

Victimized identity construction: Azerbaijan in the Post-soviet transition

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Abstract

In the identity construction, most studies focus on collective memory through the representation of the historical past. Moreover, the relationship between foreign policy and identity has mostly been analysed in the field of IR through the Constructivist approach which states that ideas as social constructions influence the foreign policy and identity formation of a state. On the other hand, poststructuralist theory correlates foreign policy and identity through the methodology of discourse analysis. The advocates of poststructuralism argue that as identity and foreign policy can coexist, identities can reshape foreign policy-making and foreign policy can produce identity through special discursive practices. Following this assumption of poststructuralism about relation between identity and foreign policy, this thesis analyses how victimization discourse in Azerbaijan based on the historical representation and memory of the Karabakh War not only shaped the foreign policy of Azerbaijan during the peace talks after the war, but also constructed the identity as victimized. Massacres, in particular, Khojaly ‘genocide’ and violence of the Karabakh War is elaborated, as these representations were solidified into the collective memory. In order to find the correlation between foreign policy and identity construction, the speeches of Azerbaijani presidents are analysed and the last mobilization of people during the last clashes of the two nations is examined to prove this relation.

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Introduction

Extensive research has been conducted on the correlation between identity construction, memory and history. Identity construction closely negotiates with the social world, in other words, can be affected and reshaped by the experience in the social world, as Giddens argued.¹ The theory of collective memory in relation with identity has been developed by Aby Warburg and Maurice Halbwachs in 1930s. They emphasize the role of collective memory in the concretion of identity that it maintains the store of knowledge from which a society derives an awareness of its unity. Determination of social antagonism or positive/negative sense by a society are the main objective manifestations of cultural memory.²

Victimized identity construction in Azerbaijan was also related to the collective memory and history of the traumatic events of the Karabakh war. The victimhood narrative was formed through the official discourse of the government during the Karabakh peace negotiations. As the state follows its interests and public realm, the discourse of victimization aimed to attract an attention of international arena to the unfair consequence of the war and perpetuate the trauma. The collective memory of the traumatic events played an important role for the victimized identity formation through the official discursive practices.

After the fall of communism, Azerbaijan also experienced post-soviet transition in many fields, including new national identity building and foreign policy-making. Although national identity in Azerbaijan had strong historical and cultural ties to Turkey and Iran, it was deconstructed from its Persian and Turkic past during the rule of Soviet regime. The mixture of

¹ Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* Cambridge

² John Czaplicka, and Jan Assmann. 2019. "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity." *New German Critique* (Duke University Press) 65: 125-133.

Turkish and Muslim identity had dominated through centuries; however, after the Bolshevik occupation all subordinated nations were united by a single pan-Soviet identity.³ After the disappearance of the Cold War and the Russian impact, an ideological vacuum appeared in the national identity and in the implementation of foreign policy. The identity vacuum experienced in many countries after the collapse of communism, however, the situation was more complicated in Azerbaijan, because of its historical ties.

During Soviet regime, Armenia as the other was absent from public discourse. By the influence of Soviet propaganda towards Iran as the other of Azerbaijan, the main victimization discourse was based on Persian otherness. The occupation of south territories by Iran in 1828 has played an important role in victimized identity discourse through Persian otherness.⁴ However, before Bolshevik occupation, the victimized identity discourse was mainly related to Armenian violence towards Turks and being always subordinated by imperial powers. The collective memory of violence and subordination reemerged with several massacres of Karabagh war and events of bloody separation from communism.

Azerbaijan almost did not have any experience of statehood after the fall of communism and considered the conflict with Armenia, namely Karabagh War, as a historical situation for claiming discourse of victimhood. Together with collective memories of the past, Karabagh war was the peak in reaffirming Armenia as the other. Particularly, after the Khojaly “genocide”, the identity construction has been returned again to the Armenian otherness. Mostly ethnically Azeri town of Khojaly was occupied by Armenian forces on the 26th of February in 1992 and resulting

³ Ismayilov, Murad. 2010. "Azerbaijani National Identity and Baku's Foreign Policy: The Current Debate." *Azerbaijan in the World* 1 (1). doi: <http://ada.edu.az/biweekly/issues/vol1no1/20090326021949162.html>.

⁴ Hunter, Shireen. 1995. *The Transcaucasus in Transition: Nation-building and Conflict*. Washington: Routledge.

with the massacre of 613 civilians. Because of war, more than 1 million civilians (one seventh of the population) were forced to displace.⁵

After the Karabakh war, the conflict's victim-centered narrative became central both in identity and political discourse of Azerbaijan. This narrative mainly declared that Armenia violates international law as ultra-nationalist aggressor.⁶ After the occupation of Karabakh by Armenia and the ethnic cleansing in Khojaly, Azerbaijan was represented as a victim of Armenia's militaristic objectives, which claimed that Azerbaijan's identity was threatened. The memory of these dramatic incidents was combined with the struggle for territorial recognition and victimization, and together they formulated most of Azerbaijan's foreign policy for the last 20 years.⁷

Foreign policy implementation over victimized identity discourse mainly showed itself in Karabakh Peace Negotiations. During the peace negotiations, Azerbaijan politicians' declarations and rejection of the proposed solutions were explained with the victimization narrative. In many summits of OSCE the official discourse of Azerbaijan aimed to show Armenia's territorial occupations and raise awareness of the massacres committed by Armenians. All the negotiation process, the stance of Azeri politicians could be explained by the nature and dynamics of the victimization narrative.

In my thesis, I will explore how victimized identity discourse has been constructed on the base of collective traumatic memory through foreign policy. I aim to analyse the discursive

⁵ Isayev, Ismayil. 2016. "The Consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh War for Azerbaijan and the Undeniable Reality of Khojaly Massacre." *Polish Political Science Yearbook* 45: 291–303.

⁶ Gahramanova, Aytan. 2010. "Paradigms of Political Mythologies & Perspectives of Reconciliation in the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict." *International Negotiation* 15 (1): 133-152.

⁷ Suny, Ronald Grigor. 1999. "Provisional Stabilities: The Politics of Identities in Post-Soviet Eurasia." *International Security* 24 (3).

construction of identity through the impact of collective memory of the past and recent events of Karabagh war on international politics of Azerbaijan. As post-structuralism argues that not only foreign policy reproduces identities through discursive practices, but also identities shape foreign policies,⁸ I'll also examine that not only victimization discourse of identity construction has been produced by foreign policy of Azerbaijan, but also victimized identity discourse influenced the foreign policy itself. In order to illustrate the argument, I will examine Azerbaijan's external political activities in relation with Azerbaijan's discourse of 'land return' in Karabagh peace negotiations⁹ and representation of massacres and bloody events which have been committed by Armenians in the Karabakh War.

Following the discourse analysis theory of Lene Hansen,¹⁰ my research project aims to analyze the construction of Azerbaijani identity of victimhood through foreign policy implementation and its impact on formulation of foreign policy. Therefore, my main research question will be how policy makers constructed discourse of victimized identity through foreign policy and how foreign policy has been reformulated by the impact of victimized identity discourse. In other words, how the collective memory of the past and the recent massacres of Karabagh war are rearticulated through the discourse of victimized identity and, also discursive practices of foreign policy. What are the exact relations between the discourses of identity construction and foreign policy-making and implementation?

The main answer to these questions mentioned above comes through the analysis of the historical situation in the construction of the national identity which directed the discourse of

⁸ Hansen, Lene. 2006. *Security as Practice. Discourse analysis and the Bosnian war*. London: Routledge. P. 17

⁹ OSCE. 1994. "CSCE Budapest Document 1994: Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era." *Budapest Summit Declaration*. Budapest. p. 5-6.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 19.

foreign policies of Azerbaijan. To understand the main reasons of the discursive identity construction of victimhood will allow to analyze the discursive practices in foreign policy-making as well.

Historical Context of victimized identity and foreign policy correlation

Through the centuries there has been a struggle between Turks and Armenians in the South Caucasus which was accompanied by the land demands of Armenians. In the 16-17th centuries, the Safavid-Ottoman wars contributed to the increase of the positions of the Armenians. The first main conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century. Starting in May 1905, the conflicts between Azeris and Armenians which were called as “Armenian-Tatar massacres”¹¹ were the first bloody clashes between the ethnic communities. The massacres were carried out by Armenians in the cities and villages of the western and south-western parts of Azerbaijan. According to M.S. Ordubadi, in all the murders Armenians had relied on the Russian officials who were appointed by the Tsarist Russia.¹² Accepting Armenia as the other and allocating trauma in the memory started with the massacres of 1906- 07.

Under Soviet regime, there almost did not occur bloody clashes between the two nations, as the regime propagated the brotherhood of nations and othering of Turks in the West for Armenians instead Azeris. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union the tension rose and showed itself in the Karabakh War. To dismantle of national brotherhood of the region started when the Armenian people in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region asked for a referendum

¹¹ Until the declaration of the first independence of Azerbaijan in 1918, the Muslim population of the region were called as Tatars.

¹² Ordubadi, Mammad Said. 1991. *Bloody Years: The History of 1905-07 Armenian-Tatar Massacres*. Baku. P.18

to redraw the borders and transfer Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia from Azerbaijan. The area has been co-settled together with Armenians and Azeris through centuries and has strategic importance for both parts. The situation of the time was better described by Thomas De Waal. The local soviet (regional blocks of the USSR's system of government) rejected the request for referendum by considering the contradiction with interests of Soviet Azerbaijan. The demonstrations of Karabakh Armenians were counter answered with rallies of Azerbaijanis and two young Azerbaijanis were murdered during the demonstrations in Karabakh. The Opera Square rallies reached the culmination in which more than a million Armenians attended in Yerevan. Nationalism spread the whole country, as Azerbaijanis who live in Soviet Armenia was forced to leave for Azerbaijan. Many people were beaten, killed and intimidated during the deportations.¹³

As a response to deportations from Soviet Armenia, anti-Armenian pogroms started in January 13, 1990. Within a couple of days Armenians have been deported from Baku and The Popular Front started to control the city by defeating the local Communist Party. Gorbachev decided to send the army to Baku, as he did not want to lose control over city and to punish rebellions. When citizens of Baku stood in front of the tanks, they never thought that they would be shot. The Red Army of Politburo killed at least 130 citizens and 21 soldiers in Baku.¹⁴ The date was engraved in the minds of people as the Black January. The intervention of the army had played a traumatic role by breaking the trust of Azerbaijani people for the communism. After the Karabakh war, the massacres of time combined with the traumas of the war.

At the beginning of 1990, Armenia elected a non-Communist government and on October 1991 selected Ter-Petrosian as its first president. Then they better started to use the power vacuum

¹³ Waal, Thomas De. 2010. *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press. P. 99-112

¹⁴ 1993. *Azerbaijan: The Status of Armenians, Russians, Jews and other minorities*. Washington: INS Resource Information Center. P. 6

and to control Karabakh, whereas it was still de jure part of Azerbaijan. When the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh declared independence and separation from Azerbaijan, the newly formed Armenian government started to control the region unofficially. On the other side, a new parliament of Azerbaijan decided to boycott the referendum and keep Karabakh as its territory. Although the new Russian president Yeltsin tried to arrange a fruitful negotiation between the both parts, the official dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 made the war inevitable.¹⁵ In the time of mutual insecurity, the memory of bloody clashes of tsarist era were combined with the nationalist ideas with the help of historians and intellectual elites of both sides.

