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‘WITNESSES’ AND ‘MEMORIZERS’ OF THE CONFLICT AND OCCUPATION IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Kew words: Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and war, internally displaced people (IDP) and refugees, forced displacement, forced adaptation, autobiographical memory.

Açar sözlər: Dağlıq Qarabağ münaqişəsi və müharibəsi, məcburi köçkün və qaçqınlar, məcburi migrasiya, məcburi adaptasiya, aftobioqrafik yaddaş.

Ключевые слова: Нагорно-Карабахский конфликт и война, вынужденные переселенцы и беженцы, вынужденная миграция, вынужденная адаптация, автобиографическая память.

This paper is based on historical oral interviews with the Azerbaijani internally displaced persons (IDP) of the Karabakh conflict. The interviewees were adult women and men of different ages. I have divided the interviewees into two groups:

1. The ‘witnesses’ or those who were adults when the conflict started in the late 1980s, and

2. The ‘memorizers’ or those who were born later, outside of Karabakh in IDP families and who are considered, and consider themselves, as IDPs.

For studying the opinion of the ‘memorizers’ I also took field surveys among IDP’s schoolchildren. Their opinions were reflected in the special questionnaires which I distributed among them. I was analysing and comparing their answers with the answers of the elderly about the social and political impacts of the conflict.

I am interested in comparing the narratives of the two groups and how their members consider possible venues for resolving or transforming the conflict. The members of the first group (witnesses) have direct experience

with peaceful relations with the Armenians of Karabakh, but the members of the second group (memorizers) do not. The interview questions were mainly biographical, but the emphasis was on directly experiencing and witnessing the conflict, war, and displacement or being told of and remembering these processes. I will discuss relationships between collective memory and individual memory, complexities and diversities of what is called collective memory, as well as relations between memory and history. It argues that the role of both individual and collective memory of the IDPs is to transmit information from the past to the present, to transmit notions of responsibility, as well as provide a perspective to discuss and imagine ways for peaceful reconciliation and transformation of the conflict, or alternatively, offer a potential framework for imagining further armed violence.

My paper combines both analysis and questions about the conflict between two neighbours – Armenians and Azerbaijanis – on the first crack of the Soviet Union. Radicalization of the conflict and transforming it to the war stage influenced people fleeing their homeland and settling in the regions all across Caucasus territory. This conflict, like all conflicts and wars through the centuries up to contemporary times, testifies that people were suffering owing to destruction, fleeing the towns and villages and lost connections with families. The conflict was inflamed by outside support from the Armenian Diaspora, military operations by the Russian Army and ultra-nationalistic groups across the region.

Later the conflict events were so tightly intertwined that it became impossible to know how to stop it. The anger of people on

both sides, and the escalation of arms owing to the former Soviet Army in the region radicalized the situation and pushed it to the war stage. More than twenty years have passed since the conflict started yet it is still difficult to bring peace to the region.

Background

The violent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan took place between February 1988 and May 1994 in Karabakh, a legal territory of Azerbaijan. Currently this conflict is regarded as one of the 'frozen conflicts' in the Caucasus region. Despite the US and other European countries having a deep interest in Azerbaijan's oil and gas, their efforts towards resolving this conflict have proven ineffectual. On-going actions by the United States and other Western countries and Russia have, in a sense, prolonged this conflict causing instability across the Caucasus. Russia, in particular, plays a questionable role as both mediator, on the one hand, and the main financial backer of the Armenian side, on the other. It is very much an interested party.

As a result of this undeclared war, nearly twenty percent of Azerbaijan's territory remains occupied and close to one million Azerbaijanis and other minorities have been internally displaced. A very rich cultural heritage of the region, which goes back centuries, has been damaged and destroyed. The major part of the material cultural heritage could perhaps be reconstructed but the loss of human capital cannot be restored.

The people I interviewed were all civilians and they all experienced various forms of trauma, physically, psychologically and socially. This became clearly evident in their narratives.

By turning to oral history I look at the historical record as found in the lives of these ordinary people who lived and experienced it. My goal is to collect, preserve and share these oral histories. Given my research background, I had to answer the typical sceptic's questions: Do oral histories provide 'reliable' representations of the past and what kind of 'truths' do oral history methods and studies reveal?

