

THE IMPORTANCE OF GERMAN-TURKISH VOTERS IN TURKISH POLITICS

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ABSTRACT

Wilson Riley Hope: The Importance of German-Turkish Voters in Turkish Politics
(Under the direction of: Robert M. Jenkins)

This thesis examines the important role of German-Turks in Turkish politics by bringing together the concept of clientelism and applying the concept to German-Turks within the sphere of Turkish domestic politics. This research explores the methods that the Turkish government uses to cultivate the German-Turkish electorate and ensure that this loyalty is maintained in the future. Through two examples, the 2014 Presidential election and the 2017 Presidential referendum, the use of clientelist politics can be demonstrated. While existing literature discusses the long-time use of clientelism in Turkey proper, little contemporary research focuses on Turkey's German diaspora. This research contributes by exploring how Turkey's German constituency is impacted by many of the same factors of clientelism that also affect Turks in the Republic of Turkey.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Justice and Development Party
DiTiB	Turkish-Islamic Union of the Presidency of Religious Affairs
MIT	National Intelligence Organization

INTRODUCTION

This research will analyze and evaluate the importance of German-Turkish voters within Turkish politics. German-Turks are more relevant to Turkish politics than ever, and there is a significant gap in the scholarship in understanding how German-Turkish voters affect domestic Turkish politics. Scholarship from various backgrounds demonstrates that one decade ago was a significantly different time for the Republic of Turkey (Hossain and Shukri, Özgün). The Turkish government was committing to a ceasefire with its Kurdish insurgency, rapidly expanding its already significant economy, and continuing its country's push to become a member of the European Union (Ocakli, 501). One decade later the same political party and officials have rapidly consolidated power, re-committed to a violent fight against Kurds and Syrians, jailed or expelled tens of thousands of citizens, and all but eliminated the faintest hope of ever acceding to the European Union.

The complete change from modern democracy to the authoritarian state Turkey is today could not have been completed without the support of millions of regime-loyal Turks. Ironically, over one million of these loyal Turks live in a country slightly unlike the Republic of Turkey: Germany (Burkhardt and Seifert, 1). The pluralistic, highly democratic and liberal German political environment is exceptionally different from that of Turkey. Over one million German-Turks have voted for the AKP, a party that engages in policies that deliberately help their ethnic homeland renege on many of its governments' former commitments to open Turkish society, secularize its culture and create closer ties to Europe. Why do so many German-Turks support President Erdoğan and his party, the AKP?

This thesis argues that a combination of purposeful ethnic agitation, encouragement of support for political-Islamic ideas, and the constant monitoring of the German-Turkish electorate has contributed to the long-time strength of political clientelism in Turkey. In recent years the use of clientelism has exacerbated. Therefore, this thesis will demonstrate how the Turkish diaspora in Germany is affected by domestic Turkish politics, even after most Turkish-Germans have spent decades living in Germany.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. The beginning of the thesis will introduce the background of the German-Turkish relationship. Following will be a discussion on what clientelism is. The specific use of clientelism in politics will then be explained using definitions and explanations from the research of Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, as well as Susan Stokes.

Following this will be a methodological discussion, giving a brief overview of the Turkish electorate in Germany, reviewing the evidence to present this electorate, and examining the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence.

The following section will provide a short history that discusses contemporary events involving citizenship, politics and intra-diasporic fault lines and conflicts. A 2016 study from four scholars at the University of Münster will be used to demonstrate the modern religious and political beliefs of German-Turks and especially of young German-Turks (Dieler et al.). Research from Metin Heper and E. Fuat Keyman will be used to illustrate the components of Turkish clientelism.

Finally, this thesis will link the use of clientelist politics in Turkey to the German-Turks' constituency. The ability of the AKP to split opposition and maintain a hard grip on a voting bloc that exists within a nation that has enmity for much of the AKPs electoral strategy and tactics

(Germany) is remarkable; illegal spying, significant ethnic quarrels and clashes, and vitriolic political rallies are often expected to be foreign to a nation like Germany. But this thesis will demonstrate how that belief can be overcome when a nation's ethnic minority has not been integrated into society.

Background on the German-Turkish Relationship

While the Federal Republic of Germany has amended citizenship and dual citizenship laws to make it easier for Turks to receive German citizenship, around 500,000 more German-Turks voted in the latest Turkish presidential election in 2014 than in contemporary German parliamentary elections (Allen-Ebrahimian). In total there are approximately one-and-a-half million active Turkish voters in Germany (Cornell). Interestingly, support for Turkey's incumbent political party, the AKP, and Turkey's President, Tayyip Erdoğan, is higher among German-Turks than those living in Turkey (Cupolo). The AKP stands for the "Justice and Development Party" and has developed its own version of both of the words in its name over the past decade. Interestingly, German-Turkish voters were likely a crucial constituency for the AKP during the Presidential election of 2014 and the subsequent Presidential referendum of 2017. Both events will be examined in further detail.

After decades of German legislative attempts to integrate German-Turks, the vast majority of this diaspora does not feel that it is necessary to pursue German citizenship to integrate into German life and culture (Dieler et al.). The large constituency of German-Turks will continue to be a crucial part of Turkish domestic politics. To that end, Turkish political parties and politicians have not ignored them; much to the contrary. This thesis will examine how and why it is necessary for Turkish parties and politicians, and in particular, the AKP and President Erdoğan, to ensure that this constituency is saturated with supporters.

Previous Research on Clientelism

Clientelism is a pertinent topic in the scholarship of political science. Clientelism is defined by the scholars Kitschelt and Wilkinson “as a particular mode of “exchange” between electoral constituencies as principals and politicians as agents in democratic systems” (7). It is critical to define and understand clientelism for this research because clientelism is the key to understanding how politics in Turkey works. Through understanding how clientelism affects Turkish politics, the relationship between domestic Turkish politics and the German-Turkish diaspora can be understood.

Two works are especially useful and will be used in this research. The purpose of this section is to review the scholarly work of Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, as well as Susan Stokes. Kitschelt and Wilkinson researched and published *Patrons, Clients, and Policies*, a well-regarded book discussing patronage and clientelism that was complemented by research and work by a host of other scholars. The concentration of this section will be the introduction to patronage and clientelism written by Kitschelt and Wilkinson. Complimenting this section will be a review and discussion of Susan Stokes' 2009 article "Political Clientelism." Both of these works will be reviewed and compared using the work of scholars that have themselves reviewed these works. I will then discuss how I will use the three scholars work in my research.