The most traumatic event of the war has been the massacre in Khojaly. When Khojaly was attacked by the Armenian forces which was supported by 366th Russian Motor Rifle Regiment, there remained 3000 Azerbaijanis. The treatment of Armenian soldiers towards local villagers was brutal, as they exterminated 8 families, used bacteriologic and chemical weapons, murdered 613 people including children, old people and women. The crimes in the village were proved with the shootings of Chingiz Mustafayev who was TV operator of Central television. The first releases of the shootings became traumatic and ignited the discourse of victimhood for Azerbaijanis.¹⁶

At the time when Azerbaijan has not yet a regular army, Armenians captured the opportunity that they wanted through the centuries and occupied the county, which constitutes 20% of Azerbaijan's territory. These lands occupied by Armenians constitute 70% of the irrigated lands of Azerbaijan. About one million Azerbaijan Turks have been expelled from their homeland for years and they are sentenced to live in tent cities in Azerbaijan.¹⁷ Svante E. Cornell argues that

¹⁵ (T. D. Waal 2010, 113-15)

¹⁶ Mahmudov, Yagub. 2009. *Historical Facts of Armenia's Actions in Azerbaijan Land*. Baku: Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. P. 95-97

¹⁷ Chalik, Hakan. 2016. "Destiny of Karabakh: on the base of Karabakh stories." *Journal of Turkish Language and Literature* 2 (2): 155-165.

according to the UN statistics, no country had this large percentage of internally displaced people for many years than Azerbaijan. One in every ten Azerbaijanis was a refugee. The arrival of refugees in the cities, mainly in Baku, created harsh economic and political conditions. Unsuccessful war and the discourse of lost territories, not the occupied territories created the sense of humiliation which ignited victimized identity discourse.

The victimhood narrative also came to the fore by blaming the West for having biased attitude towards Azerbaijan. The narrative of victimhood was constructed with perceptions that when Saddam Huseyn occupied Kuwait, the West liberated it, or intervened to Slobodan Milosevic to stop it. However, when the fifth of Azerbaijan's territory was occupied, the international community did not levy any sanctions on Armenia and UN resolutions did not name Armenia as aggressor. Instead, Azerbaijan faced with sanctions by the USA which were not lifted until 2003. There is a common perception that due to its religious ties, Armenia has been welcomed as a member of European Christian family, and therefore, they could never accept their war terrors and ethnic cleansing.¹⁸

Thus, voicing the biased attitude of the West and perception of this view as correct became a mental process in a long term which developed sense of victimhood and showed itself in foreign policy. The discourse of victimization of nation has been placed in public consciousness which stemmed from an unachieved national aspirations and defeat complex. The Karabakh war became a historical revenge for victimized Armenian nation due to Armenian Genocide in 1915, whereas, Cornell defined that it started the discourse of victimhood for Azerbaijan.¹⁹ After the ceasefire in 1994, Azerbaijan started a new foreign policy program which aimed to gain back its lost reputation by declaring the victimhood narratives and showing the truth to the world.

¹⁸ Cornell, Svante E. 2011. *Azerbaijan since Independence*. New York : M.E. Sharpe. P. 131

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 132.

Chapter Outline

The thesis consists of four Chapters. It starts with the elaboration of relevant methodology and literature review. In the literature review, the main gap in the literature will be analysed. It will show that the vast majority of the literature tries to analyse identity construction and foreign policy making separately from the constructivist perspective, while the thesis will research the correlation of both.

The second Chapter examines theoretical framework of collective memory with the aim of situating collective traumatic memory into the post Nagorno-Karabakh war identity. It is argued that the traumatic events of the past have the capacity to reconstruct the present, therefore, the identity of trauma actively started to engage with the process of victimhood. The Chapter is intended to draw the reproduction and recovery of historical narratives through the functions of remembrance and collective memory. It aims to illustrate the engravement of the traumatic events of the Karabakh war and Khojaly genocide into the collective memory and how it became a crucial component of victimized identity construction during the peace talks.

The third Chapter focuses on the analysis of the historical and legal background of the peace negotiations and the detailed elaboration of intended timeframe. As the timeframe for the negotiations is broad, the last section of the Chapter analyses the particular timeframe of the talks in which the discourse of victimhood has been an important part of the talks. The Chapter facilitates better and brief understanding of the peace negotiations before the discourse analysis.

The last Chapter is devoted to the examination of the construction of victimized identity through the foreign policy in the peace talks. It seeks to show how the discourse of victimhood was framed by employing the discourse analysis of the official governmental discursive practices. Following the explained methodology in the first Chapter and theoretical framework on the

collective memory, the discourse analysis is based on the explicit intertextual analysis through the analytical focus on the speeches. In the last section of the Chapter, the formation of victimization discourse in the peace talks through the functions of collective memory and official discursive practices is proved by examining the mass mobilization of people in the four-day Karabakh war.

Chapter 1: Literature Review and Methodology

1.1 Literature Review

Analyses on foreign policy and identity construction in Azerbaijan has always been researched separately by the scholars. There are two main perspectives by scholars for the evaluation of Azerbaijan's foreign policy. The former group mainly focuses on the country's foreign policy after the fall of communism which has been analysed from geopolitical importance and security perspectives. It has been argued by many scholars that foreign relations have always been crucial not only for its security, but also for survival. The geopolitical situation has been called as "arc of instability" by Zbigniew Brzezinski due to Azerbaijan's border with both Iran and Russia and being a critical gateway, which connects Europe to Asia. Also, energy resources have played a major role for accepting Azerbaijan as geopolitically key actor in the region. Its maneuvers for foreign policy implementation have been evaluated by many scholars in the context of balancing three traditional powers, namely Iran, Russia and Turkey and considering the interest of superpower, The United States.²⁰

The latter group of main researches as mentioned below have focused on foreign policy perspectives of Azerbaijan after the Karabakh war. In foreign policy after the war, strategic position and rich oils, gas resources made Azerbaijan to look for supporters for the recognition its rights on Karabakh. Researchers mainly focus on Azerbaijan's foreign policy strategy that is agenda setting for the Nagorno -Karabakh conflict. This is possibly the only policy area in which Azerbaijan requests more involvement both from the EU and United States to be strong mediator by recognizing its territorial integrity. Here, the overwhelming majority of literature is devoted to

²⁰ Cornell, Svante E. 2011. *Azerbaijan since Independence* . New York : M.E. Sharpe. P. 297

the correlation between the culprit and the victim through the collective memory of the victimhood in search of international justice.²¹ However, there is no exact literature in which one considers the creation of the victim of identity based on collective memory through the implementation of foreign policy.

There are many publications which can be considered as a starting for the research. Considering the analysis of Azerbaijan's foreign policy from the geopolitical and security prism and examination after the Karabakh war, Svante Cornell's *"Azerbaijan since Independence"*, Brenda Shaffer's *"Permanent Factors in Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy"*, as well as Tadeusz Swietochowski's *"Azerbaijan: A Borderland at the Crossroads of History"* can be crucial and detailed analysis. However, the mentioned sources can be accommodated within the Realist prism. The researchers rely on realist foreign policy analysis which belongs to the classical realist theory. As Morgenthau argues, Realism conceptualizes foreign policy in a way that states should seek for survival within the rules of international relations. International politics should be based on struggle for power and national security.²² Here, realist school doesn't correlate identity and study of foreign policy, whereas poststructuralist approach to foreign policy which is relevant for this research, establishes two-way relationship between foreign policy and identity. Poststructuralist approach considers foreign policy as important on identity articulation and in this correlation identity shapes foreign policy and also is shaped by foreign policy.²³

Regarding the literature on identity construction in Azerbaijan, it has been evaluated on the base of causal epistemology which is relevant for conventional constructivism. For instance,

²¹ Gils, Eske Van. 2018. "Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy Strategies and the European Union: Successful Resistance and Pursued Influence." *Europe-Asia Studies* 70 (5): 738-758. doi:10.1080/09668136.2018.1479733 . p. 747-48

²² Morgenthau, Hans. 1948. *Politics among Nations*. New York: Knopf.

²³ (Hansen 2006, 1)

“Provisional Stabilities: The Politics of Identities in Post-Soviet Eurasia” by Ronald Suny, *“Azerbaijan: A question for Identity”* by Charles van der Leeuw, *“Azerbaijan Diary”* by Thomas Goltz, *“Between Europe and Asia: identity in post-Soviet nation-building narratives”* by Joshua Kucera have a constructivist approach to identity formulation and transformation considering historical shifts.

Ronald Suny focuses on the fluidity of identities that their construction is heavily depended on the decisions of policymakers. He claims that depending on the international or domestic situation, political actors can make use of identities which constructed by elites.²⁴ In turn, Charles van der Leeuw analyses identity dynamics before and after the fall of communism. He particularly questions the ideological vacuum in identity construction, in the context of Islam, Russian modernity and Iran-Turkey heritage by analyzing social memories going back to the years of Stalin era and after socialism. He also touches the question of identity in the context of historical dimensions of the Karabakh conflict.²⁵ Joshua Kucera analyses major political debates on conflicting identities in post-Soviet Azerbaijan. His research better describes the debate of elite on identity construction both after the fall of communism and Karabagh war.²⁶ However, following constructivist approach, these publications analyze identity construction in Azerbaijan either from collective memory perspective or on the basis of belief system of policy makers.

Contrary to the constructivist claims of epistemology, post-structuralists believe that there is no pre-social identity of the state but argue that identities are socially constructed through

²⁴ Suny, Ronald Grigor. 1999. "Provisional Stabilities: The Politics of Identities in Post-Soviet Eurasia." *International Security* 24 (3).

²⁵ Leeuw, Charles van der. 2000. *Azerbaijan: A Question for Identity*. New York: ST. Martin's Press.

²⁶ Kucera, Joshua. 2017. "“Between Europe and Asia”: Geography and Identity in Post-Soviet Nation-building Narratives." *Central Asian Affairs* (Harvard University) 4 (4): 331-357.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1163/22142290-00404002>.

practice and language. By criticizing constructivists, poststructuralists argue that as knowledge is politically and historically situated, the proper knowledge (in constructivism) which stems from casual epistemology is unable to cover the truths. In poststructuralism the representations of policy and identity are linked through discourse rather theorizing.²⁷

Unlike what realist and constructivist theories of foreign policy and identity argue, identities and states are always in a process of being and are never completed entities. Foreign policy as a main practice of the state can articulate both identity and state in this continuous process. Therefore, the research focuses on the discursive approach of post-structuralism which can better find the correlation between the authoritative discourse of national identity and political agents. By focusing on the discourse analysis theory of Lene Hansen, the thesis examines that victimized identity discourse is not only constructed through foreign policy implementation, but also foreign policy was formulated by certain discourse of identity construction. From this perspective, poststructuralist approach and the concept of Hansen in her book – “*Security as Practice. Discourse analysis and the Bosnian war*” - became the main source and influencer for this thesis.

According to the post-structuralist approach, the relationship between foreign policy and identity can be explored through the application of the concept of discourse. The main thinkers of this approach firmly believe in the importance of a language that creates an identity that gives meaning. They argue that foreign policy decisions cannot be dissociated from the discourse on national identity. Poststructuralists are not interested in a decision-making process in foreign policy but analyze the effects of its construction.²⁸ Being inspired by Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida,

²⁷ (Hansen 2006, 10)

²⁸ Ollapally, Deepa. 2005. *Foreign Policy and Identity Politics*. New Dehli: Orient Longman.

Lena Hansen argues that poststructuralism can be applied to foreign policy and identity to find a correlation between them.²⁹

Hansen argues in her mentioned book that the notions of foreign policy implementation and identity are interwoven to each other. Foreign policy decision-making cannot be implemented without considering of identity and identity cannot be analyzed separately without considering how policies are being pursued. She analyses the foreign policy as a discursive practice that representations of foreign policy-making and identity are related through the discourse. In other words, identity and foreign policy coexist through discursive practices and there cannot be an independent identity without considering the discourse of foreign policy. She further argues that culture, territory, language and history are the main elements in national identity construction, however none of these elements ensure the unity of the nation. She suggests that the discourse of foreign policy should be considered as a model which creates a link between policy and identity.³⁰

According to Hansen, foreign policies construct objects by assigning meaning to the situation, and by doing so they draw upon particular identities. The poststructuralist assumption claims that representations of identity situate foreign policy issues in an interpretative way in which foreign policies are formulated. Identity is accepted as political and discursive “to argue that representations of identity place foreign policy issues within a particular interpretative optic”.³¹ In this perspective, there is no any objective identity which can exist out of discursive realm and poststructuralism analyses identity as relational conception rather than cultural. In other words, “poststructuralism’s relational conception of identity implies that identity is always given through reference to something it is not”.³² Relational concept of identity is based on the assumption that

²⁹ (Hansen 2006, 15)

³⁰ Ibid., p. 17-18.