I want to know the manner in which IDPs construct and use memory to give meaning to their lives and to the past. In other words, I use memory as a category of cultural and historical analysis in order to understand the process of change in the lives of the people I interview. By telling stories, the Azerbaijani IDPs are involved in constructing what scholars call communities of memory. These communities of memory, or shared experiences, bind Karabakh IDPs across economic and geographical lines, but they are not monolithic.

These communities of memory are somewhat fragmented by class and gender, as well as geographically and generationally however they share similar standards of acceptable social behaviour, values, and traditions.

I am particularly interested in the way that individuals use memories to give meaning to their traumatic and life-transforming experiences, which, in turn, creates a sense of shared history and identity. Noting that the communities of memory are not homogeneous and that collective memory can be problematic I am interested to learn how the IDPs use memory to connect personal experiences to local, regional, national and world historical contexts.

Each Karabakh village, town and neighbourhood is unique in many ways, including architecture, customs and traditions. This means that each community has its own history and "collective image". These small town populations lived compactly and were closely connected to and familiar with each other. The conflict and the later war phase separated people and interrupted relations between them. The population of Karabakh has been dispersed over Azerbaijan's territory, and also over other former Soviet republics, Turkey and even some Western countries.

When the conflict started people wanted to know how it started and when it would finish. Even when cities and villages were being occupied one by one, people were keeping the hope that it would be temporary and they that they would soon be back to their homeland. Trying to adapt to the new envi-

ronment, so much different from the Karabakh, particularly the families coming from rural communities, they suffered from a variety of social, economic, medical and psychological problems.

Methodology and Data

As someone who has experienced life as an IDP herself for twenty years, my everyday contacts and discussions with neighbours serve as the primary data for this document. Later I formally gathered data observing them in towns and in villages. Presently, I have conducted 84 interviews with IDPs who were forty years of age or more when the conflict started circa 1988. I have 43 records of the youth, who were born outside of the Karabakh, but they are considered as IDP. Based on a sample for convenience, I wanted to make sure that the people I interviewed represented diverse geographic, economic and educational backgrounds and included both genders. Common among them was the unforgettable look in their eyes while remembering their past lives with big hopes and dreams to go back one day to their homeland. These interviews are part of an on-going project to form an 'Oral History Archives of the Displaced Witnesses of the Karabakh Conflict'.

In addition to the oral history interviews, I have also used a questionnaire for creating a data bank on IDP's. The data bank embraces a wide range of characteristics, including personal data that I kept confidential (name surname, DOB, ethnicity/nationality, social origin, home town address, education and profession) and specific questions which reflect IDPs' geography of settlement, death of relatives' since the beginning events up to the time of interview, adaptation processes, IDPs' access to the Western countries humanitarian donations, their view on reasons for occupation of the Karabakh region and ways of conflict resolution. I am going to share the data bank with other researchers. The data bank contains information about 142 adults and 43 students. I continue adding information about the others 'witnesses' and 'memorizers' of the conflict. The data bank

includes a special part – data base on 'memorizers' (the IDP's schoolchildren). The pupils' questionnaires differ from the adults' questionnaires.

For the survey among the 'memorizers' I was interested especially in addressing such questions as: When did they learn about the conflict and war in Karabakh? Where did they get that primary info? From parents, friends, school teachers, TV, radio, press, internet? Are they ready for peaceful living together with the Armenian kids? Would they like to call for peace in the region together with the Armenian kids? Are they considering that the conflict and war have affected innocent Armenians kids like them?

There is a scope of questions which I have addressed to both of my groups: 'witnesses' and 'memorizers'. These questions are: Which way of resolution to the conflict do you give privilege: militarily or by continuing negotiations? Which forces have caused the conflict and occupation of the Karabakh?

All these questions aim at recalling the memories of respondents' to restore the history of the conflict, the war and post war (adaptation) period. I am sure that these people are like live historical sources of the events. I consider that there are none better than these, able to describe how the events took place.

