

Humanizing the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: Legacy Across the Generations

by

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Abstract

The Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) Conflict has become a threshold of the revival of the Armenian state and national consciousness. The conflict, which continues to be unresolved for over thirty years, resulted in continuous small and big clashes, creating an environment of imminent danger. This capstone project looks at families with distinct socio-economic and geopolitical backgrounds that have lived through the NK conflict. It aims to analyse their inter-generational communication and family narratives to understand how the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has shaped people and how people, in turn, feel about the concepts of motherland, war and 'Armenianness'.

Acknowledgments

The idea of this capstone was ‘conceived’ when the 44-day Nagorno-Karabakh War started in September 2020. At that point, no one had a clue of what was going to happen. Probably, if not all of us, but most of us were 100% sure that we will win because that was all we had known till then. But as time went by, it was harder and harder each time to come back and write a proposal based on such a vulnerable topic. Nevertheless, in different stages of this project, many people supported and cheered me to stay true to my initial idea and do it as planned.

This capstone project endured war, deaths of very dear people, overwhelming shock and grief, indescribable rage, endless disappointment, countless protests, senseless arrests, however, at the end of the day, this project is about love: love towards homeland, love towards family, love towards peace and love towards strangers, whom you call Armenian.

Փակիր աչքերդ, տղաս,
արցունքի պես թեթև մարմինդ
հանձնում ենք հողին:
ասե՛լ, որ սա պատերազմ էր
գրքերի ու մարդկանց միջև,
և հաղթեցին ճանճերը
սատկած

...

Ինչպե՛ս ասել, տղաս,
որ դու հիմա ծանր ես թարթիչի չափ
և կուրծքդ՝ կրծոտած բառերով լի սափոր՝ քարով ջարդված,
ի՞նչ բառերով պատմել քեզ այս ձյունը, թափորը մարդկանց,
ինչպե՛ս ասել քեզ, որ դու չկաս...

—Հասմիկ Սիմոնյան (2020)

First and foremost, my dear reader, I would like to thank all the people who went to fight and die, fight and live for this glorious homeland we call Armenia. Eternal glory to the heroes who died with a determination to protect the motherland and those who continue to live and serve for the sake of statehood.

I want to thank my supervisor, Dr. Hourig Attarian. This road definitely was not the easiest one, and she stayed beside me to listen to all my hours-long concerns, worries and fears, to give much-needed support and comfort for the project and future. This capstone project was deeply motivated by her oral history course, which opened up very new and surreal horizons for understanding human nature and being organic between and within. Thank you for listening to and giving me a moment to breathe, Dr. Attarian.

I would like also to thank Dr. Hrag Papazian, who guided me during the first stages of this capstone and provided me with valuable feedback regarding how the project would be best represented. In addition, his Cultural Geography course was the inspiration behind the second component of my capstone project: digitized mapping.

I express my sincerest gratitude to all my interviewees who took their time to talk with me about very vulnerable topics and were extremely kind and genuine to be there for further assistance in the later stages of the project. I would like here again to mention all their names because this project would not be without those interviews:

Poghos Khamoyan, Mkrtych Khamoyan, Gayane Asaturian, Shahen Mutafian, Narine Arakelyan, Armen Hadimosyan, Karen Hadimosyan, Minas Ivanov, Armen Ivanov, Arthur Ivanyan and Monika Ivanyan. Thank you yet again for your invaluable contribution, for your patience and the trust that you hold for me.

In this section, I cannot not mention my family and their immense support and belief in what I do; this goes not only for this last half a year, but all my undergraduate education and beyond. They put each and every effort to make my studies possible, as well as, listened to my continuous complaints, found right words to make me believe in myself and supported me unconditionally in all my endeavours.

I am also highly grateful to my friends, who were there from the very beginning of this project and assisted as much as they could, starting with the organization of interviews, and finding possible candidates, to cheering me up when I was devastated and overwhelmed, motivating and pushing me to do this so I will not have regrets later on.

Here I would love to mention my support team members: Ani Galstyan and Lusine Zoryan, who I am sure will do an excellent job in their respective capstones. You were there for me with every question, be it technical or general. I am happy to be able to work with you on the very last and most important project in our college years and share this journey with you.

Lastly, but not least, I would like to thank my capstone. It challenged me on so many different levels and made me grow without even understanding it. This was an eye-opening experience, which allowed me to become a bit closer to what is called an "Armenian Identity" and understand how complex a concept it is.

Thank You.

Introduction

The Nagorno-Karabakh movement and the first war (1988-1994) has been an integral part of Armenian identity for the last three generations at least. The notions of "victory" and "winners" I assume unconsciously, and perhaps, unintentionally, had become part of the Armenian upbringing system. The choice of this capstone topic corresponded with the start of the second Nagorno-Karabakh war in September 2020. I realized overnight at the time that my capstone should be connected with Artsakh in some way; however, I had quite a hard time understanding what it should be about.

The history of the conflict traces back to the 1920s when communist-controlled Russia set its sights on newly independent states of the Caucasus – Armenia and Azerbaijan. At first, it was settled that Karabakh would be part of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, but the Soviets' new Commissar of Nationalities, Joseph Stalin, reversed the decision. As a result, in 1923, Nagorno-Karabakh became an autonomous administrative region of the Azerbaijan S.S.R., despite the fact of Armenians being the ethnic majority population (94%) (Blakemore, 2020). In the 1980s, with the steady collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) and Armenia started to raise their concerns due to which the regional parliament of Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast officially voted to unite with Armenia (Blakemore, 2020).

On one side, Azerbaijan tried to suppress the separatist notions, and on the other, Armenia backed the national 'awakening' movement. In 1991, when both Azerbaijan and Armenia declared their independence, a full-scale war erupted. The first Nagorno-Karabakh war subsequently resulted in thousands of deaths and over a million displaced population from both

sides. Eventually, Armenian forces gained control over Nagorno-Karabakh, and a Russian-negotiated ceasefire was declared in 1994. The Nagorno-Karabakh Line of Contact has been since established, separating Armenian and Azerbaijani forces (Blakemore, 2020).

The Organization for Security and Co-Operation (OSCE) Minsk group was set up in 1992, co-chaired by France, Russia and the US, intending to mediate peace talks (OSCE, 2011). Nonetheless, the clashes have continued systematically, with the first serious flare-up in 2016 during the Four-day war, and in 2020, which evolved into another full-scale war.

Being quite heavily involved in volunteer work in Yerevan during the 44-day war in fall 2020, I clearly understood that my experience of war could not be compared with those who were forced to flee their homes, not to mention the soldiers. Even though this understanding made me feel extremely uncomfortable and self-conscious, in fact, it helped me to concentrate my attention on how the same reality can have thousands of perspectives and interpretations. Thus, I realized that it would be interesting to research and examine the experiences of people from various cultural and social backgrounds, regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

For me, it is essential to represent the conflict from the human perspective, because the stories of people are lost within the turmoil of media manipulations, aligned with the increasingly rapid pace of life, when the lives of people are determined by the title of media coverage. The very actual tragedies of people become a tool for political agendas and propaganda. I think it is crucial to mention, emphasize, and stress the human factor in the conflicts over and over again.

Starting my preliminary research for the project, I found some other aspects of interconnectedness between conflict, identity and history, which became the pillars of this research.

Literature Review

For my capstone project, I study and explore the multi-layered surfaces of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the two wars (1988-1994 and 2020). I examine the role the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and intergenerational communication have played in the development of national and personal identities, perceptions towards the war, as well as the overall attitude towards the motherland. For my research, it is vital to understand the background of the conflict and how it has evolved into a full-scale war (First Nagorno-Karabakh War: 1988-1994); furthermore, how the memory of it has been passed into future generations and become a foundation for identity shaping.

Nationalism and the Emergence of the Conflict

The history of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict traces back to the end of World War I and the Russian revolution, when the newly established Soviet regime, as part of their divide-and-rule policy, gave control over the 94% Armenian populated Nagorno-Karabakh region to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan. Karabakhi Armenians considered themselves separated from their nation in Armenia, and as a response to their continuous demands to unify with Soviet Armenia, the decree on the creation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) was published in 1923. The declaration meant to be a two-edged sword. On one hand, it created a mirage of embracing Armenian national identity through the laws of the administrative, cultural, social, political, and economic nature, serving the demands of ethnic Armenian majority. On the other hand, it prevented the attachment of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia (Geukjian 2007, p. 2-4).

Nonetheless, apparently, the document never came to reality, in the sense that Armenians in NKAO never practiced real autonomy in the region, and were continuously discriminated against and subordinated to the Azerbaijani nation. Soviet Azerbaijani state policy and propaganda of cultural discrimination were seen as oppression and a direct threat to Armenian national identity (Geukjian 2007, p. 2-4). Nagorno-Karabakh was not the only autonomous region in the Soviet Union facing such predicament. Similarly, some 30 autonomous ethnic territories existed in the USSR, which were a result of Stalin's national delimitation policy.

Anatoly Yamskov (1991) argues that the "ethnic revivals" and following conflicts in the USSR have been inspired by the crisis in the official state ideology. The authoritatively propagandized image encouraged the nations to see themselves as members of a single unified Soviet people. Systematically, the Soviet regime favoured group identification over individual identification, which in fact played as a reverse card, appearing to grow the awareness of people to nationalistic appeals. "Many groups saw the strengthening and deepening of national self-consciousness as the only way to persevere as a nation" (Yamskov 1991, p. 654).

Yamskov argues that in this circumstance, the historical records of past ethnic interrelationships have played a vital role in developing the "we/them" notion that goes hand in hand, with the protection of national pride and dignity. In the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis, the background of the tragic and conflict-ridden history of Armenian and Azeri relations ignited the flame of nationalistic and patriotic spirit (Yamskov 1991, p. 656).