After this discussion, I will establish what the definition of clientelism and patronage for use in my research is. Using Kitschelt and Wilkinson, as well as Stokes own definitions and distinctions, I will establish which particular aspects of clientelism and patronage will be used. Specifically, the mobilization of ethno cultural divides, the use of fear, and the use of significant monitoring efforts in Germany will be the base upon which clientelism among German-Turks can be understood.

Research by Kitschelt and Wilkinson

In 2007, Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson edited and published *Patrons, Clients and Policies*, a work that the author's intended to use to reorient the way that scholars observed the "wide variation" of linkages between politicians, parties and citizens (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 1). The information used in my research will draw from their first chapter: Kitschelt and Wilkinson's introduction to their work. The scholars introduce a new perspective of understanding clientelism and patronage.

Traditionally, the study of clientelism and patronage involved the understanding of national values, traditions, political cultures and individual relationships. Kitschelt and Wilkinson sought to introduce a new wave of study, a method that pursued a political-economic interpretation of the issue. The authors identify clientelism in "economic terms" (Clark and da Silva, 1845), defining it as a contingent direct exchange relationship, mainly developing from low-income populations. Traditionally political scientists and sociologists sought to identify clientelism with religion (Catholicism in southern Italy is an example), low trust societies, and other social circumstances (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 3).

According to Kitschelt and Wilkinson, as a society achieves greater economic prosperity clientelism will weaken for a variety of reasons (35). More affluent countries will have more important private market options for citizens to pursue, making them less dependent upon their patron. As societies increase their wealth, paying off citizens becomes prohibitively expensive. The economic and political competition also increases the chance that clientelistic scenarios will occur. Ethnic heterogeneity also increases competition, as politicians cannot capture one ethnic-group vote and always expect to win an election.

Clientelism ultimately involves a politician, and usually a political party. Political organizations need to win votes to be elected and come into power; ensuring that an own politicians party receives the most votes is, in non-clientelistic scenarios, done through voter mobilization, and convincing swing voters to vote for their candidacy (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 12). In a clientelist setting, the politician will take measures to ensure that they have enough votes to win an election, regardless of whether or not they need swing voters or have a willingness to convince someone to vote for them (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 12). To ensure these votes are received, the clientelist politician needs to know how and where to target voters. This could mean violating the ballot box to know who is voting for whom, and then threatening or bribing those same kinds of individuals or those same individuals in future elections or before an election (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 17).

In this context, bribery is correctly known as a contingent exchange. A contingent exchange is a reciprocal transaction between the patron and client (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 18). The benefit that the patron will give to the client is tied to that client's vote.

Clientelism as Presented by Stokes

Susan Stokes presents an approach to the topic of clientelism that becomes a grounded, reasonably uncomplicated presentation of what clientelism and patronage are, and how they are different. Stokes 2011 article sought to define clientelism, differentiate between clientelism and patronage, and explore causes and consequences of the two phenomena.

According to Stokes, clientelism can be defined as "the proffering of material goods in return for electoral support" (2). This definition is more straightforward than that used by Kitschelt and Wilkinson but also needs added context. Stokes makes specific room in her article to differentiate between clientelism and patronage. Stokes presents patronage as a sub-class

below clientelism; clientelism is a broader, more encompassing category (3). Patronage is defined by Stokes as the proffering of public resources by office holders in return for electoral support, whereas in clientelism the more powerful actor in the principal-agent linkage may or may not hold public office; the patron necessarily does hold public office and has the ability to enforce a system of clientelism with greater effect (3).

Stokes offers a pure materialist view of clientelism: "political clientelism, the giving of material resources as a quid pro quo for political support" (20). This support can come in the form of vote buying, of the proffering of public employment, and of preferred access to public goods and services (Stokes, 2). However, Stokes also discusses a further important nuance to how clientelism can be explained. Stokes portends that the proffering of material goods can also include the threat to exclude them (6). A patron can offer jobs, services, and inroads to competitive contracts, and a patron can also take them away. Stokes explains that "A very different way of thinking about clientelist exchanges is that they tie the client to the patron not by encouraging a norm of reciprocity but by encouraging a fear that the flow of benefits will be cut off" (6). An example of benefits being cut off is the potential of having the privilege of being able to vote from abroad being taken away if the diaspora abroad cannot be relied upon to vote for the patron.

Another aspect of clientelism that Stokes identifies is the importance of norms, the cement that binds the patron and the clients together. This norm is one of reciprocity; people should help the patron, who is helping them in turn (Stokes, 5). The client should not be disloyal. This psychological aspect has a further effect: this sense of obligation may continue to work even when the decision to be loyal to the patron is against the apparent interest of the clients (Stokes, 6). Among diasporas this phenomenon is especially interesting; this loyalty helps

explain why so many German-Turks are willing to vote for the AKP, when German and European politicians repeatedly explain that the best economic and political outcome for the Turkish diaspora is through Turkish leadership that is willing to compromise and accede to democratic norms and values that the AKP has tossed aside in recent years (Foreign Staff).

Comparing the Scholars

The previous two sections introduced two different works defining and describing the concept of clientelism. This section will offer a brief comparison between the two works. Terry Clark and Filipe da Silva reviewed Kitschelt's and Wilkinson's work and were satisfied with the scholar's and frame with which they were working. The political-economic lens presented a coherent new aspect to the way clientelism is contemporarily understood (Clark and da Silva, 1845). The two reviewers particularly were impressed by the "consistency between theoretical claims and empirical findings" (Clark and da Silva page number, 1846), which is essential because of Kitschelt and Wilkinson's developmental perspectives. This developmental perspective is an economic perspective, which describes how democratic regimes change depending on their economic development. Lower levels of economic development create conditions that make clientelism more likely, as it is much less expensive for a patron to influence their voters. The two reviewers felt however that the authors did not do enough to examine competing views of how clientelism can be explained: therefore, it is necessary for my research to use the work of another scholar, in this case, the scholarship of Susan Stokes.

Stokes strength is in offering a concise and straightforward definition of clientelism, and of differentiating between the terms clientelism and patronage. Stokes' work is also shorter than the work of Kitschelt and Wilkinson, but Stokes work compliments their work, as neither of the definitions or usage of clientelism in any other works is mutually exclusive. Stokes is not seeking

to create a new understanding or perspective, but rather describing what she understands as a consensus that can be used as a base for research.

