) it's still connected to one of the two other cases by the 'genocide factor', which gives it a common ground for contrast and comparison. Plus, (3) the relationship between countries is comparable as it involves a great power dealing with a crime they committed against a smaller country both in territorial and geopolitical significance.

After a preliminary analysis of the three cases selected, three hypothesis were reached: first, that for an apology to happen, there has to be some sort of *pressure to act* that might be a combination of domestic pressure and international pressure. Actors, such as the media, government bodies or international organizations have to be pushing for an apology to happen; the internal pressure being the most important of all. The second, that the crimes have to be perceived

as grave enough to ‘deserve’ an apology, in our cases, the genocide factor plays a big role in this second hypothesis. The third, that there’s more likelihood of an apology if the victim state is perceived as having economic potential for the offending state. It should be noted, of course, that none of these hypotheses are considered written in stone (should go without saying), since even in this small sample there are contradicting results. But this simply points to the complexity of the subject and that really, there is no single answer as to why state apologies happen; as in most social science studies, we can reach an approximation of an answer. Using the proposed model of analysis and as a point of reference for the process tracing study, each case then was placed on a “stop” throughout the road to apology, with the Turkey-Armenian case ambiguously situated in two of them:

FIGURE 2: THE ROAD TO APOLOGY AND EACH CASE’S STAGE



■ Indicates a partial reach of this stage. While Turkey has committed itself for the research of the crimes against Armenians, it has stopped church of accepting that the crimes they're accused of existed in the first place.

Source: Prepared by author.

For the process tracing analysis three periods were considered: first, the historical antecedents of each country's state crimes i.e., in Guatemala and El Salvador's cases, mapping the history and relationship of the three countries before their local conflicts; second, the intervention of the US during the Civil War of each country and the consequences it had (direct and indirect) and third, the Bill Clinton visit to Central America where the apology was issued to Guatemala but not to El Salvador. Sources were varied and numerous. Apart from academic research and newspaper reports at the time of the events and the following decade, Presidential archives and numerous agencies reports were taken into account. Crucial to the analysis were both reports from the Truth Commission in El Salvador and in Guatemala. After a careful case comparison, the conclusion reached is twofold: The first hypothesis is considered valid, and an external case can be cited as a validation: Bill Clinton's apology to Greece during a heated and protested visit to Athens in 1999. It is valid to point out that in both cases, external pressure was a factor and the apology was issued as a "saving face" strategy by the US leader. But the third hypothesis is the one that holds more weight: the Genocide question certainly weighs heavy. An external case also offers validation to this hypothesis: Bill Clinton's apology to Rwanda, where genocide also play a part. also: Putting the apology to Guatemala in a broader geopolitical context certainly provides this study with a necessary confirmation that the conclusions reached are valid.

Why is this research important? From an academic perspective and as mentioned above, it is a contribution to what authors call the "Geopolitics of Peace", regarded as an often-ignored aspect of geopolitical research. Megoran (2010) rightly points out that "geography in general has been better at thinking about war than peace, so too has one of its most enduring subfields, geopolitics" and that "geographers had made little effort to develop this geopolitics of peace" (page 384). He cites various studies and publications that have tried to cover "war and peace", but that

in the end tend to focus mainly on the first one rather than the second. Second, it is a valuable addition to the ever-important subject of reconciliation and transitional justice. As Correa et al (2015) say, “At their best, apologies can help to mark a before and after, acting as a symbolic turning point. They sometimes mark either the commencement or the culmination of a long, sometimes divisive period of debate and reflection in a society” and their study is an “important element of transitional justice” (page 4). Finally, it highlights political apologies in a region that might be considered minor (Central America) but that has deeper global implications (the Cold War). It is also important for local politics as it might be a useful tool for El Salvador’s authorities as to why an apology did not happen and if it should happen at all. Is it time US apology to El Salvador? Should Turkey finally relent and walk the rest of the way towards the full state apology and stop tiptoeing around the subject? Should an apology be pursued and actively demanded? What are the benefits that might come from it judging from the Guatemala case or other cases around the world and through history? Though some recent articles have started a demand for a late apology in the case of El Salvador, the changing political scenarios and more pressing concerns (namely gang violence and forced migrations) in both United States and Central America make it unlikely to happen. A recent change in government in the United States that completely goes against the tenements of what we can call the geopolitics of peace is also a big factor in why this wouldn’t happen at least in the near future. In Turkey’s case, almost four years after Erdogan’s historic remarks on the anniversary of the Armenian genocide, it almost feels like they are backtracking and back into full denial mode. Has the wheel turned and the cycle of state apologies began to wane? Will we have another ‘wave’ of apologies after this indifference dies out? All these questions might be useful starting points for further research but for now we should be at peace with trying to find an answer to the complicated conundrum that this thesis proposes.

1. Theoretical Framework and concept operationalization

In this chapter, I will introduce a short theoretical framework that will be useful for understanding the study in question and the main concepts that will be used. It is by no means an exhausting look into all the literature that has been building around the subject of state apologies, and especially in the case of genocide (an important concept for two of the cases selected) it is all but a cursory look into its meaning. For deeper understanding of each, looking into the respective bibliography and sources is suggested.

1.1 Driving Theories

Theories of state apologies are varied and wide in focus and relevance. Central to this work will be the Image Repair Theory, developed by Benoit and cited by Edwards and Shaw (2011) and an important source to understanding why not only states apologize-but also corporations, personalities, celebrities and private individuals. This Image Repair Theory is based on the understanding of various ‘stages’ or pieces that puzzle together an apology, or rather strategies that an apologizing interlocutor might use. These categories are:

- Simple denial; which applies partially to the Turkey and Armenia case. Even though the government hasn’t flat out said that *nothing* happened, it attributes the events to outside forces, a World War, and simply denies the existence of a genocidal motivation behind its actions;
- Shifting the blame;

- Evading responsibility, which doesn't deny the fact but minimizes its effects and argues that it was mostly out of its control. This applies particularly to the Turkey and Armenia case. Turkey's government has gone to great lengths
- Reducing offensiveness, which means using positive "and extols virtuous and good qualities (..) to engender positive feelings towards them, while simultaneously making the action they committed seem less offensive" (Ibid, 2010, page 22), which is particularly important in the Guatemala case since Bill Clinton tried to diffuse the actions of the government by highlighting the new relationship between them;
- Corrective action, or making a commitment to change in the future or efforts to repair the past wrongdoings;
- Finally, guilt or *mortification*, when the speakers takes "full responsibility for their actions". These categories, of course, don't work in isolation and most often than not they are used in combination to generate a full effect that ends up favoring the apologizing force.

A broader theory central to this research will be what Megoran (2010) calls the *Pacific Geopolitics*. He introduces this theory saying that geographers have been more adept to study war than peace, and that Critical Geopolitics have focused mainly on what leads to violence but not what leads to the opposite. It is important since it signals a way of understanding why actors (including government) frame their geopolitical "knowledge in ways that contribute towards more harmonious relations between states and other human groups" (page 385). In this sense, State Apologies seem to be firmly rooted in this geopolitical understanding of the world.

1.2 Concept Operationalization

“These are acts, drawing on the genesis of the International legal concept of crimes against humanity that came out of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, which offend the ‘laws of humanity’, they include genocide, apartheid, and other forms of systematic oppression and state murder”

Balint, 2011, page 3

For the development of this Master’s Thesis, two concepts are key: State Crime and State Apology. State Crimes will be considered and conceptualized from two perspectives; the crimes (or violations) have to be internationally recognized as such, and I will limit this research to crimes committed against states by other state-sanctioned institutions. Domestic crimes and subsequent apologies will not be considered: not because they don’t matter, but because it will give the research much more focus and a deeper connection to the Geopolitical/International Relations theories and practices.

State crimes, Balint (2011) points out, “are state orchestrated, harnessing institutions and expressing state policy” (page 14). She also points out to the precondition of the state crime to be something of enormity, of big importance. But what does this mean? She opines that state crimes cause “mass harm and destruction” and are part of the “institutionalized policy of the state” concept proposed by Chambliss (1988) and used as a sustained, long-term national building tool. State Crimes that draw special attention (and thus, more probability for a state apology) also seem to evoke stronger adjectives. Described as monstrous and monumental, these are crimes that are put a cut above others. War crimes such as genocide are comfortably placed in this category. The

concept of state crime, it's useful to point out, its fairly new, as is their newfound intensity in scholarly attention. "Altogether, in the twentieth century and the hundred years since 1908, state crimes hardly imaginable were a more visible element of our global environment" (Chambliss et al, 2009, page 68). This is where the state crime is connected, as said above, with the ever difficult concept of genocide, which seems to be perceived as the crime representing the worst tendencies of state (more on Genocide later). It's also worth discussing that the conceptualization of state crime has to be considered against the idea of "state law". Since the crimes are perpetrated by the states, Friederich (ibid, 2009) says, and the state themselves make the law, it's impossible to define a state crime just as a matter of a state violating said laws. He points out to alternatives such as international law, or as some other authors like Hillyard (2004) propose, an idea of the "social harm" that these crimes provoke. Social harm exists outside law and can be useful for research such as this were the borders between what's legal and not legal (rules of engagement and so on) are porous. It's interesting, as well, to considered a crime to be the inaction to prevent others from abusing their power; and it's a testament to the fact that as many states have apologized from preventing crimes than for actually actively doing them (see: the Netherlands apology for "not doing enough" to prevent the Holocaust, or the United States apology for "not stopping" the Rwandan Genocide").

Which brings us back to the thorny subject of Genocide. Now this is not the place to offer a deep analysis of what constitutes or not a genocide, subject that has been debated enough by authors before (see Fischer, 2017 for a number-based analysis). A generally accepted definition is the one taken from the Genocide Convention of 1948, that as cited by Shneider (2010), "lays out the definition of the crime of genocide in Article 2. The key clause lists "national, ethnical, racial or religious group" as those which the Convention protects" and therefore the intention of wiping

them out through systematic killings must be considered genocide. But he later points out that this definition has been considered too restrictive and in the case of Guatemala, Human Rights Activist Rigoberta Menchú sought to challenge that convention through an international suit, arguing that the genocide was directed specifically at the Mayans as a national group. Shneider (Ibid, 2010) then goes out to conclude that probably this suit won't have fruitful resorts, but that is more a fault in the original definition of genocide than in the events that happened in Guatemala during the Civil War. He concludes that "Genocide is a crime that requires the specific intent to destroy a group in whole or in part, but does not require any particular context in which that intent arises" (page 349) and therefore the Guatemala case cannot be definitely argued, at least to **not** be considered genocide. The denial of genocide plays a huge role in the Armenian case.

