

# **Diaspora Digital Diplomacy:**

## **A comparative analysis of HALC, ANCA and AJC**



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*In memory of Professor Kouskouvelis, who was a constant inspiration throughout my years in University. The dedication to his vocation, right up until the moment of his passing, is something I will always look up to.*

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## **Abstract**

This thesis brings together diaspora public diplomacy studies and digital diplomacy studies to explore how diaspora public diplomacy has adapted to the digitalisation of diplomacy. This thesis explores the intersection of digital diplomacy and diaspora public diplomacy, focusing on the strategies employed by diaspora organizations to achieve diplomatic objectives. Drawing on the literature on both fields, the study analyzes the online presence, social media content, and advocacy efforts of three diaspora organizations - HALC, AJC, and ANCA - to demonstrate the distinctive role of diaspora and their unique approach to diplomacy. The methodology used involves a lexicon-based approach to categorize and analyze Twitter content from June to December 2022, with a thematic focus on ontological and physical security, as all three organizations demonstrated an ontological and physical security thematic agenda, suggesting that they are concerned with both physical threats to their communities as well as threats to their sense of identity and belonging. The study is framed from the perspective of Brinkerhoff's three pillars outlining how diaspora diplomacy differs from public diplomacy, highlighting the unique role of diaspora identity, motives and involvement goals, and potential for advantageous middle-ground positions in public diplomacy. The findings suggest that social media can enhance diaspora diplomacy efforts, and the distinctive role of diaspora in promoting and achieving diplomatic objectives.

## 1. Introduction

Diaspora communities play an increasingly important role in international relations, utilizing public diplomacy strategies to advocate for their countries of origin and promote their identities (Bernal, 2005; Noya, 2006, Brinkerhoff, 2019). Diasporas have historically served as an extension of national prestige and have received academic attention as an agent of public diplomacy. Diaspora identity is a combination of traits from the country of origin, the country of residency, and lived experience, which gives them a greater range of means to achieve their goals. According to Brinkerhoff, diaspora communities have a unique "in-between" position that allows them to act as intermediaries between their home country and host country and facilitate communication and understanding between the two (Brinkerhoff, 2019). With the rise of digital diplomacy, these communities have adapted their strategies to the online world, using social media to disseminate information and mobilize support as digital diplomacy became an important tool for image management by enabling a two-way engagement with the public (Melissen, 2005; Pamment, 2013).

This thesis aims to investigate the intersection of digital diplomacy and diaspora public diplomacy by analyzing the online strategies employed by three diaspora organizations: the Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC), the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), and the American Jewish Committee (AJC). The research utilizes computational analysis and the Python programming language to examine the online presence, Twitter content, and advocacy efforts of these organizations. Moreover, the thesis employs qualitative content analysis to classify the tweets based on the ontological and physical security dipole. Lastly, this thesis utilizes the three pillars of Brinkerhoff's framework to understand the unique role of diaspora identity, motives, and involvement goals in public diplomacy. Brinkerhoff's three pillars of diaspora involvement provide a valuable lens to comprehend the distinctive role of diaspora communities in public diplomacy. The initial pillar, identity, emphasizes how diaspora communities maintain ties to their home country while developing a sense of belonging in their country of residence. The second pillar, motives, highlights the diaspora's motivation to support their home country and strengthen ties with their host country. The third pillar, middle-ground position, recognizes the unique space diaspora communities occupy between their home and host countries, enabling them to act as intermediaries and facilitate communication and understanding between the two. By employing Brinkerhoff's

framework, this thesis aims to demonstrate how diaspora organizations can leverage their distinct identities, motivations, and middle-ground position to promote their interests and achieve diplomatic objectives.

The key objectives of this thesis are four-fold. Firstly, it seeks to explore how diaspora organizations are utilizing digital technologies to engage in public diplomacy efforts and achieve their diplomatic objectives. Secondly, the thesis examines the strategies employed by these organizations to achieve diplomatic objectives online, shedding light on the potential of digital tools to enhance diaspora public diplomacy efforts. Thirdly, the research highlights the unique role of diaspora identity, motives, and involvement goals, and potential for advantageous middle-ground positions in public diplomacy, showing how diaspora organizations can leverage their unique identities to promote their interests and achieve diplomatic objectives. Finally, the study demonstrates how social media can enhance diaspora diplomacy efforts, exploring how digital tools can be used to amplify diaspora voices and promote their interests.

HALC, ANCA, and AJC have been chosen as key studies for several reasons. Firstly, they are prominent diaspora organizations that are active in advocating for their respective communities. Secondly, they have a significant online presence and utilize social media as a tool for public diplomacy. Finally, they represent different diaspora communities, allowing for a comparative analysis of the strategies employed by different groups.

In conclusion, this thesis utilizes computational analysis and qualitative content analysis to investigate the intersection of digital diplomacy and diaspora public diplomacy, focusing on the online strategies employed by HALC, ANCA, and AJC. The study aims to contribute to the understanding of the unique role of diaspora communities in digital diplomacy, drawing on theoretical frameworks of ontological and physical security and Brinkerhoff's three pillars analysis of diasporas role in public diplomacy efforts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the topic.



## 2. Diaspora and Public Diplomacy

The purpose of this section is to present the case of diaspora as a public diplomacy agent and to illustrate some of the ways diaspora populations are participating in public diplomacy activities. Before discussing the specific role that diaspora communities can play in public diplomacy, it is useful to define the term "public diplomacy" and understand how it relates to diaspora. Public diplomacy fundamentally comprises exchanging policy ideas and fostering partnerships amongst political bodies in order to inform and persuade audiences in other countries (including but not limited to states) (Ho & McConnell, 2017). The scope of what falls within the purview of public diplomacy, however, has given academics cause for concern, with worries that the phrase has lost its analytical traction (Sharp & Wiseman, 2012; Gilboa, 2008). Public diplomacy is "in a sense a metaphor for the democratization of diplomacy, with various actors having a part in what was once an area reserved to a few," as Melissen (2013, p.2) has observed. In academic work, there has been a shift from the conventional assumption that diplomacy is the exclusive province of the state (Nicolson, 1939; Satow, 1922) to a broader understanding of diplomacy.

For millennia, diasporas have served as an extension of national prestige (or decline). The spread of national strategies to actively use them for public diplomacy is, however, what is new (Melissen, 2011). Today, the importance of diasporas in public diplomacy is expanding (Brinkerhoff, 2019) as diaspora publics may engage the global community in issues that might otherwise be viewed as domestic (Bernal, 2005). In this light, Diaspora has received academic attention as an agent of public diplomacy. More precisely, according to Noya, a nation's immigrant and emigrant populations are its most valuable public diplomacy assets (Noya, 2006). In a similar spirit, Zaharna (2011) argues that due to their boundary-spanning responsibilities in domains ranging from domestic to foreign publics, diaspora publics are a crucial component of a country's public diplomacy. Lastly, as Ho & McConnell (2017) observe, in this world where migration has reached historic levels, diasporas are recognized as influential actors in local and global issues who are sought after as potential diplomatic agents for communication, representation, and negotiation.

On the one hand, when saying that the diasporas are the new actors of public diplomacy, we refer to the term 'Diaspora diplomacy' which has been used to refer to '*the growing public diplomacy trend in which diasporas are contributing more actively to the recasting of real-*

*world cross-cultural exchanges and relations*' (González, 2014). On the other hand, giving more emphasis to the state's role in engaging its nationals abroad, Rana defines diaspora diplomacy as engaging a country's overseas community to contribute to building relationships with foreign countries. Lastly, according to Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2019), diaspora diplomacy differs, in a sense, from public diplomacy in three key ways: i. the fact that the diaspora identity leads to certain diplomatic applications for which diasporans may fill a special role, ii. the fact that diasporans' answers to the world's identity and equity crises produce unique motives and involvement goals and iii. the fact that diasporans could possess a middle-ground edge in terms of public diplomacy.

Therefore, diaspora can not only be a successful agent of public diplomacy, but through its uniqueness -in terms of identity- has a greater range of means with which it can achieve its goals. As mentioned above, diasporans are fundamentally different from other public diplomacy actors in that their entire presence is a form of public diplomacy. Diaspora identity is a combination of traits from the country of origin, the country of residency, and lived experience. It is neither entirely one thing nor the other (Brinkerhoff, 2019). Therefore, diasporans are aware of the potential future for their country of origin because they have already experienced it. They may be in a position to "translate" new ideas in ways that are consistent with local cultural norms since they have first-hand knowledge and experience. In their interactions with their countries of origin and their host countries, diasporas have the potential to be powerful and autonomous actors. Through gaining legitimacy, building moral support and authority, and taking on various public diplomacy responsibilities, diaspora publics provide an "in-between advantage" (Brinkerhoff, 2019). Diaspora groups' efforts to bring about change, whether they take the form of lobbying, sending remittances, or committing violent acts, may impact the success of home politics and attempts to settle domestic problems (Heindl, 2013). Diaspora seeks to influence public opinion and the views of targeted non-state actors and groups. They also work directly with governments and international organizations and can be used to advance government goals.

In order to show how diaspora organizations can leverage their unique identities, motivations, and involvement goals to promote their interests and achieve diplomatic objectives I am following Brinkerhoff's (2019) three pillar framework. Keeping in mind that i. diaspora identity leads to specific forms of diplomacy for which diaspora communities may be particularly well-suited, ii. the fact that diaspora communities may have specific motivations

and goals for engaging in public diplomacy based on their experiences of identity and inequality, iii. but also that diaspora communities may have a unique "in-between" position that allows them to act as intermediaries between their home country and host country and facilitate communication and understanding between the two, I will examine HALC, AJC and ANCA in order to see if they meet those three criteria.

### **3. Digital Diplomacy: State-of-the-art**

The Web 2.0 revolution has permeated our everyday lives in ways unthinkable previously and the practice of diplomacy is no exception to this reality. More precisely, the recent spread of digital initiatives in foreign ministries has caused a revolution in the practice of diplomacy as the new public diplomacy is characterized by dialogue, collaboration, inclusiveness and most importantly the establishment of two-way engagements with the public. The rise in popularity of social media platforms, websites and digital applications has facilitated the interaction, or perception of interconnectivity, between the diplomatic elites and the everyday citizens. As a result, official social media accounts are increasingly used as tools for presenting and shaping the images of countries around the world as well as providing diplomacy practitioners the ability to personalize themselves. Therefore, digital diplomacy is an important tool for image management as people who visit a nation's social media accounts often seek interaction and are therefore willing to open channels of dialogue. It is this two-way engagement that enables social media to serve as a very useful tool for change management. Some examples of the importance of social media for image management are: i. the United States' effort to portray itself as a financially responsible global leader, with strong moral values, who focuses on establishing positive connections with the Arab and Muslim countries, after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (Manor & Segev, 2015), ii. China's efforts to use digital tools to push back against criticism and defend China's interests, by expressing a more nationalistic and assertive tone in its digital presence, also known as Wolf Warrior Diplomacy (Huang, 2022), (Shumba, 2021), iii. Russia's employment of humor in its social media content as a means of presenting itself as a confident world leader that uses straightforward and easy-to-understand diplomacy in order to create a positive brand perception of Russia among the general public (Manor, 2021).

Digital diplomacy is inextricably linked to the concept of "new" public diplomacy, foregrounding the drive to engage with increasingly interconnected foreign publics and moving

away from one-way information flows towards dialogue and engagement (Melissen 2005). Although digital diplomacy can take many forms, digital diplomacy scholars have mainly focused on the use of social media for diplomatic purposes to such an extent that digital diplomacy is identified with social media diplomacy. Research on digital diplomacy (DD) is extensive and has developed considerably in recent years under three different perspectives:

First, digital diplomacy has been studied by communication and media studies scholars (i.e. Pelling, 2015; Segev 2015; Wichowski 2015), second within the International Relations discipline and especially among experts in communications and diplomacy (i.e. Manor, 2017; 2018; 2021; Bjola, 2015; 2018; Murray, 2015) and third from a technical perspective (i.e. Banepali, 2017; Khan, 2021; Raziq, 2021).

Scholars have examined digital diplomacy by exploring Countries' Digital Diplomacy Strategies with regard to the whole world, or towards specific countries or regions (Huang & Wang, 2021; Manor, 2021; Bjola & Manor, 2018; Garud-Patkar, 2022), diplomatic practices during the COVID19 pandemic (Eksteen, 2022; Manor & Pamment, 2022; Bjola, 2022; Huang, 2022), social and ethnic movements, (Johnson, 2018; Malek, 2021; Aggestam, Rosamond, & Hedling, 2021), diaspora, (Pivovar, Ershov, & Katagoshchina, 2021; Dickinson, 2020; Melissen, 2020), Digital Diplomacy of International Organizations, (Ayodele, 2021; Zaiotti, & Bjola 2020; Wright, 2019), the Theoretical Conceptualization of DD (Cerf, 2020; Manor, & Pamment, 2019), technical issues (Banepali, et all, 2017; Caldwell, 2019) , DD's Impact on Practice (Adler-Nissen, & Eggeling, 2022; Holmes, 2022) the various threats and risks arising from the states' exposure to digital platforms, (Lemke & Habegger, 2020; la Cour, 2020; Saad, Chamoun, & Bazan, 2015)

However, scholars agree that because of the expansion of communication technology, the many expressions of the diaspora and government policies regarding expatriates are affected and altered (Rodima & Grimes, 2019; Bravo, 2019; Ding, 2007). To begin, it is critical to emphasize that communicative technologies have an impact on existing social networks and reciprocal duties. More precisely, diasporic societies may readily overcome financial and geographical challenges with the assistance of ICTs, and communicate on previously unfathomable scales (Ding, 2007). New media, based on the Internet, broaden the role of existing mass media by combining their news duties with entertainment, activism, and education (Ding, 2007). In addition, technological revolution has brought changes in areas that

have not received enough attention, such as remittances. The power of digital remittances and blockchain technologies to grow and modify traditional means, as a result of poor faith in official institutions, has the potential to scale diasporas and alter the nature of migration, statehood, migrant remittance sending, belonging, and sovereignty (Rodima & Grimes, 2019). When it comes to states, however, it is underlined that, while governments are utilizing social media to accomplish public diplomacy aims, the complexity and intensity of the social media usage differs in degree and quality, as seen by the situations of El Salvador and Costa Rica. As Bravo (2019) observes, while both countries have used social media to publicize their foreign policy and achievements in international relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Costa Rica has primarily used social media to promote the foreign policy goals and successes of the government on the international stage, while El Salvador has also used these platforms to engage with and connect with its diaspora in the United States.

#### **4. Diaspora Digital Diplomacy**

As seen in the previous section, digital diplomacy has received academic attention as technology altered the old ways of diplomacy, however, while much attention has been focused on the great power practices on the various digital platforms, little attention has been paid to the digital practices of the diaspora and the various non-state entities. More precisely, through a search of the term digital diplomacy in Scopus, out of 372 results, only 7 refer to digital diaspora diplomacy issues. The limited literature on diaspora action on various digital platforms concerns either the effort and the means by which the diaspora, itself, attempts to achieve its goals, or the ways in which states try to communicate and engage with their diaspora. (Pivovar, Ershov, & Katagoshchina, 2021; Dickinson, 2020; Melissen, 2020). The literature also seems divided on the potential of digital media for diplomatic purposes beyond state actors. For example, although Siapera (2010) emphasizes the internet's originality, interactivity, and capacity to allow discussion and exchange of material, she points out that, this must be seen more as potential than actual: "although the technology may provide the means by which it is accomplished, the actual contents that people post may in fact fall short of this deliberative process" (ibid.: 194).

However, digital tools haven't only caused a revolution in the practice of diplomacy by state actors, as diaspora communities are also using social media for diplomatic purposes and have

gradually enhanced their influence, power, and legitimacy in the global arena through the use of digital communication technology. Nevertheless, although research has been conducted on how states use social media for diplomatic purposes, few studies have specifically examined the role that diaspora communities play in using social media for diplomatic purposes. As Zaharna and Uysal (2016) state through their four-quadrant model that elucidates the evolving role of diasporas, while both the state and the public are interested in promoting the state's aims and policies, there is a movement from state-based to public-based efforts as a result of digital communication technology. By extending the definition of citizenship through the creation and dissemination of a politically-motivating "infopolitics," digital technology is becoming a more significant medium for the virtual construction of diasporic groups' links to their home countries (Bernal, 2014). New civil-society actors have been able to gradually enhance their influence, power, and legitimacy in the global arena because of globalization and new communication technologies. (Castells, 2008) Globalized conceptions of diasporic communities can serve as a justification for governmental actions taken outside the conventional bounds of national borders. Indeed, Anderson (1998: 58–74) asserts that long-distance nationalisms may result from diasporic participation with domestic politics due to contemporary technology. The heightened diasporic interest in the politics of the country of origin is referred to as "new patriotism" by Appadurai (1996).

In recent years, a number of states have gained the administrative and diplomatic skills necessary to methodically influence and communicate with their diaspora groups. As Manor (2019) observes, social media platforms can be used by diplomats to keep in touch with far-off diaspora groups that appear to be much closer than they actually are. MFAs may also utilize digital channels to inform diasporas about developments in their nation of origin and therefore deepening their emotional attachment to their previous motherland, but also offering collaboration possibilities on digital platforms that can result in the emergence of communities for diplomats and diasporas (Manor, 2019). As a result, academic literature is examining cases of how states engage with their diasporas in order to enhance government goals. For example, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) was established by the Nigerian Government in 2019 to mediate relations with Nigerians in the diaspora for mutual developmental benefits of diasporans and the Nigerian homeland (Olubukola, 2020). The India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians launched a 2016 and 2017 social media campaign to persuade the diaspora to channel philanthropy to national and state government social development projects (Dickinson, 2020). The Georgian Diaspora Ministry uses Skype

to offer free Georgian language lessons to children of diasporas around the world (Manor, 2017).

On the other hand, scholars focus less on the digital means and methods diasporans themselves are using in order to achieve their objectives. However, ICTs make it simple for diasporic groups to overcome financial challenges and engage in previously inconceivable levels of communication. By fusing entertainment, activism, and education with news functions, Internet-based new media broadens the scope of traditional mass media. As Ding (2007) observes in the case of China, members of the Chinese digital diaspora who are influencing Chinese politics and foreign policy, are crucial to China's efforts to improve its reputation internationally. For Chinese digital diasporas, the ICTs help them to not only preserve Chinese ethnic identity, but also to transmit traditional Chinese culture and values around the world. In the Greek case, Koukoutsaki and Monnier's (2012) analysis of the websites of the Greek-American diaspora, revealed that the nationhood claimed and promoted is ethnic and cultural, and it espouses the form of an ecumenical and transcendent Hellenism.

In conclusion, despite the increasing importance of diaspora digital diplomacy in today's interconnected world, this topic has received relatively little academic attention. As a result, there is a significant gap in our understanding of the ways in which countries are using digital tools and platforms to engage with their diaspora communities and the impact of these efforts. The same gap is observed when it comes to the specific digital tactics and strategies that diaspora communities, themselves, are employing to achieve their goals. Through my thesis, I hope to contribute to this important and understudied area of research by exploring the use of digital tools and platforms in diaspora diplomacy and examining their impact on public diplomacy efforts. As mentioned in the previous section, I will use Brinkerhoff's (2019) three pillar approach, and I will try to explore what she has highlighted about conventional diaspora public diplomacy efforts in the interconnected world of social media and digital diaspora diplomacy.

