

HOW MILITARIZATION COMMUNICATED THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION SHAPES ARMENIAN IDENTITY

by

Khanum Gevorgyan

Presented to the  
Department of English & Communications  
in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

American University of Armenia

Yerevan, Armenia

May 26, 2021

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Abstract.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Key Terms and Definitions.....	6
Literature Review.....	7
Research Question and Methodology .....	12
Research Findings and Analysis.....	17
1. The Subtle Art of Militarizing.....	17
2. Teacherhood, Parenthood, and Statehood.....	20
3. The Labyrinth of Identity-Making.....	26
Recommendations: Future in the Making.....	30
Conclusion.....	33
References.....	35
Appendices.....	37
1. General Interview Guidelines.....	37
2. General Consent Form.....	40

## **Abstract**

Education is a basis for many civil society functions but sometimes it gets mixed with factors that do not belong in the sphere. This research explores how militarization is conveyed in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions in Armenia and how it impacts the shaping of local Armenian identity. In-depth interviews, experience observation and secondary research analysis allowed to understand the medium and the most powerful influencers of militarization. The research and the interview analysis shows that because of normalized and institutionalized militarization, generations in Armenia end up adopting a culture of violence, which in turn, is often directed internally, towards Armenian society itself. As a result, this encouragement and further reinforcement of violence increases the role of militarization in Armenian identity.

You have been promoted! Your pretty new uniform's ready. Get in it! And next time when you go up to battle, you'll win it! The boys in the back room have figured out how; just wait till you see what they've puttered up now! To clobber those Zooks in their land of bad butter, we have built a thing called the Utterly Sputter.

—Dr. Seuss, *The Butter Battle Book*

## Introduction

When grandson Yook was learning about the history of his homeland – Yookeroo, he never thought that those behind the wall put the butter under the bread. Whatever Zooks did, he was taught that theirs was the right way, and so his mission was to protect “the right, honest way!” (Seuss, 1984, p. 6). In this story, Seuss touches upon the “Hobbesian fear,” caused by the “security dilemma” that leads to war and “arms racing” overwhelmingly present during the Cold War as he was a state propaganda film and poster illustrator (Beier, 2011, p. 97-102). Then one wonders why Dr. Seuss raises such issues in children’s stories. Are such tales meant for adults, or perhaps he wanted to critique the human rationale that poisons one’s childhood? Dr. Seuss leaves his reader hanging at the end of the story: does the bomb destroy Zookeroo or Yookeroo, or both, or perhaps none? We will never know what happens to Zookeroo or Yookeroo in *The Butter Battle Book*, but we can give an ending to it ourselves (unless the decision becomes too hard and we let other generations deal with it).

Some of us have seen wars, some haven’t, some wish they had not. However, have you ever wondered what war would feel like for you if you were born in a different culture? What would be the buttered battle for French, or Malaysians, or perhaps, Armenians? Hovhannes Toumanian, the national poet of Armenia, has penned the Armenian buttered battle version, *A Drop of Honey* (1909), showing how a tiny thing can set the foundations for a massive and disastrous war without leaving traces behind. *A Drop of Honey* is the story of a shepherd and a shopkeeper. The shepherd, tired from his work, stops by the neighboring village to buy some

honey. The honey-talk ends when a fly, unaware of its importance in the story, starts sucking a drop of honey on the floor. Afterward, there are cat and dog fights, shepherd and shopkeeper fights that lead to deaths, and a whole fight for dignity. The fights grow more violent with time, and soon, a drop of honey becomes the cause of a war between two peoples. Like Dr. Seuss, Toumanian masterfully shows an arms race in a village tale combined with national/village pride that becomes a disastrous competition for power. One difference is that Toumanian does not leave his readers hanging; he does not give us an alternative. Toumanian shows how arms racing ends up bringing famine, pain and destruction to both villages. Perhaps that is what makes him a national poet. He knows what Armenians would imagine after reading it or what his people would do in that situation. In Armenia's case, honey is always a big deal.

What we have are two cultures, oceans away from each other, speaking about the same catastrophe in children's tales. While *The Butter Battle Book* and *A Drop of Honey* are considered fiction/fantasy, the hidden message behind both stories is a reality for many children around the world. In the modern world, hatred, the institutionalized normalization of war, weaponry, "drops of honey" and "battered battle" opinions follow children everywhere, from home to kindergarten, to movies and games. By the time they understand what they have been exposed to, they grow up and take on either an actual weapon or continue militarizing coming generations. In essence, we come to understand that militarization, as Cynthia Enloe puts it, is a "sociopolitical process" (2004) with roots that go beyond the soil into the most "unlikeliest of places" (Beier, 2011, p. 97).

Sometimes, a person's love towards their country exceeds the love towards their children. As a result, they lose their rationale to understand what comes about. Militarization is the process of a society's organization for a military conflict, war, or violence, either self or state-initiated.

The glorification of the army, normalization of weaponry in everyday life, camouflage clothing in fashion, and paramilitary media are examples of militarization in a society. As militarized generations, most people do not question the spread of militarization from the army to higher educational institutions, secondary schools, and at some point, even early childhood education (ECE), where children learn how to walk and talk. When the wave reaches ECE institutions, people expose their children to violence, war, fighting, and death. In contrast with tales, the violence here is not covered by village stories or creatures that do not exist. The main reason parents and people stay silent is that they do not see an alternative to their situation (Beier, 2011, p. 107). The state makes sure that militarization is never questioned because it is necessary for a state to function. In some countries, militarization, and the main aim it carries in the society, intersect with the same society's identity, smoothing the way for militarization. Identity, being a formation of various events and processes in a nation's life, is forcibly built upon militarization. Militarization, incorporated with identity, becomes mundane, breaking the actual path to identity. Then people lose their understanding of what is and what is not a part of their national consciousness.

The army's influence is decisive in countries in war, in a conflict with another country (frozen or not), that have a strong military, influence over other states or future political ambitions to be achieved with the military. In countries that fall under any of these categories, voices for militarization, which mainly include the nationalist front of the population, are more vocal. Armenia, unfortunately, is one of the countries where militarization slowly reaches towards the most "unlikeliest of places" (Beier, 2011, p. 97). The consequences of militarization on early childhood education curricula and culture affect the Armenian identity of the 21st century, which, as numerous scholars mention (Panossian, 2002; Abrahamyan, 2006; Areshian, 2018), is

shaped by not only past historical and religious events but also the traumatic experiences of the Armenian genocide, the first Nagorno Karabakh war (1988-1994), the April war (2016), and finally the second Nagorno Karabakh war (2020) (and everything in between).

### **Key Terms and Definitions**

#### *Militarization*

Militarization is the process of transforming a particular entity to act similarly to the armed forces. Militarization can be done by society or a specific state by preparing the people for a military conflict, war, or violence. Having militarism, a state's or government's firm belief in maintaining a strong military for the sake of national interests, as an ideology base, the militarization of the society normalizes war with all its forms: weaponry, military parades, symbols, and excessive military education (McLean & McMillan, 2009).

#### *Early Childhood Education*

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a branch in pedagogy focusing on children's learning process from birth till eight years old. Early Childhood Education as a stage is crucial for child development as it prepares the child for continuous learning and exploring of the world (UNESCO, 2017).

#### *National Identity or National Consciousness*

National identity is a person's sense of belonging to a state or a nation. It includes understanding a nation as one despite the person's legal citizenship, place of birth, and residence. That oneness of a group of people is shaped by their history: certain historical events of significance, national symbols, religion, and culture. National identity is expressed in two ways: patriotism and

chauvinism. Patriotism is the positive expression of national identity, which shows one's love towards one's country and the national pride the person carries. Meanwhile, chauvinism, the negative expression of it—is the belief that one's country is superior compared to others and shows extreme loyalty to it (Ashmore, 2002).