What constitutes a 'state apology'? A cursory review of literature would point out to a state apology being an expression of regret, remorse or 'contrition', as Ku (2015) calls it, made by a representative of the state. While some authors like Ku (ibid) have developed levels of apologies that go from "shallow contrition" to "deep contrition", in my research I wouldn't focus on analyzing the *deepness* or *value* of the apology. In its stead, I would focus on establishing the **existence** of the 'state apology' as such, which as Winter (2015) argues, can be simply recognized –and further legitimized– when a 'true' representative of the political authority of a state issues it. That is, when a national figure recognized as the leader of the nation is the one that expressed the contrition, and when that national figure is perceived as representing the nation and the content of the apology connects and reflects the people's feelings. To this end, he points out to the collective nature of a state apology, which is not limited to an individual but to the expression of national regret that "works to restructure the collective identity by repudiating the wrongful act" (page 268). It comes into full circle then, that a crime that was used as 'nation building tool' should come to a

metaphorical end by issuing ‘national’ expression of remorse. In that sense, it helps me focus my research and consider state apologies that have (1) been issued and expressed by the main political leader of the state, (1) garnered strong support from all sides of the state’s actors (public, political, private) (2) are considered legitimate by all political institutions and representatives (3) have garnered support in the public sphere (citizens). I would suggest that those are the most genuine apologies, the ones that are not made out of pressure, but out of collective will.

We must also consider the reasons why a state wouldn’t apologize for crimes it has committed and why it would do so. To talk about this, I refer to the work of Gibney (2008) who points out various reasons why State Apologies might be issued, which to him are as follows:

- A genuine apology, which means the state actually thinks its actions were wrong and it’s genuinely pursuing better relations with the victim country. They include a demonstration of guilt and a base for future negotiations and compensations of victims.
- An apology might be issued also as a consequence of a sentencing by an international tribunal. Here the apology is only by prescription and almost mandatory; it does not follow conscious decisions or high levels of contrition;
- An apology can also be pronounced as a way of defusing an international event that might lead to bigger events; the author points out to the bombing of China’s Belgrade embassy and the subsequent US apology of that incident as an example;
- An apology might also happen because a state is coerced and cornered into making one; the Germany ‘apologies’ after World War I would be a prime example of this;

- Finally, an apology might be only seen as a *public relations* tool, a way to signal a new commitment to lead through peace or “good actions” by the apologizing power. It is my belief that this is the closest case as to why the apology to Guatemala happened; as it was part of a sort of “Mea Culpa” tour by Bill Clinton. Of course this is not the only explanation, since the apology to El Salvador did not happen.

He also points out the reason why a state, government or representative wouldn't apologize:

- The State does not think that it has done anything wrong. In this case there is no recognizing the crime; thus no apology is deemed necessary. This is central to the genocide denial by the Turkish government throughout the 20th and 21st century;
- The State might not apologize for fear the apology might be used in the future to ask for reparations or as a legal tool by the victimized; which is also a reason why apologies aren't more frequent or seem to be handpicked (like why it did happen in Guatemala and why it didn't in El Salvador),
- The State might not apologize because it might think that such apology will result in it being perceived as weak; which is contradictory since a big country like the United States has apologized frequently without this being taken into consideration;
- The state might not apologize simply because he sees no need to, no political advantage and no “reason to apologize to a much weaker state or to a state with which it has no desire to maintain good relations” (Ibid, 2008). In this case, I see this as pointing out a possible reason why the US apology to El Salvador didn't happen and specially why Turkey didn't

deem necessary to apologize to Armenia, who they have long considered to be an insignificant partner both economically and culturally.

Other authors, like Ku (2015) analyze political apologies by offering other, more concrete, reasons why a state apologizes. Studying the issue of comfort woman and the many apologies from Japan, he points out to many possibilities that are useful for this research:

- He argues that apologies and what he calls “history policies” are based on the pursuit of national interests. “For perpetrator states, coming to terms with their past wrongs can be used as a means of improving their diplomatic relations with former victim states, which can help avoid diplomatic isolation and thus promote their own security” (Ku, 2015, page 246). Economic interests are, of course, also important for him in the way states shape their decisions whether to apologize or not.
- He then argues that states will apologize when they are being lead by ‘progressive’ parties or governments. What he understand by progressive is up for grabs, but we can infer that, at least in this case, it it close to what we understand as ‘liberal’ and the opposite of ‘conservative government. “Progressive ruling coalitions are more apt to voluntarily initiate processes that address past wrongs and ignore or finesse conservative and nationalist interest groups.”, he mentions (ibid, 2015, page 248) while pointing out that Conservative governing coalitions might put matters of national pride first and therefore might be less likely to apologize or even bring up the subject of past offenses.

Another concept that will be useful for this master thesis is what I’m calling the “Pressure to Apologize”, that can come from different sources that can be divided into two broad camps: domestic and international sources. Domestic pressure is considered a main driver for an apology

by Daase and Engert (2015), for example; which they then divide between a “top down” and a “bottom up” pressure that comes from the society itself in the second case and from the leaders in the first. This pressure is manifested through an official policy that demands these leaders to commit to an apology. They go on to say that “as international apologies are issued at the interface of the domestic and the international level, it is more over possible that a (...) government finds itself entangled in a two-level game where it is confronted with divergent and competing requests (...) which may eventually lead to ambiguous political gestures” (ibid, 2015, page 7). In terms of international pressure, Yamazaki (2006) points to the growing “pressure on nations to conform to international norms, specially in regard to principles of nonaggression and human rights” (page 111) and how it has increased exponentially in the last few decades. He also makes not of the importance of the role of media, and how, through coverage of crimes and explicitly pressuring governments to apologies, become part of this international pressure cooker that leads to the offending government to offer an apology.

1.3. Policy considerations

Research on this subject is bound to be useful for career politicians and their advisors who want to find out how and when an apology is issued and what are the main signals or stepping stones for reaching that moment. However, since my research is going to be mainly concerned with how state apologies came to be and not really about their effects, the policy implications are somewhat diminished. So the objective of this research with definitely not be policy prescription, but solely focused on explaining outcomes.

It bears mentioning that there are drawbacks to state apologies. Not every state pursues them because of fear of being perceived as weak and as points out, there could even be huge costs by doing it. As Lind (2004) points out, “Apologies in international politics can be very costly. First, by apologizing for foreign victims, a leader is telling his or her electorate: you and your former government are culpable of great crimes and, your son not only died for nothing, he died for an unjust cause. Contrition may be politically costly to a leader if it trigger a backlash among his or her people” (page 550), while she also points out to the potential financial reparations that might be demanded after an apology. As a result, **it’s would be unwise to go ahead and prescribe a policy of issuing states apologies about everything.** This excessive amount of apologies may have (and may already be having) the opposite effect, by weakening the gesture and making it seem like more of an obligation, a simple step to get over as quickly as possible. Writing in an article for the Toronto Sun, Gordon Chong puts this into perspective when he calls out the many apologies that the Canadian state has been giving in recent years. “The problem with an endless cycle of apologies for past wrongs is that they eventually become political pandering, distinguishing Canada only as a nation of apologists, which is an embarrassingly “sorry” global image.”¹

¹ See: <http://torontosun.com/2016/05/28/too-many-apologies/wcm/835f19e4-8ef1-4d4c-b0b6-31a4d0044539>

2. Research question and Hypotheses

As this thesis will try to elucidate the reasoning behind state apologies, mapping their road from the acceptance of a state crime to the final expression of regret, I establish the main question to be *What causes State Apologies to be issued in some cases but not in others?* I hope to drive and work towards a deeper understanding of the practice and how some crimes seem to lead to state apologies and some others don't. Of course, the answer must not be interpreted as conclusive to every case that exists out there; but it will apply to the cases hereby selected and the method and process used can be extrapolated to others that share similar traits. This turns this document into more of a pilot study using a small case selection but offering a template for further exploration of others.

To establish this Master's Thesis various hypothesis, it will be useful to go through a bare bone process that Thompson (2008) offers when talking about the apology from the United States to Guatemala:

“Clinton apologized to Guatemalans for the harm done by U.S. Intervention in their political affairs. Suppose that this apology came about as the result of the following process. Some of his advisors favored acts that would change political relations with Guatemala and other countries in the region. They had in mind a U.S. congressional inquiry into past injustices, as well as their policies designed to show that the U.S. was serious about facing up to the past, and they wanted Clinton to announce these initiatives in his speech. But other advisors didn't want any policy changes and reasoned that it would be detrimental to U.S. interests to rake up the past. Others thought an apology might improve relations with Guatemala about

didn't want to give anyone the idea that this signaled a major shift in U.S. policy. In the end it was decided that Clinton should make a low key apology; and whether anything followed from it would be determined by further political contestation” (page 38).

We can gather many things by analyzing this process:

That apologies are understood as a tool for foreign policy; that they have to be measured in content and in delivery to send the right message; that the revelations from the U.S. congressional inquiries played a major role in deciding to issue the apology and how to do it; and that *pressure to act* was a key factor in deciding whether or not to issue an apology. Taking this into the Turkey-Armenia case, we can follow a trace of denial as a political maneuver; owing to what Zarakol (2010) calls the “ontological insecurity” of the Turkish state, facing international pressure to apologize but refusing to because it threatens the sense of self it is trying to build. As he points out, “the state’s (Turkey’s) own narrative of self is trumping the demands from the international community, ultimately undercutting the kind of respectful treatment the state desires to obtain from its partners” (page 8).

Following this preliminary thoughts, we can spearhead the next three hypothesis:

That for an apology to happen, the *pressure to act* has to be significant, and the most **important pressure should come from domestic actors** either represented by the government, higher courts or the media. International pressure can be high and still an apology might not happen; the pressure from within has to be high, all the time.