...in a situation of rapidly increasing national self-consciousness and an increased attention to the history of their people, age-old victories and defeats are becoming widely known and are being actively discussed by the broad masses of the population. (Yamskov 1991, p. 656).

He adds that the notion of the national awakening of consciousness includes the notion of "native land" (p. 648). Ohannes Geukjian claims that Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh and

Armenia shared strong attachment to their ethnic identity and determined their actions towards gaining socio-economic and political advantages, thus aiming to unify Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia (Geukjian 2007, p. 236).

Memory, Intergenerational Communication and Identity Shaping

As Andras Keszei (2017) notes, communities, similar to the way individuals construct their identities through narrative reproduced by autobiographical memory, also create accounts of self-interpretation (p. 807). He argues that the interrelated nature of memory, history and identity are vital aspects for all societies in past and present. Thus, these three dimensions of study are central for the analysis of social groups' behavior throughout the time (Keszei, 2017, p. 817), and this is what this capstone explores more in-depth. Life in society requires a coherent self consisting of more or less reliable self-knowledge, self-image and self-definition, which is produced by our memory based on the data of ourselves from earlier times. Keszei puts it this way:

We are not who we are simply because we think. We are who we are because we can remember what we have thought about. ... Memory is the glue that binds our mental life, the scaffolding that holds our personal history and that makes it possible to grow and change throughout life. (Keszei 2017, p. 818)

Relying on the importance of memory in human life, we can indeed assume the significance of the latter in the lives of social groups in general. The intertwined nature of on the one side the personal and collective, and on the other side historical and cultural memories for the self-definition of the individual as a part of the broader group, including the member of a nation, stresses the projection between individual and collective identities. “Those result from their 'common supra-individual sources for identification', which are predominantly based on history and cultural memory” (Keszei, 2017, p. 818).

Alessandro Portelli (2014) claims that a human being cannot control whether to remember or forget and has only partial control over the content and memory functioning. Most of the time, memory acts like an involuntary muscle, a sheer reflex independent of one's intentions and will. He compares memory to breathing, arguing that memory is a function that can be trained, practised and improved, but never suppressed (Portelli, 2014, p. 44). “In a way, memory is not storage of data; instead, it is an endless search for meaning, in which the traces of experiences that no longer make sense or that mean too much are filtered out through forgetting” (Portelli, 2014, p. 46). As Portelli holds: “each beginning of a nation is not only the creation of a new order but also the trauma of a failure and the destruction of an older one. Memory here plays the role of exorcising the conflict” (Portelli, 2014, p. 46).

As Judith Herman in her *Trauma and Recovery* (2015) insists, the knowledge of horrible events periodically intrudes into public awareness, but it's rarely retained for long. Denial, repression, and dissociation operate on a social as well as an individual level. Similar to the traumatized people, it is vital to understand the past in order to reclaim the present and the future. “In the aftermath of systematic violence, entire communities can display symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) while being trapped in alternating cycles of numbing and intrusion, silence and reenactment. Recovery from this requires remembrance and mourning” (Herman 2015, p. 115; p. 175).

Marianne Hirsch talks about this same remembrance through photographs in her book *Family Frames* (1997). She holds that photographs are very particular instruments of remembrance since they are perched at the edge between memory and post-memory, as well as memory and forgetting. In her words: “Postmemory is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by a deep personal connection” (Hirsch 1997, p. 18).

Postmemory is a powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. This is not to say that memory itself is unmediated but that it is more directly connected to the past.

Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated. (Hirsch 1997, p. 18)

The research conducted for this capstone project recollect the narratives of both the Armenian genocide and the first Artsakh war, which are second/third-generation memories of collective traumatic events and experiences.

Jaak Rakfeldt (2015) and Astri Erll (2008, 2011), discussing the collective cultural memory both agree that although members of the group perceive themselves as relating to the same community of remembrance, the actualization of their identities as individuals is a necessity, without which the collective and cultural memory will be lost. That is to say, collective cultural memory is shaped by individual memories, and originates from individuals within a sociocultural context. Rakfeldt, based on his research "Home Environments, Memories, and Life Stories: Preservation of Estonian National Identity" (2015), argues that the preservation of Estonian national identity during the Soviet occupation was made possible due to the actualization of individual memories. This was done through the act of remembering a history of mythic, idyllic independent Estonian republic, as well as celebrating its holidays and the Estonian Song Festivals, where people got an exceptional opportunity to mesh their actualized individual memories with their ethnic identities, thus bolstering their collective cultural memory (Rakfeldt, 2015, p. 527).

Rakfeldt notes that during the period of Soviet control, the foremost goal of the authorities was to destroy everything that can bring back memories about the past, as well as prevent the transformation of information from one generation to the next (2015, p. 533). Hence, through his research, he interestingly reaches the conclusion that the home was the only place and environment where generations can have free and undisturbed conversations, thus conveying the memory in the form of individual stories of life experiences (Rakfeldt, 2015, p. 534).

In the context of family studies and home environments, the research study of Astri Erll titled "Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies" is quite insightful (2011). She, referring to Halbwachs' "Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire" claims that family memory is a specific type of collective memory, stressing the uniqueness and distinctiveness of this particular type of memory and its emphasis on the relationships within the kinship. Halbwachs held that family memory is characterized by the intensity of its group allegiances and strong emotional dimensions (Halbwachs as cited in Erll, 2011, 305).

Erll states that family memory is a typical intergenerational memory, which is based on the ongoing social interaction and communication between different generations of one family. The exchange of "living memory" between eyewitnesses and descendants becomes possible through the repeated recall of the family's past, meaning that people who did not experience past events for their own can share in the memory as well. Intergenerational memory in the family environments may go back as far as the oldest members of the family can remember stories both from their lives or that they heard from even older generations (Erll, 2011, p. 306).

Erll, discussing Jan and Aleida Assmanns' findings on collective memory and cultural identity, points out the qualitative differences between a collective memory based on everyday communication and a collective memory, which is more institutionalized and defined by

“symbolic objectivities,” such as monuments, memorials. Thus, Assmanns differentiate two categories of memory frameworks: communicative and cultural memories (Assmanns as cited in Erll, 2011, p. 311). Communicative memory can be found in everyday interaction, and is predominantly based on the historical experiences of contemporaries. Within this framework, the contents are ever changeable, and everyone is considered to be equally eligible to remember and interpret the shared past. Jan Assmann believes that communicative memory belongs to the field of oral history (Erll, 2011, p. 311).

Undeniably, the family memories should be discussed in the framework of communicative memories, with its emphasis on everyday life, face-to-face communication, oral narratives, and its time-limited nature of 3 to 4 generations. Nonetheless, it should be clearly understood that communicative memory is intertwined and linked to cultural memory, thus becoming a part of the broader memory-building process (Erll, 2011, p. 312).

Astri Erll, closely analyzing the research conducted by Angela Keppler (1994), notes that the unity of family memory rests principally on the continuity of the opportunities and acts of shared remembrance, rather than on the consistency of the told stories. She claims that, “Family memory is, thus, a dynamic, context- dependent construction that can change considerably over time as well as according to different settings and audiences” (Erll 2011, p. 314).

Oral History as a Source and Method

Alexander Freund (2009), in his article “Oral History as Process-generated Data” agrees with Keppler, implying that oral histories and narratives, in general, are complex social constructs that are naturally subjective and thus often context-dependent on the meaning.

One of the most prominent oral historians, Alessandro Portelli, put it this way: “Oral histories tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, what they now think they did” (Portelli as cited in Freund, 2009, p. 26). Not only the interviewees but also interviewers as well cannot be entirely detached, objective towards and uninvolved in the story, and thus not influence the development of the narrative. Freund argues that oral historians acknowledging their impact and role should increasingly take into consideration how their social status, gender, ethnicity, age, religious or political affiliation shape their relationship with the interviewee (Freund, 2009, p. 26).

Subjectivity and memory have been defined as significant concerns regarding the credibility and usefulness of oral history as evidence. Freund referring to Portelli notes that the subjectivity of oral history reveals the source’s most important data, in as much as it “tells us less about events as such than about their meaning” (Freund, 2009, p. 38). Indeed, interviewees can provide decisive factual data about the past; however, Freund argues that the phenomenon of oral history is rather to tell us how people make sense of the past, and in order to understand the latter, one should focus not only on what has been said (content) but also on how it was told (form) (2009, p. 40).

Here we reach the concept of retrospectivity, meaning that oral histories are always about two different time periods: both about the time interviewees reminisce about and time in which they do the reminiscing (Freund, 2009, p. 42). This aspect of oral history causes challenges for the interviewer, creating burdens on conducting genuine interviews and understanding where the reality lies.

Patrick Ryan (2008) notes that consciously or subconsciously, awareness of causes for human actions and emotion in stories, cognitively result in the combination of real and imagined

experiences held in memory (p. 68). “The self-reflexive nature of the storytelling experience may create so-called mega-identities that are exaggerated expressions of the respondents’ true self, or possibly, false, self-chosen stereotypical representations designed to feed one’s ego and meet the societal standards” (Ryan, 2008, p. 74).

Wali states,

The ultimate purpose of the oral historian should be to embrace the genuine connection between the interviewee and interviewer, thus being patient enough to ‘give voice’ to those who have been socially sidelined, becoming a medium for them to express their unique perspectives. (2018, p. 74)

Wali claims that ‘narrative identity’ empowers the researchers to document the identity that is negotiated and twisted with various types and forms of accounts (2018, p. 76).

To conclude, during the research, I came to the realization that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is poorly represented in terms of its impact on the Armenian nation in general and ordinary citizens in particular. The sources used in this literature review helped to contextualize my findings and became a framework within which I analyzed the data. Oral history is key to my capstone research both as a method and as source for my study. Moreover, memory and family studies are vital for understanding the narratives of my respondents. At the same time, the analyses conducted in the field of NK conflict are needed to provide context that will give a spatial and temporal explanation to the events discussed in the study.