According to Brinkerhoff (2019) diasporans are different from other public diplomacy actors, as their everyday existence is already an act of public diplomacy due to their mixed identity from both their country of origin and their country of residence. Diasporans have the potential to bridge the people-to-people understanding that is often the goal of public diplomacy. Their engagement with their places of origin, through transportation, tourism, telecommunications,

transfer, and nostalgic trade, leads to significant public diplomacy, whether intentionally or not. Diasporans' sense of not fully belonging to any culture may compel them to engage in diaspora diplomacy activities, by other actors that bridge the divide, and mobilization around identity may generate greater passion and staying power. Examples of diaspora communities that have organized activities or projects to achieve this goal include the Chinese diaspora, which has long facilitated business networks throughout Southeast Asia and beyond, and whose migration to Africa is viewed as supporting Chinese foreign policy related to accessing Africa's natural resources. The American Jewish Committee seeks to leverage its extensive experience in engaging with diaspora communities to train US-based diasporans from Latin America and Africa through institutes, representing a unique non-state-based public diplomacy effort. The Irish diaspora in the US has established numerous cultural organizations and philanthropic groups, and St. Patrick's Day celebrations have become a distinct American tradition, directly impacting the consumption of Irish culture (Brinkerhoff, 2019). Safeguarding their heritage can also be a powerful mobilizer of latent diasporans, who may be important and potent for place branding, influencing thoughts, feelings, and associations with a place.

Furthermore, in terms of the second pillar Brinkerhoff discusses two global political crises described by Manuel Castells that affect governance institutions and how they relate to diasporas in public diplomacy. The first crisis is one of identity, where people feel disconnected from political decision-making, but diasporas may mobilize their cultural identity through various networks and feel empowered by potential efficacy. The second crisis is one of equity, where globalization can increase inequality, and diasporas may suffer directly from these inequities and take direct action to support individuals and communities in their countries of origin. Diasporas may engage in targeted advocacy or institutional interventions to address these issues.

Lastly, when analysing the third pillar, Brinkerhoff mentions that diasporas have a potential in-between advantage for public diplomacy due to their identity characteristics and motivations. This includes the back-with-the-future effect, psycho-social advantages, and operational advantages. Diasporans can employ their socio-cognitive and operational advantages to operate by exception, connect various sources of resources, and develop multi-polar influence efforts. They can speak the language of both the Country of origin (COO) and the Country of Residence (COR), and the cultural language of different sets of actors, official and unofficial, local, and international. They may be uniquely able to persuade their COO actors to adopt new ideas by



translating them in local culturally appropriate ways and connecting them to local circumstances with which they may have emotional and socio-cognitive experience.

Therefore, I intend to utilize Brinkerhoff's (2019) approach to investigate the insights she has presented regarding traditional diaspora public diplomacy initiatives within the context of social media and digital diaspora diplomacy and explore whether diaspora expresses its unique identity, its response to crises and its in-between advantage in social media platforms in order to achieve diplomatic purposes and goals.

## **5. Methodology**

To analyze the digital diplomacy strategies of three diaspora organizations (HALC, AJC, ANCA), I collected and analyzed their Twitter content from June to December 2022. The data were downloaded using Twitter API, during this period AJC had Tweets, HALC 1700 and ANCA had 2905 Tweets. In order to draw conclusions I used Python code and followed computational analysis as such a large amount of data could not be easily examined manually. During this period, Greek-American diasporans, along with diasporans from Armenia and Israel, launched two social media campaigns targeting the provision of jets to Turkey and the election of Mehmet Oz as a Republican candidate who has been questioned for his financial links to the Turkish government. To cleanse the data, I removed common stopwords (such as and, or, the etc.) and followed a lexicon-based approach to label and categorize the Tweets (Jayamalini & Ponnaivaikko, 2020; Agarwal, Xie, Vovsha, et al, 2011; Khan, Asghar & Shakeel, 2014). I classified the Tweets in two main categories: ontological security and physical security. I used a lexicon-matching approach as i. It does not require any complex natural language processing or machine learning algorithms to be applied to the text, ii. The lexicon can be customized to focus on specific terms or keywords that are relevant to the classification task at hand, which can help to improve the accuracy of the classification, iii. It can be robust to changes in language or wording, as it is based on the presence or absence of specific keywords or terms, rather than on the context or semantics of the text. (Kannan, Karuppusamy, Nedunchezian, & Venkateshan, 2016). Furthermore, by exploring HALC's retweets, I examined the digital diplomacy of key players in the Greek-American diaspora and their partners, since HALC presented the highest percentage of Retweets in their content. Finally, I analyzed the interaction on the three organizations' Twitter accounts by counting likes

and retweets per post, using Python. I decided to measure likes and retweets as the most straightforward and widely used methods for indicating that a user has found a post interesting, relevant, or worth sharing with their followers.

## **6. The American political system and diasporans**

The American political system differs from others in that it focuses on political rather than ethnic factors for acceptance and allegiance (Shain, 1995). American patriotism is based on dedication to democratic and humane values rather than cultural or ethnic identity. Americans from different ethnic backgrounds can identify with their country of origin without feeling excluded from the larger community. Many diaspora communities in the US have ties to their ancestral land and maintain an interest in the politics of their homeland. With the help of modern transportation and communication, these communities have become transnational. The more established ethnic groups in the US, such as those of Greek, Armenian, Irish, or Jewish descent, are examples of this trend (Shain, 1995). According to Mearsheimer and Waltz the United States' political system is particularly susceptible to the influence of interest groups such as the Israel lobby, and that the lobby has been able to wield significant power and influence in shaping US foreign policy towards Israel. They argue that this is due in part to the nature of American politics, which is pluralistic and allows for the formation of powerful interest groups, as well as the strategic and economic interests that the US shares with Israel.

Traditionally, diasporas in the United States have been deeply committed to political movements in their home countries, frequently perceiving themselves as ambassadors of their ancestral homeland. Some older diasporas, such as Jews, Greeks, and Italians, tend to live through their ancestral home countries rather than actively attempting to alter their governments (Shain, 1995). They view politics in their homeland as essential to their political identity in America, and they are more inclined to support or oppose existing regimes that coincide or contest with American liberalism and/or U.S. foreign goals. However, they tend to embrace their homeland in a way that is not threatening to their American identity and must defend themselves against charges of divided loyalties. For instance, Greek-Americans have succeeded in projecting their American loyalty and ethnic identity "within the agora of American multiculturalism." (Shain, 1995). However, their efforts to persuade Congress to impose sanctions on Turkey after its invasion of Cyprus in 1974 backfired when the notion that

"Congress acted irresponsibly" by submitting to the pressure of an ethnic group prevailed in public (Scourby, 1984).

In a similar vein, the Jewish lobby in the United States has always presented its loyalty to Israel as an extension of its allegiance to American democratic values and strategic interests. However, it has increasingly found itself caught between its commitment to both its old and new countries (Vital, 1990). The charge of dual loyalty is a vulnerability that can be exploited by either the home or host country to either encourage or hinder diaspora political involvement. Consequently, diasporas could be used as pawns to convey messages between the United States and their home countries. (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006)

## **7. The Greek diaspora in the US**

Greeks have been coming to the United States since colonial times, but permanent communities were not established until the 1890s. The first known Greek to set foot on US soil was Don Teodoro, a sailor and ship caulker, who arrived in Pensacola, Florida, in 1528 (Greece in the USA, n.d.). The first significant Greek community was in New Orleans during the 1850s, and by 1866, there was a Greek consulate and the first Greek Orthodox church in the United States. Immigration picked up in the 1890s, and 450,000 Greeks arrived in the US between 1890 and 1917. Greek immigration to the US before 1920 can be traced along three major routes. First, Greeks went to Western states to work on railroad gangs and in mines. Second, Greeks went to New England mill towns to work in textile and shoe factories. Third, Greeks went to large Northern cities, primarily New York and Chicago, to work in factories or as busboys, dishwashers, bootblacks, and peddlers. Greek immigration to the US slowed after 1945, but picked up again after Greece joined the European Union in 1981 (Greece in the USA, n.d.)

## Number of people from Greece obtaining legal permanent resident status 1820-2010

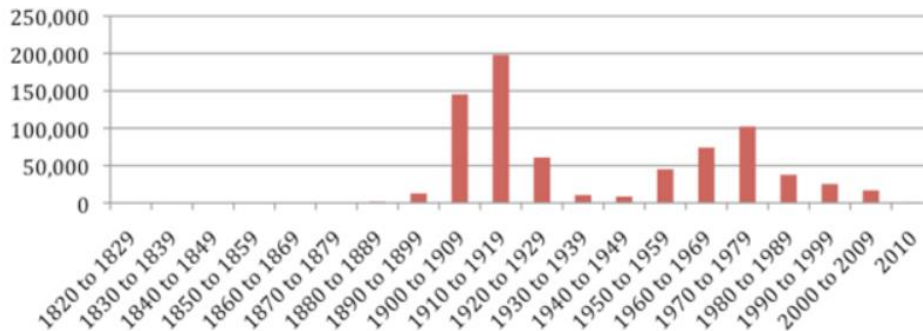


Figure 1 Number of People from Greece obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status 1820-2010 Source: Hellenic American Project

As mentioned above, Greek-Americans is an example of a diaspora that has been successful in projecting their American loyalty and ethnic identity "within the agora of American multiculturalism." (Shain, 1995) Greek-Americans have a long history of political involvement in Greece, particularly in advocating for U.S. policies that support Greece's interests. During the military dictatorship in Greece from 1967 to 1974, Greek-Americans were active in lobbying the U.S. government to support the restoration of democracy in Greece. (Kaloudis, 2008) They were also instrumental in convincing the U.S. Congress to impose sanctions on Turkey after its invasion of Cyprus in 1974 (Kaloudis, 2008). Indeed, the US and Greek-American reaction to the invasion of Cyprus was a critical point in Greek diasporic history, as the diaspora became actively involved in US politics, lobbying for the Greek cause and forging relationships with politicians. This led to the creation of the "Greek Lobby," as there were extensive efforts by prominent Greek groups such as the Panhellenic Emergency Committee and the United Hellenic Association to rally support and encourage Congress to adopt policies that were favorable to the Greek community (Karpathakis, 1999; Prévélakis, 2000; Kaloudis, 2008; Kaloudis, 2018). While the Greek-American attitude towards the dictatorship sparked great divisions amongst them, leading to a lack of consensus, Greeks united against the fear of a Turkish invasion in Greece, illustrating the long-standing nationalist element of Greeks. The Greek diaspora has managed to create a separate identity that lies in an undecided state between the US and Greece and could thus influence both through its connecting points with each.

However, although the Greek diaspora in the US has been involved in various initiatives and organizations ever since, it has received little scholarly attention. This thesis seeks to fill that gap by examining the case of the Greek community (by focusing on the case of HALC), which is one of the oldest and most essential diaspora communities in the US. The thesis focuses on the recent online actions of Greek American organizations in support of Greek policies and aims to provide insight into the situation of the Greek diaspora in the US.

### **6.1 Greek Digital Diaspora Diplomacy: What is HALC?**

The Greek diaspora in the United States has used digital tools and platforms, such as social media, to engage in digital diplomacy and promote the interests of Greece and the Greek-American community. This can include sharing news and updates about Greece, participating in online discussions about issues affecting the country, and coordinating efforts to advocate for the interests of the Greek-American community. As other examples of diaspora digital diplomacy have shown (Mercea, 2018 & Bravo, 2012), social media could also be a useful tool for members of the Greek diaspora to connect with each other and build a sense of community, even when they are geographically dispersed. Digital diplomacy can help to strengthen the relationship between the United States and Greece and foster a sense of connection and belonging among members of the Greek diaspora.

This thesis will examine a specific non-governmental organization of the Greek diaspora in the United States, the Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC), and will attempt to explore its digital agenda and compare it to other important diaspora groups in the US, the Armenian and Jewish diaspora. The Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC) is a non-profit organization that seeks to promote the interests of the Greek-American community and strengthen the relationship between the United States and Greece. The organization is active in advocacy and public policy and works to educate and engage members of the Greek-American community on issues of importance to them. HALC also supports a variety of cultural and educational initiatives and seeks to foster a sense of community among Greek-Americans.

I selected HALC for my research as the organization has a considerable presence on internet platforms and has undertaken numerous actions in various digital media. HALC owns its own podcast, newsletter, active Twitter account and has created several petitions in order to promote



HALC's Twitter account appears to be highly focused on geopolitical issues concerning Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and developments in the Eastern Mediterranean in general. The topics they discuss include territorial disputes, military threats, energy security, and conflicts. HALC's focus on these issues suggests that the organization is actively engaged in promoting awareness of these complex topics to a global audience. The prominence of certain terms, such as "aggression," "sovereignty," and "threat," suggests that HALC is taking a critical view of the actions of some governments, such as Turkey and Russia, in these regions.

More precisely, as one can see from Figure 2, the protagonist in the digital agenda of HALC is Turkey, as words and phrases such as "Turkey, Turkish, Erdogan, Ankara and nojetsforTurkey" appear with the highest frequency. This comes not as a surprise as for decades, Turkey and Greece have clashed over territory and airspace claims in and over the Aegean Sea. The use of certain terms such as "nojetsforTurkey," "sanction," and "Congress" suggests that HALC is actively seeking to influence policy decisions made by the United States government. It appears that HALC is advocating for specific policy positions, such as sanctions on Turkey and increased support for countries such as Armenia and Greece which therefore suggests that HALC is leveraging its digital presence to promote its policy goals and gain influence in policy circles.

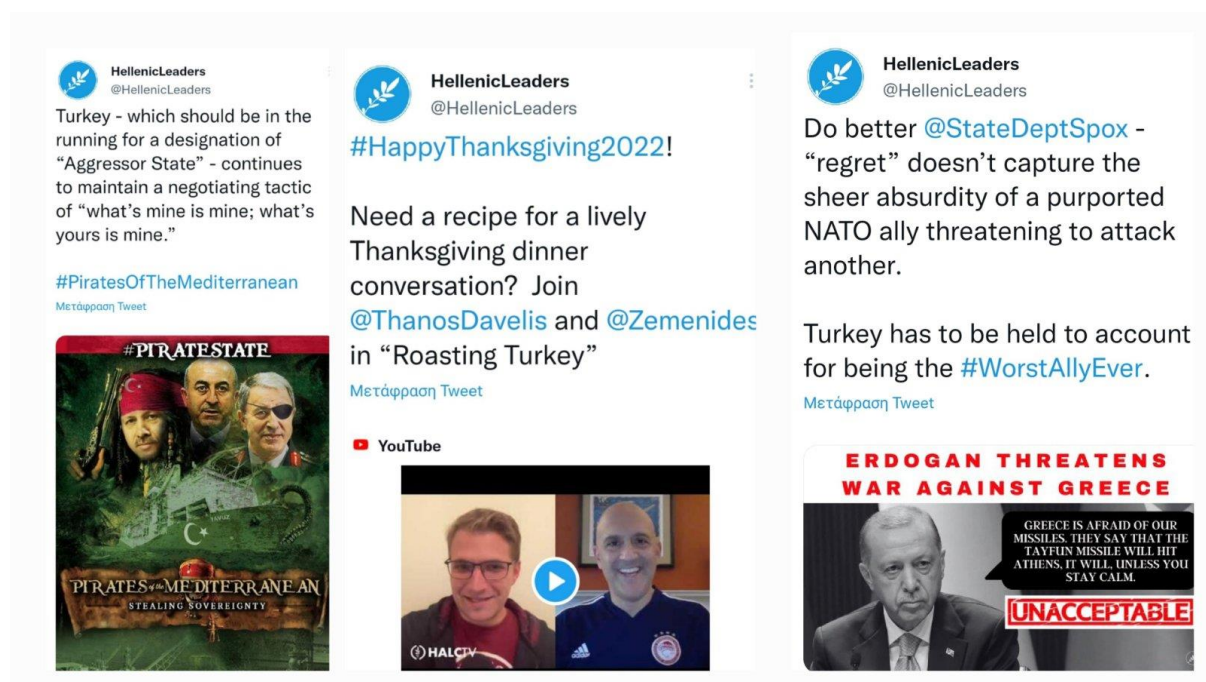




Figure 3 HALC’s Tweets: advocating against Turkish aggression.

Analysing the tweets above one concludes that HALC's Twitter account is focused on raising awareness and advocating for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Greece in its ongoing disputes with Turkey. HALC uses a variety of tactics to achieve its goals, including humor, statistics, and advocacy. For example, in a Thanksgiving and #PiratesOfTheMediterranean post, HALC used humor to encourage its followers to join in on the conversation about Turkey's aggression towards Greece. Furthermore, HALC often highlights Turkey's aggressive tactics, such as using American F16s to turn the Aegean into a flashpoint for intra-NATO conflict. The organization uses statistics and graphs to illustrate Turkey's violations and calls for the United States to stop providing Turkey with military support. This approach shows HALC's dedication to promoting the safety and security of Greece and the surrounding region. Moreover, HALC's use of hashtags such as #NoJetsForTurkey highlights its efforts to stop the United States from providing Turkey with military support that could be used to violate Greece's sovereignty. This approach shows HALC's dedication to promoting international laws and regulations that protect the territorial integrity of nations.

At the same time, as seen in Figure 2, words such as “Aegean”, “Eastern Mediterranean”, “Israel” and “Cyprus” suggest that through its Twitter account, HALC appears to be advocating for a stronger alliance between Greece, Cyprus, and Israel in the Eastern Mediterranean region. HALC places great value on the strategic partnerships formed between Greece, Israel, and Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean region. These alliances are seen as critical for promoting



stability, security, and prosperity in the region. Through these partnerships, the countries have been able to strengthen their economic and political ties, and have come together to address common challenges such as energy security, and regional instability (Tziarras, 2019). HALC recognizes that these partnerships are built on a shared commitment to democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law, and that they represent an important bulwark against authoritarianism and aggressive actions by countries like Turkey. HALC criticizes Turkey's actions and rhetoric towards Greece, as well as its denial of Greece's maritime boundaries and rights under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. HALC suggests that supporting Greece and Cyprus militarily would help to stabilize the Eastern Mediterranean and discourage Turkish aggression, which can be seen through the use of hashtags such as #StrongerTogether.





**HellenicLeaders**  
@HellenicLeaders

Except Lebanon, Israel and the Republic of Cyprus are real countries and members of the United Nations.

[#OurFavoritTurkishTroll](#) can keep indulging in fantasies re: what constitutes a state, but he might as well be advocating for delineating an EEZ with the Kingdom of Gondor.

[Μετάφραση Tweet](#)



**HellenicLeaders**  
@HellenicLeaders

“Greek officials say they are very concerned by the escalating rhetoric and threats by Turkey against Greece in recent weeks. They expect Israel to send a message to Turkey about the need for de-escalation.

Israeli [o]fficials...plan to raise the issue during Gantz's visit”

[Μετάφραση Tweet](#)



**HellenicLeaders**  
@HellenicLeaders

Except Lebanon, Israel and the Republic of Cyprus are real countries and members of the United Nations.

[#OurFavoritTurkishTroll](#) can keep indulging in fantasies re: what constitutes a state, but he might as well be advocating for delineating an EEZ with the Kingdom of Gondor.

[Μετάφραση Tweet](#)



**Umut Acar** @AcarUmut · 27 Οκτ 22

“We welcome the maritime boundary delimitation agreement signed between #Lebanon and #Israel, with mediation of the #US”

...