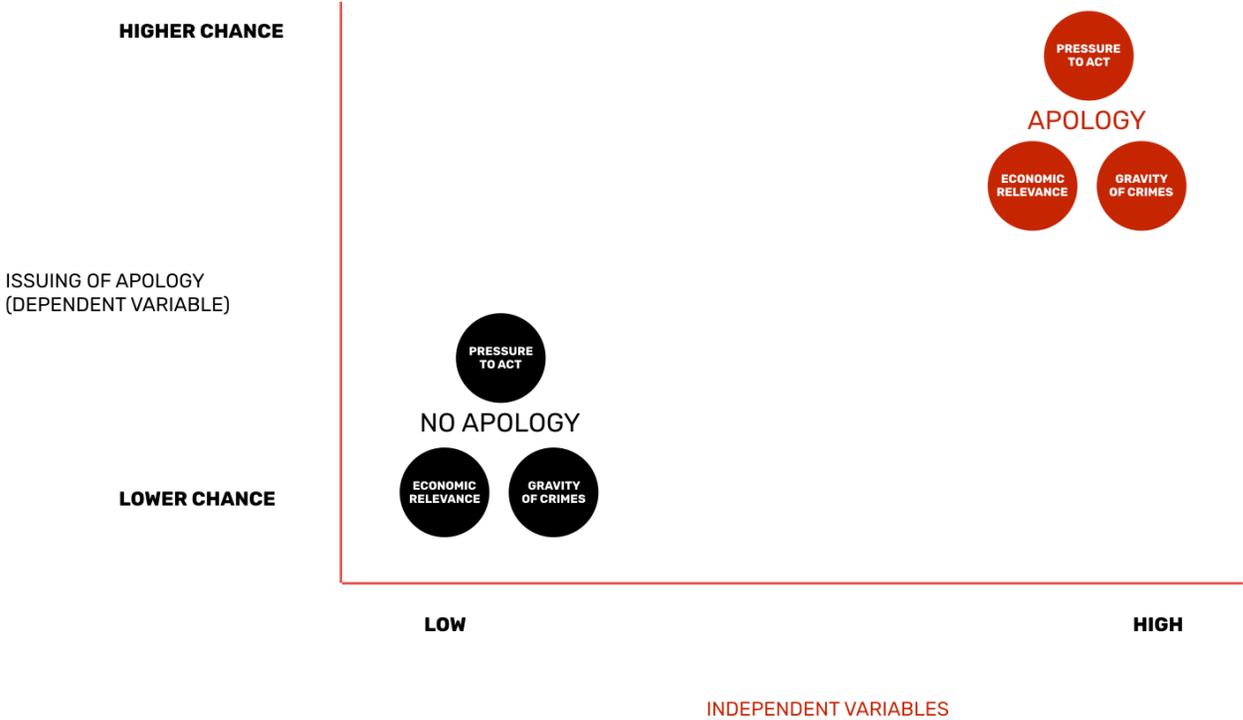
Following this logic, a combination of the two of them will always lead to an apology.

That an apology is more likely to happen if the crime is perceived to be graver, case in point, if the state crime involves ‘high crimes of humanity’ such as genocide or ethnic cleansing. This, of course, has to come as with the first hypothesis, from within and outside. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Turkish-Armenian case, in which outside influencers and actors mostly recognize the events as genocide while the internal struggle with the denial of this has been long-lived.

That for an apology to happen, the victim state should be considered of economical importance and relevance for the offending state. If a victim state is perceived as not offering any important economic future advantages, an apology is less likely to happen. Note that I’m defining this as a *perceived* economical importance, not an actual one; so in reality small states that are not that big in economic advantage might get an apology while other of similar size won’t.

These three hypothesis will be the guide with which I will conduct a process tracing case study that will try to compare the three cases. To better structure the following analysis, it helps to present the dependent variable (The state apology) and the independent variables (or elements of causality) that I’m focusing on for the process tracing:

FIGURE 4. DEPENDENT VS. INDEPENDENT VARIABLES



Source: Prepared by author.

3. Methodology

Process tracing has gained popularity as a way of social science research to determine causality and linking moments in history that can explain outcomes. “Through the use of histories, archival documents, interview transcripts and other sources, the investigator examines whether the causal process of the theory that he is using can be observed in the sequence and values of the intervening variables” (Venneson, 2008, page 232). Process tracing is the specific methodology applied to the case study, which as Ragin (2000) proposes, is a “research strategy based on the in-depth empirical investigation of one, or a small number, of phenomena in order to explore the configuration of each case, and to elucidate features of a larger class of (similar) phenomena, by developing and evaluating theoretical explanations” (Page 418).

General methodology will be qualitative, given to the choice of case study/process tracing as a methodology. But, some quantitative data will have to be considered, as Collier (2011) point out, “the fine-grained description in process tracing sometimes relies on quantitative data. This is certainly reasonable, given that—in the spirit of pursuing multi- method research—the boundary between qualitative and quantitative should not be rigid”. He also gives hints at how the process tracing methodology should start to be applied, “It can therefore be productive to start with a good narrative or with a timeline that lists the sequence of events. One can then explore the causal ideas embedded in the narratives, consider the kinds of evidence that may confirm or disconfirm these ideas, and identify the tests appropriate for evaluating this evidence.” (ibid, 2008). These type of tests that will confirm and disconfirm the links that exist within the road from state crime to state apologies will be addressed in future drafts of this methodological chapter, where specific

ideas about how to measure and explain their link and the final outcome will have to be worked upon.

3.1 Case selection process

Process tracing in its “Explaining outcome” will be used for this research. Considering that in explaining outcome variety of process tracing, case selection doesn’t need that much thought, not to mention that they would be selected randomly, but few rules apply to this process. Beach (2012) argues that in this case we only select ‘historically important’ cases, but at the same time fails to explain what historically important means. He explains that “Case selection strategies are not relevant when we are engaging in explaining outcome PT due to the broader conceptualization of outcomes that is a product of the different understandings of case study research (and science itself) underlying this variant of PT” (page 30).

So based on this, I will establish some factors that will help me choose the cases to apply the process tracing methodology:

1. Cases will provide with a rich amount of information available for analysis
2. They are similar in geographical, geopolitical and historical sense; it makes sense to examine cases as close as possible to each other to truly understand the differences between them.
3. Feel particularly important, therefore it’s not a simply political maneuver but it feels like it’s being ‘demanded’ by everyone. As Beach calls them, the “historically important” cases.

4. Cases will fall either to the Full (Complete) Crime-Apology Cycle or the Incomplete Crime-Apology Cycle.

3.2 Limitations & Barriers to the present research

In this section I plan to put forward the limitations that I perceive are key for the development of my research. What are those limitations? Will they affect the quality of the research? What can be done to minimize the effects of these limitations?

Limitations to be considered are as follows:

- Reliance on secondary data and sources. Since most cases I will favor will fall into those “historically important” categories, a lengthy amount of time has passed between them and now. That will mean limited access to people responsible for the actions taken. This, however, will not mean that I couldn’t have access to people responsible for the decisions now; which will be particularly useful for the Incomplete Apologies cycle.
- Case selection limited by language proficiency of researcher. Although English and Spanish open up a lot of doors to case studies (and specially Spanish with cases that have yet to be studied/researched), the research would benefit from a greater language (and therefore global) perspective.
- Number of cases able to be selected keeping in mind the length of the research. Developing a process tracing case study for six cases (which is the goal of this thesis) sounds like a

great challenge, and even as that I would considered it barely a drop of what needs to be done in order to fully comprehend the topic. This workload/timing limitation needs to be considered. Researcher will try to minimize its effects by selecting representative cases which shared characteristics with others and that therefore may be considered a reliable sample.

- However, by using the **explain outcome category of** process tracing, one of the limits of the research is going to be how it would be hard to take the results (the explanations) and apply them to other cases. As Beach (2009) explains, this particular methodology creates what are in essence case-specific combinations, and therefore are “non-parsimonious conglomerates that cannot be exported to other cases.” (page 3).

4. Case selection

Process tracing and its subsequent case studies require a deeper research than other methodologies. That's why authors recommend selecting a small number of cases (even one) to make the study more fruitful. Taking this into consideration and reviewing the list of political apologies issued since 1984 (see Annex 1), I have concluded that the best cases for the present thesis are the following:

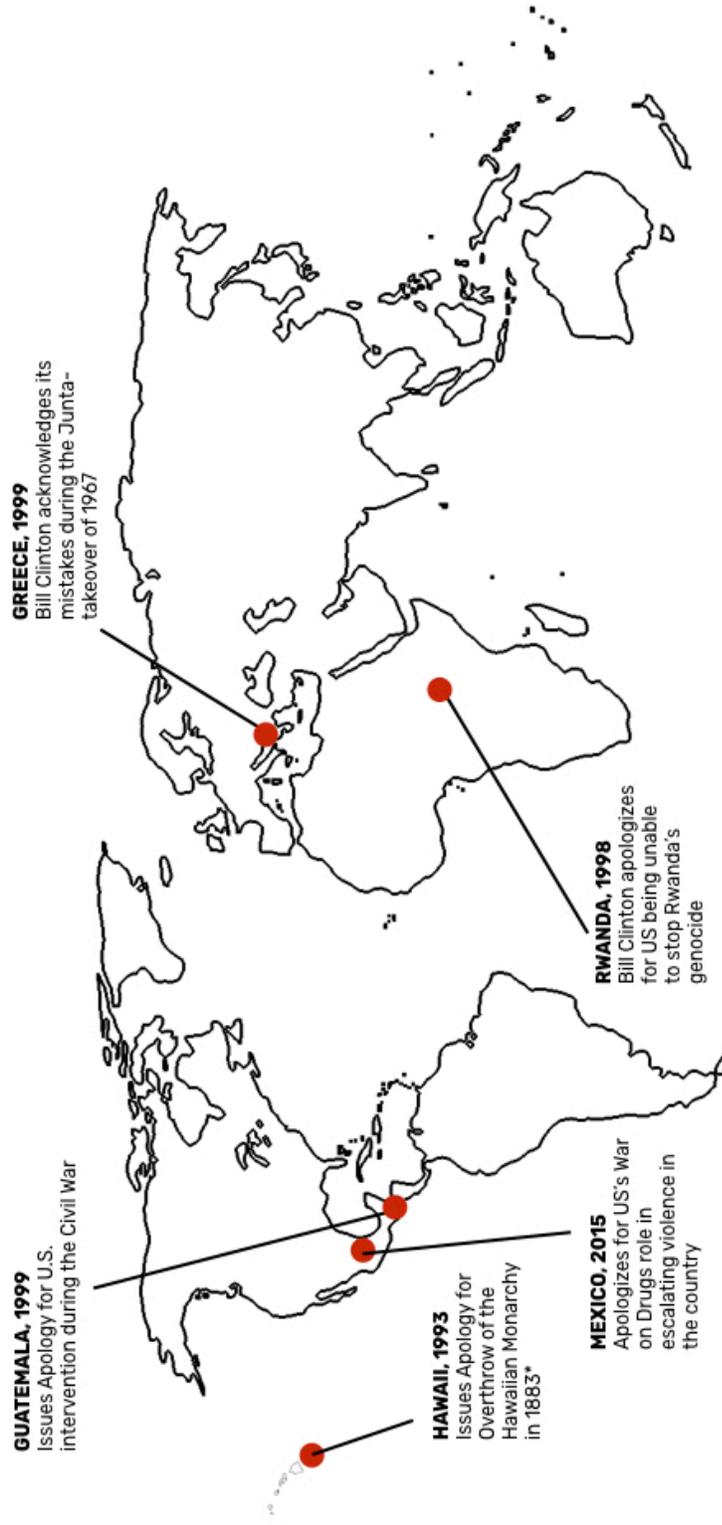
1. Complete Apology Cycle: United States apology to Guatemala for its intervention during its civil war
2. Incomplete Apology Cycle: United States non-apology to El Salvador for its intervention during its Civil War and the Turkey non-apology to Armenia for the mostly-accepted genocide of the early 19th century.