Using Clientelism in this Thesis

For this thesis, clientelism will be defined as the exchange of economic and political goods in return for political support. Economic goods include significant aid from the Turkish government's executive office of Diaspora Affairs. Political goods mean continued support for the Turkish-German diaspora that is loyal to the Turkish regime, allowing German-Turks to visit Turkey when tens of thousands of citizens have been expelled, and providing significant aid to German-Turks when they revisit their previous homeland. Using the research of Kitschelt and Wilkinson, as well as of Stokes, I will be able to put my research into the context of clientelism. Specifically, using the frameworks put forth by the three scholars, I will link the domestic clientelist politics in contemporary Turkey to politics in the German-Turkish diaspora. This system of clientelism can be understood thus: in return for this significant support from the Turkish government, and the cultivation of a loyal clientele, the AKP can rely on German-Turks to vote for them.

The more powerful actor involved in this research is in and of political office: President Erdoğan and his AKP party. Not only do AKP control and proffer public resources within Turkey and abroad, but they also control their system of clientelism through part of what Stokes refers to as "the paradox of clientelism" (5). Clientelism is according to Stokes inherently both voluntary and exploitative (5). Stokes references Kitschelt in which he writes that clientelism "involves reciprocity and volunteerism but also exploitation and domination" (5). This exploitation is understood in this research as the way in which German-Turks are spied upon by the Turkish state within their own religious and cultural organizations. Exploitation is further

seen in how by extracting votes from German-Turks, the AKP puts further constructive measures, such as making German citizenship more attainable, in serious jeopardy (Elger et al.). German-Turks volunteer their votes: in return, they expose themselves as potential dangers to German society, a society in which many political actors see as fundamentally different than what Turkish-Germans support in Turkey.

German-Turks are increasingly being accused of disloyal to democratic and secular German values, despite Turkey still being an officially secular country (Reay). Such a large population of anti-democratic citizens (and non-citizens) that are also sympathetic to a conservative kind of Sunni Islam that is promoted by official Turkish state offices (DiTiB) is a further description of this danger (Reay).

First, I will draw upon multiple scholars who have researched the history of political developments in Turkey and the German-Turkish diaspora. I will then link historical developments to the developments of clientelist politics in Turkey and illustrate how the German-Turkish constituency has been affected by clientelist politics in both Turkey and Germany.

A strength of the evidence the I am utilizing is the widespread understanding of the Turkish Republic as a clientelist political state. Clientelist policies in Turkey have been active for decades, and the election of the AKP to power in 2003 exacerbated the use of clientelist policies. The scholarship of Metin Heper, E. Fuat Keyman, Sabri Sayarı, and Feryaz Ocakli all support the statement that the Republic of Turkey has and continues to engage in clientelist politics.

Therefore, the onus is to link the constituency of German-Turks to Turkish clientelist politics. The theme of Stokes article is that the patron will seek to engage his constituents with material goods and threaten to take them away if the patron sees a threat of disloyalty from those

constituents. Therefore, when attempting to define a political situation regarding clientelist exchange, the situation must have elements defining what the specific material goods are. In the context of Turkish-Germans, this research will present the development of new executive offices and preferential treatment for potential clients in Germany as the primary material good that the AKP is presenting to German-Turks.

As German-Turks have only been voting in Germany since 2014, scholarship on the specific aspects of clientelism among German-Turks is limited. What there is no doubt about though is the level of support that the AKP enjoys in Germany, and the necessity of this using the German-Turkish constituency to consolidate power in Turkey. The election of 2014 and Presidential referendum of 2017 were close votes: therefore, the use of clientelist politics among German-Turks can be seen as President Erdoğan utilized multiple methods to enforce German-Turks support and willingness to vote for himself and the AKP, as well as rewarding these voters with easier access to their rights as citizens.

Methodology

The previous sections presented an introduction to clientelism, and how the concept of clientelism will be used in this research. This section will repeat what the specific questions to be answered in this research is, and how that question will be answered. Some underlying facts guide this research. Firstly, it is supported by scholarship that a substantial majority of German-Turks support President Erdoğan and the AKP (Schuster). Secondly, the scholarship also supports the statement that clientelism exists in Turkish politics (Heper and Keyman, Sayarı, Yildirim). Both of these statements are supported by facts.

The answer to the research question will be underpinned by a qualitative approach. The evidence gathered to support the conclusion of the research and to support the assumptions made

to guide the research are composed of substantial amounts of previous research on clientelism in Turkey. The sources I will use to describe the political environment among German-Turks include contemporary studies and observations from German news sources as well as the German-subsiary of the Aspen Institute. Also used is Murat Erdoğan and Şahin Zeynep's 2016 study of the implementation of voting from abroad in Turkish elections, which primarily focuses on Turks voting in Germany.

The approach of this research design is mainly a qualitative perspective, mostly utilizing document analysis to define, understand and explain the questions and results of this research. Most of the documents analyzed are either prior scholarship, mostly articles, as well as journal and newspaper articles showing more contemporary events. Print media is the primary source of these articles.

Following this analysis, two examples will be presented, the 2014 Turkish elections and the 2017 Turkish Presidential Referendum. The use of document analysis in defining clientelism and how it can be used in the Turkish context will be applied to these two case studies. To analyze the results gathered, the research presented will be compared against the theoretical approach as defined by the combination of Kitschelt, Wilkinson, and Stokes definitions and guidelines. Again, document analysis and the discussion of examples are the primary methods of research, and the collection of data comes from secondary sources from scholars and journalists.

To help explain the use of clientelism among German-Turks, the background will be provided from three significant studies from Metin Heper and E. Fuat Keyman, Sabri Sayarı, and Feryaz Ocakli. All three of these works are central to understanding the link between Turkish domestic politics and political action in Germany. Heper's and Keyman's work is a 1998 study of the use of patronage in Turkey and is the oldest work used in my research. Sayarı's work is a

2016 study on contemporary uses of clientelism in Turkey and focuses on an interdisciplinary approach between sociology and political science. This work is essential, as the governing party in Turkey, AKP, has consolidated power substantially since the last elections in 2014 (Ocakli, 501).

All of these works present substantial evidence as to how clientelism in Turkey exists and operates. Further justification on how linkages are made between Turkey and German-Turks is provided by multiple studies and contemporary articles in journals, magazines, and newspapers. Erdoğan 's and Şahin's discussion of the implementation of voting from abroad in Turkish elections is the primary work that will demonstrate the importance of German-Turks in Turkish elections, and why German-Turks were allowed to vote from abroad. All of these works are quite contemporary. However, voting from abroad in Turkish elections only began in 2014. Therefore, the linkages between clientelism in Turkey and the implementation of clientelism among German-Turks in Germany must be completed using analysis that is still in the process of being absorbed and understood.