### **Literature Review**

Militarization has been a significant part of states and governments and carried imperialist and expansionist ideologies from the Ancient Assyrian Empire to the Ottoman Empire and even the United States of America. According to the 2019 Global Militarisation Index (GMI), Armenia was ranked second to Israel among the most militarized countries (BICC, 2019). Taking this ranking into account, it is not debatable that the Armenian identity is somehow influenced by the wave of strong militarization in the country. Militarization is the most potent weapon the national front of a country has. It is viewed as a means to protect one's nationality or, as Benedict Anderson puts it in his *Imagined Communities*, the imaginativity of a group of people (1983). People push forward militarization, unaware that it is not militarization but fraternity that forces an individual to kill or die for a country. Soon, militarization becomes a part of their national agenda.

Suppose it is not militarization that enroots the idea of a nation in a person's mind but fraternity. How don't all seven billion people in the world have the same sense of fraternity towards one another? That is where nationalism comes and “invents nations where they do not exist” (Gellner, 1964). People that don't know one another, will probably never meet, and do not even know what the other thinks, come together and create this “imagined community.” Inside this community, people always find ways to link fraternity and connect emotionally, either through their experiences or common beliefs (religion or culture). According to Anderson, this



community later creates a nation, which in itself is “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (1983, p. 6). It is limited because, first, it does not go beyond one imagined community and, second, has physical borders, after which fraternity dies out and another nation begins. It turns out, we all live and die for these limited imaginings, but what makes us accept these imaginings?

The “imagined community” does not form itself unless two significant factors are contributing to identity building. Having a common language and means to spread ideas throughout the community is the basis for the creation of a national identity (Anderson, 1983). The language could always be different in various imagined communities, but the means to link people together was what mattered. That is how Martin Luther, the founder of Christian protestant movement succeeded. After being ordained from his priesthood, he started bringing up various theories and thesis into the academic prepositions he wrote, such as the *Ninety-five Theses*. Soon enough, his ideas spread all over through the press and book-sales. He became the first best-selling author in the world and the person who showed the importance of print capitalism, the theory of a nation, community that forms due to a common language and the use of printing press. Print capitalism became a means to communicate (and later to form identity) (Anderson, 1983) with followers of the same ideology, although after refusing to renounce his writing, the Catholic church condemned him as an outlaw (Dixon, 2002). These collective identity creation factors: common language and communication medium, apply to almost all nations.

Following Anderson, Levon Abrahamyan brings language as an essential factor in building the Armenian national identity. In his volume *Armenian Identity in a Changing World* (2006), Abrahamyan concludes his chapter “The Path to Tradition” by bringing two factors that

indicated national consciousness in Armenia in the 4th and 5th centuries: territory and language. Meanwhile, Steven Grosby (1997) also added the belief of a common Armenian ancestry as a factor in the Armenian identity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although identities change with time and events happening to a people, language and “bounded areal jurisdiction” have remained a part of the Armenian identity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Among the “paths” that shaped the Armenian identity are also the “path of faith, tradition, prehistory, memory, dispersion, and finally, violence (Abrahamyan, 2006). These paths create the galaxy of Armenianness considering the historical events and traditions of the history of Armenians. Religion is one of the most prominent factors shaping Armenian identity for ages. The adoption of Christianity as a state religion around 301 AD brought Armenians together, classifying them as a “specific religion-bounded ethnic group” (Abrahamyan, 2006). Looking back at the history of the Armenian people, we witness many political and cultural eras where the Armenian church led the country and the people because of either statelessness or a lack of leadership.

As Abrahamyan rightly mentions, the prehistory of the Armenians also has a vital role in their identity perception. Although Abrahamyan’s prehistory is mainly constructed around Armenia and the USSR, it must be mentioned that early historical kings of Armenian descent in the Greater and Smaller Armenia still have their influence on Armenian identity. There are generations of Armenians that see themselves as descendants of the Soviet Union; meanwhile, a majority considers themselves true survivors of Greater Armenia and descendants of Tigranes The Great (Abrahamyan, 2006, p. 55-95).

The next two paths that Abrahamyan identifies to help us understand the complexities of Armenian identity are that of memory and dispersion. The Armenian genocide of 1915 (all waves included) has influenced Armenian identity greatly. According to Abrahamyan, many

sayings of the language derived from the Armenian genocide, such as “the Armenian’s Fate” which is correlated with the Armenian genocide, during which 1.5 million Armenians, Greeks, and Assyrians were massacred, and millions fled from Eastern Anatolia (Abrahamyan, 2006). This victim ideology has been a part of Armenian identity ever since the genocide until the first Karabakh War (1988-1994). Unfortunately, the last Karabakh War (2020) will deepen this victim ideology among Armenians while the victory of the previous war weakened it. The “path to dispersion” is interconnected with the Armenian genocide as well, because most members of the Diaspora are descendants of Armenians that fled the Ottoman Empire during the Armenian genocide, although the creation of the Armenian Diaspora had already started around the 4th century AD (Abrahamyan, 2006, p. 324). Now, the Diaspora has a significant role in identity creation in Armenia. The reasons are many but to mention few, firstly because they are involved in the local politics and contribute greatly to lobbying for Armenia abroad. Second, many members of the diaspora are now expats that work and live in Armenia greatly engaging in all social and political affairs of the country. The final, and most important of all, the “path to violence”, where Abrahamyan shows how “cultures” of violence are created because of various political, historical, and anthropological circumstances (2006, p. 248), will be further discussed below.

When Armenian children start school, they are taught about the importance of the Armenian language and how Mesrop Mashtots, a medieval Armenian monk, had a dream in which he was told to create a new alphabet, a language. This information is mostly teacher enforced and has no academic proof; however, romanticizing certain events in schooling is what most teachers feel obliged to do. At school, children are not taught about the importance of the Armenian language in the formation of national consciousness in Armenia in the 4th century.

This takes us back to Anderson and Abrahamyan illustrating that language, especially print language, is crucial in identity-making. What else are we taught at school that is romanticized?

Garine Palandjian, in her chapter of *The ABC's of Being Armenian*, explores how national identity was constructed in the pre-and post-Soviet Aybenarans<sup>1</sup> (2014). The education system in Armenia is overviewed by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the educational reforms and the content of the books are “predominantly shaped by local politics” (Palandjian, 2014), thus assuming different meanings based on the classroom and the teacher leading it. Similar to Abrahamyan’s analysis, Palandjian also identifies certain themes that are interconnected with identity building. Such themes include “Membership to Local/Global Community,” where Armenian textbooks only proved to revolve around the local/national community. In this theme, there were indirect messages of nationness through lullabies and songs “that defined the homeland as belonging to ancestors,” claiming a historical link to the land. This is done through cartoon drawings of Ararat, Yerevan, and even a map of Armenia where Nagorno Karabakh, a disputed territory between Armenia and Azerbaijan, is included (Palandjian, 2014) .

The next theme of “Nature/Environmental Awareness” primarily highlights the ruralness of Armenia. Palandjian’s research shows how Armenians are portrayed as people who love nature, who have a rich cultural heritage illustrated through drawings of fruits that define Armenia and are symbols of the country, such as grapes, pomegranates, and apricots. Moving on, we have the most critical theme where we see factors of identity building mentioned by Abrahamyan and Anderson: language and church. The Armenian language is praised in the

---

<sup>1</sup> “Aybenaran/այբբենարան” is the alphabet book in Armenian from which children learn the Armenian letters. The word is constructed using the names of first and second letters of the alphabet -- “ayb/այբ” and “ben/բեն.”

textbooks, and the Armenianness of a person is directly connected with them speaking Armenian: “reinforcing the idea that all Armenians should learn to read, speak and write Armenian” (Palandjian, 2014, p. 295). Meanwhile, church or religion as a part of Armenian identity is manifested in the idea of the “Red Wine” and photos of churches and crosses in the Aybenarans. Although education is meant to serve the person to adjust to the ongoing transformations in the world successfully, its construction still mainly depends on the way it is transferred, the role of the state in education, and childhood socialization.

### **Research Questions and Methodology**

The primary aim of the research is to understand how militarization, communicated through early childhood education, shapes the Armenian identity. There are various sides to how militarization affects childhood education, but what the research focuses on is how it contributes to identity-making in the current Republic of Armenia. Thus, this capstone will mainly answer the following question: How does militarization in kindergartens affect Armenian identity?