Why this selection? The reasons for choosing these three cases are the following:

1) **Two of them are highly related**

Both involve Civil Wars. Both occurred around the same time frame in history. Both involve the same aggressor: The United States. Both are connected by geography and by political context. Both victim states are similar in culture, history and character. This helps us narrow the

FIGURE 5
BILL CLINTON WORLDWIDE APOLOGIES



*Although at the time not a state-to-state apology, it is relevant to this research due to Hawaii being an independent state during the time.

Source: Prepared by Author.

possibilities of why an apology was issued and one case and not in the other much further and gives credibility to both the hypothesis and the potential results. A third case that's far in geography but shares some traits with the other two offers contrast and an alternate way of exploring the road to an apology.

2) High availability of sources

All cases are highly documented and have been a topic of discussion both in academic and political circles. In Guatemala and El Salvador, both civil wars have been traced, described and researched by Truth Commissions, with results of those researches being respected and held canon. In the case of Turkey, the Armenian Genocide has been one of the most documented, disputed and researched cases. There has been high consensus in the worldwide academic circles and apart from Turkey and its closest allies, there is not much discussion about the nature of the crimes.

3) Shared geopolitical context

In Guatemala and El Salvador's cases, The geographical closeness of the countries and the shared history and the greater shared context (the Cold War) also give this paper a broader geopolitical context that will be valuable for further studies. It is the opinion of the author that cases where the apology was issued and where it was not then, must be as close as possible to be considered worthy of pursuit. Guatemala and El Salvador's Civil Wars were not just a domestic consideration. They were part of the Cold War, a broader global conflict that was situated mainly in the 'global south'. As the final report by the Commission for Historical Classification puts it:

“The cold war also played an important role. Whilst anti-communism, promoted by the United States within the framework of its foreign policy, received firm support from right-wing political parties and from various other powerful actors in Guatemala, the United States demonstrated that it was willing to provide support for strong military regimes in its strategic backyard”. In the case of Guatemala, military assistance was directed towards reinforcing the national intelligence apparatus and for training the officer corps in counterinsurgency techniques, key factors which had significant bearing on human rights violations during the armed confrontation. Cunningham (1999) even argues that 1998 and the following years “witnessed a profusion of examples of what may be termed the ‘politics of apology’” (page 1), so these cases fall squarely during that period of history. Another important Geopolitical Factor is the fact that genocide is cited as one of the crimes during the Guatemalan civil war. This coincides with a worldwide trend to ask for reparations and demands acknowledgement of responsibility by offending states.

4) The Statesman factor

Two cases share the same ‘apologist’, Bill Clinton. The other one involves Erdogan, the current Turkish leader. This is important since personal influence of specific leaders seems to be taken as an after-thought in a lot of academic research. As Saunders (2011) points out, “scholars have tended to (leave leaders out of the equation)...and have rarely incorporated a central role for leaders, especially since Kenneth Waltz’s dismissal of individual-level explanations in *Man, the State and War.*”(Page 3). Although her research is focused on analyzing why states intervene, the same principle can be applied as to why states (through individuals that represent them) offer apologies and other don’t: it sometimes might come down to a personal factor defined by the leader in charge.

4) The powerful Genocide idea

In Guatemala's case, it was a difficult but in the end fruitful journey to get international recognition of the Genocide that happened in the country, at least to the point where its perpetrators, mainly Ríos Montt, were in the process of being trialed for it. According to the Center for Justice and Accountability, "in 2012, a Guatemalan court – with CJA acting as a key advisor – indicted Ríos Montt on accusations of torture, genocide, forced disappearances, state terrorism, and crimes against humanity. The trial resulted in Ríos Montt's conviction and he was sentenced to 80 years in prison"², but this verdict was later overturned. In Turkey's and Armenia's case, of course, genocide has played such an important role that has been part of one of the greatest geopolitical battles of the 20th and 21st century. These two sides of a coin, so to speak, represent an interesting contrast in what happens when an offending state pushes for recognition of crimes versus what happens when the offending state simply denies that they happened. The inclusion of state crimes as grave as genocide gives this study, as well, a place on the literature of transitional justice, about which authors such as Clark and Kaufman (2010) have written at length.

5) Language and personal considerations

Two of the cases are close to the author's experience and life story. There will be no language barrier when consulting primary sources and this gives much more options to dig deeper into each case study. The author hopes to contribute to its country's academic knowledge and point out to cases that can be often be ignored due to their perceived non-significance. The third case, even though it involves two countries which languages the author isn't at all familiar with, offer

² See: <http://cja.org/what-we-do/litigation/the-guatemala-genocide-case/>

such a wealth of information that it manages to compensate that factor. They have been documented enough as to provide enough data and historical points to create a fairly complete case study for it.

5. Process tracing: Historical Review

This is the first of three chapters that form the main analytical part of this Master Thesis. In the first one, I will present a cursory review of the events of the Civil War in Guatemala and in El Salvador and about the Genocide in Armenia. In this section I will discuss the independent variable of the gravity of crimes and consider how influential it was on the expression of apology. On chapter 6 I will conclude with a short economic comparison to analyse whether the potential economical relevance of the victim countries had some sort of influence in the decision to issue an apology and how it contrasts between the cases. Finally, on chapter 7, I will conduct a process tracing analysis based on the Road to Apology Model presented in the Introduction of this Master Thesis where the main driver of the analysis will be the second variable, the *pressure to act*.

Let's begin.

5.1 Historical Review: Guatemala and El Salvador

Guatemala was nearing national elections in 1954, one of the most important in their history. The Cold War conflict was heating up elsewhere in the world and the United States was already on its way to stopping any suspected pro-Communist activities in what authors call “its backyard”, or Central America and the Caribbean. Through intervention they stopped a democratically elected government from taking power and installed a military dictatorship.

In El Salvador, the most important development were the training and creation of the so-called *death squads*, that were set up in part by the C.I.A. and General José Alberto Medrano. According to Michaels (1987) these death squads are “infamous, and it has been estimated that

they have murdered several thousand civilians since their inception. At one point, it was estimated that the death squads murdered 300-500 civilians each month” (page 227).

One important note that we have to make is to note the 1973 War Powers Resolution, “(a resolution) to prevent secret, unauthorized military support activities” (ibid, page 228) in countries where a declaration of war has not been made. This has been cited by authors (namely Michaels, 1987) as providing a legal basis to declare the US intervention in El Salvador (and by extension Guatemala) as illegal. It established provisions such as a 48-hour limit for written reports from the Presidential Office to the Senate to authorize any introduction of United States Armed Forces to hostilities. The Government of President Reagan tried to fight these allegations but Congress in 1981 decided to bring a suit against the President and challenging “The legality of the U.S. presence in, and military assistance to, El Salvador”.

Contrasting the crime: US intervention in Guatemala and US Intervention in El Salvador

The following table follows closely the revelation of the Truth Commission Reports for Guatemala and El Salvador and other historical sources.³

US INVOLVEMENT, GUATEMALAN CIVIL WAR-AN OUTLINE	
1960	The “Silent Holocaust” takes place in Guatemala, where more than 200,000 native Mayans are suspected to be murdered by US-trained forces.
1977	Guatemala is subject to a “country-specific human rights legislation” that terminates military assistance from the United States. (Broder, Lambek, 1988)
1986	Congress enacts new legislations that lifts the previous prohibition on military aid but it is confirmed that the army continues to “terrorize the Guatemalan People” (ibid, 1988).
1986-1987	The Congress approves 109.5 million in assistance in economic and military aid and allocates 117.6 million for 1987, while 144.6 million requested for both years 1988 and 1999, for a total of more than 515 million USD .

³ See references

1990	LA CIA division chief warns the Guatemala Chief of Station (COS) that Human Rights performance is high on the agenda for the executive and legislative branches; at the same time noting that Guatemala is only second after El Salvador when it comes to Human rights violators in the region.
August 1992	The LA division chief instructs all assets to be wary of possible human rights violations. "The guidance cable also directed stations to follow up on all accusations on human rights violations in order to corroborate or refute them".
1996	An Amnesty Law is passed in Guatemala by the government shielding Civil War crimes from prosecution.
1996	The Office of The President of the United States releases a CIA report in which it is accepted that "several CIA assets were credibly alleged to have ordered, planned, or participated in serious human rights violations such as assassinations, extrajudicial executions, torture or kidnapping while they were assets", and that at the time, the CIA was aware of those allegations.
US INVOLVEMENT, EL SALVADOR CIVIL WAR-AN OUTLINE	
1980	US-trained death squads raped and murdered 4 United States churchwomen and this crime forced the U.S. Government "to take notice of the human rights violations committed by (them)" (Michaels, 1987)
1981	The Atlacatl Battalion was a "Rapid Deployment Infantry Battalion" or "BIRI", that is, a unit specially trained for "counter-insurgency" warfare. It was the first unit of its kind in the armed forces and had completed its training, under the supervision of United States military advisers, at the beginning of that year, 1981.
1981	To defeat the rebels, the US equipped and trained an army which kidnapped and disappeared more than 30,000 people, and carried out large-scale massacres of thousands of old people women and children.
14 January, 1981	Military aid from United States is resumed in El Salvador.
1982	The El Mozote massacre became public knowledge on 27 January 1982, when The New York Times and The Washington Post published articles by Raymond Bonner and Alma Guillermoprieto, respectively, reporting the massacre. In January, they had visited the scene of the massacre and had seen the bodies and the ruined houses.
1983	Towards the end of the year, FMLN embarked on its biggest military action against El Paraíso military base in Chalatenango; it is estimated that more than 100 soldiers were killed in the attack. On 25 May, the Clara Elizabeth Ramírez urban unit of FPL executed Marine Colonel Albert Schaufelberger, the second-ranking officer among the 55 United States military advisers in El Salvador.

1983	Vice-President Bush publicly condemned the death squads. He demanded the removal of certain armed forces and security officers who were associated with human rights violations. The visit demonstrated that United States diplomatic pressure could bring about a reduction in the number of violations.
1985	By this year, the United States government was delivering military and economic aid of more than 2 billion USD to El Salvador. Alberto Bonilla, president of Salvadoran Central Bank, noted that “without this aid, the country would have 20% negative economic growth”. (Michaels, 1987)
1989	US-trained army unit murdered six Jesuit priests, the country's leading intellectuals, in cold blood. US congressional investigation found strong evidence that the army's high command had ordered the murders, prompting a cut in military aid.
1992	A Peace Accord is reached that brings a close to the Civil War

Table 1. US Involvement in Guatemala and in El Salvador, an Outline. Source: The Commission on the Truth for El Salvador, United States Institute for Peace, Commission of Historical Clarification, United Institute for Peace

5.2 Historical Review: Turkey and Armenia case

The Armenian genocide has been thoroughly studied and written about by various authors (see: David, 2017 and Ackam’s important 2012 work drawn from deep Ottoman archives). The racial component plays a huge part when talking about the Armenian Genocide, and at least 1.5 million people have been suggested as victims of the events. Bjornlund (2016) opens one particularly devastating account of the genocide with the following quote from an US envoy to Armenia:

All tell the same story and bear the same scars: their men were all killed on the first days’ march from their cities, after which the women and girls were constantly robbed of their money, bedding, clothing, and beaten, criminally abused and

abducted along the way. Their guards forced them to pay even for drinking from the springs along the way and were their worst abusers but also allowed the baser element in every village through which they passed to abduct the girls and women and abuse them. We were not only told these things but the same things occurred right here in our own city before our very eyes and openly on the streets.