[Εμφάνιση αυτού του νήματος Tweet](#)

Figure 4 HALC's Tweets: advocating for a stronger alliance between Greece, Cyprus, and Israel in the Eastern Mediterranean

Lastly, as seen in Figure 2, words such as “genocide”, “Armenian” and “history” portray HALC’s focus on historical conflicts such as the Armenian Genocide and the ongoing tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan. This suggests that HALC is also interested in promoting historical awareness and using historical context to inform current policy debates. Specifically, HALC focuses on issues related to Greek and Armenian history, including the Armenian Genocide, ongoing tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and past conflicts such as the burning of the Greek city of Smyrna in 1922 by Turkish forces. HALC seeks to accomplish its goals by using its Twitter account to share news articles, videos, and commentary related to these issues. The organization also seeks to mobilize its followers to take action on behalf of its causes. For example, HALC has partnered with other organizations such as the Armenian National Committee of America and the Hellenic American Leadership Forum to #StopOz, a campaign to prevent Mehmet Oz, who denies the Armenian Genocide, from being elected to public office.





Figure 5 HALC's Tweets: Historical Conflicts and Cooperation with ANCA

As seen from the examples above, the #StopOz campaign is a crucial initiative for both HALC and ANCA, who cooperate in order to prevent his election. As organizations that are dedicated to preserving and promoting the history and culture of their respective communities, HALC and ANCA view the denial of the Armenian Genocide as a serious threat to the preservation of the history of the Armenian people, since Greece was also a victim of genocide alongside Armenia when during World War I, the Ottoman Empire carried out a campaign of genocide against its Christian populations. Dr. Oz is a well-known media personality who has expressed views that are aligned with the Turkish government's policies. He has publicly denied the Armenian Genocide, which is a deeply important issue for the Armenian community. By denying the genocide, Oz is contributing to the erasure of the history of these Christian populations and minimizing the severity of the atrocities committed against them. Additionally, Mehmet Oz's political aspirations pose a threat to the interests of both the Greek and Armenian communities. As a supporter of Turkish President Recep Erdogan, Oz has expressed views that are aligned with the Turkish government's policies, which include denying the Armenian Genocide and opposing Greek claims in the Aegean Sea. (Hellas Journal, 2022) If Oz were to be elected to a position of power, he could potentially use his platform to advance these views and harm the interests of the Greek and Armenian communities. Therefore, by working together on this campaign, HALC and ANCA are showing that they are willing to take action to ensure that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed.

Overall, it appears that HALC is using its digital presence to promote its policy goals and raise awareness about important issues in the Eastern Mediterranean. The prominence of certain terms in HALC's Twitter account suggests that the organization is actively engaged in shaping public discourse and advocating for these specific policy positions.

### **6.3 Key Interactions**

In addition to the frequently used keywords identified in HALC's account, I have noticed a significant number of mentions of names and accounts (see Figure 2). Retweeting the posts of others can be a way for an individual or organization to demonstrate credibility and lend legitimacy to the opinions being communicated. By retweeting the posts of others, an individual or organization can signal that they find the content being shared to be valuable and worthy of being shared with their own followers (Smith, 2010). This can help to build credibility and trust with the audience, as it shows that the organization is willing to engage with and amplify the ideas of others. Retweeting can also be a way to demonstrate credibility and legitimacy by bringing attention to sources and information that might not otherwise be widely known or shared. By retweeting the posts of experts or respected sources, an individual or organization can lend credibility to their own opinions by showing that they are well-informed and engaged with a range of sources (Smith, 2010). Overall, the act of retweeting can be an important tool in the practice of digital diplomacy, as it allows individuals and organizations to amplify messages, engage with a wider audience, and build credibility and trust with their followers.

Based on this framework, the interactions of HALC and the accounts from which it retweets are investigated in this section. The collation and analysis of these accounts was deemed important as the majority of HALC's posts are retweets. More specifically, of the 1700 posts used for this research, 1343 are retweets, which corresponds to a percentage of 79% of the total posts (Figure 6). Keeping in mind that another 7,2% (123 Tweets) are replies, leaves only a 13,8% of original content.

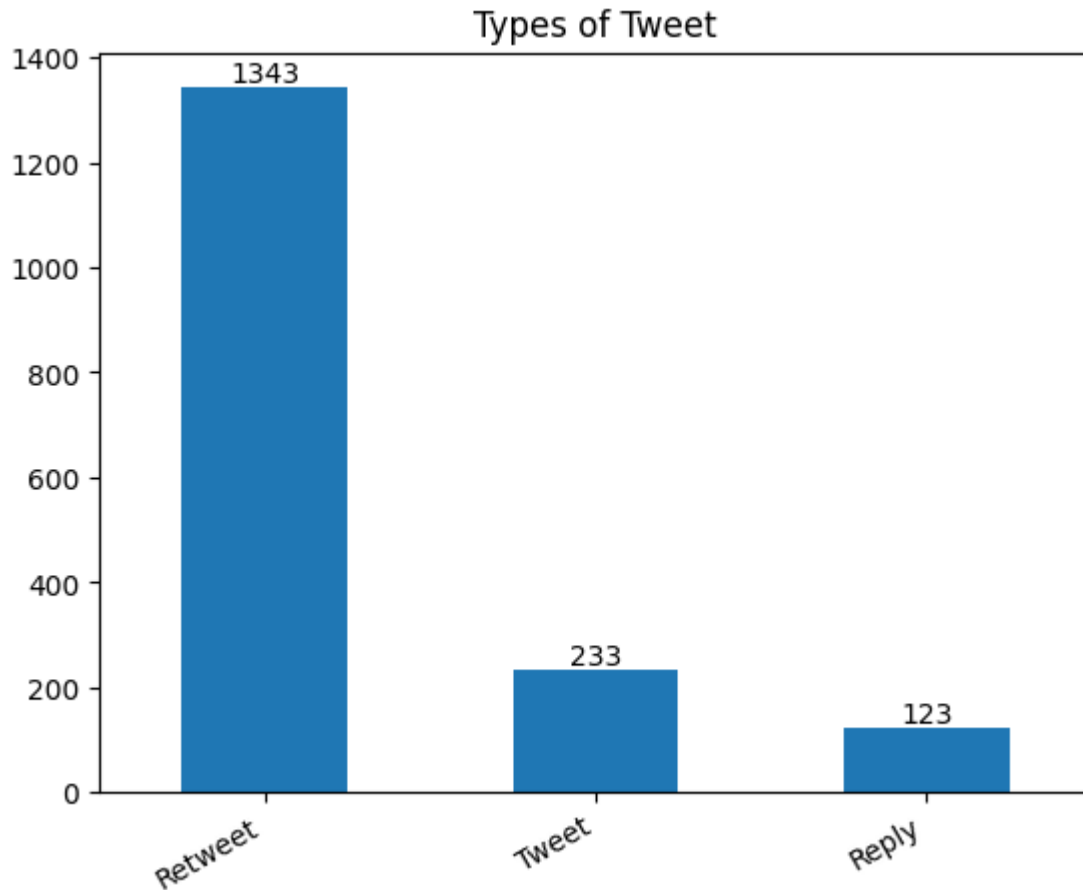


Figure 6 HALC's Types of Tweets

As can be observed in Figure 7 the main accounts that HALC retweets from are ANCA, Lena Argiri, Endy Zemenides, the Greek Current, Michail Ignatiou and the English edition of Kathimerini. Since the Greek Current is the HALC's podcast account and Endy Zemenides is the Executive Director of HALC, I will further analyze the rest of the accounts.

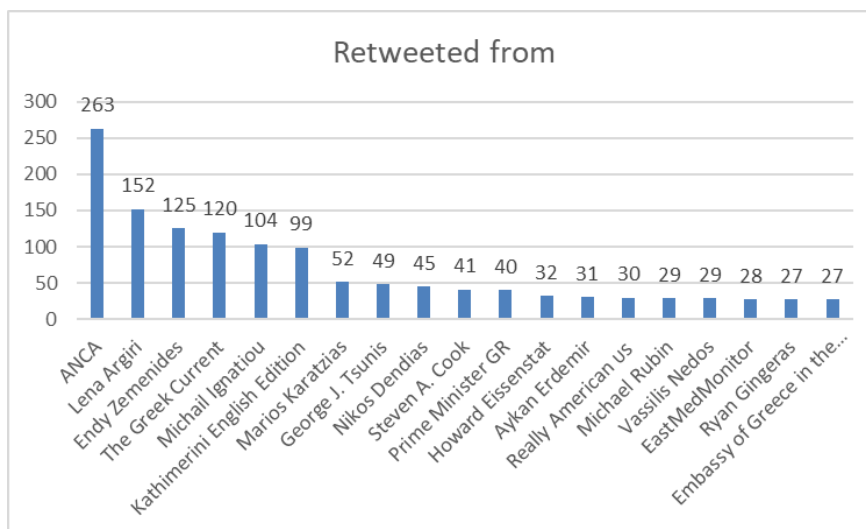


Figure 7 HALC's Retweet Sources

Firstly, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) is a grassroots organization that represents the interests of the Armenian American community in the United States. As seen above, one of the main issues that the ANCA has focused on is the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, in which an estimated 1.5 million Armenians were killed by the Ottoman Empire (the predecessor of modern-day Turkey) during World War I. The ANCA has strongly advocated for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the United States government and other countries, and has criticized Turkey's denial of the genocide. There have been instances of cooperation and collaboration between the ANCA and HALC on various issues. For example, the two organizations have jointly advocated for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in the Eastern Mediterranean region and have supported initiatives to promote regional stability and cooperation. (e.g. HALC joins ANCA in condemning Turkish and Azerbaijani aggression against Armenia, ANCA and HALC Statement on the Hagia Sophia, ANCA and HALC Welcome NDAA Provision Mandating Sanctioning of Turkey for Purchase of Russian S-400s, ANCA, HALC, IDC Welcome Initial U.S. Sanctions on Turkey, Condemning Turkey's threat to invade N. Syria ) They have also worked together to promote the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the United States government and other countries, as well as to recognize the contributions of Greek and Armenian Americans to the United States. Additionally, the ANCA and HALC have jointly organized events and initiatives to celebrate and showcase the cultural traditions and achievements of their respective communities, including cultural festivals, lectures, and educational programs. Lastly, ANCA and HALC have cooperated in other ways on Twitter by collaborating on joint campaigns such as the #nojetsforTurkey campaign, the "Tell UNESCO to save Hagia Sophia!" petition etc.

Based on the above, it is clear that the two organizations have common values that they are trying to promote. Being both Christian populations that were expelled and suffered genocide by the Ottoman Empire, it can be said that both peoples experience the mnemonic status anxiety (Malksoo, 2021) towards Turkey. Furthermore, the fact that Turkey supported Azerbaijan's genocidal war on Artsakh further unites the narrative of the two groups, who perceive Turkey, in one way or another as a physical security threat. By retweeting each other's content, ANCA and HALC aim to reach a wider audience, amplify their messages on specific issues or events but also spread awareness on issues of common interest as they were described above.

On the other hand, Journalists and Greek correspondents may function as multipliers of diaspora groups' messages on Twitter by amplifying and disseminating these messages to a broader audience. HALC's retweets from these specific accounts can be seen as a strategic move to amplify and support the voices and opinions of individuals and organizations that align with HALC's goals and values. Lena Argiri and Michail Ignatiou, for example, are journalists who cover Greek-American and Greek foreign policy news in the United States and abroad, respectively. By retweeting their content, HALC is able to share news and analysis related to Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean with their followers. Endy Zemenides, as the Executive Director of HALC, is likely to share content that is closely aligned with the organization's mission and values. The Greek Current is HALC's own podcast account, which means that retweeting from this account is a way for HALC to promote its own content and reach a wider audience.

At the same time, the English edition of Kathimerini is a well-respected Greek news outlet that covers a wide range of topics, including politics, culture, and international affairs. By retweeting content from Kathimerini, HALC is able to share news and analysis from a credible source with their followers.

Lastly, as seen in Figure 7, HALC's interactions with members of Congress and high-level officials from the Greek government and the U.S. Embassy in Greece highlight the unique position that diaspora organizations can occupy in public diplomacy. By engaging with both American and Greek stakeholders, HALC is able to promote the interests of the Greek-American community and advance its diplomatic objectives, particularly in relation to issues in the Eastern Mediterranean that are of great interest for Greece. By retweeting and engaging with Congress members who support these policies, HALC is leveraging its unique position as a diaspora organization to influence U.S. policy towards these issues. At the same time, HALC's interactions with high-level officials from the Greek government and the U.S. embassy in Greece demonstrate its access and influence within the diplomatic community. By retweeting content from the Greek Prime Minister, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the U.S. Ambassador to Greece, HALC is signalling its support for their policies and initiatives, which align with HALC's own advocacy goals related to the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, HALC's interactions with both American and Greek stakeholders demonstrate the advantageous position that diaspora organizations can occupy in public diplomacy. By leveraging its unique identity and access to both government and civil society, HALC is able



to contribute to the broader goal of promoting international cooperation and understanding, while advocating for policies that support the interests of the Greek-American community and Greece's position on key issues in the Eastern Mediterranean.



Figure 8 HALC and retweets from Greek Correspondents

The fact that most of HALC's tweets are retweets suggests that the organization is not primarily a content creator, but rather a curator and disseminator of information related to its areas of interest. This approach can be advantageous because it allows HALC to leverage the expertise and content produced by others, while also amplifying their own message and contributing to a broader conversation. It also suggests that HALC is well-connected and engaged in ongoing discussions and developments related to its focus areas, as evidenced by the variety of accounts and individuals that it retweets. It was therefore considered important to analyze the accounts from which HALC retweets and in this way demonstrates credibility and lends its legitimacy to the opinions being communicated by these accounts (Lee & Sundar, 2013).

On the other hand, primarily retweeting content can limit the organization's ability to shape the narrative and express their unique perspective. By relying heavily on retweets, HALC may be seen as simply echoing the viewpoints of others rather than contributing original insights and analysis. Additionally, if HALC is only retweeting content from a narrow range of sources, it can lead to an echo chamber effect and limit exposure to diverse perspectives and information.

(Cinelli et al., 2021) At the same time, relying heavily on retweets can also lead to a lack of engagement with followers, as retweets do not typically prompt the same level of discussion and interaction as original content (Pew Research Center, 2021).

#### **6.4 Between ontological and physical security: Topic Classification in HALC's Tweets**

In order to better interpret the above focus of the Greek diaspora in the case of Turkey and Eastern Mediterranean the concepts of ontological and physical security have been chosen. Thematically classifying HALC's tweets under the concept of physical security would be of great value since a plethora of the organization's posts refer to traditional security threats. More precisely, HALC's tweets about Turkey's aggression and geopolitical tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean are related to physical security because they concern the protection of states and regions from the physical threat of armed conflict and invasion. For example, HALC's tweets about the need for Greece, Israel, and Cyprus to form alliances in the Eastern Mediterranean can be seen as a call for greater physical security in the region through cooperation and joint defense, a support to what has been called a quasi-alliance (Tziarras, 2016). Similarly, HALC's tweets about Turkey's aggressive actions and rhetoric towards Greece and Cyprus can be seen as an attempt to raise awareness about physical threats to these states and regions and the need for a strong defense against them.

On the other hand, thematically classifying HALC's tweets under ontological security would be of academic interest because ontological security deals with the protection of a state's or group's identity, culture, and values. HALC's tweets about historical events such as the Armenian Genocide and the destruction of Smyrna can be seen as related to ontological security because they concern the protection of cultural and historical identities. For example, HALC's tweets about the Armenian Genocide can be seen as an attempt to raise awareness about the historical trauma and cultural identity of the Armenian people and the need to acknowledge and protect their identity. Similarly, HALC's tweets about the destruction of Smyrna can be seen as an attempt to raise awareness about the historical trauma and cultural identity of the Greek people and the need to acknowledge and protect their identity. To gain a better understanding of this classification, I will examine the concepts of physical and ontological security below:

Ontological security in IR refers to the idea that actors care about their sense of self and that they are motivated to act in defense of that sense of self. Mitzen (2006a: 341) has argued that states seek ontological security, which is the 'security not of the body but of the self, the subjective sense of who one is, which enables and motivates action and choice' (Mitzen 2006a: 344). "Othering" is an important concept for ontological security and is a label used when the "other" does not fit into the categories of norms that the "self" subscribes to. Moreover, ontological security is intimately tied to identity, to the extent that some even define it as "confidence in one's identity" (Della Sala, 2017, p. 547). The quest of ontological security drives actors to "routinize relationships with significant Others" (Mitzen 2006a: 341) and to "select paths of action that are comfortable with their sense of identity" (Steele, 2005: 526). Physical security, on the other hand, comprises both the naming and identification of threats, as well as the construction of mechanisms to defend the Self against those threats. The division between the two levels of security places the us/them dichotomy in the realm of security-as-being and the friend/enemy dichotomy in the realm of security-as-survival (Rumelili, 2013). However, like "mind and body, psyche and soma, psychological and physical, personality, the self, the organism" (p. 19) are both required for an ontologically secure sense of self, ontological and physical security are also inextricably linked (Choi, 2019).

Taking the above as a starting point, I claim that Turkey is the "other" that historically and up to this day poses a threat to the identity of Greeks both within the national borders and in the diaspora. Turkey can be seen as an ontological security issue for Greeks, in that it poses a threat to their sense of identity and self-perception. In the past, conflicts between Greece and Turkey have often been rooted in differences in culture, religion, and national identity, and these differences can create feelings of insecurity among members of the Greek community. The relationship between the two countries has also been marked by periods of tension and hostility, which can further exacerbate feelings of insecurity among Greeks. As a result, Turkey may be viewed as a source of ontological insecurity for some Greeks, and addressing this insecurity may be an important factor in shaping Greek attitudes and actions towards Turkey. Furthermore, I argue that Greek communities may experience mnemonical status anxiety towards Turkey. As Malksoo (Malksoo, 2021) mentions, mnemonic status anxiety can be observed when a state is concerned about the international recognition and validation of its official national biographical narrative by a relevant memory order. In the context of Greece and Turkey, the memory wars and the mnemonic status anxiety refer to the ongoing disputes between the two countries over their shared history and the events of the past. These disputes

often center on issues such as the recognition of the Pontic Greek and Armenian genocide, and the treatment of Greek ethnic minorities in Turkey.

On the other hand, Turkey is also a physical security issue for Greece. For many years, Turkey has been a source of concern for Greece due to its military power and its willingness to use force to advance its interests. This has been particularly true in the Eastern Mediterranean, where Turkey has sought to assert its control over disputed territories and natural resources. (BBC, 2020) This has led to a number of incidents, including military confrontations and territorial incursions, that have raised fears of a larger conflict between the two countries. In recent years, the situation has become even more tense, as Turkey has become increasingly assertive in its foreign policy. (IISS, 2020) This has included the use of military force in Syria and Iraq, as well as its ongoing dispute with Greece over maritime boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean (Brookings, 2021). These actions have further strained relations between the two countries, and have raised concerns about the potential for a military conflict between them. Overall, Turkey's military power and aggressive foreign policy pose a significant physical security threat to Greece and Greek communities, and have the potential to escalate into a larger conflict.

The above are demonstrated by observing the other keywords identified in HALC's Tweets, as shown in Figure 1. After defining Turkey as the "significant other", it is observed that the other thematic groups in the table can be easily categorized around it based on the concept of ontological and physical security. More precisely, as mentioned above, the territorial disputes and natural resources in the region of Eastern Mediterranean are key physical security issues between Greece and Turkey. As seen in Figure 1, words such as "Eastern Mediterranean", "Israel", "Cyprus", "EastMed", "energy", "Aegean" and "sovereignty", alongside "occupation", "invasion" and "military" frequently recur in HALC's digital agenda, confirming this conception. On the other hand, words such as "Armenia", "Armenian", "genocide", "Armenian genocide" and "history", which also are frequently presented in HALC's Twitter posts, show that Turkey poses an ontological security issue to Greece and Greek communities abroad. Lastly, another issue that seems to concern HALC is the war in Ukraine and Russia's illegal invasion. Although at first glance this appears to be an international issue, in fact, isolating the tweets concerning Ukraine, it was observed that the main theme of the posts is: i. Turkey's attempt to play a peacemaking role in the war, ii. Turkey's support for

the Putin regime, iii. the support of Greece in Ukraine through the provision of arms, iv. and the similarity of the Putin rhetoric against Turkey to that launched by Erdogan against Greece.

