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Hate Speech on the Internet from the side of Azerbaijan during and after the Nagorno Karabakh war 2020

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Table of Contents



01 Introduction

02 Research question

03 Methodology

04 Findings and analysis

05 Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

THE BEGINNING OF CONFLICT

- In 1920, November 30, the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan declares the recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh, Nakhijevan and Zangezour territories to be Armenian.
- On June 12, 1921, based in the declaration of Azerbaijani RevCom, as well as the governments of both Soviet Armenia and Azerbaijan, the National Council of Azerbaijan SSR proclaims Nagorno-Karabakh as an inseparable territory of Armenia.
- In June 1921, Armenia also declares Nagorno-Karabakh as an inseparable part of Armenian SSR.
- On July 4 in 1921, neglecting the legal agreement, the statement that Nagorno-Karabakh is inseparable part of Armenia was reconfirmed during the session held in Tbilisi by the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party of Russia.



INTRODUCTION

- During the night of July 5, Stalin the Russian ruler makes a decision to incorporating Karabakh to Azerbaijan, and declaring it as an autonomous territory. Then, violations against the Armenian population began.
- On December 10, 1991 in accordance with the international law norms and USSR laws, the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh declared the Nagorno Karabakh Republic establishment through plebiscite. As a consequence, two equal states were formed in the territory of Azerbaijani SSR.
- In 1991, with the collapse of the USSR a war erupted between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh region.
- By 1993, Armenia already controlled the whole territory of Karabakh, plus a little of surrounding territory as a security buffer.
- In May, 1994 a ceasefire was signed. Regardless of ceasefire, skirmishes happened and the situation on borderline remain tense.





INDTRODUCTION

On September 27, 2020, in the peak of Covid-19 pandemic, Azerbaijani side began a large-scale attack through the whole borderline of the Nagorno-Karabakh. The war lasted for 44 days. As a result, Nagorno-Karabakh lost most of its territories. Unofficially, 5000 soldiers were killed, not to mention the civilians. Tones of violations happened during the war. Azerbaijani side used internationally prohibited weapons, bombed hospitals, kindergartens, and civilian houses.

Based on the evidence, we can assume that Azerbaijani government spreads armenophobia in the country. The hatred against Armenia is state supported.

In my capstone project, I will refer to the hate speech spread by the Azerbaijani side towards Armenian people. I will bring up certain examples and analyze the discourse based on the international norms.

THE UN DEFINITION

Even though there is no internationally recognized definition of hate speech, the UN understands it as follows “any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or other identity factors”