Research Questions

The main purpose of this capstone project was to study how the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has influenced the development of personal and collective identities and became the cornerstone

for the mobilization of national consciousness in Artsakh and the Republic of Armenia. The First Artsakh war (1988-1994), affecting each and every Armenian household and leaving long-lasting political, economic and social consequences, has divided the history of the nation to before and after. Hence, this capstone tries to answer the following secondary questions:

1. How has intergenerational communication helped to preserve and transfer war narratives between generations?
2. How did the war and intergenerational communication shape attitudes towards the conflict and motherland in general?

Methodology

Qualitative Research and In-depth interviews

The cornerstone for my research is family studies in the context of preservation and transmission of collective and cultural memories. In order to explore my primary research question, I have conducted eleven in-depth interviews with people who had distinct social, psychological, and economic war experiences and with their children.

The interview consisted of two parts. Firstly, I interviewed the older generation (parents), aiming to reconstruct their stories relating to the first Artsakh war. Only afterwards, I approached the representatives of the younger generation (post-war), and based on the personal narratives of their family members, I tried to understand the influence those stories have had on my interviewees' identity shaping, as well as on their attitude towards the concept of motherland. I have explored more thoroughly the themes of nation, patriotism and conflict. In addition, I gave my respondents from both older and younger generations the same standard questions regarding

family relations, being Armenian, feeling Armenian, the attitude towards Armenia, Artsakh, Karabakh conflict etc.

The research is based on five family narratives, where the older generation has different experiences regarding the first NK war. All my respondents agreed to disclose their identities in this capstone project and allowed the usage of data (interviews, photographs from personal archives, etc.) for academic purposes.

The experiences of my interviewees are as follows:

Family 1: Poghos Khamoyan (born in 1961) - war veteran; Mkrtich Khamoyan (born in 1998) - his son, future doctor, as a part of ambulance staff was increasingly involved in the second NK war (2020).

Family 2: Gayane Asaturian (born in 1974) - repat from Syria, Aleppo; Shahen Mutafian (born in 2002) - her son, he was the one who insisted on moving to Armenia at the age of three-four, future (script-)writer.

Family 3: Minas Ivanov (born in 1969) - he has lived in Georgia all his life, in a heavily Azerbaijani populated region; Armen Ivanov (born in 1995) - his son, increasingly involved in the organizational activities of the local Armenian community.

Family 4: Armen Hadimosyan (born in 1968) - left Armenia for France in 2012; Narine Arakelyan-Hadimosyan (born in 1974) - her father is a war-veteran, Armen's wife; Karen Hadimosyan (born in 2003) - their son, he has lived half his life in France and half in Armenia.

Family 5: Arthur Ivanyan (born in 1976) - a teenager during the first war, volunteered in the 2016 war; Monika Ivanyan (born in 2007) - his daughter, a teenager during the second NK war.

Throughout the research, I tried to address how the difficulties shaped my respondents and what kind of struggles, worries and regrets they have regarding both the war and future life.

Moreover, I wanted to understand how they conveyed their memories to the younger generation and how the younger generation is going to do the same.

Oral history, which is the primary method of researching this capstone project, is considered to be a distinct example of historical narrative-making that is based on the stories of the 'ordinary people' and then contextualized and presented by historians, meant to offer a valuable alternative to the conventionally understood records (Rakfeldt, 2015, p.534).

Mapping the Oral Histories

Even though this capstone is research-based analysis, for better representation and doing justice to the narratives entrusted to me, the capstone has an additional component of mapped stories. In the digitized maps, one may see the trajectories of the family narratives, such as where they come from, where they live, how far away they are from Artsakh. This will help to understand better the complex and intertwined nature of the concepts of motherland and identity. The mapped narratives can be accessed at: <https://arcg.is/1rT9KD>

Research findings and analysis

NK Conflict: Two Generations Through and Beyond the War

The Karabakh movement, which evolved to become a conflict lasting more than thirty years, as one of my interviewees, Arthur Ivanyan (44), mentions, did not start from a specific point; it gradually took over people's lives and became a new normal (A. Ivanyan, interview, April 18, 2021). Armen Hadimosyan (53), who demobilized from the Soviet Army just before the movement and following escalations, claims that during his army years (1986-88), Armenians

and Azerbaijanis had already been separated. The authorities had feared the possible clashes and internal acts of revenge against the background of pogroms initiated by the Azerbaijani government, which resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties and thousands of displaced Armenians, part of whom could not even escape. Those pogroms and increasingly discriminative attitude towards Armenians in Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblasts (NKAO) ignited the light of national consciousness in Armenia and Artsakh. People started mass demonstrations in February 1988, which lasted for four years, aiming to advocate for the Armenian cause and the transfer of the mainly Armenian-populated NKAO to the jurisdiction of Armenia (A. Hadimosyan, interview, April 13, 2021). However, the standpoint regarding the movement and its possible developments were ambiguous at that point.

Poghos Khamoyan (60) claims that from the very beginning of the demonstration, he knew that it would evolve into a full-scale war since "as people stood up, it is no longer possible to silence them". Therefore, Poghos Khamoyan and his friends and coworkers had secretly undertaken the production of military equipment, such as grenade launchers with its projectiles, anti-tank rocket-propelled grenade launchers and the distribution of those across the frontline villages in Armenia and the NKAO. In 1990, they also started the organized recruitment of detachments, ready to protect the borders, though those groups were poorly equipped, mostly with shotguns (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021).

Meanwhile, Armen Hadimosyan (53) and Minas Ivanov (52) could not imagine that the demonstrations would turn out that way. Minas Ivanov, living in Georgia, in a predominantly Azeri-populated region, could not assume the possibility of full-scale military activities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, primarily because the Soviet Union had not yet collapsed (M. Ivanov, interview, April 4, 2021).

Arthur Ivanyan (44) and Narine Arakelyan (46), who were in their adolescence during the war and were living in Yerevan, cannot vividly recollect in their memory the first stages of the conflict, partially due to the extreme lack of available information on what was going on in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Narine Arakelyan (46), reminiscing the years of war connects it with the constant absence of her father, who was participating in the war. She finds it difficult to remember specific events during the war because her extreme anxiety – enormous fear and worries to lose her father had blurred her consciousness and mindfulness (N. Arakelyan, interview, April 14, 2021).

Poghos Khamoyan, a war veteran on the other hand, emphasizes that the most challenging part of going to war was the departure from the family. He says that he never directly said that he would go to the battlefield again – Poghos would lie because he could not bear the anxiety and uneasiness of his family. That is two sides of the same story: people on the battlefield fighting for the motherland and families left back without any source of information.

Armen Hadimosyan (53) finds that the secret of victory in the first Artsakh war was the unification of the nation around one supreme purpose and full support of everyone. However, talking about life away from the war scenes was not stress-free as well. Along with the ongoing war, the effects of the devastating Spitak earthquake (1988), during which between 25,000-50,000 were killed and up to 130,000 were injured, were still striking. In addition, the economic crisis and the energy blockade (1992-1995) that was partially a result of shutting down the nuclear power plant Metsamor after the earthquake and blockade of the country due to the war, made life in Armenia in the 90s miserable and distressed (A. Hadimosyan, interview, April 13, 2021). As Narine Arakelyan (46) mentions, in her university years, she had to walk to the university, which was 20 km away from where she lived and then walk back home, while the rest

of the time she spent knitting socks to send to the frontline. She felt obligated to somehow contribute to the national cause and be a part of its fulfilment (N. Arakelyan, interview, April 14, 2021). Poghos Khamoyan, not being a devoted Christian himself, as he notes, is strongly convinced that it was faith that kept the Armenian nation alive, just as belief and trust were the only means to face difficulties and struggles (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021).

The situation was not better for people living outside of Armenia either. Minas Ivanov (52) remembers that during this period, Armenian villages in Georgia, especially those with close Azeri neighbourhoods, organized their own military detachments and built checkpoints and posts (դիպրոտ), watchfully controlling and monitoring the safety of Armenians and mobility of Azeris. The circumstances in Georgia totally differed from that of Armenia. Living in a third country, any developments in the NKAO resulted in tense inter-ethnic clashes hundred kilometers away in Georgia. On the other hand, both Armenians and Azeris clearly understood the need to maintain balance. Regardless of any outcome of the NK conflict, both nations would continue to live in the same villages next to each other and would be forced to negotiate their ways for coexistence (M. Ivanov, interview, April 4, 2021).

Gayane Asaturian (46), born in Aleppo, Syria and lived there up to 2006, finds her quite detached from that part of Armenian history. She learnt that the war erupted in Armenia while she was at school. Still, since her family was not an active participant in the local Armenian socio-political organizations, the war somehow passed by her. She only remembers how her grandfather, a genocide survivor, would rejoice each time learning that a land had been liberated. However, the influence of the war and the ultimate victory influenced Gayane's life much later when she and her family decided to move to Armenia for residence. Artsakh and, most

importantly, the victory of Armenia, conveyed a sense of security and desire to live in the motherland among fellow Armenians (G. Asaturian, interview, April 3, 2021).

The young generation respondents, all of them born after the end of the war, construct their perception about the First Nagorno-Karabakh War mainly based on family narratives circulated in close circles. Thus, the NK conflict is not just merely a fact or reality left in the past, but rather a living memory that was transmitted to them, which, in turn, they feel obligated to transfer to the coming generations. As Mkrtich Khamoyan (23) mentions, he has grown up listening to stories about the war, while his very first association with war is seeing his father in military uniform (M. Khamoyan, interview, March 29, 2021). Similarly, Karen Hadimosyan (18), who was born in Yerevan, but has lived half of his life in France, reminisces very little about the war. His remembrances are limited to certain scenes, such as assorting his grandfather's medals (Narine Arakelyan's father) or going to Victory Park on May 9. What he remembers happened to him at a very young age, and make a comprehensive understanding of what has happened during the first Nagorno-Karabakh war based on those memories appear to be impossible, but in the long-run those visual associations connect the past and present and make sense in a broader context (K. Hadimosyan, interview, April 14, 2021).