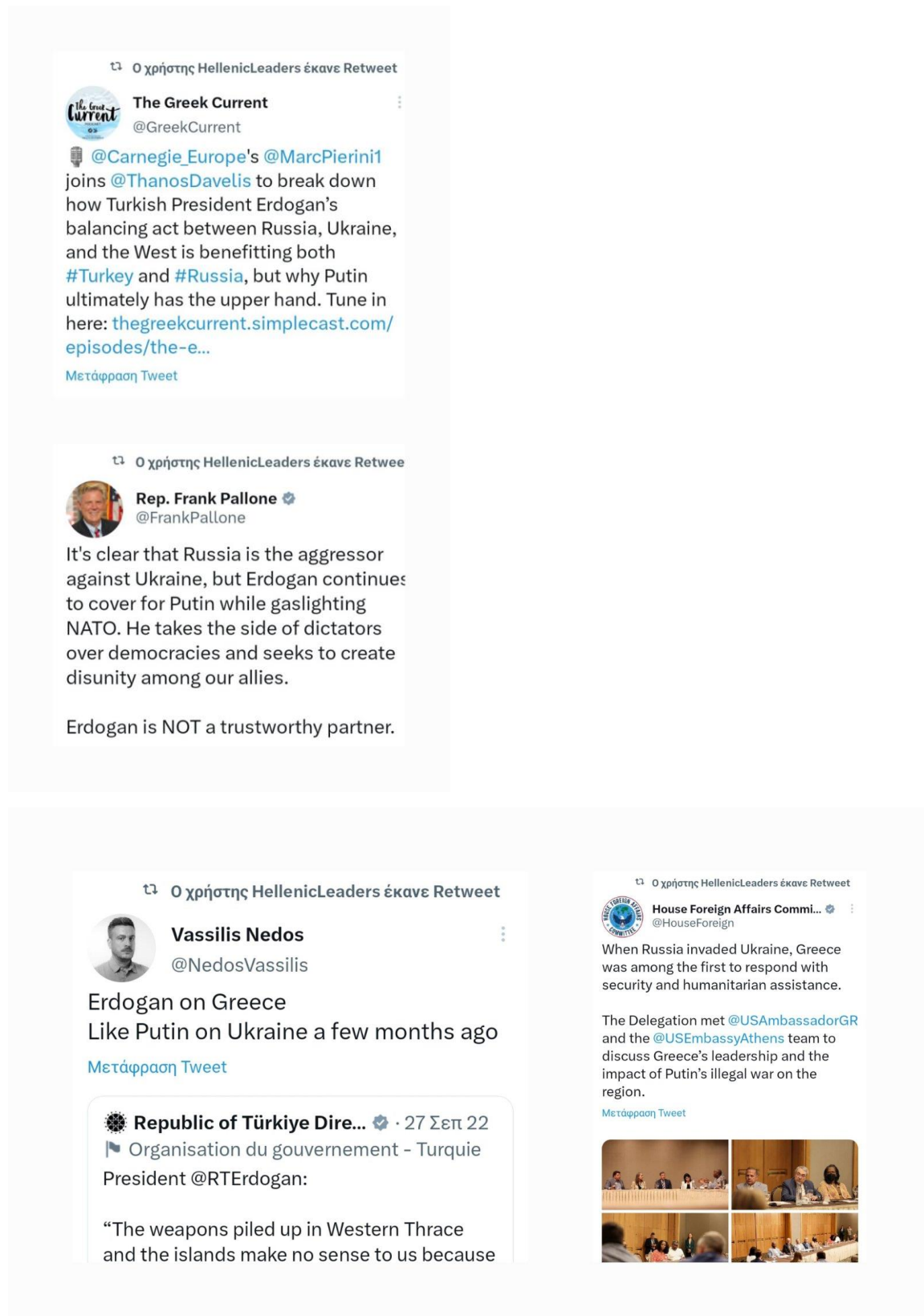


Figure 9 HALC Tweets concerning the situation in Ukraine

In conclusion, it can be observed that the HALC's digital agenda is created on the basis of a "significant other", Turkey. By perceiving Turkey as an ontological threat, an agenda concerning history and the Greek identity emerges, with the issue of the genocide of Christian minorities during the Ottoman Empire being the connecting link between the two Organizations. On the other hand, perceiving Turkey as a physical threat, an agenda emerges concerning security and energy issues in the Eastern Mediterranean as well as Turkey's role and rhetoric concerning the war in Ukraine.

Based on the broad portrayal of HALC's digital agenda that was analyzed above, two thematic topics have emerged on HALC's Twitter posts: i. issues of ontological security, ii. issues of physical security, both of which derive from the fact that Turkey has been designated as a "significant other" in the Council's actions. In order to further analyze these two categories but also to quantify the amount of posts HALC devotes to each of these topics, a lexicon-based approach was used. More specifically, I created a lexicon of words and phrases associated with each topic and then used a lexicon-based approach to classify the given posts' texts into the appropriate topic (Jayamalini & Ponnaivaikko, 2020; Agarwal, Xie, Vovsha, et al, 2011; Khan, Asghar & Shakeel, 2014). For the category of ontological security, I created a lexicon based on words that describe the Greek community's identity and history, its values and beliefs. On the other hand, for the category of physical security, I created a lexicon based on contemporary security threats that Greece faces. The two lexicons are presented below in Table 1. However, it should be clearly mentioned here that lexicon matching may be less effective at handling variations in spelling, grammar, or language usage, as it is reliant on exact word matches. Moreover, although this lexicon is trying to capture keywords of both security concepts, it is possible that an incomplete lexicon may result in inaccurate classification of the text, as it may not capture all of the relevant words or phrases. (Khoo, Christopher, Johnkhan, Sathik & Basha, 2017) Therefore, the possibility of error in the exact percentages should be taken into account here.

PHYSICAL SECURITY	ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY
'strategic', 'crisis', 'national', 'security', 'disputes', 'instability', 'threats', 'wars', 'violent', 'radicalization', 'aggressiveness', 'revisionist', 'maritime', 'Evros', 'fence', 'armament', 'demilitarize', 'islands', 'Sovereignty', 'destabilize', 'violate', 'escalation', 'conflict', 'Ankara', 'provoke', 'F-16', 'militaries', 'defense', 'Erdogan', 'casus belli', 'territorial waters', 'offensive', 'nojetsforTurkey', 'Israel', 'Cyprus', 'Turkey', 'EastMed', 'energy', 'Aegean', 'sovereignty', 'Russia', 'Ukraine', 'στρατηγική', 'κρίση', 'εθνική', 'ασφάλεια', 'διαφορές', 'αστάθεια', 'απειλές', 'πόλεμος', 'βίαση', 'ριζοσπαστικοποίηση', 'επιθετικότητα', 'αναθεωρητισμός', 'θαλάσσια', 'Εβρος', 'φράχτης', 'εξοπλισμοί', 'αποστρατιωτικοποίηση', 'νησιά', 'κυριαρχία', 'παραβίαση', 'κλιμάκωση', 'σύγκρουση', 'Αγκυρα', 'πρόκληση', 'στρατός', 'άμυνα', 'Ερντογάν', 'χωρικά ύδατα', 'επίθεση', 'Ισραήλ', 'Κύπρος', 'EastMed', 'ενέργεια', 'Αιγαίο', 'κυριαρχία', 'Ρωσία', 'Ουκρανία', 'Τουρκία', 'τουρκικά'	'Pontian', 'Genocide', 'anniversary', '353', '000', '1916', '1923', 'memory', 'ancestral', 'ancestors', 'pogrom', 'historical', 'Pontus', 'Pontian', 'Pontic', 'Remembrance', 'Greco-Turkish War', 'Hellenism', 'history', 'Ottoman Empire', 'recognition', 'Hellenic', 'homeland', 'Armenians', 'Assyrians', 'Chaldeans', 'Syriacs', 'Arameans', 'Maronites', 'Christians', 'Asia Minor', 'identity', 'Hellenic', 'Ottoman', 'Thrace', 'Eastern Thrace', 'Greeks, expatriates, Greek-Americans, Πόντιοι, Θράκη, Έλληνες, ομογενείς, Έλληνοαμερικανοί, ελληνική διασπορά, Ανατολική Θράκη, Γενοκτονία, επέτειος, μνήμη, πρόγονοι, Αρμενία, πογκρόμ, ιστορική, Πόντος, Πόντιοι, μνήμη, ελληνοτουρκικός πόλεμος, ελληνισμός, ιστορία, Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία, αναγνώριση, ελληνικότητα, πατρίδα, Αρμένιοι, Ασύριοι, Χαλδαίοι, Αραμαίοι, Μαρωνίτες, χριστιανοί, Μικρά Ασία, ταυτότητα, ελληνικότητα, Οθωμανική'

Table 1 HALC's ontological and physical security lexicon

Based on the lexicon seen in Table 1 I've found that of 1700 Tweets from HALC's account (during June 2022-December 2022), 1062 refer to physical security while 305 on ontological security. Using python code, I created two sums for each category which counted the tweets in which there was a reference to one of the above words. The outcome of the analysis of HALC's tweets suggests that the organization is primarily focused on physical security concerns related to Turkey's aggression in the Eastern Mediterranean region. HALC is focusing on Turkey as a physical security threat because of the ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean, as Turkey's aggressive actions in the region, such as its claims to maritime territories that overlap with Greece's Exclusive Economic Zone, have increased the potential for military conflict. HALC sees these actions as a threat to the physical security of Greece, Cyprus, and Israel, as well as to the broader stability of the region.

On the other hand, the lower number of tweets related to ontological security highlights that this issue is of lesser importance to HALC, at least in terms of social media communication.

The organization may consider historical events such as the Armenian Genocide or the destruction of Smyrna as part of Greece's collective identity and traumatic past, but they do not appear to be a primary focus of their advocacy efforts. It is possible that HALC sees the physical security concerns as more pressing and immediate, given the potential for conflict and destabilization in the region.

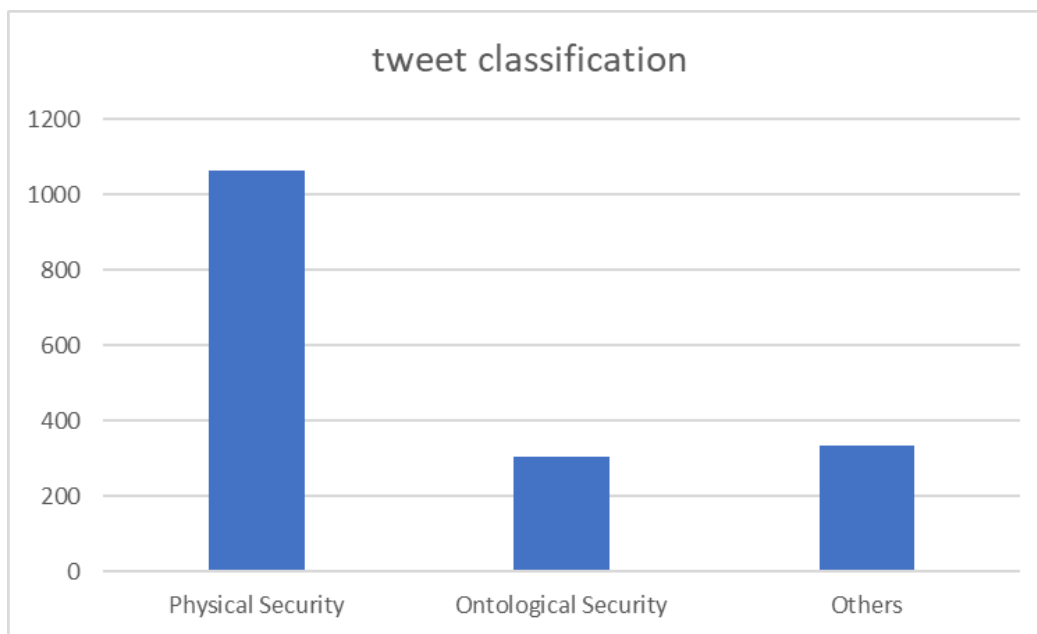


Figure 10 HALC's Tweet Classification

### 6.5 HALC's content and it's engagement

The focus of this section is to analyze the level of engagement that HALC's audience has with their posts, particularly their most viral ones. These posts have gathered the highest levels of likes, retweets, comments, and shares, indicating their popularity among the audience. Through an examination of these posts, I aim to gain insights into the content, messaging, and themes that resonate the most with HALC's followers and the broader Twitter community. To measure engagement, I tracked the number of likes and retweets for each post, which provided a clear understanding of how well each post performed and how it was received by HALC's audience. By monitoring these metrics, I was able to identify the posts that received the most attention and interaction and those that were less successful.

At the time of writing this thesis, HALC's Twitter account had 18.4 thousand followers. However, according to the graph below, most of their tweets receive fewer than 500 likes and



retweets per post, suggesting that the account neither has a large number of followers (compared to the other two organizations), nor their followers always engage with their content. Despite this, the graph also shows one tweet that received over 2000 likes and retweets per post, the content of which I will analyze further below.

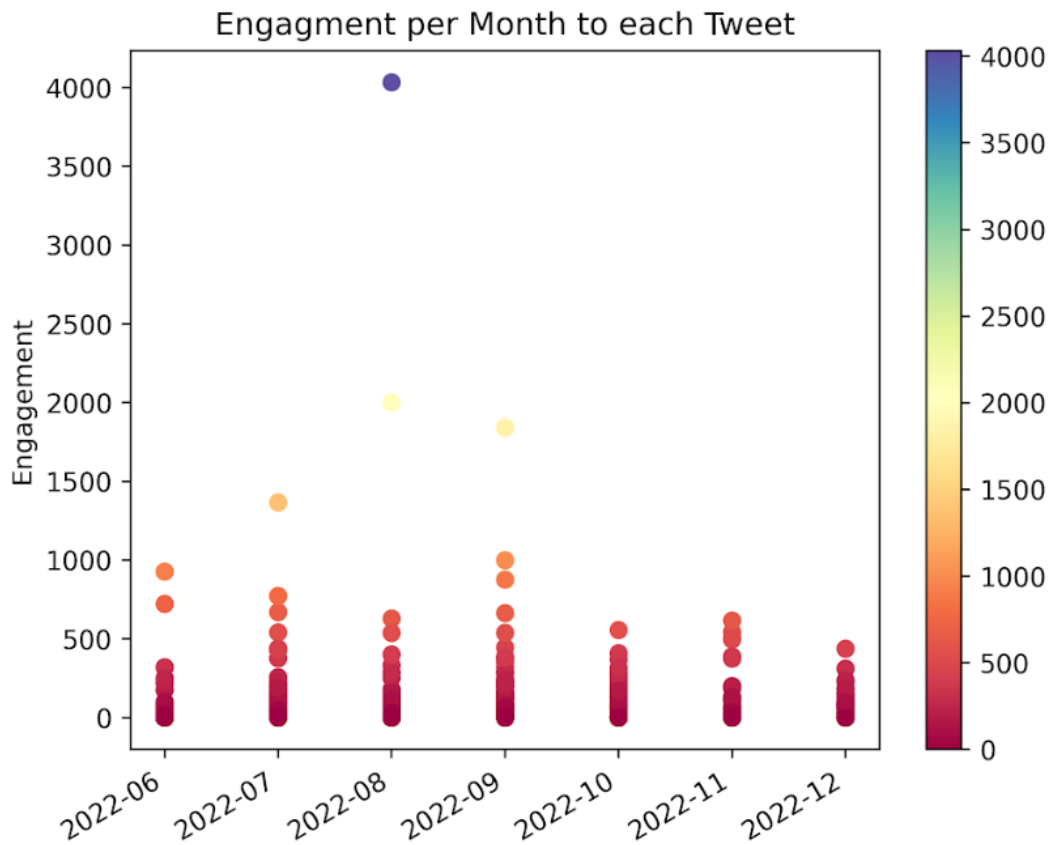


Figure 11 Interactions from audience, HALC’s Twitter account

The most popular tweet from HALC is a collaborative video with ANCA regarding Mehmet Oz's candidacy and the call to prevent his election. The video features images of Oz, Hagia Sophia, and Erdogan while a male voice provides reasons why the organizations believe that his candidacy should be thwarted. These reasons include: (i) his refusal to renounce his Turkish citizenship and his past service in the Turkish military, (ii) his close relationship with Turkey's authoritarian leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and the fact that he is being paid millions by Turkey's national airline, and (iii) his membership in the Diyanet mosque, which is directly funded and operated by the Turkish regime. ANCA and HALC are questioning why someone with such strong ties to the Turkish government would want to run for the United States Senate. They argue that Oz's connections and allegiances make him too dangerous for the Senate, and call on Pennsylvania to reject his candidacy in 2022.



Figure 12 HALC's most viral post

The tweet generated a lot of attention, with 1,813 retweets and 2,514 likes, while the accompanying video was viewed approximately 1.9 million times. The post's controversial and attention-grabbing topic, which raises concerns about Pennsylvania Republican Senate candidate Mehmet Oz's purported close ties to Turkey's authoritarian leader and regime, likely contributed to its virality. The post uses critical and emotive language, employing phrases like "dangerously close," "authoritarian leader," and "Turkish theocracy's Government Ministry." It also calls for action from its audience, using the hashtag #StopOz and urging Pennsylvania to reject him in the upcoming election. The video adds credibility to the argument presented and provides further evidence to support the claims made in the description's text. Furthermore, the use of the video in this post was beneficial in increasing audience interaction since videos are visually appealing and have the potential to instantly capture the viewer's attention while at the same time offer a more interactive and captivating method of delivering information compared to text alone (Moran, Muzellec & Johnson, 2020). Additionally, videos are easily shareable on social media, making them a valuable tool in expanding the reach of a post to a wider audience (Moran, Muzellec & Johnson, 2020). Lastly, in order to expand the reach of the post's message, HALC worked together with ANCA, a notable Armenian advocacy

organization, in producing the video. This collaboration likely helped to increase the post's visibility to a wider audience, particularly among ANCA's followers and supporters. Additionally, partnering with a reputable organization like ANCA may have added credibility to the post's message, as it shows that other groups share similar concerns about Mehmet Oz's alleged ties to the Turkish regime. Overall, the collaboration between HALC and ANCA can be viewed as a strategic move to enhance the post's impact and influence on social media.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

Upon analyzing HALC's digital agenda, a discernible pattern emerges regarding the organization's focus on ontological-physical security classification in their Tweets. The frequent usage of words relating to history and genocide indicates that HALC is intent on safeguarding its past identity. Additionally, the frequent repetition of terms such as "Turkey, Turkish, Erdogan, Ankara, and nojetsforTurkey" suggests that HALC's primary focus is the physical well-being and sovereignty of Greece.

To explore whether the diaspora plays a distinctive role in public diplomacy and the promotion and attainment of diplomatic objectives, I will apply Brinkerhoff's (Brinkerhoff, 2019) three points on how diaspora diplomacy differs from public diplomacy. These points encompass the unique diplomatic applications that arise from the diaspora identity, the distinct motivations and engagement goals of diasporans in responding to global identity and equity crises, and the potential for diasporans to occupy a middle ground in public diplomacy.