I visited IDPs' refugee camps, shelters and schools, universities' hostels and buildings where they lived in very close conditions. I gathered data for my research through interviews, recording the same. I will be archiving them, making them accessible to the public via the internet, bearing in mind all standard research permissions and protocols. In addition, I supplement my research with images that the IDPs wanted to share with me. I will scan and save them for the archives.

The kind of data that I have gathered for this oral history project is unique. Existing literature mainly reflects the life and heroism of individuals or the political aspects of the conflict. This study provides a format for the voices of ordinary people to be heard with local details, and personal emotions concer-

ning what happened to them employing mainly a biographical format¹. These voices highlight the conflict and occupation from multiple angles going ahead of and beyond an entire set of documentaries, archival pages, and published articles and books, to tell real life stories. In all their diversity, they collectively comprise many voices mixed with excitement and sadness, with blame and with demand, calling for justice.

Respondents

In my opinion, their participation in this oral history project is bringing to light some 'unknown' parts of the conflict. By the 'unknown' I mean the stories of lived experiences of ordinary Azerbaijani citizens of Karabakh. This is like call to refreshing their memories about the beginning of the conflict, its radicalization, war stage, fleeing the Karabakh and becoming IDPs on their own country. The oral narratives highlight the conflict from the civilians' prospective. Generally speaking, they were pleased to share their personal histories and memories of the conflict, usually expressed as a form of relaxation by giving them the opportunity to tell what was on their mind and in their soul, to a larger public.

*Do not ask me, "Who I am: IDP or refugee!"
Do not ask me, "How are you doing"?"
Just hug me warmly with all your soul.
And do not ask me, "How are you doing"?"*

This song² is very popular among the IDPs and refugees. I shared a lot with the people who told me about their stories. I was born and raised in Shusha, the historical capital of the region, as an Azerbaijani who grew up with Armenians as neighbours, friends, and class mates.

The respondents are divided into two groups: 'witnesses' and 'memorizers' of the Karabakh events. The respondents of the project are differing accordingly to their witnessing of the conflict and war, adaptation to the new spatial, economic, social, moral environment. All of the witnesses have been forced to be active actors of the unexpected events. Generally, witnesses are differentia-

ting as militants and civilians. Witnesses are distinguished into the following groups: kids, teenagers, youth, middle aged and elderly.

'Memorizers' of the Karabakh conflict, war and post war period are all those young people who were born outside of the Karabakh because their families had to flee the Karabakh. Memorizers differ from the witnesses in that they had never been forced to witness the bloody pages of the Karabakh events. At the same time, both of these groups, witnesses and memorizers, share in common the memorizing of these events. The important question is; what does each of these groups memorize?

Which source is reflected in their memory? Who provides the information for the memorizing? How does this information impact to their personal and social life with their entire life? This kind of questioning will continue, but I would like now to focus on this question; What is the relationship between witnesses and memorizers in forming the collective portrait of the Karabakh community memory? How do these two groups collective memory influence the collective memory of Azerbaijani society as a whole?

My point is that as witnesses and the memorizers each have their own recorded memories of the events. All of the witnesses are considered as such because they obviously have first-hand memories. In contrast memorizers who have never directly witnessed the events, the witnesses have identified scope of the memories and knowledge about the events. In their turn they will discuss those events with their contemporaries and will share them with the future generations. But what is distinguishing the memorizers is that they never were witnessing the events in the Karabakh.

In my observation, the youth-memorizers views, though having never witnessed the events, are much more radical than the elderly. In general, I am not offering an easy solution toward a peaceful living situation, after being separated now for a period of almost twenty years, the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of the Karabakh.

Looking at the Armenian-Azerbaijanis ethnic conflict from the historical prospective it should be recognized that the categories of 'witness' and 'memorizer' are dynamic. All witnesses of the Karabakh events at the end of the 80-s in the 20 century are also memorizers. They remember the events of the ethnic conflict from the beginning of the 20th century (1905, 1918), when their parents and grandparents were sharing those bloody events with their children, the youth of that time.