(Herzog, Page 16)

There is today, in general scholar literature, little disagreement about how and why it happened, and that it constituted in fact a genocide. We can trace it back to the events surrounding the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of the Turkish state. The worst events happened between 1915 and 1916, where anywhere from 600,000 to 1.5 million people are calculated to have been victims. The concept of genocide was so new that it was even inspired by what the Armenian population calls “the great catastrophe”. According to the United States “Holocaust Encyclopedia”, “From 1915-16, the Ottomans killed large numbers of people in mass shootings; many others died during mass deportations due to starvation, dehydration, exposure, and disease. In addition, tens of thousands of Armenian children were forcibly removed from their families and converted to Islam.”⁴

⁴ See: <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10008189>

TABLE 2: HISTORICAL REVIEW-A SUMMARY

CASE COMPARISON - KEY FACTS			
	Guatemala	El Salvador	Armenia
Time frame	36 years, from 1960 to 1996	12 years, from 1980 to 1992	Main events during 1915-1916, oppression and massacres happened well into the 1920s
Victims	140,000-2000,000 mortal victims, though estimates vary. 600 Mayan villages destroyed.	70,000-80,000 mortal victims, though estimates vary.	Up to 1,500,000 victims
Worst crimes	Genocide, called the "Silent Holocaust".	The mayor crimes during the war were indeed massacres directed at civil population suspected of supporting the Communist rebels. Massacres like El Mozote where nearly were murdered by US-trained military personnel still haunt the nation.	A disputed, mainly by Turkey, Genocide of the Armenian people.
Economic Relationship	Minor Exporter and Importer	Minor Exporter and Importer	Dismissed as unimportant, diplomatic relationships have been on a standstill for decades
External and domestic pressure	The fact that genocide was invoked during the Civil War in Guatemala is another important factor. Authors like Edwards and Shaw (2013) point out to the broader campaign by UN leader Koffi Annan to protect human rights. It was the so-called "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine.	Some isolated reportage mainly calls for further investigations of certain massacres (El Mozote, 1981) and the persecution of the murdered of Civilian	Domestic pressure has been remarkably low since the beginning. International pressure, of course, has existed and been going on for decades, ignored and dismissed by the Turkish authorities.

Prepared by author. Sources: See references

6. Economical relationship between offending and victim states

In this section, I conduct a small comparison between the victim states and try to Guatemala was the biggest economy in comparison to El Salvador, as presented in the following table:

6.1 The Guatemala and El Salvador Case

Economy of El Salvador and Guatemala in 1999			
Country	GDP	Exports to US	Imports from US
El Salvador	12,600 million USD	248 million USD	1,173 million USD
Guatemala	18,319 million USD	844 million USD	1,893 million USD

Table 3. Sources. Department of State, United States

The Department of State offers interesting points of comparison between the two countries. It describes the United States as being one of the largest trading partners, but it does not so for El Salvador. At the same time, it offers a much more specific outline of policy objectives for Guatemala than for El Salvador, where only a few key points are mentioned.

This indeed tells us that both countries are similar in size and economical importance, and that since no such big difference existed in their potential for future development, this factor cannot be considered to have a major impact on the decisions the United States government had in their relations with them.

6.2 The Armenian Case

In the case of the Turkish-Armenian apology, the economical interest has been categorically denied by authorities and authors alike. Mensur Akgun, Director of the Global Political Trends Center (GPOT), declared unceremoniously to HETQ (April, 2018) that

*“We see no long-term economic potential in Armenia. There is no comparison with Azerbaijan. In addition, we regard the Azerbaijanis as brothers. That’s another story. **If you had oil, then I can assure you that would have been a good reason to normalize relations.**” (emphasis mine).⁵*

This is of course just one person’s opinion, but it does point out to a trend in which we are able to recognize that both state and non-state actors consider the economic potential as an important factor in the way that they approach historic events and crimes and the need to acknowledge them, let alone apologize for them. At a latest 2016 estimate of 1.698 trillion USD, the Turkish economy dwarfs the Armenian, which at the same year stood at 26.3 billion.

⁵ See: <http://hetq.am/eng/news/765/istanbul-diary-turkish-analyst-back-pedals-on-genocide.html>

7. The Road to Apology: Case by Case Process Tracing

In this section, I will take the model of Road to Apology presented in the introduction (reproduced below for reference) and work on tracing each of the cases and see how they have progressed and in which stage they are currently in. The analysis will be rounded out with considerations about how the independent variables (*pressure to act, gravity of the crimes and economical importance*) played or not played a factor in the steps along the way.

7.1 The Guatemala Case

Denial of Crime

Although the United States did not ever deny that its intervention in Guatemala per se (since it consisted mostly on Congress-approved military aid), it did lead efforts to keep the worst of their crimes a secret and also most of the outright human right abuses of the Guatemalan government, and to continue military aid, choosing to ignore those abuses, According to a May 2013 article on ABC News, “By November 1982, Reagan's administration proposed renewed arms aid, citing an improvement in the human rights situation”⁶, when in reality nothing significant had changed. Writing for Telesur, Sanford (2016) says that “in the 25 years I have investigated the Guatemalan Genocide, I have witness the deployment of propaganda to exculpate the army and those who benefited from the Genocide as well as sophisticated smear campaigns directed at those who

⁶ See: http://abcnews.go.com/ABC_Univision/News/ronald-reagan-finance-genocide-guatemala/story?id=19179627

defend the rights of survivors”⁷. Although in this case the US Government cannot be accused of the crime on their own, their participation did lead directly to the actions taken by the Guatemalan military forces. Elsewhere, Isaacs writes for The New York Times in 2013 about the continued military aid from Reagan:

*In choosing to do so, the United States deliberately turned a blind eye to the Guatemalan genocide. The Reagan administration publicly supported army claims that guerrillas rather than soldiers were perpetrating atrocities and tried to polish the tarnished image of the Ríos Montt regime, encapsulated by Reagan’s claim that the general was being given a “bum rap.”*⁸

That is a definite sign that although the denial didn’t extend itself beyond the years of the crimes, it was for a moment a followed policy to ignore the real gravity of the events that were happening in Guatemala.

Cooperation in investigation

In 1990, Latin American CIA division chief warns the Guatemala Chief of Station (COS) that Human Rights performance is high on the agenda for the executive and legislative branches; at the same time noting that Guatemala is only second after El Salvador when it comes to Human rights

⁷ See: <https://www.telesurtv.net/english/opinion/Denial-from-the-Holocaust-to-the-Guatemalan-Genocide-20161011-0001.html>

⁸ See: <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/05/19/what-guilt-does-the-us-bear-in-guatemala/we-enabled-guatemalan-genocide-but-the-elite-committed-it>

violators in the region; further, in 1992, The LA division chief instructs all assets to be wary of possible human rights violations.

In 1996, according to Livingstone (2013), the Office of The President of the United States releases a CIA report in which it is accepted that “several CIA assets were credibly alleged to have ordered, planned, or participated in serious human rights violations such as assassinations, extrajudicial executions, torture or kidnapping while they were assets”, and that at the time, the CIA was aware of those allegations.

In 1997, newly declassified documents regarding the 1954 Guatemalan coup were released. According to Los Angeles Times, they contained revealing information about the plan to murder dozens of Guatemalan political leaders in a plan that would take down the government:

On Friday (May 23, 1997), 1,400 pages of CIA documents on the coup--a fraction of the total still classified by the CIA--were declassified and put on public display at the National Archives in suburban Maryland. Those documents reveal the lengths to which U.S. officials were willing to go in order to ensure that the Central American country remained in the U.S. sphere of influence.⁹

A Truth Commission Report, titled “Memories of Silence’, was finally released in 1999. This report was the result of the work of the United States Institute for Peace, an independent institution “devoted to the nonviolent prevention and mitigation of deadly conflict abroad”. Known also as a Clarification Report, it was made public just one month before Bill Clinton’s visit to Central

⁹ See: http://articles.latimes.com/1997-05-24/news/mn-62119_1_cia-document

America. This guaranteed that the report would be a topic of conversation and that Bill Clinton would have to directly address it during his speech.

We have pointed out above in the theoretical section (see: page 17) that there hasn't been an universal or conventional decision about whether the actions of the Guatemalan government against its Mayan population amount to genocide, at least according to the accepted definitions of the term amongst scholars and international lawmakers. Nonetheless, in 1999 a lawsuit was filed by human rights activist Rigoberta Menchu at the Spanish National Court demanding the genocide to be investigated and trialled. Flash forward to 2017 and a trial has finally transpired and the leader of the country during the period, General Montts, has been found guilty of aiding the genocide of the Mayan population.

In combination, all of this document releases, media coverage and independent investigations amount to a huge domestic and international pressure to reveal the truth about the events in Guatemala and gave momentum for an eventual apology, and as we'll see in the next section, the sum of all these events might've directly lead to the Clinton speech and it's content.

Admission of guilt, expression of regret and offer of compensation

Just before Bill Clinton's visit, the Central American Countries had been victims of deadly hurricanes and weather disasters. The main one was Hurricane Mitch, which caused 240 deaths in El Salvador plus \$400 million in damages, 268 deaths in Guatemala and more than \$740 million in damages.