Firstly, HALC's focus on geopolitical issues in the Eastern Mediterranean involving Greece, Cyprus and Turkey aligns with Brinkerhoff's first point about the diplomatic applications of diaspora identity. As a diaspora organization focused on Hellenic issues, HALC fills a special role in advocating for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Greece and Cyprus in its ongoing disputes with Turkey. The organization's tweets and retweets frequently highlight instances of Turkish aggression in the Eastern Mediterranean, and call for diplomatic solutions to territorial disputes in the region. By doing so, HALC uses its diaspora identity to promote the interests of the Greek state and people. Lastly, it is noteworthy that the diaspora is fully aligned with Greek foreign policy and rhetoric in the case of Turkey and Eastern Mediterranean. However, in terms of rhetoric, precisely because of its specific identity as

diasporans, I have observed that HALC has the ability to appear more hard-line, poignant and sometimes ironic in its rhetoric against Turkey, as seen in the Tweets presented above.

Secondly, HALC's interest in promoting historical awareness and using historical context to inform current policy debates aligns with Brinkerhoff's second point about the unique motives and involvement goals of diasporans. By advocating for recognition of historical events such as the Armenian Genocide and the burning of Smyrna, HALC shows a concern for issues that are not strictly related to Hellenic interests but are of importance to the organization's members and the broader diaspora community. HALC's interest in historical conflicts is also indicative of the organization's desire to use past events to inform current policy debates and promote peaceful solutions to ongoing conflicts. HALC has a special interest to strengthen ties with ANCA as by supporting ANCA it further uploads its agenda regarding Turkey and broadens its support base.

Finally, HALC's use of Twitter to raise awareness and advocate for Hellenic issues aligns with Brinkerhoff's third point about the middle-ground edge that diasporans may possess in terms of public diplomacy. By engaging with its audience on Twitter, HALC is able to reach a wide audience and present its message in a way that is easily accessible and engaging. The organization's use of social media platforms to raise awareness about geopolitical issues in the Eastern Mediterranean is a prime example of how diaspora organizations can use public diplomacy to advance their interests and promote peace and stability in their ancestral homelands. The war in Ukraine was an important way for the Greek diaspora to use its "in-between" advantage to show the Americans that Turkey is not a trustworthy ally. By showing the similarities between the Putin regime and the Erdogan regime, their aggression towards their neighbours and their expansionist rhetoric, the Greek diaspora seeks to alarm the American public opinion and to the American policy makers, by showing the seriousness of the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the dangers of the expansionist appetites of Erdogan as seen in the corresponding case in Ukraine. In addition, it stresses the necessity of distrusting Turkey as an ally because of its cooperation with Russia and the intermediate position between Russia and the West, that Turkey maintains in the war in Ukraine.

## **8. The Jewish diaspora in the US**

The Jewish diaspora in the United States began in the late 1700s, with the arrival of Jewish immigrants from Europe. These immigrants came to America in search of economic opportunities and religious freedom. As British settlers moved across North America, they gave hundreds of biblically derived names, including Jericho, Eden, Samaria, Hebron, and Salem. The United States has more places named after locations in Israel than any other country, creating a symbolic link between the two regions (Glick, 1982). More precisely, during the colonial period, Ashkenazic and Sephardic Judaism were brought together in America. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, unique Jewish denominations emerged in America, such as the Reform and Conservative movements, which added complexity to American Judaism alongside the Orthodox tradition. The period between the Johnson Act of 1924 and the end of World War II had a significant impact on American Jews, as it did on all Americans. The Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, affected the lives of all Americans, but the impact on Jews was unique because of their Jewish identity. However, even without these events, American Jewish life would have changed after the early 1920s due to the cessation of immigration from Europe (Diner, 1999). With immigration halted, American Jews became more integrated into modern urban life. The percentage of Jews in the American population was about 3.6 percent in 1927, and it remained the same for some time before declining due to the end of immigration. Lastly, following the Holocaust and Six-Day War in Israel in 1967, there was a renewed commitment to a unified Jewish identity across the globe, not just in America. The initial Jewish settlers in the British colonies demonstrated their ability to uphold a multifaceted religious tradition despite having a small number of followers. As their community expanded, the importance of various institutions, including denominational organizations, seminaries, and the contributions of women, were reaffirmed (Diner, 1999).

Indeed, the Israeli lobby is widely recognized as one of the most powerful and well-connected interest groups in the United States. Its members include various organizations such as AIPAC, ADL, and AJC, among others. The lobby is known for its impact on shaping US policy towards Israel, specifically in areas such as military aid, diplomatic support, and trade relations. Moreover, it has a significant role in shaping public opinion and discourse regarding Israel and the Middle East. While some experts believe that the lobby holds an excessive influence on American foreign policy (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006), others argue that it is a legitimate

interest group that represents the views of a substantial portion of the American population (Brown, 2006).

One of the most important academic works that have underlined the excessive influence of Israeli diasporas on American foreign policy is Mearsheimer and Walt's book "The Israel lobby and the US foreign policy" (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). The authors mentioned that the Israel lobby has been successful in influencing U.S. foreign policy to the point where it is not in the best interests of the United States. More precisely, the lobby has been able to exert its influence through a variety of means, including campaign contributions, media control, and the ability to shape public opinion. The authors claim that the lobby's influence has led to increased hostility in the Middle East and has made the United States less safe, while at the same time, the U.S. support for Israel has been a major driver of anti-American sentiment in the Middle East and has contributed to the rise of Islamic extremism and terrorism against the United States. As a result, the authors argue that the U.S. should re-evaluate its relationship with Israel, and that U.S. foreign policy should be based on the U.S. national interest, rather than the interest of the Israel lobby. However, it is important to note that although the book is controversial and has been widely criticized by many scholars and political leaders (Rabinovich, 2008), no one challenges the fact that the Israel diaspora in the US is a significant and influential force in protecting Israeli interests in the US.

## **7.1 The case of AJC**

In the context of this thesis and in order to examine the digital presence of the Israel diaspora in the U.S, I have chosen to take a deeper look at AJC's Twitter account. The American Jewish Committee (AJC) is an organization that focuses on promoting Jewish interests and values globally. One of its key areas of focus is digital diplomacy, particularly in the context of the Jewish diaspora. By leveraging digital technology and social media, the AJC is able to connect Jewish communities around the world and promote dialogue and understanding between different groups. One of the factors that make AJC an interesting organization to study in the context of this comparative analysis is the fact that they work in cooperation with other diaspora organizations such as the Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC) and the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA). More precisely, it is through this cooperation with



for cooperation and peaceful resolution of conflicts between different groups, as well as to urge leaders to take action on issues related to human rights and peace.

More precisely, in AJC's Twitter agenda, a strong focus is observed on issues related to Israel and the Jewish community, such as supporting Israel, combating anti-Semitism, and promoting the rights of Jewish people. Words such as "Israel," "Jewish," "antisemitism," "Jews," "people," "Israeli," and "Holocaust" indicate that AJC is primarily concerned with the safety and security of the Jewish community and the protection of the Jewish people's rights. The frequent use of the words "hate", "antisemitic", "terror", and "hatred" also suggest that AJC is actively working to combat anti-Semitism and hate speech.

Additionally, the frequent use of words such as "community", "president", "join," "action," "watch," "attack," "combat," "fight," "urge," "leaders," "continue," "war," "congress," "minister," "country," "cooperation," and "rights," suggest that AJC is actively engaged in working to promote the interests of the Jewish community and Israel both in the US and internationally. They are closely monitoring the developments and actions of the leaders and the government and are taking actions to promote cooperation and rights of the Jewish community.

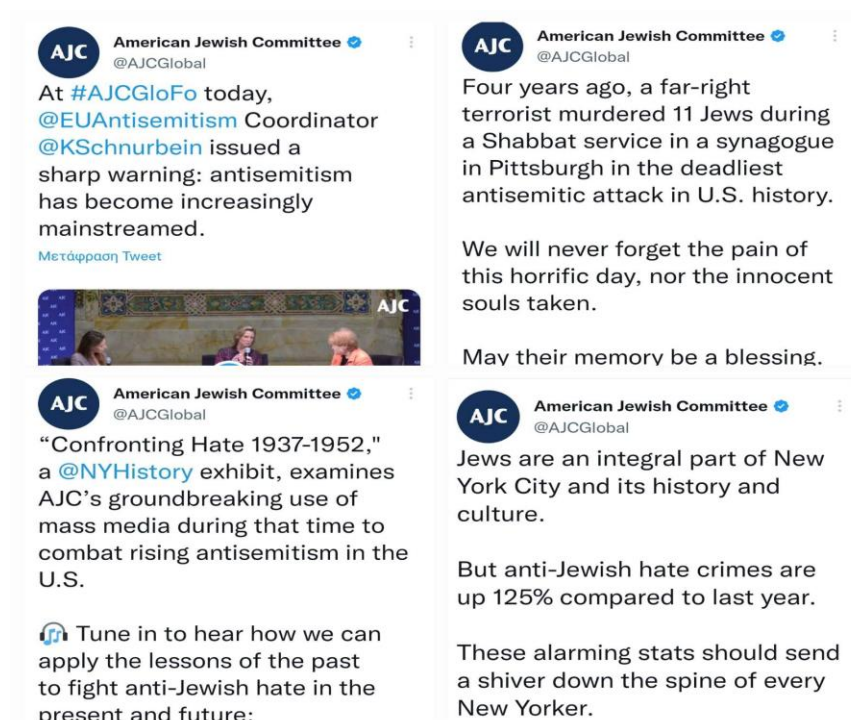


Figure 14 AJC's Tweets: Raising awareness of the issue of Antisemitism.



As seen from the examples presented in the Tweets above, AJC engages with governments and international organizations to raise awareness of the issue of anti-Semitism and to advocate for measures to combat it. This includes working with law enforcement agencies to promote security for Jewish communities, and advocating for the adoption of measures to prevent hate crimes and discrimination against Jews. Furthermore, AJC provides educational resources and programs aimed at increasing public awareness of anti-Semitism and promoting understanding of its impact on Jewish communities. Moreover, AJC closely monitors incidents of anti-Semitism and provides regular reports on the state of anti-Semitism globally. This helps to raise awareness of the problem and to inform efforts to combat it. Lastly, AJC works with a wide range of partners, including civil society organizations, governments, and international organizations, to tackle the issue of anti-Semitism. This includes collaborating on advocacy campaigns, educational programs, and other initiatives aimed at promoting understanding and combating anti-Semitism.



Figure 15 AJC call to action Tweets

Furthermore, the use of words such as "Iran" and "Iranian" in AJC's Twitter account also suggests that the organization is actively working to raise awareness about the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program and the regime's support for terrorism. AJC is closely monitoring the actions of the Iranian government and are working to bring attention to the threat that Iran poses to the security of Israel and the Jewish people.



Figure 16 AJC Tweets advocating against Iran.

As seen in the examples above, the Tweets referring to Iran are focusing on presenting Iran's aggression in the Middle East, its ties with terrorism worldwide, and on monitoring rights abuse in Iran. More precisely, AJC includes Iran's Conventional Weapons Program in its digital agenda because the country's military build-up and acquisition of advanced weapons pose a threat to regional stability and security. AJC seeks to raise awareness about this issue and to advocate for measures to prevent Iran from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and other destabilizing weapons. At the same time, AJC seeks to raise awareness about Iran's involvement in conflicts in the region as well as in sponsoring and supporting terrorist organizations. Lastly, AJC includes internal oppression in Iran in its digital agenda because of the country's widespread human rights abuses. Under this prism, AJC works to raise awareness about the situation in Iran and to support human rights activists and organizations working to promote freedom and democracy in the country.

Furthermore, the frequent use of the words "peace", "Abraham Accords" and "cooperation" suggests that AJC also promotes peaceful coexistence and cooperation between different groups and countries.

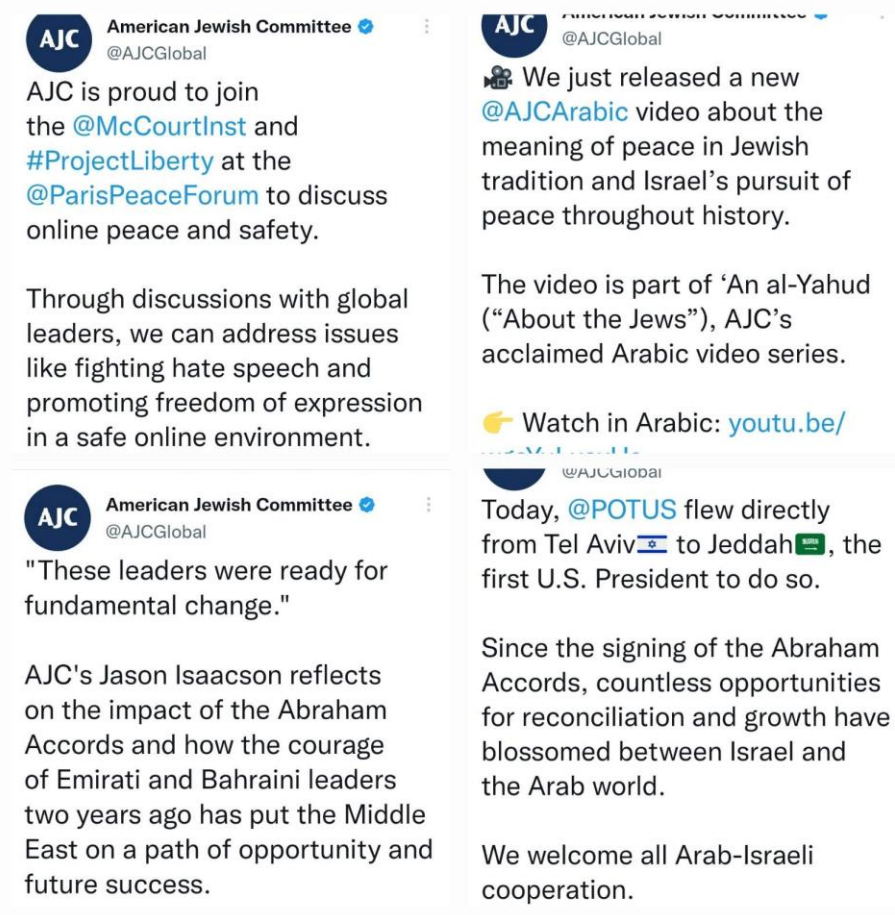


Figure 17 AJC Tweets portraying Israel as a power of peace and cooperation

As seen in the examples above, the AJC portrays Israel as a power of peace and cooperation. This image helps to promote a positive view of the country and counterbalance negative stereotypes and misinformation. The AJC uses various tactics and rhetorics in order to achieve this goal, such as highlighting instances of Israeli-Arab cooperation, sharing stories of peace initiatives and diplomatic efforts, and promoting Israel's technological and economic advancements. One may claim that the highlight of this urge for peace and cooperation is depicted in AJC's embrace and endorsement of the Abraham Accords. The Accords provide a new framework for regional cooperation and reconciliation, which is of great interest to AJC, as it aligns with their goals of promoting peace, stability, and respect for human rights in the region. The Abraham Accords have established new avenues for collaboration, allowing governments to access new resources and allies to tackle regional issues like Iran's aggressive behavior and nuclear aspirations, religious extremism, incitement, and political instability.

Including the Abraham Accords in their digital diplomacy agenda is therefore a natural choice for AJC, as it provides a unique opportunity to advance their advocacy efforts in the region, as well as portray Israel as a peaceful state in the region.

Lastly, AJC has incorporated in its digital agenda the Russian invasion and war in Ukraine. The American Jewish Committee has a long history of supporting Ukraine, dating back to its endorsement of Ukrainian independence in 1991, as the first Jewish organization to do so. Therefore, during Russia's invasion and war in Ukraine, AJC continues to support Ukraine and its sovereignty in light of these values. As observed in the tweets below, the organization recognizes the importance of democratic regimes, as they promote stability, security, and the protection of human rights. By contrast, the authoritarian regime of President Putin, like the Iranian regime, poses a threat to peace and stability in the region and around the world. As a result, in support of Ukraine, the AJC has taken a number of actions, including advocating for the preservation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, raising awareness about the situation in the country, and providing humanitarian assistance to affected communities. The AJC has also called for international support for Ukraine, including diplomatic and economic pressure on Russia to end its aggression and respect Ukraine's territorial integrity. Through these efforts, the AJC continues to demonstrate its commitment to promoting peace and stability in Ukraine and around the world.

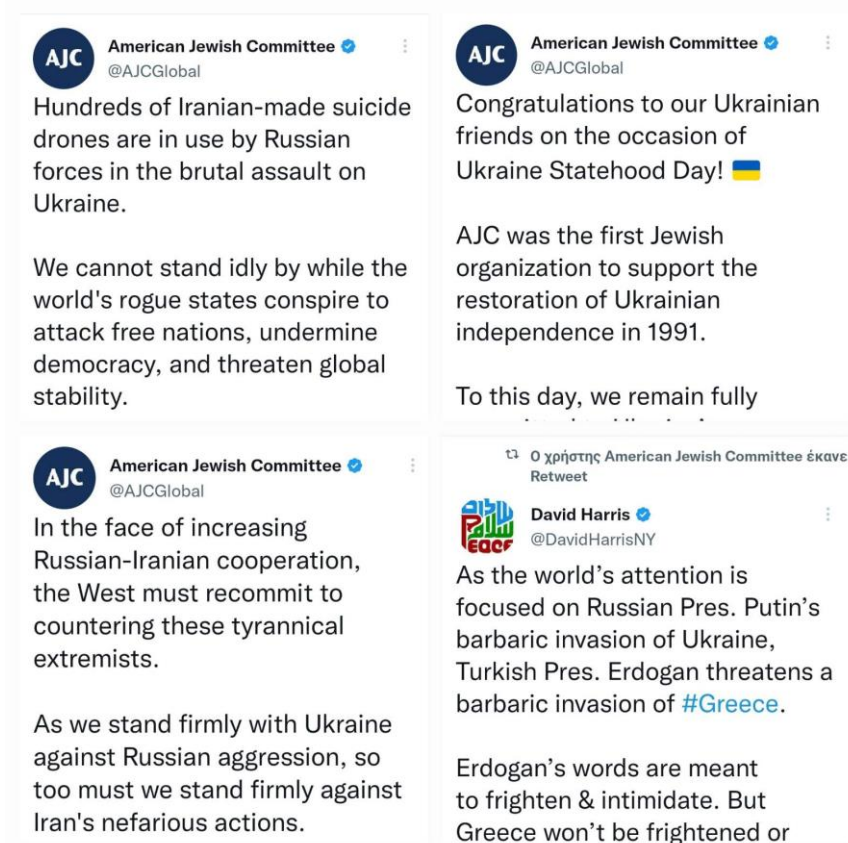


Figure 18 AJC Tweets on the situation in Ukraine

### 7.3 Between ontological and physical security: Topic Classification in AJC's Tweets

As previously observed in the case of HALC, AJC's Tweets have also an ontological-physical security classification pattern. More precisely, repetition of words referring to the Jewish identity, historical events related to Jewish history as well as words referring to the phenomenon of anti-Semitism and the hatred observed against Jewish communities identify with the idea that actors care about their sense of self and that they are motivated to act in defense of that sense of self. On the other hand, the repetition of words such as "Iran", "terrorism" and "nuclear weapons" show that AJC's focus not only to the identity or the self, but also "to the body", by pointing out and condemning the physical threats Israel is facing.

Under this prism, I have created another two lexicons in order to classify AJC's Tweets, based on the words I've found in AJC's Twitter posts.