The secondary question of the research is: How is militarization communicated in early childhood education institutions: kindergartens, preschools, and nurseries?

The primary methodology of the research has been phenomenological research analysis. This type of analysis enabled research on militarization based on the experiences of the interviewees and the researcher. The analysis is based on the responses to all of the interview questions, the experiences that teachers and parents voluntarily shared, and the memories and experiences of the researcher herself. This research was primarily qualitative, given that militarization and identity-building are very sensitive topics in Armenia. In an attempt to fully understand whether people know what these concepts are and how they shape their way of thinking, I chose to do in depth individual interviews instead of just scratching the surface with a

survey. Although the pandemic made it challenging to connect with interviewees on a physical level and interpret their bodily emotions, the prior existing trust helped me acquire in-depth knowledge of their experiences. If not for qualitative research, it would be difficult to understand what children are taught in these institutions and the environment in which they are raised. .

To achieve the best result, I used various methods, including interviews, content analysis, visits to appropriate institutions, and participant observation. Interviews included nine preschool teachers, ages 27 to 60, from private and public ECE institutions in Armenia as well as 10 parents, ages 25 to 38, from different backgrounds and occupations. One of the teachers currently lives in Yerevan, while the others live in the regions. Five of the parents live in Yerevan, while the rest are from the regions. The interviews were conducted online and lasted from 30 to 90 minutes each. Since some of the teachers and parents decided not to disclose their identities, I have given all interviewees pseudonyms to respect their privacy, yet keep the research personalized.

The aim of the interview with teachers was to 1) understand whether early childhood education teachers know and understand what militarization is, 2) understand whether the teachers themselves support militarization of the system, 3) find out whether or not there is militarization in kindergartens and 4) if yes, figure out whether it is state-enforced or teacher-driven, then 5) identify ways militarization is communicated, and finally, 6) how children behave after being under the influence of a specific object or subject of militarization. The preschool teacher interviewees were randomly selected from a database of 150 teachers that participated in the EduKid program. EduKid (formally known as TEACH) is a professional development program for preschool teachers founded by three AUA alumni in 2018, myself among them. It provides training for teachers involved in early childhood education in Armenia. Their mission is

to modernize the preschool education system through sharing theoretical knowledge, technical skills, and best practices among teachers in Armenia. Although the teachers are from different regions of Armenia and have various social backgrounds, they all represent only one gender: female.

Similarly, the aim of interviews with parents was to 1) understand whether parents know what militarization is, 2) whether parents are for or against their children being exposed to militarized culture in kindergartens, 3) whether they expose their kids to news about war, fighting, and conflict in their household, 4) identify the ways militarization affects the child's personality and behavior, how the child acts towards his/her family members and the peers/friends in the neighborhood, and finally 5) determine whether parents support national identity reinforcement from a very young age.

According to UNESCO, Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions include nursery, kindergarten, preschool, and the first years of elementary school education. Whereas in Armenia, all ECE institutions are mostly called kindergarten/preschool (from the age of two to six) and do not include the first two years of elementary education. Therefore, I will be using the terms kindergarten and preschool throughout the research, to refer to ECE in the Armenian context.

In 2018, when EduKid had its first workshop for preschool teachers, I saw how poorly these teachers were treated although they had the most challenging job one could have – they were given the responsibility to teach future generations. It was worrying to see how degraded the importance of these teachers was. There was little attention paid to how the teachers conducted their lessons; although they had specific lesson plans to follow, they were still free to organize the class time however they saw fit. Later on, when these teachers became Facebook friends with me, I was exposed to all the initiatives and events the teachers organized with and

for the children. Once I came across a social media post from a kindergarten where the children were marching with toy guns. A former EduKid participant had organized the event. The post had hundreds of comments from, perhaps parents, relatives, and other Armenians, who encouraged such initiatives and were proud of the children because they would grow up as strong soldiers and patriots. It was then that I realized how little we need to call ourselves patriots, and as an Armenian who has lived her whole life in a village yet had the chance to explore what is outside of Armenia, I realized that patriotism in Armenia is limited to symbolic events, speeches, and the exposure to militarization. That is how I came up with the idea to explore how ECE institutions and teachers impact these children's lives and show that one does not have to have a militarized childhood to love their country and contribute to its development.

As excited as I was about the whole research, I already knew what I wanted to hear from my interviewees. I did not even think at the time how a single event could change the outcome of the interviews and how I viewed the research. On September 27, 2020 Azerbaijan raged a war on the de facto Republic of Nagorno Karabakh, which lasted 44 days. All my expectations from the interviews for the capstone project faded away because of the war. Although I started my interviews a few months after the war was technically over, my interviewees and I were still experiencing emotional trauma that impacted the research process. As a representative of a generation that carries the impact of the first Nagorno Karabakh war, whose lives have been drastically changed by the latest war, I had to continue a research study that was much more relevant in the present. That is why this research will include an analysis of the research question and the topic alongside small narrative vignettes reflecting either my own personal experiences or those of the interviewees. These vignettes run parallel with the writing as solid experiences that demonstrate what the chapter is about.



After the interviews with the teachers, the research showed a need to add questions on the latest Nagorno Karabakh war (2020). While interviewing the teachers, it was clear that they were lost on how they should continue their job as teachers because, as human beings, they were also very broken after the war and needed mental health counseling to recover from it. Therefore, before starting the interviews with parents, two questions on how the latest war has affected their perception of militarization were added (please see Appendix A for the detailed questionnaire). The parent interviewees were selected voluntarily through an announcement post on Facebook. Note that after the interviews were done, I met with some of the teachers and parents. During these short meetings, most of the participants shared that they started thinking more about the questions asked after the interview. Moreover, their perceptions had changed towards having a country with stronger state-enforced militarization.

After the interviews were conducted, it became difficult to continue the research. I had to relisten to the interview recordings to identify the themes that I would build the analysis on, but I could not. After every interview was finished, especially those with the teachers, I felt very depressed. The interviews were very personal; the teachers shared their worries, post-war feelings, and the trauma, plus their powerlessness to talk and communicate with children who lost their loved ones to the war. I felt furious and hateful towards the previous/current governments of Armenia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan, and even towards myself, because at the age of 22, I was still powerless to do anything to improve the situation these teachers and parents were in, besides sharing their pain. Therefore, I hope this research will help many educators and parents in Armenia to understand that having a country with less militarized education does not make Armenia weaker. Instead, it contributes to the upbringing of a rational generation that loves their homeland as much as someone who has been militarized and taught to hate.

## Research Findings and Analysis

### The Subtle Art of Militarizing

*I remember my father's camouflage shirt that he always wore when working in the garden. It gave him a powerful vibe. The 10-year-old me thought it was those patterns that were powerful. One day, I saw my classmate wearing camouflage pants and that was my push to start wearing my dad's shirt a few years later. The shirt is somewhere in my wardrobe now. I stopped wearing it in 2016 during the Four-Day Artsakh War, when I realized that the same pattern no longer gives me the powerful vibe but instead reminds me of war.*

Hovhannes Toumanian, the national poet of Armenia that all Armenians cherish and love, is the first-person children in kindergartens in Armenia learn about. “The Bird” (date unknown), “The Dog and the Cat” (1886), “Nazar the Brave” (1912), and “The Unlucky Panos” (1914) are some of the tales that teachers read for children, although most of these tales have many messages that these kids will probably understand only when they are older. Hovhannes Toumanian was a peacebuilder himself. The chapter dedicated to Hovhannes Toumanian in Children’s Encyclopedia tells how he was a mediator during the Armenian-Tatar war. He was detained twice and heavily criticized those who initiated the Armenian-Georgian war of 1918 (Arzumanyan, 2010). Then why do we militarize our children parallel to teaching them about the gems of Toumanian?