Shahen Mutafian (19), being raised in Syria up to age four, vividly remembers family discussions about Artsakh; not ever being in Armenia at least once, not understanding what the matter of discussion was, but at the same time feeling a longing for a place so dear even though never seen (Sh. Mutafian, interview, April 5, 2021).

Nonetheless, these abstract representations of the war among the younger generation ended with the 2016 4-day War and, most importantly, the recent 2020 44-day War. The notion of a glorious past, which covered or edited out all the horrific nuances of war, became visible in

detailed manner. The second Artsakh war, in particular, challenged us to rethink our perception of the conflict: it transformed from the domain of family narratives, legends and stories of heroic deeds to a very pragmatic realm, requiring immediate solutions and approaches.

The second Artsakh war forced the younger generation to feel the same sufferings and worries that older generation endured during the first Artsakh war. Practically, the post-memory regarding the first Artsakh war, transformed into the actuality.

Having a well-established army, people from the very first day volunteered to go to the front to be next to conscripted soldiers. Among those volunteers were Poghos Khamoyan and Arthur Ivanyan, who expressed readiness to replace the soldiers in case of need. However, the number of young volunteers exceeded the expectations to the point that the Ministry of Defense could not register all of them. As Poghos Khamoyan (60) mentions, “If there were these many patriot young adults during the first Artsakh war, we could have reached the bank of the Qur river.” He argues that this phenomenon was a result of the systematic pro-Armenian education in the last thirty years. People born after independence were consciously or subconsciously brought up with the notions of being a winning nation, with a well-defined pride for liberated Artsakh. At the same time, Poghos Khamoyan argues that this new generation lacks a substantial understanding of historical realities and practical knowledge (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021). As Arthur Ivanyan mentions (44), the new generation is exposed to 'uncontrollable information flows', and the immense data received hinders critical thinking, unlike the first Nagorno-Karabakh war, when people had little if any information about what was going on in the battlefield.

In the recent war, people were engaged in the actual war through social media platforms that created echo chambers, where media manipulations and false propaganda have been an integral

part of it. Arthur Ivanyan argues that the new and upcoming generations should be eventually left with no option but to learn how to analyze the received information and how to connect the dots (A. Ivanyan, interview, April 18, 2021).

Poghos, Arthur and Minas pinpoint the fact that the defeat in the recent war was due to incompetent governance. All of them agree that the new generation had been remarkably decisive in their readiness to serve the country but lack determination, which was even more deepened by the fake propaganda that yielded a misleading sense of safety and imminent victory.

Gayane Asaturian (44), whose son was serving in the army during the war, could not really explain her worries in words, saying that it was the darkest of times. However, to the question, “Did you not have thoughts of regret of moving to Armenia?” she answers negatively, saying that there were times that her family regretted moving to Armenia, because of different circumstances such as social or economic ones, but never due to war (G. Asaturian, interview, April 3, 2021).

Respondents who were physically out of the country, mainly Narine Arakelyan, Armen Hadimosyan and Minas Ivanov, organized relief efforts in their respective locations, aiming to help Armenia and Armenian soldiers. As Armen Hadimosyan notices, there were instances that they could pay people to do the work of arranging packages meant to be sent to Armenia, which exceeded several tonnes. Still, they preferred to do it themselves, investing not only emotional, but also physical efforts. It helped them to feel a bit at ease they could do something for their motherland , while being far away (A. Hadimosyan, interview, April 13, 2021).

Coming back to the younger generation, Mkrtich Khamoyan (23) best describes his emotions, saying: “Being born in the family of a war veteran, and brought up motivated by the stories of fidayees, it would be such a shame if I would not participate, especially when my

friends and guys my age were on the frontline. Working in the ambulance and transporting the wounded soldiers was a salvation for me (M. Khamoyan, interview, March 29, 2021).” Overall, the notion of somehow contributing to the war efforts is common among the respondents.

The situation yet again was problematic in Georgia where there were lots of minor and significant clashes among the Armenian and Azerbaijani population. However, what Armen Ivanov (26) emphasizes is that he was shocked by the indifference of some people from his surrounding, who acted as if nothing is happening (A. Ivanov, interview, April 8, 2021).

That indifference was mentioned almost by all my respondents who noticed it among people around them. This is an interesting phenomenon when the active military activities motivate an inner discussion within the society. In this recent case, we witnessed the situation of polarization and isolation concerning the geopolitical understanding of the military operations. Even during the active stage of the war, people inserted the previously developed political discourse of ‘black and white’ in the context of the war. The political discourse used by Nikol Pashinyan, who came to power after the Velvet revolution in 2018, embedded the notion of 'black' and 'white', thus differentiating the previous and current authorities. On the macro-level, this differentiation resulted in the polarization of the society, which in turn affected the overall moral and psychological condition of the people. The implementation of this domestic political dialogue in connection with the full-scale war seriously deteriorated the unification of the nation as one entity (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021).

As Monika Ivanyan (14) remembers, during the war, most of her classmates showed little interest in the war, claiming that Artsakh is an obstacle that hinders the development of Armenia. The ignorance of the children is not that big of an issue, who cannot currently have their own

developed viewpoint; the more significant problem is that they repeat whatever is discussed in their home environment.

Monika, for whom the 44-day war started with the image of waking up and seeing her father collecting his military uniform and equipment to go to war, found herself in isolation from her classmates because of their general indifference regarding the matter. This lack of empathy and knowledge both from the side of her friends and teachers became a moving force for her to decide to become a member of Homenetmen¹, aiming to get more theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to better the country (M. Ivanyan, interview, April 17, 2021). Mkrtich Khamoyan and Shahen Mutafian recount how they faced almost identical situations with their classmates.

Both generations, witnessing firsthand the atrocities of war and the individual tragedies about which conventional history turns a blind eye, agree that war is the most evil act a human can initiate.

As Armen Hadimosyan (53) mentions, there are no winners and losers in the war; each side loses the most precious thing, human life, among thousands of others. To the question, what was the most devastating part of the war, my respondents of the young generation mention the loss of their friends. Everyone whom I interviewed had lost a close friend to this disastrous war. Interestingly enough the older generation mentioned the loss of the land or Artsakh first and then talked of casualties. Nonetheless, this premise indicates how they interpret the loss of every inch of the land as an even more consequential danger for Armenia.

¹ Homentmen- (meaning Armenian General Athletic Union) is a pan-Armenian organization, founded in 1918 and devoted to sport and scouting. The motto of Homenetmen is "Rise and Raise" (Elevate Yourself and Elevate Others with You)

Mkrtich Khamoyan (23) describes precisely the shift of attitude towards Artsakh and Nagorno-Karabakh war, saying: “Before the recent war, the triumph of Artsakh was the symbol of victory of the Armenian nation, our pride, dignity and self-respect, now it has transformed into a huge wound, pain, becoming a symbol of struggle and future endeavour to bring back what has been lost ” (M. Khamoyan, interview, March 29, 2021).

Based on these observations, in the case of the first Artsakh War, human loss seems to be regarded differently, with those fallen seen as heroes of the war afterwards. They appeared to have become symbols of victory and a source of inspiration for the coming generations. Meanwhile, the soldiers and volunteers who did as much as they could to serve the motherland and protect Armenia in the recent war came to be seen as martyrs of the unjust war.

Arthur post is that historically, Armenia and Armenians being forcefully involved in the continuous inter-ethnic conflicts, the need of the struggle for self-preservation resulted in the high level of militarization, which has been misinterpreted by foreigners and even Armenians as an instance of extreme nationalism. After the victory of the first Artsakh war, one thing is for sure, in self-perception as a nation, we reconfirmed the right to have statehood (A. Ivanyan, interview, April 18, 2021).

Arthur Ivanyan further explains that similar to 1918, when Armenians after the genocide declared the independence of the First Republic of Armenia following the victorious battles of Sardarapat, Bash-Aparan and Gharaqilisa against the invading Turkish Army; with the triumph of the first Artsakh War, as a nation, Armenians affirmed their understanding to have a sovereign state and their readiness to take full charge of it. Being stuck in this geopolitical location, surrounded by enemies, as Arthur notes war is the cost we pay for the right of self-determination as a nation (A. Ivanyan, interview, April 18, 2021).

Armenianness: Recollecting and Reshaping Armenian Identity

The Karabakh movement and the conflict itself have become a cornerstone of national awakening and ethnic identity. Both within the nation and in the eyes of foreigners, Armenians, before the NK war have been mainly seen through prism of genocide survivors. The Armenian genocide was and continues to be the foundation of national consciousness and unity; however, the Karabakh conflict shifted the course of the action of how people perceive ‘Armenianness’.

The tendency to generalize people with distinct characteristics, thus aiming to differentiate them from others, is a well-accepted practice worldwide. The generalizations connected to specific groups, be it ethnic, religious, social or cultural, at some point promote a sense of belonging and affinity since they are best revealed in comparison with others. Nonetheless, it hinders understanding the complicated nature of personal and collective identities in the framework of ethnic belonging. Through this research, it came to appear that all my respondents have a different experience and, more importantly, a dissimilar understanding of what does it mean to be Armenian.

Gayane Asaturian (44), who spent a considerable part of her conscious life in Syria, claims that Armenians settling in Syria, through time, have earned the reputation of kindhearted, fair workaholics who excelled after the genocide to rebuild and reconstruct their lives and identity. She emphasizes that Armenians are loved and respected in Aleppo, because of their widely accepted characteristics of not lying, being humane, and having dignity. This collective image was motivated by the need of genocide survivors to be quickly integrated to a society and maintaining balance in the multicultural environment. In turn, this positive image of Armenian people empowered the coming generations to stay Armenian and embrace their Armenian

identity. Contrary to this, when they decided to move to Armenia, with the idea of finally living among Armenians in their own country, they had an experience of facing a unexpected backlash from some of the locals. She said that her daughter was forced to change five schools since the adaptation was complicated. Some in Armenia used to call them out for moving to Armenia, calling them names, such as “you are not Armenian... What have you lost in Armenia? Go to your country!”