They also had been burdened by systematic deportations that were sending back migrants from the United States and the Presidents and the government in general were focused on stopping or slowing down those repatriations. In a 199 report for the website Mother Jones, Montaigne

offers a worrying number: 56,000 criminal deportees, mainly gang members from all over the United States, were being deported to Central America “creating dire problems for recipient countries, some of which are just beginning to recover from years of political violence”.¹⁰

The visit was in the context of a Central American Summit that gathered all the presidents of Central America. The agenda was clearly lopsided by these recent events. At the same time, it is important to note that just one more before, in February 1999, the final report from the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) was released and brought to light the human rights violations and violence, criminal abuses and outright instigations committed during the armed confrontation that affected Guatemala for thirty-five years. This report received widespread and national coverage in the United States and the most damning came from The New York Times, which on the first paragraph pointed out to the direct involvement of the United States during these events:

*A truth commission report made public today concluded that the United States gave money and training to a Guatemalan military that committed "acts of genocide" against the Mayans during the most brutal armed conflict in Central America, Guatemala's 36-year civil war.*¹¹

Clinton was visiting Guatemala when he issued a political apology for the role of the United States during the country's civil war. The apology was issued as part of a roundtable discussion on peace

¹⁰ See: <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/04/deporting-americas-gang-culture-el-salvador/>

¹¹ See: <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/03/11/world/clinton-offers-his-apologies-to-guatemala.html>

efforts at the national Palace of Culture in Guatemala City. It is useful to consider that at the time of being issued, Clinton's apology was classified as a "near-apology" by some news outlets (Mother Jones, 1999). But the language use was clear and recognizing the crimes is one big step forward from not even mentioning them and Bill Clinton himself in his autobiography classifies it as an 'apology' when retelling the events. Second, his address during the Central American Summit in Guatemala, when in front of every other president of Central America, he expressed his regret for the role of the United States during the Guatemalan Civil War. This was covered at the time by most major news outlets in that country, but it is interesting to note that local newspaper archives from Guatemala reveal that during the presidential visit, they decided to focus on subjects such as migration (during the former years, deportations had become a burden in the Central American Countries) and the relief efforts from Hurricane Mitch, a hurricane that had affected the whole Central American region in 1999.

7.2 El Salvador

Denial of crimes

If there was a denial of crimes in El Salvador, it was during the time of the Civil War while the crimes were being conducted and allowed to happen almost under their noses. To avoid embarrassment at home, different versions and amount of cover up tactics were used by the US Government to avoid confronting the reality in the Central American country. In 1993, The New York Times released the results of an investigation about that period and different congressmen testified that while there were still worrying human right abuses happening in El Salvador, the United States government at the time decided to keep sending military aid to support the rightist government responsible for most of the abuses. "It is now clear that while the Reagan

Administration was certifying human rights progress in El Salvador they knew the terrible truth that the Salvadoran military was engaged in a widespread campaign of terror and torture," The New York Times quoted the Chairman of the House Committee on Western Hemisphere Affairs Mr. Robert G. Torricelli saying in March, 1993.¹²

Cooperation in investigation

In 1993, as part of the Truth Commission Reports about the Civil War in El Salvador, the CIA released important documents¹³ that revealed how deep the US involvement was. The Truth Commission themselves were US-sanctioned and sponsored; and the international media was open and willing to report and denounce the different events that were happening the Central American Country. Following several Republican congress requests for transparency of information, the Bill Clinton administration released never-before-made-public documents about the intervention of the United States in El Salvador. These documents, part of the Digital National Security Archive (DNSA), contain crucial information that show how the United States government was aware of the human rights abuses and "assassinations, abductions and torture orchestrated by member's of El Salvador's powerful right-wing and military, yet continued working with those individuals".¹⁴ Part of this Security Archive is cited to be the result of "8 years of pressure" by the National Security Archive to get the documents released, and it includes a blueprint plan for a victory against the guerrillas. A request of information addressed to then president Bill Clinton in 1993 included petitions to release documents about as many as 32 cases of human rights abuses that

¹² Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/03/21/world/how-us-actions-helped-hide-salvador-human-rights-abuses.html?pagewanted=all>

¹³ Source: www.cia.gov

¹⁴ See more: <http://proquest.libguides.com/dnsa/elsal1980>

were revealed in the Truth Commission Report. Many of these documents were still being kept or re-classified, and as recently as 2009, though, the push to release more documents or unclassified version of the documents continues. In an 2009 article for the Unredacted blog, Doyle (2009) says that “US Attorney General Eric Holder issued new instructions to all federal government agencies to encourage disclosure in response to the Freedom of Information Act, to the fullest extent possible”.¹⁵

Expression of regret

Crucial to the development of this case is the gap between the previous events (the 1993 Reports) and the Clinton State Visit and following speech. Almost 6 years passed and by then there was little talk about the US role during El Salvador’s Civil War, which like Guatemala had also just been severely damaged by Hurricane Mitch and was, as it is still today, in the middle of an ersatz Civil War with street gangs. Therefore, the *pressure to act* can be considered low since Clinton didn’t receive any specific calls to say something during his visit. In fact, when the authorities of the countries prepared for the visit, they focused on topics such as reconstruction after the hurricane, national debt, commerce, investment, migration and international crime. Shared history and the events of the past were never on the agenda (Kandel and Rosa, 1999). Nevertheless, during Bill Clinton’s 1999 visit, the then US president gave a speech at the National Assembly in El Salvador in which we can identify some shades of Expression of Regret that give me confidence to situate this case on this stage of the Road to an Apology. While he did not apologize for the actions of the United States during the Civil War, he did struck a sorrowful mood

¹⁵ See: <https://unredacted.com/2009/11/16/right-to-justice-in-el-salvador/>

while stressing the difficult times that the country had in the past and the “bitter divisions that the US role caused back home” (for further analysis of this speech, see next section and the Annexes).

Full State Apology

Even though there have been calls demanding a US Apology to El Salvador, this has yet to happen. In an article for The Nation, Raymond Bonner (2016) surrounds a call to an apology by contrasting it to a recent speech by Obama in Argentina, where he expressed his regret for the US involvement in that country’s dirty war. He goes at great lengths comparing the number of victims in both wars (In Argentina, 30,000; in El Salvador, 70,000) and concludes that Obama’s gesture just points to the lack of any official word regarding El Salvador’s Civi War. “In Argentina”, he concludes, “Obama tossed white roses into the water at a memorial to the victims of that country’s dirty war. No US official, not even a mid-level one, has ever visited the monument at El Mozote or apologized or expressed regrets about that massacre or, more broadly, for Washington’s active role in funding and encouraging El Salvador’s dirty war.”¹⁶

7.3 Turkey

Denial of Crime

Denial of the Armenian Genocide is almost built-in into the Turkish national character. We must not forget that it’s even a crime to suggest otherwise, in account of it being an insult to ‘turkishness’. This is referenced by authors such as Zarakol (2010), who writes:

¹⁶ See: <https://www.thenation.com/article/time-for-a-us-apology-to-el-salvador/>

That Atatürk's regime chose not to confront the crimes of 1915 at this juncture is hardly surprising: admitting guilt would have undermined the project of constructing a modern, proud, European Turkish nation, and it would have also perpetuated the hierarchical relationship with the West the new regime was trying to avoid. (Page 15)

In the realm of international pressure, it's almost impossible to count the ways that Turkey has been receiving direct and indirect pressure to at least recognize the gravity of the crimes, that is, recognize the events of 1915-1916 as a genocide. There's a website dedicated to gather information about the countries which recognize it as such, 28 so far, in which Germany ranks high as one of the most recent and more important ones to do so, in a Parliamentary resolution in 2016, following a wave of coverage that also included the Pope, in 2015, referring to the events as Genocide. In the US realm, even though Barack Obama recognized the events as genocide when he was a private citizen and a Senator, for example, he backtracked and didn't match this recognition when he became president¹⁷. Elsewhere, senators such as Adam Schiff have suggested that the denials have become part of Turkey's "psyche" and that the recognition would be a devastation¹⁸, according to Garland (2015) on a Los Angeles Times article.

The only trace of domestic pressure came in December 2008 with an independently funded "I Apologize" Campaign, lead by two hundred intellectuals and that received thousands of signatures from people in Turkey. Erdogan dismissed the campaign, saying, according to Los Angeles Times, "These Turkish intellectuals must have committed the genocide since they are the

¹⁷ See: https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/23/world/europe/despite-campaign-vow-obama-declines-to-call-massacre-of-armenians-genocide.html?_r=0

¹⁸ See: <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-why-armenia-genocide-recognition-remains-a-tough-sell-20150426-story.html>

ones who are apologizing."¹⁹ Another minor event was a group of lawyers that resisted a conference that would present results that denied the Armenian genocide and proceeded to release an 'official apology' themselves, declaring in a statement that ""We, as lawyers from Izmir, will not allow that the crimes and the genocide committed against the Armenians be consigned to oblivion".²⁰

Apart from these isolated incidents, there hasn't really been any 'inside' pressure, either top down or bottom up to deliver an apology.

Expression of Regret

A historic statement came from Erdogan in 2015. In an official document from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a speech he gave during a religious ceremony at an Armenian church in Istanbul, he cited a "shared pain" and extended condolences to the descendants of the victims. A deeper analysis of this statement is presented in chapter 11

¹⁹ See: <http://www.latimes.com/la-oe-ozyurek5-2009jan05-story.html>

²⁰ See more at: <http://asbarez.com/133887/turkish-lawyers-apologize-to-armenians-for-genocide/>

FIGURE 5-PROCESS TRACING-CASE COMPARISON OF ROAD TO APOLOGY : A SUMMARY

STAGE	US-GUATEMALA	US-EL SALVADOR	TURKEY-ARMENIA
DENIAL OF CRIME			Up to 2017, the Turkish government partially denies the crimes committed. It does recognize the fact that there was uncontested violence and murder of countless Armenians, but it fights the idea that it (a) was a major state crime (b) it consisted of genocide.
STATE CRIME	US intervention during Guatemala’s Civil War has widely been acknowledged to have led to strong military oppression and violence that ultimately resulted in the “Silent Holocaust” against the Mayan population.	If somehow subdued when put into comparison with the Guatemala case, the United States followed a similar and quite strong intervention procedure during El Salvador’s Civil War to stop the spread of communism. This resulted in horrifying massacres such as El Mozote in 1981.	Widely recognized as such, the Armenian Genocide represents one of the biggest State Crimes of the 20 th century that are still unacknowledged with an apology.
INVESTIGAGION COOPERATION	Not only did Bill Clinton offer to fully declassify documents from the CIA, but the United States had been willing to offer intelligence and open up investigations about its involvement before and during Guatemala’s Civil War.	As early as 1981, at the beginning of El Salvador’s Civil War, members of Congress were challenging the legality and urging further investigation about the US Presence and military aid in El Salvador.	In a landmark speech, Erdogan offered a full, scholarly collaboration to shed light on the events of 1915, to be conducted by a team of Turkish, Armenian and international investigators.
ADMISSION OF GUILT	Bill Clinton, during his March 1999 visit, covered the previous two stages and went a step further by offering up economic incentives to what he called “support for those regions that suffered the most from violence and repression” but stopping short of offering compensation for the victims or their descendants.	In his National Assembly speech, Bill Clinton obliquely referenced past crimes by talking about the “divisions” that the USA’s ‘role in the region’ caused in the past.	
EXPRESSION OF REGRET			
OFFER OF COMPENSATION			
FULL STATE APOLOGY			

Source: Author

8. Analyzing the Apology and non-apologies: an interpretative approach

In this chapter I will complement the case study with an interpretative approach. By following Benoit's model of image repair theory I will go through the main points of the Clinton apology in Guatemala and also analyze his remarks during his visit to El Salvador to understand the difference and similarities and how they correspond to each tactic of 'image repair'. There seems to be a connection with Bill Clinton and apologies. This relationship has been examined closely and it's obvious that the president seemed to have a tendency to do it that separated him from his predecessors. He, according to Edwards (2008) followed a confessional foreign policy that even influenced future presidents into following a similar pattern of contrition for their country's past mistakes, a trend that didn't differentiate between political affiliations, followed by Democrat and Republican presidents alike. This stands in marked contrast with our other major political leader, Erdogan, who has been instrumental in the denial of the Turkish genocide ever since he's been in power. To understand and analyze his position, I will also add his most famous remarks around the topic, released in a statement in 2014, to look for traces and any signs of these tactics of image repair. All these speeches have been taken for archives from both presidents and can be consulted in full in the annexes.