Fortunately, German-Turks have been voting in Turkish elections for a more extended period than 2014 (Erdoğan and Şahin, 173). Previously, German-Turks who decided to vote left Germany and flew to Turkey to participate in elections. Linkages to German-Turks, therefore, have existed before 2014. Another strength of this evidence, presented by Schuster and Cornell is that the use of surveillance among the electorate, and threats made against Turkish voters and citizens who are not (in the government's public view) "loyal" to the governing regime, are public knowledge. None of this information is made known through conjecture.

How Clientelism Started in Turkey

Having established the definition of clientelism used in this project, the use of clientelism in Turkish politics will be explained. Since the mid-1970s, there have been two major research waves on political clientelism in Turkey (Heper and Keyman, 260). While the primary focus of the early studies was on traditional patron-client relations in the rural small-towns and villages, recent research has been primarily concerned with clientelistic networks and patronage distribution among the urban poor in the low-income districts of the major cities, especially Istanbul (Heper and Keyman, 262). Programmatic appeals, the popularity of the leaders, and the management of the economy are essential in shaping the preferences of the voters in Turkey (Yildirim). But an equally important factor is the distribution of goods and services in exchange for votes through political clientelism and patronage (Yildirim).

Clientelism in Turkey 1945-2003

Heper's and Keyman's, as well as Sayarı's research, will be used to demonstrate a basic history of clientelism in Turkey up until the election of Erdoğan 's AKP at the beginning of the new millennium. Turkish politics did not revolve around the pros and cons of sound socio-economic policies. Instead, political patronage was the primary strategy of obtaining votes, and religion became increasingly used for political purposes. To obtain votes, the strategies of vote-buying were heavily depended on to build loyal electorates. The emergence of Tayyip Erdoğan and the AKP introduced new-Islamist politics into the Turkish electorate.

Clientelism in Turkey has deep historical roots dating back to the strict social structure of the Ottoman Empire (Sayarı, 665). Many of the same "Notable" families who extracted labor and taxes from the peasants surrounding them were among the first to seize opportunities in power within the new Turkish Republic (Heper and Keyman, 262). These notables became crucial for the rural and often even the urban support of the new regime (Heper and Keyman, 264). The

politicization of these existing clientelist linkages between Turkish "Notables" and 16th century peasantry during the formative phase of the multi-party system in Turkey contrasts sharply with the history of democratization in Western Europe (Heper and Keyman, 264). During the time that influential political leaders were assuring their patronage over their constituents, Turkey was being supported with vast amounts of aid from the United States through the Marshall Plan, and was invited to and acceded to NATO (Heper and Keyman, 265). Turkey was seen as an essential ally that was well positioned geographically in the Cold War: the clientelistic politics in Turkey were often seen as a way to ensure elite support for the country's leadership (Heper and Keyman, 265).

At the same time as Turkey was entering NATO and clientelist parties were at their zenith in the midcentury, the Republic of Turkey signed an agreement with West Germany to send hundreds of thousands of workers to rebuild the German economy (Burkhardt and Seifert, 2). The workers chosen to be sent were often poor, from rural areas in Anatolia (Burkhardt and Seifert, 2). These workers would have long known the traditions of clientelism in rural Turkey, and they took their experiences and expectations with them to Germany. This population would continue to grow and permanently settle in Germany: a large population of conservative, Islamic Turks that supported their home government in Turkey and would continue to maintain intimate ties with their homeland.

Clientelism during this time was characterized by factors that Kitschelt and Wilkinson identified that would belong to a country with low economic development until Turkish liberalization at the end of the 20th century. These factors were heavily influenced by the previously mentioned Notables, who would control their local constituencies by providing their supporters with healthcare, jobs in government and local industries loyal to himself, as well as

restricting the role of opposing politicians or even potentially troublesome developments (Heper and Keyman, Yildirim).

With the end of the 20th century and the end of the Cold War, Turkey's national leadership liberalized the country's economy, allowing greater economic prosperity and setting the country on pace for decades of fast economic growth (Heper and Keyman, 274). The traditional facets of Turkish clientelism were reduced during this time. Secularism rose in importance, and the military initiated arrests and a coup in the 1990s in order to stem the tide of growing strains of conservative Islamic politics in Turkey (Heper and Keyman, 275).

The release of Tayyip Erdoğan from prison at the end of the 1990s after an unapologetically pro-Islamic and illegal speech he made while Mayor of Istanbul gave conservative Turks a new figure to rally around (Friedman). Erdoğan was seen at this time (in clear opposition to his previous speech) as a moderate concentrated on economic growth and prosperity for Turks. This attitude would change in later years of his rule within the AKP (Hossain and Shukri, 8).

Clientelism in Turkey 2003-Today

Multiple scholar's research, especially Sayarı's and Ocaklı's, will be used to describe the state of clientelism from the emergence of the AKP onward. AKP has continuously increased its voting margin and has also sustained that level of support through traditional methods of clientelism in Turkey. While the AKP initially became a more pluralistic political platform based on increasing economic opportunities for all Turks and lessening dependence on traditional ethnic fault lines, events of the past decades put that progress to a complete halt and reversal.

Scholars including Hossain and Shukri, Ocaklı, Özgün, and Sayarı have determined that a new phase of Turkish politics has been entered since the AKP entered power at the beginning of

the century. This new phase is more than the commonly identified type of personalist clientelism or real abuse of power. Many public procurement bids, public land sales, and privatizations of considerable size go through the system only with the active intervention and blessing leaders in the Turkish government (Ocakli, 502).

This new clientelism serves less for the personal gains of party officials and more to sustain the party's grip on power and to further its political goals. The desire to sustain party power and further political goals is a primary reason why the AKP allowed the Turkish diaspora to vote from abroad in 2014 (Erdoğan and Şahin).

However, President Erdoğan 's new clientelism operates through two principal sources of revenue, in addition to the regular government budget, to function. The prime minister (who President Erdoğan effectively controls) commands a large and secret discretionary fund (Yildirim). Legally, the prime minister can allocate this money as he or she pleases without any oversight or accountability (Yildirim). Furthermore, the prime minister can keep what he spends the money on a secret. This account has increased more than tenfold since the AKP came to power in 2003 (Yildirim).