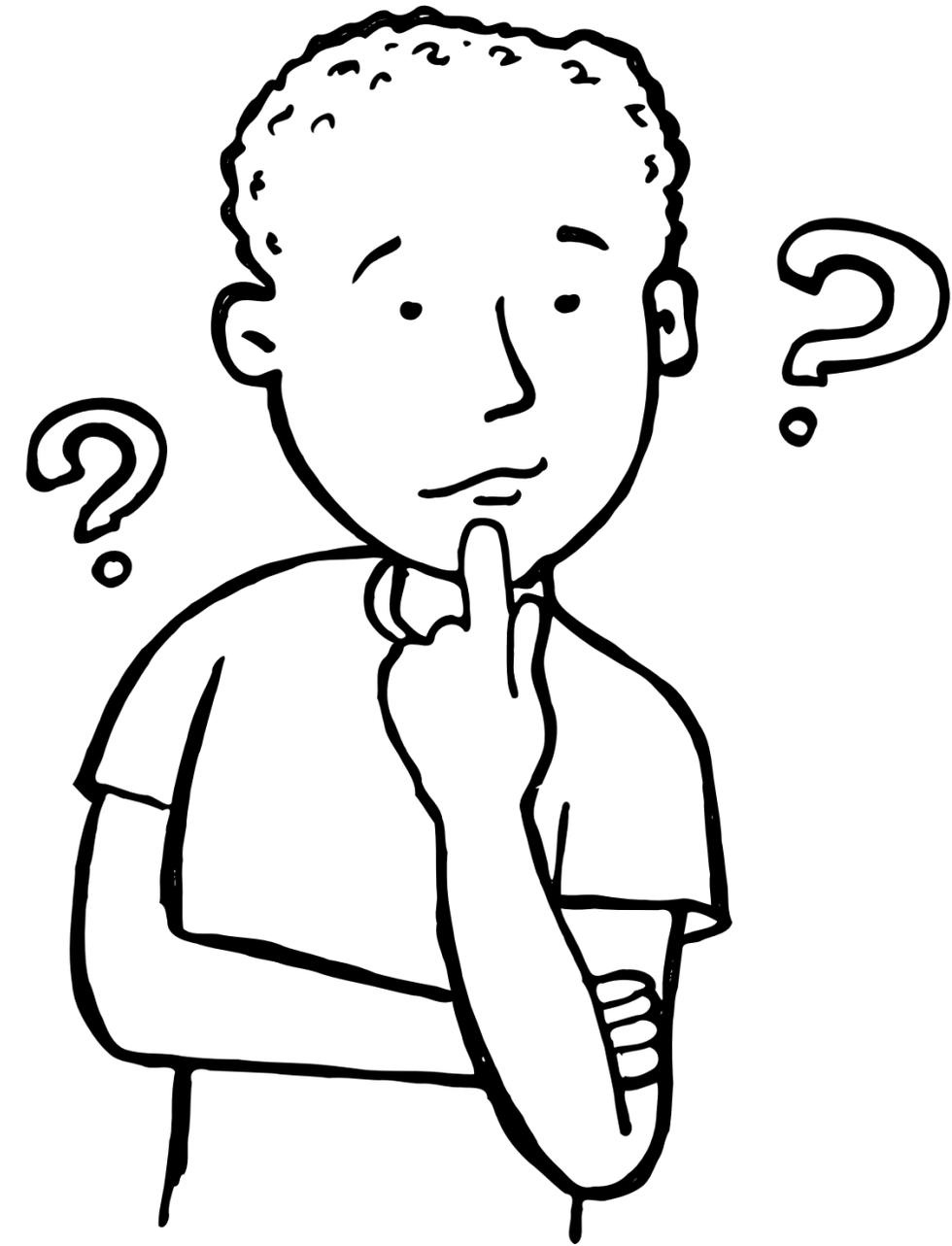
Jihadist hate speech

Jihadist hate speech is most commonly spread by the fan-followers of Salafi jihadist militant groups, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda. Jihadist hate speech spreaders promote violence and aim to threaten civilians through execution videos, war photographs and videos, news updates, interviews with famous jihadists, interpretations of Islam, terrorism videos, torture videos, and others. The most used platforms for hate speech are Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Telegram, JustPaste.it

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: What kind of hate speech was spread through the internet during the Nagorno-Karabakh War of 2020?

RQ2: How Armenians reacted to the hate speech spread by the Azerbaijani side on social media?



Methodology

As a primary method two interviews were conducted.

- The First interview was held with the Human Rights defender of Armenia, Arman Tatoyan.
- The Second Interview was conducted with the representative of the Armenian Social Media Army.

The paper contains evidence taken from the official reports of the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and random comments seen by me on different social media platforms.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER OF ARMENIA

- Hate speech is not protected under the Freedom of speech.
- Hate speech is very dangerous as it can become a cause for other serious crimes, such as murder.
- Hatred towards Armenians is state-supported in Azerbaijan.
- Even the speech that does not contain any offense can become a hate speech because it can raise hatred and aggression towards someone .



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER OF ARMENIA

- Many of Aliyev's speeches contain hatred towards Armenians.
- Some Armenians also made hateful comments towards Azerbaijan, however it was not state supported.
- The Trophy Park, an “exhibition-park” about to the September-November 2020 war in Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) which was opened in Baku on April 12, 2021, is considered to be hate speech.
- There is a distraction of cultural-historical and religious heritage of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh.



ARMENIAN SOCIAL MEDIA ARMY



The goal of ASMA was to counterattack and spread pro-Armenian theses



Rules: Keep all the community rules



The Policy: not to depict Armenians as powerless

Evidence and Analysis



- Comparison of Taalat Pasha (Armenian genocide organizer 1915) and Recep Erdogan (Current President of Turkey)
- Key statement "let history play out properly this time"
- Hate speech - a call for genocide

Hate speech example

- No direct mentioning of the word “Armenians”, still it is widely acknowledged that in 1915 Turks committed the first genocide of the 20th century towards Armenians.
- As a woman, Roya Amirova wishes Armenian women to be tortured, raped and massacred.
- This statement is a hate speech as it specifically targets Armenian women based on their ethnicity and is a call for a genocide



Roya Amirova

@RoyaAmirova

Replying to @JMavyan and @presidentaz

Your mom , sister, daughter
and wife on their knees. In
1915 we didn't fuck you good
enough you should get more.
Ogrash ogli ogrash

12:28 PM · 12 Oct 20 · Twitter for iPhone

State Supported Hate Speech



President Aliyev appeals to the emotions of his nation and encourages hatred towards Armenians