According to the teacher and parent interviews, child tales are not a means of militarization in kindergartens. All of the tales that teachers share with the kids are those of Toumanian, Aghayan, and other Armenian and foreign authors, none of whom promote physical fighting, war, or violence. Outside of the kindergarten, the children are again exposed to similar tales through the media and their family members. One of the reasons why tales are not a means of militarization, at least in Armenia, is the mandatory writers that ECE teachers have to cover in

these institutions. According to their lesson plans, the teachers have specific months or classes dedicated to a few Armenian writers and poets, and during those days, children only read their pieces. For instance, February is Toumanian's month, and many kindergartens in Armenia have "Toumanian's Week/ Թումանյանյան շաբաթ" where they mainly cover, watch or perform tales and poems from Toumanian. Similarly, they have weeks dedicated to other authors, such as the first few weeks of fall that are dedicated to Teryan.

Toys are the first and most powerful means of militarization in kindergartens and homes of Armenians. Toys are usually the means through which children develop new skills and learn about life and their surroundings. Some toys can also teach about conflict resolution, while others may encourage conflict. Fortunately, according to the decision of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports in Armenia, toys that encourage violence or fighting are not allowed in public kindergartens. Guns, tanks, and tiny soldier toys that I remember playing with in my kindergarten 15 years ago are no longer allowed, which the ministry should be given credit for. Development and didactic toy games have come to replace guns and tanks in public kindergartens, although some kindergartens lack these toys because of financial difficulties (Rita, interview, Feb. 21, 2021). The situation drastically changes when we move from public kindergartens to private ones. Of course, there are private kindergartens in Armenia that work according to international standards, such as the Montessori, Smart Start International, and QSI preschools. However, the number of families that can afford such preschools is minimal. Outside of these preschools with international practices, we have preschools owned by private individuals that do not follow state guidelines. Some of the interviewed teachers worked in such kindergartens where, besides having didactic games, there are guns, tanks, and other military

toys that the kids played with. Moreover, some teachers even encouraged playing war games, and sometimes they joined these games themselves (Anahit, Feb. 20, 2021).

The next means of militarization communicated in kindergartens is the cultural and emotional baggage that teachers (and parents) burden children with, especially boys. The majority of Armenian parents favor a son over a daughter for various reasons, such as family lineage, property inheritance, and financial support, and because boys are the defenders of the homeland (Abrahamyan, 2012). Many of the teachers view boys as soldiers, especially after the 2020 war, and use every opportunity to remind them that they have to grow up and become soldiers. The interviewees shared many stories where they told the boys in the group not to cry when hurting themselves or not being able to play with the toy they want as “they are future soldiers and soldiers do not cry” (Anna, Feb. 20, 2021). One of the interviewees even told how once one of the boys came with camouflage shorts and top, and she proudly announced him as the soldier of the day (Syuzanna, Feb. 21, 2021). This was a common act among most teachers and parents because Armenians measure patriotism by the level of militarization. This is not something that we can blame the teachers for as it is a part of the Armenian mentality, and as much as teachers call on boys as soldiers, parents are those that reinforce this idea even more.

The need to satisfy parents drives many preschool teachers to organize school events or “handes/huínդէս” around a specific theme, such as Army Day or the Independence Day of Armenia (or similar holidays that have military connections). During these events, the teachers give kids poems to learn by heart about war, the army, and previous historical events. The children stand on the stage, sing military songs, wear camouflage clothes or military caps, and decorate the stage with Armenian flags. One of the interviewees mentioned how during one of

her initiatives, the children performed a war scene, made a car registered to the Ministry of Defense, and sang with a picture of Mount Ararat in the background (Anna, Feb. 20, 2021).

As a result, the children did what they were asked, including performing military songs with strong lyrics that encourage the killing of the enemy, glorify the army, and reduce patriotism to a matter of war participation. Unfortunately, these kinds of events encourage children and motivate them to perform, because afterwards they are usually praised by their teachers and the whole family. This is how militarization gets a green light in identity building. Many interviewees mentioned that after the last Nagorno Karabakh (NK) war, not only boys are reminded that they are defenders of the homeland but also girls, because “as we saw many girls can also fight” (Rita; Syuzanna; Anahit; Nune; Feb. 20-21, 2021).

Other forms of militarizing kids and normalizing war and army in kindergartens include visiting monuments dedicated to war heroes, having veterans as guest speakers, and introducing army themes in lesson plans and movie screenings (Anna; Rita; Marine; Feb. 20-21, 2021).

### **Parenthood, Teacherhood and Statehood**

*When growing up, we are told that defending Armenia is our duty. Then you wonder, why do not other nations go to the army. Don't they have a duty? If they don't have a duty, does that mean they have no homeland? Why does one have to pay a duty to a land, while the other does not.*

*We should not be taught that going to the army is our duty because that overwhelms us, makes us feel indebted to a piece of land. Instead, we should be told that going to the army is to protect ourselves, our homes, our loved ones.*

According to an old Armenian saying, "Children are like dough; they will become whatever you make of them." It is relatively easier to teach children the perceived rights and wrongs of an act when they are young and yet unshaped, rather than when they are older and

have their understanding of the world. In a child's life, those playing with the "dough" are the parents<sup>2</sup> (family), the teachers (surrounding world), and the state (education policies). Each of these stages is a powerful means to enroot militarization.

The first person that a child interacts with is their family. Especially in Armenian settings, where family is of great significance, the child is shaped mainly by family traditions, mentality and worldview. Even when we look beyond a specific family and to Armenians as a nation, we still see the factor of the family being present: the whole Armenian nation is a big family. That is the reason why we hear youngsters address older generations as "papi/tati (grandma'/grandpa')" or "hopar/horkur (uncle/aunt) and each other as "aper/kuyr (brother/sister) (Abrahamyan, 2006). This also portrays how Armenia follows the *gemeinschaft* (communal society) type of social system described by Ferdinand Tönnis. *Gemeinschafts* are the societies where traditional and social rules define how impersonal relations work (Tönnies, 2001, p. 26-29). Since many parents have been exposed to militarization and unconsciously thought of it as culture, they continue to raise their kids with similar traditions. During the interviews, many parents realized that their children (and themselves) had been militarized from a very young age (Azniv; Gurgen; Yeva; Mar. 6, 2021). The constant pressure of being Armenian, the need to prove that you must exist as a nation, and the responsibility to carry and protect Armenian identity have been mirrored in cultural songs, and thus in parents' behavior as well. One of the parents recalls how he listened to songs about national heroes, such as Gevorg Chaush, General Andranik, Garegin Nzhdeh<sup>3</sup> and felt alive because these songs made him feel proud of his identity. Now, he listens to these same songs with his kids (Gurgen, March 07, 2021). The

---

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the role of the mother is stronger on children's upbringing than that of the father. The reasons might be that fathers are the main source of income and they do not engage in family matters as much as mothers do. Therefore, the way children and mothers see the world are alike.

<sup>3</sup> State heroes of Armenia from different periods of the Armenian history.

parents realize that the songs that awaken national pride, yet normalize war and violence, or praise killings are not healthy. Unfortunately, the parents feel they cannot help it because it is their responsibility to raise generations that carry social memory. This duty mainly falls on the mother's shoulders because they are responsible for children's upbringing<sup>4</sup>.

As a result, children that come to kindergarten are already exposed to militarization, war, and killings to some degree. Most of them know the words "war," "army," "killing," and "death" from their families, but they do not associate any meaning with it (Karine, Feb. 20, 2021). These words become something they have heard and repeat unconsciously. This may be called a "parrot effect." Not only children come to kindergarten already influenced by their families, but the teachers also bring their family's understanding of a homeland, patriotism, war, and army to the table.

