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INVESTIGATION OF CHINESE STRATEGIES DURING THE PANDEMICS THROUGH THE LENSES OF MOZI AND GALTUNG

Abstract: The concept of war is the core of military thought. Johan Galtung established the theoretical paradigm of Peace Studies and was known as the "father of Peace Studies". Mozi was a strategist and thinker with a unique pioneering spirit during the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. His idea of "universal love and non-aggression" is a model of ancient Chinese pacifism. Although they lived in different times, both of their views on war have had a significant influence on the world. Their views also share many commonalities. They both believe that the root of war is the struggle and dislike of people. They both oppose war and advocate taking care of people. However, due to being from different times, there are huge differences in their views in regards to being anti-war, the level of taking care of the population, and the means of defense. The purpose of this comparative study is to promote the innovative development of China's traditional culture. It also provides useful inspiration for China's peaceful construction during the current pandemic.
Keywords: Galtung, Mozi, viewpoints of war, peace, epidemic situation

Introduction

Comrade Jinpin Xi pointed out in the report of the 19th National Congress of the CPC that, "We will promote the creative transformation and development of fine traditional Chinese culture. Inherit revolutionary culture, develop advanced socialist culture, stay true to our roots, absorb foreign sources and face the future. We will build a better Chinese spirit, Chinese values and Chinese strength and provide spiritual guidance to the people"(XI Jinping). Mohism is an important part of China's traditional culture. Combining it with realistic culture is conducive to the revitalization of Mohism in the modern period so as to better serve society. The comparison of the war views of Mozi, the founder of Mohism, and Galtung, the father of Peace Studies, is not only a re-excavation and innovation of traditional culture, but also a reflection on war, a basic human phenomenon. Only by a more profound analysis of war can we better maintain peace in reality.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak in 2019, the rapid deterioration of Sino-US relations has caused anxiety in the international community. The United States regards China as its primary competitor, and has been engaged in an escalating technological and diplomatic war with China. China-US relations have been pushed to the brink of total confrontation. How should the Chinese government respond? This paper attempts to comb through and compare the war views of Mozi and Galtung, and to discuss the countermeasures of China's peace construction during the pandemic.

Galtung's view of war

Violence has long been narrowly defined as directly involving physical injury and war. Johan Galtung put forward such concepts as "cultural violence" and "structural violence" to explore the possibility of war on a deeper level. War is an extreme form of direct violence. Structural violence and cultural violence can be transformed into direct violence under certain conditions, leading to conflicts and wars.

Galtung believes that violence can be divided into five types: natural violence, direct violence, structural violence, cultural violence and temporal violence. Among them, "direct violence" includes verbal and physical violence, which refers to intentionally harming the interests of others and causing physical and mental damage to people through repression and intimidation. War is an extreme form of direct violence. "Structural violence" rises to the institutionalized field, which can be divided into political violence, oppressive violence, economic violence, and exploitative violence. Structural violence exists in the structure of society and the world. It harms the interests of others by means of exploitation and oppression and leads to injustice. Structural violence occurs when people are denied access to educational resources, medical treatment, housing and work. It is relatively stable and occurs daily, but once qualitative changes occur, it can become external violence, and then lead to conflicts and even wars.

Cultural violence exists in "religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics)" (Johan Galtung 2013, 38). There is not only the possibility of cultural violence inciting war, but also the "legitimacy" of war given by some countries in the name of culture. Cultural violence generally legitimizes other violence in two ways. One is to obfuscate the truth and cover up the fact of violence. The second is to change the moral color of violent actions and push the violence to the moral high ground. Through the propaganda of legitimacy, direct and structural violence not only seem to be

legitimate, but also become internalized in individuals' psychological mechanism of the use of violence, and the interests of the victims are affected by the influence of the dominant cultural background.

In Galtung's conception of violence, war is direct violence. Structural violence can also be externalized into war and conflict under certain conditions. To achieve peace, the most important task is to reduce and avoid the occurrence of violence and eliminate violence to the greatest extent. Galtung proposed that the solution to violence is Diagnosis-Prognosis-Therapy. By analyzing the state of violence and paying attention to the dynamic trajectory of the process of violence, the aim is to reduce direct violence and bring negative peace, as well as eliminate structural violence and improve life to bring positive peace.

Political system and military defense

Galtung argues that when democracy works well at home, some groups will in theory be relatively satisfied that most of their needs are met, leading to a residual peace within the country. In international competition, democracy often acts as an arbiter of non-violence, but this does not guarantee that residual peace within its own country will translate into a peaceful movement within the inter-state system. Democracies, which often profess to love peace, are not belligerent or even inclined to resort to war, they resort to force most reluctantly and only in certain circumstances. Galtung disagrees that democracies represent peace, noting that after World War II, the countries most involved in wars were the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Israel. They were all democracies.

In Galtung's view, war was supported by many factors, including patriarchy, a state system that monopolized violence, and a superstate system that manipulated hegemony. He argued for the abolition of war as an institution, just as slavery and colonialism were abolished. Countries, nations or other groups sometimes attack or even resort to force because of conflicts and disputes, and the way to prevent violence is defense. First, the military should rely on defense as a replacement for aggressive foreign wars, and the defensive level should not cause panic; second, reduce the conventional and paramilitary components, build a non-military defense system and turn to international peacekeeping mechanisms.

Galtung believes that violence and non-violence are a dilemma, and there are mainly two extreme positions in the traditional defense debate. One is pure military defense - "use violent means to destroy destructive facilities of the other side". The second is pure non-violent defense, that is, "the use of non-violent means to make the other party unable to profit from the attack" (Johan Galtung 2003, 125). At

present, no country adopts pure non-violent defense, and instead a purely military approach is adopted and implemented more often. The fundamental problem, Galtung argues, is not the defense policy, but a deep cultural shift away from relativism and towards absolutism, and an inability to achieve balance.

The transformation of peace and conflict

Galtung defined peace as the absence of violence and the transformation of non-violent conflict, thus bringing about the concepts of "negative peace" and "positive peace". Negative peace focuses on the absence of direct violence and the desire to resolve disputes through negotiation and mediation in an attempt to achieve security in the short term. However, the security environment created by negative peace is not stable, and the stability emphasized by collective security is usually based on power, so negative peace implies tolerance of structural violence.

According to Galtung, active peace is a non-violent form of conflict transformation, including the following aspects: 1. Natural peace, cooperation among species rather than struggle; 2. Direct positive peace, caring for the basic needs, survival, happiness, freedom and identity of all people; 3. Structurally positive peace, replace repression with freedom and exploitation with equality by means of dialogue, integration and participation; 4. Culturally positive peace, replacing the legality of violence with the legality of peace. In short, peace knows no bounds and should be pursued with "peace for all" as the goal. Positive peace transcends the absence of war and means creating a social environment in which people can live with dignity.

Galtung believed that human beings are full of conflicts, and the transformation of conflicts is a never-ending process. According to Galtung, the conflict caused by structural violence can be transformed through four steps: confrontation, struggle, separation and combination. He argued that non-violence must be part of the public discourse, that conflict should be managed with non-violence and creativity, that the creation of sustainable approaches acceptable to all parties, and that violence should be prevented through equality and justice.

On the whole, Galtung regards war as the manifestation of direct violence, structural violence can be externalized into direct violence under certain conditions, and cultural violence tries to legalize direct violence and structural violence. Democracies do not guarantee peace, but rather are often involved in war. The only way to prevent violence when conflicts and wars arise between countries, nations or other groups in pursuit of interests is to have proper defense. There are various factors that lead to war, and eliminating war can only achieve "negative

peace". To achieve real peace, we should not only focus on the prevention and control of direct violence, but also reduce the possibility of war from the cultural and structural levels of violence.

Mozi's view of war

In his early years, Mozi was a student of Confucianism. He was dissatisfied with the Confucianists' advocation of the restoration of the Zhou Rites, the latter was characteristic of the hierarchical system. Mozi founded the Mohism School, which along with Confucianism, was ranked among "the outstanding schools of the world". Mozi deeply condemned wars of aggression in the chapter "non-offensive", and his ideas of universal love and non-attack had a profound influence on later generations.

Mozi was a skilled craftsman. He cared for the common people and had a profound understanding of the harm of war. The war brought untold suffering to the people. The ruler, in order to annex the territory of another country, mobilizes his army and attacks the nation without sin. The war abused the children of Heaven, destroyed the throne of God, and overthrew the country. "Use the people of Heaven to capture the city of God"(Mozi 2016, 168) ("Non-attack", part 3.), is not good for Heaven; The war caused people to be displaced, caused thousands of casualties, and consumed people's wealth. "The benefits of killing the people of other countries have been very rare (Mozi 2016, 168). ("Non-attack", part 3.), is not good for the people. Therefore, Mozi was very sympathetic to the suffering of ordinary people in war. He believed that war was not in line with the fundamental interests of people. The people delayed farming because of warand lost the dignity of life when the country was in a state of war.

Second, there is no profit to be made from war, and "if you count the gains, you will see that the gain is less than the losses" (Mozi 2016, 158). ("Non-attack", part 2.). The war dragged on for months and even years, causing the country to waste its laws and regulations and the people to lose their livelihood. The gains outweighed the losses. "The top has no time to govern the country, scholars have no time to govern their palace, farmers have no time to harvest, women have no time to spin, that is, the state has lost its soldiers, and the common people are changing their business (Mozi 2016, 170)". War disturbs the normal life of a country from the king down to the common people.

Mozi believed that the land ruled by the emperor was abundant, and the labor force was scarce due to the heavy casualties caused by the wars, and the land acquired was worthless because it was not cultivated. The people are the wealth

that the king should cherish. The gains of a country waging a war are far from making up for its losses. The emperor enjoyed the glory of winning the war by waging war to achieve the purpose of expanding his territory. However, Mozi thought that the losses outweighed the gains. Even if there were successes, they were only isolated cases.

From the perspective of human development, war is a shortcut for great powers to accumulate primitive capital. But in Mozi's view, war destroyed production, lost a large number of laborers, and hindered the development of the country. Mozi's "non-offensive" ideology stood on the standpoint of the common people and called for the cessation of mutual attacks for the purpose of self-interest.

Non-attack, but punish the tyrant

Mozi used "righteousness" to distinguish the nature of war, but by this he did not mean absolute peace which is against all wars. "If there is justice in the world, then there is governance; if there is no justice in the world, then there is chaos. Based on this, I know that justice is right (Mozi 2016, 238)". ("Under the Spirit", part 1.). Mozi attached great importance to "righteousness". When a righteous person is in a position of power, the world will surely be governed and the common people will benefit from it. The more harm you do to others, the greater the sin, and the greatest injustice is to attack another country. Mozi disdained and rejected the situation that the gentlemen know to condemn and convict murder crimes, but did not condemn, and on the opposite, even praise an unjust war which resulted in countless casualties. Mozi thought that the gentlemen should distinguish between right and wrong. In Mozi's view, people are more likely to lose their principles or hold double standards in the face of the most important right or wrong, which provides convenience for the bully and undoubtedly aggravates the unrest of human society.

Mozi made a strict distinction between "punish" and "attack", with non-attack and punish tyrant. Mozi believed that Tang's attack on Jie and King Wu's attack on Zhou were "imperial assaults", which were ordered by Heaven. Although these struggles were profitable, "attacks" were fundamentally different from them. Mozi believed that when Jie was conquered, the time of the sun and the moon were not fixed, the grain withered and died, and the crane sang for several days. At the time of Shang Zhou's conquest, the sun rose at night, the sky rained flesh, and there were women turning into men. These were all signs that the heaven was going to kill the tyrant. An atrocious tyrant treats his people so heartlessly that the people

cannot even survive. Therefore, Tang and King Wu attacked the tyrant in order to obey the command of Heaven and for the vital interests of the people of the dawn of the world. They did not do anything unjust. Both attacks and denunciations resorted to force; they are similar in form, but completely opposite in nature in the eyes of Mozi. Attack is evil, it reverses black and white, and it hurts others not to benefit oneself; Whereas denunciation is justified to make right the wrong and to fight for the welfare of the people. Even if we have to pay a price in denunciation, we will in return achieve peace and remove the root cause of war. Thus it can be seen that Mozi held a positive attitude towards the denunciation for the sake of the people and for the achievement of justice.

In theory, Mozi's perception of war has a lot of common in the principles that formed the basis of the doctrine of "jus ad bellum" in the Western tradition of just war. "Jus ad bellum" includes six principles: the just cause, the last resort, proportionality, the probability of success, good intentions, and legitimate power. It is generally believed that only when the purpose is expelling the aggressor or a preventive blow, war is allowed. This is consistent with Mozi's views on war. At the same time, in the perception of Mozi, it is also possible to find the proportional principle of the "jus ad bellum", which is suitable from the perspective of morality.

Universal love and disorder control

Mozi lived in an age of disintegration of the rite system, a society full of war, famine and tyranny. Mozi greatly sympathized with the poor people living under the flames of war, and in order to reduce the chances of predatory war between the strong and the weak, he proposed the idea of "universal love". "Universal love" is one of the core theories of Mozi, whose fundamental spirit is to emphasize that love has no difference, but uniformity. Only by achieving "universal love" can we achieve "non-attack".

Universal love requires that people break through class differences, make no distinction between relatives and distant ones, noble or lowly, and love others with the attitude of loving oneself: "We should regard the country of others as the country of ourselves, the home of others as the home of ourselves, and the body of others as the body of ourselves (Mozi 1997, 29)" ("Universal love", part 2.). Mohism attributed the root cause of chaos to human nature, everyone loves themselves but does not love each other, forget what is right when facing interests. In Mozi's view, "universal love" can eliminate all the chaos caused by "love oneself". "Universal love" is used to unify the messy individual consciousness and

lay a firm foundation for permanent peace. War, as one of the objects of this consciousness revolution, will eventually be reduced.

Although Mozi pursued "universal love" to seek peace and advocated "non-attack", he clearly understood that it was unrealistic for a strong country to give up attacking a weak one in the era of vassal rivalry. Therefore, Mozi stood in the perspective of the weak, studied and improved the defensive instruments for defending a city against foreign invasion. Mozi pointed out that if a great power established the world in the name of benevolence and justice, and held its vassals in the name of virtue, the people of the world would immediately submit to it. If great powers unjustly attack small and innocent nations, the latter can unite to help each other. In addition, Mozi's thoughts on defense are thoughts of preparing for danger in times of peace. Although Mozi studied the way of defense seriously, it was also for the purpose of eliminating war. What Mozi really cared about was to "love each other and benefit each other", so as to resist war and safeguard peace with the strength of justice.

In short, Mozi believed that war was very harmful. It was bad for heaven and people, and the gains were outweighed by the loss of the defeated nation. Mozi did not oppose all wars, but distinguished the nature of wars by "righteousness". In order to achieve "non-aggression", Mozi proposed the concept of "universal love", which laid the foundation for the realization of peace. Mozi's ethics of war, involving the limited use of force to restore the principle of justice, can be viewed precisely as one of the earliest versions of the theory of just war in ancient Chinese thought.

Similarities and differences of the perceptions of war of Galtung and Mozi

Both Galtung and Mozi believed that the root of war and conflict lies in the struggle between people. Galtung, identifying with the hierarchy of needs theory by the very famous American social psychologist Maslow, thinks that conflict is more about the struggles among people, and struggles for survival, freedom and identity (Johan Galtung 2003, 84), that is, the struggle for the fulfillment of basic human needs. Influenced by Maslow's Needs Theory, Galtung believed that survival, happiness, freedom and identity are the most basic needs of human beings. When peoples' needs are frustrated, this creates obstacles for the individual

at a cultural level, people kill because they are taught from an early age that violence is legitimate under certain circumstances, and such cultures legitimize violence. Many Western countries believe in Christianity, whereas many

MiddleEastern countries believe in Islam. When their faith gives responsibility to propagate and defend a group of people of national, sexual, or racial origin, ideas such as "the chosen people" and "fundamentalism" tend to provoke strife and conflict, but the resulting violence is seen by believers as legitimate. According to Galtung, such ideas are reprehensible because they are fraught with violence and war.

Mozi believed that the root cause of social unrest and frequent wars was that people did not love each other and fought against each other. In the early period of the Warring States Period, various vassal states fought for territory and Chinese society was thrown into chaos. Mozi pointed out that: "All the people in the world do not love each other, the strong will hold the weak, the rich will bully the poor, the expensive will be cheap, deceit will deceive the fool (Mozi 2016, 125). Mozi believed that people only love themselves, their families and their countries, but they cannot love others and other countries. If they do not love each other, they will take actions that benefit themselves at the expense of others, which will lead to social unrest. In addition, Mozi believed that the greatest injustice under heaven was to attack another country. The gentleman condemned stealing peoples' lives, killing people and stealing goods, but praised the unjust war that caused countless casualties, and regarded the war as just. Mozi strongly condemned this perspective. Mozi's notice of the gentleman's neglect of the injustice of war and Galtung's concern about the legitimacy of cultural violence have something in common, since they both realized the role of education in shaping people's ideas.

Both opposed the war

Traditionally, it is believed that brilliant achievements were an important mark of the success of a great ruler. Rulers at the pinnacle of social class were impregnated by the aristocratic values that they must protect their property assiduously, and war was an effective way to expand their wealth.Neither Mozi nor Galtung agree with such ideas and believed that war could not make people rich or bring peace. They strongly opposed war.

First, Mozi set an example of resisting war. Mozi traveled to the states such as Qi, Wei, Song, Lu, Yue and Chu, promoting his theory of non-attack and universal love. With his great enthusiasm, he prevented three imminent battles: Qi was about to attack the state of Lu, Prince Yang Wen of Lu was about to attack the state of Song, and Chu was about to attack the state of Song as well. Secondly, Mozi focused on the actual consequences of the war to analyze the damages, the attack on both sides of the war caused endless harm and no profit. In the pre-Qin period,

war was dominated by cold weapons. It was the size of the army that was important. Mozi believed that the emperor's resort to war for impossible compensation would bring great losses, and used Fu Chai as an example to demonstrate the harm of war. On the basis of his father's inheritance, Fu Chai attacked the state of Qi in the north and defeated the army of Qi: "The nine states of barbarians are bound to serve the state of Qi". However, he did not show kindness to the people after the withdrawal of his troops, which led to their rebellion and dissension. After that, Gou Jian retaliated and the State of Wu was destroyed. Fuchai became strong by conquest and was destroyed by conquest. Mohism acknowledged that a few countries did benefit from the war, but this was the exception. To lose the country because of love of war is common law.

Galtung, a master of peace studies, was strongly opposed to war. Galtung believed that war was an extreme form of direct violence, and advocated that not only should war be eliminated, but also "structural violence" and "cultural violence", so as to achieve real peace. According to Galtung, war leads to casualties, and these deaths lead to the trauma of their loved ones, which may turn into hatred and lead to the addiction of revenge. Combined with the possible sense of glory and victory of the winner, conflict and war may be reignited. Galtung believes the real solution is not "a vicious cycle of revenge, because violence only begets more violence. (Johan Galtung 2005, 9)" If conflict is to be avoided, it is important to emphasize the role of a joint new norm in which parties transcend national and religious boundaries to engage in peaceful dialogue: diagnosis, prognosis and therapy together.

Giving consideration to the public
Mozi, taking the interests of the people as the starting point, put forward the theory of "non-attack" for a country that likes to attack, and judged the nature of the justice of war based on the interests of the people. Mozi put forward the idea of "universal love", that is, people should live in peace with each other, love each other without difference, love each other and benefit each other, and take the thousands of laborious people as the object of love. He proposed that people replace "self-love" with "universal love". In this way, the chaos and disasters can be eliminated, and the world will be peaceful and prosperous. In addition, Mozi affirmed that the will of survival and reproduction are in the nature of human beings, and framed human nature as basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, transportation and childbearing, but denied any desire beyond this scope to benefit oneself at the expense of others. Mozi believed that whether people's basic survival

needs can be met is related to the good an devil of human nature and the safety of the society. Only by meeting people's living needs can we truly save the country and the people.

Galtung stressed the need to pay attention to the interests of the people, both in war and in peace. First of all, Galtung defended the rights and interests of women, paid great attention to the elimination of violence within individuals, and believed that gender and inter-generational violence were no less harmful than inter-state violence. Gender, as an invariant of space and time, is closely linked to violence. There is a large amount ofviolence committed by males in society, such as domestic violence and social crimes. Men have a positive attitude toward violence. In order to reduce violence, Galtung proposed to increase the emotional intelligence level of men as much as possible and pay attention to the psychological and physical aspects of men. Secondly, influenced by Maslow's theory of needs, Galtung focused on the most basic needs of human beings, believing that human beings need food, water, air, housing, health, children, sex and education, etc. The key to ensure human survival lies in the transformation of conflicts, and only in this way can deadly violence caused by conflicts be avoided. Similar to Mozi, who valued the interests of the masses over the gains of war, Galtung argued that " the interest of the collectivity of having the basic needs of its individual members satisfied (Johan Galtung 2003, 85)".

The scope of anti-war is different

The scope of Galtung's opposition to war was greater than that of Mozi. Galton divided peace into negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace means the absence of war or other direct forms of violence in organized states. From the perspective of Galtung, the war that Mozi opposed belongs to the category of negative peace. Galtung's pursuit of peace is not limited to passive peace. In his point, it is rather narrow to limit the study of peace to the study of war avoidance or even more specifically to the abolition or control of superweapons. Positive peace transcends the absence of war and also involves the elimination of social exploitation and injustice. Positive peace means the elimination of hunger, violence, human rights abuses, refugees, environmental pollution and other threats to peace. It means that people can live in dignity and prosperity. "Everyone has the right and the possibility to live a healthy life, and if that is taken away, then violence has an effect (Robert Woito and Robert Pickus 1982, 440)". The positive peace pursued by Galtung aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination, such as class, age, religion, race and gender, and believes that the elimination of structural

violence is a prerequisite for positive peace. Thus, Galtung is concerned with a lasting and comprehensive peace, not just the absence of means of war or direct violence, but with the goal of improving the conditions and quality of life of the population. Negative peace can provide favorable opportunities for the growth of positive peace, and positive peace can consolidate the achievements of the negative peace and make the negative peace advance smoothly to the state of positive peace.

Mozi opposed unjust wars and held a positive attitude towards just wars to eliminate unjust wars. Mozi classified the nature of war according to the standard of "justice", and the justice of war depended on whether it was for the welfare of the people. Mozi believed that a great power attacking a small country or attacking an innocent country without reason belongs to the category of unjust wars, while wars to suppress a tyrant or to support a weak and small country to resist aggression as just wars. In the eyes of Mozi, there is an essential difference between "accuser" and "attack". Mozi opposed aggressive wars and offensive wars and advocated self-defense wars and just wars. It can be seen from the above that the scope of Galtung's opposition to war was larger than that of Mozi. Galtung opposed all forms of violence, and war was undoubtedly included. In addition to eliminating war, Galtung also pursued positive peace and opposed exploitation and discrimination.

Different ways of defense

Mozi advocated "non-attack", but for wars of aggression, he advocated the idea of "saving and defending" in the strategy of active defense for weak states. In order to ensure the security of a weak state, Mozi put forward that active defense should be carried out to counter the strong and support the weak. In his works Preparing the Gate, Preparing the Water and Preparing the Ladder, Mozi teaches weak countries how to use strong walls and advanced equipment to defeat the enemy. In order to achieve this end, Mozi and his disciples actively ran and mediated, frequently traveled between the belligerent states, publicized his "non-attack" theory, invented and improved the instruments for defending cities, studied defense tactics seriously, and helped the weak states that were invaded organize wars of defense.

Mozi mentioned in the chapter "Preparing the Gate", "I build the city, reserve the equipment, prepare the rice, build close relations among all classes, and get the help of the neighboring princes: those are my support (Mozi 2016, 489)". From this we can see that Mozi's defensive thoughts about weak states preparing themselves and countries supporting each other. Mozi believed that in order to defeat a strong

aggressor, a weak state must unite as one and prepare its people for war. Moreover, Mozi advocated that in a cruel war, the reward and punishment must be clearly defined, and the soldiers should be encouraged with material glory. At the same time the families of the wounded and the dead must be appeased and shown kindness and mercy.

Galtung, whose peace thought was formed in Europe after World War II, thinks that it is very narrow to limit the study of peace to how to avoid war. Galtung believes that diagnosis, prognosis and therapy are ways of preventing and abolishing violence, that is, to diagnose the state of violence, to reduce violence and to improve living conditions. Galtung believes that more non-violent roles can be included in peacekeeping operations to increase the space for non-violent resolution of conflicts, such as by increasing the proportion of women. But this is different from Mozi's support for women to join the army to defend the country, Galtung's idea is more about neutralizing the violence of men. According to Galtung, peace-building actions are equivalent to building structural culture and cultural peace. It is necessary to recognize the structural violence of the whole society and make it creatively transform to positive aspects.

Generally speaking, Mozi's measures to stop wars are mainly to prevent wars by meeting the needs of the people for adequate food and clothing within the country, to actively oppose aggression and prepare for war at home, and to stop wars by means of mutual support from outside the country. Galtung broke through the simple scope of anti-war and comprehensively considered the three forms of violence, namely direct, structural and cultural, and advocated creatively transcending and transforming conflicts.

Taking into Account the Different Levels of the Public
As a small-size production laborer, Mozi personally experienced the hardships and difficulties of life. For Mozi, survival and reproduction are the basic human desires: "Therefore, one must always be full, and then seek beauty; Clothes will always warm, and then beg for beauty; The inhabitant must be steady, and then seek happiness" (Liu Xiang 1992, 324). It is a blessing to meet peoples' basic needs otherwise it will lead to disaster. In addition, Mozi proposed to cut down on burial expenses, to meet the needs of human reproduction.

Whether basic needs can be met is related to the good and evil of human nature and the safety of society. Mozi affirmed that survival and reproduction are the natural nature of human beings. On the other hand, he framed the natural nature of human beings as the scope of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and

reproduction, and held a negative attitude towards desires beyond this scope. Mozi believed that when individuals pursue interests, they must consider the interests of the whole world as the premise, and should restrain their own behavior.

Compared with Mozi's consideration of the basic needs of people's food, clothing, housing and transportation, Galtung's consideration of people is more extensive. For a long time, people narrowly limited violence to causing physical harm to people and attributed the root of war to the "evil" of human nature. But Galtung believes that peace is not only the disappearance of direct violence, but also entails the governance of deep structural violence. International conflicts often stem from neglect of human needs. War is an extreme form of direct violence. Eliminating war can only achieve "negative peace", while eliminating structural violence and cultural violence can achieve "positive peace". Galtung is concerned not only with the damage caused by war and violence, but also with how human beings can live more decently.

Relatively, Galtung surpasses Mozi in the aspect of taking care of the people. Take the United States as an example, according to the idea of Mozi, the United States is the world's most developed country, and its people are well-dressed and well-fed, and lead a rich life, so they should give up acts of war and abide by their own obligations. Apparently that is not the case. Obviously, just meeting the daily needs of people is not enough to end war.

Galtung was more aware of the exploitation and oppression of the people through structural violence and cultural violence. Galtung's consideration of the people was more extensive than that of Mozi, because it was inseparable from the background of the times they lived in.

Chinese Peace Strategies during the Pandemic

The COVID-19 epidemic is spreading around the world, renewing people's estimations of a risk society, causing worldwide human casualties and international security unrest.

According to WHO real-time statistics, "Globally, as of 6:06pm CEST, 6 August 2021, there have been 200,840,180 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 4,265,903 deaths (WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard)". The epidemic has not only damaged human health and the dignity of life, but also caused incalculable disasters in the fields of international economy and security. Trump, Pompeo and other Western politicians have repeatedly named the novel coronavirus as the "Wuhan Virus" or "China Virus". This act of combining the Covid-19 epidemic and the stigmatization of specific ethnic groups aims to shift

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the inherent contradictions in the US, and stimulate the hatred of Western people against China, so as to restrain the development of China and consolidate the hegemony of the United States.

Both Mozi and Galtung believed that the root cause of war and conflict was the struggle between people, and it was easy to provoke disputes when people's needs could not be met. From the perspective of public health prevention and control, the United States has shifted the responsibility to China, which was the first to experience COVID-19. From the moral high ground of safeguarding national security, the Trump administration has mobilized allies to block Chinese companies such as Huawei in high-tech fields such as 5G network communications and chip cooperation. As Mozi said, war is unprofitable, and the gains are not as great as the losses. This series of US policies towards China has gained less than it costs the US and its allies. Although the US has many alternatives to replace Huawei, none of them is good enough. William Barr, the Trump administration's attorney-general, admitted that the government's research into alternatives to 5G would be "pie in the sky". "This approach is completely untested, and would take many years to get off the ground," he said of the open radio access network software (Coby Goldberg 2020).

In fact, long before the epidemic spread, the logic of the Trump administration's foreign policy was essentially embodied in the strategic framework of "great power competition" and the policy goal of "America First". In August 2019, the Trump administration explicitly emphasized in the National Defense Authorization Act that "Congress declares that long-term strategic competition with China is a principal priority for the United States that requires the integration of multiple elements of national power, including diplomatic, economic, intelligence, law enforcement, and military elements, to protect and strengthen national security" (The 115th Congress 2018). According to Galtung, imperialism combines direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. Under the guise of "justice" for democracy and human rights, the United States grossly interferes in the internal affairs of other countries, which is the embodiment of imperialism's hegemony.

China has always maintained that the two countries should jointly promote China-US relations based on coordination, cooperation and stability. However, the US domestic policy towards China has undergone a new paradigm shift, shifting from the "engagement policy" of encouraging China's integration into the world to the "non-engagement policy" (Zhu Feng 2019, 3). In the face of the United States'

groundless efforts to suppress it, China should firmly defend its national interests and safeguard its national security. We should take the following countermeasures:

First, we will continue to prevent the epidemic, stimulate economic growth, and meet people's living needs. Mozi's and Galtung's views on war both emphasized the need to take into account the common people. Under the epidemic situation, the state should prevent and control the epidemic situation and ensure the people's right to live healthily. With the epidemic basically under control, China does the utmost effort to make up for the economic losses caused by the epidemic and ensure the quality of life of the people. Facing the situation that the United States is suppressing China's high-tech industry in the world, China needs to vigorously promote the development of high-tech industry, overcome the difficulties of core science and technology, and make the core technology in key fields not subject to other countries.

At the same time, we call for and do our best to maintain the stability and smoothness of the global industrial chain and supply chain, so as to promote the recovery of the world economy. During the time of the novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic, China appealed for global solidarity and cooperation to overcome the epidemic situation and jointly build a community of human health. In order to support the economic and social recovery and development of the countries affected by the epidemic, China has promised to provide us $2 billion in international assistance within two years, which is the practical embodiment of the concept of the community of human destiny. Only when the people's right to survive is guaranteed, can the conflict be gradually transformed.

Second, war is unprofitable, cooperation is beneficial to both sides, and fighting is harmful to both sides. We should continue to promote Sino-US relations with "coordination, cooperation and stability" as the keynote. There is anxiety and insecurity caused by China's rise and catalyzed by the epidemic situation, which will only arouse the disgust and resistance of the Chinese government and even the people. From the perspective of Mozi's war, the gains made by the countries that launched the war are far from making up for their losses. Attacking innocent countries is an unjust war of bullying the weak. Sino-US cooperation is in line with the interests of the people of the two countries and the common interests of the people of the world.

As the world's top two economies, China and the United States account for 40% of the world's economic scale, and their mutual interests coexist and depend on each other. The purpose of cooperation between the two countries is not only to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results, but also to check and balance

opponents and prevent situations such as war. However, not all people in the United States agree with the Trump administration's hegemonic anti-China policy, and there is no lack of moderate power to release friendly messages to China. China should take the initiative to mobilize the positive forces of the international community, restart contacts, dialogues and consultations between China and the United States, and maintain the coexistence of cooperation and competition between China and the United States as much as possible.

Third, China should be well prepared for long-term strategic competition with the United States and take appropriate defensive measures while strengthening itself. The state of Sino-US relations has changed from cooperation and competition to containment and suppression of China by the United States, which is largely due to the anxiety of the United States about the vacillation of its hegemonic position. The rise of China's national strength and the expression of its own interests in the international order have led to the insecurity of the US government and the anticipation that international politics will enter a new round of big-power competition. As long as China's national strength continues to rise, the United States can not really give up its fear and doubts about China. Therefore, we should strive to transform the conflict rather than eliminate it. At present, China and the United States have doubts about each other. Both sides should increase the transparency of their policies to a certain extent to avoid the possibility of tension caused by the misjudgment of information. Mozi advocated non-attack, but weak countries should take active defensive measures in the face of aggressive war. China should enhance its comprehensive national strength and be prepared to deal with the game between big powers. At the same time, we should maintain the necessary restraint and calm, prevent the big power confrontation from getting out of control and guard the last "safety valve".

Conclusion

This paper compares the thinking of the ancient Chinese thinker Mozi and the father of modern Peace Studies John Galtung. Although they come from very different backgrounds and time periods, their views of war have some aspects in common. In detail, the two thinkers above resolutely opposed wars, thinking that the reason for wars is people's resistance. Moreover, they think that it is unprofitable if the ruler attempts to obtain interests by stirring international disputes. The two also advocated that in order to achieve peace, rulers should love the people, and that rulers should put the basic needs of the people first. However, Mozi and Galtung also have different views on war. Mozi put more emphasis on

how to meet the needs of the people's clothing and food as the way to prevent wars. Galtung's anti-war scope was even greater, stating that structural violence should be eliminated, and the vitality of the pursuit of people should also be included.

Comparison analysis of the perceptions of war of Mozi and Galtung, provides a beneficial reference for how China continues to go to peace development paths. The epidemic does not distinguish national boundaries and races, and war is unprofitable. No country should utilize the epidemic to provoke international disputes. Whether in ancient China or modern China, war has never been a priority of Chinese leaders. In the face of the U.S. comprehensive pressure strategy on China during the epidemic period, China has strengthened its defenses, improved the people's livelihood and promoted Sino-US relations with the keynote of "coordination, cooperation and stability" on the premise of adhering to national sovereignty and security. The novel coronavirus has spread to 210 countries and regions, becoming the most serious public health emergency since World War II. Infectious disease is a common enemy of mankind. The control of COVID-19 is the common responsibility of the international community. All countries should work together to prevent and control the spread of the epidemic and to strengthen global public health governance.

Mozi proposed "non-attack" claims and opposed the country's aggression against each other. It has set up a banner of safeguarding peace for China and the world, and has also profoundly influenced China's modern foreign policy. Xi Jinping proposed the idea of a community with a shared future for mankind. In dealing with international and regional affairs, China advocates the emphasis on peace and propose to settle relevant issues through peaceful negotiation. Of course, geopolitical competition and strategic preferences jointly determine a country's external behavior. For a long time, China's economic development has been integrated with the process of regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific. At present, the COVID-19 pandemic is still spreading around the world, and the recovery of the world economy is tortuous. At this historical juncture, it is all the more important for the Asia-Pacific region to shoulder its responsibility of the current time and move firmly toward the goal of building an Asia-Pacific community with a shared future. At the same time, China advocates shouldering its due international responsibilities in the international community and helping the weak and needy, which is a realistic reflection of Mozi's idea of "universal love". The Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative are both important public products from China to the international community, which will provide new development

opportunities for the majority of developing countries, and which is of great significance to sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region.

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DAVIT AGHABEKYAN

TORN BETWEEN LOYALTY AND IDENTITY:
THE CRIMEAN ARMENIANS IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA

Abstract: *The following research tries to understand how the lives of the Crimean Armenians were impacted after the collapse of the Soviet Union. After briefly discussing the Crimean Armenian communities in the Soviet Period, the article mainly focuses on the social and political issues that Armenians of Crimea have faced during the post-Soviet period. There are two research questions: 1. What key problems have the Crimean Armenians encountered during the post-Soviet transformational period? 2. How did the 2014 events impact the Crimean Armenians? With the help of content analysis and interviews, the research looks into these and a set of other relevant questions. The main findings are that Crimean Armenians have mostly perceived the peninsula to be more Russian than Ukrainian, that is why their lives were not dramatically affected after Crimea came under the control of Russia, apart from some issues concerning traveling and visas, documentation and social protection.*
Keywords: *Crimea, Armenian diaspora, Ukraine, Russia, Identity politics*

Introduction

Armenians have been residing in the territory of Crimea since the eleventh century. They have left a rich historical and cultural legacy. There are a number of churches, historical monuments and sites which signify the Armenian presence in the peninsula. There has been sufficient research done on the development of Armenian communities of Crimea in the Middle Ages up to the twentieth century. Since the 1900s, Crimea has been under constant transformation periods. In the course of a century, it has been a part of the Russian Empire, Soviet Union, independent Ukraine and the Russian Federation. During each of the four phases, it has had a different status. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Crimea, like any other post-Soviet state or region, went through a difficult transformation. When discussing Crimea, it is usually perceived as a region within either independent Ukraine or Russia rather than a single distinct area. In the context of the 2014 events, the Crimea is viewed either as a tool in the hands of international actors.

Crimea is discussed from the perspective of sanctions imposed by the West, while the people of the peninsula are often neglected. It is not quite often spoken about how the multi-ethnic population of Crimea coexists and how their lives have been affected since the 2014 events. The aim of this paper is to discuss the post-Soviet period of Crimea and understand what difficulties the Armenians of the peninsula have been facing. In order to conduct this research, two research questions have been developed, which are "What key problems have the Crimean Armenians encountered during the post-Soviet transformational period?" and "How did the 2014 events impact the Armenians of Crimea?". In order to answer these questions, content analysis and interviews have been conducted. The 1998 constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the 2014 constitution of the Republic of Crimea have been analysed. Ten interviews have been conducted with Armenians living in Crimea who gave first-hand information about their lives in the peninsula. Apart from the latter, the existing academic literature has been reviewed, and the existing gaps have been identified and an attempt has been made to contribute to the already existing academic materials.

Brief History of Crimean Armenian communities

Crimean Armenians have been residing in the territory of the peninsula since the 11th century. Some even claim that Armenian communities in Crimea were established earlier, during the 8th century (Porksheian 1968). Although there are sufficient number of works written about Crimean Armenians in the Middle Ages and up to the 19th century, there is not enough academic material written on them during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. This literature review will discuss the following categories: Stalin's nationalist policies, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the consolidation of the community, and the post-Soviet period. The first category will mainly concentrate on the period of the 1940s. Crimean Armenians were able to maintain good relations with the multi-ethnic population of Crimea, including with Ukrainians, Russians, Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups residing in the peninsula (Grigoryants 2004). According to Clement Harutyunyan, Crimean Armenians played a significant role in World War II. Regarding partisans who were fighting against Nazi Germany behind enemy lines and contributed greatly to the victory, he mentions that there were a number of Armenians: a total of around 500 Armenian partisans from Crimea and North Caucasus. Partisan detachment no. 10 was fighting in Crimea under the command of Aram Teryan (Harutyunyan 2004). However, thisdid not play a significant role for Stalin. From May to June 1944, around 200,000 Crimean Tatars were deported from Crimea to

Central Asia. Stalin's order was based on the accusation that Crimean Tatars betrayed the Red Army and collaborated with the Nazis. The next step of Stalin's nationalistic policy concerned the other ethnicities of Crimea, particularly the Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians. Shortly after the deportation of Crimean Tatars, according to the decree of the State Defense Committee No. 5984 TS (top secret) of June 2, 1944, during the so-called "second special resettlement", Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians were deported from Crimea. Every representative of those ethnicities, regardless of their gender, age, service to the Soviet regime, the former partisans, disabled people, veterans, members of the Communist party, family members of Red Army soldiers, etc. were forcibly taken away from the peninsula. Around 10,000 Armenians were deported from Crimea (Grigoryants 2004). The pretext used for the deportation was once again the accusation of conspiring against the Red Army (Mirzoyan and Mirzoyan 2019). The literature has adequately addressed the issue of deportation. However, there is a lack in of academic research with regards to the Armenians in Crimea from 1944 up to the 1980s. As almost all the Armenians were deported from the peninsula, there was no community as such, hence the absence of the community resulted in the gap in academic literature.

Although in 1956 a decision was made that allowed the deported peoples to move from their deported destinations (except returning to Crimea) there were still not many Armenians in Crimea till 1989. The situation changed after that. The Spitak earthquake in Armenia in 1988, the Sumgait pogroms and the struggle of Nagorno-Karabakh for self-determination became a psychological impetus for ethnic consolidation. After the creation of the "Crimean Armenian Community", the efforts of the organization were aimed at consolidating the Armenian community in Crimea and since then they have been implementing various initiatives aimed at strengthening the Armenian community of the peninsula. The urge to assist Armenians who suffered from the 1988 earthquake and the Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan became a decisive factor for ethnic mobilization. The newly created "Crimean Armenian Community" took the responsibility of taking care of 6000 Armenians who moved to Crimea from the disaster zone (Grigoryants 2004).

The existing literature on the period after the collapse of the Soviet Union adequately discusses the events which were happening in Crimea. With regards to the post-Soviet period, there are a number of articles in periodicals and websites. However, there is little academic research. The academic articles which discuss the events of 2014 and how Crimea went under the control of Russia mainly discuss

the political issues and do not concentrate on the people of the peninsula. The social and political issues that Crimean Armenians have encountered during the post-Soviet transitional period are not sufficiently discussed. In order to fill the articulated gaps, interviews with representatives of the Crimean Armenian Community and content analysis have been conducted.

The Crimean Armenians in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods

Crimea has always been a multinational hub that underwent a number of transformational phases. In 1921, the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was established within the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic of the Soviet Union. In 1936, it was renamed the Crimean Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic and in 1945 it was transformed into the Crimean Oblast. Even within Soviet Russia, Crimea had witnessed significant transformations. From 1942 to 1943 it was under the control of Nazi Germany. A year later, in 1944, after regaining control over Crimea, Stalin ordered the deportation of the Crimean Tatars using their collaboration with the Nazis as a pretext. Around 250,000 Tatars were deported to Central Asia (Potichnyj 1975). Later, Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians of the peninsula were deported as well. The demographics of Crimea witnessed a dramatic shift. In 1954, the Crimean Oblast was given to the Ukrainian SSR. The decree was published on the front page of "Pravda" and stated that the decision was made taking into account the economic commonalities, closeness and cultural and communication links between Crimea and Ukraine (Siegelbaum 2021). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Crimea transformed into the Autonomous Republic of Crimea within independent Ukraine and a special status was given to the city of Sevastopol. According to Article 133 of the Ukrainian Constitution of 1996, the cities of Kiev and Sevastopol have a special status, which is regulated by the laws of Ukraine (Constitution of Ukraine 1996). According to the decision of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine № 11-rp/2001 from 13.07.2001, forms of local self-government in each state are determined taking into account its political and territorial structure as well as historical, national, economic and other characteristics (Constitutional Court of Ukraine 2001). There is special provision on the special status of the city of Sevastopol which states that the hero-city Sevastopol is a city of national importance with a special status due to a number of reasons such as historical and geographical significance, the base of the Ukrainian naval forces and the temporarily located Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, the characteristics of local budget formation, executive power and local self-government (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine 2006).

After 2014, Crimea became a part of the Russian Federation. A year earlier, the president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych rejected the association agreement with the European Union in order to tighten economic ties with Russia. This step became a reason for the Euromaidan protests. Russia framed the protests as fascist movements hostile to the Russian minorities of Ukraine. As the majority of the Crimean population was Russian, panic spread through the peninsula. Using this opportunity, Russia intervened and the armed group called "Little green men" raised a Russian flag on the roof of the Crimean Supreme Council's building. In less than a month, the Crimean Supreme Council voted to secede from Ukraine and declare it as a sovereign territory within the Russian Federation (Crimean Supreme Council 2014). After the referendum that was organized in Crimea, Moscow officially declared the Republic of Crimea and the Federative City of Sevastopol territorial subjects of the Russian Federation (Russian State Duma 2014).

A number of different nationalities have been living in the territory of Crimea and it is interesting to understand what impact the territorial and sovereignty transitions of the 20th and 21st centuries have had on the population of Crimea. During the 20th century, in addition to Russians, who constituted the majority in Crimea, among other ethnicities residing in the peninsula were Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars, Armenians, etc. For example, in 1939, Crimean Tatars comprised 19.43%, Ukrainians 13.68%, and Armenians 1.15% of Crimea's population (Demoscope weekly 1939).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Crimea remained a part of Ukraine. However, a referendum was conducted in 1991 to understand if the population of Crimea wished to "Re-establish the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic as a subject of the Union SSR and a participant of the Union Treaty" (crimea.vgorode.ua 2014). 93.26% of the population of Crimea said "yes" to territorial autonomy. Voter turnout was 81.37% while the percentage of people who voted against the re-establishment of the Crimean ASSR was 5.64% (Noskova 2016). In 1992, the Crimean Supreme Council adopted its constitution which was amended the same year, and twice more in 1994. Finally, at the end of 1998, the Ukrainian Parliament approved the Crimean constitution. After 1992, the question of the independent statehood of Crimea depended solely on the President of Ukraine. If the president was pro-Russian, the situation in Crimea was calm and harmonious. If the president was pro-Western, separatist and independent state-building narratives spread all over the peninsula. So, the latent phase of the conflict on the status of Crimea was marked by calm and positional controversy manifestations (Hovhannisian 2018).

Findings

In order to answer the research questions of the paper, interviews have been conducted. Purposive sampling strategy, which was the most suitable option for this research, was used in order to choose interviewees. Ten interviews have been conducted with the Crimean Armenians which revealed evidence and helped answering the research questions.

Document review was done in order to understand the rights and privileges ethnic minorities of Crimea had during both Ukrainian and Russian rule. The research faced a number of limitations. Firstly, because of the COVID-19 pandemic the interviews were conducted online. It was not possible to go to Crimea and conduct interviews face to face with the representatives of the Crimean Armenian community because of the mentioned reason. Some interviewees, who were purposefully chosen based on their life experience and background in Crimea refused to give interviews because of various reasons.

Rights and legislation

Article 9 of the Crimean Constitution of 1998 stipulates "Securing Rights and Freedoms of Ukrainian Nationals in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea". According to Article 9.2, The Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) and the statutory acts of the authorities of the ARC may in no way limit any rights and freedoms of citizens established by the Constitution of Ukraine and Ukrainian laws (Constitution of Crimea 1998). This article shows that the rights of national minorities in Crimea were protected by the main law of the Autonomous Republic. Indeed, the following articles of the constitution prove this point. For example, Article 10.1 stipulates that alongside the official language, Russian, Crimean Tatar and other ethnic groups' languages must be secured, used and protected. Moreover, according to Article 10.2, Russian, as the language of the majority shall be used in all spheres of public life (ibid). Article 10.3 gives more freedom to the languages of the national minorities of Crimea. It stipulates that citizens should have the right to be educated in their native language at preschool establishments and to be taught in the native language in public educational establishments in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and other statutes of the ARC.

Indeed, we can observe that since then, Article 10 has been functioning properly as there are a number of Crimean Tatar and Armenian schools in Crimea. According to the information provided by *rg.ru*, as of 2020, there are 547 schools in Crimea of which 16 are Crimean Tatar (Izotov 2020). There are Armenian

Sunday schools in Simferopol, Sudak, Yalta, Alushta, Yevpatoria and Theodosia. Moreover, in September 1999, one year after the constitution was adopted, the first consolidated Armenian language class in Crimea was opened in Simferopol School no. 33, where, in addition to the main curriculum, primary school students had Armenian language lessons twice a week (Crimean Armenian Community 2021).

Article 14 of the ARC Constitution concentrates on citizens' rights and interests in the sphere of national culture. This is another representation of Crimean law taking into consideration its diverse and multi-national population. The sub-points of Article 14 concentrate on the "preservation of the diversity of cultures which were formed in the Crimean Peninsula in the course of history" (Constitution of Crimea 1998, article 14.1). The article also provides different cultures and nationalities with an opportunity to form associations that will establish their rights and interests. This particular point gives the green light to nationalities to form their community representing bodies in order to preserve their national identity outside their homeland.

According to Article 14.4, citizens of all ethnicities should be given the right to celebrate ethnic holidays, profess their religion, satisfy their needs in literature and arts, to establish ethnic mass media, publishing houses, museums, theatres, film studios and other ethnic, cultural and educational establishments pursuant to the Constitution of Ukraine and Ukrainian laws (Constitution of Crimea 1998, Article 14.2).

"The Crimean Armenian Society", which was formed in 1989, is an example of the proper functioning of Article 14.

Figure 1. Population of Crimea by ethnicity in 2001 and 2014

	2001 (number)	2001 (percentage)	2014 (number)	2014 (percentage)
Russians	1,450,000	60.4	1,492,078	67.9
Ukrainians	576,600	24	344,515	15.7
Crimean Tatars	259,000	11	232,340	10.6
Belarussians	35,000	1.46	21,694	0.95
Tatars	13,500	0.56	45,000	1.96
Armenians	10,000	0.4	11,030	0.5
Total Population	2,401,200	100	2,293,673	100

Source: Ukrainian census results 2001, Crimean census results 2014

According to the Ukrainian census results of 2001 there were 2,024,000 people in the ARC and 377,200 people in the city of Sevastopol. Overall, there were 2,401,200 people in the peninsula [1]. More than 60% of the populations were Russians (around 1,450,000), 24% Ukrainians and around 11% Crimean Tatars (576,600 and 259,000 respectively). The number of Armenians in Crimea was 10,000 (around 0.4%) (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine 2001).

Since 2014, the picture has changed. Republic of Crimea had a population of 2,293,673 of whom 1492078 Russians (67.9%), 344515 Ukrainians (15.7%), 232340 Crimean Tatars (10.6%) and 11030 Armenians (0.5%). As we can see the number of Ukrainians has decreased dramatically which is understandable from the context of the 2014 conflict, while the number of Armenians has slightly increased (Federal State Statistics Service 2015).

According to Article 13 of the 2014 Constitution of the Republic of Crimea, everyone "is equal before law and the court. The state guarantees equality of human and civil rights and freedoms regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, property and official status, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs, membership in public associations, and other circumstances. Any form of restriction of the rights of citizens on the basis of social, racial, national, linguistic or religious affiliation is prohibited" (Constitution of the Republic of Crimea 2014, Article 13). Article 19.1 stipulates that "everyone has the right to determine and indicate his nationality" and according to the Article 19.2 "everyone has the right to use his native language, to choose freely the language of communication, education", and art. Article 21 specifies that "everyone is guaranteed freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, including the right to profess, individually or jointly with others, any religion or not to profess any religion at all, to freely choose, have and disseminate religious and other beliefs and to act in accordance with them" (Constitution of the Republic of Crimea 2014, Article 19.1, Article 19.2 and Article 21).

It is apparent that after Crimea went under the control of Russia, the constitution underwent only a slight amendment: the rights of national minorities with regards to language, religion, freedom of conscience etc. have been preserved. Moreover, when Crimea was within Ukraine most of the articles in the constitution had a point about correspondence with Ukrainian laws and regulations while in the case of the 2014 Constitution the situation is different. Correspondence with

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[1] Further calculations will discuss the national composition of Crimea combining the population figures in Crimea and Sevastopol.

Russian laws and regulations is not required after each article which may signify that national minorities are entitled to more freedom than before.

Interviews

Ten interviews have been conducted. Nine interviews were conducted in Russian and one in Armenian. All of the interviewees were Armenians from Crimea. Three of them have been living in Crimea since the Soviet times, four since the nineties and three moved to Crimea after the events of 2014. They have different backgrounds, and are from different age groups, which helped to gain insight from different angles. During the interviews, a number of interesting and useful facts have been identified. Evidence that was collected ranges from socio-political issues of the Crimean Armenians to their daily initiatives and personal stories.

Consolidation

One of the dominant themes derived from the interviews concerns the issue of the consolidation of Crimean Armenians into a united community. Almost all of the interviewees mentioned that during the Soviet period there were very few Armenians left in Crimea after the 1944 deportation. The community was almost non-existent and there was a risk of closing the book on the centuries-long history of the Armenian community in Crimea. According to one of the interviewees "in fact, until 1989, the Crimean Armenians were not particularly active. Moreover, there was no community as such. There were several families who ended up here for work, and they knew each other. But to say that there was a Crimean Armenian community in a sense, we should not, because all the Armenians of Crimea were deported in 1944." According to another interviewee who has been residing in Crimea since Soviet times, "At the time of my arrival in Crimea [70s, 80s] there were very few Armenians here, but they were all very respected. All directors, honoured doctors, kolkhoz chairmen, moreover, all eminent, not just ordinary people. There were a few of them, dozens and a bit more, maybe dozens of ordinary Armenians as well but that was all. We were few, but nevertheless we all knew each other and kept in touch". Moreover, according to another interviewee, "Armenians were not allowed to register here, that is, a person on his own could not come and register. Armenians and other peoples who were deported did not have the opportunity to enter higher educational institutions. They were on the list of those whom it was not desirable to accept". The interviewee added that "Despite the fact that the main postulate, the slogan of Soviet power was the friendship of

peoples, there were some issues about which the bulk of the population did not know, did not face them". The Armenian population of Crimea started to consolidate in 1989. "In 1989, the first national cultural society was registered after being allowed to, the Armenian community was registered. And the activity, the impulse to this was given, first of all, by the earthquake of 1988". At that time the few Armenians in Crimea united and created the community: "After the earthquake, after the events of Baku[2] , and because of economic hardships in Armenia, waves of Armenians started to arrive in Crimea and according to the results of 2014 they almost restored the number of Armenians that were in Crimea before the deportation".

Assimilation

Another important piece of information garnered from the interviews was with regards to the Armenian language, its usage in the community and the issue of assimilation. Almost all of the interviewees stated, that despite the efforts of the community to teach Armenian both in church-affiliated Sunday schools and private schools, not many of the young population speak Armenian fluently. The children who are born in the families where they do not speak Armenian, do not speak the language. Even some people who were born in Armenia but moved to Crimea at an early age start to speak less and less in Armenian. Interviewees have mentioned that they have witnessed assimilation. As one of the interviewees noted, "Without the linguistic environment, the language is forgotten and it is impossible to learn it. Let me bring an example of the 2014 census results. The analysis showed that 40 percent of the young girls and 60 percent of the young boys enter into inter-ethnic marriages. This means that we face very rapid assimilation".

Another interviewee also commented on the issue of mixed marriages. He added that "mixed marriages are not a novelty for the Armenian diaspora, but the issue is that, in Crimea, it is surprising how many new families are formed between Armenians and Crimean Tatars. It is a huge problem. They have an absolutely different way of thinking. Moreover, Crimean Tatars are people who are extremely loyal to Turkey despite its aggressive stance on Crimea. It seems like people don't have historical memory".

On the other hand, the Crimean Armenian community is trying to implement initiatives in order to stop the assimilation and revive the Armenian language

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[2] Pogroms against the Armenian population of Baku which took place in 1990.

among the population. There are Sunday church-affiliated schools where children "can learn the Armenian alphabet and church stories"   Apart from church Sunday schools, there is the "Armenian school after Gabriel Ayvazovsky" (Non-conventional Armenian school until 2012). The latter is an "educational structure" that uses non-conventional methods to teach the Armenian language. The school was established in order to tackle the issue of "the loss" of Armenian. Often, one parent or both of them did not know the language, and that is why the child also did not speak it as well: "One of the tasks of the school was not only to preserve the language, but also teach it at a literary level, and not only to children, but also to their parents". According to the interviewees, the system of the school came to solve a number of issues. For example, if before the initiative students had problems with places to study (there were no specifically designated places except for church), then after the creation of the school the students had an opportunity to study in classrooms with equipped facilities. Moreover, teachers at the school gained the opportunity to officially register as teachers of schools, received a salary and benefits such as social advantages etc.: "The non-conventional Armenian school has been in contact with the Ministry of Education of RA. The curriculum of the Armenian language comprised by the non-conventional school for secondary schools, where there were groups created to study the Armenian language, was accepted by the ministry of education and recommended for the diaspora in 2004. Based on the curriculum, legislative right to study the Armenian language in all primary schools of Ukraine was received".

There were attempts to implement the curriculum in schools in Lvov and Kyiv. However, they were unsuccessful, as the system which was functioning in Crimea failed to be created in other areas. There was no connection between the municipal authorities, the government and the Armenian community like in Crimea.

The impact of the 2014 events

Interesting findings were derived from interviews with regards to the 2014 events. According to all of the interviewees not much has changed in their lives since Crimea came under the rule of Russia, except maybe the issues with documentation, visa and traveling. According to one of the interviewees "I, as a representative of the middle class, cannot say that back then everything was fine and now we are under pressure. The person who worked before works now as well". Moreover, according to one of the interviewees "We have always perceived Crimea as Russian, have always spoken in the Russian language, only in

documentation we encountered Ukrainian and remembered that we were a part of Ukraine". Another thing in common in the responses of the interviewees in terms of the 2014 events is that because of Russia they have been saved and the violent events that happened in Donbass did not reach Crimea. Within a night the flag of Ukraine has been replaced with the flag of Russia with no bloodshed.

The most common problem due to the 2014 events emphasized by the interviewees refers to documentation and visa issues. As all the documents were in Ukrainian, there was a need to translate the documents to Russian. All the passports and all the registration documents had to be changed in order to correspond to the legislation of the new state: "All the property had to be registered, to be moved to the legislative sphere of the Russian Federation. This was problematic. First of all, because of this there were long queues. Secondly, you know, if someone has built something and lived freely and no one had issues with it, now that needed to be legalized. But legalize how? People have had troubles with these and there has been dissatisfaction". Another major issue that Crimean Armenians are facing refers to traveling. Before 2014 there were direct flights to Yerevan and "if before it took me two hours to arrive in Yerevan, now I have to spend all day on it and I am not even speaking about the fact that currently it is twice as expensive". However, according to some of the interviewees, there are other options to travel from Crimea. One of those options is to go to Ukraine, obtain a Ukrainian international passport and get a visa and travel with that one. So, people would have two international passports, Russian and Ukrainian, and they will show the Russian one in Russia and the Ukrainian one during international flights. It is sometimes possible to get a visa with Russian/Crimean passport, for example, during diplomatic visits.

On the other hand, there are also positive consequences of being under Russia's rule. According to one of the interviewees, after 2014, everyone got medical insurance, while during Ukrainian rule it was not the case. There were people who voluntarily paid for insurance but it was not widespread. After 2014, medical insurance became a common practice in Crimea. Indeed, till the end of 2014, almost all the residents of Crimea were provided with compulsory medical insurance policies (Federal Fund of Compulsary Health Insurance 2014).

Another interesting finding was with regards to other social issues. To the question about 2014 events affecting the personal lives (social issues) of the Crimean Armenians, a number of interviewees shared important details. For example, they mentioned loans that were borrowed from Ukrainian banks. There have been a number of people whose loans, which remained unpaid in Ukrainian

banks, were legally canceled by the Russian authorities. According to one of the interviewees, "Crimeans have won in all aspects. Those who had loans, loans have been canceled, those who had deposits in the banks, received their money back. People only won". On the other hand, another interviewee said that "there have been talks on canceling the loans, however around sixty percent of the people paid their loans back, at least the people that I know have paid back". Other interviewees have also spoken about this saying that there was an option of not paying the loans back. Thus, it can be understood that most of the Crimeans benefited from this and that is the reason many people feel satisfied with becoming a part of Russia.

Another interesting finding pointed out by one of the interviewees concerns the issue of the church and religion. According to the interviewee, after Crimea came under Russia's control, a question with regards to the status of the Armenian Apostolic Church arose. The Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin decided to move Crimea out of the Ukrainian Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church and incorporated it into the Russian and New Nakhijevan Diocese. Understandably this caused issues in Ukraine: "Ukrainian Diocese had problems because of this. From the perspective of logistics, the decision should have been made, as the head of the Ukrainian Diocese would not be able to attend parishes taken place in the peninsula due to the difficulties with entering Crimea. Therefore, it was necessary to incorporate it into either Russian Diocese with the centre in Moscow, or the Southern Russia Diocese with the centre in Krasnodar."

If we try to look at the issue which the interviewee spoke about from the perspective of the logistics, it would be more reasonable to incorporate Crimea into the Southern Russia Diocese as the distance between Krasnodar and Crimea is only around 420 km. However, according to the interviewee, it was incorporated into the Russian and New Nakhijevan Diocese "taking into account the difficulties that the Armenian churches of the Crimea had". The interviewee added that "Moscow did a lot in order to restore the Armenian churches in Crimea in the last 5 years".

Cultural coexistence

Another interesting aspect that came about during the interviews referred to cultural and ethnic co-existence in Crimea. As Crimea is a multi-ethnic region it was interesting to learn how throughout the years Armenians coexisted with the other ethnicities of the peninsula. This issue will be presented from two sides. The positive side is about the peculiarities of cultural coexistence while the negative side is about cultural extremism. The positive example which was brought by one

of the interviewees is from the beginning of the twentieth century, while the example on cultural extremism is from April 2021. Famous composer Alexander Spendiaryan, who spent most of his life in Crimea, created two masterpieces which have a significant place in the cultural life of Crimean Tatars. He wrote the music for the most famous Tatar dance Khaytarma. Moreover, "in order to write down the music for the Tatar lullaby, he needed to go to Tatar families to hear the women sing. However, Tatar women do not sing next to other men. He had a friend, they went to their house, persuade the wife so that she sings the lullaby in another room so that Spendiaryan can hear it and write it down". Although this story is from the beginning of the twentieth century, it still spread a light on the coexistence of Crimean Tatars and Armenians of Crimea. However, more than a century later, things have changed. According to one of the interviewees there is cultural extremism present in the peninsula. According to him "in one of the cities of Crimea, on genocide remembrance day, posters, which contained information about Armenian Genocide, were torn down. In Theodosia, which can be considered an Armenian city, the representatives of the city administration instead of speaking about the Armenian Genocide, were speaking about the deportation of Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Greeks and Armenians".

Connections with Armenia

Another dominant theme derived from the interviews is the connection of Crimea Armenians to Armenia. Before 2014, there were stronger ties with Armenia, taking into account the sanctions that Crimea is under. The president of Armenia and the Catholicos of all Armenians visited Crimea in 2008. After the 2014 events, the ties with Armenia weakened. There were cases when government members of Armenia were invited to Crimea for some events or initiatives but they declined the invitation. The lack of official visits, the difficulties with regards to traveling and Armenia's ambiguous stance on Crimea have led to the fact that the Crimean Armenians have started to feel less connected to Armenia. On the other hand, it did not ruin their unity during the 44-Day War. Most of the interviewees mentioned that by the efforts of the community about thirty million Russian Rubles (around 400,000 USD) were collected to help Artsakh. Moreover, there were volunteers who went to Armenia to protect their homeland. Unity and connection of Crimea Armenians have always been present and an interesting historical pattern can be observed. According to Patkanian and Abrahamian, a group of Crimean Armenians consisting of 400 volunteers went to fight with Davit Bek for Syunik in 1722 (Patkanian 1897; Abrahamian 1964).

Conclusion

After the 1944 deportations, there were few Armenian families left in Crimea as around 10,000 Armenians were deported from the peninsula. Armenians were physically absent from Crimea till 1989, hence the lack of academic articles with regards to the Crimean Armenians of the Soviet period. In 1989, the Crimean Armenian Community was legally registered and Armenians in Crimea started to consolidate. Currently, the Crimean Armenian Community is still working in different directions, implementing various initiatives aimed at tackling the issues of the Armenian community in Crimea and preserving their history and national traditions.

The analysis of the 1998 and 2014 Constitutions showed that the ethnic minorities of Crimea, including Armenians, enjoyed basic rights and freedoms ensured at the highest legislative level. In the 2014 Constitution, the laws have been formulated "with more freedom" than in the Ukrainian constitution.

Ten interviews conducted with Crimean Armenians revealed a number of dominant themes. One of the issues that Armenians in Crimea are currently facing is the problem of assimilation. Although the efforts of the community are aimed at tackling the issues connected with assimilation by implementing a number of different initiatives such as teaching the Armenian language or celebrating ethnic holidays, the cases of inter-ethnic marriages and the loss of the language are present.

Armenians in Crimea have mostly perceived Crimea as Russian even when they were within Ukraine. It is for this reason that after 2014, when Crimea became a part of the Russian Federation, the lives of Armenians in Crimea have not been significantly affected. One of the main issues that the Armenians encountered after the 2014 events concerned documentation. The documents they had were in Ukrainian and there was a need to translate them into Russian. There were issues with property registrations as well. Sanctions imposed on Crimea and the absence of international flights made it complicated for Crimean Armenians to travel to Armenia and other destinations.

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Appendix 1

Interview Questionnaire

1. Can you please briefly introduce yourself, your background and tell how you and your family arrived in Crimea?
2. What is your main occupation in Crimea?
3. Can you tell me about the lives of Crimean Armenians after the collapse of the Soviet Union? *

   *If the interviewee has been residing in Crimea since the 1990s
4. What role does the Armenian language play in the lives of the Armenian community of Crimea?
5. Are you or any of your relatives involved in any volunteering/social events or initiatives organized by the Armenian Community in Crimea/Church ?
6. Can you tell me about your experience in 2014? What challenges did you face?
7. What can be said about the lives of Crimean Armenians before and after 2014? What has changed? Were Armenians enjoying more privileges during Ukrainian or Russian rule?
8. Can you please tell me about the impact of 2014 events on your life? How did it affect your personal life (for example if you had any loans taken from Ukrainian banks etc.)?
9. How did the 2014 events affect your visa issues and traveling? What I mean is that was it easier to travel before or after 2014?
10. How connected do you feel to Armenia? Has there been any action from Armenian organizations or has the government established contact with you?
11. What was the overall mood of the Crimean Armenians during the 44-Day War? Have you been involved in any initiatives aimed at assisting Armenia during the war?

KARINE MKHITARIAN

PUBLICLY DECLARED POSITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE KARABAKH PROCESS: PROBLEMS OF CONSISTENCY AND CONTINUITY

Abstract: *The paper focuses on the analysis of the publicly declared positions of Nikol Pashinian, the Prime Minister of Armenia, in the context of the Karabakh process, examining the impact of the declared position on the negotiation process and identifying the shifts in the leader's positions on the Karabakh issue over the time. The research is conducted using the qualitative content analysis method. The research demonstrates that Pashinian's declared positions on Karabakh issues led to the disruption of the negotiation process and identifies that the leader's declared positions were targeted at preserving public support and staying in power have changed over time due to the changing circumstances.*
Keywords: *conflict resolution, negotiations, leadership, political statements, Karabakh process.*

Introduction

The initiation of a conflict resolution process and the signing of ceasefire/peace agreements in international conflicts are almost always perceived as an outstanding achievement for leaders, placing their names in the history books. However, only at first glance does the initiation of the conflict resolution process seem to be perceived by the public as a positive result of the actions of a leader. In fact, the leader is often trapped in the initiated conflict resolution process, especially when the public is not ready for peace and does not truly appreciate and understand the need for steps to achieve it.

Frequently, leaders who sign peace agreements are declared by the people to be traitors of national interests and are forced to end their political careers. The conflict resolution process heavily depends on the leader's ability to communicate with his public, informing them about the possibilities and plans for resolving the conflict in the face of the need to preserve public support and maintain power. This becomes even more relevant due to the advancement of information technologies and mass media that gives the domestic public more possibility to follow and

monitor the conflict resolution process and express its opinion. Moreover, in a conflict resolution process full of uncertainties and in the context of existing distrust between the negotiating parties, the publicly declared positions are important to establish communication between the adversaries.

In the context of Armenia, the recent 44-day Karabakh War has shown the particular importance of this research, the topic for which was chosen before the war broke out. The war that disrupted the ongoing conflict resolution process allows examining and distinctly seeing how the Armenian Prime Minister's public statements influenced the development of the negotiation process. It also gives the ability to trace how many of his initially stated positions corresponded to the positions publicly declared by him later, mainly after signing the 2020 Joint Statement on Karabakh.

In order to understand how public statements by leaders are relevant to the conflict resolution process, based on Pashinian's case, the study set out to answer the following question: 1) how did Pashinian's publicly declared positions impact the Karabakh negotiation process; 2) do the declarations made by Pashinian on issues related to the Karabakh conflict change over the time, specifically in the pre- and post-war periods, and if yes, why?

The hypotheses worked out to test are the following: 1) Pashinian's declared positions contributed to the disruption of the negotiation process leading to a full-scale war; 2) Pashinian has changed his position on a number of significant issues on the Karabakh issue with time, specifically after the 44-day Karabakh War, to justify the conditions signed by Armenia in the 2020 Joint Statement on Karabakh, preserve public support and stay in power;

Thus, taking into consideration the above-mentioned points and realizing that the leader's public statements are of particular importance to the conflict resolution process, the topic was voluntarily chosen as a matter of thorough research.

Literature review

Conflict resolution is a complex phenomenon that is affected by a number of factors such as the situation on the battlefield, the domestic situation in the conflicting countries, the objectives and goals of the conflicting parties, etc. The positions taken by the leaders of the countries also have a significant impact on the conflict resolution process and have the capacity to determine the development of the negotiations. Any conflict resolution process is full of uncertainties and unpredictability, because of the distrust that naturally exists between the conflicting parties coming to the negotiation table and the public questioning the ability of

their governments to pursue such a track in the negotiation process that would ensure the protection of the publicly perceived national interests of the country. Hence the leaders should find an effective way to communicate with their domestic public to ensure the public support of the negotiation process launched and signal to other participants of the negotiation process such messages that would help to move the negotiation process forward. That is why the impact of the declared positions of the leaders on the conflict resolution process should be carefully examined and is a focus of this article.

Conflict resolution can be defined as a phased, multi-layered and multi-dimensional process involving different numbers of participants (Deutsch 1973, 56). Conflict resolution can be bilateral which means that it can involve two conflicting parties in the resolution of the conflict (India-Pakistan peace process). The conflict resolution can also be in a multilateral form which means that some third party such as a state or an international organization will be involved in the conflict resolution process (Serbia-Kosovo peace process). Sometimes the conflict resolution process can be openly multilateral when the third party is openly and directly involved in the process. However, in some cases, the conflict resolution process is not multilateral, when third party or parties significantly impact the conflict resolution process, but do not openly and directly participate in it (Deutsch 1973, 48).

In academia, there are three main phases of conflict resolution identified: the pre-negotiation phase, negotiation phase and post-negotiation phase (Saudners 1985, 249). During the pre-negotiation phase, the sides of the conflict seek to build trust and make all of them more dependent on each other so as to limit the capability of one party of the conflict to act unilaterally and harm the others. This helps to put the conflict on a hold for at least some period of time and start to find common grounds for reaching a resolution of the conflict. The main objectives of the pre-negotiation phase are to define the actors who are going to take part in the actual negotiation process, the time and location of the meeting, discussing and defining the agenda of the meeting and the level of the negotiations (Saudners 1985, 260).

Negotiation is defined as a process in which the conflicting parties are discussing the common and conflicting interests directly with each other and try to reach a compromise taking into account the concerns and interests of all of the parties involved in the conflict (Brigg 2008, 68). Negotiation is considered to be an important tool in peacemaking that gives a possibility to avoid the use of force. The crucial part of a negotiation process is that none of the conflicting sides will get all

of its needs satisfied and both of the sides should be ready for some concessions in order to reach a compromise (Cohen 1997, 92). However, it is important to take into consideration that the minimum concept is also important in the negotiation process as both of the parties have in their perspective the minimum and most basic interests and demands that should be accounted for.

The post-negotiation phase usually comes with analyzing the course and results of the negotiations held and results in signing some kind of an agreement that encompasses the outcomes of the negotiations. In case of low mutual trust between the conflicting parties, different kinds of control mechanisms are introduced in order to ensure the compliance of the conflicting parties to the reached agreements. The phase of implementation and monitoring comes into force (Spector 2013, 5-16).

Conflict resolution is a complex process that is impacted by a number of factors. One of the factors that should be considered is the role of the leaders and the positions declared by the leaders on the peace process. In academia, there is a common understanding that leadership is an important factor in the development of the peace process that can have a significant impact on the final outcomes.

Leaders who initiate a peace process and take active part in it should take a balanced approach to conflict resolution in order to be able to preserve public support and keep their power, but at the same time move the negotiation process forward, leading to a breakthrough in the negotiations. On the one hand, the leaders are expected to signal the opponents about openness to the negotiation process and readiness for the following possible compromises and concessions to create a basis for negotiations with the conflicting parties. On the other hand, the leaders should at least appear to adhere to their initial demands, being "tough" and persistent to keep the political support of the public and other political forces and institutions that frequently react extremely sensitively to the concessions made and are ready to express their outrage and disagreements which can lead to leaders losing their political power and public support (Ortriz 2020, 34).

There are a number of factors that can impact the positions taken by the leaders in a negotiation process, such as domestic politics, personal beliefs and values, the behavior of the adversary, the international environment, etc.

The stability of the political power of the leaders at the domestic landscape and the political support obtained in the country significantly impact the positions of the leaders in the negotiation process. In cases when the leader does not have solid power in the country and is heavily undermined and contested by opposition forces, the leader tends to be more cautious and limited in his actions as he prefers

to act with maximum care, not to give the opposition parties the opportunity to destabilize the situation and weaken his position. Moreover, in the countries with a strong civil society constantly involved in monitoring the actions of the leaders, specifically regarding the negotiation process, the leader is also prone to act less reckless and be more restricted in his strategies and actions in the course of the negotiation process. When striving to stay in the office in a state with a well-developed civil society, free, fair and regular election practices, the leader would be focused on preserving electoral support (Ghosn 2010, 1055). The initiation of the peace process has the potential to be perceived critically by the public and other political forces and institutions that have issues with accepting and supporting the peace process and strong opposition at the domestic level can be formed. In a case when the public struggles with accepting the concessions and compromises initiated, the leader can be framed as a traitor who is bargaining on national interests and is betraying the whole nation (Rosler 2016, 46). Thus, to avoid such a destiny in a democratic country with a well-developed election system, civil society and active political life of the state, the leader would be more restricted in his actions and more careful about the expressed positions in the course of the negotiation process. In autocratic systems with failing election system, being neither competitive, free nor fair, with a lack of checks and balances, and an absence of public monitoring of the leaders` actions in the negotiation process, the leader can take more controversial and unexpected actions, and agree to publicly hurtful concessions to move the negotiation process forward (Irragori 2011, 94).

The personal beliefs and values of the leaders can significantly influence the decisions made by leaders in the course of the negotiation process, either moving it forward and reaching outstanding results or stagnating and even degrading the process. It is widely accepted in academia that some leaders "are better negotiators than the others as a gift from nature and culture" (Ghosn 2010, 1058). The individual and psychological characteristics of the leader are assumed to have a significant impact developed by the leader in the negotiation process. Some leaders, due to their personal characteristics, are more prone to apply an individualistic style of negotiations when they take an active part in the negotiation process, becoming involved in all the phases of the negotiations by themselves, limiting the possibilities for other political officials to step in and influence the negotiation process (Ghosn 2010, 1058). However, others are more prone to use the group negotiation style when leaders rely more on group discussions in the negotiation process and create possibilities for other political actors to get involved in the process. Due to individual and psychological characteristics, some leaders

tend to be more effective, being more open to the negotiation process, more flexible and adaptive that allows them to move the negotiation process forward, while other leaders, due to their high level of anxiety, suspicions, being more reserved, etc. can take such positions in the negotiation process that would stagnate and prevent progress (Irragori 2011, 97).

The international environment can also impact the positions declared by the leaders in the negotiation process, and changes in the international context can also lead to the altering of the declared positions of state leaders, who would review their attitude due to the transforming international environment (Kremenyuk 1988, 215).

The actions of enemies can also impact the declared positions of the leaders. If the adversary takes a harsh position and does not demonstrate any willingness to negotiate, the leader involved in the negotiation process can also declare about the stagnation of the negotiations and no prospects for progress. If the adversaries hesitate to act according to the points negotiated and act in such a way that their words and deeds come in a conflict, the leaders can start to change their attitude (Bailer 2010, 748). Thus, in academia there is a strong understanding of the crucial role of the leaders in the negotiation process and the factors that can impact their negotiation style. However, while examining the existing literature, it became apparent that issues such as how the publicly stated positions of the leaders can impact the negotiation process are not broadly discussed in academia and deserve careful study.

In the case of Pashinian, the role that his publicly declared statements related to the Karabakh issue played in the negotiation process has not been thoroughly studied. The correlations between his initial (mainly pre 2020 Karabakh War) and post-war positions on Karabakh were also not broadly discussed. That is why this paper focuses on filling the existing gaps in academia.

Methodology

The qualitative method of content analysis was applied for this research. The publicly declared statements of Armenia`s Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian on the Karabakh issue were carefully studied. 14 speeches of Nikol Pashinian from January 2018 to 2021 March on Karabakh from the official website of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, 8 newspaper articles informing about Pashinian's statements on foreign policy issues from Armenian and other Russian and international outlets and the 2020 Joint Statement on Karabakh were analysed. The purposive sampling was applied to select the articles and speeches for the

analysis. The hashtags "Nagorno-Karabakh", "Nikol Pashinian Karabakh", "Karabakh issue", "Azerbaijan Armenia", "44 Day War", "Joint Statement on Karabakh", etc. were applied on the official website of the Armenian Prime Minister and Armenian and international media outlets to select the speeches and articles for analysis.

The analysis was not focused on latent content, as the latent meanings behind the speeches of Nikol Pashinian have been identified and analyzed in the course of the research. The speeches delivered by the leader before the Joint Statement on Karabakh was signed, the statement itself and the speeches of the Armenian leader after the Joint Statement was signed have been analysed to see how his initial statements correlated with the latter one and how they impacted the negotiation process.

Limitations

The research has some considerable limitations. First of all, it should be mentioned that only the positions publicly declared by Pashinian in the timeframe of January 2018 – March 2021 have been analysed, as the main part of the research focused on the current, ongoing events was finished by April 2021. Thus, the declarations publicly made after March 2021 were not in any way studied and analysed, which does not allow us to trace the changing dynamics of Pashinian's position on the issues related to the Karabakh process and identify how his declarations continue to impact the conflict resolution process.

Moreover, the research does not include an extensive study on the factors that have impacted the positions of the state`s leader over the course of the negotiation process, besides shedding light on the impact of domestic politics on the declarations publicly stated by the leader. Other factors such as the personal beliefs and values of Pashinian, the international context and the behavior of the adversaries are touched upon, but not comprehensively studied due to the following reasons.

The personal beliefs and values can be barely accurately studied and examined, as in the case of Pashinian, there was no possibility to have an interview with him due to the unstable political situation in Armenia and the continuation of the Karabakh process in the context of which he is barely expected to be sincere and open for a conversation. It was decided not to look profoundly into the impact of the international context and the behavior of the adversaries as it would enormously stretch the research and make it highly unfocused. There were also considerable limitations regarding the study of the relevance of Pashinian's

declared position. It was related to the fact that the 2020 Karabakh process was very recent and Pashinian is still in process of clarifying his current positions on a number of issues and they are not solidly formed and declared yet. Also it should be considered that no significant literature in the academia on the relevance of Pashinian's declared positions, the correlation of his initial statements with the currently declared positions exists due to the recent nature of the war that has fundamentally transformed the previously ongoing conflict resolution process, so there was no solid academic basis for the study of the Pashinian`s case and it was done almost from scratch.

Findings

The Karabakh conflict is one of the most complex conflicts in the present day that has intensified since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The conflict is not only a territorial dispute but is also an example of ethnic confrontation, which makes it even more complex. For over 30 years, the Karabakh conflict has been attempted to be resolved through various diplomatic, military and political means, but to no avail. The last serious escalation of the conflict occurred in the fall of 2020, due to the aggression of Azerbaijan, turning into a full-scale war that completely changed the status quo that had existed since 1994.

The Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian, who came to power on the wave of the massive public protests during which the population demanded the resignation of the former Armenian leader Serzh Sargsyan, has used the Karabakh issue in order to criticize and discredit the government of Sargsyan and gain public support. Pashinian has criticised Sargsyan's government for incompetent and non-transparent management of the Karabakh issue that was stagnating and remaining unresolved.

Being elected by the majority of votes and being framed as the first democratic leader of Armenia, it was important for Pashinian to make efforts to move the Karabakh conflict resolution process forward, which the perceived democratically elected leader saw as his mission. Pashinian's personal perception that democratic countries are invincible and that no country would dare to attack a democratic Armenia that was trying to gain the support of other powerful Western democracies made him convinced that he can change the flow of the Karabakh conflict resolution process and be more bold in his demands and statements. His perception of himself as a national savior who came to take the country out of the chaos and represent the interests of the nation also contributed to making his approach to conflict resolution more individualistic and lacking checks and

balances. Pashinian's individualistic and discrete approach to conflict resolution led to the fact that other institutions and political forces as well as the public did not have a lot of opportunities to have a say and were largely removed from the negotiation process. This became even more vivid due to the extreme polarization of the Armenian political forces and public who were in one night informed about the conditions of the Joint Statement on Karabakh signed and were not ready to accept them.

In this section, the statements of Prime Minister Pashinian in the pre and postwar periods from 2018 to 2021 are analysed, to understand how his initial statements corresponded to his declarations made in the 2020 post-war period, to what extent they were consistent and to see how the statements impacted the Karabakh negotiation process.

In his statements Pashinian has touched upon a number of issues which have been identified and classified to provide an analysis:

1) The issue of the seven surrounding districts taken by Armenia in the 1994 war
2) The issue of the stakeholders and the format of the negotiations;
3) The issue of transparency of the Karabakh negotiation processes;
4) The issue of Russia's role in the negotiation process and conflict-management.

Analysing the statements made by Nikol Pashinian as an opposition representative and as an official representative (Prime Minister) of Armenia, it becomes evident that his declarations from being extremely categorical in the time when he was an opposition representative shifted to being more moderate and balanced as prime minister of the country. This can be seen as a result of the responsibility gained as a Prime Minister and the necessity to be diplomatic in order to ensure and protect the national interests of the country in different directions. The role of an opposition representative criticising government actions, sometimes even without being constructive due to the lack of real responsibilities and obligations allowed Pashinian to be more categorical. While holding office, because of the need to establish multifaceted foreign policy and pay attention to issues existing in various domains, Pashinian's statements concerning the Karabakh issue can be characterized as more deliberate and balanced. Nevertheless, over the course of his governance, Pashinian has been prone to make categorical statements and adhere to a hard and what is more important, inconsistent line regarding the Karabakh problem that did not benefit the negotiation process.

For example, in the course of his political career, Pashinian made statements on the seven liberated provinces and the status of Karabakh, which went beyond the existing negotiation process, were too tough and uncompromising, and obviously did not have any real chance to be accepted by the Azerbaijani side. Pashinian made this statement in 2019, declaring that "Artsakh is Armenia. Period" (Eurasinet 2019).

At the core of the negotiation process are the Madrid Principles, which call for the return of the territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control. While declaring that Artsakh is Armenia, Pashinian in his statements did not define what he meant by Artsakh - the territory of the former Autonomous Karabakh Oblast, or all the territories liberated in the course of the 1994 war, including the seven districts surrounding the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast that, according to the Madrid Principles, should be returned to Azerbaijani control (*OSCE* 2009).

Moreover, his statement declaring that Artsakh is Armenia came into conflict with the Madrid principle of granting interim status to Karabakh providing guarantees for security and self-governance and future determination of the final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh through a legally binding expression of will (ibid). It should be also taken into account that Armenia's official position on the status of Karabakh before Pashinian came to power was to demand independence for Artsakh, not to make Artsakh a part of Armenia, at least officially. By stating that Artsakh is Armenia, Pashinian not only was contradicting the Madrid principles, but was also making Armenia's position on the status of Karabakh highly inconsistent and unpredictable.

Such statements concerning the official status of Karabakh, which were made by the Prime Minister, not only had the potential to lead the already stagnating negotiation process to a deadlock, but also showed the inconsistency of the Armenian position in resolving the Karabakh issue. This statement runs in conflict with the previously declared position of Armenia, on the basis of which the negotiation process has been built for more than two decades, and shows Armenia's inability to form a single consistent position for participation in the negotiation process under Pashinian. It is interesting that later, during the 44-day war, the representatives of Azerbaijan will call this statement of Pashinian the reason for the outbreak of the war, referring to the fact that such statements led the negotiation process to a deadlock and did not imply a peaceful settlement of the conflict (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 2020). Nikol Pashinian to a large extent did not manage to take a balanced approach to the Karabakh issue, keeping a balance between the

need to compromise with Azerbaijan and meet public expectations. His hard line communicated to the public was not backed up enough with "behind closed door" negotiations with the Azerbaijani side, which in many ways disrupted the negotiation process and kept it in a deadlock.

There are also a number of inconsistencies identified in the declared positions of Nikol Pashinian regarding the Karabakh conflict. For instance, in a radio interview in the pre-war period Pashinyan stated that "there is no land to hand over to Azerbaijan" and has later declared that the territories controlled by Artsakh are of "significance to our survival as a country" (Abrahamian 2018). By doing so, Pashnian was sending a clear message that Armenia was not ready for any concessions on the territories and did not consider returning the seven surrounding districts, as stated in the Madrid principles, to the Azerbaijani control. So, it is crucial to note that in the pre-44-Day Karabakh War period, Nikol Pashinian was frequently stating that no Karabakh territories will be returned and that they have a significant importance to Armenia. These kinds of messages sent could not but cause significant outrage on the Azerbaijani side and signal that barely any negotiations were possible, making Azerbaijan more aggressive and more likely to turn to the violent means to resolve the conflict, which led to the devastating 44-Day War.

However, after the 2020 Karabakh war when the withdrawal of Armenian forces from a number of districts was agreed on, Nikol Pashinian made statements that were implied to undermine the importance of the territories lost, questioning their development capacity and their Armenian roots and origins. This can be vividly illustrated by Pashinian's remarks made on Shushi, the loss of which caused the major outrage of the Armenian public. So, in the post-war period Pashinian has stated that Shushi was a "miserable and pale " city and questioned the importance of keeping Shushi (The Armenian Weekly 2021). The abovementioned shows that from the rhetoric of significance of all the lands held and their remarkable importance for Armenia, after signing the 2020 Joint Statement declaring the withdrawal of the Armenian forces from a number of territories kept under the Karabakh control, Pashinian shifted to questioning the relevance of the lost territories for Armenia. So, his pre-war statements on the territories kept under the Karabakh control did not correspond to the declarations made by him on that issue in the post-war period. Pashinian changed his position on the issue trying to justify the territorial concession that he had agreed upon signing the 2020 Joint Statement on Karabakh, sending to the public the messages that would decrease the public outrage and help him stay in power.

Being an opposition leader, Nikol Pashiniyan has stated that "We need to prevent Armenia's Azerbaijanisation" and in his victory speech in 2018 Pashinian also promised to finally make "the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic an inseparable part of the Republic of Armenia" (Open Democracy 2018). This statements show that in the pre-war period, Pashinian trying to gain public support was trying to utilize the nationalistic sentiments of the people and build the victorious rhetoric stating that the Karabkh issue would be resolved in favor of Armenians. This kind of nationalistic rhetoric and ready-made formulas utilized by Pashinain in his messages to the public could not avoid but being tracked by the Azerbaijani side that perceived Pashinain's position as an uncompromising one and did not really demonstrate his willingness to negotiate on the issues that were still perceived as being unresolved. Undoubtedly, this position clearly conveyed by Pashinain had no chance to add to Azerbaijan's willingness to negotiate and to resolve the conflict in a peaceful way. It is interesting to note that after the 44-Day War, Pashinian has numerously stated the territorial concessions were the only existing alternative for Armenia, a "painful decision, but a necessary and inevitable one" (Hetq 2020). Speaking about the territorial concessions which he agreed on signing the 2020 Joint Statement, Pashinian stated: "There was no option. There was a thesis that existed throughout the entire history of the negotiations, and it was a hardened reality". In the course of the analysis it becomes evident that Nikol Pashinian's publicly declared positions have dramatically changed from the times of him being an opposition leader to the after-war period when he as a Prime Minister of the country signed the 2020 Joint Statement. Coming to power on the wave of the nationalistic and victorious sentiments, representing himself as a savior who was going to resolve the Karabakh issue in favor of Armenia, after the 44 Day War Pashinain has dramatically changed his rhetoric to justify the decisions made. The change of his rhetoric declaring that territorial concessions were the only option had a potential to help the Prime Minister keep the power and not to be perceived as a traitor preserving the public support.

However, Nikol Pashinyan's positions on territorial concessions differed not only in the pre-war and post-war periods. In the times of Nikol Pashinian being an opposition leader, his position on the Karabakh issue can also hardly be characterized as a consistent one. In his book "The other side of the Earth" Nikol Pashinian concerning the Karabakh issue has written that:

"The rationality says: because of the part, the whole cannot be endangered, and at least, it is necessary to declare, loudly declare, that we do not need these

fields, that we are ready to return these lands in the name of peace" (Pashinian 2018).

In his book Nikol Pashinian has stated that territorial concessions should be made by Armenia in order to reach peace. This comes into conflict with his latter statements about the unity of Armenia and Karabakh and the essential role of the Karabakh lands for Armenia. As can be seen Pashianian's position on the territorial concessions has numerously changed over time from the narrative that "we do not need the fields" in the early times of him being an opposition leader to the narrative that the Nagorno-Karabakh territories are "necessary for our survival as a state" in the times when he was trying to gain power and public support and in the first years of him being a newly elected Prime Minister and, finally to the narrative that the territorial concessions were the only option. Based on the analysis conducted it becomes evident that the publicly declared positions of Nikol Pashinain on territorial concessions can barely be characterized as consistent ones. His nationalistic rhetoric on Nagorno-Karabkh being an indispensable part of Armenia, in the revolutionary period and at the early stage of his Prime Minister career before the 44-Day Karabakh war, strongly communicated to the Armenian public to gain support but not being backed up by any talks with the Azerbaijani side has given Azerbaijan the room to blame Armenia for the unwillingness to negotiate and resolve the issue at the negotiation table, creating a possibility for Azerbaijan to turn to violence.

In the pre-war period Pashinian's statements about the need to change the format of the negotiations, bringing back to table the representatives of Artsakh can also be considered as a cause of the disruption of the negotiation processes as they were also breaking the worked out pattern of the negotiations held and were perceived by the Azerbaijan's government as categorical and unacceptable ones. This position taken by Pashinian actually implied that the negotiation process should *de facto* start from scratch undermining the previous negotiations held. The OSCE Minsk group released a statement urging the sides to refrain from "demanding unilateral changes to the format without agreement of the other party" (OSCE, March 9).

However, Pashinian was persistent in declaring that Artsakh should become a full-fledged negotiator stating that:

"Only the authorities of the Republic of Artsakh can speak on behalf of the Republic of Artsakh, as the Republic of Armenia can speak on behalf of the Republic of Armenia. The Republic of Armenia is a party to the conflict and will speak for itself on its behalf" (Artsakh Press 2018).

Even though the Joint Statement on Karabakh was signed without Karabakh official participation, as only Armenian, Azerbaijani and Russian leaders have signed the document, still in the post-war period in his speeches Pashinian has stated that he made the decision on signing the Statement based on the talks with the Artsakh representatives who have stated that the war should be stopped, showing that the Artsakh position was also taken into account. Moreover, in his article about the origins of the 44-Day War, Pashinian stated that the expulsion of Artsakh from the negotiation process was the major failure of the Armenian government over the course of the years (The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia 2021). This kind of declarations have shown that Pashinian kept being consistent with his pre-war declaration about the necessity of including Artsakh in the negotiation process even after the Statement signed, explaining the non-participation of the Artsakh representatives in the 2020 Karabakh process by the impossibility to include Artsakh in the process at that escalating stage of the war when the decision on the cessation of the hostilities should have been made immediately.

However, it seems that Pashinian was consistent in his positions on the issue due to the fact that his consistency in including Artsakh as a negotiation party made it possible for him to blame the former Armenian governments for excluding Artsakh out of the negotiation process. He stated that the expulsion of Artsakh has been detrimental for the conflict resolution process and that the mistakes made by the former governments haven't given him any real possibility to avoid the disastrous outcomes, specifically in the situation of an active military conflict. Pashinian has been consistent on the issue of the negotiation parties as this gave him a chance not to take the responsibility for the outcomes and keep the public support highlighting that he made everything possible in the process disrupted by the previous government. However, the question of to what extent his uncompromisingly publicly expressed position on including Artsakh as a full-fledged participant in the negotiation process, have contributed to the intensification of Azerbaijan's willingness to provoke a real war, still remains open. While receiving criticism for plaguing the negotiation process to the deadlock by deliberately taking such a categorical position of officially including the representatives of Karabakh in the negotiation that in no scenario will be accepted by the Azerbaijani side Pashinian stated that:

"The negotiations have already come to a deadlock. In fact, I offer a way out of the deadlock" (The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia 2018).

It is interesting to note that Pashinian himself has numerously stated that the negotiation process was in a deadlock and being asked about Armenia's interpretation of Madrid principles under his governance, refrained from answering, stating that:

"Of course, we can present our own interpretation of these principles, but there will be no use, because our objective is not the engagement in a verbal dispute, but the efficient negotiation process" (The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia 2019).

Pashinian has also made it vocal that looking for compromise is not something that is being on the agenda for the Armenian government due to the unwillingness of Azerbaijan to accept bringing Artsakh back to the negotiation table. He stated that: "I consider any discussion of compromise senseless" (The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia 2018).

Which significantly disrupted the sheer essence of the negotiation process aimed at finding compromises in the diplomatic domain in order not to be reduced to the situation of an intense armed conflict. This kind of framing of the negotiation process as a verbal dispute, signaling about the stagnation of the negotiation process and deadlock it ended up in, pointlessness of future talks and compromises have negatively impacted the negotiation process, making it even more irrelevant without any prospects of future breakthroughs. It is consequential that by discrediting and undermining the negotiation process stating its uselessness and irrelevance, the conflicting parties are prone to refer to war means in order to resolve the existing dispute, which happened in the Karabakh case.

It is also interesting to note that Pashinian's initial criticism delivered to the former government of Armenia on the lack of transparency of the negotiation process could be used to characterise the negotiations under his governance as well. The existing opposition was strongly criticising Pashinian for keeping in secret the content of the informal talks between Aliyev and him, for example, after the Davos meeting when Pashinian refused to disclose the discussed issues (Caucasian Knot 2019). Criticising the former government for keeping the negotiation process in secret, Pashinian coming to the power has promised that:

"Should the talks result in a settlement that I would personally consider to be a good option, let no one think that I will sign any confidential paper or take any secret action. If I see that there is an option that needs discussing, I will come to you and give you the details of it, after which you will decide whether to accept the settlement or not" (The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia 2018).

This kind of criticism targeted the former government and the promises to ensure a transparent negotiation process were crucial for Pashinian to gain public support in terms of the Karabakh issue as well as to help him to gain and keep the power. However, the main claim of the Armenian society and opposition forces to Pashinian after the war is that the negotiations on Karabakh before and during the war can be characterised as "closed" and lacking transparency, and that the decision to sign the Statement with painful losses for the Armenian society was not presented to the public approval and discussion as promised, but was kept in the strictest confidence until the very last minutes.

In the address to the nation on November 12, 2020 Pashinian states that he had to keep the negotiation process in secret and did not consult with the public in order not to give detailed information about the real situation to the enemy (The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia 2020). Moreover, one of the reasons for keeping the negotiations process in secret, as stated by him, is that his promise to present the details to public for the approval concerned the options for the settlement of the conflict, which the agreement signed is not about, as Pashinian states that the document signed "does not envisage a substantive solution to the issue, but only a cessation of hostilities" (ibid). However, this kind of explanation is not fully convincing and raises numerous questions as the Statement signed included such conditions as handing over lands to Azerbaijan, and not only the buffer zones discussed in the Madrid principles, but also the territories of the former Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, deployment of peacekeeping forces, issue of the IDPs and refugees, and establishment of new transport links, which makes it impossible to characterise the Statement as not including the topics that he has promised to discuss with the public prior to signing any kind of a document.

Hence, Pashinian's initial claims about keeping the process transparent and open with taking no secret actions and signing any confidential paper without presenting it to the public were inconsistent with his post-war statements on the importance of keeping the negotiations in secret due to a number of reasons. It can be assumed that Pashinian kept the details of the negotiations secret, realising that the terms discussed would not be accepted by the Armenian society and would face a serious backlash from the public demanding the resignation of the leader. By keeping the negotiations secret Pashinian managed to sign the Statement to stop the hostilities. The shift in the position concerning the openness of the negotiation process was also defined by his desire to minimize the public outrage, demonstrate that there was no alternative to keeping the process in secret and increase his chances of staying in power.

Pashinian's position on Russia's role in the negotiation process has also been significantly inconsistent and became one of the factors that could have led to the disruption of the negotiation process. In 2016, after the April War, being a representative of the opposition forces, Pashinian declared that Russia with its actions *de facto* provoked the war, highlighting Russia's negative role in the conflict resolution process, stating that Russia uses the conflict in order to promote its own interests and benefit from the confrontation (Tsargrad 2020). Being an opposition leader, Pashinian was criticising Russia's actions in the region which could have caused tensions between the Russian government and Pashinian as a politician. Even after Pashinian becoming the Prime Minister, the tension between the Russian and Pashinian's governments was increasing, and the Russian government perceiving Armeni as its sphere of influence, criticised the Pashinian for being non-constructive (*RIA News* 2018). Azerbaijani side, closely following the existing dynamic, could not but have noticed that with Pashianian becoming the Prime Minister of Armenia, the relations between Russia and Armenia became more complex. For Azerbaijan it created a possibility to decrease the Russian support to Armenia, continue building close relations with the Russian government and prevent Russia from fully supporting Armenia in the conflict.

Even though, as a Prime Minister of the country, Pashinian has significantly reviewed his position on Russia realising that building at least stable and respectful relations with Russia is one of the Armenian foreign policy priorities, the already existing tensions were visible for the adversary that now had more possibilities to resolve the conflict with preferred military means. As a Prime Minister, Pashinian had to take into consideration the already existing geopolitical, military and economic realities and pay attention to the development of the Russian-Armenian relations which were significant for the country's economy and security. Pashinian called Russia a "strategic partner", referring to it as "friendly Russia" taking into consideration that Russia's role in keeping the Karabakh conflict resolution in a peaceful flow was considerable (Hetq 2019). In 2018 Pashinian stated that: We all understand that Russia, as a superpower, has an opportunity to prevent a war (Armenpress 2018). By making statements about Russia being a friend and partner of Armenia, Pashinian tried to ensure the security of the country and non-aggression of Azerbaijan and make sure that Russia will not shift to supporting Azerbaijan in the negotiation process, which will be critical to Armenia and Artsakh. During the 44-Day War, Pashinian has numerously stated that "in case of necessity Russia will fulfill its treaty obligations".

Thus, it can be stated that performing as an opposition representative, Pashinian turned to criticising Russia's actions in terms of the Karabakh conflict, and the strategy was primarily chosen as it give Pashinian a possibility to discredit the in-action government that was strongly relying on Russia in terms of Karabakh issue and was maintaining close ties with the Russian government. Pashinian`s criticism of Russia's role in the Karabakh conflict resolution process helped him to gain the support of the public that lost trust and was disappointed by Sargsyan's government which was closely cooperating with Russia. At the same time Pashinian's messages on Russia sent to the public reached also the Russian government being dissatisfied by the existing rhetoric and the Azerbaijani government that saw the issues in Russian-Armenian relations as an opportunity to develop its relations with Russia and prevent Russia from supporting Armenia with military, diplomatic and economic means. However, Pashinian has evidently changed his position on Russia's role in the Karabakh process stating the importance of Russian-Armenian partnership as soon as he came to power as a Prime Minister of the country. Being in a position of an official leader of the country, Pashinian changed his publicly expressed views on Russia's role in the Karabakh process, gaining the real responsibility for the security and wellbeing of the country and taking into account the geopolitical realities, already existing agreements and etc. that for more than two decades have shaped the Karabakh process.

Thus, it can be stated that Pashinian's inconsistent statements made on a number of issues such as the status of Karabakh, the format of negotiations, Russia's involvement and others discussed above, uncompromising statements and harsh rhetoric applied have significantly disrupted the negotiation process before the 44-Day War and, to a large extent did not correspond to the real actions and decisions made by the Pashinian government and Pashinian, in particular, after signing the peace treaty that has caused an intensive public outrage and disapproval. Even though in some cases, such as participation of the Artsakh representatives in the negotiations process, Pashinian remained quite consistent even in his post-war rhetoric, still on a number of issues his positions declared in the pre-war and war period diverged from those declared in the post-war period. Most of the shifts in the positions declared by Pashinian were aimed at gaining support of the public and political power in the country and staying in office.

Conclusion

The analysis of Nikol Pahinian's publicly declared statements has made it evident that his statements had a significant impact on the Karabakh negotiation process, which aligns with a broader academic framework stating that the publicly declared statements of the leaders have the capacity to impact the negotiation process. Taking into account the existing academic approach that the publicly declared positions of the leaders can either move the negotiation process forward and lead to the diplomatic resolution of the conflict or disrupt the negotiation process and reduce the conflict to a full-scale war, as a result of this study, it can be stated that mainly due to their inconsistencies and categorical nature and harsh, uncompromising rhetoric, Pashinian's publicly declared positions have undermined and disrupted the negotiation process. A balanced approach to negotiations, stating that to reach success in the conflict resolution process the leader should keep a balance between taking a harder line to meet public expectations and messaging the adversaries about the readiness to negotiations and compromise, was not successfully applied by the Armenian Prime Minister. Pashinian did not manage to balance the messaging forthe domestic public and the adversary which in the end led to the disruption of the negotiation process and Azerbaijan's willingness to turn to military means, being provoked by the messages sent by the Prime Minister and seeing no room for negotiations and compromises.

The existing idea in academia that the positions that leaders publicly declare are meant to gain public support and help them stay in office has also been revealed in the studied case. As revealed by the researchthe publicly declared positions of Pashinian to a large extent did not correlate with each other and have changed in the pre and post-war periods depending on the changing circumstances in order to justify the decisions made by the government, decrease public outrage by convincing the public that no alternatives in fact existed, and maximise the leader's probabilities of staying in power. Pashinian`s pre-war publicly declared positions on the legal status of the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, the transparency of the negotiation process, Russia's role in the negotiation process and the deployment of peacekeeping troops in Karabakh to a large extent did not correlate with his later ones and were changed to maximally legitimise the actions taken and increase his chances of remaining in power.

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LOUISA KHACHATRYAN

MEDIA FRAMING AND OFFICIAL PROPAGANDA IN ARMENIA DURING THE 45-DAY ARTSAKH WAR

Abstract: *This study analyzes the role of the media during the 45-day war in Artsakh in 2020. It aims to understand how the local media responded and reacted to official propaganda, particularly to the statements of the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. The research question of the capstone project is "What was the media framing of the official statements of the Armenian Prime Minister throughout the war?" To answer this question, the study first provides a short timeline of the war and the PM's statements. Secondly, it conducts a descriptive content analysis of the three local media outlets, which are selected through purposive sampling. The analysis shows that the government-imposed censorship as well as the political economy of the media significantly affected the way the PM's statements were being framed. The study tries to understand to what extent there was a "rally round the flag" effect and what caused certain behavior from different media outlets.*
Keywords: *Artsakh war, media framing, propaganda, Nikol Pashinyan, rally round the flag*

Introduction

The unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resumed on September 27, 2020, when Azerbaijan launched a large-scale offensive along the full length of the line of contact. Azerbaijani armed forces targeted not only military infrastructure, but also civilian settlements and people. People were forced to hide in shelters to stay safe and not become a target of oftentimes indiscriminate Azerbaijani military strikes. The well-preparedness of thee Azerbaijani armed forces, as well as the training supported by Turkey and the wide scope of the war proved that the offensive attack was premeditated and was jointly organized by Azerbaijan and Turkey with the extensive engagement of mercenaries. Within hours, both the president of Artsakh and Prime Minister of Armenia declared martial law and announced a general mobilization of males over 18.

Different media outlets, both local and foreign, started intensively covering the situation in the front line, Azerbaijani war crimes and Turkey's political and military support. The local media outlets were mainly relying on the official

sources and government narrative when covering the war. State actions, particularly the framing "Haghtelu enq", were mainly directed towards impacting public behavior and creating a rally-round-the-flag effect in the country. The state actions during the war were intended to get increased public support for the government and particularly the PM. The research question of the project is "What was the media framing of the official statements of the Armenian Prime Minister throughout the 44-day Artsakh war?" The study proposes two hypotheses: there was rally-round-the-flag during all 45 days of the war, and no media outlet ever questioned the Prime Minister's narrative framed as 'Haghtelu enq' (We will win!); The support for the Prime Minister's narrative about the war in the media heavily depended on the political economy (including ownership type) of the selected media outlets.

Limitations to Freedom of Speech Under Martial Law

This section provides an interpretation of the Martial Law of the Republic of Armenia. As noted in the introduction, Armenia declared martial law on the first day of the war. It is important to note that a part of Article 7 of the martial law implies "limitation of press and mass-media freedom by means of preliminary censorship (Irtek – Legal Information Center). Moreover, on October 8th, the Armenian government made several amendments in the martial law, according to which:

1. it was prohibited to criticize, deny, or question actions of the state and local self-government bodies aimed at protecting state security and the enforcement of the legal regime of martial law,
2. it was prohibited to question or spread propaganda against the defense capacity and security of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh,
3. the Police of the Republic of Armenia was authorized to take the necessary measures to ensure that the above-described reports and publications were taken down as well as to temporarily confiscate printing equipment, radio broadcasters, amplifiers, and duplicators (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh).

Methodology

As noted in the introduction, the research question of the current project is "What was the media framing of the official statements of the Armenian Prime Minister throughout the war?" To answer this question, the paper conducts a

qualitative analysis. It first presents a short timeline of the war and the most important statements/messages of the Prime Minister of Armenia. The paper uses the website EVN Report for this part of the research since that website provides the chronology of official updates for each day of the war. For Pashinyan's statements and interviews, the official website of the Prime Minister was used. The study then conducts a descriptive content analysis of three Armenian media outlets that feature video interviews on a regular basis with invited experts and politicians. The selected media outlets are Armenian Public TV, 168.am and Factor.am. The media outlets are selected through purposive sampling, meaning that the selection of these media outlets was based on personal judgment considering the following facts:

1. Public TV has national coverage (as well as a channel on Youtube) and is the only government-funded and owned broadcast visual media.
2. "168.am" has both a news website and featured periodic video interviews uploaded on Youtube and social media channels, as well as broadcast on ArmNews TV. This media has a more oppositional editorial policy.
3. Factor.am does not have TV broadcast opportunities but has a significant subscriber base and viewership on social networks (350K on Facebook and 200K on Youtube). It has video content both on its website and social networks. This media is independent, mainly donor-funded, and leans towards airing pro-government narratives.

The interview programs on the three listed media outlets were selected through convenience sampling (regular program format, periodic interviews on a daily or weekly basis, relevant topics - among other reasons) and were taken from the heading "Programs" on the website of each media outlet. These are "Interview with Petros Ghazaryan" on Public TV, "Review" on 168.am, and "Yerevani Jamanakov"[1] on Factor.am. The study monitored these interview programs since they were airing the most often and were convenient to find on their websites. The study monitored all the broadcast interviews that were conducted throughout the 44 days of the war in the three programs mentioned.

The content analysis of these interview programs on the selected three media outlets provides a balanced view of how the Armenian Prime Minister's messaging during the war was being framed and narrated for the public.

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[1] Note: Here it is important to note that there is another interview program on Factor.am named "Interview". However, it does not have any particular schedule and was extremely difficult to identify and monitor. Therefore, the study monitored the above-mentioned program.

Research Findings & Analysis

Timeline of the war and Pashinyan's statements

On the first day of the war, most of the Armenian officials and ministry representatives publicly addressed the escalation and condemned Azerbaijan for the use of force and violation of the trilateral ceasefire of 1994. The MFA and MoD of Artsakh and Armenia, the president of Artsakh, the human rights defenders of Artsakh and Armenia, as well as the PM of Armenia gave public addresses and represented the military situation in the front line and the Armenian army's preparedness to defeat the enemy. On that day the Armenian PM gave two public addresses to the nation and one to the National Assembly. Additionally, two live conferences were held by the representative of the Armenian MoD Artsrun Hovhannisyan. The PM's first address called for unity and urged the nation to trust only official sources and not believe the adversary's disinformation. Shortly after, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs made a joint statement, where they condemned the use of force and urged the sides to cease the hostilities and resume the negotiations. Armenia's Security Council held its first special session to discuss what steps had to be taken in the defense against the enemy. Later, the PM addressed the nation by urging everyone to stay united since only in that case can the country ensure resistance to the threats of the enemy. He also drew the attention of the OSCE Mink Group and the international community to the seriousness of the issue. Moreover, Pashinyan referred to Turkey's possible intervention and said that "The outbreak of large-scale war in the South Caucasus can have unpredictable consequences. It can spill over regional borders, magnify in scale and threaten international security and stability" (Statements and messages of the prime minister of RA). In his National Assembly speech, Pashinyan stated that he is ready to sacrifice himself for the Motherland and added that there is no alternative to Armenian victory. At the end of the day, the EU & NATO representatives referred to the clashes, called for an immediate cessation of the hostilities and urged the sides to resume the negotiations and find a peaceful solution. The PM held a phone conversation with the Russian president and expressed his concerns regarding the hostilities (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh).

On the second day of the war, Turkey's direct involvement, as well as its political and military support to Azerbaijan, became apparent. Turkey has been accused of sending mercenaries from Syria to Azerbaijan, andTurkish F16s were observed bring utilized in support of Azerbaijan. On that day the Hayastan All Armenian Fund also made a statement about launching a global fundraising campaign in support of the Armenian army. The Azerbaijani army started

expanding the geography of hostilities to the territory of Armenia and attacked the Vardenis region on the third day of the war. On September 30, the MFA of the RA issued a statement demanding the withdrawal of Turkish armed forces from the conflict zone. The Armenian PM held holding telephone conversations with the leaders of both foreign states and international organizations by expressing concerns over the hostilities and regional instability. Pashinyan started giving interviews to the global news outlets and providing information about the Azerbaijani offensive along the entire length of the line of contact (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh). On September 30, during the meeting of the Security Council the Chief of the General Staff of the Armenian Armed Forces "presented our losses and assessment of the Armed Forces on the current situation noting that measures must be taken within two to three days to stop the war, otherwise in the event of fighting with this intensity, our resources will be depleted in a short time and with each passing day we will have more unfavorable conditions for the negotiation process" (The message of Chief of the General staff of the RA armed Forces 2020). It is crucial to note that this information became apparent for the media and the public after the war, while the government was aware of it on the 4th day of the war. On the same day, the PM gave interviews to BBC, The Spectator, 60 minutes on Russia-1 TV station and Washington Post. In his interviews, he highlighted the international community's misperception about the essence of the Karabakh conflict by emphasizing that "It is not about territory. It is about people, about humans, about security" (Interviews and press conferences). The PM also added that Turkey's involvement in the conflict poses an existential threat to the security of the region. Throughout the fighting, a few foreign and Armenian journalists came under fire and were injured. The next day Pashinyan said that Armenian diplomacy recorded a victory since the international community had registered that Azerbaijan is supported by Turkey and the Syrian mercenaries and terrorists. He wrote, "Artsakh is fighting against international terrorism, the targets of which are not separated by geopolitical borders" (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh). One of the war crimes was noticed on the 5th day of fighting, when the Armenian side found syringes in the pockets of Azerbaijani soldiers, which means that they were under the influence of drugs (GAH!).

On October 1st, the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issued a joint statement calling the sides for an immediate ceasefire and a restart of the negotiations without any conditions. On the same day, the French president and the Russian foreign ministry claimed that they have information about Turkey's transportation of Syrian mercenaries to Azerbaijan. The Armenian government

announced that for security reasons additional restrictions of movement from Armenia to Artsakh will take place starting from October 2nd. On the next day, Artsakh's MFA published a statement calling for the international recognition of the Republic of Artsakh and arguing that it would be the only mechanism for restoring peace in the region. The PM of Armenia addressed the nation, saying that the enemy is there to continue with their genocidal policy, however in case of unity, the Armenians will be able to win. The PM stated that "Aside from the military units of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces, Syrian mercenaries and terrorists; special units of the Turkish Armed Forces are on the ground" (Statements and messages of the prime minister of RA). He repeatedly stated that Armenia will win the war and that "only victory is the ending that we imagine at the end of this struggle" (ibid). Since October 4th, the enemy started targeting the city of Shushi and its vital civilian infrastructure, while continuing the heavy shelling of Artsakh's capital Stepanakert. Within a few hours, the president of Artsakh announced about a counterattack by the Armenian side implying the destruction of the military airport in Ganja, Azerbaijan. The latter is considered a military facility of strategic importance for the enemy. In his address on October 5th, Nikol Pashinyan called all the servicemen and those who finished their service to the army to mobilize for the defense of their homeland. As said in his speech "This is a new Sardarapat, this is not just a Karabakh issue, this is a continuation of a genocidal policy against the Armenians, and we should protect our people from genocide" (ibid). On the same day, it was announced for the first time that the Armenian armed forces had pulled back from some parts of the front line for tactical purposes (GAH!).

Active military actions continued taking place with the participation of Syrian mercenaries and terrorists. Artsakh's Foreign Ministry called the governments of different countries to stop arming Azerbaijan. Moreover, on October 6th Artsakh's president called for the formation of a new anti-terrorist coalition to fight global terrorism. Meanwhile, Turkey's foreign minister visited Baku and criticized the international efforts that were not able to settle the conflict over which Armenia and Azerbaijan have been fighting for decades. On the next day, Pashinyan gave an interview to Russia's first channel. The PM referred to the topic of international terrorism and argued that "compromise is needed to resolve the conflict." Pashinyan also referred to Turkey's role and its genocidal and expansionist policies in the region. On October 8th, the Armenian government adopted a new policy on the "Limitations to freedom of speech under martial law". According to the decision, it was "prohibited to criticize or question actions of the state" as well as

"to question or spread propaganda against the defense capacity and security of the RA and Artsakh" (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh). Later that day, Pashinyan gave an interview to TV5Monde of France and called for the international recognition of the Republic of Artsakh.

Following a call by Russia's president to cease the hostilities, the foreign ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia met and agreed on humanitarian ceasefire that was implemented on October 10th. However, the Azerbaijani side violated the ceasefire, and it became impossible for the Red Cross to complete the task of exchanging the prisoners of war and retrieving the bodies of the killed servicemen. On October 14th, the prime minister addressed the nation delivering several messages. Firstly, he said that "the Karabakh conflict has no military solution" and claimed that Armenia is ready to resume the negotiations with Azerbaijan. He then compared Erdogan to Hitler and again noted Turkey's genocidal policy. Finally, Pashinyan stated that "I am committed to tell our people the truth, unlike Azerbaijan, which conceals its thousands of casualties from its own people" (Statements and messages of the prime minister of RA). On the next day Turkey banned a humanitarian flight that was sent by the Armenian-American community to civilians affected by the war. The Armenian government decided to ban Turkish goods in protest of the latter's support to Azerbaijan during the war (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh).

Yet another humanitarian truce was agreed upon on October 18th, following a meeting of the foreign ministers on the previous day. However, this attempt also failed as Azerbaijani forces continued their offensive. Moreover, it became known after the war that on October 19th, Russia's president Putin proposed an end to the hostilities and return to the negotiation table, which Pashinyan did not agree to (Putin says Armenia could have stopped the war and kept SHUSHA 2020). The latter gave an interview to Tass, saying that he was ready to meet with the Azerbaijani president in Moscow and find a compromise for the conflict. Two days later, in his address to the nation the PM said that "any hope for a diplomatic solution is not viable at this stage as Azerbaijan is refusing to compromise" (Statements and messages of the prime minister of RA). The PM called everyone to form volunteer battalions and apply to military committees as the situation remained critical. He assured that the Armenian side is going to win the war and there was no alternative to that. Another important event that took place on October 21st was the meeting of the former presidents of Armenia and Artsakh to discuss the war situation. The prime minister gave an interview to the Russian Interfax the next day. He claimed that Armenia is not against deploying Russian peacekeepers

in the conflict zone. On October 23rd, the president of Artsakh wrote an open letter to the Russian President asking for support in ending the war and resuming the negotiations (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh).

Another turning point throughout the war was the demonstration of an interactive map by the representative of the Defense Ministry, Artsrun Hovhannisyan during his daily briefing on October 24th. It is noteworthy that the map was presented a month after the beginning of the hostilities. The map showed the latest developments on the front line, pointing to the areas that were under the adversary's control, the areas where the enemy was pushed back and the areas where active military operations were taking place. Another humanitarian ceasefire was brokered on October 25th. However, it did not hold because of attacks by the Azerbaijani armed forces. The next day Nikol Pashinyan addressed the nation and assured that "the Armenian side has done everything to maintain the ceasefire." Another crucial statement made by Pashinyan is that "Azerbaijan is not looking for a resolution to the conflict but rather the capitulation of Karabakh" (Statements and messages of the prime minister of RA). He also noted that Armenia is ready for "painful concessions", but will not accept the capitulation of Artsakh. The prime minister's wife announced that a women's unit will start military training the next day and head to join the defense army of Artsakh.

In another address to the nation, Pashinyan referred to Azerbaijani war propaganda and the false announcements about their victory. However, he assured that Azerbaijani people would not ever hear such news and their desire to capture Artsakh would never come true. At the end, Pashinyan added "Let's agree to not be afraid of anything. And you, the Armenian people, are the winners" (Statements and messages of the prime minister of RA). On the same day, the commander of the defense army Jalal Harutyunyan got injured on the battlefield, and he had to appoint Mikayel Arzumanyan to that position. On October 28th, Azerbaijan's president announced that he was ready to go to Moscow and meet the Armenian prime minister for talks on the conflict. However, he was suspicious of the effectiveness of the meeting with the new government of Armenia. The next day, Artsakh's president announced that Azerbaijani forces were several kilometers from Shushi and warned about the danger they were encountering in the defense operations (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh). On October 30th, Pashinyan gave interviews to several media outlets such as Telegraph, European Post, Foreign Policy and Tageblatt. The PM stated that the "optimal solution is the deployment of Russian peacekeepers," but added that it has to be acceptable to all the parties to the conflict (Interviews and press conferences).

Another war crime took place on October 31st when Azerbaijani forces started using phosphorous munitions over Artsakh, thus setting fires to areas close to civilian settlements. On the same day, Armenia's PM sent a letter to Russia's president and officially requested their assistance. In response to that, Russian MFA said that they would provide assistance if the battle transfers to the territory of Armenia. On November 2nd, Pashinyan gave an interview to the Jerusalem Post and expressed concerns over the presence of terrorists in the South Caucasus region and condemned Israel for arming Azerbaijan and supporting Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression. During these days, the military operations near Shushi were continuing and the representative of the defense ministry assured that Shushi will not fall and will remain Armenian. However, on November 8th, Aliyev claimed that Azerbaijani forces had succeeded in capturing Shushi, which the Armenian side opposed in its official statements (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh).

On November 9th, 17 political parties issued a statement demanding the resignation of Pashinyan and the government. The parties argued that the government was not able to handle the crisis and to prevent the war. The spokesperson of Artsakh's president announced that Shushi was no longer under Armenian control, which caused tense public discourse and grievances. The spokesperson said, "False calls of victory and Facebook speculations will lead us to losing everything bit-by-bit" (Artsakh spotlight Karabakh). However, after several minutes, Pashinyan wrote on his Facebook page "The battles for Shushi continue." Late that night the news about the capitulation of Artsakh was announced, and the document signed by Pashinyan was published on different platforms.

Framing of the Armenian Public TV

This section presents the content analysis of one of the leading media outlet's video interviews with the invited experts and politicians. The section discusses how the Armenian Public TV referred to the official statements of the government, namely Nikol Pashinyan, throughout the war. This section reviews the interviews and aims at understanding if the narrative is mainly supportive of the government or if there are cases of questioning the official statements or providing alternative thinking for the public discourse.

Firstly, it is important to note that the TV show "Interview with Petros Ghazaryan" usually airs every day with invited guests who talk about the political, social, and economic developments of the country. However, from the first day of the war until October 12th no interview was conducted and uploaded for this TV show. This means that two weeks during the war the show "Interview with Petros

Ghazaryan" did not appear on TVs and there was no discussion about either the war or the statements made by Pashinyan. The first interview since the war was conducted on October 12th with the Minister of Health Arsen Torosyan. The interviewer starts with the statement about the humanitarian ceasefire that was agreed on October 10th, but had been broken by the adversary. The main question on the agenda was the initial purpose of the ceasefire and the proper functioning of the Ministry of Health during the war. Another issue that was emphasized during the interview was the COVID-19 pandemic and the surge in the number of cases during the war. However, the minister assured that the central attention of the healthcare system at the time was on serving wounded servicemen and ensuring their well-being (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

The guest of the interview on October 14th was the vice president of the National Assembly of Armenia, Alen Simonyan. The main issues on the agenda were the PM's address to the nation, Armenia's relations with the Russian Federation, Turkey's involvement in the war, and the possible recognition of the Republic of Artsakh. The interviewer opened the program with the mentioning of the prime minister's address to the nation on that day, and noted Russia's call to cease the hostilities. Alen Simonyan repeated the PM's statement that "there is no alternative to our victory." The interviewee assured that the government completes its diplomatic mission and does every possible thing to succeed in it. Moreover, he stated that the government sees no alternative to the resolution of the conflict outside the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group. Another crucial aspect of the interview is the mentioning of the July clashes, which the PM also stressed several times in his addresses. Alen Simonyan noted that the clashes were proof of Azerbaijan's inability to fight alone, and therefore its willingness to involve Syrian mercenaries and terrorists with the help of Turkey. Simonyan stated that Armenia has successful strategic relations with its counterpart Russia and there are no concerns in that respect. He also noted that all the resources are allocated towards the recognition of the Republic of Artsakh by the international community as well as Armenia. Finally, Simonyan stressed the primacy of determining the status of Artsakh and the security of its people (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

On October 15th, the guest of Petros Ghazaryan's show was Aram Sargsyan, the leader of the oppositional "Hanrapetutyun" party, as well as the brother of national hero Vazgen Sargsyan and his successor as PM in 1999-2000. They discussed the proposed plans on solving the Karabakh conflict and tried to understand which option is the most acceptable for the Republic of Armenia. Sargsyan noted that the primary condition for resuming the negotiations is to stop

the war. He also mentioned Turkey's direct involvement in the conflict and the key role of the international community in stopping the war and fighting against terrorism in the South Caucasus region and globally. The interviewee stressed the importance of rallying around the government and doing everything possible to defeat the enemy. He repeated the PM's statement on rejecting the formula "territories for peace" ,which is a part of Lavrov's plan. However, both Sargsyan and Petrosyan agreed that Russia's role in the conflict is influential and maintaining stable relations with the latter is important. Finally, Sargsyan said that the president of Azerbaijan is not honest with its nation and spreads fake news about their success on the front line (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

The next interview was conducted with the representative of the Armenian Defense Ministry, Artsrun Hovhannisyan on October 20th. The discussion was mainly about the military operations and the overall situation in the front line. The interviewee provided details of the adversary's military operations, the deployment of forces and Armenian army's resistance to it. Hovhannisyan ensured that the Armenian armed forces can push back the enemy and show good resistance to its offensive. He also encouraged public support for the armed forces, and advised people to follow the official news and not spread false information. The MoD representative emphasized the involvement of Turkey and its military and political support to Azerbaijan and expressed concerns over the military equipment that is being used against the Armenian forces. Hovhannisyan also talked about the human and equipment losses of the Armenian defense army, but claimed that the fighting spirit of the army is extremely high (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

Another interview was conducted with political scientist, former Artsakh government official Edgar Elbakyan on October 22nd. The main issues discussed during the interview were Turkey's interest and attempts at increasing influence in the South Caucasus region. Elbakyan talked about the public discourse in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. He mentioned that the Azerbaijani public shows great enthusiasm because of the information provided by their government about their military successes. However, the interviewee ensured that the government of Azerbaijan often provides false information to its public to get their support. Elbakyan claimed that the adversary's preconditions for resuming the negotiations assume the capitulation of Artsakh, which the PM also mentioned in his address a day before. The last thing discussed during the interview referred to the meeting of the ex-presidents of the RA. Elbakyan said that it was an essential step towards unity in these difficult and fatal times for the Armenian people (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

On October 27th, a day after the third humanitarian ceasefire was violated, the guest of the TV show was the chair of Arabic studies at the YSU, Davit Hovhannisyan. The interview started with the conversation about the consequences of the ceasefire violation and the role of the OSCE Minsk Group in the process. The interviewee emphasized the inequality of power in the front line as well as Turkey's role and interest in the region. Finally, the interviewer asked Hovhannisyan about his opinion on Vazgen Manukyan's call to the government to resign and transfer power to the army. Hovhannisyan argued that it is crucial to keep the unity and consolidate all resources during wartime. The guest of the October 29th interview was Andranik Kocharyan, the chairman of the standing committee on defense and security of the National Assembly of the RA. It was the day when Artsakh's president announced that the enemy is several kilometers from Shushi. The questions discussed during the interview included the decisions adopted by the National Assembly towards facilitating the organization of the armed forces, mobilization of resources as well as punishments in cases of desertion. They also talked about the opposition's call for resignation, as discussed with the previous interviewee. Kocharyan said that it was an unexpected announcement for him and argued that such steps would only interfere with the government's handling of crisis management. He assured that the government is open to any suggestion and support of the representatives of previous governments of Armenia. At the end of the interview, Kocharyan stated that Armenia's good relations with its strategic partner Russia allow for better resistance against the adversary's offensive (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

The guest of the interview on November 3rd was the leader of oppositional party "Bright Armenia" Edmon Marukyan. Ghazaryan opened the interview with a note about the terrorist attack in Vienna and the PM's condolence letter to its chancellor. The issues discussed during the interview were Turkey's policy towards Armenia and the involvement of terrorists in the war, Russia's role in the Karabakh conflict and the rivalry between Turkey and Russia over their influence in the region. However, the focus of the interview was on Turkey's terrorist attacks in different parts of the world and the inevitable consequences of such events. On November 6th, when the Armenian armed forces were conducting military operations for the defense of Shushi, Ghazaryan invited the representative of the Armenian Defense Ministry Artsrun Hovhannisyan to talk about the battle for Shushi. Hovhannisyan assured that the Armenian army demonstrated heroic resistance to the adversary's attacks and the battle for Shushi was expected to end the next day. They also discussed Azerbaijani propaganda throughout the war and

Aliyev's alleged announcement of capturing Shushi. The interviewee believed that there is no need to spread panic and make assumptions based on the enemy's propaganda. Finally, Hovhannisyan said that in wartime spreading propaganda is normal and people should not wait to hear the whole truth when the battle is still in progress (Interview with Petros ghazaryan).

On November 9th, the most critical and decisive day of the war, the guest of the TV show was Vardan Aramyan, the ex-minister of finance of the RA. The questions on the agenda were the economy of the country and the impact of the war on it (News in armenia today: Nagorno Karabakh latest NEWS). So, it can be concluded that the narrative of the Armenian Public TV during the war was not critical of the government and the measures it was taking in the defense of Artsakh. The guests who were invited for the TV show "Interview with Petros Ghazaryan" were representatives of both governmental and oppositional parties, as well as military experts and other politicians. The questions asked by the host were mainly about the adversary's military operations, their war crimes and the Armenian army's great resistance to it. There were few questions about the government's response to the situation, however in cases of being asked such questions the interviewees were mainly supportive rather than critical. None of the interviewees questioned the government's narrative throughout the war.

The Framing of 168.am

This section presents the content analysis of the video interviews of one of the Armenian media outlets that has a more oppositional leaning. In particular, it looks through the interviews conducted for the program "Review" on 168.am website. The section highlights some of the important aspects covered throughout the interviews with the invited experts and politicians. The descriptive analysis helps to understand who the guests of the program throughout the war were, and what kind of interpretations about the official statements of the government they had at that time. Was it "rally round the flag" for all 44 days, or did they somehow question the narrative of the government?

The first interview was conducted on October 3rd with Vahram Ter-Matevosyan, the Program Chair of the Political Science and International Affairs Department of the American University of Armenia. They talked about the Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression against Armenia and Artsakh, the involvement of the terrorists in the war, as well as about the international community's response to the escalation. The interviewee talked about Turkey's foreign policy and its attempts at increasing its influence in the region. One of the crucial questions

raised by the guest is "What is happening behinds the scenes?", "What kind of agreements are being made between the parties to the conflict?" and "What does Pashinyan talk about with Russian President Putin?" Moreover, he stated that there is an instability in the public's interpretations of the Armenian government's work with the international community. Ter-Matevosyan also talked about Russia's role in the conflict and its policy towards Turkish aggression against Armenia. He criticized the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group in being unable to mediate and show progress in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict. Moreover, he also criticized the government's inaction in signing a military-political alliance between the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh, as well as the lack of attempts towards the international recognition of the Republic of Artsakh, claiming that this step would significantly affect the course of the war (News in armenia today: Nagorno Karabakh latest NEWS).

On October 5th "Review" invited Armenian historian Hayk Demoyan to talk about the Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression and the war crimes of the adversary. Demoyan stated that "This is a terrorist war", which threatens stability in the whole region. He argued that Turkey was pursuing its own national and political interests and using Azerbaijan for that purpose. Another important argument made by the interviewee is that "Turkey's policy is a challenge for Russia" and that it is in the Russian interests to support Armenia in this conflict. The interviewer also referred to Pashinyan's interviews given to several international media outlets. The guest agreed with Pashinyan's statements on the involvement of terrorists in the battlefield as well as accusing the US of providing Turkey with weapons that are being targeted against the peaceful civilians of Artsakh. On October 7th, the guest of the program was IR specialist Suren Sargsyan. The questions discussed on the agenda were the role of the international community, particularly of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group. Sargsyan analyzed the relations between the US and Turkey, especially the former's provision of weapons to the latter, and tried to evaluate the situation on the front line. Finally, the interviewer referred to Pashinyan's call for the international recognition of Artsakh. Sargsyan noted that it is important to work with the international community and make sure that several countries will recognize it. Moreover, he argued that Armenia's recognition of Artsakh may change the course of the negotiations and that is why the Republic of Armenia has not recognized it yet (News in armenia today: Nagorno Karabakh latest NEWS).

The guest of the program on October 10th, when the first humanitarian ceasefire was agreed by the sides, was Alexander Markarov, the Deputy Vice-

Rector for Scientific Policy and International Cooperation and Head of the YSU. The main theme of the interview was the discussion of the ceasefire document. Markarov emphasized the role of Russia in conflict management and as a mediator in the ceasefire agreement. He also accused Azerbaijan of violating the ceasefire and preventing the exchange of the POWs and the injured servicemen from the conflict zone. Markarov noted Armenia's position on the format of negotiations and the principles agreed upon in the previous meetings between the parties to the conflict. At the end, the interviewee referred to Pashinyan's call on the recognition of the Republic of Artsakh. The guest agreed that if we recognize the independence of Artsakh, "it will not significantly change the international situation and will affect the negotiations." The guest invited to the program on October 14th was military expert Vahagn Saroyan. That day the Armenian PM delivered an address to the nation carrying out three important messages discussed in the previous section. The main questions on the agenda were the military situation in the front line, equipment, and human losses of the adversary. The guest evaluated Azerbaijan's military operations and its offensive against Artsakh. He accused Azerbaijan of committing war crimes and targeting civilian settlements. Saroyan also assessed the efforts of the Armenian defense army and assured that it demonstrates excellent results in its defensive operations (News in armenia today: Nagorno Karabakh latest NEWS).

The program hosted analyst Karen Veranyan on October 21st to discuss the work of Armenian diplomacy and attempts at cooperating with international organizations and stopping the war. Veranyan stated that the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group are cooperating and issuing joint statements that call for ceasing the hostilities and resuming the negotiations between the parties to the conflict. He accused Turkey of arming Azerbaijan and openly supporting it in the conflict. Moreover, the guest expressed concerns over the lack of sanctions from the international community against Turkey that engaged terrorists in the war and is directly involved in the military operations. When asked if Pashinyan should continue his communication with the nation through his addresses, Veranyan said that it is crucial to maintain this format of informing people about what is going on in the front line as well as in the diplomatic field. The next day, on October 22nd, "Review" hosted Armenian politician Paruyr Hayrikyan, who at the beginning of the interview started criticizing the Armenian government, particularly Pashinyan's statement about forming volunteer battalions. Hayrikyan noted that such messages should not take place during the war, because "the adversary might have access to our media and learn that our army is not capable of conducting military operations

and there is a need for volunteers." Moreover, he said that it is too early to declare that we won the war and get enthusiastic about that (News in armenia today: Nagorno Karabakh latest NEWS).

The last interview during the war was conducted with the leader of the Armenian Democratic Party Aram Sargsyan on November 9th. The main questions discussed during the interview were Turkey's expansionist policy in the South Caucasus, its support to Azerbaijan and Armenia's diplomacy with foreign states that are also involved in conflict management. Sargsyan criticized the Armenian government for not officially requesting Russia's assistance in the fight against global terrorism. Sargsyan also claimed that because of certain factors Russia has trust issues towards the Armenian government, and that also needs to be overcome for improving the Armenian-Russian relations. At the end, the guest required Armenian government's accountability about the unfolding events and its steps towards facilitating the crisis management in the country. Sargsyan encouraged the government to request support or advice from experienced people, who have corresponding skills and knowledge and can be helpful in managing the situation (News in armenia today: Nagorno Karabakh latest NEWS).

After analyzing all the interviews on "Review" it can be concluded that those were mainly criticizing and condemning the Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression towards Armenia and Artsakh. The guests were mainly speaking about the adversary's war crimes, as well as violation of all the international norms and rules. It can be noted that there was some difference in the interviews at the beginning and at the end of the war. At the beginning, the interviewees were mainly avoiding any criticism of the Armenian government and its functioning throughout the period when the country was at war. However, starting from the 26th day of the war, some of the interviewees expressed grievances and concerns about the Armenian government's inability in handling the situation and in responding to the adversary's military and political pressures.

The Framing of Factor TV

The section analyzes the interviews on Factor TV, particularly on the program "Yerevani Jamanakov" throughout the duration of the war. As noted in the methodology section, this media outlet is independent, mainly donor-funded and has a pro-government narrative. Compared to the previous two media outlets, this one was not that active and aired only a few interviews during the war. This section aims at understanding if the narrative of the interviews was mainly supportive of the government, or if there was any case of questioning the messages of Pashinyan.

This will show if the framing corresponds to the government narrative, or it showed skepticism throughout the war.

The first interview was conducted on September 29th, 2020, with playwright Karine Khodikyan. The questions discussed during the interview were the unity of the Armenian nation, the courage of Armenian soldiers and the violations committed by the Turkish-Azerbaijani forces. One of the important points noted by the guest was that Armenian people were somehow divided in their political views a few days before the war, but when the war started everyone gathered around the idea of defeating the enemy. When talking about the international community's response to the adversary's aggressions, Khodikyan mentioned that they do not react correspondingly and do not address the urgency of the problem. She repeated the PM's statement that "this is a new Sardarapat" and "we should be united in this together." On October 6th, the program hosted producer Nikolay Tsaturyan to discuss how the situation evolves in the front line. The guest spoke about the capabilities of the Armenian armed forces, their preparedness, and the psychological aspects of the war. He then referred to discussing the financial aspect of the war, and the support Armenia gets from various sources. Tsaturyan claimed that the indifference of the international community and its lack of a reaction to the military operations carried out by Azerbaijan and Turkey affect the peaceful resolution of the conflict, and rather aggravate the situation in the front line (Factor Information Center).

On October 13th, the program hosted Aghasi Tadevosyan, who is a cultural anthropologist. Tadevosyan claimed that the Armenian nation faces yet another genocidal threat during the days of the war. He criticized the previous governments of Armenia and argued that they failed to contribute to the strengthening of the army. However, he mentioned that the current government succeeded in consolidating all the financial and human resources towards overcoming those issues. The guest claimed that the Armenian nation was able to unite as they always do in crisis situations. Tadevosyan also said that "the Azerbaijani people are in an information vacuum, while in Armenia the government does not block the social media and people are aware of the situation in the front line." He added that the president of Azerbaijan spreads fake information about their military successes, while such propaganda is absent in Armenia. The guest of the program on October 20th was literary critic Arkmenik Nikoghosyan. The first statement made by the guest was that "we will win", a phrase that was also present in the prime minister's addresses to the nation. He then expressed concerns over the indifference of the international community and the lack of a tough response. Nikoghosyan stated that

it is crucial to be united and to support the government to win the war (Factor Information Center).

"Yerevani Jamanakov" program hosted actor Vigen Stepanyan on October 20th to talk about the events occurring in the front line. Stepanyan mentioned that the Armenian army shows professionalism and succeeds in resisting the adversary's offensive actions. Moreover, the guest noted that he would not discuss any political or diplomatic issue since he is not specialized in that field. When asked how he would evaluate the statements coming from the opposition parties, he argued that it is unacceptable to make divisive statements since the country is at war. At the end of the interview, Stepanyan said "Do not say that we will win, say we already won." The last interview on Factor TV during the war was conducted on November 3rd, and the guest of the program was musician-composer Yeghishe Petrosyan. At the beginning of the interview, the guest repeated the PM's statement that Armenia faces a hybrid war, while the international community is ignorant towards the war crimes committed by Azerbaijan. Petrosyan criticized the previous governments of Armenia and said that they failed at investing in the army and strengthening it, and that is one of the main reasons that the war started. However, he stated several times that "we will win in this war" (Factor Information Center).

To sum up, this media outlet showed complete support to the government narrative and the official statements of the prime minister. Moreover, compared to the previous two media outlets, this program was the least analytical and critical towards the questions discussed during the interviews. One of the major factors contributing to such coverage was the selection of the guests since most of them were cultural figures and intellectuals, unlike the previous two media outlets that hosted military experts or politicians.

Conclusion

Several conclusions can be made from the findings analyzed in the sections above. Firstly, it can be concluded that the Armenian government's coercive actions resulted in maintaining the rally-round-the-flag effect throughout the whole course of the war. Such actions included government-imposed censorship and limitations to freedom of speech under martial law. Moreover, the government authorized the police to take measures for ensuring that everyone was following the law. The Armenian Prime Minister was frequently emphasizing in his messages that the unity of the nation was crucial in terms of showing patriotism and being able to win the war. However, as it turned out after the war, there was a mismatch between the situation in the front line and Pashinyan's messages.

The political economy of the selected media outlets is enough to explain the framing of the PM's messages during the war. The study revealed that the state-owned Public TV and the independent Factor TV were always supportive of the official statements of the Prime Minister and never questioned those in the interviews conducted during the war. Unlike these two media outlets, the 168.am showed rally-round-the-flag for the first 25 days of the war, but after that it started questioning the government narrative about Armenians winning the war despite the censorship imposed on the media. Therefore, the study confirms the second hypotheses, which says "The support for the Prime Minister's narrative about the war in the media heavily depended on the political economy, including ownership type, of the selected three media outlets."

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