³¹ Ibid., p. 6.

³² Ibid.

identity is always constructed through collectively articulated codes and juxtaposition to a radically different Other.³³

As representations of identity are always operated in the legitimization of foreign policy, representational framing of the policy relies on the knowledge which comes from background literature and media coverage. Knowledge is important in this sense, as it creates an authority for politicians to speak about a specific issue. Policy speeches or journalistic reportage have importance, as they establish specific form of knowledge as acceptable. The main concern of poststructuralism here, is how the texts of politicians construct acceptable knowledge.³⁴ In order to answer this question, Hansen suggests the methodology which should concern textual selection and how identities are constructed through foreign policy texts.³⁵

1.2 Methodology³⁶

The main methodology of the research will be discourse analysis. Here, the main purpose of using this method is to show the constitutive relationship of foreign policy and identity and how their characters express themselves in the discourse. As poststructuralism affirms, “foreign policies rely upon representations of identity, but it is also through the formulation of foreign policy that identities are produced and reproduced”.³⁷ Following the argument, the research examined not only victimization discourse of identity construction has been produced by foreign policy of Azerbaijan, but also victimized identity discourse influenced the foreign policy itself. In order to

³³ Ibid., p. 6-7.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 8.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

³⁶ The main part of the methodology has been used from the book of Lene Hansen and some parts were taken from the written summary of research plan which has been submitted for Research Design and Methods in International Relations Course.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

support the argument, it studied Azerbaijan's external political activities in relation with Azerbaijan's discourse of 'land return' in Karabagh peace negotiations.

By focusing on the discourse analysis theory of Hansen, the research analyses that victimized identity discourse is constructed through the foreign policy implementation or the official discourse of the state.³⁸ Following the discourse analysis theory of Hansen, research project aims to analyze the construction of Azerbaijani identity of victimhood through foreign policy implementation and its impact on the formulation of foreign policy. The textual selection is based on the speeches of politicians during Karabakh peace negotiations and high culture in different forum and events.

Hansen suggests intertextual content analysis for the methodology of textual analysis. So, the main approach in the research, intertextual model includes wider body of texts. As Hansen argues, intertextual approach "identifies the texts produced by these actors including speeches; political debates, interviews, articles and books as well as the texts, which have had an intertextual influence on their discourse. The goals are to analyse the construction of identity within official discourse".

³⁹ As Hansen draws on Julia Kristeva's book of *The Poststructuralist Conceptualization of Security*, the meaning of a text is a product of other interpretations or readings. Therefore, intertextuality is both methodologically and theoretically important for discourse analysis of foreign policy. By situating against or within other texts, the produced texts use previous ones to construct policies and identities. In other words, a unique text can produce a new discourse by referencing or quoting the previous texts. Therefore, explicit intertextual reading analyzes how policy and identity are articulated in the original text.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid., p. 1.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 59.

The research design for this type of analysis should depend on the choice of selves, number of events, temporal perspective, and intertextual model.⁴¹ By using intertextual content analysis, the research analyzes the official discourse of ruling elites in order to find the link with identity construction. By using the aspects of the texts and making references between them, the understanding of intertextual relationship between identity and foreign policy discourses is shaped. According to Hansen, intertextual analysis aims to examine how writers characterize and draw on other sources in order to write their own texts.

Hansen suggests three intertextual models for conducting intertextual analysis of official foreign policy discourse in which state action is legitimized. The first model which is relevant for this research, is directly based on the texts produced by official authority or foreign policy actors. The texts may include interviews, speeches, or political debates, in other words, official texts are the main object analysis. The main aim of this model directly meets with the goal of the research which both focuses on the analysis of identity construction within official discourse. Memoirs or historical texts of foreign policy written in the past has a crucial effect, as they lead politicians to construct legacies and decide on the present and future.⁴²

Following the research design, Hansen argues that the number of events should be chosen through the discussion of the temporal dimension. Temporal perspective can be based on one moment, comparative moments or historical dimension of the issue. After deciding on the temporal perspective, the number of events should be chosen. The events might be one or vary. If multiple events were chosen, they should be related either by time or issue.⁴³ In order to produce a complete research design, the chosen intertextual model is coupled with relevant dimension which focuses

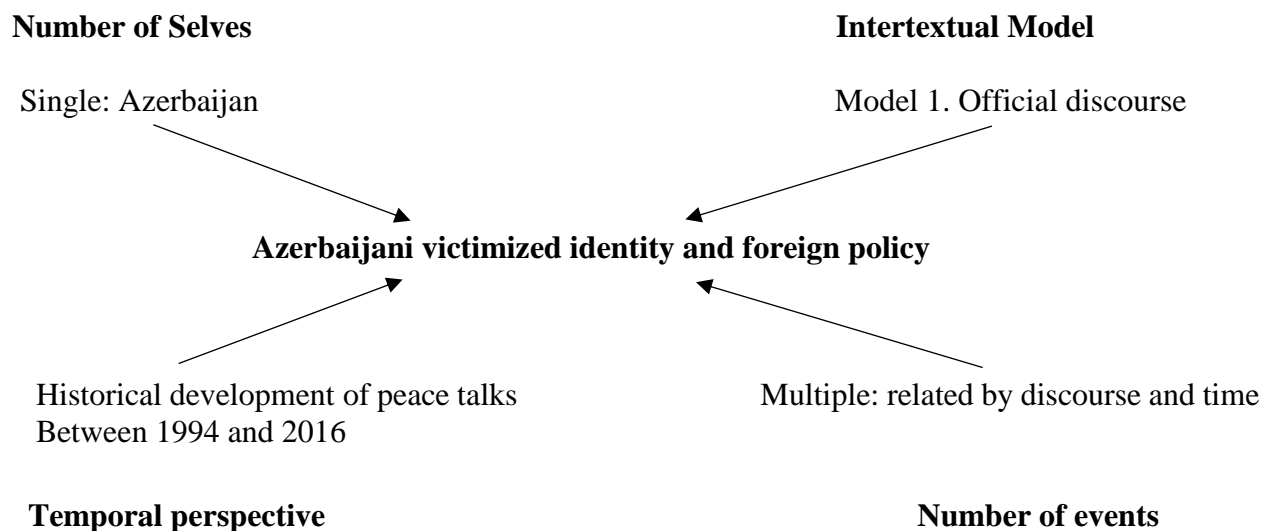
⁴¹Ibid., p. 75.

⁴² Ibid., p. 64.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 80-81.

on multiple events. The chosen multiple events from Nagorno-Karabakh peace talks are justified in Chapter 3. The choice of selves, in other words, the chosen foreign policy subject for the thesis is Azerbaijanis. Therefore, temporal perspective of the research is based on a longer historical analysis of foreign policy. The four dimensions of poststructuralist research design for the thesis are summed up in Figure 1 which clearly displays key options for each dimension:

Figure 1: Elaborated research design for discourse analysis ⁴⁴



Through the explained dimensions of intertextuality, textual selection should consider two aspects, argues Hansen. The former is that texts should be taken from the time under study and the latter focuses on the key texts which function as nodes or frequently quoted. For poststructuralist discourse analysis, methodological priority for textual selection is given to the primary texts which are presidential speeches, interviews and statements in the case of official foreign policy.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Figure 1 was created by Author using the research design of Lene Hansen to better apply discourse analysis

⁴⁵ (Hansen 2006, 82)

Following poststructuralist approach to the textual selection, the research also selected concrete textual material for discourse analysis from the presidential speeches and statements during the Karabakh war peace talks. The frequent quotation of victimized discourse in these speeches is the major reason for the concrete selection of presidential speeches.

Using intertextual content analysis, analyzing the content of data is based on the analysis of the speech of politicians during Karabakh peace negotiations. The time frame is between 1995 and 2016. Within the time frame, peace negotiations occurred with many years of breaks between them. The timeframe starts the analysis with Budapest Summit in 1994 and ends with the four - day war in Nagorno Karabakh which happened in 2016

Regarding the textual analysis – examining victimized discourse in foreign policy within peace negotiations– OSCE Minsk Group’s Database is the main source, as the database provides all records of the peace negotiations and meetings, and press releases. Beside the Database of OSCE Minsk Group, International Online Library under the name of “Heydar Aliyev Heritage” and the reports of International Crisis Group on the peace process will be main sources for the research where most frequently quoted texts can be found for the intertextual content analysis of the speeches. Different policy texts are also be examined by accessing the official web-pages of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan and the government which provides data for the phases of peace talks.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

2.1 The place of collective memory and trauma in victimized identity formation

This Chapter aims to analyse the Azerbaijani identity of victimhood on the base of historical narratives of the past conflicts with Armenia, namely the Karabakh war and Khojaly massacre. In order to find the victimized identity construction, how the impact of traumatic events of the war on the collective memory caused creation of victimized identity is mainly examined. By analyzing the war incidents, the Chapter argues that the collective memory of the past shaped the victimized national identity of Azerbaijanis. Firstly, it will start with the analysis of the concepts of trauma, collective memory and the impact of their relation on national identity construction. The analysis of war incidents with the application of the concepts of trauma and memory will follow the former.

According to sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, there cannot be any individual memory, as each individual is determined by social norms. He argues that each individual memory stems from a collective memory which was established through norms, traditions, languages and places. Therefore, he accepted memory as a social fact by claiming that an isolated individual cannot form any memory. Our identity is perpetuated through preserving memories in each epoch of our lives and this process is continually reproduced.⁴⁶ Paul Connerton is another important contributor to the literature who discusses the importance of collective memory in national identity formation. He claims that our experience of the present day mainly depends on our knowledge of the past. The factors occurred in the past effect or distort our experience of the present. As this process happens in a repetitive way, experience of the past reaches into the everyday details of our life. In

⁴⁶ Halbwachs, Maurice. 1992. *On Collective Memory*. London: The University of Chicago Press. P. 47

other words, the images of the past legitimate a social order in the present.⁴⁷ Therefore, collective memory exists as a process of reinterpretation through the continuous interaction. In order to better understand collective memories and their relations to collective identities, it has been argued that collective memory's reproduction and origin are located in the communicative practices (language) which shape social life, as well as in the public rituals.⁴⁸

If communicative memory is distinct with its proximity to the everyday, collective memory is characterized with its distance to the everyday. It has been situated in the subconscious and its horizon doesn't change through years or centuries. The fateful events of the past are the fixed points of collective memory in which memory is preserved through institutional communication (observance and practice) and cultural formations (monuments, rites, texts).⁴⁹

By relating the three poles – society, memory and culture to each other, Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka identify some characteristics of cultural memory. First and foremost, by preserving the store of knowledge, cultural memory makes society much stronger. It makes society to comprehend its peculiarity and unity. Identificatory determinations, such as clear distinctions between who belongs to society, who don't, or between who is foreign and who appertains to society, supplies the knowledge in the cultural memory. This knowledge is controlled by a need for identity. Secondly, cultural memory has the capacity to reconstruct by relating its knowledge to a contemporary and actual situation. Another main function of collective memory is stable formation of the meaning through shared knowledge and crystallization or objectivation of

⁴⁷ Cennerton, Paul. 1989. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge University PressCambridge. P. 2-3

⁴⁸ Gongaware, Timothy B. 2010. "Collective Memory Anchors: Collective Identity and Continuity in Social Movements." *Sociological Focus* (Taylor & Francis, Ltd) 43 (3): 214-239.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41633861>. P. 217

⁴⁹ (J. A. Czaplicka 1995, 129)

communicated meaning. Not only writing and communication, but also rituals and pictorial images function for the stable formation. Lastly, cultural memory has also reflexivity which functions through interpretation of common practice in terms of rituals, maxims or proverbs. The attitude of society towards the past or history and the function of remembering are identical to characterize the self-image of this society.⁵⁰

Arthur G. Neal differentiates between collective and individual trauma by arguing that a national trauma is shared with others. According to him, the concept of trauma is applied to extraordinary experiences and national trauma can be confirmed when the feelings of sadness, anger, fear are shared collectively. Comparing the collective and individual traumas, he argues that the enduring effects of a national trauma resemble the trauma in the memories of an individual. As an individual memory, the national consciousness also tries to extract meaningless experience, however, when the event is dismissed from the minds of people, it is replaced with despair and anxiety. In other words, how an individual becomes permanently changes after the traumatic event, the nation also faces with a permanent change due to trauma in the social realm.⁵¹

The main theme which is equally important and suitable for both collective memory and trauma is objective and subjective interpretation. In other words, the reaction of the individuals to the traumatic event that happened, is crucial for the psychology of remembering. The elements that shape collective identity, such as conflicted past, common beliefs and memory are crucial for actualization of collective trauma. Another main feature is the nature of disruptive event which frustrates and threatens usual assessment of social reality by the nation.⁵² Under the circumstances

⁵⁰ Ibid., 131-33.