This unexpected cold and unfriendly attitude traces its roots to the understanding and perceiving of what it means to be Armenian. Apparently, there is no conventionally accepted description of Armenianness. However, people project whatever they consider being Armenian as the epitome of the ethnic identity; subsequently, we witness the reality of resistance towards accepting differences. Identity is not unidimensional; it is, in fact, a socially and historically constructed concept, which is developed and influenced throughout the whole life of a person. Thus, a perception of an ethnic identity, which someone would consider conventionally accepted, can be contradictory to what other people believe. This is, perhaps, what the Gayane Asaturian’s family faced after the repatriation. The way they manifested their Armenianness differed from what people were used to; thus, they came to be labelled as “others” among post-soviet Armenians.

For Gayane’s family, the settlement and adaptation to life were way more problematic than living in a foreign country. The decision to move to Armenia was very spontaneous; being here during the vacation, the kids refused to go back. They stayed with the idea of bringing up their children in Armenia and working for the betterment of Armenia (G. Asaturian, interview, April 3, 2021).

Shahen Mutafian (18), Gayane's son, with quite an amusement in his eyes, remembers the best day of his childhood when he and his brother were able to play with local kids outside. However, they had not regretted their decision to move to Armenia since that comments by some people cannot be compared with the privilege of living in one's own country. For him an example of 'Armenianess' is his grandfather, who donated his only coat in support of the relief efforts for the Spitak Earthquake (1988). He argues that through this sense of solidarity, the perception of belonging to a particular nation is manifested (Sh. Mutafian, interview, April 5, 2021).

The situation in Georgia seems to be almost the opposite of what Gayane described. From Minas Ivanov's (52) perspective, there is little if any solidarity among Armenians. In recent years, in Georgia, Armenians, especially from Armenia, are perceived to be liars and cheaters who love money a lot. This does not refer only to the relationship with other nationalities, but they will not hesitate to lie or trick fellow Armenians as well. This tendency is way more notable among the traders. Minas argues that this is the heritage of the Soviet era, where the concept of free market did not exist, hence people were free to manipulate the system for their benefit. Moreover the collapse of the Soviet Union, the First Artsakh war, the devastating effects of 90's economic crisis and energy blockade, when Armenians were left with no means to survive, one's own welfare and prosperity had become the number one priority. Armenians were subconsciously forced to rely on more individualistic ideals, rather than collective on, embracing materialistic self-reliance (M. Ivanov, interview, April 4, 2021).

His son, Armen Ivanov (26), sharing his observations, notes that, lately, especially after the defeat of the war, many Armenians slowly but steadily try to disguise themselves as 'citizens of the Earth'. He explains this phenomenon with the physical difficulty of being an ethnic minority

in a host country and having interethnic tension between your and neighbouring people. Armen explains that the situation deteriorated recently due to the fact that Azerbaijanis in the neighbourhood experienced a moment of national awakening after the 44-day war. As Armen puts it, Armenians have never shown off their status of winners, but Azerbaijanis took advantage of the situation and purposefully escalated the situation in the region. This complicated relationship between and within the ethnicities makes a part of people be easily detached from their identity or not embracing it. Contrary to this phenomenon, there is also a progressing tendency of becoming over-protective and conservative in terms of national matters. Armen explains that it is solely based on the family upbringing what path one may choose, insisting that both detaching from the identity or becoming over-conservative results in an internal conflict within a person (A. Ivanov, interview, April 8, 2021).

Traditionally there is an interesting agreement among inhabitants of the Armenian villages in Georgia, which requires that no one will sell their property or house to the people of other ethnicities, no matter what. This agreement has worked from the very establishment of the Armenian villages in the Marneuli region, which count 11, aiming to secure the safety of Armenians and creating impassable boundaries for other nationalities (A. Ivanov, interview, April 8, 2021). The inhabitants of these villages are mostly migrants from Karabakh, with a small number of genocide survivors, hence the toponyms similar to those in Karabakh: Shahumyan, Khachen etc. Even though the Ivanov family are descendents of genocide survivors, the majority of people there have Karabakhi heritage, with an almost identical dialect.

In Georgia, actually, the Armenians can be divided into three categories, as Minas Ivanov explains: Georgian Armenians, who completely assimilated and the only manifestation of their Armenianness is the surname. Then there are the Armenians living in Georgia who are mostly

detached from each other and do not have any social or political organizations that can unite them; however, they consider themselves Armenian and try to preserve their identity. The third category is the Armenians from Javakhk, who are primarily descendants of genocide survivors and share a powerful bond with the 'mother' Armenia. Mainly because Javakh is predominantly Armenian populated, the collective and individual identity maintenance is not problematic and disputable, unlike those Armenian communities that settle in the areas where they constitute a minority.

Further discussing Armenian identity, it is worth mentioning that "being Armenian" or "feeling Armenian" should not be taken for granted. People throughout their whole life reassure themselves of being a part of a specific culture and recreate and reshape it the way they see it. The case of Armen, who has both Armenian and Assyrian origins, is remarkable in the sense that he admits it is his conscious decision to embrace his Armenian side more, primarily because of the existence of Armenia as a state and Artsakh as the guarantee of statehood. Moreover, being a descendant of an Armenian genocide survivor, he understands the importance of having a country and the privileges it assumes at certain levels. From his stance, Armenianness and Armenian identity are supported by the physical actuality of the sovereign Armenian state (A. Ivanov, interview, April 8, 2021).

The Hadimosyan-Arakelyan family moving to France faced the difficulty and pressure of being the representation of the "Armenian family" in the eyes of foreigners. Residing in a town where there are only two Armenian families, as Narine Arakelyan describes it: "We are the 'doors' towards Armenia. Whatever we do, how we behave, unintended, we act on behalf of all Armenians. The same goes for other nationalities as well; for me, the French people are defined

and represented with the image of those with whom I interact" (N. Arakelyan, interview, April 14, 2021).

Another challenge their family in the new country faced is bringing up their children in the 'Armenian' way. Both Narine and Armen agree that sometimes they have to be much stricter as parents than in Armenia. However, Armen Hadimosyan (53) notices that if they are not stringent, they could not take control of their children, who grew up in an environment with completely different acceptable values and worldviews. He considers the preservation of one's own identity and culture especially important, since there is a very thin line between integrating into the society and losing a sense of belonging to the national identity (A. Hadimosyan, interview, April 13, 2021).

Narine Arakelyan (46) assumes that the preservation of Armenian identity is hidden in the cultural components.

If the mother tongue and the national cuisine are being continuously used in the household, children would love it no matter what and would behold the Armenian culture. The only way they can become closer to Armenia is by celebrating the Armenian holidays, singing national songs and preparing Armenian dishes. In fact, they have succeeded in conveying a sense of belonging and embracing Armenian identity within their children. As their son, Karen Hadimosyan (18), mentions, the culture and cuisine are mediums that help to connect within yourself to the national legacy and heritage, as well as share a part of 'Armenianess' with others (K. Hadimosyan, interview, April 14, 2021).

Poghos Khamoyan (60), who has lived all his life in Armenia, finds that the essential trait in Armenian identity is patriotism and the ability to stay humane against all the odds. The greatest of all the values for him is his family, children and dignity. As a collective image, an Armenian

should know its history; Poghos signifies this aspect multiple times, arguing that the roots of our misfortunes are the lack of knowledge about ourselves and interest in our past (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021).

Arthur Ivanyan (43), in his definitions of Armenian identity, describes almost the same as Poghos Khamoyan. He claims that history and culture are the axes of national identity and patriotism; if we do not preserve those, we could no longer differentiate ourselves from others. As a distinct feature for Armenians, Arthur distinguishes one characteristic that can unite most of the Armenians – the ability to have one thought, the power to be unified around one purpose. He considers the image of an ideal Armenian to be like Nahapet, from the same-titled movie, embodied by the popular actor Sos Sargsyan²– a strong-willed Armenian fighter who was forced to witness the destruction of his village and the massacre of his family during the genocide. Left to die, he was able to make his way to Eastern Armenia. Despite being filled with grief and unable to move on, Nahapet succeeds in building a new future after suffering such deprivations in life. He represents an image of someone unyielding, striving, fighting, which Arthur considers to be the collective vision of the Armenian nation (A. Ivanyan, interview, April 18, 2021).

Despite the differences in understanding and perceiving Armenian identity, one thing was common among all my respondents: their conviction that identity is shaped by the environment you have been brought up in, primarily by family and school environment. As Poghos Khamoyan mentions, people are born egoists; they should be taught how to love and accept something, be it themselves, others or the motherland (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021).

² Nahapet is a 1977 Soviet Armenian drama film, directed by Henrik Malyan, about a man who tries to rebuild his life after losing his wife and child in the Armenian genocide. It is based on a novel written by Hrachya Qochar. The film has been cited as an example of the portrayal of genocide in the film industry.

Motherland: Set of Values rather than a mere territory

“The homeland, for me, is not defined by a specific geographical location; rather, the homeland is the sum of those values, which are acceptable, normal, and natural.” This is how Arthur Ivanyan sees Armenia. He states that he cannot imagine living in any other place since all his conscious life is connected to this exact space. The love towards homeland is manifested through having a vision of how the country should be developed; it acquires state-centric thinking and devotion. He notices that patriotism and patriotic acts are usually comprised of the narratives of a victorious war. There is very little room for its discussion from the standpoint of statehood. According to Arthur, national consciousness, which in recent years has been misinterpreted both by locals and foreigners as a source of hatred towards other nationalities and a moving force behind the national struggle, works in a totally different direction. In fact, the threat to security ignites the necessity of struggle and, as a derivative, raises national self-consciousness; henceforth, patriotism is not and should not be only discussed in the context of war (A. Ivanyan, interview, April 18, 2021).