Though cease fire has been declared people are still dying on the front lines. The young memorizers are witnessing the death of the civilians and especially the innocent children on the frontline. A couple of schoolchildren were killed by Armenian soldiers on the frontline. These events of the cease fire form youth memorizers into actual witnesses of the consequences of the conflict and war in the Karabakh. Now we have another case, where children are becoming witnesses to the atrocities of the current war in Karabakh. Is there any need to emphasize that these are events filled with anti-human tragedy, targeting innocent children?

The memorizers' memory about the conflict and war in Karabakh is moulded by their impressions from conversations with the elderly, from internet sources, TV, Radio, books and newspapers. So what they will memorize and how their memory will be formed will depend on specific source information. The same memorizers will be witnesses of the reconciliation and restoration process in Karabakh on their return home. And they will tell those witnessed stories to their kids, which will be the new memorizers of the events. And this process will continue to further generations.

We, elderly from the both sides, which had experienced the peaceful life within the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of the Karabakh, have to take responsibility for the coming generations contributing to the peace process and preventing the Karabakh from new conflict and war. The moral outcome of this position will be worse if the conflict should start again.

Some narratives

One of my respondents, a 56 year old lady named Naima, remembered her grandmother stories about the ethnic conflict at the beginning of the 20th century in Shusha. Her grandmother witnessed cases when the Armenian ultra-nationalists were binding boiled samovar to the back of the Azerbaijani women. As a result the women couldn't run or even move. They were dying because of the pain shock.

Naima's own witnessing of the events is related to that time when she was in the Shusha hospital, where she delivered her first child, in November, 1991. In those days the situation had become very difficult around Shusha and the surrounding villages. She was in bed just after giving birth in the Shusha hospital when the hospital became under fire by the Armenian military forces and all patients had to leave the hospital. Ambush can only apply to a moving person or vehicle.

I asked her why the Armenian's forces were targeting the hospital. She explained that because of a tremendous role that played Shusha hospital during those days. A great number of wounded Azerbaijani soldiers and injured civilians were seeking medical assistance, first aid and treatment. The hospital was also serving the local civilians as it normally did during the peace time. The Armenian military forces were targeting the hospital in order to deprive support for the Shusha defenders and assisting civilians. Six months later Shusha was occupied by the Armenian military forces.

Naima was remembering how an Armenian guy fell in love with her. The beginning of that story was when her institute group was helping the farmers with collecting the vinegar in one of the Armenian villages. She was lazy and a poor student. This was because living in Shusha town, which is placed on the high mountain, where people were not practicing farming. So she wasn't familiar with this kind of a work. One day during a break, she saw a handsome 17 year old boy riding a bike. She asked him for a ride. Then she kept riding the bike. The young man fell

in love with her and came every day, helping her with collecting the vinegars. Thanks to his assistance she became the number one among the students. When they were leaving the village the young man was crying next to the bus which was taking the students for collecting the cotton in other village. He gave her some gifts and they exchanged postal addresses.

As soon as she returned to Shusha she also sent gifts back to him and they continued in correspondence. After couple of months the young man's family visited her family unexpectedly. She was still excited when she described a numerous of gifts which have fulfilled almost an entire room! They had come to visit Shusha with the purpose of marriage proposal. She did not accept. Traditionally it was acceptable in Azerbaijani community when an Azerbaijani boy marries an Armenian girl. But the opposite was very rare, when an Azerbaijani girl would marry an Armenian boy.

Her family hosted them for a couple of days and then they left Shusha. She never saw him again. Her father told her to stop corresponding with him and she never replied to his numerous letters ...

I was very impressed with another respondent's story. He was a 45 year old taxi driver. He looked much older than his age. He remembered the events like a nightmare. He still can't believe that it was he who survived through the unexpected war pages. He was married and had two children. When had peace settled into his village he still believed that the conflicts would stop and that they would continue to live in his home which he had inherited from his father. When the Armenian forces suddenly attacked the village he was in the neighboring city but his family was at home. He was in a hurry to get home to help his family escape. He didn't know that his brother (which was also his neighbor) had already left the village with both of their families. As he and two of his relatives reached the village and saw the empty house they relaxed thinking that his family had likely escaped. Now he faced only

the problem of getting himself back. As it began to get dark they witnessed how the angry and merciless Armenian armed people were occupying their village, searching and destroying their houses and their cellars.