⁵¹ Neal, Arthur G. 2005. *National Trauma and Collective Memory*. New York; London: M.E. Sharpe. P. 3-4

⁵² Alexander, Jefferey C. 2004. "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma." In *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, by C. Alexander Jefferey, Eyerman Ron, Giesen Bernhard, J. Smelser Neil and Sztompka Piotr, 1-30. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press. P. 1-2

of national trauma, the boundaries between death and life, order and chaos become fragile. Senses of fear, danger and insecurity are the basic reflects to the national trauma which makes people mobilize urgently. A violent situation frequently emerges when collective sadness is accompanied by anger ⁵³ which was the same situation for Azerbaijani people after the Karabakh war and Khojaly massacre.

There can occur lots of frustrated events, such as disruption of economic system, earthquakes or failure of the government to provide basic protections etc., however, none of them can be considered as traumatic. For traumas to appear collectively, social crises have to become cultural crises. Traumas don't happen due to the group experiencing of pain. Rather, "it is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity".⁵⁴ As a result of the event, if there is an obvious threat to the identity of society, threat to the place where they live in, then collective actors accept social pain as a fundamental danger and transforms the fear to anger. ⁵⁵

National traumas as cultural process, a form of remembrance and collective memory ground identity formation of a nation. Trauma is directly related to the construction of collective memory and the formation of collective identity, as it has a potential to unite all subjects of nation. Compared to psychological or physical trauma, cultural trauma "refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion". ⁵⁶ National traumas cannot be easily dismissed, as they have been

⁵³ (Neal 2005, 5)

⁵⁴ (Alexander 2004, 10)

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Eyerman, Ron. 2004. "Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity." In *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, by C. Alexander Jefferey, Eyerman Ron, Giesen Bernhard, J. Smelser Neil and Sztompka Piotr, 60-111. University of California Press. P. 60

permanently placed in the public consciousness, therefore, traumas have been ingrained in collective memory. National traumas link the past to present through imagination, remembrance and representations. This leads to identity -formation in which “certain subject-positions may become especially prominent or even overwhelming, for example, those of victim or perpetrator wherein one is possessed by the past and tends to repeat it compulsively as if it were fully present”.

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The cumulative effects of national traumas have central importance in the framing of the collective identity of any group of people. The creation of legendary and heroic figures is crucial to provide inspirations for future generations in order to perpetuate the legacy of the memory. Arthur G. Neal also exemplifies three historic events and epic struggles of Americans which have played an important role for identity construction or what it means to be an American. He analyses traumatic role of American Revolution and Civil war, then the heroic commitments to win the World War II. Therefore, he concludes that “taking an active approach mastery and control over events through the pooling of collective resources became embedded in national consciousness”.

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In order to justify the past, commemorating of defeat and victimhood has an equal importance together with commemoration of victory. The use of violent imaginaries, myths and histories is crucial to provide historical justification for the ongoing hostility and to represent the nation as the victim.⁵⁹ Followingly, Vamik Volkan emphasizes the importance of ‘chosen trauma’ which has decisive role for collective identity by passing through stories and generations. When

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 62.

⁵⁸ (Neal 2005, 21)

⁵⁹ Todorov, Tzvetan. 2010. *The Fear of Barbarians: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations*. University of Chicago Press. P.61

the ‘chosen trauma’ becomes a national history or an important myth, it is used to legitimize the violent action against the collective who committed the original trauma.⁶⁰

According to Walter Michaels, wounded subjects due to national traumas tend to desire for recognition internationally by reproaching power rather than aspiring of it. Therefore, the wounded subjects position themselves outside of or against to the central mainstream power who prefer to stay quiet for their subjugation. By attaching wounded discourses, the nation makes a claim of exclusion and injury. After traumas, making the discourses of subjugation and suffering as the basis for identity inhibits the nation to claim for a complete freedom by strengthening their status as damaged. He further argues that the current identity framing based only in traumatic events of the past.⁶¹ Following the topic, Wendy Brown argues that the language of ‘wanting’ rather than ‘being’ is more convenient for the structure of victimized identity construction. He claims that the language of ‘wanting’ is future -oriented and requires full recognition of subjugation.⁶²

Both claims of Wendy Brown and Walter Michaels are relevant for the case of victimhood discourse construction in Azerbaijan after traumatic events in the Karabakh war. As the peace negotiations are examined in the next Chapters, the discourse of victimhood in the negotiations was based on the language of ‘wanting’. As indicated in the Wendy Brown’s argument above, that victimized nation wants for international recognition of their victimhood, in the Azerbaijani’s case, the language of ‘wanting’ requires the full recognition of the crimes which committed during the Karabakh war and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

⁶⁰ Volkan, Vamik D. 2006. *Killing in the Name of Identity: a Study of Bloody Conflicts*. Charlottesville: Pitchstone. P. 180-83

⁶¹ Michaels, Walter B. 2004. *The Shape of the Signifier: 1967 to the End of History*. Princeton: Princeton University. P. 55-60

⁶² Brown, Wendy. 1995. *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 76

The collective experience of traumatic event turns into the meaning and identity crisis. In the trauma process, ‘carrier groups’ who are intellectuals and popular TV reporters, are important to represent the desires and interests of the affected public.⁶³ In the next section the role of carrier groups in victimized identity construction after traumas is also analysed.

2.2 Framing of victimized identity in public consciousness

Having outlined theoretical framework of the thesis, this section aims to analyse the explained theoretical framework on collective memory and trauma, and their impact on victimized identity construction in the case of the Karabakh war. In other words, how can the theories of collective memory and national trauma be explained in the case of victimized identity construction during and after the Karabakh war? In order to better explain the correlation between theory and case, it analyses representation of historical past, the role of ‘carrier groups’ for the construction of hate narratives, and situation before and during the war. It also outlines the specific periods and events which were followed by the discourse of victimization that as an ultra- nationalist aggressor Armenia violates the international law.

After the Karabakh war, the antagonism towards Armenians significantly increased with reference to Armenia’s expansionist policies and militaristic campaign in Karabakh as an ultra-nationalist and aggressor nation.⁶⁴ Therefore, Azerbaijan has been portrayed as a victim of Armenia’s expansionist policies and ultra-nationalistic mission within the victimhood framework by declaring its national identity under threat.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 63.

⁶⁴ Gahramanova, Aytan. 2010. "Paradigms of Political Mythologies & Perspectives of Reconciliation in the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict." *International Negotiation* 15 (1): 133-152.

The victimized identity of Azerbaijanis who lived in the border and together in Karabakh and Baku with Armenians gradually developed in the 19th century under tsarist Russian rule. The perception of victimhood stemmed from multifaced antagonism and complex cohabitation with Armenians. Under the social and economic developments of the late 19th century in the Russian Empire, Armenians occupied profitable positions and inhabited in large cities by benefiting disproportionately from economic advances of Baku. By getting frequent favoritism by their Russian rulers, Armenians could rise key political and economic positions which caused the feeling of resentment and concluded with anti-Armenian feelings of Azerbaijanis.⁶⁵

In the late 1870s, the emergence of pan-Turkism was also given an intellectual basis by educated Azerbaijanis who aimed to response the tsar's Russification policy. In this sense, pan-Turkism in the territory of Azerbaijan aimed to promote the sense of Turkic historical, linguistic and national commonality. The growth of this idea among Azerbaijanis ignited anti-Armenian sentiments not only due to seeing Armenia as a geographical obstacle dividing the Turks of region, but also due to the perception of inherent racist nature in the region. On the other hand, Armenians also had the same hatred, as they equalized the Azerbaijanis with the Ottoman Turks who were accepted as perpetrators of anti-Armenian policies. After the pogroms of 1895-96 and massacres of 1915 of Ottoman Empire against the Armenians, anti-Azerbaijani sentiment reached its peak and exploded into violence. During the Russian revolution of 1905, riots broke out in Baku when the death of an Azeri citizen was seen at the hands of Armenian policeman. Within a week, the conflict spread to both Nakhchivan and Karabakh, 1500 people were killed, and tortures continued until the reestablishment of order in the empire by 1907. With the conflict, territorial dimension

⁶⁵ Croissant, Michael P. 1998. *The Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict: Causes and Implications*. London; Westport: Praeger Publishers. P. 1-8

was added to the both nation's enmity.⁶⁶ Thus, with the 1905-06 Armenian -Tatar Massacres the first blood was shed and it became the precedent for the future conflict between the two nations. As explained in theoretical part above, the experience of the present depends on the knowledge of the past, the 1905-06 Armenian -Tatar Massacres played an important role as a first important confrontation in the collective memory of Azerbaijanis by constituting a major part of this knowledge.

After the World War I, when the tsarist empire started to decline, the brutal war was fueled again. As collective memory derives from a traumatic event, March massacres of 1918 or "March Days" became another important event for perpetuation of trauma in the memory.⁶⁷ In the time of complex situation, a temporary Soviet power was established in Baku in 1917 which was headed by Armenian Bolsheviks. With the given power from Soviet Russia, the Armenian Bolsheviks started to exterminate the Muslim population of entire Baku. A. Kluge who has been a lawyer of the member of the Emergency Commission reported that 11,000 Azerbaijanis were killed in late March and early April.⁶⁸

Through the emotive demonstrations, and victim-centered imaginaries, "March Days" are celebrated in each year which clearly shows the existence of commemoration of the past. The collective memorialization of both 1905-06 Armenian -Tatar Massacres and "March Days" in 1918 shows these events as 'chosen trauma' of the past which is a part of war and victimhood discourses. The past events of 1905-06 Armenian -Tatar Massacres and "March Days" in 1918 had importance for commemoration, therefore, the representation of these traumatic events in the

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶⁸ Khalilov, Aslan. 2011. "March 1918: Azerbaijan without Azerbaijanis." *IRS Heritage* 4 (56): 22-27.

memory of the present is a crucial part of victimhood discourse. These past events give additional lawful reasons to claim Armenia as an ultra- aggressor country who threatens Azerbaijani identity.

The fall of communism ignited the hatred of the past in public consciousness of both nations. The representation of the past in the present memory of Azerbaijani people has started with ethnopolitical mobilization of Armenians in Karabakh. At the end of 1980s, there occurred some exact events which caused the remembrance of the past, i.e. of the 1905-06 Armenian -Tatar Massacres or “March Days” in the collective memory. These events were the range rallies of Armenians in Erevan in February 1988 who supported demands of Karabakh Armenians.⁶⁹

As one of the well-known researchers of the region, Svante Cornell argues that beside the factors, like the absence of democratic institutions in the Soviet Union or the support of Armenian diaspora, ancient hatred became another reason for the start of conflict.⁷⁰ Thomas de Waal also emphasized the importance of the official propaganda of myth and hatred, and the idea of different historical past. Different national versions of history and re-representation of the enemy image in public consciousness ignited the first confrontations. The different ideas on history and identity became dangerous for security and expanded massively in the time of ideological vacuum.

Directly after the first confrontations, the hate narratives of the past revived. The historical interpretations of intellectuals played a significant role in the revival of hate narratives in collective memory of people. For example, historians from both sides started to find some proofs dating back to mediaeval period in order to make a legitimate claim for Karabakh. As explained in the section above that the ‘carrier groups’ have important to represent the desires of the affected people in the trauma process, the claims of Armenians to Karabakh and their rallies in Erevan made Azerbaijani

⁶⁹ Garagozov, Rauf. 2006. "Collective Memory in Ethnopolitical Conflicts: the case of Nagorno-Karabakh." *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 5 (41): 145-155.

⁷⁰ (Cornell 2011)

historians react. The historian Suleiman Aliarov and the poet Bakhtiar Vahabzade published an “Open Letter” in the journal of *Azerbaijan* in which they declared Karabakh as Azerbaijan’s part by claiming that “the Azerbaijani people, in the new era of international competition, have been among the first victims”.⁷¹

During the Karabakh war, one of the most referenced events through the framework of victimhood, is Khojaly massacre of 1992. Khojaly is a small town which is located in the Northeast of Karabakh. In the time of escalation of war, the town was occupied on the 26th of February in 1992 by Armenian forces. The occupation of mostly ethnically Azeri town of Khojaly, resulted with the massacre of 613 civilians and many tortures to victims.⁷² As ‘chosen trauma’ is decisive for collective identity,⁷³ the Khojaly massacre of 1992 became the ‘chosen trauma’ of the near past and started to be used to legitimize the violent action of the aggressor. As the event is represented officially and discursively in emotionally-charged terms, its memorialization aimed to support the claims of victimized identity and Armenian vandalism. In order to perpetuate of memorialization of traumatic events, namely both “March Days” of 1918 and Khojaly massacre of 1992, 31st of March has been declared as the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis by President Heydar Aliyev.⁷⁴

It has always been accepted that there is a Christian unanimity which always resulted with the support to Armenians from Russia. Feeling geographically isolated in the region as being the only large Muslim community and being separated geographically from its brother nation of Turks in the West, the discourse of victimhood of Azerbaijani people rose its peak with the ‘new’ traumatic events of near past (end of 1980s and beginning of 1990s). The narrative of isolation as an integral part of victimhood rose with the event of 20th of January in 1990 which is known as

⁷¹ Waal, De Thomas. 2013. *Black Garden*. New York; London : New York University Press. P. 30-31

⁷² (Gahramanova 2010, 145)

⁷³ (Volkan 2006, 180)

⁷⁴ (T. d. Waal 2013, 97)

“Black January”. The event has also importance in the discourse of victimhood, as Soviet-Armenian troops entered Baku to dismantle the independence movement of Azerbaijanis. They killed 130 people and used violence by crushing the people with tanks.⁷⁵ In the escalation situation of the Karabakh war, “Black January” was accepted as a direct threat to the existence of Azeri identity. As national traumas are decisive to frame the collective identity of population,⁷⁶ the explained events had a traumatic effect by engraving in the memories of people which composed an integral part of victimized identity construction.

Overall, in the aftermath of traumatic events, the duty of remembrance was chosen to make negotiations. By declaring that the duty of society is to remember,⁷⁷ collective remembering of the past events became decisive for the dialogue after the war. As the remembrance of the traumatic events of past accelerated the construction of victimized identity, the duty of remembrance became an integral part of foreign policy through the peace negotiations.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 96

⁷⁶ (Neal 2005, 21)

⁷⁷ Fournet, Caroline. 2007. *The Crime of Destruction and the Law of Genocide: Their impact on Collective Memory*. London : Routledge.

Chapter 3: Peace talks through the foreign policy: placing victimhood

The Chapter aims to analyse the situation before the peace talks start. In order to better analyse and understand the framing of victimized identity through the peace talks, legal and historical background of the negotiations, main claims of both parties and mediators' role are examined in the first part of the Chapter. As the discourse of victimhood through foreign policy in the peace talks is analysed in the next Chapter from the prism of the legal claims and proposals of mediators, the present Chapter provides better explanation of how peace talks and the claims there, were formed. The last section of the Chapter also examines the four phases of peace talks which is important to better understand the chosen timeframe for the thesis. As the timeframe of negotiations is broad, the last section of the Chapter tries to give an overview of the chosen timeframe where the talks had mainly been set up within the victimized discourse. Nevertheless, the topic is elaborated broadly in the next Chapter.

3.1 The situation before ceasefire

3.1.1 Historical and Legal background for the talks

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict exists from the end of the World War I, but only after the withdrawal of Armenia and Azerbaijan from the Soviet Union it became a full-scale war. The current situation is neither war, nor peace. Armenians say that Nagorno-Karabakh is essential for its national existence, whereas Azerbaijanis consider Nagorno-Karabakh important for its modern statehood. Both newly independent states refer to the principles of human rights to justify their position in the negotiations and accuse the other in the occupation and the violent human rights

abuses.⁷⁸ The causes of the war in 1988-1994 have not been eliminated, conversely new hate and disintegration elements increased since the cease-fire, with making the possibility of war re-emergence more real.

The controversy started when the Soviet period borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan was determined. Nagorno-Karabakh has been declared as a part of the Soviet Azerbaijan by the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party in 1921 and Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast was established in the region by giving a wider autonomy to Azerbaijan in 1923. On the other hand, several times Armenians sent petitions to Moscow in order to change the status of the province.⁷⁹ The controversy began again in 1988 when the Nagorno-Karabakh Soviet adopted a resolution to transfer Karabakh to the Armenian SSR. Azerbaijan officially denied the resolution, while Armenia agreed Nagorno-Karabakh's internalization.⁸⁰

In 1991, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's independency was declared by the regional council. After declaration of its independence, Azerbaijan canceled the status of Nagorno-Karabakh's autonomy. However, the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians continued their attempts to separate, and about 108,615 voted for independence at referendum. Although Azerbaijan did not recognize the referendum, Stepanakert formally declared independence by relying on the result of referendum in 1992. However, no state, including Armenia, recognized the independency of Nagorno-Karabakh.⁸¹

The main political cause of the conflict was the claim of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the desire of the majority of the Nagorno-Karabakh population to self-determination. In the

⁷⁸ (T. d. Waal 2013, 145-156)

⁷⁹ Kaufman, Stuart. 2001. *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*. Ithaca. P. 60

⁸⁰ (T. D. Waal 2010, 110-111)

⁸¹ 2005. *Nagorno-Karabakh: A Plan for Peace*. Crisis Group Europe Report, International Crisis Group, 1-31.
<https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/167-nagorno-karabakh-a-plan-for-peace.pdf> p. 4

conflict, a contradiction appeared between the two principles of international law – the right to international law and the inviolability of international borders. Both sides of the conflict used 1975 Helsinki Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in which Armenians argue that their positions are based on the right of self-determination of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians in accordance with human rights and VIII principle of the Final Act Declaration. However, Azerbaijanis' claim is that, according to Principle III, the essential issue is the inviolability of international borders. Azerbaijanis consider that the right to self-determination cannot be related to the secession from the state and should be applied in the context of territorial integrity. In their view during the talks, the war started as a result of the Armenian occupation and plan of the Great Armenia.⁸²

Referring to Soviet law, Armenia underlines that as Azerbaijan had the right to leave the Soviet Union in 1991, Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians also had the same right to leave Azerbaijan. Their main argument is that Article 3 of the Soviet Union on April 3, in 1990, gave the right to Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast and Armenians who live in Karabakh, to leave Azerbaijan by referendum.⁸³ On the other hand, Azerbaijani officials state that the right to self-determination does not apply to one-sided separation or secession by arms. They take as an example of James Crawford's arguments that there has not been any recognition of the right of one-sided separation based on the majority of votes in territory in international practice. He further argues that even when there are strong and persistent calls for independence (for instance, measured by referendum results indicating significant support for independence), the issue is at the discretion of the relevant state.⁸⁴ Moreover, UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), Article 6 has been used as

⁸² Ibid., p. 4-5.

⁸³ Hunnum, Hurst. 1993. *Documents on Autonomy and Minority Rights*. London : Springer. P. 754

⁸⁴ Crawford, James. 1997. *State Practice and International Law in Relation to Unilateral Secession*

support for claims which states that although all nations have the right to self-determination “any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations”.⁸⁵

Also, another main claim of Azerbaijan is that according to the Soviet constitution in 1977, the territory of the ally republic cannot be changed without the consent of this republic and 1988 decision of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Nagorno-Karabakh remained within Azerbaijan. Furthermore, it was mainly argued that Armenia’s aspiration was not to set up self-determination in the root of the conflict, but instead to state Armenia's territorial invasion ambitions. It was accepted that self-determination referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh was Armenia's pretext for involvement in internal affairs of Azerbaijan. Therefore, they did not follow the UN Charter (article 2) which forbids states to interfere in the territorial integrity of other states. By blaming Armenia as an aggressor state, Azerbaijan defends citing Article 51 of the Charter (self-defense), justifying the use of force against the Armenian troops.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ (Nagorno-Karabakh: A Plan for Peace 2005, 5)

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 6.

3.1.2 Mediation efforts

Negotiations on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have begun since the beginning of the 90s of the last-century, in other words, from the very beginning of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Although there was no talk of a lasting peace process at that time, the parties have repeatedly discussed episodic talks with the mediation initiatives of regional countries on suspending military operations. The war which was accompanied by the mass deportation of the Azerbaijani population of Nagorno-Karabakh and its seven regions, the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories by Armenia, by the massacres committed in Khojaly and other settlements continued until May 1994.⁸⁷

The first initiatives on mediation for the conflict came from Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin. After a visit to Baku in September 1991, they could organize negotiation between Armenia and Azerbaijan's Presidents. Although a declaration was signed on the peaceful settlement between the both parts, new attacks of Armenia in October against Azerbaijanis in Karabakh (in Khojavend region) canceled the declaration.⁸⁸ Since 1992, the conflict has been mediated by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and its Minsk Group (established in 1994). The co-chairing system, which was established in 1994, was changed in 1997 and included the representatives of France, the United States and Russia. Representatives of these countries are working together to prepare negotiated documents and conduct mediation diplomacy. During the war, when the mediation efforts of OSCE tried to

⁸⁷ 2012. "The process of negotiations." *Karabakh Realities*. <http://karabakhrealities.com/?lang=en&b=karabakh-conflict&cat=2&id=20>

⁸⁸ Ibid.

process the negotiations, the occupation of the other region of Azerbaijan suspended the negotiation process.⁸⁹

In order to resolve the conflict, OSCE Minsk Group prepared proposals which two of them have been discussed particularly. The first proposal is called “step-by-step” model in which there are several stages. In the first stage, Armenia should gradually withdraw its military force except the Lachin corridor which connects Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia. Following this, the peacekeeping forces should be deployed in the area to provide security and then Azerbaijani IDPs should be allowed to return. The final status of Nagorno-Karabakh and the issue of Lachin corridor has left to settle after the implementation of the first stages. The second proposal was the “package approach” which addresses all the issues at once and includes the determination of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh.⁹⁰

3.2 Phases of peace talks

According to Taleh Ziyadov, Nagorno-Karabakh negotiations can be divided into four phases which the thesis will follow the timeframe: Pre-Negotiation (1992-94), First Phase (1994-1998), Second Phase (1998-1999), Third Phase (1999-2004) and Fourth Phase (2004- today).⁹¹ As the main aim of the thesis is to find an answer to victimized identity construction through the foreign policy, the main speeches are analysed which delivered in the mentioned periods of peace talks. Following the major concern of the thesis, the most frequently quoted speeches with the emphasis on victimhood are examined in Chapter 4. Now, the discussion turns to analyse the

⁸⁹ Ziyadov, Taleh. 2010. "Nagorno-Karabakh Negotiations: Though the Prism of a Multi-Issue Bargaining Model." *International Negotiation* 15: 107–131. doi: 10.1163/157180610X488209 p. 108

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 112.

phases of peace talks, as it contains the timeframe of the research. The focus of the subsection is on the specific events where the speeches contain victimized discourse within this timeframe.

In the Pre-Negotiation Phase the talks occurred during the escalation of military operations. In this period, different mediators emerged, like Iran and Russia and their interests in the conflict clashed, therefore, a sustainable agreement couldn't be achieved. Furthermore, the occupation of one of the most important cities, namely Shusha, by Armenians made the negotiation fail which was held in Tehran On May 9, 1992. Consecutive occupations of the regions in Karabakh by Armenians, inconsistency of the OSCE mediation efforts and regional competition for mediation made the Pre-Negotiation Phase ineffective.⁹²

When the ceasefire was agreed in Bishkek Protocol in 1994, serious negotiations started between the countries. This period was associated with problem solving approach, as both Armenian president Ter-Petrosian and Azeri president Heydar Aliyev agreed on joint solution for the conflict. The fact that two of international borders of Armenia were closed with Turkey and Azerbaijan after the war, and it was excluded from energy projects in the region, complicated Armenia's political and economic positions by forcing it to think of 'compromise'.^{93 94}

After the ceasefire agreement, the meetings of heads of states and governments of the OCSE member countries was held in Budapest on December 6, 1994. The event is essential at the beginning of the first phase of talks following the agreement on cessation of armed conflict, as it decided to send a multi-national peace-keeping forces to Karabakh.⁹⁵ The Summit is also relevant

⁹² (T. d. Waal 2013, 229-31)

⁹³ (Ziyadov 2010, 113)

⁹⁴ Quotation marks belong to the Author, as return of lands can not be accepted as compromise by Azerbaijan.

⁹⁵ OSCE. 1994. "CSCE Budapest Document 1994: Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era." *Budapest Summit Declaration* . Budapest . 5-6.

for the analysis due to the speech of Heydar Aliyev, president of Azerbaijan, with focus on victimhood narrative.

The main three principles which are known as “the Lisbon Principles” accepted in OSCE Lisbon Summit in 1996 tried to provide conflict settlement.⁹⁶ Lisbon Summit in the first phase of the talks is also important from the victimhood identity discourse perspective considering the major concern of the research. Considering the importance of the Summit as an international arena, the speech of President Heydar Aliyev is worth to analyse in victimized identity context.

The official discourse of victimhood was continued in the second phase of the talks as well. At the beginning of the second phase Ter-Petrosian’s ‘problem-solving approach’ to the conflict caused his resignation and therefore, a shift in the negotiation process. The former secessionist leader, Robert Kocharian became a new leader of Armenia in 1998 who started to represent the interests of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians as well during the negotiations. He preferred ‘package plan’ by refusing to delay the decision on the final status of Karabakh. So, by shifting talks from problem-solving to bargaining, he changed the direction of negotiations.⁹⁷ In the second phase of talks, there was a negotiation about swapping territories, i.e. exchange of corridors, namely Meghri and Lachin which could link Azerbaijan to its Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan and Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh. In other words, Azerbaijan had to go to compromise for Karabakh in favor of Armenia, and instead could gain a strip of territory to connect Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan. In this phase, Azerbaijan softened its position by going the compromise of swapping territories and agreed to sign a peace agreement in the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999. However, the possible scenario caused opposition in both countries, for example the senior Azerbaijani officials resigned from their posts and eight officials in the Armenian Parliament were assassinated including

⁹⁶ (Ziyadov 2010, 114)

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 116.

Speaker and Prime Minister.⁹⁸ It was also thought that the assassinations were organized by Russian security services, as Russia was not willing to solve the conflict because of its fear that both countries will be willing to join the Euro-Atlantic organizations and lose the land connection to Iran via Armenia.⁹⁹ Therefore, to sign the agreement in Istanbul Summit was failed and remembered with Heydar Aliyev's speech focusing on the security issues, like illegal militarization of Karabakh which threatens Azeri identity.¹⁰⁰

Following the failure of exchanging land corridors, the third phase of negotiations were held in Paris and Key West, Florida in 2001. As Thomas De Waal described, the talks in Key West which organized with the assistance of US Secretary of State Colin Powell, was the "most high-profile and intensive negotiations ever on the dispute".¹⁰¹ During the negotiations Aliyev seemed to ready for some compromises,¹⁰² whereas his speech in Key West continued the emphasis on victimized identity discourse which aimed to create a clear picture of victimhood in an international arena.

The fourth phase started with Ilham Aliyev, a new president of Azerbaijan, after his father's death. Unlike his father, in the new negotiations period, he followed more traditional approach by focusing on the restoration of territorial integrity and supremacy of international law. He included using force if needed or revenge to his discourse with emphasizing the victimhood discourse within it. During Prague Process, following Elkhan Mehtiyev's analysis, the major issues remained as it was in Lisbon Strategy, whereas two new concepts of 'referendum' and 'interim regime' were added. Both concepts were dealing with the future status Nagorno-Karabakh; the former focused

⁹⁸ (T. d. Waal 2013, 265-66)

⁹⁹ (Ziyadov 2010, 118)

¹⁰⁰ "Heydar Aliyev Heritage" International Online Library. 1999. *Istanbul Summit of OSCE*. November 18. <http://lib.aliyev-heritage.org/en/2952114.html>

¹⁰¹ (T. d. Waal 2013, 267)

¹⁰² (Ziyadov 2010, 119)

the vote from both Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Karabakh, while the latter referred to a temporary status of Nagorno-Karabakh until its final status is decided.¹⁰³

Following the analysis of victimized identity construction, the speeches in Prague Summit in 2004 and in ministerial conference of OSCE in Madrid in 2007 are more relevant events to examine the victimized identity discourse through foreign policy. In the last phase of negotiations, Madrid Principles gained importance, as it emphasized “Non-Use of Force, Territorial Integrity, and the Equal Rights and Self-Determination of Peoples” and most importantly mentioned “return of the territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control” which articulated in OSCE Minsk Group’s report of 2009.¹⁰⁴ The discussed events are analysed elaborately in the next Chapter by focusing on the victimized identity discourse.

¹⁰³ Mehtiyev, Elkhan. 2005. "Armenia-Azerbaijan Prague Process: Road map to Peace or Stalemate for Uncertainty?" *Conflict Studies Research Center* 23: 3-14. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/87489/05_may.pdf

¹⁰⁴ OSCE Minsk Group . 2009. "Statement by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries ." July 10 <https://www.osce.org/mg/51152>

Chapter 4: Situating Nagorno-Karabakh Peace Talks in the Victimization Discourse

This Chapter aims to examine victimized identity construction through the official foreign policy discourse during the Karabakh war peace negotiations. By doing this, the methodology which suggested by Lene Hansen is applied to the case. As elaborated in the methodology part, the research follows model 1 in intertextual research model which focuses on official discourse of the government and analyses official texts. The goal of this model is to find how the official discourse is stabilized through intertextual links¹⁰⁵ which makes it applicable for the thesis. The intertextual model is applied through the chosen multiple events of the Nagorno-Karabakh war peace negotiations by focusing on a longer historical analysis. These events were related by discourse and time. Also, the textual selection for discourse analysis followed the three criteria which were suggested by Lene Hansen. These criteria focus on key texts which are widely read and attended, clearly articulate policies and identities, and have the formal authority to define a political discourse.¹⁰⁶ The last section of the Chapter tries to prove the victimhood discourse of the peace negotiations through the four-day war in April 2016.

¹⁰⁵ (Hansen 2006, 64)

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 85.

4.1. Victimhood discourse in the first Phase of the talks

As briefly discussed above, Budapest Summit in 1994 and Lisbon Summit in 1996 are the most important events in the first phase of negotiations, not only due to their crucial contributions, but also due to emergence of victimhood discourse through the speeches of president Heydar Aliyev. Therefore, this section aims to analyse the speeches of Heydar Aliyev in both summits. Following the discourse analysis of Lene Hanses, it is focused on that how the president's speeches framed victimhood as a prevalent discourse through his foreign policy during the talks.

In his speech in Budapest Summit, Heydar Aliyev started the second part of his speech by focusing on the military aggression of Armenia and victimhood of Azerbaijanis:

“Armenia launched a military aggression against our republic six years ago with the goal of annexing the Azerbaijani province, Nagorno-Karabakh. The Republic of Armenia and Armenian separatists waged active military operations in Nagorno-Karabakh against territorial integrity of our state. After the occupation of the town of Shusha and the district of Lachin the annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh was completed. Tens of settlements with over 50 000 Azerbaijani population of Nagorno-Karabakh have been destroyed and burnt down.”¹⁰⁷

Through the quote, we can easily observe the identity construction within the radical Other. The mentioned words like, ‘separatists’, ‘military aggression’, ‘been destroyed and burnt’ aimed to depict the Armenians as the Other for Azerbaijan and this discourse was repeated by officials through the negotiation process. Following the arguments of Connolly constructing the victimized identity can occur through the two problems of the Other¹⁰⁸ which is relevant for the analysis of speech in Budapest Summit. Connolly argues that the first problem of the Other in order to construct the identity is the human experience of suffering and unfairness. This suffering causes a desire or resentment that another collective should be made responsible for it. The second problem

¹⁰⁷ ("Heydar Aliyev Heritage" International Online Library 1994)

¹⁰⁸ Connolly, William E. 1991. *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. P. 8

relies on the situating responsibility.¹⁰⁹ The second quote below can be an example for these two problems in which Azerbaijani identity continued to be illustrated as victims of the war:

“As a result of the military aggression over 20 per cent of the Azerbaijan territory has been occupied. Over 20 000 of my compatriots have been killed, about 100 000 people wounded and injured, 6 000 people taken captives, over a million Azerbaijanis, that is, about 15 per cent of the population of the republic have been ousted from their homes forcibly and now live in tent camps and are in of most necessary things. 700 Azerbaijani towns and villages have been destroyed in the occupied areas. All the houses, schools, hospitals in the said towns and villages have been burnt, plundered, the ancient monuments of culture have been destroyed.”¹¹⁰

In the quote mentioned above, the statistical signs aimed to depict the unfairness and suffering of Azerbaijanis via putting responsibility on Armenians. The statistics about murders and taking captives illustrates the image of Armenians as violent, and the number of destroyed villages intends to show them as vandal in an international arena.

The illustration of victimhood and making Armenia as a responsible state, continued in Lisbon Summit as well. Beside the statistical proofs (as declared in Budapest Summit in the second quote), starting from Lisbon Summit, the legal demands were also added to the discourse. Legal demands¹¹¹ aimed to show that Armenia avoids from its responsibilities, i.e. to withdraw its military force according to UN Security Council’s four Resolutions and six Declarations. The ignorance of Armenia of the Resolutions made ignite the discourse of victimhood in the speech of Heydar Aliyev:

“UNO's Security Council has adopted four Resolutions and six Declarations of the Chairman which demand the withdrawal of Armenian Armed Forces from the occupied Azerbaijan lands immediately, fully and unconditionally, to return refugees and displaced persons to their permanent dwelling places. These documents confirm the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our Republic, and that Nagorno-Karabakh is part of the Azerbaijan Republic. However, all these decisions are being ignored by the Republic of Armenia.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ ("Heydar Aliyev Heritage" International Online Library 1994)

¹¹¹ Legal demands were mainly explained in the Chapter 3.

¹¹² ("Heydar Aliyev Heritage" International Online Library 1996)

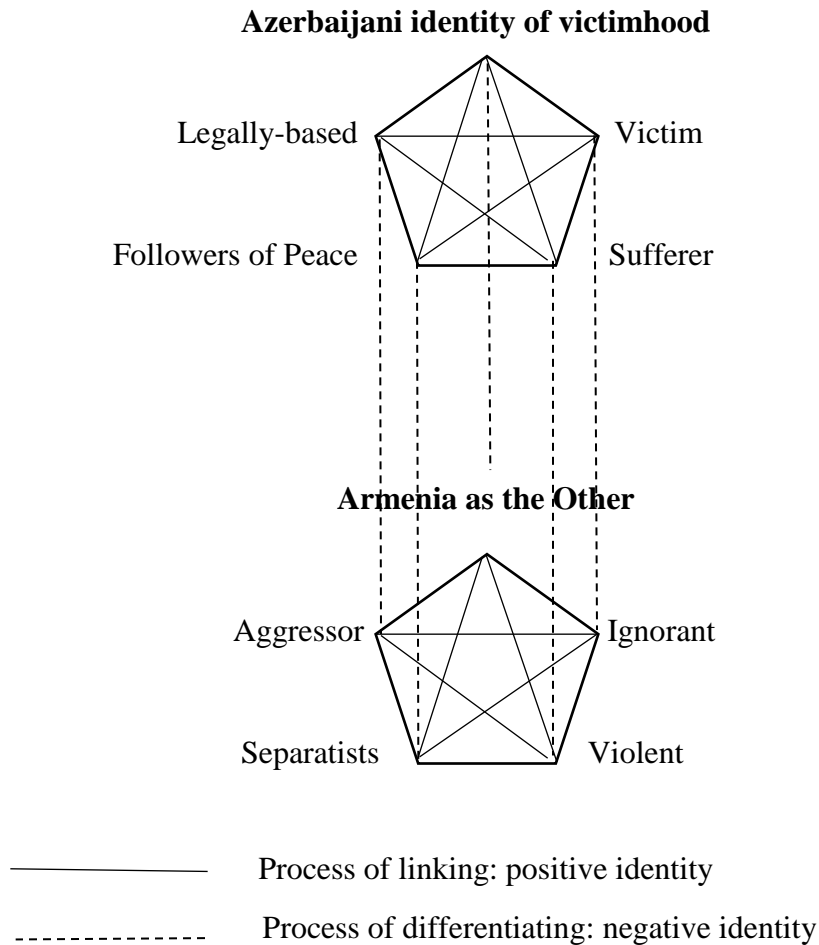
In his last comments of his speech, he blamed Armenia to continue the war, while as a legal defender, Azerbaijan only wants peace - “We do not want war, we want peace. I appeal to Mr. Levon Ter-Petrosian, the President of Armenia, to all Armenian people to join in the search of peace and cooperation.”¹¹³

Following Hansen’s methodology, in order to find the link between identity construction and foreign policy, the terms should be identified which indicate a clear construction of the Other and Self. According to her, identity construction cannot be completed only through the locating of one particular sign for the Self and Other, rather through the designating of signs within a larger system. In other words, meaning and identity can be framed through the juxtaposed signs of differentiation and sameness.¹¹⁴ In the examples of the analysed speeches above, to construct Azerbaijani identity as victimized depends on the construction of discourse which differentiates and links the signs to each other. In other words, in order to show victimized identity, the opposed signs that show the Other should be clearly defined, as illustrated in Figure 2.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ (Hansen 2006, 42)

Figure 2. The linking and differentiation of the ‘Victimized identity - Self’ and ‘Armenian – Other’. ¹¹⁵



Consequently, the construction of victimized identity through the foreign policy in the peace process during the Summits of Budapest and Lisbon, was situated in the signs of the delivered texts in which the signs are coupled to achieve ‘discursive stability’.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ The Figure was created by the Author by using the methodology of Lene Hansen in her book. (*Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*)

¹¹⁶ (Hansen 2006)

4.2 Intensification of Victimhood discourse

After the failure of the talks in Lisbon Summit and withdrawal from the implementation of “the Lisbon Principles” made Azerbaijani officials emphasize the victimhood discourse in Istanbul Summit of OSCE in 1999. The first phase of the talks was called as a ‘missed opportunity’ for Azerbaijan by many researchers, including Taleh Ziyadov¹¹⁷, as Armenia’s negotiation strategy was based on the regain of peace in exchange of return of the occupied territories. Closure of borders both with Turkey and Azerbaijan created security and economic troubles for Armenia, therefore it was ready for a ‘compromise’ by conceding that Nagorno-Karabakh is a legal part of Azerbaijan. However, with the resignation of Ter-Petrosian, it became impossible to come to a conclusion. Thus, the situation of withdrawal from possible solution at the end of the first phase ignited the discourse of victimhood starting from the second phase.

The disappointment regarding the outcomes of Lisbon Summit was seen from the very beginning of Heydar Aliyev’s speech in Istanbul Summit in 1999. Due to the failure in the first phase, the closer involvement of OSCE Minsk Group to the conflict was demanded which showed the desperate situation of Azerbaijanis.

“Already more than six years the one fifth part of territory of sovereign Azerbaijan is remaining under occupation of the Armenian armed forces, and about one million of Azerbaijanis are expelled from their homelands as a result of “ethnic purges” carried out. Unfortunately, from the time of our last summit the peace process has not brought any desirable result. The co-chairmen of the Minsk group did not show necessary activity and consistency in the realization of the principles accepted at Lisbon summit of OSCE and the Minsk process has become passive.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ (Ziyadov 2010, 113)

¹¹⁸ ("Heydar Aliyev Heritage" International Online Library 1999)

As shown from the quote, the discourse of sufferer and victim has been followed. To support the victimization discourse, statements about being peace followers and staying on the side of international law aimed to show the Other (Armenia) as an aggressor and separatist. Asking help from international community to solve the conflict has shown as a strategy of Azerbaijan. On the other hand, to attract the interest of world arena aimed to show the urgency of the problem, as many people, i.e. internally displaced people suffer from the results of the war.

“The Nagorno Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic may and should become an area of peaceful and safe cohabitation of Armenians and Azerbaijanis that will serve for the establishment of the peaceful and normal good-neighborhood relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia.” “Azerbaijan meets all the obligations under the contract entirely. But actions of some states undermine both the contract requirements and the safety of the states-participants.” “The world community must consistently and definitely assert the declared principles for settlement of the conflict.” ¹¹⁹

Julia Kristeva’s theory on the intertextual generation of the meaning argues that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another”. By referencing to the previous texts, a text has the capacity to reconstruct the past into a new text.¹²⁰ Following this structure, the analysis of the president’s speech in Istanbul Summit is directly related to the explicit form of intertextuality. Hansen also claims that when the text makes explicit references (quotes or references) to older works, to construct a new text can be most clearly identified. ¹²¹ It is clear that in the mentioned quotes above, the president constructs a new text by referencing to the unimplemented principles of Lisbon Summit. By referencing to the Lisbon Principles, he started the discourse to blame Minsk Group for being ineffective. Then, it was followed to show the victimhood discourse in a helpless situation, hoping an urgent reaction from

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Kristeva, Julia. 1980. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. New York : Columbia University Press. P. 66.

¹²¹ (Hansen 2006, 56)

international arena. He also uses direct quotations from the previous speech in Lisbon Summit about UNO's Security Council's four Resolutions and six Declarations which required the withdrawal of Armenian military forces from the occupied territories. The mentioning of internally displaced people and accusing of Armenians for the 'ethnic purges' followed the quote which aimed to stress the victimhood. Therefore, it is obvious that by referencing and quoting the previous texts, the discourse of victimhood was strengthened in the speech.

In the third phase of talks, the most important part of the negotiation happened in Key West in 2001. During the meeting, historical narrative of the past was combined with the discourse of victimhood. The process became slow due to the failures of the previous talks which substantially increased the victimhood discourse during the talks. For example, in Key West peace talks President Heydar Aliyev have repeatedly named Armenians as separatists and aggressor. Furthermore, new statements about their vandalism and violence were added to the discourse in Key West. The obvious disappointment with the actions of international community in the previous Summits of OSCE against the aggressor was clearly dictated. This obvious statements regarding the actions of world arena showed the desperate situation of Azerbaijanis which resulted with the culmination of victimhood narratives. Legal-based approach to the conflict was again mentioned by blaming Armenia for staying in an unconstructive situation.

It was also one of the first peace talks where the president clearly stated the violence against Azerbaijanis during the war. Starting to mention of massacres of the war and the desperate situation of internally displaced people became the core of the speeches afterwards. Articulation the discourse of 'genocide' in Khojaly, and the construction of victimized identity established an ethical imperative in the talks that Europe should act. This call for action and articulation of

violence with many statistics is stylistically employed in Heydar Aliyev's speech during Key West negotiations:

“Nagorno-Karabakh has fallen fully under military control of separatists and the Armenian armed forces, which carried out an ethnic cleansing by forcibly expelling the whole Azerbaijani population of 50,000 from there. This process was marked by murders and violence, and the genocide was carried out against the Azerbaijani population in the town of Khojaly.” “Thus, 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan had been occupied by the year 1993 and at present continues to remain under the occupation of Armenian armed forces. Everything on that territory is destroyed, looted, razed to earth. More than 900 large and small settlements, about 600 schools, 250 health care institutions, all museums, historical and cultural monuments have been destroyed.”¹²²

During the Key West talks, referencing to the statistical facts of the older texts, the knowledge was drawn from one text to another by locating within a particular foreign policy discourse. In other words, this new knowledge shows the victimized identity through the reference of previous texts' facts about the violence of Armenians.

4.3 'No Compromise' strategy

After being a new president of Azerbaijan in 2003, Ilham Aliyev rejected the principals discussed by his father, Heydar Aliyev and declared that “I am not in favor of making compromises” and “I am in no hurry” for the resolution of the conflict. He also blamed Minsk Group of OSCE for being ineffective and started to force them for new proposals in which the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan should be presented. Moreover, Ilham Aliyev and his foreign

¹²² U.S. Department of State. 2001. *Remarks with President Kocharian of Armenia, and President Aliyev of Azerbaijan at Key West Peace Talks*. April 3.
<https://20012009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1931.htm>

minister insisted to restart the negotiations from the scratch, whereas Armenia threatened with withdrawal from talks.¹²³

The new period of talks was also characterized with the strong anti-Azerbaijani feelings in Armenia. The hate narratives in Armenia significantly increased by articulating itself in the statements of officials. For example, the statement of Armenian Deputy Defense Minister which is “murder is characteristic of the entire Azerbaijani nations” was followed by president Kocharian’s statement which claimed “ethnic incompatibility of Azerbaijanis and Armenians”. The interview of Deputy Speaker of the Armenian Parliament made the anger reach its peak when he mentioned that “I am proud that in the Karabakh war we killed 25,000 Azerbaijanis”.¹²⁴

After the re-election of Armenian president and also a new president in Azerbaijan, the new meetings were designed to facilitate the peace talks. Between 2004 and 2006, the Minsk Group of OSCE organized several meetings between the foreign ministers of both countries which was named as “Prague Process”. The Prague Process was resulted with four meetings of presidents, while none of the meetings could come to a solution. Starting from the Prague Process, as a response to the arguments and statements of Armenia, the articulation of genocide and ethnic cleansing has been significantly increased.

One of the important meetings was held in Ljubljana in 2005 during the 13th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council within the Prague Process. The construction of Azerbaijanis as victims who were not responsible for the outcomes of the war, articulated itself with the speech of Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan during the meeting in Ljubljana. By showing Azerbaijan as a supporter of

¹²³ (Mehtiyev 2005, 3)

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

peace, he concluded that “Status of Nagorno-Karabakh can only be decided within lawful, peaceful and democratic process that cannot be based on the ethnic cleansing”.¹²⁵

In 2006, Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh voted to set up the region as an independent country, whereas it was not recognized internationally.¹²⁶ Referendum increased tension again which caused to restart negotiations. In 2007, Madrid Principles were revealed and constituted the main arguments of Azerbaijani officials in the next parts of negotiations. Madrid Principles envisioned step-by-step resolution which included a referendum for the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, gradual withdrawal of military forces from the territory, deployment of peacekeeping mission to the region and most importantly return of territories around Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan.¹²⁷

The main reason for the acceptance of Madrid Principles was the direct reaction of Azerbaijan to the referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh. Therefore, during the meeting in Madrid, the representation of ethnic cleansing, ‘genocide’, and the miserable situation of internally displaced people and violence was doubled in the speech of Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan:

“We are facing attempt by Armenia to camouflage its aggression and mask occupation of territories of Azerbaijan and barbaric practice of ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijani population with baseless declarations on self-determination and chauvinist claims of ethnic incompatibility. Armenia tries to intensify illegal exploitation of the natural resources of Azerbaijan, transfer Armenian settlers to the occupied territories and accumulate large stockpiles of weapons and munitions there, which far exceed all possible quotas.”¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs . 2005. "Statement by Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the 13th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council." December 15.
<http://www.mfa.gov.az/news/881/3891>

¹²⁶ (Mahmudov, Historical Facts of Armenia's Actions in Azerbaijan Land 2009)

¹²⁷ (Ziyadov 2010, 119)

¹²⁸ OSCE . 2007. "Report of the 15th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council ." Madrid.

Beside aggression and separatism, ‘barbaric practice of ethnic cleansing’, ‘chauvinist claims of ethnic incompatibility’ were added to the discourse in order to show the vulnerability of the situation for Azerbaijan and ask urgent reaction from the international arena. Another additional point became the religious segregation against Muslims by articulating that “more of that, Armenian Leadership starts using extremely dangerous attempts to address the issue through the religious Christian- Muslim aspect”.¹²⁹

During the meetings in Ljubljana and Madrid, the speeches followed almost the same structure of the previous speeches. To mention of Khojaly ‘genocide’, massacres of the war, UN Resolutions and Lisbon Principles were referenced and quoted very frequently. The representation of identity and policy in the original speeches of the second and third phases was followed through the referencing them in the fourth phase. The construction of victimized identity through the talks in the last phase was represented by mentioning more about the ‘ethnic cleansing’ and ‘chauvinist claims’ of Armenians, compared to the previous speeches.

4.4 The four-day war as a proof of the victimhood discourse

The victimhood discourse of the Karabakh war in the peace talks showed itself with the huge public reaction during the four-day Karabakh war in April 2016. It happened directly after the Nuclear Summit in Washington in March 2016. During the meeting, the affirmation of Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity by the US leadership caused serious provocation in Armenia. The military and political leadership of Azerbaijan also declared that four-day war happened due to the

¹²⁹ Ibid.

provocation of Armenia.¹³⁰ The announcement of Armenian Deputy Defense Minister David Tonoian caused an irritation among both officials and public and his statements were accepted as a start point for the clashes. He clearly stated in his announcement that Armenia started a new strategy by passing from a defensive position to the offensive. He continued that as a result of the new strategy, the Azerbaijani army had to fled to the second line in front with the sufferings of heavy casualties.¹³¹ So, the active deterrence policy of the Armenian military aimed to push back the Azerbaijani military force from its frontline position. Therefore, the response of Azerbaijan was inevitable, as the military pressure was increasing.

When the war started on the 2nd of April, there appeared a chance for revenge in the public consciousness. As explained in Chapter 2, by preserving the experience of the past, collective memory has the capacity to reconstruct the knowledge in accordance with the actual and contemporary situation. Experienced traumas, conflicted past and common beliefs are crucial to actualize collective memory.¹³² Therefore, the remembrance of the past, in particular, experienced traumas actualized collective memory of Azerbaijanis during the four-day war. Here, the main question is that how the collective traumas have been solidified in the collective memory of the people. The examination of collective traumas comes from the victimized identity discourse which started to appear in the Karabakh peace talks and continued through the almost three decades, as explained in below paragraphs.

¹³⁰ Shiriye, Zaur. 2017. "The Four-Day War: Changing Paradigms in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict." *Turkish Policy Quartel* 15 (4): 53-64.

¹³¹ Analyst . 2016. *Armenian army new doctrine caused Azerbaijan to panic*. March 11. <https://news.am/eng/news/316189.html>

¹³² (Neal 2005, 5)

When the collective sadness in the memory was accompanied by anger, it creates the sense of revenge.¹³³ As discussed above, when the experience of the past reaches into the everyday details of our life and is reminded in a repetitive way, it legitimizes social order of the present.¹³⁴ The repetition of the results of Karabakh peace negotiations, in particular, the accepted norms of Lisbon and Madrid Principles through the media channels in every day basis made the conflicted experience live in the collective memory. The accepted principles in Madrid and resolutions of UN which both declare the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the committed crimes in Karabakh by Armenians, Khojaly massacre, the statistical information about murders and desperate situation of internally displaced people had been broadcasted at least ten times in a day through TV channels and radio. Moreover, the analysed speeches of officials during the meetings which repetitively stated victimized discourse played an important role to construct victimhood discourse in the collective memory. The repetitive remembrance of traumatic events, for example Khojaly massacre of 1992 and mass killings in other regions of Nagorno-Karabakh, in peace talks and then its repetitive broadcast in a daily basis has engraved traumatic events in the collective memory.

Through the remembrance of the traumatic events in the peace talks, the representation of Azerbaijani identity focused on the victimization discourse which resulted with the mass mobilization and strong feeling of revenge during the four-day war. As the continuous interaction with the issues of the past is important for the reinterpretation of collective memory, the remembrance of traumatic events and other violence of the Karabakh war in the peace negotiations served to remember the past repetitively. Victimized identity discourse strengthened through the repetitive remembrance of the traumatic past during the talks. Therefore, the construction of

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Cennerton, Paul. 1989. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge University PressCambridge. P. 3.

victimized identity through the foreign policy in peace negotiations proved itself with the mass mobilization of people in April 2016.

Mass mobilization of the people was the result of victimized identity discourse in peace talks which has been engraved to the collective memory of the nation through the decades. The remembrance of the past and the feeling of revenge showed itself with the mass mobilization of people which they organised an assistance for the frontline. A political activist, Mehman Huseynov organised a donation campaign for the soldiers who fight in the frontline. Thousands of people donated for this and registered as volunteers for the initiative.¹³⁵ The protest happened in the centre of Baku with thousands of people who supported the soldiers with nationalist slogans. During the war, the Azerbaijani flag appeared almost in each balcony in Baku. After the successful ceasefire, it was accepted as a victory over Armenians and was celebrated as a holiday in schools.

During the four-day war, people organized mass blood donations for the soldiers in the front line not only in Baku, but also through the country. Lots of media portals has written on the initiatives of mobilization, for example, SalamNews spread the information on the opinions of the people who participated in the donations. They mentioned that their goal of giving blood is to meet the blood needs of soldiers and civilians who wounded in the battles for the freedom and sovereignty of the Azerbaijani lands. In the first day of the blood donation, more than two thousand people participated, and the numbers increased in the following days.¹³⁶ In another source – Azertag which is one the most well-known news agency in Azerbaijan, it was indicated that the

¹³⁵ From the online interview with Mehman Huseynov.

¹³⁶ SalamNews. 2016. *Blood Donation for the Front*. April 5.

https://salamnews.org/az/news/read/214043?fbclid=IwAR3sAilLU_L594O0n7HrVUosN49-sGj9mOLIVb0lZfKoHZXnVq-wKfq7_g0

number of those willing to go voluntarily to the front is increasing significantly.¹³⁷ People have demonstrated their high patriotic feelings in their letters to participate voluntarily in the war.

As a response to the mass mobilization of people, the president Ilham Aliyev pointed out in his twitter account that in recent days, our army suffered losses as a result of Armenian occupationist attacks and several servicemen were killed. He continued that the aggressors will be punished soon. After his announcement the letters for volunteering in the front line were peaked with the high numbers of volunteers. Defense Ministry announced that during these days, the number of letters and e-mails sent from different regions of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis living outside of our country, from a number of foreign countries, including citizens of the Republic of Turkey, to the Defense Ministry is increasing day by day.¹³⁸ They express solidarity with the Azerbaijani soldier and express their determination to fight for freedom of our lands. One of the letters the citizen expressed his feelings to the Defense Minister with these words: “As thousands of citizens of the country, I am ready to fight for the freedom of our lands. I'm waiting for Your command to start a battle with arms.”¹³⁹ The feelings of revenge, and the impact of victimhood discourse articulated itself with the letters for being a volunteer for the frontline, blood donation and other donation campaigns, protests in the streets. With the emergence of the war, the hopes for the revenge of the victimhood started to control the mass.

¹³⁷ Azertag. 2016. *The number of those willing to go voluntarily to the front is increasing*. April 5.
https://azertag.az/xeber/Cebheye_konullu_getmek_isteyenlerin_sayi_artir-940294?fbclid=IwAR1BZzSvoiiFNk8UDLtyKR-vXRX-3XeiLadIQFXHzkr89txLEhULPviRqig

¹³⁸ Modern.Az. 2016. *The Defense Ministry has announced the letters of those willing to be volunteer*. April 5.
<https://modern.az/az/news/62539?fbclid=IwAR3CyvUxIfuUSCYW3NIQowSTBz0t5FdU1EIRbAV0i6FBhfxoTYTP5uB5cYI>

¹³⁹ Ibid.

As a result of the four-day war, Azerbaijan could de-occupy a few settlements from Armenia through the successful Horadiz operation. Retaking of some lands, initiated resettlement plan, for instance in the village of Cocuq Mercanli.¹⁴⁰ Due to Armenia's control over the village through the years, it was not possible to resettle Azerbaijani villagers into the village. Nevertheless, after the four-day war the resettlement became possible which caused a 'psychological boost'¹⁴¹ not only for the Azerbaijani leadership, but also for the public.

Although Azerbaijan could get minor military success after the war (the front line was moved one kilometre further from the battle zone), it caused a mental breakthrough for the nation. It was the first military success for Azerbaijanis after the failure of the Karabagh war which trauma of the war could be overcome a little. The success of the war showed an increased optimism in the public. The mass mobilization during the war proved the construction of victimized identity in the peace talks and through the broadcasting the results of the talks in TV channels and radio. Mass mobilization also proved the remembrance and engravement of the victimhood discourse through the traumatic events into the collective memory.

¹⁴⁰ (Shiriyev 2017, 58)

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

Conclusion

This thesis on the foreign policy of Azerbaijan focused on the discursive construction of victimized memory on the Karabakh war massacres and sufferings in the Karabakh Peace negotiations. By following the discursive interconnection of the past and present in the Azerbaijani identity, it was stated that victimization discourse is an important part of Azerbaijan's foreign policy in the peace talks in which the attention of international arena was attracted.

In order to better analyse the victimized identity construction through the foreign policy in the talks, the discourse theory of Lene Hansen was applied. As the first intertextual research model was relevant for the research, it focused on the official discourse of the government and official texts (speeches of the peace talks) became an object of the analysis. While focusing on the correlation between foreign policy formulation and victimized identity, the stabilization of the official victimhood discourse through intertextual links became the goal of the research.

Choosing the relations with Armenia and Karabakh peace negotiations as a case study, the aim of the research was to show the discursive practices of victimization which created the social feelings of hatred, revenge and an image in the need of international help, in other words, the victimized identity. To examine the official discursive performances and explicit intertextuality between the speeches helped to better illustrate the significance and complexity of the legacies of the Karabakh war on the victimhood discourse. In order to better examine the correlation between identity and policy, the terms were identified which indicate a clear construction of the Other and Self. The analysis of juxtaposed signs of differentiation and sameness or the opposed and linkage signs which show the Other and Self helped to better examine methodologically the construction of victimhood in the speeches.

While necessitating the remembrance of the past and its impact on the present collective memory, the requirements about recognition of territorial integrity, committed massacres and the need for urgent reaction from international community were emphasized during the talks. As the national traumas are decisive for the representation of the past into the present, the speeches of Karabakh peace negotiations followed the representation of collective traumas most repetitively. The function of collective memory perpetuated the victimhood together with the discursive construction of the speeches. In other words, the state level institutionalized discourses utilised memory through the discursive interpretations to construct a certain conception of national identity.

As was explored in Chapter 4, examining of the four-day war proved the implication of victimization discourse of the talks. The mass mobilisation of the people, protests in the streets, hate narratives and many aid campaigns for the front line showed the feeling of hatred and revenge which was the result of victimization discourse. Through the direct and secondary intertextual links (referencing or quoting), the officials continued the victimhood discourse in the talks and broadcasted the successful but unimplemented results via TV channels and radio in a daily basis. Daily broadcasting of national traumas and consequences of the talks engraved the victimhood discourse into the collective memory through the function of remembrance which made possible the mass mobilization of people during the four-day war.

In general, the victimization discourse was linked to the national interest of state. Foreign policy is considered to reflect the domestic situation, national interest and the public realm of Azerbaijan. Therefore, victimization discourse was strengthened in the peace talks within the framework of national security by claiming the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and remembering national traumas repetitively.

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