Ontological Security	Physical Security
'American Jews', 'historic ', 'jewish', 'jewish identity', 'holy site', 'Nakba', 'Judaism', 'ancestral', 'antisemitism', 'hatred', 'history', 'historical', 'Israelis', 'Jewish identity', 'Judaism', 'Judea', 'antisemitism', 'nazi', 'Holocaust', 'Hitler', 'Jewish', 'Hebrew', 'Judaism', 'Holy Land', 'Jew-hatred', 'anti-Jewish', 'neo-Nazi', 'Jewish conspiracy', '1940s', 'Exodus', 'pogroms', 'synagogue', 'Jewish cemetery', 'Jewishness', 'Jewish identity', 'Jewish pride', 'Jewish community', 'American Jews', 'antisemitic'	terrorism', 'terror group', 'terrorist threat', 'Iran', 'Iranian-backed', 'terror proxies', 'terrorist organizations', 'Pro-Assad militias', 'Iranian proxies', 'terror network', 'terrorist attacks', 'bombings in Jerusalem', 'Israel security', 'attack in Israel', 'Palestinian terrorists', 'Ebrahim Raisi', 'uranium production', 'nuclear program', 'nuclear arsenal', 'uranium', 'nuclear Iran', 'nuclear weapons', 'stockpile', 'nuclear state', 'Iran-backed', 'militias', 'Hamas', 'Houthis', 'Hezbollah', 'nuclear deal', 'annihilation', 'nuke', 'missile', 'strike Israel', 'death', 'dead', 'anti-Israel', 'Palestinian Authority', 'Palestinian', 'iran', 'iranian', 'Iranian', 'killed', 'wounded', 'civilians', 'terror group', 'PIG', 'rocket', 'injure', 'UAV', 'IDF', 'Khamenei', 'Jihad', 'violence', 'Hezbollah', 'genocide', 'bombing'

Table 2 AJC ontological and physical security lexicon

As observed in the Table 2 above, I used words such as “American Jews', 'historic ', 'jewish', 'jewish identity', 'holy site', 'Nakba', 'Judaism', 'ancestral', 'antisemitism', 'hatred', 'history', 'historical', 'Israelis', 'Jewish identity', 'Judaism', 'Judea', 'antisemitism', 'nazi', 'Holocaust', 'Hitler', 'Jewish', 'Hebrew', 'Judaism', 'Holy Land', 'Jew-hatred', 'anti-Jewish', 'neo-Nazi', 'Jewish conspiracy', '1940s', 'Exodus', 'pogroms', 'synagogue', 'Jewish cemetery', 'Jewishness', 'Jewish identity', 'Jewish pride', 'Jewish community', 'American Jews', 'antisemitic’” for the ontological security category. For the physical security one, I used words such as “terrorism', 'terror group', 'terrorist threat', 'Iran', 'Iranian-backed', 'terror proxies', 'terrorist organizations', 'Pro-Assad militias', 'Iranian proxies', 'terror network', 'terrorist attacks', 'bombings in Jerusalem', 'Israel security', 'attack in Israel', 'Palestinian terrorists', 'Ebrahim Raisi', 'uranium production', 'nuclear program', 'nuclear arsenal', 'uranium', 'nuclear Iran', 'nuclear weapons', 'stockpile', 'nuclear state', 'Iran-backed', 'militias', 'Hamas', 'Houthis', 'Hezbollah', 'nuclear deal', 'annihilation', 'nuke', 'missile', 'strike Israel', 'death', ‘dead', 'anti-Israel', 'Palestinian Authority', 'Palestinian', 'iran', 'iranian', 'Iranian', 'killed', 'wounded', 'civilians', 'terror group', 'PIG', 'rocket', 'injure', 'UAV', 'IDF', 'Khamenei', 'Jihad', 'violence', 'Hezbollah', 'genocide', 'bombing’.

Using this lexicon approach, I’ve observed that 862 out of 1600 Tweets were classified under the Ontological Security category, meaning that over half of AJC’s Tweets are referring to the Jewish community’s sense of self and therefore showing AJC’s interest to act in defense of that

sense of self. Given the fact that antisemitism is a direct threat to Jewish ontological security and that it undermines Jews' sense of safety and stability in the world, and can even lead to violence and persecution (as seen throughout history), AJC is dedicated to countering antisemitism and promoting education and awareness about the dangers of prejudice against Jews. The Holocaust, in particular, serves as a poignant reminder of the devastating impact that antisemitism can have on Jewish ontological security. The systematic extermination of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators was a traumatic event that forever changed the Jewish community and serves as a reminder of the dangers of prejudice and hatred. It is in light of this history that the AJC's focus on ontological security takes on added significance. By dedicating more than half of their digital agenda on ontological security issues, the organization shows that it recognizes the importance of preserving Jewish heritage, identity, and history in order to maintain a stable and secure sense of self in the face of ongoing threats and challenges. AJC is therefore working, using its “in-between” advantage, to promote Jewish ontological security by aiming to create a safer and more secure world for Jews to live and express their identity.

On the other hand, AJC has a strong commitment to ensuring the physical security of the state of Israel, which is a key aspect of its digital agenda. As seen above, Israel faces ongoing physical security threats from various sources, including regional conflicts, terrorism, and hostile neighboring states, and the AJC recognizes the importance of addressing these challenges. In light of these threats, the AJC's digital agenda focuses on promoting the right of Israel to defend itself, and advocating for measures that will ensure its physical security. The organization uses its Twitter account to educate the public about the challenges facing Israel and to counter disinformation and misinformation that may undermine Israel's security. In this case, AJC is using its in-between advantage in order to build strong alliances with key global actors who support Israel's right to defend itself and to promote peace and stability in the region. Through its digital agenda, the AJC seeks to bring attention to Israel's security challenges and to mobilize support for its efforts to address these threats.

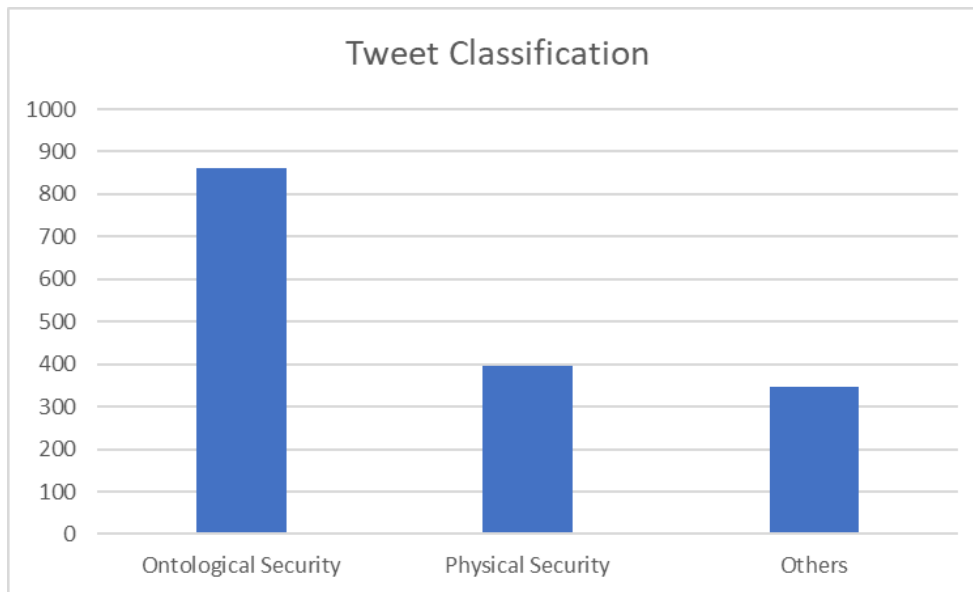


Figure 19 Tweet classification in AJC's Twitter account.

However, as observed on the Figure19 above, The American Jewish Committee places a greater emphasis on ontological security (862 tweets) than on physical security (396 Tweets) showing that the preservation and protection of the Jewish identity, culture, history, and traditions is of utmost importance. It is possible that the American Jewish Committee (AJC) is placing a greater emphasis on ontological security for the Jewish community due to the widespread nature of antisemitism and its impact on the stability and security of Jewish communities around the world. Antisemitism is a persistent problem that affects Jews in many countries, and it creates a sense of insecurity and instability for Jews, undermining their sense of identity and belonging. The impact of antisemitism on Jewish ontological security is significant and widespread, and it can have far-reaching consequences for the stability and well-being of Jewish communities. In contrast, physical security threats to Israel are more specific and targeted, and they are primarily confined to the region. While these threats are certainly significant, they do not pose the same level of existential threat to Jewish identity and culture as antisemitism does. Therefore, given the persistent and widespread nature of antisemitism, it is not surprising that the AJC is placing a greater emphasis on promoting the ontological security of Jews through its digital agenda and other initiatives.

#### **7.4 AJC and its audience: Interaction with posts**

In this section I will examine the interaction that AJC's posts receive from their audience by mainly focusing on the account's most viral posts, given the fact that these posts are the ones



that have generated the most attention and interaction from the audience. These are the posts that have received the most likes, retweets, comments, and shares, which indicates that they have resonated well with the audience. By analyzing these posts, I try to investigate into what types of content, messaging, and themes are most appealing to their followers and the wider Twitter community. In order to measure the engagement of the Tweets, I counted the likes and retweets per post. This method allowed me to have a clear understanding of how well each post performed and how it resonated with AJC’s audience. By tracking these metrics, I was able to see which posts received the most attention and interaction, and which ones didn't perform as well.

During the period that this thesis was written, AJC’s twitter account had 456,7 thousand followers, however, as seen in the graph below, most Tweets receive under 600 likes and retweets per post, meaning that although the account has a rather large amount of followers, the followers don’t necessarily interact with the account’s content. Nevertheless, as presented in the graph, there are three Tweets which received 2000 likes and retweets per post, the content of which we will examine below.

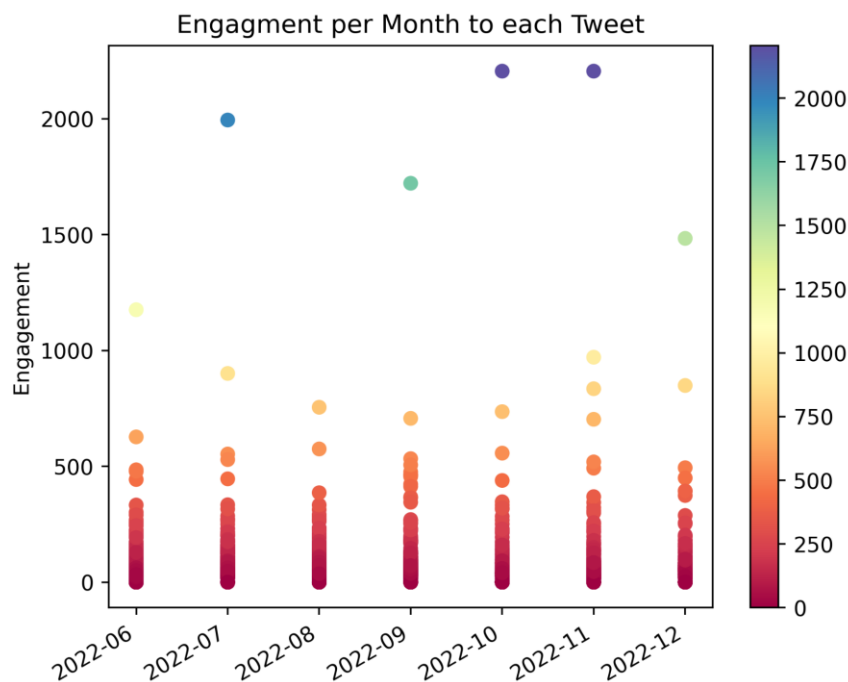


Figure 20 AJC interactions of audience

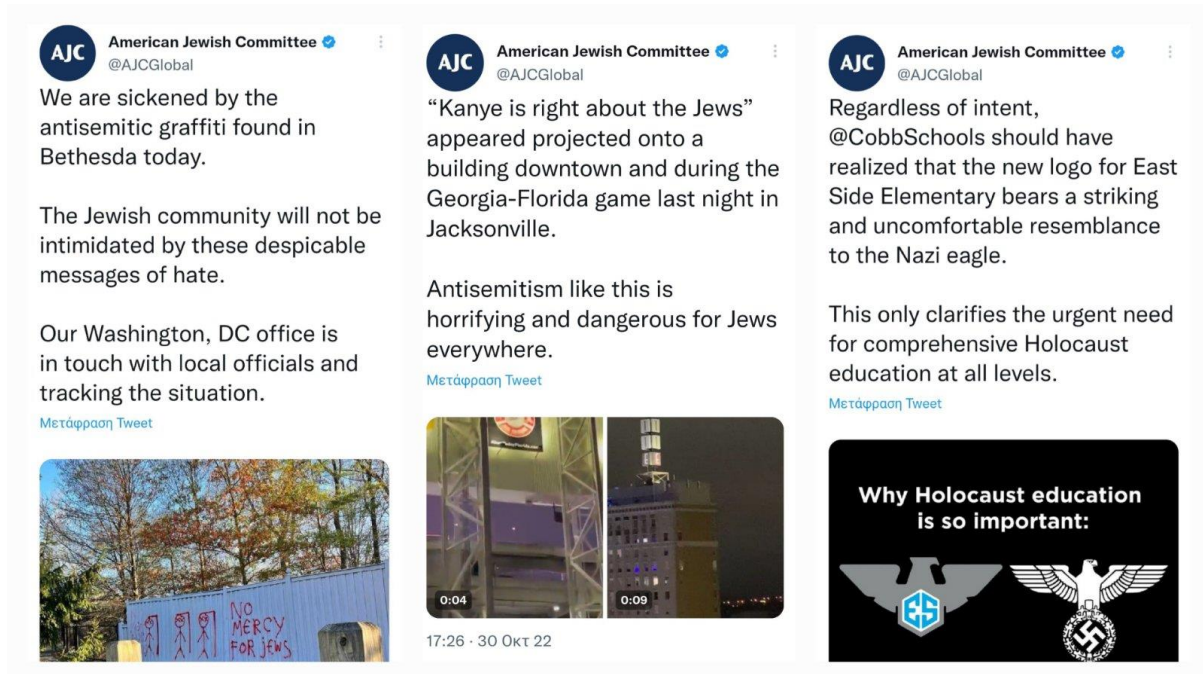


Figure 21 AJC’s most viral posts

As seen above, all three posts from AJC's Twitter account address incidents of antisemitism. They express shock and disgust at the offensive images and messages, and the impact they have on the Jewish community. The language used in the three posts from AJC's Twitter account is clear, direct, and emotionally charged. The language conveys a sense of urgency and the need for immediate action. More precisely, the language used in the posts strongly condemns the incidents of antisemitism, using words like "horrifying" and "despicable". This sends a clear message that such hate speech is not acceptable and that there is zero tolerance for antisemitism. Moreover, the posts show empathy towards the Jewish community and convey a deep understanding of the impact of antisemitism. This helps to build a sense of community and solidarity towards the victims of the phenomenon. Lastly, all three posts include a call to action, whether it's the need for local officials to address the situation, or the importance of comprehensive Holocaust education. This helps to drive engagement and encourages people to take action or pay attention to the issue (Moran, Muzellec & Johnson, 2020).

Furthermore, all three posts include media such as photos and videos. The use of images and videos makes the message of antisemitism more impactful and memorable. The images and videos provide visual evidence of the incidents and evoke strong emotions, making it more likely that people will take notice of the issue and engage with the posts. This increased

interaction helps to raise awareness and bring attention to the issue of antisemitism (Moran, Muzellec & Johnson, 2020).

## **7.5 Conclusions: Diaspora Digital Diplomacy & AJC**

By examining AJC's digital agenda, we have observed a clear pattern of ontological-physical security classification in their Tweets. Specifically, the frequent use of words related to Jewish identity, historical events in Jewish history, and references to anti-Semitism and hatred towards Jewish communities suggests that the organization is concerned with protecting their sense of self. At the same time, the repetition of terms such as "Iran," "terrorism," and "nuclear weapons" indicates that AJC's focus extends beyond just the identity or self, but also to the physical well-being of the state of Israel. Furthermore, AJC uses its Twitter platform to advocate for peaceful conflict resolution and human rights, calling on leaders to take action in promoting peace.

In order to analyze my findings and examine whether the diaspora really has a distinct role of its own in the context of digital diplomacy and in promoting and achieving diplomatic objectives, I will use Brinkenhoff's three points about how diaspora diplomacy differs from public diplomacy. These three key ways being: i. the fact that the diaspora identity leads to certain diplomatic applications for which diasporans may fill a special role, ii. the fact that diasporans' answers to the world's identity and equity crises produce unique motives and involvement goals and iii. the fact that diasporans could possess a middle-ground edge in terms of public diplomacy.

The first point, the fact that the diaspora identity leads to certain diplomatic applications, is evident in AJC's use of Twitter to address and combat anti-Semitism and discrimination against Jewish people. By focusing on these issues, AJC is highlighting the importance of ensuring the safety and security of the Jewish diaspora, and is advocating for their rights. This focus on addressing anti-Semitism and discrimination underscores the unique role that diasporans can play in advancing their community's interests, and the importance of their diplomatic involvement. From a sample of AJC's tweets presented above, it is clear that AJC is actively working with governments and international organizations to raise awareness about the issue of anti-Semitism and to advocate for measures to address it. Their efforts include collaborating

with law enforcement to enhance security for Jewish communities, as well as advocating for the implementation of measures to prevent hate crimes and discrimination against Jews.

The second point, the fact that diasporans' answers to the world's identity and equity crises produce unique motives and involvement goals, is reflected in AJC's use of Twitter to remember and honor the victims of the Holocaust and draw attention to history and past events. The use of Twitter to promote understanding and tolerance between different groups highlights the important role that memories and historical events play in shaping the identity of the Jewish diaspora, and underscores the unique motives and involvement goals of the Jewish diaspora in addressing issues of identity and equity. By incorporating historic events into their Twitter presence, AJC is promoting a sense of unity and shared history among members of the Jewish diaspora, and is underscoring the importance of their ongoing diplomatic engagement.

The third point, the fact that diasporans could possess a middle-ground edge in terms of public diplomacy, is demonstrated by AJC's focus on advocating for peace and security, and promoting cooperation and peaceful resolution of conflicts between different groups. By occupying a middle ground between different groups and promoting understanding and cooperation, AJC is leveraging their Twitter presence to advance their diplomatic objectives, and is highlighting the importance of peaceful resolution of conflicts. Additionally, their use of Twitter to advocate for human rights and peace underscores their ability to leverage their social media presence to advance their diplomatic goals, and highlights their role as a diplomatic actor with a unique perspective and agenda. As seen in the previous section, AJC's commitment to peace and cooperation is highly evident in their support of the Abraham Accords, as by including them in their digital diplomacy strategy, AJC can advance their advocacy efforts in the region and showcase Israel as a peaceful player in the region.

Therefore, the three keyways in which diaspora diplomacy differs from public diplomacy outlined by Brinkenhoff are reflected in AJC's Twitter account. Their focus on addressing and combating anti-Semitism and discrimination, remembering and honoring the victims of the Holocaust, advocating for peace and security, and promoting understanding and tolerance between different groups, highlights the unique role that diasporans can play in advancing their community's interests and promoting cooperation and understanding between different groups.

## **9. Armenian Diaspora in the United States**

Armenian migration to the United States began in small numbers in the 17th century, but significant immigration began in the late 19th century due to persecution by Ottoman Turks, including the Armenian Genocide which led to about 100,000 Armenians fleeing to the United States until immigration restrictions were implemented in the 1920s (Pezeshkian, 2011). During the first wave of Armenian migration to the United States, the majority were Western Armenians who originated from the region that is now Eastern Turkey, as opposed to Eastern Armenians from what used to be Persian and Russian Armenia. This led to the establishment of the first wave of the Armenian diaspora as predominantly Western Armenian, whose dialect differs from that of Eastern Armenians. These differences have played a significant role in the relationship between diasporan Armenians and those born in present-day Armenia (Kasbarian, 2015). Armenia briefly became an independent country after World War I but was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1920. The second wave of Armenian migration to the US occurred after World War II, with many migrants being descendants of the first diaspora wave rather than Armenians from Soviet Armenia. Most survivors of the Armenian Genocide in the first diaspora wave migrated to Middle Eastern countries, and after the US Immigration Act of 1965, it became easier for diasporans to immigrate to the US. The third wave of migration to the US occurred in the 1980s due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan, with Armenian persecution and a massive earthquake contributing to emigration. The fourth wave of migration to the US has resulted from Middle Eastern conflicts in the 21st century, though movement within the Armenian diaspora has historically been involuntary.

As a result of the above, the Armenian diaspora in the United States is comprised of Armenians who have immigrated to the country from various nations outside of Armenia, including Russia, Syria, or Lebanon. (Embassy of Armenia in the United States of America, n.d.) These immigrants have formed subcultures where they may identify as British-Armenian, Lebanese-Armenian, or Russian-Armenian, while still living as Armenian-Americans. First-generation Armenian-Americans born in the US could have hybrid identities influenced by their parents, who may also feel attached to their birth countries (Bolsajian, 2018). These immigrants have previously adapted to cultures outside of their homeland identity, making it easier for them to assimilate to life in the US than for Armenians who immigrated directly from Armenia. However, Armenians in the US have found success in assimilating to life in places like

California, where multiculturalism is an integral part of life. Armenians, primarily a Christian minority, find it easier to assimilate and find success in the US, where Christianity is the dominant religion (Bolsajian, 2018). Furthermore, Armenians of American descent, such as Kim Kardashian, Andre Agassi, Kirk Kerkorian, and Cher, have made significant contributions to American cultural life and have used their success to further Armenian causes, such as humanitarian relief and genocide recognition. As a result, despite the difficulty of finding unifying factors in a cosmopolitan world of hyphenated identities, the Armenian diaspora places importance on maintaining a sense of cultural identity and attachment to the homeland. Political interests have been unifying factors for the Armenian diaspora in creating a sense of belonging or identity (Bolsajian, 2018).

For the purpose of this thesis, I selected ANCA as a case study of the Armenian diaspora in the United States. The Armenian National Committee of America, or ANCA, is a grassroots organization that advocates for the social and political rights of Armenian-Americans and works to bring attention to issues of importance to the Armenian community in the US (Armenian National Committee of America, n.d.). ANCA is recognized for its lobbying efforts in Congress, where it advocates for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, provides aid to Armenia and Artsakh, and advocates for the right to self-determination for Armenians. ANCA is considered a significant Armenian organization in the US because it provides a unified voice for the Armenian-American community at the national level and has been successful in mobilizing support for Armenian causes while promoting political engagement among Armenian-Americans. (Armenian National Committee of America, n.d.)





Figure 23 ANCA's Tweets on the situation in Artsakh

As seen in the tweets above, ANCA is advocating for the U.S. government to send emergency aid to Artsakh and to impose sanctions on Azerbaijan in response to their blockade of the region while at the same time, the organization is calling on the American public to write to their legislators to express their support for this action. The organization's focus on the humanitarian crisis caused by the blockade and the need for action from the U.S. government suggests that they are concerned with the welfare of the affected communities and are working to bring attention to the issue. The mention of "emergency aid" and "sanctions" highlights ANCA's efforts to address the crisis and hold Azerbaijan accountable for their actions. The language used in these posts is forceful and urgent, reflecting ANCA's urgency in addressing the situation in Artsakh. The use of words such as "bitter-cold," "humanitarian blockade," "deadly dangers," and "genocidal intentions" highlights the severity of the situation and ANCA's concern for the welfare of the affected communities. The calls to action, such as "ask your legislators now" and "take action," show ANCA's emphasis on the importance of public engagement and support in addressing the crisis. The use of specific individuals, such as the Vice President and members of the U.S. government, highlights ANCA's efforts to bring attention to the issue and influence decision-makers.



ANCA is also striving for recognition of the Armenian genocide as well as the ongoing ethnic-cleansing faced by Armenia in regions such as Artsakh and Nagorno Karabakh, as seen through the use of words such as "indigenous," "heritage," "Turkey", "genocide" and "homeland." The Armenian Genocide refers to the systematic extermination of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire during World War I. Genocide has had a profound impact on both the ontological security and physical security of Armenian communities. On an ontological level, the recognition of the Armenian Genocide is important for the Armenian people as it helps to acknowledge the suffering and injustices inflicted upon them and to secure their place in history. The denial of the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman government and subsequent Turkish governments has left a deep scar on the collective psyche of the Armenian people and perpetuated feelings of insecurity and mistrust (Steiner, 2021). On a physical level, the ongoing conflict in Nagorno Karabakh and Artsakh has heightened fears for the safety and security of Armenians in the region. The violence and militarization in the region serve as a constant reminder of the atrocities committed against the Armenian people and the ongoing threat they face. The recognition of the Armenian Genocide is therefore a crucial step towards both psychological and physical security for the Armenian people. The recognition of the Armenian Genocide is important for ANCA as it serves as a means of honoring the victims and ensuring that such atrocities are never repeated again. Based on the tweets below, it's clear that ANCA has a strong agenda in advocating for the recognition and acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide. The organization is working to educate the public about the genocide and its significance through policy briefs and other advocacy efforts. The use of hashtags such as "#ArmenianGenocideEducationAct" and "#Armenian #Genocide" highlights ANCA's focus on the education and remembrance of the genocide. ANCA is also actively opposing those who deny or downplay the Armenian Genocide, as seen from the tweet criticizing Dr. Oz for his close ties to Turkish President Recep Erdogan and his support for Turkish denial of the genocide. The posts also have a clear call to action, urging individuals to oppose those who deny the Armenian genocide, thanking those who support the Armenian Genocide Education Act, and calling on individuals to support the recognition of the Armenian genocide, highlighting, ANCA's proactive and engaged approach in their advocacy efforts and their determination to achieve their goals of recognizing the Armenian genocide and ensuring that it is remembered and never forgotten. Lastly, the mention of Turkey's existential threat to Armenia highlights ANCA's focus on the ongoing impact of the Armenian Genocide on the Armenian people and their homeland. The organization is working to address the ongoing

ethnic-cleansing faced by Armenia and to protect the rights and welfare of the Armenian people.



Figure 24 ANCA’s Tweets opposing to Oz’s election

Additionally, the frequent use of words such as "policy," "congress," "advocacy," "congressional," "coalitions," "powerful," "support," "partners," and "protest" reveals that ANCA is collaborating with other organizations and groups to create a united front in its advocacy efforts. ANCA is also actively engaged in lobbying and advocacy efforts on behalf of the Armenian community in the United States. They are working to influence the foreign policy of the US government towards Armenia and Azerbaijan, and working with powerful groups to support the Armenian community. They are also working on creating coalitions and partnerships with other groups to amplify their voice.



Figure 25 ANCA: cooperation with different stakeholders

As seen in the tweets below, an example of this cooperation is ANCA’s shared action with HALC. ANCA and HALC cooperate in order to promote policies against Turkey due to the shared experiences and historical grievances of the Armenian and Greek communities. Both the Armenian Genocide and the Pontian Greek Genocide were carried out by the Ottoman Empire and its successor state, Turkey. As a result, both communities have a deep-seated sense of injustice and a desire for recognition. By working together, ANCA and HALC are able to magnify their collective voice and more effectively advocate for policies that hold Turkey accountable for its past atrocities and support the rights of Armenian and Greek communities. Furthermore, both Greece and Armenia, have faced ongoing challenges from Turkey that go

beyond the historical tensions between the nations as, today, both Greece and Armenia face regional destabilization and provocations from Turkey, which has challenged the security of their territories through military activities, illegal oil and gas drilling, and border violations. As a result of the above, ANCA and HALC have cooperated in other ways on Twitter by collaborating on joint campaigns such as the #nojetsforTurkey campaign, aiming to pressure the U.S. government to stop selling military equipment to Turkey. The groups believe that the sale of fighter jets and other military hardware to Turkey undermines U.S. national security interests and threatens regional stability, particularly in light of Turkish aggression against Greece and Armenia. The organizations are also concerned about Turkey's human rights record and its support for terrorism, which they believe make it an inappropriate recipient of U.S. military aid. Therefore, the "No Jets to Turkey" action is part of a larger effort by HALC and ANCA to promote policies that will strengthen the U.S.-Greece and U.S.-Armenia relations and hold Turkey accountable for its actions.

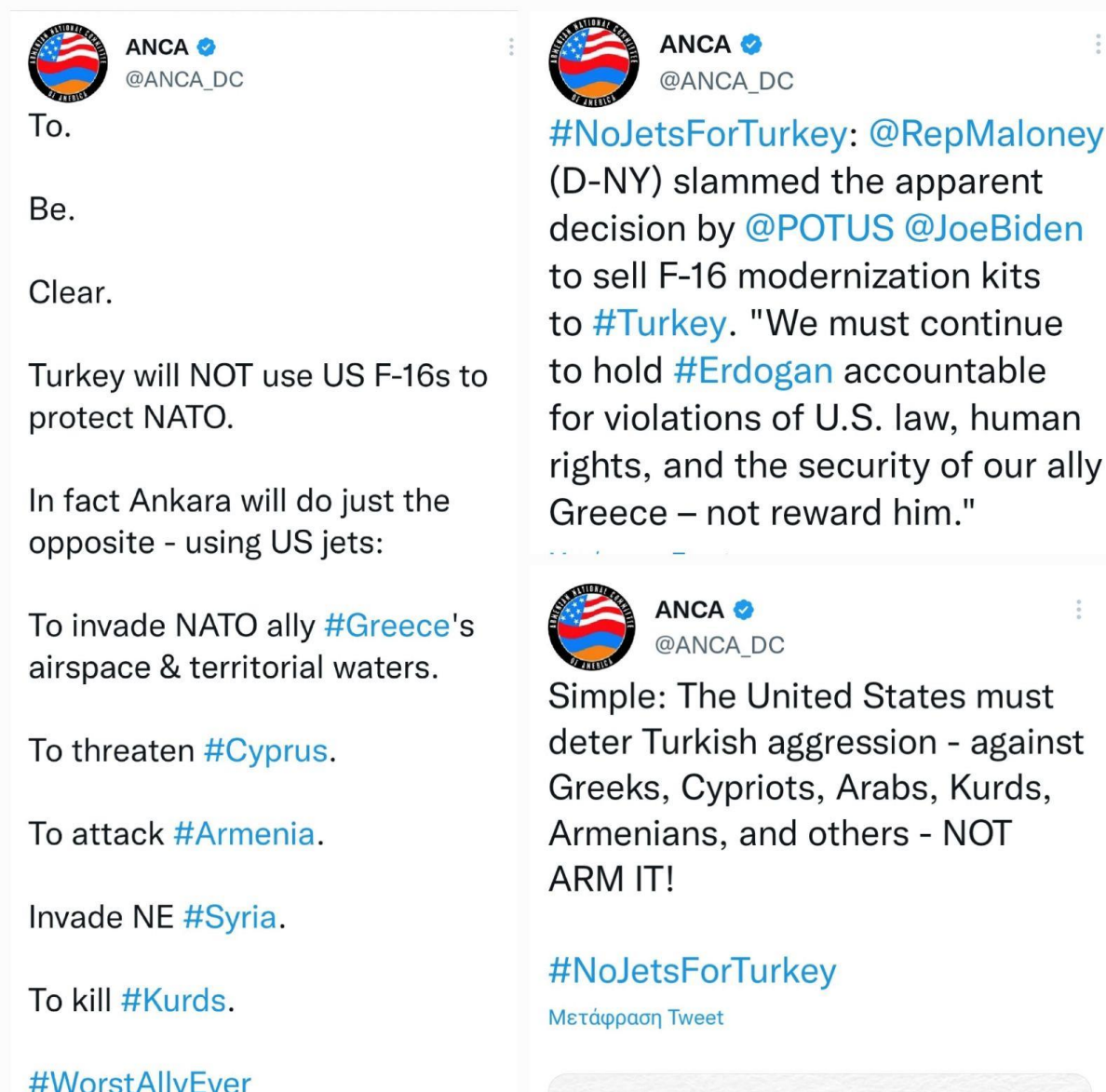


Figure 26 ANCA advocating against Turkey Tweets.

## 8.2 Between ontological and physical security: Topic Classification in ANCA's Tweets

As previously observed in the case of HALC and AJC, ANCA's Tweets have also an ontological-physical security classification pattern. In the context of ANCA's digital agenda, the use of words such as "Armenian," "indigenous," "heritage," and "homeland" expresses the organization's concern for the ontological security of the Armenian people by highlighting the cultural and historical roots of the Armenian people in the region and their attachment to their ancestral land and identity, while at the same time aims to preserve these cultural and historical connections. The Armenian people's ontological security is closely linked to their cultural and religious heritage, which has been threatened by a history of violence and oppression both in

the past and in present. ANCA frequently references Armenia's history as the "first Christian nation" and as a "genocide survivor state" in its ontological security and identity rhetoric. These references to Armenia's religious and historical identity serve to reinforce the idea of Armenia as a unique and valuable nation, whose existence and survival are tied to its cultural and spiritual heritage. Therefore, ensuring that their cultural and religious heritage is not threatened by ongoing violence or erased by historical forgetting, is essential to the Armenian community. Under this prism, ANCA is seeking to secure the Armenian people's historical memory and ensure that the events of the past are not forgotten by criticizing Turkey's actions, particularly with regards to the Armenian Genocide but also by raising awareness about this historical event and the ongoing impact that it is having on the Armenian people, by calling for its recognition and acknowledgement.



Figure 27 ANCA's Tweets seeking to secure the Armenian people's historical memory

Furthermore, the use of words such as "blockade", "humanitarian" and "aggression" suggest that ANCA is concerned with the current threats to the ontological security of the Armenian people, including human rights violations, and other forms of violence. The focus on providing

"aid" and "support" to the affected communities highlights ANCA's efforts to address these threats and secure the ontological security of the Armenian people.

On the other hand, words in ANCA's Twitter account that refer to physical security, such as "military," "attack," "war," "aggression," and "silence," suggest that ANCA is concerned with the ongoing physical security threats faced by Armenia. The use of these words in ANCA's digital agenda highlights the organization's concern with the ongoing conflicts and military actions in the region and the impact that they are having on the Armenian people. Conflict and military action can have devastating impacts on civilian populations, including displacement, injury, and loss of life. For the Armenian people, ongoing conflict and military action threaten their physical safety and security. By raising awareness about these issues and calling for action, ANCA is working to address the ongoing physical security threats faced by the Armenian people.

As a result of my analysis, I have created two sets of terms and words that are frequently used in ANCA's Twitter account, and that relate either to ontological or physical security threats faced by the Armenian community. I then used these words to categorize ANCA's tweets into two lexicons, based on their focus on either ontological or physical security as seen in the table below.

Ontological Security	Physical Security
'historic', 'spiritual heritage', 'Ottoman', 'genocide-survivor', 'memory', 'ArmenianGenocideEducationAct', 'martyred', 'Christians', 'Christian nation', 'Christian', 'Armenian churches', 'church', 'cultural', 'religious', 'Cultural Rights', 'Preservation', 'cultural heritage', 'heritage', 'Turkification', 'genocide', '1915', '1.5 million', 'Oz', 'Dr Oz'	'war-crimes', 'Nagorno', 'Karabakh', 'Hostage', 'cut-off', 'Baku dictatorship', 'detainees', 'blockaded', '#Artsakh', 'Aliyev', 'aggressor', 'Azerbaijan', 'oil-rich', 'dictator', 'Turkey', 'Azerbaijani', 'Baku', 'troops', 'blockade', 'Karabakh', 'war', 'Artsakh', 'hostage', 'humanitarian catastrophe', 'ethnically cleansing', 'NagornoKarabakh', 'Shortages', '#ArtsakhBlockade', 'Azeris', 'Starve', 'criminal activities', 'weapons'

Table 3 ANCA ontological and physical security lexicon

As seen in the Table 3 above, I used words such as 'historic', 'spiritual heritage', 'Ottoman', 'genocide-survivor', 'memory', 'ArmenianGenocideEducationAct', 'martyred', 'Christians', 'Christian nation', 'Christian', 'Armenian churches', 'church', 'cultural', 'religious', 'Cultural Rights', 'Preservation', 'cultural heritage', 'heritage', 'Turkification', 'genocide', '1915', '1.5

million', 'Oz', 'Dr Oz' for the ontological security category. I used these words as they express a sense of belonging, identity and security for the Armenian people while at the same time highlight the importance of remembering and honoring their past experiences and past self. On the other hand, I used words like 'war-crimes', 'Nagorno', 'Karabakh', 'Hostage', 'cut-off', 'Baku dictatorship', 'detainees', 'blockaded', '#Artsakh', 'Aliyev', 'aggressor', 'Azerbaijan', 'oil-rich', 'dictator', 'Turkey', 'Azerbaijani', 'Baku', 'troops', 'blockade', 'Karabakh', 'war', 'Artsakh', 'hostage', 'humanitarian catastrophe', 'ethnically cleansing', 'NagornoKarabakh', 'Shortages', '#ArtsakhBlockade', 'Azeris', 'Starve', 'criminal activities', 'weapons' for the physical security category, in order to focus on Tweets that refer to the ongoing conflict in the region and its impact on the Armenian population.



Figure 28 ANCA call-to-action Tweets



As observed in the Figure 29 below, ANCA has Tweeted 2905 times in the period of these six months, making it the most active organization of all three. Out of these 2905 Tweets, 750 refer to issues of ontological security for the Armenian community. On the other hand, 1816 Tweets refer to issues of physical security, a percentage of 62,5 % of all posts.