These two leaders and three state crime cases and the way that the countries, through their leaders, dealt with them, are important to draw conclusions about why apologies happen in one cases and why they don't in others. Let's start.

8.1 The Clinton Guatemala Apology

I will use a model of rhetorical analysis to distill the Clinton Apology to Guatemala, taken from his remarks during the Central American Summit, following Benoit's image repair theory (See: Theoretical framework). According to Benoit, apologies are part of the "image repair activity", where the 'rhetors' can use four strategies:

- Denial
- Evading responsibility,
- Reducing offensiveness,
- and Transcendence.

Denial is the admittance that the events were not a consequence of their actions. It can also shift the blame to another party. This did not happen during Clinton's visit and the apology clearly puts blame on the actions of the US government at the time.

Evading responsibility is an attempt to justify the actions by blaming outside forces, claiming that it was accidental or that they had good intentions when acting. This is not the case either; and the actions of the US government are not defused or minimized during Clinton's address.

The third category, reducing offensiveness, is approached in various ways. It can be done by putting focus on the offending party's recent efforts to change and support the victim party in a positive way. It can also be done through minimizing the perception of damages, comparing it

to another big catastrophes or trying to revisit history by changing the meaning of the events. Another way, way more common during political apologies, comes in the form of compensation. “It attempts to reimburse the victims of the offense, although this not necessarily come with an admission of guilt”. (ibid, 2013). The following section in Bill Clinton’s address to the Central American Summit complies with this category:

As many of you know, we provided \$1½ million in support for the commission. We declassified over 4,000 documents at the commission's request. Now we will encourage the translation of the report into indigenous languages and its wide dissemination. Consistent with the commission's recommendations, we also will continue our support of development programs in those communities which suffered most from violence and repression. This year, we plan to provide an additional \$25 million to support the peace accords through aid to the justice sector, to education, to literary training, to the generation of income, and to citizen participation in government.

The next possibility is the idea of *transcendence*. This is useful to round out the apology itself; it expresses commitment for a better conduct in the future and to prevent the recurrence of the offense. The last one is the admission of guilt or more dramatically called “Mortification” by Benoit. In the case of Clinton’s apology to Guatemala, both reparations and mortifications were offered as part of the speech. He clearly attributes the events of the civil war to some sort of intervention by the United States, in the following section:

For the United States, it is important that I state clearly that support for military forces or intelligence units which engage in violent and widespread repression of

the kind described in the report was wrong, and the United States must not repeat that mistake.

We may also point out to some skepticism that has been previously attributed to the Clinton apology, specially by the media, who called it a “near apology”. The question can be put to rest by citing an extract from Bill Clinton’s biography, “My Life”²¹ (highlighted by author):

“The next week I took a four-day trip to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala to highlight a new era of democratic cooperation in a region in which, not long before, America had supported repressive regimes with horrible human rights records as long as they were anti-Communist. Viewing the aftermath of natural disasters that American troops were helping with, speaking to the parliament in El Salvador, where recent adversaries in a bloody civil war now sat together in peace, apologizing for America’s past actions in Guatemala - all these seemed to me to be signs of a new era of democratic progress I committed to support” (page 469).

This is no doubt a full blown acknowledgement that his speech was meant as an apology even though keywords like “apology” or “I’m sorry” were never uttered. It is also of note that before mentioning the apology, he admits that America supported repressive regimes “with horrible human rights records” in the “Region”, thereby extending it, if rather weakly, to other countries beside Guatemala. This of course does not constitute a full admission of guilt since it

²¹ It’s important to mention that this is the only mention of the trip and his speeches there in the 800-page volume.

was not made in an official public forum, it was not directed specifically to El Salvador citizens or its government neither does it refer to any particular crimes in that country.

8.2 The Clinton-El Salvador Non-Apology

How do we analyze a non-apology? During Bill Clinton's visit to El Salvador, he addressed the National Assembly in a speech that wasn't even close to an apology, but it indeed highlighted to a certain point the role of the United States during El Salvador's Civil War. The fragments of interest are the following:

There was a time not long ago when many in this region believed they could only defend their point of view at the point of a gun, a time when civil war and repression claimed tens of thousands of lives and cast many thousands more into exile, a time when farmers were pushed off their land and children were torn from their parents, a time which provoked in the United States bitter divisions about our role in your region.

Of the four strategies that Benoit proposes, we can identify here an instance of “reducing offensiveness” and “evading responsibility”. By defusing the blame of the actions of the country and citing ‘bitter divisions’ he manages to point out that it wasn't an action that was taken “on purpose” or with full blame on one side of the equation (we must assume that he's talking about the historical Democrat vs. Republican division).

He goes on to the strategy of transcendence, where he looks to paint the positive aspects of the new relationship between the United States and El Salvador:

*You have worked hard here in **El Salvador** to shed light on that dark and painful period. Now all of us, as friends and partners, can and must join in building a common future, determined to remember the past but never to repeat it.*

I hope the people of Central America now see the United States in a new way, as a partner, a friend, a colleague in the process of strengthening democracy, in reconstruction, in reclaiming your rightful future.

Although of course this stops well behind accepting blame or an apology, the fact that he “hopes the people of Central America now see the United States in a new way”, points to an understanding that there has been a negative perception beforehand and that the country has been involved in some wrongdoing. Furthermore, near the closing of his speech he states that “*Now, it is important for all of us to stop looking backward and start thinking forward about the future we want to build for our children*”, a strategy of deflection that confirms that his speech was not concerned with digging the past and asking for forgiveness.

8.3 The Erdogan Armenia Non-Apology

In April 2014, as has been previously noted, one of the rare full statements on the Armenian genocide came from current Turkish president Erdogan. Although it of course does not meet all the requirements of an apology, it is useful to analyze its contents according to the same models as the Guatemala and El Salvador cases to see how it utilizes the same tactics to both express some

sort of remorse about the events while keeping up the image that the government has been building for decades.

He starts by describing the events to have an effect beyond the Armenian genocide. The choice of the word “Ottoman” is also no coincidence: it’s a clear way of distancing Turkey from the actions. It was another political entity entirely, he seems to be suggesting, that is responsible for these traumatic events, not the new, open and democratic nation that emerged out of its ashes.

Certainly, neither constructing hierarchies of pain nor comparing and contrasting suffering carries any meaning for those who experienced this pain themselves.

In these two lines, Erdogan is attacking the concept of genocide itself, critiquing the tendency of scholars to create this “hierarchies of pain”. It is useful in not only denying the fact but also discounting the whole idea of genocide being a valid concept that should be considered at all.

Millions of people of all religions and ethnicities lost their lives in the First World War. Having experienced events which had inhumane consequences - such as relocation - during the First World War, should not prevent Turks and Armenians from establishing compassion and mutually humane attitudes among towards one another.

This, in turn, is a case of reducing offensiveness. With these statements Erdogan is defusing the blame and intensity of the crimes by attributing the deaths to the context of a bigger conflict, the

First World War, and between people “of all religions and ethnicities”. This places the blame, so to speak, in the context and not in a particular aggressor. The simplified “relocation” term, as well, points out to an understanding of the events as a matter of the course and not a violent idea in the first place.

It is our hope and belief that the peoples of an ancient and unique geography, who share similar customs and manners will be able to talk to each other about the past with maturity and to remember together their losses in a decent manner. And it is with this hope and belief that we wish that the Armenians who lost their lives in the context of the early twentieth century rest in peace, and we convey our condolences to their grandchildren.

Regardless of their ethnic or religious origins, we pay tribute, with compassion and respect, to all Ottoman citizens who lost their lives in the same period and under similar conditions.”

He finishes up with a hopeful note, looking for some kind of *transcendence* for everyone involved. He goes back to the Ottoman idea to continue the effect.

The general effect of Erdogan’s statement is that of halfway between reconciliation and halfway between defensiveness. Not willing to give away more than he can to maintain his political clout. This wouldn’t last, as about one year later Erdogan retreated to his usual stances and declaring that Turkey itself had gone through greatest atrocities that the Armenian genocide. He stated, according to The New York Times, that “If we examine what our nation had to go

through over the past 100 to 150 years, we would find far more suffering than what the Armenians went through.”

9. Main Research Question and Hypotheses answers

Why did the apology happen in Guatemala's case and not in El Salvador's or Turkey's? I will use the three hypothesis as guiding posts to answer this question.

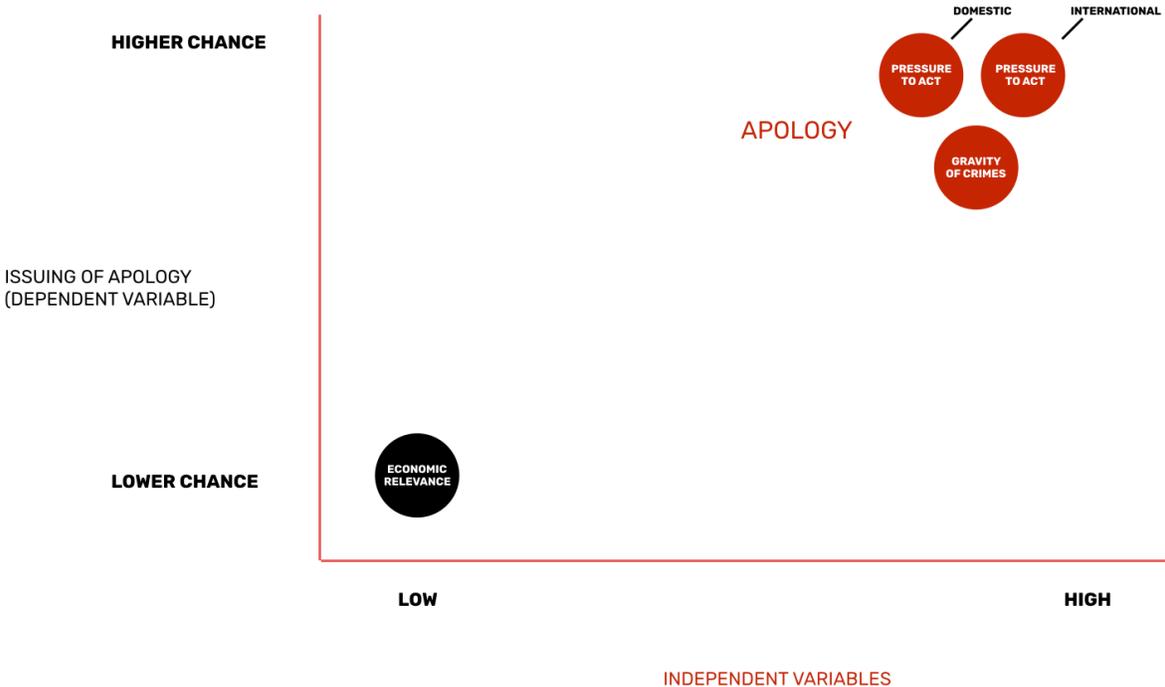
Through the process tracing method, I have come to the conclusion that the most important factor in considering whether a political apology will happen is the *pressure to act* that a country experiences. And most important of all, it's the amount of *domestic pressure* that matters. The initiative has to come from within, not from outside, for an apology to happen. **Therefore this hypothesis is marked as valid.**

Through this comparison, I have come to the conclusion that while gravity of crimes does influence the amount of international and domestic pressure that a country might experience (therefore relating to the first hypothesis), it's net influence on the fact if an apology will be expressed by a government doesn't seem to be direct. That is, in the case studied, it did not matter whether a case was considered extremely grave (Armenia), moderately grave (the disputed Mayan Genocide in Guatemala) or 'lower' grave, like the inhumane but still minor –in comparison- massacres in El Salvador. **This leads me to mark this hypothesis as invalid.**

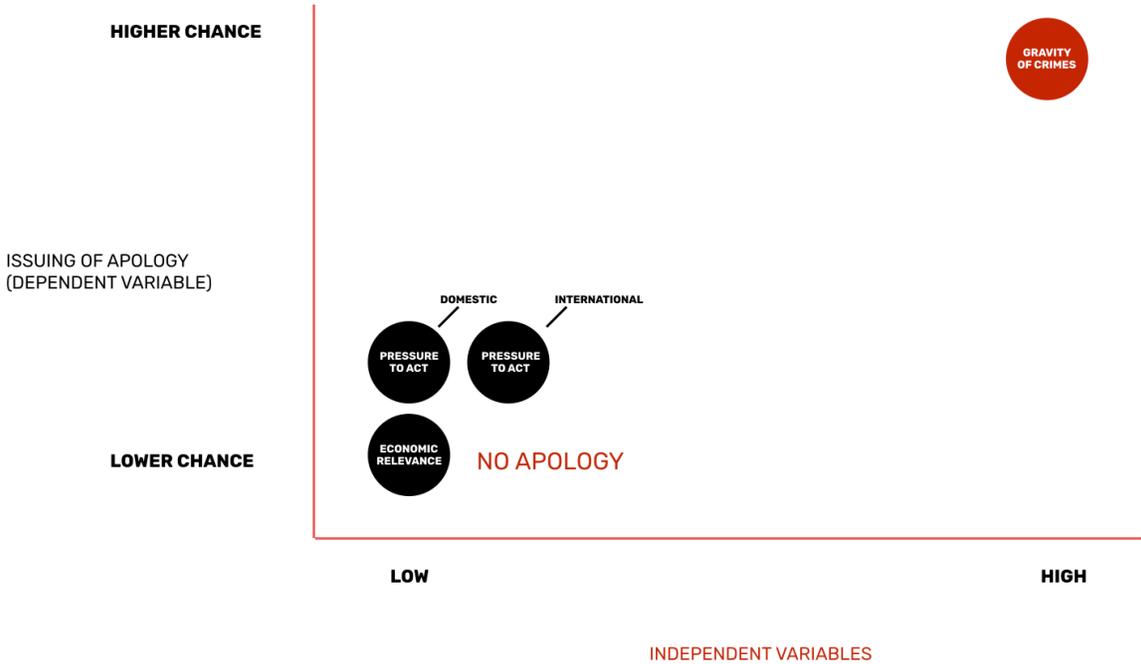
Through this comparison, I have come to the conclusion that all three countries were in similar economical conditions and both presented equal future opportunities for investment from the United States and Turkey, respectively; and this did not seem to be a factor in considering whether or not to issue the apology. **This leads me to mark this hypothesis as not valid.**

Going back to the chart I presented during the posing of hypotheses, we can summarize the results analysis in the following way:

US-GUATEMALA CASE



US-EL SALVADOR CASE



US-TURKEY CASE

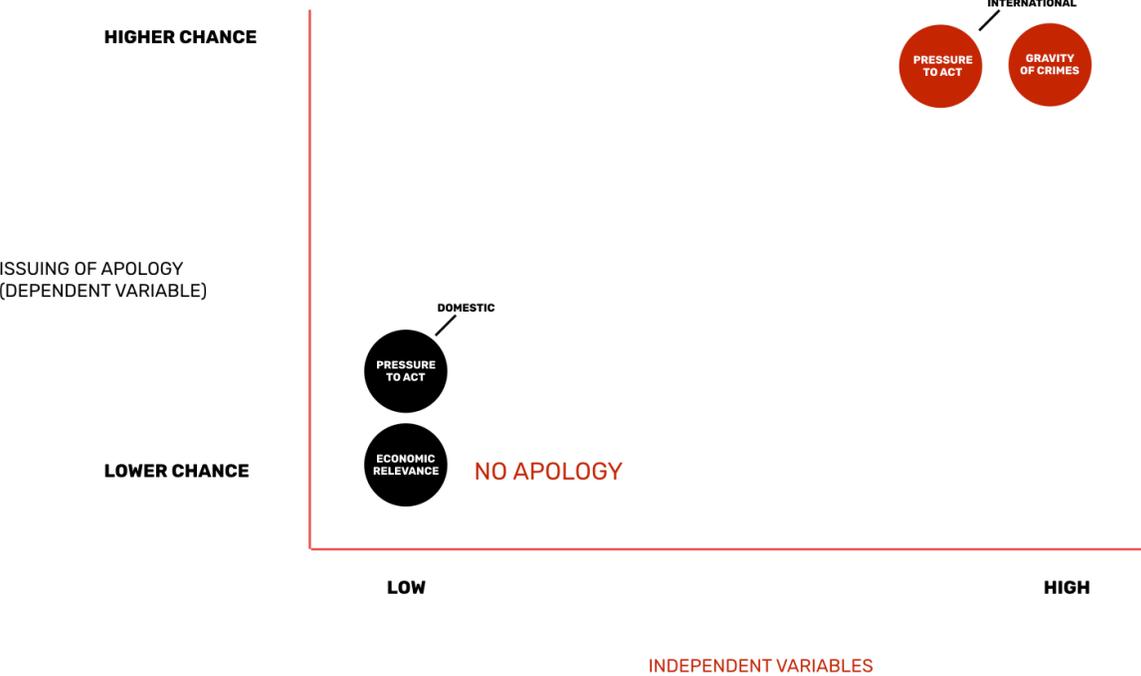


Figure 6, 7, 8 Summary of Cases and Hypotheses. Source: author.

10. Conclusion

Guatemala, El Salvador and Armenia were affected by bigger and more powerful states in what accounted to be serious crimes that are universally accepted to have been completely premeditated and amounted, in at least two of the cases, to Genocide. But as we have learned during this master's thesis, only one of the three has received an apology after the fact, even though all situations more than fit the definition of State Crime the author established and there have been several degrees of both domestic and international pressure for the offending states to offer an apology. Through a case study comparison using process tracing, we followed the events of both national conflicts and the eventful days of a crucial visit from Bill Clinton, United States president at the time, to Central America; when the apology to Guatemala was issued. We also traced and analyzed the way that Turkey has dealt with the 'question' of the Armenian Genocide and shown how for years they have resisted a wave of international pressure to apologize while facing a striking lack of domestic pressure to do so.

The answer I have reached to my main research question, "Why do State Apologies happen in some cases and why they don't in others" is, though not simple, to a measure very satisfactory. I conclude that according to the three cases studied, the main driver for an apology to happen is the *pressure to act*, and more specifically, the domestic pressure. Of the three main hypothesis established, this was the one that turned out to be the most crucial. International pressure (organizations, other governments, international media) will not in most cases (outside of forced apologies after worldwide conflicts) amount to an apology if there's no inner drive to do it. The second hypothesis, that the gravity of the crime had an influence on whether an apology happened:

the graver the grime, the more likely an apology, didn't seem to be decisive. Although categorizing crimes is entering in dangerous territory, there should be no discussion that the Armenian Genocide, for example, had far greater consequences than the Guatemalan and El Salvador wars. Yet, that crime has yet to be even acknowledged as such by the offending state. The third hypothesis, the economical importance and relevance of the victim state and the future relationship and opportunities to the offending state, was deemed to be of lower importance. One caveat: all cases studied in this Master Thesis had the same unequal relationship, i.e., big vs. small state; it would be interesting to expand the case selection in further studies to countries with equal, or small vs. big economical relationships and see how well this hypotheses holds up.

These results of course, can be and should be contested. But at least, following these case studies, we can reach a satisfying conclusion as to why the Apology Cycle was complete in Guatemala's case and why it wasn't completed in El Salvador's and Turkey's case. Further research can be done to compare the consequences of an Incomplete versus a Complete cycle. Tracing the relationship between the two countries (offending vs. victim) throughout the years to see if the apology made it better or worse, or just kept it in a stand still. What lies ahead of the road? What are the effects of a State Apology and can it be said that there's really a need for them? These and other questions that still can be asked and will contribute to the ever expanding knowledge about this important subject in international politics. It can also be useful as policy consideration for states looking to lobby an apology from an offending state, that working on creating a domestic pressure to apologize would be a fool-proof way to create the right climate for an apology.

Allow me to conclude this Master Thesis with a personal anecdote. I remember visiting the site of El Mozote years ago, where one of the worst massacres in the Salvadoran civil war took

place. One of the survivors, a woman, gave a speech during an improvised tour of the still impoverished village, in front of a small but significant monument built to the victims. She ended her speech with a makeshift song that she had composed herself. Her voice was sad and shaky. While looking at her I couldn't help but think: Would she even care that the United States hasn't or has apologized to her country? If they had, would it make a difference? Will her life change in any way? As Blatz et al (2009) say, "apologies supposedly restore justice by condemning past harms, while compensation supposedly restores justice by repairing these harms; however, apologies and compensation fail to completely restore justice for the minority because such actions cannot turn back the clock and eliminate the harm" (Page 231). This is why the subject of state apologies seems to be still intriguing, challenging and confounding researchers, since it's truly a place where the geopolitical and the personal meet.

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