Another feature of this system is the substantial rent-seeking system of procurement bids operating with AKP and Erdoğan allies. AKP officials and President Erdoğan himself encourage prominent business people in Turkey to "donate" their money to support AKP supported business ventures, notably including those led by the President's son, Bilal (Yildirim). Sometimes Imams will publish religious edicts that justify these "donations" (Yildirim). Public evidence of these AKP-supported (perhaps even mandatory) donations does exist (Sayarı, 665). When one of Turkey's biggest newspapers, Sabah, was up for sale, the then-Prime Minister Erdoğan asked several business owners who were close to him to "donate" to buy the newspaper

and maintain its control, which they did in 2013, according to various audio tapes made public (Yildirim).

Traditionally and contemporarily, the giving of jobs, money and other services is the most prominent use of clientelist policies among the general population (Sayarı, 665). There are constant allegations of nepotism and favoritism within the hiring of government agencies (Yildirim). The extensive control of the media by Erdoğan and the AKP allows for consistently favorable coverage in the public and private media outlets (Yildirim). Opposition parties on the other hand rarely have any serious positive coverage, in the same outlets, which further enhances the AKP's ability to win public opinion (Hossain and Shukri, 8). Furthermore, the lower classes are often dependent on the government's subsidized health care (Heper and Keyman). Heper and Keyman note this correctly as "free coal, free food, and free primary school textbooks for the poor and disadvantaged segments of society" (Heper and Keyman). These subsidies are usually strategically targeted to ensure acquiescence and support from a large segment of the lower income population (Yildirim).

Turkish Politics in Germany

The following section is a historical approach towards understanding the organization of Turkish politics in Germany. Turks have lived in large numbers in Germany since the early 1960s, and my research has identified three critical components towards the organization of politics, official and unofficial. First of these critical factors is the large numbers of Turks in Germany, creating a critical constituency for Turkish politicians. The second factor is the use of official religious organizations, specifically Diyanet and DiTiB, to influence voter choices. The third and final key factor is the extreme and increasing ethnic polarization and conflict that exists among German-Turks; especially between the majority Sunni and minority Kurdish population.

Turkish Guest Workers

A brief historical understanding of how so many Turks came to Germany is necessary. After the destruction of the Second World War, the West German government sorely needed the workforce to replace the destruction of its working force (Bartsch et al.). Agreements were made with a host of foreign nations, from Morocco and Spain to Italy, Greece, and Turkey (Burkhardt and Seifart, 2). Potential Turkish workers were in abundance; the Turkish government was looking for ways to reduce its population in the central part of the country, Anatolia, and the opportunity to send hundreds of thousands of these men to Germany to gain skills and rid the Turkish government of idle labor was too excellent to pass up (Bartsch et al.).

For the first few decades, from the initial agreement in 1963 until nearly German reunification in 1990, the German government and population widely assumed that these guest workers (Gastarbeiter as they became known in the German language) would just get up and leave and go back from where they came (Bartsch et al.). But with the vast needs of German industry, and the cheap labor compared to their ethnic German counterparts, these Gastarbeiters were going nowhere. In fact, two decades after the first Turks entered Germany to work; the German government began allowing their spouses and families to come and permanently settle in Germany with them; three decades later, this initial population of under a million has blossomed to potentially nearly five million today (Bartsch et al.).

This legacy of industrial labor continues to be felt among the German-Turkish community. German-Turks are poor (Reay). They have the lowest level of education and monetary success among any ethnic group in Germany (Elger et al.). Efforts to increase levels of German-language training and advanced schooling have not only flat-lined but during the last decade, German-Turks have created a backlash against such initiatives (Dieler et al.). Today,

German-Turks, including the second and third generation, increasingly believe that it is not necessary to learn the German language to integrate into German society (Dieler et al.).

Citizenship Laws

For the entire existence of the unified German state since the Empire was proclaimed in 1875, citizenship in Germany has been defined regarding blood-and-ethnic citizenship, like most ethnically homogenous European nation-states (Dempsey). However, as Gastarbeiters in increasing numbers settled in Germany for good, and as Germany began increasing the levels of refugees allowed in the country for humanitarian reasons issuing from the Wars in Yugoslavia and conflicts in Iraqi Kurdistan and the former Soviet Union, this idea of citizenship was increasingly questioned, and ultimately changed (Kaya, 484).

In the 1990s and 2000s, the post-Cold War atmosphere of more inclusive understandings of citizenship led the German government to reform how German citizenship could be attained. Obtaining citizenship became easier for non-ethnic Germans. The German government liberalized the definition of who could be a German citizen, as well as laws regarding dual-citizenship (Kaya, 484). The dual-citizenship changes were significant because German-Turks are exceptionally reluctant to give up their Turkish citizenship: German-Turks as much as any other diaspora seek to keep close ties to their former home-nation (Kaya, 484).

However, a decade after the moderate-conservative party of Tayyip Erdoğan came to power, the willingness of German-Turks to become German citizens, as well as the willingness of the German government to allow increasingly nationalist German-Turks to take advantage of dual-citizenship, is quickly waning (Dempsey). German citizens, media, and political parties have called for more significant restrictions on allowing nationalistic German-Turks, prone to violent rhetoric and bombastic claims to become German citizens (Kaya, 486). But the

willingness of German-Turks to become German citizens is already waning anyway (Dempsey).

Diyamet and DiTiB

The most effective and influential way for the Turkish government to influence the affairs of its diaspora is through the government's official religious organizations. The Presidency of Religious Affairs, known as Diyanet, controls where Islamic Imams are sent, and even what they are allowed to preach (sometimes going as far as to send specific sermons to preach on certain days) (Cornell). Specifically, the Diyanet, Turkey's official office of religion, selects and regulates the civil servants and Imams that staff Turkey's overseas mosques and consulates (Schuster).

Within the Diyanet, DiTiB is the Diyanet in Germany. DiTiB stands for the Turkish-Islamic Union of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Yildirim). DiTiB also acts as the official counselor for religious and social affairs at Turkey's consulates and the embassy in Germany (Yildirim). For decades, DiTiB was hailed as a moderating influence on Islam among German-Turks (Yildirim). However, the political-Islamist influenced AKP has seized upon the potential of DiTiB, and actively uses Imams and Mosques for heightening the influence of the AKP and political-Islam in general (Schuster).