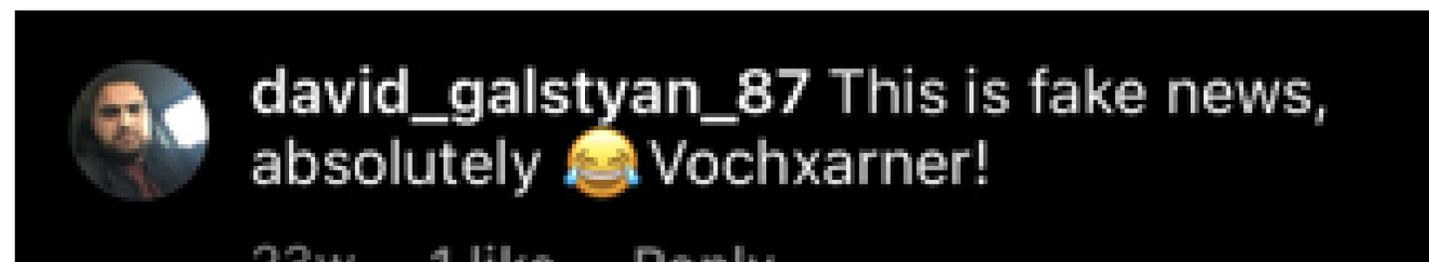
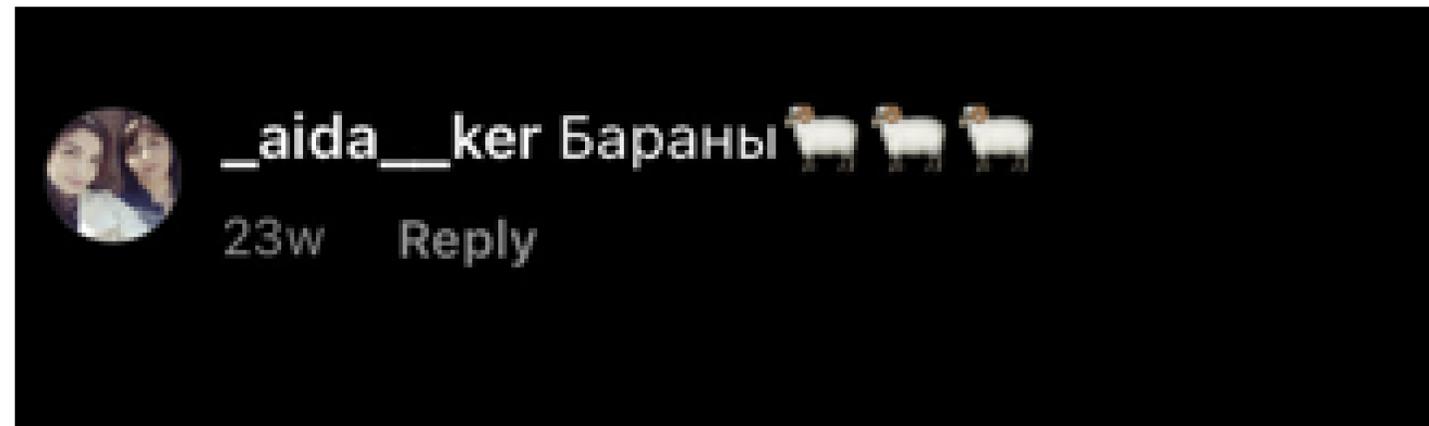
Examples:

- "We will continue to expel these liars. They see who is who now. They see that we were teaching them a lesson they will never forget."
- "We will continue to expel these liars. They see who is who now. They see that we were teaching them a lesson they will never forget."
- "We drive them out like dogs"
- "They kept pigs in our mosques"

President Aliyev serves as an example for his nation, and his followers repeat the same statements he makes about Armenians.

Armenian side on the social media

- Spread more information than hateful statements
- Extensively used the emoji sheep to indicate that Azerbaijani people blindly follow their corrupted ruler





After War

- Cultural-historical genocide in the territory of Nagorno Karabakh (destruction of Armenian churches, historical monument, cross stones)
- Opening of the wax figures museum of the Armenian soldiers and prisoners of war in Baku

Conclusion

Hate Speech on the Internet from the side of Azerbaijan during and after the Nagorno Karabakh war 2020

Hate speech was one of the crucial issues during the Nagorno Karabakh War of 2020.

RQ.A1: Azerbaijani side spread hate speech about ethnical cleansing of Armenians.

They use statements such as “Armenians must die,” “wiped of this earth,” “face the same death,” “must be killed.”

There is also distraction of Armenian historical monuments and churches, which is another reason to believe that the hate speech towards Armenians has a national-ethnical content.

RQ.A2: The most common statement that was used by Armenians to insult Azerbaijani people was “You’re sheep.” The statement tried to hint that Azerbaijani people blindly follow their corrupt leader, President Aliyev. The Armenian side was working collectively during the war and was mainly concentrated on spreading information rather than writing insulting comments. Another tactic that Armenian side used is not to answer or post under any post made by the Azerbaijani side, as doing so they would raise the popularity of the post.

Thank You

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