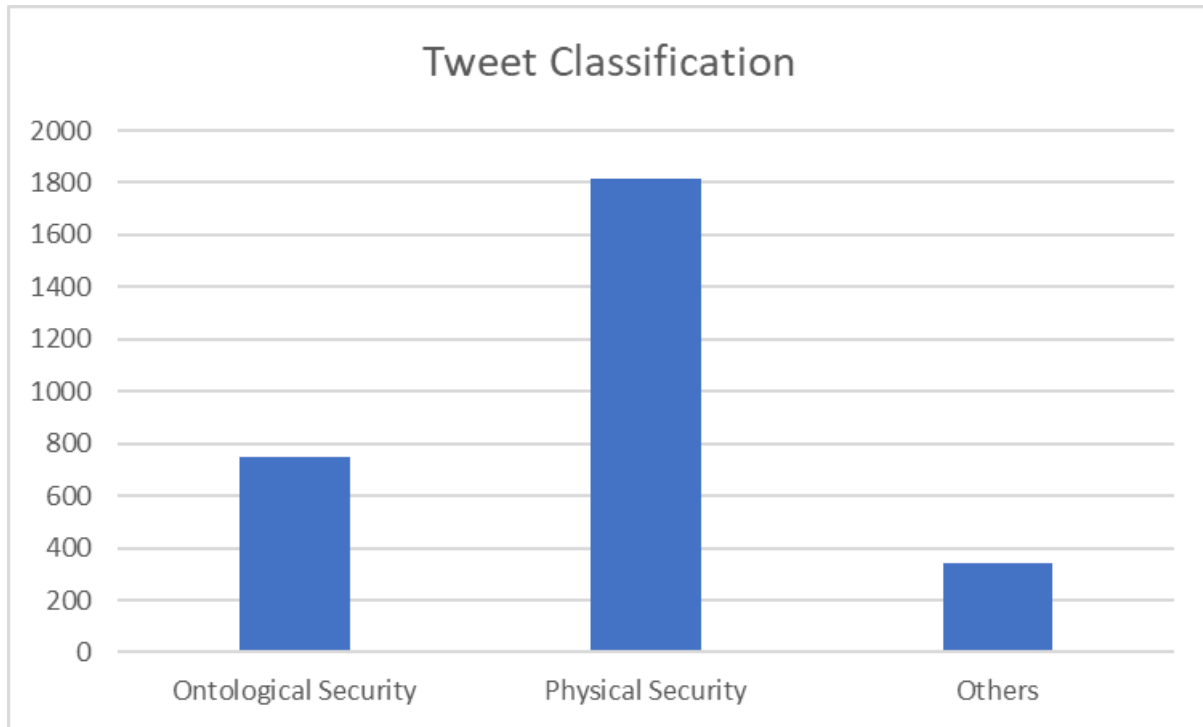


Figure 29 ANCA's Tweet Classification

ANCA's focus on physical security is largely driven by the ongoing conflicts and military actions in the region, particularly with Azerbaijan and Turkey. The 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war saw increased violence and attacks on Armenian communities in the region, leading to a significant increase in ANCA's focus on physical security threats. ANCA's focus on physical security is also influenced by the ongoing blockade of Artsakh by Azerbaijan and Turkey, which has created a dire humanitarian crisis in the region. The blockade has prevented the entry of essential goods and supplies, including food and medicine, which has led to shortages and a worsening of living conditions for the people of Artsakh (France 24, 2023). ANCA has been vocal in calling for an end to the hostilities and urging the international community to take action to address the crisis.

Additionally, ANCA's focus on physical security may reflect a belief that tangible threats to the Armenian community, such as violence and displacement, are more pressing and urgent than threats to their ontological security. While ontological security is important for a community's sense of identity and well-being, physical security threats can have more

immediate and tangible consequences. This may explain why ANCA's digital agenda emphasizes physical security issues, such as war crimes and blockades, more prominently than ontological security issues.

Furthermore, ANCA's focus on physical security may be influenced by the political and economic context of the region. Turkey and Azerbaijan are important players in the energy sector and have significant geopolitical interests in the region. ANCA's advocacy against their actions in the region may reflect a desire to protect the economic and political interests of the Armenian community. This is quite evident in tweets referring to Azerbaijan as “the oil-rich state”, “oil-rich dictatorship”, “oil-rich Aliyev regime”, as seen below.



Figure 30 ANCA Tweets advocating against Azerbaijan.

Lastly, the history of violence and conflict in the region may have created a deep-seated fear and mistrust of neighboring countries, particularly Turkey, which perpetrated the Armenian

Genocide in 1915. This fear may motivate ANCA to prioritize physical security concerns in its advocacy efforts.

### 8.3 ANCA and its audience: Interaction with posts

In this section I will examine the interaction that ANCA's posts receive from their audience by mainly focusing on the account's most viral posts, given the fact that these posts are the ones that have generated the most attention and interaction from the audience. These are the posts that have received the most likes, retweets, comments, and shares, which indicates that they have resonated well with the audience. During the period that this thesis was written, ANCA's twitter account had 66,6 thousand followers, however, as seen in the graph below, most Tweets receive under 1000 likes and retweets per post, meaning that the followers don't necessarily interact with the account's content, although the interaction is the largest of all three organizations. Nevertheless, as presented in the graph, there are three Tweets which received over 2000 likes and retweets per post, the content of which I will examine below.

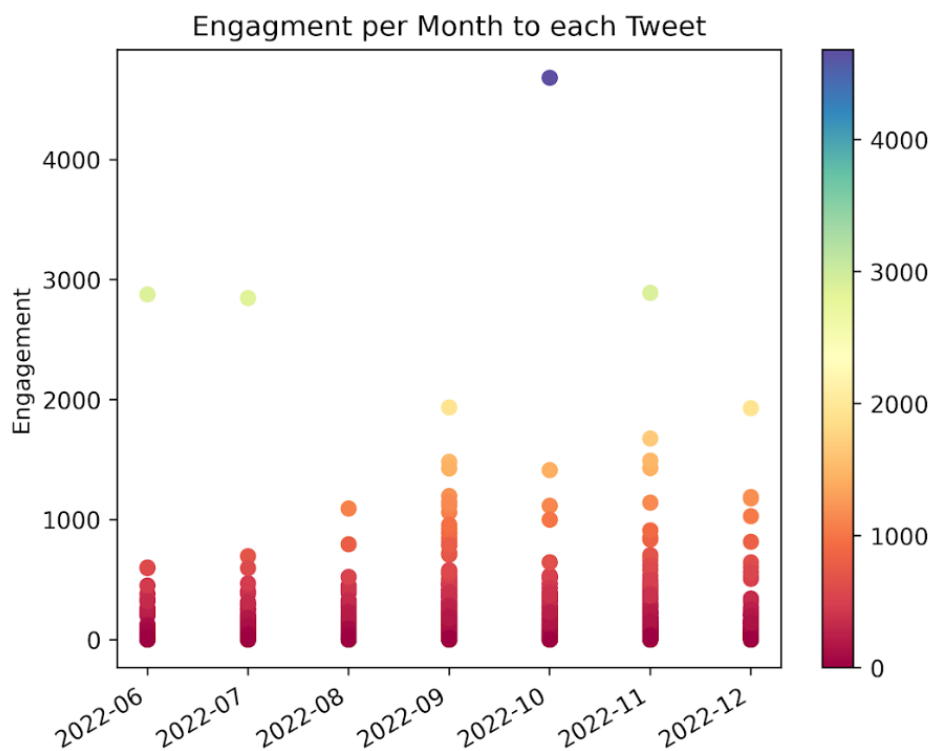


Figure 31 ANCA Interaction with Audience

The three posts on ANCA's Twitter account share a common theme of condemnation against Turkey and Azerbaijan. The posts also highlight issues related to human rights violations, regional conflicts, and geopolitical tensions.

The first post features a video that shows the execution of Armenian POWs by the Azerbaijani armed forces, a severe violation of human rights and international law. The post received 2831 likes and 1851 retweets, making it the most popular Tweet on ANCA's account in this specific period. This post may have gained attention because it showcases the atrocities of war and the inhumane treatment of prisoners and is a way for ANCA to showcase the ongoing struggle and mistreatment of Armenians in the region, and to call attention to the war crimes in the region. The post not only raises awareness about the ongoing conflict and the human rights abuses taking place, but it also highlights the importance of holding those who commit such atrocities accountable. Additionally, the post tags several high-profile political figures, such as the President of the United States and the Secretary of State, which can help amplify the message and encourage a response from those in power. By calling out these politicians, ANCA is urging them to take action and use their influence to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its actions. This post serves as a call to action to these politicians to address the issue and take steps to prevent such atrocities from occurring in the future. At the same time, by tagging these high-level officials, ANCA is increasing the visibility of the issue and bringing it to a wider audience. This can put additional pressure on these officials to take action and address the situation.

The language used in this post is very direct and urgent, with a clear call to action for people to retweet the video to President Biden, the State Department, and Secretary Blinken, this message is reinforced by the content of the post, which is very graphic and disturbing, with a warning for viewers about the violence depicted in the video. The use of visual content such as pictures and videos is crucial for the engagement and interaction these posts received. Visuals are an essential tool for capturing people's attention and conveying emotions, particularly when the content deals with sensitive and emotionally charged issues such as human rights violations, violence, and geopolitical tensions.



ANCA   
@ANCA\_DC

Retweet to @POTUS @JoeBiden @StateDept @SecBlinken this video (confirmed via forensic evidence) of #Azerbaijan armed forces executing #Armenian POWs - recorded on video (and shared by perpetrators via social media).

WARNING: Graphic violence

[Μετάφραση Tweet](#)



Figure 32 ANCA's Most Viral Post

The second post emphasizes the power of a coalition of diverse groups, including Greeks, Armenians, Jewish, and Kurdish communities, who have come together to stop Oz. More precisely, the image in the second post features a powerful statement, "a powerful coalition of Greeks, Armenians, Jewish, Kurdish and allied Americans stopped Oz," with the hashtag #stoppedOz. This post may have gained attention due to the unique and diverse coalition of groups mentioned. The post highlights the power of unity and solidarity across different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, which can appeal to a wide audience. This inclusive message may have resonated with people from various communities (such as Greek, Jew and Kurdish communities) and not just Armenians. Additionally, the use of the image can help convey the message more effectively and make the post more eye-catching and shareable.

The phrasing of the post, particularly the use of the catchy hashtag #stoppedOz, may have also contributed to its popularity although the success of the campaign might have also increased its engagement. The hashtag is short, memorable, and easy to use, making it more likely for people to interact with the post by retweeting or sharing. The post refers to Mehmet Oz, a well-known Turkish-American television personality, who has faced criticism for his comments on the Armenian Genocide and his links to Turkey. The use of the word "stopped" implies a sense of accomplishment, creating a feeling of victory against him and is therefore attracting attention from both Armenians and non-Armenians who support the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and stand against denialism and Turkey's actions.



Figure 33 ANCA's Most Viral Posts

The third post calls for the removal of Turkish troops from Cyprus and advocates for a united Cyprus. The post likely gained attention because of the long-standing conflict between Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey over territorial claims, and it also aligns with the Armenian community's support for the rights of other small nations and minority groups but also its condemnation of Turkey's aggression. The language used in the "Turkish troops, out of #Cyprus!" post is clear and straightforward, with a direct call to action. The message is forceful and uncompromising, leaving no room for ambiguity as it is a simple, memorable slogan that makes a strong statement. In this case as well, the use of the image can enhance the effectiveness of delivering the message, increasing the post's visual appeal and shareability.

## 8.4 Conclusions

The results of ANCA's account analysis suggest that the organization is focused on several key objectives. These include raising awareness about the situation in Azerbaijan and Artsakh, providing support and assistance to affected communities, advocating for responsible foreign policy in the region, and mobilizing the American public and U.S. government to take action. In addition, ANCA is also dedicated to achieving recognition of the Armenian genocide and addressing the ongoing issue of ethnic-cleansing in regions such as Artsakh and Nagorno Karabakh. The organization often references Armenia's history as the "first Christian nation" and a "genocide survivor state," which is indicative of their commitment to preserving Armenian cultural heritage. Lastly, ANCA's Twitter account frequently emphasizes the importance of democracy and human rights in the region, particularly in contrast to Azerbaijan's authoritarian regime.

To assess the significance of the diaspora's unique role in public diplomacy and its effectiveness in promoting and achieving diplomatic objectives, I will apply, once again, Brinkenhoff's three pillars, which outline the ways in which diaspora diplomacy differs from traditional public diplomacy. When we examine ANCA's agenda through this framework, we can see how these differences are reflected in their advocacy efforts.

Firstly, diaspora identity leads to certain diplomatic applications for which diasporans may fill a special role. ANCA's advocacy efforts focus on promoting and protecting the rights and interests of Armenian Americans and Armenians worldwide. Their unique cultural and historical perspective allows them to advocate for the recognition of the Armenian genocide and the ongoing ethnic-cleansing faced by Armenia in regions such as Artsakh and Nagorno Karabakh. The organization leverages their unique position as a diaspora organization to mobilize the American public and U.S. government to take action in support of their cause. ANCA's successful advocacy for the recognition of the Armenian genocide by the United States government is a clear example of this unique role of diaspora diplomacy. This achievement was made possible by ANCA's ability to leverage the cultural and historical perspectives of Armenian Americans to raise awareness and advocate for the recognition of this historical atrocity.

Secondly, diasporans' answers to the world's identity and equity crises produce unique motives and involvement goals. ANCA focuses on increasing awareness about the situation in Artsakh, providing aid and support to affected communities, and advocating for responsible foreign policy towards the region. ANCA's unique perspective as a diaspora organization allows them to advocate for the recognition of historical atrocities and promote the protection of cultural heritage, which are central to their identity as a community. Furthermore, ANCA's collaboration with Greece, Israel, and Cyprus against Turkey's actions can also be seen as an example of how diasporans' answers to the world's identity and equity crises produce unique motives and involvement goals. By partnering with other diaspora organizations, ANCA is able to amplify its message and increase its impact on diplomatic outcomes. ANCA's advocacy efforts are often reflected in their social media campaigns and hashtags, such as #nojetstoTurkey and #stopOz, which call for action to address Turkey's violations and promote responsible foreign policy towards the region. This collaboration also highlights the importance of building strong relationships within diaspora communities to address shared challenges and promote shared interests.

Finally, diasporans could possess a middle-ground edge in terms of public diplomacy. ANCA's advocacy efforts reflect this middle-ground edge in public diplomacy by leveraging social media and other communication channels to mobilize the American public and U.S. government to take action. Their emphasis on grassroots advocacy and coalition-building allows them to effect change beyond traditional diplomatic channels. Additionally, ANCA's calls to action, such as "ask your legislators now" and "take action," demonstrate the organization's emphasis on the importance of public engagement and support in addressing the ongoing crisis in the region. The use of specific individuals, such as the Vice President and members of the U.S. government, highlights ANCA's efforts to bring attention to the issues of their national interest and influence decision-makers. By leveraging their unique position as a diaspora organization, ANCA is able to mobilize its members and supporters to take action and influence policy decision while at the same time create a wider network of supporters and advocates for their cause, which is a key aspect of diaspora diplomacy

In conclusion, ANCA's advocacy efforts reflect many of the key characteristics of diaspora diplomacy as outlined by Brinkerhoff. Their unique cultural and historical perspective, combined with their special position as a diaspora organization, allows them to fill a special role in advocating for the recognition of the Armenian genocide and the ongoing ethnic-



cleansing faced by Armenia in regions such as Artsakh and Nagorno Karabakh. By leveraging their middle-ground edge in public diplomacy through grassroots advocacy and coalition-building, ANCA is able to create a wider network of supporters and advocates for their cause and effect change beyond traditional diplomatic channels.

## **10. Conclusion: a comparative analysis of ANCA, AJC and HALC**

In this comparative analysis, we have looked at the thematic classification of tweets from all three organizations - HALC, AJC, and ANCA. All three organizations demonstrate an ontological-physical security thematic classification, suggesting that they are concerned with both physical threats to their communities as well as threats to their sense of identity and belonging. While the focus on either type of security varies across the organizations, it is clear that both types of security are important for a community's sense of identity and well-being.

HALC's tweets primarily focus on physical security concerns related to Turkey's aggression in the Eastern Mediterranean region. The organization's advocacy efforts are aimed at countering Turkey's aggressive actions in the region, which have increased the potential for military conflict. While HALC acknowledges the importance of ontological security in Greece's collective identity and traumatic past, this issue appears to be of lesser importance to the organization, at least in terms of social media communication. Similarly, ANCA's tweets also place a greater emphasis on physical security. ANCA's emphasis on physical security may indicate that they prioritize the more immediate and tangible risks to the Armenian community, including violence and displacement, over threats to their ontological security. Although ontological security is essential for a community's sense of identity and overall well-being, physical security threats can have more urgent and concrete repercussions. ANCA presents extensively issues of ontological security by highlighting their cultural and historical roots in the region as well as their genocidal past. However, ANCA's greater focus on physical security is largely driven by ongoing conflicts and military actions in the region, particularly with Azerbaijan and Turkey. ANCA's focus on physical security is also influenced by the ongoing blockade of Artsakh by Azerbaijan and Turkey, which has created a dire humanitarian crisis in the region. On the other hand, AJC's tweets demonstrate a greater emphasis on ontological security than physical security. The organization places great importance on the preservation and protection of Jewish identity, culture, history, and traditions, which are often threatened by antisemitism. However, AJC also recognizes the importance of physical security, as demonstrated by its focus on Iran, terrorism, and nuclear weapons, which pose a direct threat to Israel's safety. It can therefore be observed in all three cases that diaspora organisations identify almost perfectly with the foreign policy of their countries of origin, but with the

possibility of becoming more critical or more caustic in their rhetoric because of their unique identity and their “in-between” advantage.

In addition to their focus on physical and ontological security, all three organizations also seek to promote a positive image of their respective countries of origin. In the case of Turkey, Iran, and Azerbaijan, there is a clear dipole between democracy and authoritarianism, and between actions that align with international law and those that violate it. These organizations tend to depict their countries in a favorable light, emphasizing their commitment to protecting human rights and complying with international norms and regulations. Conversely, they often highlight the abuses of human rights and violations of international law committed by their countries' adversaries. This dichotomy between good and bad, democratic, and authoritarian, serves as a way for these organizations to promote their countries' interests and justify their advocacy efforts.

Furthermore, all three organizations implement their advocacy efforts online by using messages that contain a clear call to action, along with supporting media such as pictures and videos to provide evidence for their claims. In addition, they use hashtags and catchy slogans to amplify their message and increase their reach. For instance, both HALC and ANCA have used hashtags such as #nojetstoTurkey and #stopOz and to promote their messages on social media. Similarly, AJC has used hashtags like “#ShineALight on Jew-hatred”, in its online efforts to combat anti-semitism. Additionally, as observed in HALC's online advocacy, humor is also occasionally used to engage their audience and draw attention to their cause. After analyzing the social media interaction received of all three organizations, it is evident that they receive relatively little interaction from their audience. However, when looking at the most viral posts from each organization, a common theme emerges - the inclusion of media such as photos and videos, evidence of their claims, and catchy slogans and hashtags. This indicates that the audience is more likely to engage with content that is visually appealing, informative, and easy to share. These elements help to increase the reach and impact of the organization's message. Lastly, based on the observation that a majority of HALC's tweets are retweets, it can be inferred that the organization's main role is not to create content, but to collect and distribute information on topics relevant to its mission. However, considering that HALC has the lowest number of followers and engagement among the three organizations, it might be beneficial for them to shift their focus towards generating more original content to increase their visibility and engagement with their target audience.

Another finding in my comparative analysis is that all three organizations collaborate with each other to advocate for shared interests. Despite having their unique goals and priorities, they recognize the value of working together towards common causes. This shows that cooperation and solidarity among advocacy groups can be an effective approach to achieve their respective missions. The #nojetstoTurkey campaign is one of the most successful mutual online actions that proves the importance of this collaboration.

Lastly, in order to assess whether the diaspora has a unique role in promoting and achieving diplomatic objectives within the realm of public diplomacy, I utilized Brinkerhoff's three pillars outlining how diaspora diplomacy differs from public diplomacy. These three keyways include the diaspora identity providing specific diplomatic applications where diasporans may serve a special role, the unique motives and involvement goals of diasporans in response to the world's identity and equity crises, and the potential for diasporans to possess an advantageous middle-ground position in terms of public diplomacy. Ultimately, all three organizations demonstrated the distinctive role of the diaspora and their unique approach to achieving diplomatic objectives. Therefore, by engaging diasporas in public diplomacy efforts, countries can leverage their connections to other nations and bridge cultural divides, leading to greater understanding and cooperation between nations. Additionally, the unique perspective and experiences of diaspora communities can inform and shape diplomatic efforts in a way that is not possible through traditional channels. Social media can play a crucial role in amplifying those efforts, as organizations can connect with a wider audience and mobilize support for their causes. Social media can provide a platform for diaspora communities to share their stories and experiences (as seen in all three cases of AJC, HALC and ANCA), which can help to shape public opinion and influence policy decisions. However, it is important to note that effective social media strategies must be implemented in order to achieve maximum impact and reach.

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