(Here it was that he stopped talking and burst into tears.)

He continued, "Believe me; I am amazed to still be alive! During those minutes, as we looked into each other's eyes, they were expressing only one thing, "This is the end..." But life is so sweet and as we are very attached to our families we didn't want to give up so easily... We attempted to escape from another side of the village, along the longer road which passes near by the side of the lake. Because this road is longer it was less often used. We discovered that we were still visible to the hostiles and that there was no other way than to hide in the lake. We spent about eight hours there; then during the deep night when it became silent all around we escaped from our "water-blanket"...

Our young people have never experienced living peacefully with the Armenians. What they have memorized as far and are witnessing nowadays are ceasefire has being interrupting often and killing kids and civilians on the front line villages. These events have contributed to the negative opinion of our youth about the events of the Karabakh. School friends, teachers, TV and newspapers are forming their opinions about the war and conflict. I guess, the same situation exists in the Armenia. This situation calls for the elderly to have a positive attitude with responsible behaviour in order to bring peace to the Karabakh and to encourage living together peacefully.

The remark of the seven year school boy was interesting. After his mom and grandparents' description on how their homeland Shusha was a beautiful place for living and travelling. He said, "Oh, I would like to be an Armenian!" To his confused parents he explained that, he would then have a chance to see and experience all of the beauty living in Shusha. Nostalgia attaches one to the homeland and is reviewing strongly from the IDPs' stories.

Another 13 year old boy appealed to me considering me as channel for forwarding his desires and requests to the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia. After the interview and answering my questionnaires he asked me if my paper will be seen by both Presidents. If so, he would like to request of them to read the IDP children's stories. He was excited being interviewed; He said that our voices never have been heard! We are not powerful, we are just school children. He requested of me if it would be possible to forward their stories to both Presidents so that; "They will read our stories and will hear our voices about the conflict and war in the Karabakh".

Analysis

The conflict and war in the Karabakh has changed the life of people in both countries. The ethnic conflict influenced the entire sphere of the societies of Azerbaijan and Armenia and has formed their internal and foreign policies. Since ceasefire was declared information has spread rapidly via the press and internet. A huge scope of literature, songs, poems, pictures, music, photos, and exhibitions has appeared since the conflict started. The archives and libraries have been flooded from both sides' by researchers, historians and other interested persons. Each side was telling mostly negative stories about the other. High emotions with a strong desire to prove who is right and who is wrong is the dominating factor shaping the opinion.

There are respondents who believed that not all of the Armenians are guilty of fanning the flames of war. Those respondents were convinced that they would be able to live together again in Karabakh as neighbours. Occasionally I came across respondents who did not consider all Armenians to be the same. Some of the respondents are holding a negative opinion about the Armenians. It is clear from my interviews that twenty years of conflict, war, and separation has created strongly held confrontational dispositions for those who were deeply affected by the same. The memories of the elderly are not only of the negative experiences but include a small

measure of positive. The younger generations who have memorized these events are sharing only the negative stories.

The memorizers are witnessing their parents' problems in adapting to the new environment where they are compelled to live owing to consequences of the conflict. In their daily lives they are experiencing not having citizenship in the place where they reside. All difficulties of the adaptation period are recognized as the result of the conflict and war. So from the early period of their lives they are forming negative impressions of these events and this will shape their imagination and opinion. The predominant and consistent focus coming from our discussions is their desire and intention to return to their homeland.

Accordingly to data on gender composition of the Shusha IDPs, men are dominating. Among of the 84 respondents 48 comprise men, which is more than half. There are 43 IDP students from the Shusha School Number. The majority are boys, more than 50%. The girls are a bit under 50 %.

The total number of students interviewed and who filled out the questionnaires were 43. The largest group 47 % of the interviewed students was from the grades 7-8. Two more groups consist of the students in grades 5-6, at 23% and grades 9-10, at 30 % of the total interviewed.

It should be noted that all of these IDP students studied at the Shusha School Number 1.

The school shared the building with the local Baku School Number 38.

Actually the building belongs to the Baku School Number 38 and the IDP students study there too. Shusha IDP students study in the second half of the day when the Baku students are finishing their study and then the building facility is used by the Shusha IDP teachers and students. At the entrance of the building are 2 frames testifying that there are two schools housed in the building.

Analysis shows that the earliest point at which children obtained information was ages three and four. This group is smallest (26 %) among the interviewed students and though

they are so young yet they are remarkably mature in their discussions of the events. Another group (33%) which is a little larger than the previous group are ages five and six. The largest age group, (42 %) first received information about the Karabakh conflict and war at the ages of seven and eight.

This fact shows that the children's first acquired information is correlated with their growth.

I am interested in the manner of dispersion among the students regarding the source of the first obtained information about the Karabakh conflict and war. My expectation was that the students' answers would reflect sources evenly distributed among all the categories including parents, friends, school, TV, radio, press and internet resources. Interestingly, all except three of the students who indicated that they acquired their information about the Karabakh conflict and war in the school, 40 (93%) students have named their parents as first information source. This naturally testifies that parents and the "IDP family," who witnessed the events had the greatest influence in a specific environment effecting the students view and opinion.

The children were very familiar with where their families come from and the exact date when their parents became IDP. Their information about parents fleeing the Karabakh cities, villages related to the beginning of the conflict in the Karabakh up to the war time period (1988-1993). They were pointing precisely to the name of the region, city and villages where the family left and became IDP. Eighty per cent of the respondents' parents left Shusha and the rest of them were fleeing from different places of the Karabakh. The children's knowledge of family stories and their parents' role in telling and discussing them naturally reflects the IDPs thoughts and the nostalgia held in their minds and souls while sharing with their children.

One of the key questions to understanding the IDPs' adaptation and psychological situation in the new area was question on whether you could place the local population relations to your family status as IDP? Mostly

the local people were sad and feeling sympathetic towards IDPs. This sentiment has been expressed by half of the children, while 28% of them avoided the question.

Children (7 %) told of cases when the local people did not understand that their family had been forced to leave their home town and were rude to them. The children were also sharing stories where the local people were blaming them for leaving the Karabakh and called them 'refugees' (7%). They also told how the local people's attitude toward the IDP families was indifferent to their situation (7%).

Being attached to their parents' homeland, the overwhelming majority (88 %) of the children are convinced that they are from Karabakh and do not consider their origin as Baku, because they mostly live together in Baku and other regions.

IDP children are getting some social support from the governmental and other organizations. So they feel that their community is a part of the rest of the Baku population. They feel this in their everyday life though they are also incorporated into the Baku society socially, economically and politically.

The next my two questions were closely related to the one previous. I was interested to know where the children consider themselves to belong. Sixty seven per cent of them consider Baku as a temporary residence. In contrast, 21% expressed their feel they are ordinary Baku citizens and 12 % of the children said that they feel they are IDP. There are two small groups whose daily social life is different from the majority of children. One, (9%) is a very small group of children who prefer to socialize with children from Karabakh only. The second group is children who were compelled to socialize only with children from the local communities having been separated from the Karabakh children living in the area, 12%. The majority 79% of them indicated that they socialize both with kids from local communities and from Karabakh. Living together in the Baku districts, the IDP communities communicate intensively with local people. This is manifest in their chil-

dren's association with the children of the local communities.

The opinion of the IDP children is polarized concerning questions regarding innocent Armenian children kids who like themselves, have been affected by the conflict and war in the Karabakh. Half of them responded positively. Not all of the IDP children are ready nor would they like to call for peace in the region together with Armenian children. They explain this by pointing to the continuing situation between these two nations for the last 20 years. They simply cannot imagine how begin considering that they have no current connections, no contacts with the Armenian children.

According to the survey and the results of interviews, the overwhelming majority (86%) of the children blame the Russian Army and ultra-nationalistic Armenian groups for the flare up of the events in Karabakh? Personally I was happy to have this statistic on hand, whereby we are able to differentiate Armenian people from ultra-nationalistic groups. This gives hope that peace will come soon to Karabakh.