Moreover, the teachers do not come as unprepared as kids do. They bring their motherhood duties with them and continue to enforce those. They adapt their role of a mother to kindergarten settings and continue what they started at home. I recall how my kindergarten teacher told us that we were all brothers and sisters in our group, and she was our second mother. This clearly shows how ECE teachers do not change roles when in work settings. Many of these teachers/mothers feel obligated to educate children to become strong soldiers (boys) and deserving mothers (girls) for the homeland. That is what society asks of them. Thus, they do it through school events where kids were marching like soldiers, making paper tanks during class, watching scenes from movies dedicated to the Nagorno Karabakh wars, or simply showing

---

<sup>4</sup> Of course, there are many families where parents consciously refuse to let their kids listen to such songs and do not expose them to the bloody historical pages of Armenia until they are old enough to understand it themselves, but these families are a minority. Only two of the interviewed parents followed this type of child rearing, but based on the two questions added about the impact of war, they were also confused whether they should or should not continue protecting their kids from the reality they live in.

positive discrimination towards boys because they are future soldiers. Note that these teachers are not even called teachers in Armenia. They do not receive the respect of a teacher and, therefore, do not carry the obligations of one. In Armenian, a preschool/kindergarten teacher is called "dayak/դայակ [carer/wet-nurse]" and "dastiarak/դաստիարակ [educator]" which means a person who gives lessons, yet people avoid calling these teachers by their name. This could be one reason why preschool teachers continue their motherly duties even outside of their home – they care for and do not teach kids.

Many Armenians understand the significance of quality education in nation-building and development (parents: Arpine, Yeva, Anush, Gurgen, Mar. 6-7, 2021; teachers: Rita, Karine, Siranush, Varduhi, Feb. 20-21, 2021). They do know that schools significantly shape how future generations view their social relationships with the past and present and become "agents of socialization" (Giroux, 1978, p. 149). However, not many question the way the system works and the curriculum that their children go through. The reasons vary: perhaps the parents trust the state with education or simply because they are unaware of its importance and view schools as places where children only gain factual information. This is when there are no checks and balances between the state education system and society. Therefore, the state organizes education however it wishes. If the people are lucky, their kids receive quality education, including preparations for any real-life challenges. If not, their children stay as unaware of their significance as their parents did. That is when the "hidden curriculum" enters school systems. The "hidden curriculum" is a set of "unstated norms, values, and beliefs transmitted to students through the underlying structure of schooling" that is an entirely different dimension of the accepted practice of schooling (Giroux, 1978, p.148). When the state avoids the "hidden curriculum" and society is not aware of its existence, what the people have is an incomplete education system that



misleads its beneficiaries, in Armenia’s case, children of ECE age. The hidden curriculum becomes evident when we look back at the role of the teacher in the ECE institutions: the teachers are "tools" that use the hidden curriculum to reinforce militarization unconsciously.

However, the state knowingly ignores the hidden curriculum when developing the state guidelines for the ECE institutions. According to the current education guidelines<sup>5</sup>, signed by the former Minister of Education and Science of Armenia, Armen Ashotyan, in 2011, one of the principles of the guidelines is to teach about "cognitive patriotism"<sup>6</sup> (MoESCS, 3(5) 2011,). What "cognitive patriotism" or even just “patriotism” means and what parents and teachers should understand under this terminology is unclear. Following this, the guidelines also mention how the education in ECE institutions must be secular (MoESCS, 7 (2), 2011), while point 4 states that children must learn about their traditions parallel to humanitarian values. These points may not seem contradictory at first sight but considering the hidden curriculum and how the



teachers are allowed to reinforce it, these two contradict. "We always pray before we start our classes or have our meals in kindergarten," states Syuzanna (Feb. 21, 2021), which shows how non-secular the system can be and how the hidden curriculum goes against the official one and stays unnoticed, because religion is a part of Armenian identity.

---

<sup>5</sup> Currently, the MoESCS is developing new guidelines for all branches of the education system. The final draft of the guidelines will be available for public discussion by 2022, and by 2023, it will become official. The guidelines referred to here have been put in practice since 2011 and will be used till 2023.

<sup>6</sup> This may as well be simply “patriotism” because it seems like the original law is missing a comma in between the words “cognitive” and “patriotism” in the document.

Similarly, kindergartens have various school events with strong paramilitary emphasis, veteran guest speakers, militarized language used in kindergartens, and other factors that lead to militarization yet fall under the point of teaching about "patriotism." When the hidden curriculum goes beyond state education guidelines and reaches kindergartens, kindergartens end up having lesson plans that dedicate a whole month to teach about the army and a whole year to patriotism in a way teachers perceive to be correct. The first is a part of the formal curriculum, while the second is an example of the hidden one. However, the unclarity of the guidelines and the lesson plans allow teachers to conduct their lessons however they believe acceptable. Therefore, one of the teachers enacts a soldier march, while the other shows movie scenes and actual marching scenes to explain what an army and war are (Anahit, Anna; Feb.20, 2021).

These might have been the basis for the "nation-army" concept that the previous government put into action right after the April war in 2016 (Hovhannisyan, 2020). The Ministry of Defense adopted the "nation-army" concept, which, according to the former Ministry of Defence (MoD) Vigen Sargsyan, was the process of "all the governmental bodies, civilians and anybody else" clearly understanding their role in defense of Armenia (2016). The MoD cooperated with various government-sponsored NGOs and initiatives to promote that ideology, but their main focus was on education. Therefore, the "nation-army" concept contributed to the close cooperation between the MoD and the Ministry of Education. Many schools, universities, including Yerevan State University, and youth initiatives, were devotees of the concept. The ideology was heavily criticized by civil society organizations, as it would further militarize Armenian society (Pambukchyan, 2018). The concept is now considered a failure, as the government stopped propagating it and put it on pause after the "Velvet Revolution" in 2018.

However, it is yet unknown what the impact of the second Nagorno Karabakh war will further be on this issue.

### **The Labyrinth of Identity-Making**

*My daughter's uncle was in the Army when she was just 3 years old. She saw him in military uniform just once. From that moment on, every time she saw a person in the same uniform, she would call out to him or her as "uncle." After the war, she learned who soldiers are and she stopped looking at soldiers with the same amusement. She knew exactly why soldiers were soldiers...*

Identity gives people a sense of belonging and dedication to a state or a nation. It is an ongoing process of change and is never the same in different periods. Nevertheless, one factor is always consistent: language. According to Benedict Anderson (1983, p. 44), language is crucial in identity-making for three reasons. First, it allows people to freely communicate and share their ideas and perspectives of the world. That is how people connect on an emotional level, and an institutional level. The second was print capitalism at the time, but in the 21st century, this can be replaced with modern-day media and books. Lastly, the power distribution between languages also influenced the formation of national consciousness among people. Coming back to identity-building in the age of globalization, it is important to note how language has still kept its crucial role. Anderson also points out that the language itself does not matter; it can be Armenian, English, or French. What matters is the existence of it in the community (Anderson, 1983).

Oral and written language help transform history, culture, and traditions into national identity. In Armenian identity, language stayed consistent from the 4th and 5th centuries until the present. Interestingly, according to Grosby (1997, p. 21), the second factor that indicated the existence of national consciousness was territory or "a relation of bounded areal jurisdiction." The reason why territory and not specifically a state influenced identity formation is that

Armenians had been stateless for decades. The only hope to hold on to had been the territory. Presently, the concept of territory has developed into the territorial integrity of a state. This also includes the de facto Republic of Nagorno Karabakh and the post-genocide border distribution that many Armenians hold on to.

Although this year marked the 106th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, Armenians all over the world still have not healed from it. The most challenging consequence of the genocide is the victim stereotype that suffocates Armenians. The majority of interviewees mentioned how it is the “Armenian’s fate<sup>7</sup>” to always be in danger and victimized (teachers: Nune, Anna; Feb. 20, 2021) (parents: Azniv, Zaruhi, Sona; Mar. 7, 2021). The roots of self-victimizing go deeper into history, but the latest event contributing the most to it is the Armenian genocide of 1915. The reasons why people hold on to this varies, but one of them could be the denial of the Armenian genocide by Turkey and the lack of recognition from other states. However, Armenians did try to overcome the victim stereotype in the 1980s, and it did partially succeed after they declared independence from the Soviet Union and won the war against Azerbaijan. According to Abrahamyan (2006, p. 161), this stereotype was awakened again when the Sumgait massacres started in Azerbaijan (in February 1988), and the December 1988 earthquake that destroyed Spitak and surrounding towns and villages .

Unfortunately, Armenians will again fall into the trap of victimization as they lost the second NK war in November 2020. This war will leave a significant scar on Armenian identity as a bloody war that claimed the lives of nearly 5000 young soldiers scratching off the victory of the 1994 war that was a significant contributor to the current understanding of what makes up Armenian identity.

---

<sup>7</sup> The term “Armanian’s fate/ հայի քախս” is used not only politically but also in different circumstances to show how unlucky a person is.

After the war was over in November 2020, when the whole nation was in trauma, I asked my interviewees to reflect on what contributes to identity-making and what personality traits describe Armenians in general. Only a few of them had a well thought-out answer (teachers: Siranush, Nune, Rita; Feb. 20-21, 2021) (parents: Arpine, Zaruhi, Mar. 7, 2021) because they were confused and lost in their definition of identity. Religion, the Armenian language, history, and traditions were still a part of Armenian national consciousness in their answers, but now the Nagorno Karabakh wars and the 30-year-old victory that governments silenced citizens with were gone. Nagorno Karabakh, the symbol of liberation and justice for Armenians, is now slowly fading away, leaving a tremendous gap in the mosaic of Armenian identity with nothing to replace it with but pain and revenge. On the other hand, we have the lives of soldiers, who are now purified and given the title of posthumous heroes. The role of the army and its strength is still questioned. However, all Armenians agree on the necessity of a well-structured strategy and reform system that would restore the pride of the military, and therefore the pride of Armenians as well.

Unfortunately, not many Armenians can differentiate between military reform and militarization. Most of the interviewees did not know what militarization was, yet all of them were positive about having a further militarized country. Therefore, hearing of militarization, people automatically think of it as the process of making the army stronger: buying new artillery, weaponry, and training soldiers to be able to defend themselves in the war. They do not see it as a militarization of society and future generations. In fact, it is simple to manipulate military reforms and militarize a whole society, especially when they have just lost a war, have thousands of victims and prisoners of war still in the enemy country. Unaware of what they are exposed to,

many Armenians unconsciously yet proudly continue the circle of militarization, thinking that they somehow empower the military.

It is trouble-free to militarize a country in such situations, but militarization comes with consequences that have become a part of the national consciousness and culture in Armenia. Many teachers and parents shared that the only concern they have regarding militarization is making Armenians like the Azerbaijanis, full of hatred and xenophobia (teachers: Varduhi, Siranush, Anna, Nune, Rita, Feb. 20-21) (parents: Yeva, Ruzanna, Anush, Azniv, Arpine, Sona; March 7-8, 2021). Militarization is a source of violence, and conflict constantly dehumanizes the other side. Thus, there is no way one can militarize a child yet expect them not to hate the enemy. Due to the strong waves of militarization in Armenia, violence, and aggression have become a part of national identity for a long time. Even more, militarization creates a strong wave of violence that as Abrahamyan (2006) mentions is mostly directed towards the inside hurting Armenian society, its perceptions of Armenian culture, traditions, social norms and worldview.

Militarization has brought Armenians nothing good but generations of boys who are aggressive, violent, and hot-headed. Moreover, Armenia has generations of girls that think domestic violence is a closed family affair, that a raped woman is to blame and force their daughters to be like them – deserving of the title of “a soldier’s mother/զինվորի մայր” (Anna, Nune, Anahit; Mar. 7, 2021). Unlike Basham praising the “military ethos” in the UK that leads to personal growth of boys in an austerity age (2016), the consequences of militarization in the Armenian society have not (Makdusyan, 2016) and will not lead to positive results. There are daily cases of bullying at schools, especially among boys. Armenia has high records of domestic violence, cases when a crowd breaks into a government building and breaks a TV, and people

who protest in front of the National Assembly of Armenia against a convention that aims to ensure equality and criminalizes domestic violence. If one tries to explain that militarization is the basis of such angry and inhuman, yet normalized behavior, Armenians will disagree with them, as some of my interviewees did, and argue that “a state in such a geopolitical situation has no other option but to militarize” (parents: Ruzanna, Anush, Zaruhi, Elena; Mar. 7-8, 2021) (teachers: Anna, Nune, Anahit; Feb. 20-21, 2021). Here we come back to the idea that militarization has no alternatives and is the sole option for guaranteed protection.

Us – Armenians, like to say that we hardly learn from history. We prepare ourselves to fight against a single nation/country, and when the opponent changes, our nation stays without “weapons.” As Abrahamyan (2006, p. 250) put it, “The historical memory and an image of an enemy are much more flexible in reality than one may expect.” When the enemy changes and all Armenia has done is militarizing its people and normalizing violence, sooner or later, aggression will direct itself inwards, hurting Armenians as a society and nation instead of contributing to the creation of a stronger state.

### **Recommendations: Future in the Making**

*Eighteen years ago, I was the happiest woman on the planet. Eighteen years ago I was also the saddest mother on the planet. My youngest child, my son was born and it has been 18 years I am counting and dreading his 18th birthday.*

*This hell will continue till the minute he is back home.*

“I do not know what I should do?” (Varduhi, Mar. 8, 2021), “I am not sure my teaching style was the right one before” (Siranush, Mar. 8, 2021) “How do I talk about the army, which is a mandatory lesson theme in kindergartens, when I have children who lost a beloved person to the war?” (Karine, Mar. 8, 2021) “Should I teach my kids about war? Should I tell them what happened to their cousins, fathers, and relatives?” (Nune, Mar. 8, 2021) “How do I teach kids to

be proud of their country when we just lost a war?” (Marine, Anna; Mar. 8, 2021) “How do I not cry in front of kids?” (Anna, Mar. 8, 2021) “What do I do?” (Varduhi, Siranush, Anna, Marine, Nune; Mar. 7, 2021).

There is uncertainty among all the interviewees. These teachers need help and support because they are not heartless. They also have feelings, and they also represent generations that have already seen three wars and carry the “victory” of the previous war. It is difficult for them to let go of what constitutes their identity and national pride. It is extra challenging to be “in-between two stones<sup>8</sup>” (Siranush, Varduhi; Mar. 7, 2021). At the end of the interviews, when the teachers (and parents) understood what militarization was and how it might affect their children’s behavior and identity, they started questioning their teaching and parenting methods. “Should we promote militarization to have generations that are ready for war?” (Varduhi, Marine; Mar. 7, 2021) or “Should we let our children enjoy their childhood, because at some point they will be exposed to fighting anyway? Do we postpone it as long as possible?” (Rita, Siranush; Mar. 7-8, 2021). These teachers’ diplomas are of no use when they are psychologically not ready to work with children. That is why the Ministry of Education in Armenia must acknowledge the existence of these teachers, start calling them teachers and then meet their needs. The Ministry may do its best to have an excellent strategic plan for the following years to improve the education system in Armenia. However, if in the future, these teachers (ECE in general) are ignored like before, we will have a house with an incomplete foundation that will collapse at any moment.

---

<sup>8</sup> “In between two stones” is an Armenian saying, which means that the person has to make a hard choice between two options, but it is difficult to choose one because both are important.



Based on my findings, I would like to present my recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports regarding the demilitarization of the Early Childhood Education sphere in Armenia are the following:

1. The MoESCS should organize workshops for all ECE teachers around Armenia as soon as possible. The aim of the training should be to help teachers understand and overcome the psychological challenges they are going through after the war. The continuation of these workshops must include sessions on how to deal with trauma and how to help children overcome trauma. These sessions will help educators overcome the uncertainty they face in teaching, restore the trust in themselves, and be put on the right track to continue teaching. Otherwise, the pain will transform into revenge, and that is what they will teach in kindergarten classrooms<sup>9</sup> through the hidden curriculum. The impact of war will be even more horrible than the war itself if we do not pay adequate attention to the Early Childhood Education sector.

Professional development and need-based workshops for kindergarten educators during their tenure are not something new. It is practiced by many countries, including Israel (Aram & Ziv, 2018), Finland (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2018), and Ireland (Murphy, 2015). Armenia can also follow these examples and make sure educators are ready to deal with the challenges that social and political factors cause.

2. The MoESCS should clear the education guidelines from any uncertain terminology, such as “patriotism,” that may institutionalize militarization. Any school ceremony or lesson that glorifies violence for any reason should be eliminated. Patriotism and love towards Armenia can be taught through daily activities, such as teaching kids not to litter,

---

<sup>9</sup> This idea came from one of the interviews with teachers, where she expressed her wish for someone to tell them what to do next and how to overcome the pain of the war.

harming anyone, and using their maximum potential as human beings. There should be a strict overview of what educators teach and how they teach it to catch the hidden curriculum where it exists and slowly get rid of it.

3. Although there are ways that the Ministry tries to overview the ECE curriculum and the teaching process through various visits to institutions, based on my own experience and what I see in my community, these visits are useless. The educators view the Ministry officials sent to report as someone that threatens their job. The Ministry should develop a strategy where teachers do not hide or lie to officials and view them as opportunities to grow and be better professionals. This way, there will be an active exchange of ideas and experiences between educators and Ministry officials. On the other hand, the gap between the teacher and the system will slowly close.

### **Conclusion**

Aiming to shed light on one of the most important yet ignored spheres of education, this research aimed at exploring the ways militarization is conveyed in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions in Armenia and how those ways later on shape the local Armenian identity. To do so, this work brought together a series of scholarly texts exploring identity building, especially that of Armenians, nationalism and early childhood education spheres in different countries. Through phenomenological analysis, the research gave teachers and parents a platform to express themselves and share their opinion on militarization and identity formation. The paper argues that further militarization of the education system and ignorance towards the needs of ECE educators will increase violence in the society, thus unconsciously promoting aggression in Armenian identity. The MoESCS should take a few necessary steps to be able to tackle this issue on time. Trauma stewardship and professional growth workshops, a clear yearly lesson plan, which takes the hidden curriculum into account and a close cooperation between the

ministry and the teachers are few of the possible options that might help to the betterment of the educational system in Armenia and avoiding of militarization from ECE children's lives.

## References

- Abrahamyan, R. (2012). *PREVALENCE OF AND REASONS FOR SEX-SELECTIVE ABORTIONS IN ARMENIA*. United Nations Population Fund. Yerevan, Armenia. Retrieved from: [https://armenia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Sex-selective abortions report Eng 0.pdf](https://armenia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Sex-selective%20abortions%20report%20Eng%200.pdf)
- Abrahamyan, L. (2006). *Armenian identity in a changing world*. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publication
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (2nd ed.). London: Verso.
- Aram, D. & Ziv, M. (2018). Early Childhood Education in Israel (2018). In J. L. Roopnarine., J. E. Johnson., S. Quinn., & M. Patte (Eds.). *International Handbook of Early Childhood Education*. New York: Routledge.
- Areshian, G. E. (2018). HISTORICAL DYNAMICS OF THE ENDOGENOUS ARMENIAN, I.E. HAYOTS, IDENTITY: SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS. In *Reflections of Armenian identity in history and historiography* (1st ed., Vol. 27, pp. 15-35). UCI Jordan Center for Persian Studies.
- Arzumanyan, M. V. et al. (1984). "The Children's Encyclopedia: What is, Who is?" Soviet Armenia Encyclopedia Edition. Yerevan, Armenia. Retrieved from: <http://encyclopedia.am/pages.php?bId=2&hId=1182&sWord=Array#>
- Ashmore, R. D., Jussim, L. J., & Wilder, D. (2001). Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pg. 74-75.
- Basham, V. M. (2016). *Raising an Army: The Geopolitics of Militarizing the Lives of Working-Class Boys in an Age of Austerity*. *International Political Sociology*, 10(3), 258-274. doi:10.1093/ips/olw013
- Beier, J. M. (2011). War Stories: Militarized Pedagogies of Children's Everyday. In *The militarization of childhood: Thinking beyond the global south* (pp. 95-110). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). (2019). *GMI Ranking Table: Global Militarisation Index*. Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://gmi.bicc.de/ranking-table>
- Dixon, C. S. (2002). Contesting the reformation. In *The reformation in Germany* (2nd ed., Vol. 38, pp. 275-276). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Early childhood care and education. (2017, November 23). Retrieved April 09, 2021, from <https://en.unesco.org/themes/early-childhood-care-and-education>
- Finnish National Agency for Education. (2018). *National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education Care*. Regulations and guidelines 2018:3c. Helsinki, Finland.

- Gellner, E. (1978). *Thought and Change*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Grosby, S. (1997). Borders, Territory and Nationality in the Ancient Near East and Armenia. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*. pg 21.
- Hovhannisyán, E. (2020, May 01). *Conflicts and Militarization of Education: Totalitarian Institutions in Secondary Schools and in the System of Extracurricular Education in Armenia (Part 2)*. Yerevan, Armenia: Caucasus Edition. <https://caucasusedition.net/conflicts-and-militarization-of-education-totalitarian-institutions-in-secondary-schools-and-in-the-system-of-extracurricular-education-in-armenia-part-2/>
- Maksudyan, N. (2016). Agents or Pawns?: *Nationalism and Ottoman Children during the Great War*. *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 3(1), 139-164.
- McLean, I., & McMillan, A. (2009). Oxford Dictionary. *The concise Oxford dictionary of politics* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Youth Affairs. (2011). ՆԱԽԱԴՊՈՒՑԱԿԱՆ ԿՐԹՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԿՐԹԱԿԱՆ ՉԱՓՈՐՈՇԻՉՆԵՐԸ ՀԱՍՏԱՏԵԼՈՒ ՄԱՍԻՆ ՀՐԱՄԱՆ [State Order of Early Childhood Education Guidelines], 2011.05.23/11(394).1 Article.209.4 (2011). Retrieved from: <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=67889>
- Murphy, R. (2015). Early Childhood Education in Ireland: Change and Challenge. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 8(2), 287-300.
- Palandjian, G. (2014). "The ABC's of Being Armenian: (Re)Turning to the National Identity in Post-Soviet Textbooks." In *Reconstructing Memory: School Textbooks and the Imagination of the Nation*, by James Williams, 247-268. Rotterdam, Taipei, and Boston: Sense Publishers.
- Pambukchyan, A. (2018, July 18). *The 'Nation-Army' concept: The story of failed national-militaristic propaganda in Armenia* [Scholarly project]. In *Foreign Policy Center*. Retrieved April 11, 2021, from <https://fpc.org.uk/about/>
- Sargsyan, V. (2016, October 21). Defense Minister of Armenia Elaborated on the "Nation-Army" Principle [Interview]. *Armedia*. Retrieved from <https://armedia.am/eng/news/40901/defense-minister-of-armenia-elaborated-on-the-nation-army-principle.html>
- Seuss, Dr. (1984). *The Butter Battle Book*. New York: Random House.
- Tönnies, F. (2001). *Community and Civil Society* (1339484373 981930994 J. Harris, Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Toumanian, H. (1988). *Երկերի լիակատար ժողովածու*. [Complete Collection of Works] Yerevan: Armenian SSR Publication.

## Appendix A

### Հարցաշար

#### Կենսագրություն

1. Ինչպե՞ս է ձեր անունը, ազգանունը:
2. Որտե՞ղ եք ծնվել:
  - a. Որտե՞ղ եք ապրում հիմա:
  - b. Սիրո՞ւմ եք այն քաղաքը/գյուղը, որտեղ հիմա եք ապրում:
3. Մանկապարտեղ հաճախե՞լ եք:
  - a. Եթե այո, քանի՞ տարի:
  - b. Ինչպիսի՞ն էր ձեր մանկապարտեղը:
  - c. Որտե՞ղ էր գտնվում:
  - d. Սիրո՞ւմ էիք ձեր դաստիարակներին, ինչու՞ :
  - e. Կա՞ն ինչ-որ հիշողություններ այդ շրջանից, որ տարիներ անց հիշում եք:
    - i. Ո՞րն էր լավագույն բանը մանկապարտեղում, որ ձեզ ամեն օր ստիպում էր հաճախել այն
4. Ունե՞ք քույր կամ եղբայր:
  - a. Եթե այո, քանի՞ սր, ի՞նչ է նրանց անունը:
  - b. Նրանք հաճախե՞լ են մանկապարտեղ:

#### Մանկապարտեղ

1. Ինչո՞վ է տարբերվում այն մանկապարտեղը, որտեղ հաճախում է ձեր բալիկը, այն մանկապարտեղից, որը ինքներդ եք հաճախել տարիներ առաջ:
2. Ըստ ձեզ, ո՞րն է մանկապարտեղի դերը հասարակության մեջ
  - a. Իսկ Հայաստանում
  - b. Իսկ երեխայի կյանքում

#### Փոխանցման միջոցներ

1. Ինչպիսի՞ խաղալիքներ կան մանկապարտեղում:
  - a. Տիկնիկներ՞, արջուկներ, զինվորական խաղալիքներ
    - i. Կա՞ն խաղալիքներ, որ ձեր խմբի երեխաները առանձնահատուկ են սիրում:
    - ii. Դուք խրախուսո՞ւմ եք, որպեսզի երեխաները բոլոր խաղալիքներով խաղան մանկապարտեղում, ներառյալ զինվորական խաղալիքները:

2. Ի՞նչ պատմություններ և հեքիաթներ եք կարդում երեխաների համար մանկապարտեզում:
  - a. Ո՞ր հեքիաթն են երեխաները առանձնահատուկ սիրում:
  - b. Կա՞ն հերոսներ, որ մանկապարտեզում բալիկներին խրախուսում եք լինել:
    - i. Եթե այո, որո՞նք են:
    - ii. Ինչպե՞ս եք իմացել:
    - iii. Եթե ոչ, կա՞ն հերոսներ, ում երեխաները իրենք են ցանկանում նմանվել:
    - iv. Եթե այո, ի՞նչ եք կարծում ինչու՞ :
3. Ինչպիսի՞ միջոցառումներ և հանդեսներ եք կազմակերպում մանկապարտեզում:
  - a. Տոնու՞մ եք մարտի 8-ը կամ, ասենք հունվարի 28-ը:
  - b. Կպատմե՞ք մի փոքր ինչպե՞ս եք մանկապարտեզում տոնում օրինակ հունվարի 28-ը կամ մայիսի 9-ը:
    - i. Բոլո՞ր երեխաներն են մասնակցու՞մ այդպիսի միջոցառումներին:
    - ii. Հազցնու՞մ եք երեխաներին հատուկ համազգեստ:
    - iii. Հարցնու՞մ են երեխաները ի՞նչ միջոցառում են տոնում կամ ինչու են, օրինակ ռազմահագուստ կրում: Եթե այո, ի՞նչ եք պատասխանում, որպես դայակ/դաստիարակ:
4. Տանու՞մ եք երեխաներին էքսկուրսիաների, օրինակ զինվորական երթերի պետական տոներին:
  - a. Կուզե՞իք այդպիսի հանդիպումներ շատ լինեին:
5. Հաճա՞խ եք խոսում բանակից երեխաների մոտ մանկապարտեզում:

## Ռազմականացում

1. Գիտե՞ք ինչ է ռազմականացումը (միլիտարիզացիան)
  - a. Եթե այո, կներկայացնե՞ք ձեր իսկ բառերով:
  - b. Եթե ոչ, կարո՞ղ եք փորձել գուշակել:
2. Կա՞ տարբերություն աղջիկների և տղաների միջև, երբ խոսքը գնում է ռազմականացման մասին:
3. Սովորակա՞ն էք համարումը ռազմականեցումը ցանկացած տարիքում:
4. Խրախուսու՞մ եք ռազմականացումը:
  - a. Ինչպիսի՞ն են ձեր կարծիքը մանկապարտեզից սկսած երեխաներին/տղաների՞ն նախապատրաստել բանակ գնալու վերաբերյալ:
  - b. Գովու՞մ եք երեխաներին, երբ նրանք ռազմական համազգեստով են գալիս մանկապարտեզ (օրինակ կամուֆլյաժ տաբատներ կամ վերնաշապիկ): Ինչու՞ :
  - c. Եղե՞լ է մի դեպք, երբ մանկապարտեզում բալիկները նախընտրել են ազդեցիկ խաղատեսակներ կամ ռազմական համազգեստներ, որովհետև մանկապարտեզում մյուսները ևս դա են անում: Եթե այո, կպատմե՞ք դրա մասին:

5. Փոխվել է ձեր վերաբերմունքը ռազմականացման մասին պատերազմից հետո և առաջ:

### Ազգային ինքնություն

1. Ո՞րն է ձեզ համար հայի բնորոշումը: Նկարագրե՛ք խնդրում եմ:
2. Ի՞նչ էք հասկանում ազգային ինքնությունն ասելով: Հստակ գծեր կա՞ն որ հային դարձնում են հայ: [Եթե նշվի պատերազմ կամ բանակ, հարցնել՝ ]: Ինչպիսի՞ն է պատերազմի, բանակի և կոնֆլիկտի դերը դրանում:
3. Ինչպե՞ս էք վերաբերվում երեխաների ազգային ինքնության մասին դեռ փոքրուց սովորեցնելուն:
  - a. Ի՞նչ էք կարծում երեխաներին պե՞տք է մանուկ հասակից սովորեցնել ազգության, բանակի և պատերազմի մասին
4. Ի՞նչ էք կարծում ռազմականացումը որևէ ազդեցություն ունենո՞ւմ է երեխայի և հայի ինքնության կերտման մեջ:
5. Որո՞նք կարող են լինել փոքր տարիքից ռազմականացման արդյունքները:

### Վերջաբան

1. Ինչպիսի՞ն է ձեր երազած մանկապարտեզը: Կարո՞ղ էք նկարագրել այն:
  - a. Ի՞նչ են սովորեցնում այնտեղ:
  - b. Ի՞նչ չեն սովորեցնում:
  - c. Ինչպիսի՞ երկրում է այն գտնվում
2. Ինչո՞վ է ձեր երազանքի մանկապարտեզը նման ձեր հաճախած մանկապարտեզին:
  - a. Ինչո՞վ է տարբեր:
3. Իսկ ինչո՞վ է այն նման ձեր բալիկի մանկապարտեզին:
  - a. Ինչո՞վ տարբեր:



## Appendix B

### Համաձայնության հավաստագիր

#### Մանկապարտեզի/նախակրթարանի դաստիարակ

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](mailto:hourig.attarian@aua.am)) ղեկավարությամբ Խանում Գևորգյանի կողմից դիպլոմային աշխատանքի նախագծի հարցազրույցին:

#### Նախագծի նպատակը

Տեղյակ եմ, որ այս նախագծի նպատակն է հասկանալ, **արդյոք մանկապարտեզները ուղղակի կամ անուղղակի ձևով իրականացնում են ռազմական դաստիարակություն և դա ինչպես է ազդում հայկական ինքնության հետագա զարգացման վրա:** Խանում Գևորգյանի անցկացրած հարցազրույցի նպատակը մանկապարտեզներում ռազմականացման ձևերի լուսաբանումն է ընդհանուր նախագծի համատեքստում:

#### Ընթացակարգը

Հասկանում եմ, որ հարցազրույցը անցկացվելու է մասնակցի տանը կամ մեկ այլ պատշաճ վայրում, և տեսագրվելու և/կամ ձայնագրվելու է: Ելնելով COVID-19 Հայաստանյան իրադրությունից, կարող են լինել նաև հեռավար հարցազրույցներ: Որպես մասնակից ես պատմելու եմ, **թե ինչպիսին է մանկապարտեզում առօրյան, ինչպիսի ուշադրություն է դարձվում երեխաների ինքնության կերտմանը, արդյոք ուղղակի կամ անուղղակի ձևով մանկապարտեզը նպաստում է ռազմականացմանը և եթե այո, ապա ինչպես:** 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 ԿԱՐԴԱՅԵԼ ԵՄ ՎԵՐԸ ՇԱՐԱԴՐՎԱԾԸ և ՀԱՍԿԱՆՈՒՄ 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) ԽԱՆՈՒՄ ԳԵՈՐԳՅԱՆ

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](mailto:hourig.attarian@aua.am)):