However, DiTiB has become infamous for more nefarious reasons. After the attempted coup in Turkey in 2016, conflicts between rival Turkish factions in Germany produced wide-distrust from the German government. Not only were Imams castigating and encouraging retribution against supposed "traitors," but many Imams were also becoming suspected of helping Turkish authorities identify anti-AKP citizens in their communities (Schuster). German journalist Denis Yücel (who was subsequently jailed in Turkey as a dual-citizen) discovered and leaked secret Turkish communiques instructing DiTiB Imams to track and report their followers

believed to be loyal to "enemy" factions, such as those of Fethullah Gülen (primarily blamed for the coup-attempt), PKK communists and sympathizers, and potential ISIS recruits (Cornell). At least 13 Imams names were explicitly named in the concurrent controversy (Cornell).

Overseas Voting

Overseas voting was finally realized in Turkish elections in 2014 after a longtime debate. While opposing parties saw the timing of overseas voting legalization as a strategic move, support for the measure was high enough to disregard their fears (Erdoğan and Şahin). Turks in Germany historically flew back to Turkey to vote: many German-Turks indeed did just that (Erdoğan and Şahin). Beginning in 2014 German-Turks could vote at consulates and 25th embassy in Berlin (Schuster). The size of the Turkish-German constituency is considerable. Winning Turkish-German votes is a significant achievement for the winning party. Erdoğan and his party scored very well among the Turks in Germany (Reay). For example, 570,000 Turkish voters in Germany took part in the snap election of November 2015, with 59.7 percent voting for the AKP. In no other European-Turkish diaspora did the AKP score as high as in Germany (Cornell).

However, this strong showing in the diaspora would not have been possible without several years spent on systematic forging and strengthening of ties between Ankara and the Turkish diasporas abroad, not only in Germany and other European countries but also in the United States (Yildirim). Initiated by the previous lay governments, this effort has further intensified since the conservative AKP came to power in 2002 (Yildirim). Ankara's policy with the Turkish diasporas has aimed at strengthening the role of Turkish associations, making them more prepared for action and able to have a more significant impact on public discussion and debate in countries abroad (Yildirim).

In Germany, it was the Union of the European-Turkish Democrats (UETD) that began playing a critical role in dominating debate and discourse (Yildirim). The organization was created and still acts as an arm of the AKP in Germany (Yildirim). Its representatives were the formal organizers of the election rallies in support of Erdoğan, and they were the ones calling on the German Turks to come out into the streets in condemnation of the attempt to oust Erdoğan's government. Calls for loyalty and public shaming of segments of Turkish-German society that do not fall in line primarily come from the UETD. The UETD are a large part of the AKP's monitoring efforts to enforce loyalty among German-Turks.

Analysis of the Cases

This section will present an analysis of how clientelism is affecting the Turkish diaspora in Germany. To understand how German-Turks are affected by Turkish clientelist politics, it must first be explained why German-Turks are vulnerable to and willing to engage in clientelist politics. The implementation of voting from abroad in Turkish elections was first utilized in 2014. However Turkish-Germans already voted in Turkish elections before then, and this section will first link the German-Turkish population to Turkish clientelism before 2014. This analysis will show that German-Turks were exposed to clientelism before they were allowed to vote in Germany.

Following the short analysis of overseas voting, an analysis of ethnic conflict among German-Turks will explain how President Erdoğan and the AKP can seize upon the Sunni population in Germany. A second vulnerability and method of clientelist politics among German-Turks is the use of the Turkish surveillance-state to spy-on and enforce loyalty among the German-Turkish population.

Political Islam and the AKP

Before analyzing how the AKP uses its state organs and less official resources to monitor and enforce loyalty to the party, it is essential to understand how political Islam relates to the AKP and the party's clientelist politics. The AKP can only be understood in the German-Turkish context as a party which utilizes political-Islam to achieve its goals. What is needed is a definition of political-Islam and a sufficient explanation as to how the AKP is using political-Islam to achieve its goals.

What is clear is that the AKP has used Diyanet to implement a new ideology. The rhetoric of the victimization of Islam is hugely beneficial for the AKP to use in Germany, where significant politicians and political parties often pronounce their opposition to any vocal Islam in Germany for many different reasons (Johnson, Allen-Ebrahimian). The AKPs use of Islamic rhetoric and speech that promotes "Islamic values" has increased in the past decade (Hossain and Shukri, 7).

However, the AKP has never explicitly defined itself as an Islamist party (Hossain and Shukri, 8). The AKP is a conservative party that has pragmatically utilized Islam as a part of its ideology, making it more popular for social conservatives at home and abroad. This pragmatism can be seen in the soft adaptation of norms that recommend or encourage women to wear headscarves in public, but allow for dissenters to not wear them, for example, young women at Turkish Universities protesting the wearing of the headscarf (Kaya, 485). This pragmatism has certainly waned since the consolidation of AKP power after the failed coup attempt of 2017 (Reay).

The conclusion for this research is that while the AKP cannot be called an explicitly Islamist party, its embrace of many actions and policies that are popular of political-Islamists is a specific strategy that has been put into widespread use, especially in the German-Turkish

constituency. The AKP has used Diyanet and DiTiB to monitor the German-Turkish constituency and influence German-Turks in Mosques, using officially AKP-sanctioned sermons (Schuster).

Spying on German-Turks

According to Kitschelt and Wilkinson, politicians engaging in clientelist policies do not want to misdirect their resources (18). Low-cost and nonviolent monitoring is always preferred to violent reprisals against disloyal citizens (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 23). The display of party signs and colors in public is a high-profile way to allow public pledges of support (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 23).

The monitoring of German-Turks by the AKP is an integral part of this research. "Monitoring groups of voters... and then rewarding or punishing the group is much more efficient than monitoring...individuals, especially where party organizations are weak and in elections with large numbers of voters dispersed over a wide area" (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 17). In Germany foreign campaigning is illegal, and German-Turks are half a continent away from the central electorate, therefore making it necessary for the AKP to use its state-run networks to monitor the loyalty of German-Turks.

The government of Turkey uses multiple methods of monitoring, from large displays of widespread support to widespread surveillance through the country's network of Imams in Germany (Schuster). My evidence to support the spying of Diyanet on German-Turks is the public news and investigation of government-sponsored Imams in Germany (Schuster; Cornell). These Imams were not only accused of spying on potential enemies of President Erdoğan and the AKP, but have already admitted to the allegations, and been removed from the country (Schuster). Over a dozen Imams have been recalled back to Turkey, avoiding further

investigation and legal penalties. The AKP apparently could not trust its diaspora after the coup attempt of 2016. The Presidential Referendum of 2017 was expected to be close: ensuring that disloyal Turks and competition was exposed and weakened was undoubtedly a primary reason for these Turkish Civil Servants to betray the trust of their congregations.

Turkey's official Intelligence Agency, MIT, has also repeatedly been accused of operating a strong network of up to 6,000 agents and informers in Germany (Johnson). Such widespread monitoring betrays the AKPs confidence in the German-Turkish electorate. Even if the supposed size of the operation were only half as large, such meddling within a diaspora abroad is undoubtedly incredibly intimidating for German-Turks and any Turk abroad.

AKP vs. Kurds and Gülenists

The AKP has long depended on the majority-Sunni population in Turkey for domestic support (Yildirim). The majority of Turkish Germans are also Sunni (Dieler et al., 4.). However, many of the Turks who left Turkey as Gastarbeiters and in ensuing decades left not only because they needed jobs, but because they were fleeing persecution and violence (Schuster). For decades the Alevi sect in Turkey was not allowed to publicly proclaim its existence (Özgun, 540). Kurds have been historically oppressed, and the insurgency between Kurds and the government in Ankara has lasted decades (Özgun, 540). Many Kurds are sympathizers and members of the Kurdish socialist and communist groups and are therefore much safer in Germany than in Turkey (Ocakli, 502).

Finally, the cleric Fethullah Gülen, who established hundreds of schools, mosques, and training institutions worldwide, has had a pronounced influence among Sunni-Turks (Ocakli, 502). For many years Gülen was an ally of Tayyip Erdoğan until the power struggle between the two led to a dramatic split (Schuster). This split resulted in controversy and conspiracy theories,

as President Erdoğan continually blames Gülen inspired and led bureaucrats and soldiers for delaying and hurting his government's policies (Schuster). These fractures between different groups in German Turkish society have emerged violently during the past decade of AKP consolidation and increased levels of outward political Islam (Schuster). DiTiB Imams use violent rhetoric to castigate "non-believing" Turks and PKK communists (Schuster). Disturbances and rival gang violence have wrecked some Turkish neighborhoods, where Turks remain essentially segregated from other Germans in some German cities (Schuster).

The AKP also relies on ethnic splits. Kitschelt and Wilkinson observed that patrons consistently rely on exploiting ethnic differences and conflicts to maintain the support of the targeted group (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 27). In Germany, President Erdoğan has consistently pressured German-Turks to support him in his battle against revolutionary Kurds and other subversive ethnicities, which include Alevis and Armenians (Cupolo). This is an example of the AKP relying on ethno cultural divisions for clientelistic linkages (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 27). These voters can be relied upon because they see themselves as being unfairly compensated by other ethnic groups within the constituency (groups of Kurds of Alevi's that are unpatriotic, revolutionary, or not sufficiently supporting the AKP in Turkey). Mass protests encourage by AKP officials have increasingly broken out on German streets, sometimes turning violent (Reay).

By presenting anti-AKP supporting Turks as the enemy of Turkey and ensuring loyal German-Turks that their best interest and only hope for real support in Europe is the AKP, President Erdoğan has used these over one million loyal Turks as his method of consolidating AKP power and extending the use of the clientelist state in Turkey.

2014 Election

After linking clientelism in Turkey to the diaspora in Germany, I will use two examples to demonstrate my main ideas. The 2014 Presidential election and the 2017 Presidential referendum will be used as the examples through which to illustrate the above-mentioned forms of clientelism used by the incumbent Turkish government. This will need to be sought through an understanding of the Turkish diaspora in Germany. Germany is an important constituency for Turkish politics: after İstanbul, Ankara, and İzmir it is the fourth largest constituency with about 1.4 million people having the right to vote (Frymark). I argue that President Erdoğan uses the fear of taking away the ability of “disloyal” German-Turks to return home, as well as taking advantage of increased far-right and nativist parties in Germany; “only by supporting AKP can your interests be protected” (Allen-Ebrahimian).

For their part, the AKP government had already begun to develop more severe diaspora engagement policies, rewarding constituents abroad with improved service at diplomatic missions, developing fellowship and scholarship programs for Turkish-German children and creating a new sub-section of the executive office dealing specifically with Turks abroad (Yildirim). The budget for this office was generous and likely helped in its funding by the secretive discretionary budget of the Prime Minister (Yildirim).

The new executive office helping Turks abroad, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Kin Communities was designed and functions to groom current and former citizens abroad, helping any needs they have during their visits to Turkey, giving advice and support for religious services abroad, helping with dual citizenship paperwork, streamlining pensions for older German-Turks and ensuring their political rights while abroad (Yildirim). This aid to Turks in Germany does not exist in sectors of Turkish society like Kurds in the south of Turkey or of

Alevi's in the west of the country and in Anatolia, where they are often harassed, oppressed and sometimes prevented from voting (Özgun).

This method of clientelism rewards loyal German-Turks with high levels of care and support. In return for supporting the AKP's consolidation of power, German-Turks enjoy unprecedented access and low levels of bureaucracy not enjoyed by many Turks back in Turkey (Erdoğan and Şahin, 179). These changes to diaspora policies were explicitly made with the 2014 election in mind (Erdoğan and Şahin, 177). They were made in the run-up to the national elections, in which the AKP needed to consolidate power and begin making significant changes to the political system, most notably creating a more powerful Presidency for AKP leader Erdoğan. The rapid move towards implementation of voting from abroad was widely seen as politically motivated, creating concerns about the integrity of the election concerning ballot secrecy and transparency, which were both features of Turkish clientelism in the past (Erdoğan and Şahin, 175).

As described by Kitschelt and Wilkinson, these methods are known as programmatic linkages (32). The AKP runs a program of sponsorships, executive offices that actively aid German-Turks, and monetary support for German-Turks who decide to visit or return home (Yildirim). These are selective material incentives for Turkish-German voters, who have only recently received these benefits, as well as the benefit of voting in elections from Germany. These kinds of linkages meet the definition as established by Kitschelt and Wilkinson.

Ultimately, in the 2014 elections, then-Presidential Candidate Erdoğan received 63 percent of the votes cast in Germany, while receiving only 51 percent of the vote in Turkey itself (Cornell). While the number of voters in Germany was unexpectedly low (only a little over five hundred thousand) German-Turkish voters did affect the outcome of the election, if only

moderately (Kazim). Erdoğan secured the Presidency by a slight margin and was only elected in the first round with votes from abroad (Erdoğan and Şahin, 177). The rapid implementation of diaspora engagement policies worked. Erdoğan voters were rewarded with more significant influence in Turkey, streamlined bureaucracy and an increased position in Turkish society.

2017 Referendum

“A clear majority of Turkish voters living in Germany cast "yes" ballots for Erdoğan 's autocratic presidential system. In Turkey, the result was so close that it's possible that votes from Turks living abroad may even have proven decisive. Despite living in democracies and freedom and safety, these people have essentially voted to eliminate democracy in Turkey" (Kazim, 2017).

Such was the depressing observation that ethnic Turkish journalist Hasnain Kazim made following the after the 2017 Presidential referendum that rewarded President Erdoğan with greater Presidential powers, giving him greater powers to unilaterally change laws and the makeup of the country's judiciary for example (Cupolo). Following the attempted coup of summer 2016, President Erdoğan made short work of his domestic opponents, and every major political party in Turkey quickly fell behind him, supporting his bid for increased power. Still, however, the results were close, even as widespread allegations of vote-fixing and fraud disseminated not only in Turkey but Germany. For Erdoğan and the AKP, this referendum was a necessary bid to guarantee the continuity of their ideas for consolidating power and expanding their influence in a Turkey where the checks on power (especially the military) were incredibly weakened after the failed coup.

Nearly one million German-Turks voted in the 2017 Referendum (Kazim). Essential to maintaining linkages abroad for the Turkish government is the fact that Germany has been

incredibly reluctant to grant full citizenship to the vast majority of Turks for decades. Even the change of Constitutional citizenship laws at the end of the last Millennium have failed to make significant changes to this. Turks abroad maintain deep ties to Turkey, and the Turkish diaspora in Germany continues to grow in both sheer numbers and influence, as the 2017 Presidential referendum goes a long way to underscore such circumstances. German-Turks voted 63.2 percent in favor of giving President Erdoğan greater powers, in contrast to the slim percentage of 51.3 percent in Turkey proper (Schultz). Just under 50 percent of Germany's 1.5 million Turkish citizens voted in the Referendum (BBC). Without the votes from Germany, President Erdoğan's victory margin would have been well under a million votes: if the claims of widespread fraud in Turkey had been acted upon, the votes from Germany might well have been nearly decisive in the Referendum (Cupolo).

The referendum further proves how the AKP is systematically using the same techniques of intimidation, large-scale mobilization and manipulation in making sure that the parties, and especially President Erdoğan's, interests are successfully maintained. Widespread voter manipulation, harassment, and fraud were reported in Turkey proper (Cupolo). Ahead of the election, European-wide populations of Turks reported intimidation and harassment (Cornell). In the Netherlands and Germany, pro-government lobbyists and official DiTiB and Diyanet members repeatedly enforced mechanisms of fear upon the population. "When I went to vote they called me a traitor if you're critical of Erdoğan you're considered disloyal to Turkey. Fear is the biggest problem among Turks here. They say if I go to Turkey they'll get me and lock me up. Gulenists have a lot of death threats, every day it's getting worse. I'm afraid someone will get killed," said one intimidated voter (Cornell).

This kind of politics demonstrates how the AKP and its allies treat potential opposition supporters, and voters are designed to put pressure on German-Turks. The pressure on German-Turks has become so severe, allegations of the Turkish Intelligence Agency (MIT) spying and intimidating voters in Germany became widespread; widespread enough that members of the Bundestag officially requested investigations of the MIT's activities within Germany (Johnson). Opposition Greens parliamentarian Hans-Christian Ströbele told the "Die Welt am Sonntag" that there was an "unbelievable" level of "secret activities" in Germany by Turkey's MIT agency (Johnson). This method of surveillance and monitoring aligns with the kind of strategic linkages that Kitschelt and Wilkinson maintain are critical for patrons to ensure the loyalty of their electorate.

Conclusion

This thesis explores the political connections between the Republic of Turkey and the German-Turkish diaspora. Through a combination of purposeful ethnic agitation, encouragement of support for political-Islamic ideas, and the constant monitoring of the German-Turkish electorate, the AKP, and President Erdoğan have cultivated a reliable and significant voting bloc that is demonstrably loyal to the incumbent government.

Through the examples and exploration of the methods with which the Turkish government has used to cultivate this loyalty, this thesis has argued why so many German-Turks support President Erdoğan and the AKP at high levels. The history of Turkish politics supported researching through the lens of clientelism. The tradition of clientelism in Turkey extends not decades, but centuries, to an agrarian, imperial time when local Notables held sway over their local peasantry. Turkish politics and society changed significantly, but the importance of clientelist linkages has been maintained during the existence of the Turkish Republic.

The beginning of the thesis introduced the background of the German-Turkish relationship. Following was a discussion on what clientelism is, and the specific use of clientelism in politics was then explained using definitions and explanations from the research of Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, as well as Susan Stokes.

This thesis linked the use of clientelist politics in Turkey to the German-Turks' constituency. The ability of the AKP to split opposition and maintain a hard grip on a voting bloc that exists within a nation that has enmity for much of the AKP's electoral strategy and tactics (Germany) is remarkable; illegal spying, significant ethnic quarrels and clashes, and vitriolic political rallies are foreign to a nation like Germany. Furthermore, this thesis has sought to explore how domestic Turkish politics affects and is affected by, politics in the German-Turkish diaspora. President Erdoğan and the AKP actively cultivate the support of German-Turks. Without them, President Erdoğan's electoral grip can be severely weakened.

The contributions of this thesis to the literature discussing contemporary Turkish politics is how the changing dynamic of politics in Turkey is affecting the countries significant diasporas abroad, and how those diasporas (largest among them in Germany) are affecting Turkish politics. This contribution to current literature suggests that Turkish political leaders are becoming more internationally-focused and relying on their constituents in Germany to support them when they cannot rely on political support at home.

Further research must more closely examine specific mechanisms and outcomes of the Turkish government's and executive institution's attempts to consolidate influence in Germany. Significant changes in the Turkish political order, in Turkey as well as in Germany, have taken place in a matter of years. However, with this consolidation further authoritarian initiatives beyond the Presidential Referendum have also occurred (Özgun). Turkish elections may become

ever-more predictable as the power of opposing political parties' wanes. Further research can also help to understand why a majority of the Turkish diaspora is willing to vote for significantly different political parties in Germany and in Turkey. By looking more closely at the motivations and experiences of Turkish-Germans, future researchers will be capable of understanding the dynamics of Germany's largest minority.

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