A full 86% of the children said that they are discussing the peace process and negotiations all around in the Karabakh in their daily life. Preferably, the audience for discussion is with the parents (47%), then with school teachers and friends – 35% and also with friends on facebook – 5%.

Children's opinions concerning the Karabakh resolution are divided into approximately equally groups, 51% of them are advocating the military way while 49% prefer to continue the peace process and negotiations.

Patriotic feelings of the children were reflected in their answer to the question; will they be going back to their own home town after liberation of the Karabakh territory or resolution to the conflict? Answer: Definitely yes, (67%) of the respondents. The group of the students who will 'forward' this decision to the parents' responsibility is 23%.

The next three groups are those who:

1) are in doubt and not sure of their future choice.

2) believe they will not go back to Karabakh, having not been born there.

3) avoided answering this question.

Each of these groups comprises 5% of the total respondents. I asked this question of the witnesses and memorizers; "Do you consider it possible to live together with Karabakh Armenians again?" Some respondents also noted that, in their experience, their Armenian neighbours were very sorry that the war had come and that the Azerbaijanis felt compelled to flee. But these same people noted that other Armenians had been actively involved in preparing for the violence, working with special organizations from abroad for 'the sake of greater Armenia.' Such people, respondents said, showed themselves very early in the conflict by providing Armenian forces with information about the strategic points in Azerbaijani cities. As far as a future in which Armenians and Azerbaijanis would live together again is concerned, most were prepared to live with their former neighbours but not with other Armenians who have moved in since the war began.

The memorizers' opinion is mostly excluding living together with Armenians in Karabakh again. My interviews and survey show that the elderly are more tolerant about living together with their former neighbours in Karabakh. As I mentioned before, the memorizers never had the experience of living peacefully with the Armenians. Undoubtedly, the children's perspectives were formed by information about the killing of innocent children, women and the elderly by the Armenian ultra-nationalists. Children were 'witnessing' the information on TV, press and the internet about the killing of children on the frontline villages

It was interesting to know their opinion without interferes, I asked: While peace comes soon to Karabakh and, if so, how? The children's opinion was dispersed in a few groups. Some of the groups' opinions were distinguished with detailed descriptions of the way of bringing the peace to Karabakh. Others expressed their hope (7%) by pointing out that this will be a very long process (9%)

or avoiding to go for details, just - mentioning "it is difficult to say, I'm doubtful" (14%). The analysis revealed two interesting groups whose opinions are polarized. One supports continuing the peace process and negotiations for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict. The other believes that peace will only be possibly with military intervention. Interestingly, each of these groups opinion comprises 35%. This statistic could be considered a mini model of an Azerbaijani society opinion poll.

Elderly respondents' opinions on identifying Karabakh's future status was dispersed over 4 options. Mainly the number of those respondents who consider keeping the previous status was 33% on the autonomy of Karabakh Region and identifying it on the base of referendum 35% among Karabakh population are in a significant number. There are also another two groups existed. The first one (10%) is convinced in necessity to make changes to constitution of Azerbaijan Republic on liquidation Karabakh previous Autonomy and the second one (23%) is thinking on determining for a new status.

Regarding the future status of Karabakh, 35% of the children are satisfied with keeping the previous autonomy. Another 35% evaluate the Karabakh status on the basis of the Karabakh population's referendum.

The group of children who are thinking that there should be a new process for a new status of Karabakh comprises 26%.

My last question was: Are children ready to start interacting with Armenian children after the possible liberation of Karabakh territory or another resolution of the conflict? Unfortunately the majority of children insisted that they were not ready. This should alert the elderly to help the children learn ways for establishing contact with the same age children. The elderly also need to encourage the government toward peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict.

The elderly must take responsibility for establishing positive relations between all of these children of Karabakh. The elderly are an important part of bringing peace to the

region and the children of Karabakh must learn to keep the future peaceful with their neighbours in Karabakh.

Notes

1. Parvin Ahanchi. Witnessing the War in Nagorno-Karabakh: Shusha's IDPs Testify. Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy – Biweekly. Vol. IV, No. 10 (May 15, 2011).
<http://ada.edu.az/biweekly/issues/vol4no10/20110520015522595.html>
2. The song "Halımı sorma" ("Do not ask me"). Music: Eldar Mansurov, lyrics: Sabir Rustemkhanly.
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=1495439510767>

Pərvin Əmirəli qızı Ahənçi

DAĞLIQ QARABAĞ MÜNAQIŞƏSİ VƏ İŞĞALININ "ŞAHİDLƏRİ" VƏ "YADDAŞA KÖÇÜRƏNLƏRİ»

XÜLASƏ

Təqdim edilən məqalə Azərbaycan etnoqrafiyasının aktual məsələlərindən biri olan - Dağlıq Qarabağ münaqişəsi və müharibəsinin məcburi köçkün və qaçqınların yaddaşında həkk olunmuş hadisələrin tədqiqinə həsr edilib.

Müəllifin Ermənistandan qaçqın düşmüş azərbaycanlıram və Dağlıq Qarabağ ərazisindən məcburi miqrasiyaya düçar olmuş köçkünlərin kompakt şəkildə məskunlaşdıqları ərazilərdə apardığı uzunmüddətli çöl tədqiqatları, xüsusü anket sorğusuna və çoxsaylı müsahibələrə əsaslanır. Tətbiq edilmiş anket sorğusu müxtəlif yaş qrupları arasında aparılmış və maksimal dərəcədə hər bir respondent haqqında məlumatı əks etdirir.

Tədqiqat Dağlıq Qarabağ münaqişəsi və müharibəsinin qurbanları olmuş məcburi köçkün və qaçqınların müxtəlif yaş təbəqələri amili əsasında iki qrupa – "şahidlər" və "yad-

daşa köçürənlər”ə aid edərək, onların anket və geniş şifahi məlumatları əsasında psixoloji, mənəvi, fiziki sarsıntılara məruz qaldıqlarını, hadisələrin onların yaddaşında ömürlük həkk olunduğunu, gündəlik həyatlarına təsir etdiyini əks etdirir.

Bu qrupdan fərqli olaraq Dağlıq Qarabağdan kənarada anadan olmuş və bu səbəbdən münaqişə və müharibə ilə birbaşa təsirlənməyən və valideynlərin və ya nənə və babalarının təcrübəsi olmadan yaşayan gənc nəsil özlərini sanki öz doğma yerləində olduğu kimi olduqca rahat hiss edirlər.

Парвин Амиралли кызы Аханчи

«СВИДЕТЕЛИ» И «ЗАПОМИНАТЕЛИ» КОНФЛИКТА И ОККУПАЦИИ В НАГОРНОМ КАРАБАХЕ

РЕЗЮМЕ

Представленная статья посвящена изучению одной из актуальных проблем азербайджанской этнографии - Нагорно-карабахского конфликта, события, которых навсегда врезались в память вынужденных переселенцев и беженцев, как с территории Азербайджана, так и Армении.

Статья опирается на анализ длительных полевых исследований (анкетные опросы и многочисленные интервью), проведенных автором среди азербайджанцев внутренне перемещенными из Нагорного Карабаха и вынужденными переселенцами из Армении. Опросник опроса и интервью проводился между различными возрастными группами «свидетелями» и «запоминателями» событий конфликта и войны в Нагорном Карабахе и отражает максимальную информацию о каждом респонденте.

Исследование выявило преимущество поколений, выразившуюся в процес-

се передачи информации старшими («свидетели»), ставшими очевидцами событий, молодому поколению («запоминатели»), родившемуся и выросшему в постконфликтный период. Участники и очевидцы событий подверглись физическим, психологическим, моральным травмам, стойко сопровождающим их все эти годы. Многие участники исследования до сих пор испытывают постконфликтный синдром, как следствие врезавшихся в память жестоких событий. В отличие от данной группы, молодое поколение, родившееся за пределами Нагорного Карабаха, и, следовательно, не испытывавшее напрямую удары конфликта и войны, а также не имеющее опыт родителей или прауродителей, чувствует себя вполне как дома.