His daughter, Monika Ivanyan (14), announces honestly that many times, she thought about living abroad and how her life would be tremendously different, including the fears, worries and sources of happiness. But she claims that she totally reconsidered her choices after the war and now believes that if not her, then who else should live and take care of the motherland: “If everyone leaves, then does not it mean that all the deaths of the soldiers were meaningless ?” Thus, in her life, she came to the conclusion that the motherland requires responsibility and a duty to serve, which is not solely based on words (M. Ivanyan, interview, April 17, 2021).

Poghos Khamoyan (60) is firmly convinced that the concept of homeland requires to act rather than to speak: “If you want to serve your country, then you should not put forward demands or be picky.” For him, the homeland is his home, his village, and he assures that each person should know its 'size' and try to benefit the country with the most possible. Poghos Khamoyan declares his patriotism through educating the generations with the Armenian spirit and thinks that the ultimate goal should be to teach younger generations about their history and the art of war (P. Khamoyan, interview, March 23, 2021). His son, Mkrtich (23), holds that the homeland, besides the territory, is being devoted to that place, having memories and feeling pain for that place. Patriotism for him is to serve for the betterment of the country with your skills, being an accomplished professional, in his case, a doctor (M. Khamoyan, interview, March 29, 2021).

For the Ivanov family, the concept of motherland is quite uncertain. The homeland for them is the actual home and village they have lived for generations. Then what is Armenia? one may ask. Armenia is the guarantee of their safety and security and a place with which they are connected emotionally and share the pain over the things that happen there. They do not manifest their love in words, but they show it through their attitude towards Armenians who come from Armenia. Basically, their motherland is any other human being considering him/herself Armenian (M. Ivanov, interview, April 4, 2021) (A. Ivanov, interview, April 8, 2021).

In contrast, for the repat family of Gayane Asaturian and Shant Mutafian, the motherland has very distinct forms and shapes. For generations living in a host country, there is an emotional longing towards what is considered national, towards the actual land. Gayane Asaturian remembers that after their repatriation to Armenia, when they visited their families in Syria each summer, she could not stay longer than a month, even though all her family was there. She

explains it with the phrase “I missed everything in Armenia: the water, the air.” (G. Asaturian, interview, April 3, 2021) The same goes for her son, Shahen; he describes Armenia as a heaven on Earth, “because everything is yours.” He admits that he has had thoughts of leaving Armenia for Western countries, to proceed better personal life and future opportunities. Still, especially after the war, he came to the understanding that love towards the motherland is to live there despite any difficulties. Shahen points out that patriotism can be seen in very minor nuances, such as taking care of the land, not littering the streets, because otherwise, whatever one may say, that person could not be patriotic (Sh. Mutafian, interview, April 5, 2021).

The last family, whom I had the pleasure to interview, cannot come to terms with the fact of leaving their motherland throughout these nine years. As Narine Arakelyan (46) notices, nothing can replace your birthplace, homeland. Now living abroad, both Armen Hadimosyan and Narine Arakelyan feel detached from their origins, always lacking something. The love and longing towards the homeland now have become displayed with closely following what happens in Armenia, almost like an obsession. Making their children good Armenians, nurturing Armenian culture in them, to have them embrace their national identity has become an ultimate goal that aims to compensate for their not being physically present in Armenia (N. Arakelyan, interview, April 14, 2021). As Karen Hadimosyan (18), their son, mentions, Armenia for him is not merely a birthplace but a homeland, a dream that one day will come back. As he talks about Armenia, he repeatedly uses the phrase “our country.” (K. Hadimosyan, interview, April 14, 2021)

Limitations and avenues for future research

The research conducted for this capstone project was limited by time and the opportunity to find interviewees who agreed to share their own intimate stories. Thus, the participants of this

research were mainly friends and relatives of my family. In this sense, all of them have quite a similar view on debatable topics, particularly regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, its importance and influence on Armenia, as well as on parenting experiences. Moreover, they hold an almost identical stance in the objective of NK as a vital component of statehood. Henceforth, one may argue that this paper lacks a diversity of opinions, and I will find myself in the situation to totally agree. In this context, it is worth mentioning that I did not aim to interview people who have certain viewpoints; that was not my goal. Therefore, it would work well to diversify the respondents for future research.

Even though it is challenging to come up with the rationale for how it can be achieved, it would most probably be of help to interview random people who are connected neither with the researcher nor with other respondents.

One of the most consequential limitations for my research was the pandemic and restrictions on travelling and conducting interviews face-to-face. Definitely, it would be much better to interview all the respondents in person and offline. As a result, I could not interview my interviewees living in Artsakh and IDP families, whose perspective would have considerably contributed to my research findings. Thus, for the avenues of future research, I believe the geographical scope should be enlarged.

Overall, even though this research was based on the Armenian perspective and aimed to understand the influence of the NK conflict in the construction of Armenian identity, from the perspective of social history, it would be much substantial if similar research would be conducted on the Azerbaijani side or Azerbaijani respondents would be engaged in this same research.

Conclusion

This capstone project aimed to explore and understand how inter-generational communication and family narratives in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict influenced the development of cultural and personal identities and shaped the attitudes towards the motherland, national identity and the conflict itself.

The purpose of the research was to find families with distinct backgrounds regarding the war and attempted to study the influence of their experiences on the younger generation. Hence, through in-depth interviews, five family narratives have been studied, including families of repats, expats, and war veterans.

After 70 years of relative peace and stability in the USSR, the Karabakh movement and war had become a breakthrough moment for Armenia and the Armenian nation. During Soviet times, due to the specially designed policies, people found themselves as part of a Soviet 'nation'. My respondents mention that during Soviet rule, Nagorno-Karabakh was seemed to be yet another region of a huge empire. They reminisce that talking about ethnic identity or preserving national culture was at the level of family narratives. Before the NK conflict, the primary source of historical knowledge was oral accounts, such as stories told by grandparents about their birthplace left during the genocide and songs that were conveyed from one generation to another. With the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in the late 1980s, people had become more aware and interested in their past. Practically, the national awakening resulted from the imminent threat to the collective security as an ethnic group.

In this sense, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has had a prominent and long-lasting effect on emancipating people from the 'numbness' developed through communism. Studying the past

events was the first step of becoming conscious as a nation, since before then, the data regarding the historical episodes that can increase the self-awareness as a nation, were censored and in most cases even banned. Thus the Karabakh movement encouraged more precise observation of the common past, which affected people's perception as a nation, igniting the national awakening. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, corresponding with the collapse of the Soviet Union, created devastating consequences for Armenia, which later on was reflected on the level of collective identity.

The triumph of the first NK war has had a long-lasting effect on generations to come. It has become a moment of national awakening, which united a nation spread all over the world around one idea.

Talking about ethnic identity, it is worth noticing that there is no unidimensional conception of 'Armenianness'. As most of my respondents refer to, Armenian identity and spirit vary based on what environment one has been brought up in and lives. Thus, the conventional image of a Syrian Armenian may seriously differ from one assigned to a Georgian Armenian or Armenians living in Armenia. Apparently, one thing is firmly accepted among the respondents: national identity, both in its collective and personal manifestations, is increasingly influenced by the family. The latter plays a vital role in preserving the identity and carrying the sense of belonging to a specific group of people and a place called "homeland".

In fact, the nature of identity, homeland, and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are deeply intertwined: all these essential concepts come together inside the households, where reminiscing the past and reflecting on the present through storytelling become the tool connecting all the dots.

“It is inside the Armenian family that ‘Armenianness’, Armenian spirit is being fermented; our human and social characteristics that stress our national identity, our spiritual and physical relationships, our commitment to our past, our social nature, and our collective identity are being shaped.”

- Sarkis Zeitlian (n.d.)-

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Appendices

Appendix A

Consent Form: Older Generation

Համաձայնության հավաստագիր

Համաձայնագիր մասնակցելու դիպլոմային ծրագրի իրականացման Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանում: Սույնով հավաստում եմ, որ համաձայն եմ մասնակցել ՀԱՀ Հումանիտար և հասարակական գիտությունների ֆակուլտետի դասախոս դոկտոր Հուրիկ Ադդարեանի (հեռ. 060 612769, էլ. հասցե hourig.attarian@aua.am) ղեկավարությամբ Աննա Իվանյանի կողմից դիպլոմային աշխատանքի նախագծի հարցազրույցին:

Նախագծի նպատակը

Տեղյակ եմ, որ այս նախագծի նպատակն է հասկանալ, թե ինչպես են բանավոր պատմությունն ու հիշողության աշխատանքը հնարավորություն տալիս ուսումնասիրել հանրային ու անհատական պատմության միջև կապերը: **Աննա Իվանյանի** անցկացրած կենսապատման առանձին հարցազրույցը նպատակ ունի հասկանալու՝ միջսերնդային հարաբերությունների և ընտանեկան պատմումների դերը անձի կերտման, անձնային և ազգային ինքնության, ինչպես նաև, հայրենիքի նկատմամբ վերաբերմունքի ձևավորման գործում, մասնավորապես հիմնվելով Արցախյան առաջին պատերազմի փորձառությունների վրա:

Ընթացակարգը

Հասկանում եմ, որ հարցազրույցը անցկացվելու է մասնակցի տանը կամ մեկ այլ պատշաճ վայրում, և տեսագրվելու և/կամ ձայնագրվելու է: Որպես մասնակից ես պատմելու եմ իմ անձնական փորձառությունը Ղարաբաղյան շարժման, Արցախյան առաջին պատերազմի վերաբերյալ, ինչպես նաև նրանց ազդեցությունը իմ հետագա կյանքի և ինքնության կերտման գործում: Տեղյակ եմ, որ հարցազրույցները տևելու են մոտ մեկ ժամ, բայց այդուհանդերձ մասնակիցները կարող են որևէ պահի դադարեցնել հարցազրույցը, հրաժարվել պատասխանել որևէ հարցի, կամ որևէ պահի դուրս գալ նախագծից: Հասկանում եմ, որ եթե ցանկանամ հարցազրույցը երկու ժամից ավելի երկարաձգել, ինձ այդ հնարավորությունը կընձեռվի:

Ռիսկեր և օգուտներ

Տեղյակ եմ, որ որևէ պահի կարող եմ դադարեցնել հարցազրույցը, ընդմիջել կամ հրաժարվել շարունակել: Հաշվի առնելով, որ ուսանողների նախագծերը ներլսարանային ցուցադրման մաս են կազմելու (կայքով և/կամ հրատարակումներով), իմ պատմությունը և կարծիքները, իմ թույլտվությամբ, նույնպես ներկայացվելու է:

Մասնակցության պայմանները

Որպես մասնակից ինձ հասանելի կլինեն ձայնագրված և գրի առնված տվյալները՝ դրանք ստուգելու նպատակով: Նախագծի ամբողջ տևողության ընթացքում, ես հնարավորություն կունենամ վերանայել ու հաստատել անգլերեն թարգմանությունը, եթե նյութը հայերեն է:

___ Հասկանում եմ, որ որևէ պահի կարող եմ հետ վերցնել համաձայնությունս ու հրաժարվել մասնակցել նախագծին՝ առանց բացասական հետևանքների:

___ Հասկանում եմ, որ այս նախագծի տվյալները գիտաուսումնական նպատակներով կարող են հրատարակվել՝ տպագիր կամ թվային տարբերակներով:

Իմ հարցազրույցի ինքնության բացահայտման և վերարտադրման առումով

___ Համաձայն եմ, որ **ինքնությունս հայտնի լինի**: Հասկանում եմ, որ ինքնությունս կարող է բացահայտվել այս հարցազրույցի արդյունքում հրատարակված նյութերում:

___ Համաձայն եմ գիտաուսումնական նպատակներով այս հարցազրույցի նկարների ու ձայնագրությունների վերարտադրմանը որևէ հաղորդամիջոցով (վեբ կայքեր, և այլն):

ԿԱՍ

___ Հասկանում եմ, որ իմ մասնակցությունն այս ուսումնասիրությանը **գաղտնի** է: Ես հասկանում եմ, որ իմ ինքնությունը չի բացահայտվի այլ ցանկացած հրապարակման կամ ներկայացման մեջ, որոնք կլինեն այս հարցազրույցի արդյունքը, կօգտագործվի ծածկանուն:

___ Համաձայն եմ, որ չնայած իմ հարցազրույցից որոշ նյութեր կարող են հրատարակվել, սակայն ոչ մի ձայնագրություն չի կարող վերարտադրվել:

Այն դեպքում, երբ լուսանկարներ, իրեր կամ փաստաթղթեր են նկարվել կամ սկանավորվել

___ Համաձայն եմ, որ ուսումնասիրություն անող ուսանողը պատճենահանի լուսանկարներ ու փաստաթղթեր նախագծի շրջանակներում օգտագործելու համար:

ՈՒՇԱԴԻՐ ԿԱՐԴԱՅԵԼ ԵՄ ՎԵՐՈՇ ՇԱՐԱԴՐՎԱԾԸ և ՀԱՄԿԱՆՈՒՄ ԵՄ ԱՅՍ
ՀԱՄԱՁԱՅՆԱԳՐԻ ԿԵՏԵՐԸ: ՀՈԺԱՐԱԿԱՄ ՀԱՄԱՁԱՅՆՈՒՄ ԵՄ ՄԱՍՆԱԿՑԵԼ ԱՅՍ
ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՒԹՅԱՆԸ:

Մասնակից՝
Անուն ազգանուն (Խնդրում ենք գրել տպատառ) _____

Ստորագրություն _____ Ամսաթիվ _____

Հարցազրույց վարող՝
Անուն ազգանուն (Խնդրում ենք գրել տպատառ) _____ Աննա Իվանյան

Ստորագրություն _____ Ամսաթիվ _____

Եթե որպես բանավոր պատմության նախագծի մասնակից որևէ պահի հարցեր կունենաք ձեր իրավունքների վերաբերյալ, կարող եք կապվել ՀԱՀ Հումանիտար և հասարակական գիտությունների ֆակուլտետի դասախոս դոկտոր Հուրիկ Ադդարեանի հետ (հեռ. 060 612769, էլ.հասցե՝ hourig.attarian@aua.am):

Appendix B

Consent Form: Younger Generation

Համաձայնության հավաստագիր

Համաձայնագիր մասնակցելու դիպլոմային ծրագրի իրականացման Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանում: Սույնով հավաստում եմ, որ համաձայն եմ մասնակցել ՀԱՀ Հումանիտար և հասարակական գիտությունների ֆակուլտետի դասախոս դոկտոր Հուրիկ Ադդարեանի (հեռ. 060 612769, էլ. հասցե hourig.attarian@aua.am) դեկավարությամբ Աննա Իվանյանի կողմից դիպլոմային աշխատանքի նախագծի հարցազրույցին:

Նախագծի նպատակը

Տեղյակ եմ, որ այս նախագծի նպատակն է հասկանալ, թե ինչպես են բանավոր պատմությունն ու հիշողության աշխատանքը հնարավորություն տալիս ուսումնասիրել հանրային ու անհատական պատմության միջև կապերը: **Աննա Իվանյանի** անցկացրած կենսապատման առանձին հարցազրույցը նպատակ ունի հասկանալու՝ միջսերնդային հարաբերությունների և ընտանեկան պատմումների դերը անձի կերտման, անձնային և ազգային ինքնության, ինչպես նաև, հայրենիքի նկատմամբ վերաբերմունքի ձևավորման գործում, մասնավորապես հիմնվելով Արցախյան առաջին պատերազմի փորձառությունների վրա:

Ընթացակարգը

Հասկանում եմ, որ հարցազրույցը անցկացվելու է մասնակցի տանը կամ մեկ այլ պատշաճ վայրում, և տեսագրվելու և/կամ ձայնագրվելու է: Որպես մասնակից ես պատմելու եմ իմ անձնական փորձառությունը, թե ինչ դեր են խաղացել ավագ սերնդի փորձառությունները Արցախյան առաջին պատերազմ վերաբերյալ և նրանց պատումները՝ իմ անձի և ինքնության ձևավորման գործում: Տեղյակ եմ, որ հարցազրույցները տևելու են մոտ մեկ ժամ, բայց այդուհանդերձ մասնակիցները կարող են որևէ պահի դադարեցնել հարցազրույցը, հրաժարվել պատասխանել որևէ հարցի, կամ որևէ պահի դուրս գալ նախագծից: Հասկանում եմ, որ եթե ցանկանամ հարցազրույցը երկու ժամից ավելի երկարաձգել, ինձ այդ հնարավորությունը կընձեռվի:

Ռիսկեր և օգուտներ

Տեղյակ եմ, որ որևէ պահի կարող եմ դադարեցնել հարցազրույցը, ընդմիջել կամ հրաժարվել շարունակել: Հաշվի առնելով, որ ուսանողների նախագծերը ներլսարանային ցուցադրման մաս են կազմելու (կայքով և/կամ հրատարակումներով), իմ պատմությունը և կարծիքները, իմ թույլտվությամբ, նույնպես ներկայացվելու է:

Մասնակցության պայմանները

Որպես մասնակից ինձ հասանելի կլինեն ձայնագրված և գրի առնված տվյալները՝ դրանք ստուգելու նպատակով: Նախագծի ամբողջ տևողության ընթացքում, ես հնարավորություն կունենամ վերանայել ու հաստատել անգլերեն թարգմանությունը, եթե նյութը հայերեն է:

___ Հասկանում եմ, որ որևէ պահի կարող եմ հետ վերցնել համաձայնությունս ու հրաժարվել մասնակցել նախագծին՝ առանց բացասական հետևանքների:

___ Հասկանում եմ, որ այս նախագծի տվյալները գիտաուսումնական նպատակներով կարող են հրատարակվել՝ տպագիր կամ թվային տարբերակներով:

Իմ հարցազրույցի ինքնության բացահայտման և վերարտադրման առումով

___ Համաձայն եմ, որ **ինքնությունս հայտնի լինի**: Հասկանում եմ, որ ինքնությունս կարող է բացահայտվել այս հարցազրույցի արդյունքում հրատարակված նյութերում:

___ Համաձայն եմ գիտաուսումնական նպատակներով այս հարցազրույցի նկարների ու ձայնագրությունների վերարտադրմանը որևէ հաղորդամիջոցով (վեբ կայքեր, և այլն):

ԿԱՄ

___ Հասկանում եմ, որ իմ մասնակցությունն այս ուսումնասիրությանը **գաղտնի** է: Ես հասկանում եմ, որ իմ ինքնությունը չի բացահայտվի այլ ցանկացած հրապարակման կամ ներկայացման մեջ, որոնք կլինեն այս հարցազրույցի արդյունքը, կօգտագործվի ծածկանուն:

___ Համաձայն եմ, որ չնայած իմ հարցազրույցից որոշ նյութեր կարող են հրատարակվել, սակայն ոչ մի ձայնագրություն չի կարող վերարտադրվել:

Այն դեպքում, երբ լուսանկարներ, իրեր կամ փաստաթղթեր են նկարվել կամ սկանավորվել

___ Համաձայն եմ, որ ուսումնասիրություն անող ուսանողը պատճենահանի լուսանկարներ ու փաստաթղթեր նախագծի շրջանակներում օգտագործելու համար:

ՈՒՇԱԴԻՐ ԿԱՐԴԱՑԵԼ ԵՄ ՎԵՐԸ ՇԱՐԱԴՐՎԱԾԸ և ՀԱՄԿԱՆՈՒՄ ԵՄ ԱՅՍ
ՀԱՄԱԶԱՅՆԱԳՐԻ ԿԵՏԵՐԸ: ՀՈԺԱՐԱԿԱՄ ՀԱՄԱԶԱՅՆՈՒՄ ԵՄ ՄԱՍՆԱԿՑԵԼ ԱՅՍ
ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՒԹՅԱՆԸ:

Մասնակից՝
Անուն ազգանուն (Խնդրում ենք գրել տպատառ) _____

Ստորագրություն _____ Ամսաթիվ _____

Հարցազրույց վարող՝
Անուն ազգանուն (Խնդրում ենք գրել տպատառ) _____ Աննա Իվանյան _____

Ստորագրություն _____ Ամսաթիվ _____

Եթե որպես բանավոր պատմության նախագծի մասնակից որևէ պահի հարցեր կունենաք ձեր իրավունքների վերաբերյալ, կարող եք կապվել ՀԱՀ Հումանիտար և հասարակական գիտությունների ֆակուլտետի դասախոս դոկտոր Հուրիկ Ադդարեանի հետ (հեռ. 060 612769, էլ.հասցե՝ hourig.attarian@aua.am):

Appendix C

Interview Guidelines

Part I: Older Generation

- Բարև Ձեզ: Շնորհակալություն, որ համաձայնեցիք մասնակցել իմ դիպլոմային աշխատանքի համար կատարվող հետազոտությանը: (introductory part)

1. Կներկայացնե՞ք Ձեզ:
 - Անուն, ազգանուն,
 - երբ և որտեղ եք ծնվել:
2. Ի՞նչ եք մասնագիտությամբ: Ինչո՞վ է պայմանավորված Ձեր ընտրությունը:
3. Ինչպե՞ս կներկայացնեք Ձեր ընտանիքը:
4. Ինչպիսի՞ն է եղել Ձեր մանկությունը/երիտասարդությունը:
5. Հիշո՞ւմ եք, թե ինչպես սկսվեց Ղարաբաղյան շարժումը:
6. Մասնակցե՞լ եք հանրահավաքներին: Ինչո՞ւ:
7. Ի՞նչ էր իրենից ներկայացնում Ղարաբաղյան շարժումը: Սպասո՞ւմ էիք նման զարգացումներ:
8. Ո՞նց կրնորոշեք Ձեզ/ Ձեր կյանքը մինչ-առաջին Արցախյան պատերազմը:
9. Ի՞նչ էր ԼՂԻՄը Ձեզ համար մինչ պատերազմը:
10. Հիշո՞ւմ եք, թե ոնց սկսվեց պատերազմը:
11. Կվերհիշե՞ք ոնց/ումից/կամ երբ իմացաք, որ պատերազմ է սկսվել:
12. Սպասո՞ւմ էիք, որ պատերազմ հնարավոր է լինել:
13. Կվերհիշե՞ք, որն էր Ձեր առաջին միտքը, երբ իմացաք, որ պատերազմ է սկսվել:
14. Ի՞նչ է պատերազմը:
15. Մարդ,ով չի առնչվել պատերազմին մոտիկից, ի՞նչ պետք է անպայման իմանա պատերազմի մասին:
16. Ո՞րն էր Ձեր պատերազմը:
17. Հանուն ինչի՞ էիք Դուք պատերազմում: (*հարցը կուղղվի այն հարցազրույցի մասնակիցներին, ովքեր անձամբ ներգրավված են եղել պատերազմական գործողություններին)
18. Ո՞րն է մեծագույն դժվարությունը պատերազմում:
19. Ունեցե՞լ եք հիասթափության պահեր: Ի՞նչն էր օգնում դժվարին պահերին:
20. Ինչպե՞ս փոխեց պատերազմը Ձեր կյանքը:
21. Փոխվեցի՞ք Դուք պատերազմից հետո:
22. Պատերազմից հետո, փոխվե՞ց Ձեր վերաբերմունքը Արցախի նկատմամբ:
23. Ի՞նչ է Արցախը Հայաստանի համար:
24. Ո՞րն է Ձեզ համար հայրենիքը:
25. Երևիցե՞ մտածե՞լ եք, թե ինչպիսին կլինեք Ձեր կյանքը առանց պատերազմի:
26. Հաճա՞խ եք վերհիշում պատերազմի օրերը:

27. Միրում էք խոսել դրա մասին, թե խուսափում էք:
28. Ո՞րն է Ձեր ամենասիրելի կամ խորհրդանշանական պատմությունը այդ ժամանակներից:
29. Հաճախ էք հիշում կամ խոսում պատերազմյան իրադարձությունների մասին:
30. Որպես ծնող, Ձեզ ինչպե՞ս կներկայացնեք խի՞ ստ, պահանջկո՞տ:
31. Ի՞նչն էք կարևորում երեխաների դաստիարակման հարցում:
32. Ինչպիսի՞ն կուզեիք տեսնել Ձեր երեխաներին:
33. Ի՞նչ է հայրենասիրությունը: Կարևո՞ր է լինել հայրենասեր:
34. Հաճախ են օգտագործում հայու գեն կամ նման արտահայտություններ: Ինչ էք կարծում կա ընդհանուր գծեր, որոնք միավորում են բոլոր հայերին:
35. Ի՞նչ է հայ ազգային ինքնությունը իրենից ներկայացնում:
36. Ինչպե՞ս կարող ենք դա պահել: Արդյոք, կարիք կա պահելու:
37. Հաջողել էք արդյո՞ք փոխանցել դա Ձեր երեխաներին:
38. Ձեր կարծիքով, ներկայիս սերունդը շա՞տ է տարբերվում ավագ սերնդից: Ինչո՞վ:
39. Ի՞նչ է պակասում ներկայիս սերունդին:
40. Ի՞նչ խորհուրդ կտաք «ՀԱՅ»-ին: Ի՞նչ է մեզ հարկավոր այս դժվարին ժամանակներում:
41. Ի՞նչ դասեր պետք է քաղենք անցյալից:
42. Որտե՞ղ էք տեսնում Հայաստանը 5-10 տարուց:

Part II: Younger Generation

- Բարև Ձեզ: Շնորհակալություն, որ համաձայնեցիք մասնակցել իմ դիպլոմային աշխատանքի համար կատարվող հետազոտությանը: (introductory part)

1. Կներկայացնե՞ք Ձեզ:
 - Անուն, ազգանուն,
 - երբ և որտեղ էք ծնվել:
2. Ի՞նչ կպատմեք առաջինը Ձեր մասին:
3. Երեք բան, որ էական են Ձեզ ճանանչելու համար:
4. Ի՞նչ էք մասնագիտությամբ: Ինչո՞վ է պայմանավորված Ձեր ընտրությունը:
5. Ինչպե՞ս կներկայացնեք Ձեր ընտանիքը՝ ծնողներ, նախնիներ:
6. Ինչպիսի՞ն է եղել Ձեր մանկությունը:
7. Ո՞րն է մանկության ամենավատ հիշողությունը:
8. Կհիշե՞ք մանկությունում, ինչի մասին էիք երազում:
9. Ե՞րբ եք/ո՞ւմից էք առաջին անգամ լսել Արցախյան ազատամարտի մասին:

10. Ո՞րն է Ձեր առաջին աստղացիան, երբ լսում եք «Արցախյան առաջին պատերազմ»:
11. Ի՞նչ է Արցախը Ձեզ համար:
12. Ի՞նչ է հայրենիքը:
13. Ինչպե՞ս պետք է վերաբերվել հայրենիքին: Պարտադի՞ր է սիրել այն:
14. Համարո՞ւմ եք ինքներդ Ձեզ հայրենասեր:
15. Արդյո՞ք պետք է լինել հայրենասեր:
16. Ինչի՞ց է գալիս հայրենասիրությունը:
17. Ո՞նց է կերտվել Ձեր ինքնությունը: Ինչի՞ հիման վրա:
18. Ի՞նչ դեր է խաղացել ընտանիքը Ձեր կերտման գործում:
19. Երբևիցե Ձեր ազգային պատկանելիությունը դարձել է խոչընդոտ:
20. Տանը հաճա՞խ եք լսել պատերազմի տարիների մասին:
21. Երբևիցե մտածե՞լ եք, ինչ կլիներ, եթե Արցախյան ազատամարտը չլիներ:
22. Եղե՞լ եք Արցախում:
23. Ի՞նչ է Ձեզ համար պատերազմը:
24. Ըստ Ձեր պատկերացումներ ու զգացումների, առաջին և երկրորդ Արցախյան պատերազմները ինչո՞վ էին տարբերվում:
25. մինչ-պատերազմյան և հետ-պատերազմյան Դուք, շա՞տ եք տարբերվում:
26. Ինչպիսի՞ն է Ձեզ դարձրել պատերազմը:
27. Ինչպիսի՞ն է այսօրվա մեր սերունդը: Փոխվել են արդյո՞ք արժեքները:
28. Ի՞նչ է պակասում ներկայիս սերունդին: Պակասում է արդյո՞ք:
29. Երբևիցե՞ մտածել եք Հայաստանը լքելու մասին: Ինչու՞ :
30. Ի՞նչ եք հասկանում ասելով «հայ»:
31. Ի՞նչ պետք է անպայման սովորեն եկող սերունդները:
32. Ինչպե՞ս պետք է փոխանցենք մեզ հասած ժառանգությունը:
33. Արդյո՞ք պետք է եկող սերունդներին դաստիարակել պատերազմի պատումներով:
34. Ի՞նչ կպատմեք Ձեր երեխաներին կամ եկող սերնդին ներկայիս իրավիճակի մասին:
35. Ի՞նչ խորհուրդ կտաք:
36. Որտե՞ղ եք տեսնում Հայաստանը 5-10 տարուց: