

THE ROLE OF AZERBAIJANI DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY  
IN SHAPING THE PERCEPTION OF HOMELAND

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE ROLE OF AZERBAIJANI DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY IN SHAPING THE PERCEPTION OF HOMELAND**

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This thesis analyses the role of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey in shaping the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey from the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites with respect to historical geography, cultural and linguistic bonds. The conditions reconstructing the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations are evaluated in the light of findings obtained through qualitative research. The thesis argues that historical and political boundaries of homeland do not always coincide with the boundaries of real homeland as in the case of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey. Turkey becomes the actual and real homeland for the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations although they have emotional connections with Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, homeland, diaspora

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE’DEKİ AZERBAYCAN DİASPORA ÖRGÜTLERİNİN ANAVATAN ALGISİNİN ŞEKİLLENMESİNDEKİ ROLÜ

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Bu çalışmada, Türkiye’deki Azerbaycan diaspora örgütlerinin, kendi üyelerinin anavatan algısının şekillenmesindeki rolünü Azerbaycan diaspora elitlerinin perspektifini göz önünde bulundurarak, tarihsel coğrafya, kültürel ve dilsel bağlar bakımından analiz etmektedir. Türkiye’deki Azerbaycan diaspora örgütlerinin üyelerinin anavatan algısını yeniden inşa eden koşullar, nitel araştırma ile elde edilen bulgular ışığında değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışmada, Türkiye’deki Azerbaycan diaspora örgütlerindeki durumda olduğu gibi, anavatanın tarihsel ve politik sınırlarının her zaman gerçek anavatanla örtüşmediği savunulmuştur. Türkiye’deki Azerbaycan diaspora örgütlerinin Azerbaycan ile duygusal bağları olsa bile, Türkiye Azerbaycan diaspora örgütleri için asıl ve gerçek anavatan durumuna gelmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Azerbaycan, anavatan, diaspora

*To My Little Universe*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ADR	Azerbaijan Democratic Republic
JDP	Justice and Development Party
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republics
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This thesis analyses the role of Azerbaijani diaspora organization in Turkey in shaping their perception of homeland from the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites. The aim is to show the role of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations over the reconstruction of perception of homeland. While analyzing the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' perception of homeland, their historical experiences are remarkable to reveal the uniqueness of Azerbaijanis because the reason making this topic important to study is Azerbaijani people's historical past and their cultural bonds with Turkey.

Depending on the implication from the homeland literature, "What is the role of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey in shaping the perception of homeland?" is the research question of this study. Based on this main question, this study basically aims at answering the following questions: "How perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey is reconstructed by diaspora organizations and diaspora network?", "How are historical experiences affected the reconstruction of perception of homeland through the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey?", "What are the impacts of cultural and linguistic bonds over the reconstruction of perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora organizations?" and the main argument of this thesis is that Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey reconstruct the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' activities.

At this point, it should be noted that in this study Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' administrators who are Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people and who migrated to Turkey before the collapse of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) are the main focus of this thesis.

To construct a theoretical framework for the purposes of the work, literature on the debates about diaspora and homeland is discussed. However, generalizations about the perception of homeland of diaspora members by exemplifying the most known diasporas fail to understand the unique pattern of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' role on the perception of homeland in Turkey. Because Azerbaijan's historical and political boundaries do not coincide with each other, the role of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in reconstructing their perception of homeland is much more complicated and unique.

The homeland-diaspora perspective of Azerbaijanis in Turkey had not studied academically. This therefore, acted as a limitation towards of finding academic sources and statistical data to verify the data acquired by the fieldwork in this study. Thus, analysis of qualitative research is supported by historical experiences of Azerbaijanis and the oldest Azerbaijani association's publications in Turkey.

This thesis is based on the fieldwork conducted in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey between December 2012 and March 2013. During the fieldwork, in-depth-interviews were conducted with eleven Azerbaijani civil society organizations' administrators in the three cities of Turkey, Izmir, Ankara and Istanbul. Azerbaijani civil society organizations in three cities were selected instead of local Azerbaijani civil society organizations. This is because Azerbaijani civil society organizations are concentrated in big cities in Turkey due to internal migrations from their birth places within the country. While contacts were established with three active Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Istanbul, three of similar organizations were found to be active in Ankara, and four organizations, reached in Izmir. Other Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey listed on the website of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic are scattered in different cities in Turkey such as Eskişehir, Balıkesir, Kocaeli, Manisa, Çanakkale, Muğla, Adana, Antalya, Iğdır, Edirne and Samsun. But in these cities, there is just one Azerbaijani civil society

organization while some of them are not active. It was observed that these organizations are more active in these cities than the regional Azerbaijani associations, but with difficulties in reaching them, most of the organizations are seen registered but inactive. Also, conflicts among the Azerbaijani civil society organizations served as limitations toward getting information about the active Azerbaijani civil society organizations. However, the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic has got a website<sup>1</sup> showing the recognition of these Azerbaijani diaspora organizations throughout the world. In Turkey, some of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations are not included in the list of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations even though they are actively engaging in Azerbaijani diaspora organizations due to political differences between these civil society organizations and the State of Azerbaijan. Furthermore, most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey are new, so their organizational structures and plans are new.

Family elders of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations' administrators migrated to the eastern border region of Turkey near Armenia separated by the Aras River. Therefore, the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' administrators as parts of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations were selected as sample for this thesis to analyze the role of the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in shaping their perception of homeland.

The questions respondents were asked, were mainly related to Azerbaijani civil society organizations' operations in Turkey, their perception to Azerbaijan and Turkey as their homeland, historical and cultural bonds on the basis of their family members' migration history and Azerbaijani diaspora network throughout the world. (see Appendix B).

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<sup>1</sup> To see more, "Azərbaycan Respublikasının Diasporla İş Üzrə Dövlət Komitəsi", <http://www.diaspora.gov.az/index.php?options=content&id=84#>

In the second chapter, theoretical framework for the analysis of Azerbaijani diaspora members' perception of homeland was examined. The definitions of both, homeland and diaspora are discussed with the evaluation of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey within the scope of homeland-diaspora literature. The analysis in the following chapters is based on the fieldwork where in-depth interviews were conducted with eleven administrators of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. In the third chapter, the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey is highlighted to comprehend how Azerbaijani diaspora elites reconstruct the diaspora consciousness by taking into account Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' activities in Turkey, three dimensional relations of Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey and Azerbaijani diasporas' media network. In the fourth chapter, reconstruction of the perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora organization in Turkey is analyzed. Firstly, reconstruction of the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey is analyzed over historical geography. Secondly, cultural and linguistic bonds of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations within Turkey in terms of reconstruction of the perception of homeland will be concentrated on. In the Conclusion, the analysis of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' perception of homeland in Turkey and how Azeri diaspora elites in Turkey affect this perception will be analyzed in depth by considering the Azerbaijani people's historical, cultural and linguistic background.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The aim of this chapter is to identify how diaspora elites reconstruct the perception of homeland by discussing the nature of homeland concept. Firstly, the perception of homeland in terms of definitions of nation-state and diaspora will be analyzed. The perception of homeland of diaspora will be elaborated with the discussion of diaspora conceptualization, nation-diaspora homeland context and diaspora members' perception of homeland. Later, in order to analyze the perception of homeland through the reconstruction by diaspora elites, the definition of homeland will be discussed with regard to components of the homeland concept. Then, how the homeland concept is reconstructed by elites will be examined.

#### **2.1. The Perception of Homeland of Nation-States**

Homeland, both as an abstract and a concrete meaning is crucial to identifying people. So how nations are defined on the basis of the concept of homeland is assessed to comprehend uniqueness of nations. Firstly, the conceptual differentiation between nation and ethnies is a key point to apprehend the actual meaning of the terms while explaining these concepts linkage with homeland broadly. Shortly, Smith defines the concept of nation as 'a named human community residing in a perceived homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a distinct public culture, and common laws and customs for all members'. The concept of ethnies can in turn be defined as 'a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry

shared memories, one or more elements shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elites.<sup>2</sup>

The difference between *ethnie* and nation in terms of boundary issue is that *ethnies'* link with a territory relates to only historical and symbolic past but nation's link with territory stems from physical and actual possession of territories.<sup>3</sup> Although there are historical and conceptual overlap between nation and *ethnie*, the connection between nation and *ethnie* is problematic and uncertain because of exceptions of the general definition like the possibility of forming nations without immediate antecedent *ethnie*.<sup>4</sup> As it can be inferred from the quotation, it is hard to make a clear cut distinction between the definition of nation and *ethnie*. Their meanings interlace with each other. There are just small distinctions.

What are these distinctive points of nations?<sup>5</sup> Which differentiate nations from the other kinds of collective, cultural identity?<sup>6</sup> As a common assumption by scholars:

Nations are territorially bounded up with the units of population and that they must have their own homelands; that their members share a common mass culture and common historical myths and memories; that members have reciprocal legal rights and duties under a common legal system; that nations possess a common division of labor and system of production with mobility across the territory for members.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.13.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp.40-41.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p.13.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p.13.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* pp.13-14.

Additionally Smith puts emphasis on the linkage between homeland and nation:

The nation is conceived of as a territorial patria, the place of one's birth and childhood, the extension of hearth and home. It is also the place of one's ancestors and of the heroes and cultures of one's antiquity. Hence, from the standpoint of a territorial nationalist it is quite legitimate to annex the monuments and artefacts of earlier civilizations in the same place, appropriating their cultural achievements to differentiate and glorify the territorial nation, which may (to date) lack achievements of its own.<sup>8</sup>

Nations are limited within the boundaries of their homeland in the sense that "no nation imagines itself conterminous with mankind."<sup>9</sup> Thus, nations see themselves superior in these well-defined boundaries so the image of one world for one nation is not possible because this image is against the nature of the feeling of superiority. There should be other nations for nation-states to make comparison and to see itself as a superior one among others. Smith explains rediscovery and restoration of the uniqueness of nation by means of returning to the authentic roots of its historical culture which is inseparable parts of homeland.<sup>10</sup>

Also, national territoriality is a strategy used by members of a nation to control their own destiny correspondingly achieving control over their perceived homeland.<sup>11</sup> Although nations may be described on the basis of deterritoriality in

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<sup>8</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.117.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, p.7.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.37.

<sup>11</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (1994). *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Chichester: Princeton University Press, p.22.

the near future, the residence in homeland or the possession of homeland is still a remarkable criteria for the norm of nationhood.<sup>12</sup> Temporal and spatial claims about unique history and destiny, and a historic homeland are inseparable parts of nations' political power and nations' legitimacy.<sup>13</sup> By this way, members of a nation can identify themselves with a defined territory. It is important both for self-confidence and differentiating non-members. However, Connor focuses on the important point that the identification of national identity on the basis of homeland does not solely depend on rational choice but physical bonds which are the essence of the nation to make differentiations from all nonmembers.<sup>14</sup> In order to clarify non-members outside the nation, the construction of identity within a nation equates identity with the 'sameness.'<sup>15</sup> The relation between nation and homeland naturalizes the linkage between soil and blood among the members of community with a strong manner of legitimization of nationalist claims about the land.<sup>16</sup> Thus, nations unite to serve the purpose of fraternity over the past two centuries and can willingly die for such well-defined homeland.<sup>17</sup> Also, the identification of members of nation is not limited within the boundaries of

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<sup>12</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.111.

<sup>13</sup> Özkırımlı, U. (2010). *Theories of Nationalism A Critical Introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p.51.

<sup>14</sup> Connor, W. (1994). *Ethnonationalism The Quest for Understanding*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p.197.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.75.

<sup>16</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.230.

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, p.7.

homeland, but its extent has moved towards to the outside of the boundaries of homeland in which the diaspora members have been living. Thus, its extent is widened. So does the relation between nation inside and outside the homeland. The perception of homeland is also transformed into another dimension.

## **2.2 The Perception of Homeland of Diaspora**

Anderson proposes a definition for nation: “it is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.”<sup>18</sup> Also, he explains why it is imagined by giving reference from Seton-Watson: “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each live the image of their communication.”<sup>19</sup> Anderson’s definition of nation refers also, to diaspora communities’ perception of nation and components of nation like the homeland conception which bound nations to territory. Anderson’s ‘imagined community’ has established a bond with the imagined places as ‘displaced people clusters around remembered or imagined homelands, places, or communities.’<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, p.6.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* p.6.

<sup>20</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.244.

### 2.2.1. The Conceptualization of Diaspora

The term diaspora has changed in meaning has changed over time so how can we grasp the core meaning of diaspora theoretically becomes significant. From the perspective of Cohen, to comprehend the term diaspora at all points, some central aspects of the Jewish experience should be considered by scholars before interpreting the changing meaning of diaspora as a contemporary concept, a new and exciting way of understanding of cultural differences, identity politics and the proclaimed dissolution of the nation-state.<sup>21</sup>

Previously diaspora was identified historically and originally with Jews who forcibly dispersed as a punishment to forsake the righteous paths, so until recently catastrophic characteristic of diaspora was emphasized in a widespread manner.<sup>22</sup> Actually, the term diaspora is found in the Greek translation of the Bible and its' meaning originally refers to sow widely. Moreover, Greek's used this term to illustrate the colonization of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean in the Archaic period.<sup>23</sup> Contrary to victim diaspora (diaspora as a victimized one), diaspora was used positively to refer to military conquest, colonization, and migration, which were among the predominant features of the Greek diaspora although there was some displacement of the ancient Greeks to Asia Minor in consequence of poverty, overpopulation and interstate war.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.508.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p.507.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p.507.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* pp.507-508.

However, the term diaspora generally was used to describe Jewish diaspora who left their homeland and lived in exile from Judea or Jerusalem.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Safran takes into account the features which make Jewish diaspora archetype as one of the first expatriate society:

the absence of a physical homeland for nearly two millennia, the lack of full acceptance of Jews by their host societies, the transfer of diasporic features on the population of the restored homeland and the consideration of Jewish diaspora as a normal aspect of the Jewish condition.<sup>26</sup>

Victim diasporas were at the heart of any definition of the concept.<sup>27</sup> At the beginning, diaspora as a term stayed undertheorized in large part because of its limited scope applied to a very limited number of transnational ethnic minority groups such as Jews, Armenians, Chinese, and Indians.<sup>28</sup> Cohen puts an argument that not only victim diasporas but also, the varieties of new and interesting diasporas from a different context should be taken into consideration.<sup>29</sup> Recently,

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<sup>25</sup> Braziel, J. A. (2007). *Diaspora : An Introduction*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishing, p.11.

<sup>26</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.10.

<sup>27</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), pp.512-513.

<sup>28</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.9.

<sup>29</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.514.

multiplicity of discourses stressing the literature to elucidate social heterogeneity of diasporas and its organizational structure.<sup>30</sup>

Over the decades, the term diaspora has been extended from first and long established diasporas like Jewish, Armenian or Greek experience, towards new and more contested experiences.<sup>31</sup>

Recently, the term diaspora aroused interest of intellectuals to be used as metaphoric designations for several categories of people-expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities<sup>32</sup> and recent communities of dispersion were known by other names as exile groups, overseas communities, ethnic and racial minorities, and so forth.<sup>33</sup> Shortly Safran signifies that:

...the label has been stretched to cover almost any ethnic or religious minority that is dispersed physically from its original homeland regardless of the conditions leading to the dispersion, and regardless of whether, and to what extent, physical, cultural, or emotional links exist between community and the home country.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Werbner, P. (2000). Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora-Between Aesthetic and "Real" Politics. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 9 (1), p.5.

<sup>31</sup> Kokot, W., Tölölyan, K. & Alfonso, C. (2004). Introduction. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.6.

<sup>32</sup> Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), p.83.

<sup>33</sup> Tölölyan, K. (1996). Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 5 (1), p.3.

<sup>34</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.9.



Moreover, the concept of diaspora has started to be used more widely especially in the academic field after the transformation of pattern of migration with the effect of globalization which has made borders more transparent and has carried on cultures beyond the nations and beyond the nation-states borders in contemporary world. Thus, the definition of diaspora as a term has been changed over years due to the multiple identities and cross-border networks of global migrations.<sup>35</sup> Compared to the past, more and more people have left their places of origin because geopolitical repartitioning, restructuring of the global economy, and patterns of warfare have transformed the world migration pattern.<sup>36</sup>

It is obvious that there are now more dispersed communities than existed before in the global era.<sup>37</sup> Due to the variety of political and economic reasons, tens of millions of people, who have been leaving their homeland in the past half of a century, designated differently such as political refugees, expellees, displaced persons, or voluntary emigrants.<sup>38</sup> As distinct from traditional immigrants, they have protected their origin, their self-identity and their connection with their homeland so they feel like living in two worlds both in their homeland and in their host country.<sup>39</sup> This is why the term can be applied not only the Jewish and

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<sup>35</sup> Kokot, W., Tölölyan, K. & Alfonso, C. (2004). Introduction. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.3.

<sup>36</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.190.

<sup>37</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.11.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* p.11.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* p.11.

Armenian paradigmatic types but also other expatriate communities especially after the impression of globalization upon the term diaspora.<sup>40</sup>

The extension of the meaning of diaspora conducted to semantic shift of the concept and led to an ambiguity in its meaning which almost labels any group of expatriates, or even individual migrants.<sup>41</sup> Butler points out that not all movements of people have been considered as a diaspora.<sup>42</sup> Safran asserts that the extension of categorization of the term diaspora in recent years is problematic and critical because it may lead to misuse or abuse of the meaning of diaspora.<sup>43</sup> Hence, how the term diaspora can be defined or theorized. How are diaspora movements distinguished from the different types of immigrant societies?

In this sense, Safran describes diaspora as follows: “being in a diaspora implies a tension between being in one place physically-the place where one lives and works-and thinking regularly of another place far away.”<sup>44</sup> Additionally, diaspora does not necessarily depend on volunteer movement from homeland to host land.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.11.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p.10.

<sup>42</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.189.

<sup>43</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.11.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p.12.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p.14.

According to Safran's view, the concept of diaspora can be specifically applied to expatriate minority who possess these following characteristic features: 1) dispersal of segment of people from a specific center to two or more peripheral or foreign, regions; 2) maintaining a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland; 3) believing not fully accepted by their host society and feeling partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) idealization of ancestral homeland to which they or their descendants would eventually return when conditions are appropriate; 5) defined ethno communal consciousness and solidarity by the relation between homeland and diaspora members. These features make possible the extension of the meaning of the term diaspora for other expatriate communities from the perspective of Safran.<sup>46</sup>

Cohen asserts that not all minorities in host land evaluated as diaspora.<sup>47</sup> In fact, no single contemporary diaspora corresponds with all the definitional criteria. In this way, Cohen has modified two features in the list of Safran's, accepted three of them and added four more.<sup>48</sup> These features are listed below:

1. Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions.
2. Alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions.
3. A collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements.
4. An idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation.
5. The development of a return movement which gains collective approbation.
6. A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history and the belief in a common fate.
7. A troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance

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<sup>46</sup> Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.83-84.

<sup>47</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.514.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* p.515.

at the least or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group. 8. A sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement. 9. The possibility of a distinctive yet creative and enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, Cohen categorizes diasporas into five types: victim (Africans, Armenians), labor (Indians), trade (Chinese, Lebanese), imperial (British), and cultural (Caribbean). These typologies refer not only to conditions of dispersal but also, other features like the status of diasporan communities in their host lands.<sup>50</sup> He acknowledges that diasporas can form multiple types or can change their characteristic over time.<sup>51</sup> While defining these typologies, Cohen additionally argues that religion cannot be one of the types of diasporas, but maybe provides an additional cement to bind a diasporic consciousness.<sup>52</sup> However, according to Butler, diasporas are too complex to categorize in this limited types, while often multiple types of migration are combined within a single diaspora.<sup>53</sup> Hence, Butler reviews several types of dispersal; captivity, state-eradication exile, forced and voluntary exile, emigration, migration, imperial diaspora to make consistent

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<sup>49</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515.

<sup>50</sup> Cohen, R. (1997). *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. London, New York: UCL Press, pp.x-xi.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* p.188.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* p.189.

<sup>53</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), pp.198-199.

comparison.<sup>54</sup> Also, Anthias finds Cohen's typology more limited in terms of lack of concern with the intersectional ties of class and gender.<sup>55</sup>

Butler ranges the most diaspora scholars' agreement about the three basic features of diaspora: dispersal to two or more locations, relationship to an actual or an imagined homeland and self-awareness of the group's identity. Diasporan members consciously become part of the ethno national group and establish link between homeland and other dispersed people by imagined binds.<sup>56</sup> This diaspora consciousness generally related to a state of mind and a sense of identity which represents dual or paradoxical nature<sup>57</sup> because of both negatively experience of discrimination and positively identification with a historical heritage or identification with contemporary world cultural, political forces.<sup>58</sup> The contact between communities of diasporas provides diasporas consciousness, institutions and networks independently from the homeland.<sup>59</sup> Even, not all diasporas necessarily are operative one, self-awareness is significant in case of maintaining ties among diaspora's members.<sup>60</sup> This awareness is also important to make

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<sup>54</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), pp.200-202.

<sup>55</sup> Anthias, F. (1998). Evaluating 'Diaspora': Beyond Ethnicity. *Sociology*, 32 (3), p.560.

<sup>56</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.192.

<sup>57</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.281.

<sup>58</sup> Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (3), pp.311-312.

<sup>59</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.207.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p.207.

distinction between people who stay at their homeland and people who do not.<sup>61</sup> To indicate diasporas whose homeland no longer exists, or who have been separated from their homeland for many generations, Butler offers that “while all diasporas may be ‘imagined communities’ (Benedict Anderson), only communities, imagined in certain ways are diasporas.”<sup>62</sup> Through imagination, the memorial past of diaspora members related to homeland provides link between diaspora members and homeland. According to Butler, diasporas are multi-generational so diaspora compose of at least two generations.<sup>63</sup> By this way, Butler presents checklist approach but it should be considered that diasporas have dynamic social process because there is a risk of moving towards essentializing diaspora.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, there should be a framework against the fixed definition of diaspora to compare one diaspora to another more effectively across space and time by establishing basic categories of analysis in five dimensions regardless of size or type: 1) Reasons for, and conditions of the dispersal, 2) relationship with homeland, 3) Relationship with host lands, 4) Interrelationships within communities of the diaspora, 5) Comparative studies of different diasporas.<sup>65</sup> In this manner, diasporas can be distinguished from other types of communities through defining its unique characteristics which can be applied to all diasporas.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.208.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* p.192.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* p.193.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* p.193.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* pp.193-195.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* p.194.

In order to compare diasporas, there should be two levels existence.<sup>67</sup> Firstly, the common experience of diasporas can be acquired with the comparative approach by applying any single segments of diasporas. Secondly, comparative analysis of different diasporas is necessary to study type of a community formation.<sup>68</sup>

As it is seen from the views of scholars, different diasporic identities are emphasized to explain the concept of diaspora. All diaspora communities have passed different transformations in their migratory histories along with the impact of state policies over diaspora members.<sup>69</sup> When some members have preserved their ethnic identity and their loyalty to homeland, other groups may have lost their prior identity through intermarriage or etc.<sup>70</sup> Hence, diaspora does not exist in a pure form because of its adaptation, preservation, and creation have varied with each historical case and moment.<sup>71</sup> From the point of Clifford, diasporic identity contains within itself both antagonistic features, which is a sense of superiority to other minorities and migrant populations, and coalitionary features in terms of shared histories of colonization, displacement, and radicalization.<sup>72</sup> For instance, although not necessarily all diasporas' history are the result of oppression, some of the diasporic people with their experiences of violent process of displacement successfully sustain their distinctive political communities and

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<sup>67</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.195.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* pp.195-196.

<sup>69</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.516.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* p.517.

<sup>71</sup> Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (3), p.319.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* p.315.

cultures of resistance.<sup>73</sup> However, it is obvious that they all have passed different diasporic phases.

### **2.2.2. The Context of Nation-Diaspora-Homeland**

Although diaspora experiences are different from each other, most of the scholars link the recent diasporic experiences with the transnationalism. Practically, Vertovec identifies the term diaspora with the deterritorialized or the transnational population who has originated in another land as distinct from where they reside and where social, economic, and political networks have pertained across the borders of their nation-states.<sup>74</sup>

Soysal asserts that “diaspora is a past invented for the present, and perpetually laboured into shapes and meanings consistent with the present.”<sup>75</sup> Diaspora organizations have changed with the direction of transnationalism as a response to the present time.<sup>76</sup> Politics, economics and institutions of nation-state have transformed and new forms of citizenship, which have included different kinds of identities other than titular nation into its political frame, have emerged.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (3), p.319.

<sup>74</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.277.

<sup>75</sup> Soysal, Y. N. (2000). Citizenship and identity: living in diasporas in post-war Europe?. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23 (1), p.2.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* p.5.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* pp.3-5.



Hence, Soysal interprets diaspora as the extension of the nation-state.<sup>78</sup> Diaspora as a part of transnationalism triggers the debate about the issue of transparency of borders which is the cornerstone of nation-states.<sup>79</sup> Nation-states have always identified with clear-cut boundaries as a site of homogeneity, equilibrium, integration.<sup>80</sup> Despite the fact that diasporas posited in the era of transnationalism, they have existed before the construction of nation-states.<sup>81</sup> However, now with the effect of transnationalism and diasporic organizations, the hegemonic constructions of national homogeneity have come under question by several intellectuals.<sup>82</sup> However, whether national identities are under challenge from de-territorialized social identities or whether national identity and diasporic identity all complement each other is critical and worthy of evaluation.<sup>83</sup> The meaning of diaspora is widely used to contain a broader range of groups and phenomenon. In this respect, how contemporary nation-states are affected by this new meaning of diaspora becomes prominent. Braziel submits that transnationalism has not brought an end to nationalism and nation-states.<sup>84</sup> To

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<sup>78</sup> Soysal, Y. N. (2000). Citizenship and identity: living in diasporas in post-war Europe?. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23 (1), p.3.

<sup>79</sup> Tölölyan, K. (1991). The Nation-State and Its Others: In Lieu of a Preface. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), p.6.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* p.6.

<sup>81</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.211.

<sup>82</sup> Werbner, P. (2000). Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora-Between Aesthetic and "Real" Politics. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 9 (1), p.1.

<sup>83</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.517.

<sup>84</sup> Braziel, J. A. (2007). *Diaspora : An Introduction*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishing, p.6.

evaluate this critical point, Cohen leads by a quotation from his readings: “the world is being organized vertically by nation-states and regions, but horizontally by an overlapping, permeable, multiple systems of interactions.”<sup>85</sup> Thus, both relations of nation-state and diaspora in transnational level could exist together. From the perspective of Tölölyan, although diaspora is designated as the vocabulary of transnationalism, this does not imply that nation-states have lost their legitimacy and power against diaspora from the perspective of transnationalism.<sup>86</sup> Besides, Tölölyan asserts that “diasporas are sometimes the source of ideological, financial, and political support for national movements that aim at a renewal of the homeland”.<sup>87</sup> Diasporas are ideologically and materially part of the nationalist projects of homelands as ‘long distance nationalism.’ Although some of the actions are emancipatory and democratic, most diasporas support ethicist, nationalistic, and exclusionary movements.<sup>88</sup>

Diaspora can serve as a bridge between nation-states and transnational system as long as their self-awareness protected within diaspora relations.<sup>89</sup> Thereby, diasporas have acted as important players for the construction of

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<sup>85</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.517.

<sup>86</sup> Tölölyan, K. (1991). The Nation-State and Its Others: In Lieu of a Preface. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.4-5.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* p.5.

<sup>88</sup> Werbner, P. (2000). Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora-Between Aesthetic and "Real" Politics. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 9 (1), pp.5-6.

<sup>89</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.277.

regional alliances or global political economies.<sup>90</sup> For the articulation of diasporan identity, new alignments between international diasporan communities and ancestral homeland become prominent to demand more autonomy vis-a-vis the traditional modes of hegemony.<sup>91</sup> Butler defines this as 'diaspora nationalism' which implies 'stateless' form of patriotism.<sup>92</sup> This promotes new identity formation crossing the borders of nation-states.<sup>93</sup> On one side, diaspora identity encourages its own national identity and represents its national identity in the host land. On the other side, members of diaspora want to preserve their dual belonging by dual citizenship and campaign to protect their rights about their multiple identities

Diasporan communities start to advocate the self-representations of their collective existence more loudly when compared with the past experiences and bring the issues into agenda, which are considered as a taboo previously to protect cohesion of nation-states in the past.<sup>94</sup> Increasing relevance of representations of identity and culture in international politics makes transnationalism and diaspora as significant concepts which marked last decades.<sup>95</sup> While multiple identities are

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<sup>90</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.277.

<sup>91</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.212.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* p.212.

<sup>93</sup> Anthias, F. (1998). Evaluating 'Diaspora': Beyond Ethnicity. *Sociology*, 32 (3), p.558.

<sup>94</sup> Tölölyan, K. (1991). The Nation-State and Its Others: In Lieu of a Preface. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), p.6.

<sup>95</sup> Kokot, W., Tölölyan, K. & Alfonso, C. (2004). Introduction. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.2.

now recognized globally, so members of diaspora identify themselves by both with their homeland and host land identities.

Diasporaric identity is one of the examples of the heterogeneity of identities which refers to different and shifting levels of identity.<sup>96</sup> Hall submits that “identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think ... instead, of identity as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation.”<sup>97</sup> According to Hall, there are at least two different ways of comprehending the cultural identity.<sup>98</sup> Firstly, it defines ‘as a sort of collective one true self, hiding inside the many others.’<sup>99</sup> However, the second way indicates that with the many points of similarity there are also critical points of significant differences which represent our uniqueness from others.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, in this second sense, cultural identity is a matter of becoming together with being.<sup>101</sup> Hence, both belong to future and the past.<sup>102</sup> According to Hall, “diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing

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<sup>96</sup> Kokot, W., Tölölyan, K. & Alfonso, C. (2004). Introduction. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.7.

<sup>97</sup> Hall, S. (1990). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. in J. Rutherford (eds.). *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence, p.222.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* p.223.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* p.223.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* p.225.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* p.225.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* p.225.

and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference.”<sup>103</sup> Diasporas have changed historically over times.<sup>104</sup> To adapt different political and social context, diasporic identities have ‘reconstructed and reinvented imaginatively and socially as they move into new places or as political circumstances in their place of settlement change.’<sup>105</sup>

In addition to Cohen, Safran denotes that “national boundaries have become more permeable, a development that has enabled minority communities to receive infusions of culture from abroad.”<sup>106</sup> With diaspora relations and diasporic identities’ borders have become more transparent but “diasporas may transcend boundaries, but space, place and locality remain important points of reference, on a symbolic as well as on a physical level.”<sup>107</sup> Not only one place of locality but also multi-locality is characteristic features of diaspora in transnationalism. Thus, the awareness of multi-locality in the memory of diasporas produces “a multiplicity of histories, ‘communities,’ and selves... such multiplicity is being

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<sup>103</sup> Hall, S. (1990). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. in J. Rutherford (eds.). *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence, p.235.

<sup>104</sup> Werbner, P. (2000). Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora-Between Aesthetic and "Real" Politics. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 9 (1), p.5.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* p.5.

<sup>106</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.12.

<sup>107</sup> Kokot, W., Tölölyan, K. & Alfonso, C. (2004). Introduction. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.5.

redefined by diasporic individuals as a source of adaptive strength.”<sup>108</sup> Locality does not lose its impact against globalism.

With the effect of fragmentation and multiplication of identities in addition to the effect of universalization, transnational bonds have been strengthened by shared imaginations and cultural artifacts in the age of cyberspace. In this respect, diaspora fills the gap between local and global by its imaginary acts.<sup>109</sup> The impact of transnationalism and globalization transform the relations of diaspora both in homeland and host land through communication technologies and the practice of media. The development of global media and communication technologies has promoted actively the diasporas’ participation and intervention in the politics of homeland.<sup>110</sup> Also, communication channels have enhanced the interaction between different cultures and identities as well as diasporic one. Communication networks, connected to religious and cultural myths, have been significant for mobilized diasporas to constitute a major basis for modern ethnic identification.<sup>111</sup> For instances, “The combination of linguistic skills and their relation to broader patterns of communications specialization has probably contributed more than the diasporas’ myths themselves to their occupational role

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<sup>108</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.282.

<sup>109</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.516.

<sup>110</sup> Werbner, P. (2000). Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora-Between Aesthetic and "Real" Politics. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 9 (1), p.6.

<sup>111</sup> Armstrong, J. A (1976). Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas. *The American Political Science Review*, 70 (2), p.395.

specialization.”<sup>112</sup> Clifford briefly explains the influence of modern technologies in global era:

...diasporic forms of longing, memory, and (dis)identification are shared by a broad spectrum of minority and migrant populations. And dispersed peoples, once separated from homelands by vast oceans and political barriers, increasingly find themselves in border relations with the old country thanks to a to-and-fro made possible by modern technologies of transport, communication, and labor migration. Airplanes, telephones, tape cassettes, camcorders, and mobile job markets reduce distances and facilitate two-way traffic, legal and illegal, between the world's places.<sup>113</sup>

Until recently most of the scholars have dealt with nations' clear-cut boundaries. However, this view will be changed by diaspora organizations in the near future.<sup>114</sup> This old understanding about nation-state structure is not appropriate for the “long-distance nationalism” of diaspora communities.<sup>115</sup> Demmers claims that “nationalism... has outgrown its definition... globalization ... has not mean the end of nationalism. Instead nationalists have begun to carry out their struggles on a global scale. National communities are being ‘imagined’ in a new (delocalized) way.”<sup>116</sup> At the same time, identity formation does not specifically or in a limited sense is based upon space or territory in contemporary world.<sup>117</sup> Instead, some of the territorially defined identities have no longer lived

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<sup>112</sup> Armstrong, J. A (1976). Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas. *The American Political Science Review*, 70 (2), p.396.

<sup>113</sup> Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (3), p.304.

<sup>114</sup> Demmers, J. (2002). Diaspora and Conflict: Locality, Long-Distance Nationalism and Delocalisation of Conflict Dynamics. *The Public*, 9 (1), p.93.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* p.93.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* p.93.

in defined territories<sup>118</sup> like diaspora communities. All of these transformations have also altered the way of thinking of diaspora members' perception about their homeland. Additionally, diaspora communities' relationship with homeland has affected each diaspora member in a different level when compared to people who live in their homeland.<sup>119</sup>

Diaspora and homeland groups live in different realities. The homelands that lie at the symbolic center of transnational national communities are 'inventions'; they are products of the imagination of deterritorialized groups. Hence, diaspora and local groups may have different interests in maintaining the 'homeland' as a collective identity and a source of cultural reproduction.<sup>120</sup>

### **2.2.3. The Perception of Homeland of Diaspora Members**

People living in homeland and diaspora groups have perceived their homeland from distinctive perspectives because they have passed different historical phases in different territories.<sup>121</sup> In other words, while members of diaspora have lived outside the homeland, they have started to look their homeland from outside or a different angle than people living inside the homeland. Their perceptions and emotions have been shaped separately although the media or technology has facilitated knowing about everything inside the

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<sup>117</sup> Demmers, J. (2002). Diaspora and Conflict: Locality, Long-Distance Nationalism and Delocalisation of Conflict Dynamics. *The Public*, 9 (1), p.90.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* p.89.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* p.95.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* p.95.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.* pp.94-95.



homeland. However, there are always distances like ways or technological channels between them and their homeland. This relation is not a direct connection, but it is not a straightforward connection. Although the distances between diaspora and homeland have become more permeable, distances are still there. First and foremost, their feelings about living physically outside the homeland affects them differently by their imagination of homeland although the new era of transnationalism makes the boundaries more invisible.

With the effect of global migration trends, there have been more and more mobilized people scattered all around the world. This means that more and more people have started to identify or categorize themselves with reference to 'deterritorialized homelands, cultures, and origins.'<sup>122</sup> This can be realized through the power of imagination and memories in the absence of territorial, national bases.<sup>123</sup> With respect to perception of homeland of diasporas, the sense of past memories has become crucial. Brah strongly emphasizes that historical past especially for diaspora communities have bounded up with them to their past memories, continuously lived and re-lived, produced and re-produced and transformed through individual and collective memory and re-memory via "confluence of narratives."<sup>124</sup> Thus, different historical circumstances have differently been imagined by "diasporic community" in an ongoing basis.<sup>125</sup> This means that "the identity of the diasporic imagined community is far from fixed or

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<sup>122</sup> Malkki, L. (1992). National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.24.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* p.24.

<sup>124</sup> Brah, A. (1996). *Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting Identities*, London, New York: Routledge, p.183.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* p.183.

pre-given.”<sup>126</sup> Their historical past and their journey are important and are indispensable parts of their life in a sense that holding on their present life in a meaningful way. By this way diaspora communities have found the way to connect their origin and their original homeland.

Diaspora communities can preserve and feel the image of unity of their nations in their memorial minds which have been recreated or rooted in historical past of nations. For instance, they imagine their homeland in a spiritual way even if they have never been to their homeland or they have been far away from their homelands. However, diaspora has conflicting nature. On the one hand, unduly attachment of the imagination of homeland for diaspora members has eased the preservation of nation-state boundaries. Furthermore, homeland dynamics have active political role upon the diaspora members. As assessed by Ishkanian, diaspora has become part of the nationalist projects of their homeland due to the mobilized transnational actors.<sup>127</sup> On the other hand, diaspora organizations have abandoned strict borders of nation-states through multi-directional migration trends, thanks to new communication channels. Hence, diaspora organizations make possible to transcend the national level relations, limited to the homeland boundaries. Diaspora organizations also have their potential to affect the nationalist actor through the global networks in spite of living long-distances from their homelands. In this sense, both dialogue between the local and the national geographic scales and the linkage between global scales is impressive for the

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<sup>126</sup> Brah, A. (1996). *Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting Identities*, London, New York: Routledge, p.183.

<sup>127</sup> Ishkanian, A. (2005). Diaspora and Global Civil Society: the Impact of Transnational Diasporic Activism on Armenia's Post-Soviet Transition. in T. Atabaki, S. Mehendale (eds.). *Central Asia and the Caucasus: Transnationalism and Diaspora* (pp. 113-139). London, New York: Routledge, p.114.

perception of homeland.<sup>128</sup> Kaiser puts emphasis on this issue: “In this way, national homeland discourses operate at a multiplicity of geographic scales, such that local, national and international homeland narratives mutually reinforce one another, rather than diminish each other in a zero sum fashion.”<sup>129</sup>

The rise of diasporic identity does not cause the diminishing of national identity as Smith also put emphasis on “multiple collective identifications, whose scope and intensity will vary with time and place.”<sup>130</sup> Thus, diasporic people can simultaneously identify their identity with different identification context or categories. The important thing is that diasporic people’s feelings for where they belong. They can feel that they belong to two different places at the same time. Conversely, Malkki makes a metaphorical explanation for homeland belonging: “motherland and fatherland, aside from their other historical connotations, suggest that each nation is a grand genealogical tree, rooted in the soil that nourishes it. By implication, it is impossible to be a part of more than one tree.”<sup>131</sup> However, global identification has affected also people’s perception of belonging. Even if people aware of their base identity, they also feel like belonging to another one at the same time especially after the spread of diaspora movements.

The imagination of homeland which is constructed consciously is an essential part of collective diasporan identity. This connection established with

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<sup>128</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.240.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.* p.243.

<sup>130</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.175.

<sup>131</sup> Malkki, L. (1992). National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.22.

homeland is a distinguishing feature of diasporas from other groups.<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, Butler describes the issue of return to homeland as intrinsic to the diasporan experience rather than a specific orientation to toward physical return.<sup>133</sup>

Members of diaspora have a spiritual, emotional, and/or cultural home no matter that they have residency on another land. Also, this home may not be the 'original' or 'ancestral' homeland.<sup>134</sup> Thus, a deep symbolic relation to the homeland is perpetuated, thanks to common language, history, culture and religion.<sup>135</sup> Fidelity of families to their homeland memories and ethno-religiously centered customs, rituals, and festivals, celebrated within a cohesive community are the considerable elements for the maintenance of diasporic identity.<sup>136</sup> These memories and customs also promote replication of homeland culture in their host lands and instrumentalism of diaspora.<sup>137</sup> Especially, language as a psychological and/ or cultural manifestation and homeland alphabet are among the indicators of

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<sup>132</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.204.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.* p.205.

<sup>134</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.13.

<sup>135</sup> Kokot, W., Tölölyan, K. & Alfonso, C. (2004). Introduction. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.3.

<sup>136</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.14.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* p.14.

diaspora members' adherence to diaspora identity.<sup>138</sup> Diasporic culture is embodied in transnational moral gestures of philanthropy, political lobbying, and personal relations of kinship, marriage, or economic investment.<sup>139</sup> Safran claims that "the persistence, inculcation, exacerbation, or weakening of diaspora attitudes is reflections of the sociocultural values, institutional structures and political contexts of the homeland as well as host land."<sup>140</sup> Thus, the actual perception of the members of diaspora about their homeland and their diasporic identity as an image is important.<sup>141</sup> Mass media facilitates dialogue between diasporas in their host land and their nationalities in homelands. Homeland imagination in historical process for diaspora members are also shaped by media channels. In this respect, Edward Said mentions an "imaginative geography and history", which helps "mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the difference between what is close to it and what is far away."<sup>142</sup> Thus, it is supposed that channels of media are effective tools for imagination of geography and history. Under the assumption of Said's inference, this imagination reflects the relation between diaspora's homeland and host land sometimes in a dramatized way. It is worth examining how the relations between homeland and host land are evolved for diasporas.

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<sup>138</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.16.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.* p.17.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* p.17.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* p.17.

<sup>142</sup> Hall, S. (1990). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. in J. Rutherford (eds.). *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence, p.231-232.

Even members of diaspora have adapted host land in all aspects, they continue to identify themselves with their homeland especially after some traumatized events, which trigger and restore diasporic identities.<sup>143</sup> Safran makes a point that:

what if an immigrant community's orientation toward the home country – in terms of culture, religion, psychological orientation, or homeland support – has been so weakened that there is little left except a vague memory, either of gross injustice or a glorious past: is it still a diaspora?... Many Jews and Armenians are 'de-diasporizing' as their identities are gradually merged with those of the majority of the host societies of the United States and Western Europe among whom they live, especially as the markers of their uniqueness – language, religion, lifestyle, and even collective memory – weaken. Yet there are periodic 'triggering' events, either in the homeland or the host land, that tend to revive the diasporic identities of ethnic or religious groups, such as systematic persecution, religious intolerance, genocides, or natural disasters.<sup>144</sup>

As Safran states; diasporas retained a common historical and memorial past. They have some practical and symbolic connection with their homelands.<sup>145</sup> They try to keep their cultural, political and economic contact by establishing active institutional connections with homeland from their host country.<sup>146</sup>

When considering the diaspora's multi identification, borders' limitation gradually becomes insignificant. This also affects the diaspora consciousness of homeland differently from people to people. Sometimes this perception logically

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<sup>143</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.10.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* pp.15-16.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* p.10.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* p.10.

and emotionally covers individual aspects or societal assertiveness as a responsibility to homeland.

#### **2.2.4. Analyzing the Concept of Homeland**

The perception of home, related to geography, has broadened in its meaning with the nationalization.<sup>147</sup> Although researchers are not sufficiently focused on the topic of homeland in the area of political geography in terms of the formation of national self-consciousness and as a place where international relations have been shaped<sup>148</sup>, the concept of homeland has started to be overemphasized with the changing atmosphere of twenty first century.<sup>149</sup> The conceptual meaning of homeland changes over time because it does not take out from static conditions. Instead, its condition depends on historical, political and social transformations. The homeland making process is not fixed but it has changing nature.<sup>150</sup> The memories established upon the homeland have undergone changes according to unstable spatial and political circumstances because memories of nations reconstructed on the basis of the political atmosphere. Memories of people have reformulated to delete the miserable memories to overemphasize and glorify their historical past. This heroized history is important

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<sup>147</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (1994). *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Chichester: Princeton University Press, p.17.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* p.5.

<sup>149</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.229.

<sup>150</sup> Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.11.

to create link with their ancestors and their ancestral homeland by conceptualizing blood-soil-identity formation.<sup>151</sup> Nations act like there isn't any other reality for nations as if they possessed qualities starting from their birth like it is given despite being constructed through imagination.

In order to sustain and find authentic self, reinforcement of communities' feelings living inside and outside the homeland for the attachment to homeland are necessary from the perspective of nationalists.<sup>152</sup> Seeking their original roots, returning and finding these roots provide an imagination of secure political roof for nations.<sup>153</sup> The image inside the memory which strengthens the homeland consciousness is also important for grounding nations' origin on primordialism and rootedness.<sup>154</sup>

However, nationalist discourses do not reach a consensus over the general view of homeland and as Özkırımlı mentions that "the geography of nation is not given." These nationalist discourses have been actually results of contingent outcomes of social practices.<sup>155</sup> It is asserted that "from at least the time of Durkheim, anthropology has known that the experience of space is always

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<sup>151</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.230.

<sup>152</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.34.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.* p.34.

<sup>154</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.235.

<sup>155</sup> Özkırımlı, U. (2010). *Theories of Nationalism A Critical Introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p.210.



socially constructed.”<sup>156</sup> In this respect the role of history in homeland construction process is decisive:

The homeland constitutes an historic territory, the ancestral land. It is land of our forefathers and foremothers, and contains their last resting-places. It is also the arena and indispensable setting for the great men and women, and the turning points, in the nation’s history – battles, treaties, synods and assemblies, the exploits of heroes and the shrines and schools of saint and sages. Then there is landscape itself.<sup>157</sup>

According to Smith, nations and well-defined territories comprise a whole.<sup>158</sup> However, this well-defined territory cannot be just anywhere but be the ‘historic land’ where “terrain and people have exerted mutual, and, beneficial influence over several generations.”<sup>159</sup> He defines homeland in a broad sense:

The homeland becomes a repository of historic memories and associations, the place where ‘our’ sages, saints and heroes lived, worked, prayed and fought. All this makes the homeland unique. Its river, coasts, lakes, mountains and cities become ‘sacred’ – places of veneration and exaltation whose inner meanings can be fathomed only by the initiated, that is, the self-aware members of nation. The land’s resources also become exclusive to the people; they are not for ‘alien’ use and exploitation.<sup>160</sup>

Kaiser claims that

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<sup>156</sup> Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.11.

<sup>157</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.35.

<sup>158</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.9.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* p.9.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* p.9.

the belief in an ancestral homeland reinforces the perception that the nation is primordial organisms and one that is rooted to a particular place. For members of the indigenous nation, this is reflected in a strong emotional attachment to the homeland, in a belief among members that they belong only there and nowhere else. In its role as a crucial element of the common origins mythology, the homeland-as-birthplace myth may also be seen as an underlying ingredient of national territoriality.<sup>161</sup>

Thus, since most of the people view their ethnic homeland as more ancient than any nation-state, the claim of ancestral homeland made by ethnic perception has become dominant against nation-states' claims in case of conflict between neighbors' homeland boundaries.<sup>162</sup> This also makes easier to the perception of internalization of their roots and naturalization of ancestral homeland in the eye of members of nations.<sup>163</sup>

Kaiser also elaborates differently the fatherland and motherland images of homeland, respectively, exclusionary especially in the times of jeopardize, and inclusionary in the time of preserving or providing harmonious interethnic conditions.<sup>164</sup> Although this two homeland discourses have been enforced both for external and internal legitimacy in world system, in general, fatherland discourse is predominantly applied.<sup>165</sup> Whether its meaning is inclusive or exclusive, "boundary making is an other-forming process, and plays a vital role in the

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<sup>161</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (1994). *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Chichester: Princeton University Press, p.18.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.* p.19.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* p.20.

<sup>164</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.233.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.* p.234.

construction of us and them.”<sup>166</sup> In order to comprehend this homeland making process, there are different connotations linking to perception of homeland: “the subjective sense of homeland is founded on the perception held by members that a given place is both the geographic cradle of nation and also the ‘natural’ place where the nation is fulfilled its destiny.”<sup>167</sup> Although homeland is generally perceived as just solely determined boundaries of nation-states, the borders beyond the homeland may also be accepted as a part of national homeland in the minds of members of nation-state.<sup>168</sup>

### **2.3. The Components of Homeland**

The attachment to homeland has been continuing process by adapting the historical conditions of centuries. It is important to hold nation in unity through several components and connotations for perpetuating people’s attachment to homeland. National unity in defined boundaries of homeland is an important essence of nationalism. For this reason; Smith defines nation as cultural communities whose members have been united through common historical memories, myth, symbols and traditions.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.232.

<sup>167</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (1994). *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Chichester: Princeton University Press, p.10.

<sup>168</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.237.

<sup>169</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.11.

Indeed, nationalism carries on both civic and ethnic elements in different degrees and forms.<sup>170</sup> In this respect, the fact that these components directly link with homeland is not a decisive point but the connotations of these components about homeland are important to perceive homeland as a concept because it is hard to make specific division. Instead; the ideological components of nationalism are considered as a part of chain. Genealogy and ties with descents, popular mobilizations, vernacular languages, customs and traditions are among these components of ethnic conception of nation. Likewise the nation, culture is accepted as an indissoluble part of soil.<sup>171</sup> Also, emotional ties to the soil make them loyal to nationhood and nation-state.<sup>172</sup> In this sense, Malkki gives alternative examples:

The ashes or bodies of persons who have died on foreign soil are routinely transported back to their 'homelands,' to the land where the genealogical tree of their ancestors grows. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust: in death, too, native or national soils are important.<sup>173</sup>

Thus, people's identity even in the time of dead depends on where being rooted.<sup>174</sup> Mythical and subjective links are important for attachments to specific territory because this place, inherited from their descendants, is unique for ethnic communities.<sup>175</sup> These intense and spiritual attachments are bound up with ethnic

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<sup>170</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.13.

<sup>171</sup> Malkki, L. (1992). National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.29.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* p.27.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* p.27.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.* p.27.

<sup>175</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.23.

to its homeland and strengthen its identity even it is far away from the homeland like the classical examples of diaspora communities of Jews and Armenians.<sup>176</sup>

According to the Anderson, language connects us affectively with dead people<sup>177</sup> and our ancestor. The language is also important to protect national sentiment through the form of poetry and songs like national anthems. He explains this sentiment:

how selfless this unisonance feels!... If we are aware that others are singing these songs precisely when and as we are, we have no idea who they may be, or even where, out of earshot, they are singing. Nothing connects us all but imagined sound.<sup>178</sup>

Anderson contributes that “from the start the nation was conceived in language, not in blood, and that one could be ‘invited into’ the imagined community.”<sup>179</sup>

Myth of origin, historical memories, collective symbols derived from the perception of homeland is necessary to establish mutual relation and political solidarity between members of nation.<sup>180</sup> Alternatively, homeland is reflected as sacred place of the God where the whole community represents the God.<sup>181</sup> Not

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<sup>176</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.23.

<sup>177</sup> Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, p.145.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* p.145.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.* p.145.

<sup>180</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.138.

<sup>181</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.230.

only ‘sacred repository of people’s memory’ but also natural feature such as lakes, mountains, rivers and valleys have also symbolic meaning for people’s mind.<sup>182</sup>

Given territory with determined boundaries of the nation generally shaped by nation-states and its dominant ethnic to reach their historical boundaries are based upon legends, memories and myths despite the multi-ethnic structure of these nation-states.<sup>183</sup> Although communities are subject of several periods of transformations throughout the history, they have protected their common memory.<sup>184</sup> What is the motivation under the maintenance of their core and indigenous peculiarities of nation?<sup>185</sup> Is it because of their survival approximately in and out of their homeland with an independent statehood in a simple sense?<sup>186</sup> However, there is a good example to point out these questions like Jews who persist in their national identity in exiled far from their spiritual homeland for nearly two thousand years owing to their living and protected memory through language, religion, narratives and traditions.<sup>187</sup>

Map and other cartographic representations, motherland and fatherland images, symbolic national landscape, and national monuments and

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<sup>182</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.65.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.* p.39.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.* p.33.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.* p.33.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.* p.33.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.* p.33.

commemorative sites help to nationalize space and territorialize the nation.<sup>188</sup> All Stamps, flags, posters and school textbooks serve to enhance homeland consciousness in the minds of the population being nationalized.<sup>189</sup>

The historical experiences, attaching nations to their homelands, are justified through reinterpretation of each successive generations in order to control nations destiny by combining ‘new events and selecting from among alternative myths and symbols.’<sup>190</sup> Thus, reconstruction of national history by dynamic national self-consciousness established a ‘dialogue between past and future conducted in the present’.<sup>191</sup> Kaiser depicted this process as “integrating historical myth into texture of the landscape, conflating history and geography and weaving historical memory into the spatial configuration of nationhood.”<sup>192</sup> Shortly; “the outcome is that space is invested with historical meanings and mythical associations, while history and memory are concretized as locations; memorial spaces and historical places make history visible and therefore tangible.”<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.232.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.* p.233.

<sup>190</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (1994). *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Chichester: Princeton University Press, p.21.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.* p.21.

<sup>192</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, pp.235-236.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.* p.235.

## 2.4. The Reconstruction of Perception of Homeland

How can people feel belong to one place? What are the conditions behind this feeling of belonging? In this case, Smith makes differentiation between Western model of citizenship and non-Western in terms of attachment to the homeland.<sup>194</sup> Smith asserts that while Western model of citizenship in terms of historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members and common civic culture and ideology depends on citizen's preference about their belongings, the non-Western or ethnic conception of nation remain organically from the birth become of their native community even they emigrated to another territory.<sup>195</sup> However, this argument should be questioned in terms of how much people whether be Western or non-Western are free to choice their sense of belongings or preferences. The critical thing in this perception is that to what extend people are free to make their choices? Is it result of the imposition of political elites or is it the natural outcome of historical and cultural bonds because political elites have tended to direct the homeland making process in line with the nationalist project. At this point, the legal equality under the concept of citizenship including civil and legal rights, political rights and duties, and socio-economic rights for national communities in their defined homeland have become also manifestation of measure of common values and traditions.<sup>196</sup> This refers to identification of nations with a measure of common and a civic ideology, a set of common understanding and aspirations, sentiments and ideas to entrench and

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<sup>194</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.11.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.* p.11.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* pp.10-11.



cement the bounds among population in their homeland<sup>197</sup> and outside the homeland.

The continuity of nation-state relies on solid basis. The homeland making process on the basis of rewriting the historical past of nation, formed by national elites, is one of milestones of this national construction. Thus, national elites have created an image of framework for the belief of members of nation. They have built an unreal image of nation-state.

Dominant elites have revived ethnic past and brought ethnic memories into center for the process of construction of nation-states. Myths and images have been mobilized in the direction of nationalists' aims to sustain continuation of nation as an ancient community of belonging.<sup>198</sup> From the point of Smith, descents and genealogies are significant for ethnic model to support its claims.<sup>199</sup> Thus, in ethnic model people do not coalesce for a mobilization of political action for their own interests but they can be a part of leaders' actions through manipulation of their national aspirations.<sup>200</sup> National elites have transformed or sometimes have rediscovered new historical past to lend credence to basic principles of nation-state for the mobilization of a formerly passive community. According to Gupta and Ferguson; designing perception of homeland is important in order to awake masses for collective political movements.<sup>201</sup> In this sense, the

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<sup>197</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.11.

<sup>198</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.230.

<sup>199</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.12.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.* p.12.

<sup>201</sup> Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.12.

place of movement inside the homeland is substantial as a secure and recognized compact territory in order to convert passive community into active one as a part of national elite's plan.<sup>202</sup> Thus, sentiments about homeland as instruments of nationalists are used to mobilize community even members of nation have lived outside the homeland.<sup>203</sup> Gupta and Ferguson shortly explain that: "although homelands are most often depicted as politically neutral, cultural spaces that are both 'natural' and 'eternal', in reality homelands are politically constructed places towards which the population is territorialized."<sup>204</sup> Homeland making process or the image of homeland has been changed in response to political circumstances.<sup>205</sup>

The homeland term has been articulated by political leader in the direction of their interests. Some part of ancient history has been shown as an anachronistic past and newly and artificially constructed history has been reflected as if they have been a part of native and inherent historical past. Thereby; homeland consciousness has been shaped not only by community or individual perception and values but also by the intervention of national elites into national values.

The impact of national elites on the perception of homeland has gripped on mostly the perception of homogenous nation-state in its ancestral homeland. This is an illusion to persuade members of nation about living in homogenous homeland in unity and in peace. This perception of homogeneous homeland has

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<sup>202</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.64.

<sup>203</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (2004). Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity. in D. Conversi (eds.). *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, New York: Routledge, p.229.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.* pp.230-231.

<sup>205</sup> Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), p.12.

also been required to be in touch with the members of nation outside the homeland because they are integral part of this imagination.

If the nation is defined as “a social group which shares a common ideology, common institutions and customs, and a sense of homogeneity”, sense of homogeneity under the historical homeland for nations will be a conflicting issue especially with the overlapping perception of state and nation because as Connor analyzes in the early 1970s that less than 10 percent of state was the presumably ‘the real homogeneous nation-states.’<sup>206</sup> Most of the nations have extended their living places beyond the nation-states although most of the authorities inaccurately presuppose all states as nation-states. Instead, members of nations have commonly lived in the adjoint border of these nation-states<sup>207</sup> or far away from their nation-states because of migration trends. In a broad sense:

the remarkable lack of coincidence that exists between ethnic and political borders is indicated by the following statistics. Of a total of 132 contemporary states, only 12 (9.1 per cent) can be described as essentially homogeneous from an ethnic viewpoint. An additional 25 states (18.9 per cent of the sample) contain an ethnic group accounting for more than 50 per cent of the state's total population, and in still another 25 states the largest element accounts for between 75 and 89 per cent of the population.<sup>208</sup>

Territorial unity is about social and cultural unification but this does not mean the real homogeneity.<sup>209</sup> The nationalism is considered as:

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<sup>206</sup> Connor, W. (1972). Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?. *World Politics*, 24 (3), pp.333-334.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.* p.333.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.* p.320.

<sup>209</sup> Smith, A. D. (2010). *Nationalism Theory, Ideology, History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.29.

...an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity and identity of a nation. The unification of homeland is substantial for idea of nationalism. The aims of unifying all nationals, scattered outside the national territory, within the homeland or receive the host land and annex them into the homeland are indispensable part of nationalism.<sup>210</sup>

Thus, the imagination of homogenous homeland is not about the unity of nation but about ideological construction of nationalists. Thus, under this imagination members of nations can be easily manipulated as a part of nationalists' aims because the feeling of belonging to the homeland has been consolidated with the feeling of living homogeneously with the other members of nation under the same roof. While living outside the historical national geography, feeling of belonging to the homeland is continuously reconstructed by national-diaspora elites according to the existing political, social and cultural conditions.

## **2.5. The Evaluation of Azerbaijani Diaspora Organizations**

Depending on the common points of diaspora concept, distinctive points of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey and how administrators of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' perception of homeland is shaped are analyzed in this chapter. Perception of homeland is constructed by its components of geography, culture, memory, history, landscapes, and art. These components are continuously reproduced both by diaspora organizations' elites and by hereditary memory of Azerbaijani people which pass from generations to generations.

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<sup>210</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.75.

Although there is not a single definition of diaspora which corresponds to all definitions described by scholars,<sup>211</sup> there are common points of variety of scholars' definitions of diaspora to make inferences. Most of the scholars assert that not all movements of people considered as diaspora<sup>212</sup> but communities imagined in certain ways are diasporas.<sup>213</sup> These common points will be supportive to make implications about the perception of homeland of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people who migrated to Turkey before the collapse of USSR. One of the basic common points of diaspora is that diaspora societies composed of generally displaced people who dispersed involuntarily and often traumatically from their homelands to at least two or more new places.<sup>214</sup> Therefore, diaspora communities feel like being one place physically and thinking another place far away.<sup>215</sup> The second one is diaspora communities' collective memory or memorial past about their homeland in conjunction with history,

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<sup>211</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515.

<sup>212</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), p.189.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.* p.192.

<sup>214</sup> Brazier, J. A. (2007). *Diaspora : An Introduction*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishing, p.24., Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.83-84., Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515., Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.11.

<sup>215</sup> Safran, W. (2004). Deconstructing and Comparing Diasporas. In W. Kokot, K. Tölölyan, C. Alfonso (eds.). *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. London, New York: Routledge, p.12.

myths, location, achievements.<sup>216</sup> The third one is related to idealization of ancestral homeland with the collective commitment of diaspora to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity.<sup>217</sup> Another common point is the establishment of link and solidarity between homeland and diasporas in other countries of settlement.<sup>218</sup> Diaspora members consciously connect each other based on distinctiveness, common history, and belief in common fate. Contact with co-ethnics through diaspora relations provides diaspora consciousness related to state of mind and sense of identity, self-awareness of group identity and diaspora networks independently from the homeland. Although not all diasporas are necessarily operative, self-awareness is important to make differentiation between diaspora members and people living in homeland.<sup>219</sup> The last common point is that diaspora can form multiple types and change their characteristic over time with a dynamic social process.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.83-84., Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), pp.193-195., Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515.

<sup>217</sup> Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.83-84., Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515.

<sup>218</sup> Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), pp.192., Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.83-84., Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515.

<sup>219</sup> Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515., Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), pp.192-207.

<sup>220</sup> Cohen, R. (1997). *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. London, New York: UCL Press, p.189., Butler, K. D. (2001). Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 10 (2), pp.193-195.

Although there have been common points of diaspora, every diaspora communities carry its own characteristic. As opposed to the one of the common points of diasporas which is the lack of acceptance by host land or trouble relationship with host land,<sup>221</sup> Azerbaijani people living in Turkey integrate into Turkey. This is the remarkable point of the discrepancy of the Azerbaijan community from other diasporas. Therefore, the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey becomes distinctive characteristic of Azerbaijani diaspora. Azerbaijani people with whom I made in-depth interviews, who migrated to Turkey before the collapse of USSR, attach Turkey with the citizenship. They are not citizens of Azerbaijan but citizens of Turkey. In contrast to general view of diasporas' nostalgia to turn back to their homeland, most of them do not plan to physically turn back to Azerbaijan, instead they have permanently settled down in Turkey with their families because their ancestral homeland stay in Armenia and these lands are no longer accessible for them. They integrate into Turkey especially in terms of language and culture. However, they are aware of their Azerbaijani identity especially in terms of ancient bonds and emotional bonds shaped by Azerbaijani people's common history and migration history and cultural links with their co-ethnics in their memories, shaped by their family elders. Azerbaijani diaspora identity is considered as a complementary part of Turkish national identity according to Azerbaijani diaspora elites. Cultural similarities based on Turkic identity ease the adaptation of Azerbaijani people to Turkey. Azerbaijani diaspora positions their existence against the Armenian diaspora organization all over the world due to the Armenian occupation of their ancestral homeland. Azerbaijani diaspora has attempted to be newly established in Turkey especially after the collapse of USSR with the support of the State of Azerbaijan especially against Armenian diaspora organizations as it can be

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<sup>221</sup> Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1 (1), pp.83-84., Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), p.515.

inferred from the respondent 10's sentence: "the State of Azerbaijan tries to strengthen Azerbaijani diaspora vis-a-vis the Armenian diaspora." However, Azerbaijani diaspora network in Turkey did not develop so much as well as Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey's connection with diasporas in other countries in the world because of the lack of unity.

Shaping the perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora organizations with their diaspora organization's activities in Turkey are affected by historical past of Azerbaijani people. For instance, Azerbaijani diaspora elites living in Turkey expatriated from their ancient homelands, Armenia, into Turkey's east border line near to Azerbaijan because most of the people forced to live their homeland in wartime. After wartime and with the establishment of the USSR, Azerbaijani people in Turkey lost almost their connection with their homeland and their accession to their homeland where they imagined turning back one day due to the USSR. Also, their ancestral or historic homeland, of which they adhere to glorified history, became part of Armenia. Therefore, these expatriate people had to abandon their hope to go back to their homes because of the strictly closed borders of USSR. Thus, after the force migration, they lost their real homeland and these lands were perceived as lost homeland. Also in the time of Soviet, Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republics (SSR) was also inaccessible homeland for Azerbaijani people in Turkey. With the continuation of USSR dominance in the region Caucasia in years, Turkey has become new, current and actual homeland of Azerbaijani dispersed people but not as host land. Following the collapse of USSR and the opening of border gates, some part of ancestral Azerbaijani lands have been accessible. However, some parts of Azerbaijan's historical lands still have been seen as occupied areas especially for the conflicted areas between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh. Also, from the perspectives of some of the Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey, some parts of Iran, where Azerbaijanis live, is also one of the important ancestral lands of Azerbaijani people.



Hence, historical and memorial past of Azerbaijani people make the Azerbaijani people in Turkey unique considering the diaspora's perception of homeland. In the following chapters, perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations and how this perception is reconstructed by Azerbaijani diaspora elites by considering Azerbaijani historical geography and Azerbaijani cultural and linguistic bonds with Turkey are discussed.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3. THE PERCEPTION OF HOMELAND OF AZERBAIJANI DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY

Perception of homeland do not just depend on the defined boundaries of nation-states but it is more transnational concept and the conceptualization of homeland transform itself with the transnational diaspora relations, thanks to their activities which kept alive the historical, cultural memories of diaspora members alive. The collective diaspora identity has been reconstructed by diaspora elites like the nationalist cadres of Azerbaijan, especially, Mammad Amin Rasulzade. These nationalist cadres have undertaken the leadership position of construction of diaspora identity of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin in Turkey on the basis of the both Turkish and Azerbaijani identity. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is analyzing how diaspora elites in Turkey have continuously reconstructed the perception of homeland.

Historical past and culture produce diaspora consciousness.<sup>222</sup> Diaspora consciousness can be reproduced through mind, through cultural artefacts and through a shared imagination<sup>223</sup> with the diaspora organizations activities and networks. Diaspora identities protect their uniqueness by producing and reproducing.<sup>224</sup> Despite the common memory of diasporic identity, there are factors which make diaspora relations complicated in a sense that diaspora

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<sup>222</sup> Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (3), p.319.

<sup>223</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.282.

<sup>224</sup> Hall, S. (1990). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. in J. Rutherford (eds.). *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence, p.235.

members' different background and social and political heterogeneity between members.<sup>225</sup>

Reproduction of Azerbaijani culture through the Azerbaijani civil society organizations under the diaspora is important for diaspora members' perception of homeland. Thanks to the Azerbaijani associations' activities in Turkey, Azerbaijani people in Turkey keep their memory, history, and culture alive. Azerbaijani people's perceptions to their real, ancestral, lost and inaccessible homelands are kept alive through diaspora consciousness which is reproduced by diaspora elites. By the way of culture, history and memory, the geographical attachment of these people has enlarged so reproduction of Azerbaijani culture, history and memory through diaspora organizations attach Azerbaijani people to Turkey as their new and actual homeland, to the Republic of Azerbaijan as their newly accessible and emotional homeland, to Armenia as their ancestral homeland and to some parts of Iran, where the density of Azerbaijanis is high, as their homeland. Also, with the diaspora organizations activities, this diaspora consciousness is transmitted from older generations to young generations.

### **3.1. The Azerbaijani Diaspora Organizations in Turkey**

Until the collapse of the USSR, short-lived Azerbaijani civil society organizations were founded in Turkey with the aim of giving support to the struggle of independence of Azerbaijan by providing cooperation among Azerbaijani people in Turkey. One of the famous Azerbaijani civil society organizations which continue to operate is the Association of Azerbaijan Culture.

Azeri Brother Fraternal Association is among short-lived Azerbaijani civil society organizations.<sup>226</sup> Its name was changed as Azerbaijan Fraternal

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<sup>225</sup> Sheffer, G. (2010). Integration Impacts on Diaspora-Homeland Relations. *MMG Working Paper*, 10 (8), p.7.

Association in 1954.<sup>227</sup> Journal of Mücahit was its media organ.<sup>228</sup> In 1958, the association united with the Recognition of Azerbaijan Culture Association which was founded in 1950s.<sup>229</sup> As a result of emerging conflict between Azerbaijani associations in Turkey, new associations emerged.<sup>230</sup> Another association, founded in 1952, was Azerbaijan Nationalist Association<sup>231</sup> with its Journal of Turk Izi<sup>232</sup> Azerbaijan Youth Association came into action in 1961 as youth branch of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture.<sup>233</sup> Also the Recognition of Azerbaijan Association was established in 1965.<sup>234</sup>

Before the collapse of the USSR, Azerbaijani civil society organizations were not long-term associations except the Association of Azerbaijan Culture. This is why its establishment history and its aim have been significant. Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have been mostly established in the near future in order to develop diaspora organizations among Azerbaijani civil

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<sup>226</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye'de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.108.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.* p.109.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.* p.145.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.* p.113.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.* p.113.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.* p.111.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.* p.112.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.* p.152.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.* p.153.

society organizations. The exception of ten Azerbaijani civil society organizations, with which I made interview, is the Association of Azerbaijan Culture, established in “1949.” This association has undertaken much more different roles from Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey.

### **3.1.1. The Association of Azerbaijan Culture**

The Association of Azerbaijan Culture still actively engage in Azerbaijani associations’ organizations unlike other Azerbaijani civil society organizations established before 2000s. The fact that how the Azerbaijani nationalist leader Mammad Amin Rasulzade played a role in the foundation of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture started with the establishing Musavat Party is worth to describe.

As stated by Resuloğlu; Musavat Party was established in 1911 on the basis of Turkish nationalism in Baku and Mammad Amin Rasulzade became its leader.<sup>235</sup> This party featured in the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) in these years.<sup>236</sup> Azerbaijani people acquired their independence on May 28 with the foundation of the ADR.<sup>237</sup> ADR was the first founded Republic among Turks and Muslims<sup>238</sup> but almost all countries recognized Azerbaijan after 18 months passed from its establishment.<sup>239</sup> Allies

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<sup>235</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye’de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.40.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.* p.30.

<sup>237</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.63.

<sup>238</sup> Rasulzade, M. E. (1954). Azerbaycan Davası. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 26-27, p.3.

forces recognized Azerbaijan's independence in Paris Peace Conference.<sup>240</sup> The ADR adopted the discourse that "our homeland is Azerbaijan, our nationality is Turk, and our language is Turkish."<sup>241</sup> Also, new state's authorities adopted the slogan of Ali Bay Huseyinzade: 'Turkify, Modernize, Islamize' which refers the new state's flag colors –blue, red, and green – respectively.<sup>242</sup> The underlying idea of this slogan was that "the new Azerbaijani national identity...Turkic but separate from Turkey, Shiite Islamic but rejecting the clerical establishment."<sup>243</sup>

With the occupation of the ADR, Mammad Amin Rasulzade captured and kept away from Azerbaijan in Moscow. In 1922, he escaped from Moscow to Turkey by way of Europe.<sup>244</sup> He came to Turkey because Anatolia has been Turks' real homeland for centuries.<sup>245</sup> The supporter of Musavat Party escaped from Azerbaijan after the occupation of Baku by Red Army so they continued

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<sup>239</sup> Azərbaycan'ın Büyük Devletler Tarafından Tanınmasının 60. Yıldönümü. (1980). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 223, p.1.

<sup>240</sup> Selçuk, A. (1995). 12 Ocak 1920 Azerbaycan İstiklalinin Tanınması 75 Yıldönümünde. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 301, p.24.

<sup>241</sup> Nerimanoğlu, K. V. (1996). Dilimiz Varlığımızın Tasdikidir. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 307, p.22.

<sup>242</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.51-52.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.* p.51.

<sup>244</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye'de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.30.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.* p.34.

their nationalist aims especially in Turkey, Poland, and Germany.<sup>246</sup> Hence, most of the Turks have preferred Turkey for migration.<sup>247</sup> In order to deal with Azerbaijani national independence struggle, the Azerbaijani intellectuals came together under the leadership of Mammad Amin Rasulzade for establishing Azerbaijan National Center as the political representative of Musavat Party in abroad far away from Azerbaijan<sup>248</sup>, after the Musavat Party was banned in the USSR and its organizations went into underground in Ashkhabad, Tehran, Tabriz and Afghanistan as stated by Kengerli.<sup>249</sup> Musavat Party's political representatives in abroad established contact with the underground foundation of party in Azerbaijan secretly.<sup>250</sup> Azerbaijani people in Turkey propagated their aims through the publications such as Journal of Yeni Kafkasya (1923-1927), Journal of Azeri Türk (1928-1930), Journal of Yeşil Yaprak (1928), Journal of Odlu Yurd (1929-1931), Journal of Bildiriş (1930-1931)<sup>251</sup> and Journal of Azerbaycan Yurt Bilgisi (1931-1947)<sup>252</sup> Nevertheless, he had to be deported from Turkey as a result of increasing pressure of Soviet authorities over Turkey about his attempt to organize national struggle against the USSR from abroad. With his deportation,

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<sup>246</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye'de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.41.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.* p.34.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.* p.36.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.* p.8.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.* p.41.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.* p.42.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.* p.76.

the Azerbaijani people continued to give support their national struggle for their independence in Europe<sup>253</sup> through publications of İlham Kaynağı, Hakkın Sesi, Vatan Sesi, Mukades, Odlar Ülkesi, Dilek, Hak and Hamle.<sup>254</sup> After the World War II (WWII), Azerbaijani people who are captured by German army or who fought for Germany accepted by Turkey as migrants like intellectuals deported from Turkey in 1930s so Mammad Amin Rasulzade turned back to Turkey. He continued to follow the aim of independent Azerbaijan by establishing the Association of Azerbaijan Culture in Turkey.<sup>255</sup> The respondent from the Association of Azerbaijan Culture explains that:

the reason of the establishment of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture is basically rely on first ADR which existed only two years and invaded by Soviet army in 27 April 1920. The founder and the president of this State of Azerbaijan, Mammad Amin Rasulzade, had to live in exile from Azerbaijan. He continued to support the independence of Azerbaijan outside the Azerbaijan SSR under the roof of the Azerbaijan National Center between the years 1924-1949. However, there is an urgent need of permanent legal foundation in Turkey where Azerbaijani people in exile chose to live permanently. Hence, the Association of Azerbaijan Culture was established in 1949 with the contribution of Mammad Amin Rasulzade as the honorary president of association.<sup>256</sup>

Hamit Ataman (as the first president of association), Resul Ünsal, Kerim Öder, Ahmet Yaşat, Celal Odelli, Mehmet Kengerli, İskender Aküzüm, Feyzi Aküzüm, Cemil Ünal are the presidents of association up to now. The association

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<sup>253</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye’de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.30.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.* p.79.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.* p.30.

<sup>256</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012



has also continued to its functions with its regular journal, Journal of Azerbaijan Culture.<sup>257</sup>

Musavat Party and its supporters like the Association of Azerbaijan Culture were considered as anti-state and nationalist by communist regime. Communist regime perceived Musavat as the archenemy<sup>258</sup> while the Association of Azerbaijan Culture assessed communist regime as one of the big thread for the humanity.<sup>259</sup> Both Soviet authorities and Iranian authorities send diplomatic nota to the Turkish government about the activities of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture because from the Soviet side, the administrators of association were from Musavat Party and from both side association aimed to division of the USSR and Iran for united Azerbaijan in north and south.<sup>260</sup> In accordance with Rasulzade, communist regime deceived people about nationalism which was used for the interest of capitalism in order to constrain possible nationalist movement in Soviet republics.<sup>261</sup> Doctrine of communism served for the fragmentation of national unity and national solidarity.<sup>262</sup> On the contrary, nationalism would become the

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<sup>257</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği, Retrieved August, 23 2013 from <http://www.azerbaycankulder.org/dernek.aspx>

<sup>258</sup> Karaca, A. (1980). Azərbaycan Milli Hareketinin İdeolojik Karakteri. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 234, p.45.

<sup>259</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Kurultayı Yapıldı. (1981). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 236, p.48.

<sup>260</sup> Sovyet Rusya ile İran, Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği ile ilgili olarak Hükümete Nota Verdi. (1978). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 226, p.125.

<sup>261</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1952). Şekilce de Muhtevace de Ruslaşdırma. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 5, p.3.

<sup>262</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1952). Milli Birlik. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 7, p.1.

end of nations' prison of the USSR.<sup>263</sup> As believed by Mammad Amin Rasulzade 'the flag, which has been raised on time, have never been lowered',<sup>264</sup> so Azerbaijani national struggle should be promulgated in Turkey and in the world.<sup>265</sup> With the perestroika policies implemented by Soviet authorities, Azerbaijani organizations in Turkey boosted their effectiveness of activities by exerting their struggle of independence into international platform.<sup>266</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture organized press conferences together with Azerbaijan National Center, Turk Ocakları and Nationalist Action Party (MHP) for the Armenian savageness in Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>267</sup> The association has also membership in the Azerbaijan National Foundation Union which had one of the foundations of the Azerbaijan national struggle.<sup>268</sup> It can be inferred from that Mammad Amin Rasulzade did not give up believing the independence of Azerbaijan. Thus, under the leadership of Mammad Amin Rasulzade, Association's establishment aims are based on national struggle of Azerbaijan with the promotion of its culture and history<sup>269</sup> and also on making the

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<sup>263</sup> Milliyetçiler 3. İlmi Seminerinde Dış Türkler Konusu Görüşüldü. (1979). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 230, p.46.

<sup>264</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1952). Milli Birlik. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 7, p.1.

<sup>265</sup> Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği 30. Dönem Genel Kurul Toplantısı Yapıldı. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 255, p.66.

<sup>266</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye'de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.133.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.* p.134.

<sup>268</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye'de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.150.

<sup>269</sup> Beşinci Kongreye Giderken Azerbaycan. (1953). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 10, p.1.

Azerbaijani Turks widely known in Turkey to enhance brotherhood relations between Turks.<sup>270</sup> Thanks to association's activities to enhance Azerbaijani and Turkish culture and history with organizations, the Association of Azerbaijan Culture was deemed worthy to status of association of the public weal.<sup>271</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture has been one of the active civil society organizations in Ankara. However, after the 1980 Turkish coup d'état, its association activities with its journal were suspended.<sup>272</sup> The activities of association were interrupted during the 1980 Turkish coup d'état for a while. Apart from that, association effectively has continued to carry out its activities.<sup>273</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture opened branch in the North Cyprus Turkish Republic.<sup>274</sup> Association has branches in Istanbul, Bursa, Izmir, Antalya, Sivas, Turgutlu, Söke and Kayseri.<sup>275</sup>

The Association of Azerbaijan Culture's aims and activities are listed below as such

Aims:

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<sup>270</sup> Aküzüm, F. (1953). Azerbaycan Gecesi. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 10, p.19.

<sup>271</sup> Kamu Yararına Çalışan Derneklerden Sayıldı. (1994). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 298, p.34.

<sup>272</sup> Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği'nin Açıklaması. (1981). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 25, p.8.

<sup>273</sup> Şimşir, S. (1999). *Azerbaycanlıların Türkiye'de Siyasi ve Kültürel Faaliyetleri (1920-1991)*. Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, p.131.

<sup>274</sup> Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği'nin Lefkoşa Lokali Kıbrıs Cumhurbaşkanı Vekili ve Millet Meclisi Başkanı Ayhan Halit Acarkan Tarafından Törene Açıldı. (1996). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 308, p.29.

<sup>275</sup> Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, Retrieved August, 23 2013 from <http://www.azerbaycankulder.org/dernek.aspx>

- Making promotion of Azerbaijan with its history, culture and art by celebrating its national and historical days.
- Publishing books, journals and brochures.
- Helping Azerbaijani people who need economic and moral support.
- Establishing branches related to sport, theatre, opera, folklore, music, women, youth, and media.
- Organizing touristic and country tours.
- Financial support for students coming from Azerbaijan.<sup>276</sup>

Activities:

- Organizing commemorative days for important Azerbaijani people like Mammad Amin Rasulzade<sup>277</sup> and Elchibey.<sup>278</sup>
- Celebrating the important days of Azerbaijan like Foundation of ADR on May 28, Black January on January 20, and Salvation of Baku by Ottoman Army on September 15 by emphasizing the Azerbaijan's struggle for independence.<sup>279</sup>
- Organizing meetings about the April 27 of Russian Red Army invasion by entering Baku.<sup>280</sup>
- Visiting Mausoleum of Atatürk.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.51.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.* p.54.

<sup>278</sup> Elçibey'in 4. Ölüm Yıldönümü Münasebetiyle Halk Cephesi Partisi ve Müsavat Partisine Gönderilen Anma Yazısı ve Müsavat Partisinden Gelen Cevabi Yazı. (2004). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 355, p.10.

<sup>279</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.55.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.* p.55.

- Making contact with nationalist associations in Turkey.<sup>282</sup>
- Celebrating recognition of the ADR by neighbor countries<sup>283</sup> and by great powers of America, Ottoman Empire, Italy, England, France, Iran, Japan on January 12<sup>284</sup> and celebrating 21 Azer on December 21.<sup>285</sup>

The foundation of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture has served for the unification of Azerbaijani people living in Ankara together with enhancing cohesion and solidarity among Azerbaijani people through country tours, tea parties, balls and other meetings.<sup>286</sup> All activities are carried out within the scope of association's aspire to keep alive the Azerbaijani culture. As a part of association's aim, the Association of Azerbaijan Culture tries to show people that culture of Azerbaijan is entirely Turk. It is important to protect historical and cultural existence of Azerbaijani Turks.<sup>287</sup> Within the scope of Association of Azerbaijan Culture, cultural activities such as opera 'Leyla ile Mecnun by Üzeyir

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<sup>281</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.55.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.* p.56

<sup>283</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği 30. Dönem Genel Kurul Toplantısı Yapıldı. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.73.

<sup>284</sup> Ahmet Karaca, Trt 2 Yayınında Azerbaycan Türkleri Konusunda Yorum Yaptı. (1979). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 232, p.16.

<sup>285</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.56

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.* p.51.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.* p.60.

Hacıbeyli, Şah İsmail by Müslim Magomay, Arşın Mal Alan by Hacıbeyli, traditional Azerbaijani music ‘Segâh, Azərbaycan, Şuşa’nın Dağları, Humaroldum’, traditional Azerbaijani dance ‘Azərbaycan, Derbendi, Diringi, Mendil, Nazbarı, Kaytağı, Kıskaç, Hingizer, Şamil, Terekeme, Uzundere, Ondört, Dilşad’ were performed.<sup>288</sup> Cultural activities of association include the topics on Azerbaijan history, Azerbaijan language, Turkish history, Azerbaijan geography, economic wealth of Azerbaijan.<sup>289</sup> Some of the conferences made by Association of Azerbaijan Culture are about the intellectuals of Azerbaijan poet Shahriar and the national hero of Settar Han for 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of South Azerbaijan Constitutional Movement.<sup>290</sup>

The Association of Azerbaijan Culture continues its operation starting from the time of USSR to advocate independent Azerbaijan. After the collapse of USSR, the Association of Azerbaijan Culture keeps to undertake the role of maintenance of Azerbaijani culture and protect Azerbaijani’s rights against Armenian diaspora as one of the important Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey.

### **3.1.2. The Newly Established Azerbaijani Civil Society Organizations**

After the collapse of USSR, newly established Azerbaijani civil society organizations have been established. Nine of the ten Azerbaijani civil society

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<sup>288</sup> Aküzüm, F. (1953). Azərbaycan Gecesi. *Azərbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 10, p.19.

<sup>289</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği 30. Dönem Genel Kurul Toplantısı Yapıldı. (1986). *Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.81.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.* p.82.

organizations with which I made in-depth interview established after 2000s such as in “2009”, “2008”, “2010”, “2011”, “2012”, “2013.” This can be inferred by recent historical experiences like the collapse of USSR and with the continuing Nagorno-Karabakh dispute with Armenia that, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations have attempted to be enhanced against Armenian diaspora. For instance, respondent 6 states that:

our Azerbaijani civil society organization started to operate in 2008 for the purpose of protecting Azerbaijani culture instead of being a limited regional civil society organization in Turkey like civil society organizations specifically to Kars or Iğdır.<sup>291</sup>

For stronger diaspora relations between Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey, Federation of Azerbaijani civil society organizations have also been started to be established in recent years. Respondent 10 indicates that “our federation of Azerbaijani civil society organizations was founded in 2004 to established dialogue between people living in Turkey and Azerbaijan.”<sup>292</sup> Respondent 7 from other Azerbaijani civil society organizations’ federation tells that:

our federation was established in January 2013. Its opening decision was taken in the First Congress of Azerbaijani Turks living in Turkey realized in 2011 in Çeşme. In that period of time; there were two Azerbaijani federations in Turkey and both of them were supported by the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic. In order to fill a gap among Azerbaijani diaspora organizations with the aim of being independent Azerbaijani civil society organizations from the State of Azerbaijan, third federation of Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey was established with its broad network<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>292</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>293</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

Before 2000s most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations were frequently closed and opened. Some Azerbaijani civil society organizations opened new branches in other regions of Turkey or some associations were united with these branches. This caused the emergence of “structure of divided civil society organizations.” In this sense interviewee 2 gives an example of the history of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Izmir:

The first Azerbaijani civil society organization in Izmir was established in 1991 under the name of Contemporary Association of Azerbaijan Culture and Art. Approximately in the same date of the opening of the first Azerbaijani civil society organization in Izmir the second one, whose name is Azerbaijani Turks Culture and Solidarity Association, was started to operation. In the same year, the third one as one of the branch of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture in Izmir was opened. Although there were contradictions between them in terms of their political views, these three Azerbaijani civil society organizations merged under the name of one association. While one of them was social democrat, the other one came from nationalist background. Also the third one was known as anti-communist against the Soviet authority. This united association continued since the beginning of 2000s. Besides, the State of Azerbaijan has started to give support to Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world as in Turkey since the beginning of 2000s, so new Azerbaijani civil society organizations were started to be active in Izmir with the contributions of the State of Azerbaijan, importantly economic ones. At first, we had not an idea to found second Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Izmir. After authorities of the State of Azerbaijan wanted to control these Azerbaijani civil society organizations, we decided to find new Azerbaijani civil society organization in Izmir in 2008 to be an independent civil society organization from any state authorities.<sup>294</sup>

One of the important reasons why these civil society organizations were frequently closed and opened is the budgetary problems of civil society organizations. At this point, Respondent 6 explains this situation with this sentence:

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<sup>294</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013



All Azerbaijani civil society organizations that want to be independent from any state authority stand on their own feet. Therefore, these civil society organizations do not pursue commercial goals while attempting to hold together the Azerbaijani people socially and culturally.<sup>295</sup>

In times past, several Azerbaijani civil society organizations were frequently opened, closed or united with others. Or some of them merged under the name of different federations of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. After the State of Azerbaijan controlled that Azerbaijani civil society organizations were established, the separation between these civil society organizations have become more apparent because most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have been established newly and because there have been political fractions between them. At this atmosphere, they could not achieve to developed powerful diaspora network with the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. However, the establishment of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey makes possible the reconstruction of both Turkish and Azerbaijani identity in Turkey. Therefore, this strengthens the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey by accepting Turkey as their real homeland because the conditions in Turkey enable the promotion of their historical memories, cultural belonging in addition to their attachment to Turkey as their homeland.

### **3.1.3. Membership in Azerbaijani Civil Society Organizations**

Also, although most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have names related to Azerbaijan due to their link with Azerbaijan, members of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey do not just limited to Azerbaijanis. Not only people belonging to Azerbaijani identity but also

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<sup>295</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

members of regional civil society organizations of Azerbaijanis in Turkey can also be a part of Azerbaijani federations in Turkey.

Respondent 7 from federation depicts that “regional associations about Iğdır and Meskhetian Turks are also their federation’s members.”<sup>296</sup> Interviewee 3 defines their associations’ membership profile as:

the Anatolian people who settled down in Anatolia as Turks. We do not make separation among members about the fact that whether they come from Azerbaijani identity or not. Our members profile consists of mostly Turkish citizens or Turkish people. Also specifically to our association, some of our members came from Azerbaijani national independence struggle. For the membership, people’s attachment for their homeland, nation and flag are indispensable condition so members of our association should be sensitive to national affairs.<sup>297</sup>

The sentence declared by respondent 4 is important in this sense: “our mentality about association does not depend on the number of members because not only Azerbaijani people living in Turkey but whole 74 million Turkish citizens in Turkey are considered as our natural members.”<sup>298</sup> Newly emerged Azerbaijani diaspora organizations claim that even their basic aim is determined according to Azerbaijani identity’s interest, approximately both Azerbaijani people living in Turkey and whole Turkish people in Anatolia or people belonging to Turkish identity in Turkey have been their area of interest. Additionally, in order to be part of federations of Azerbaijani civil society organizations, Azerbaijani identity has not been a condition to become a member. For respondent 10:

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<sup>296</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>297</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>298</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

the quality is more critical than the effort to enhance the number of members so we have 14 associations inside the federation. Our overall objective does not promote the number of associations inside the federation but Turkish people in Anatolia who have common culture with us could be our member. This federation is a diaspora organization and Azerbaijan has 75 million diaspora in Turkey.<sup>299</sup>

This understanding of Azerbaijani civil society organization membership profile, including not only Azerbaijani people but also Turkish people show the effect of how diaspora organizations strengthen the national identity of Turks as umbrella identity instead of nourishing policies for the abolishment of nation-state while diaspora organizations living in geography outside their ancestral homeland.

Instead of increasing the number of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations' members, the members profile becomes important for these Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. Therefore, most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey want to maintain their fixed but small number of membership. Interviewee 1 states that "the number of members in our association is not so high and we do not exert any effort to increase the number of members because the number of people who participated to the activities is much more than the number of members."<sup>300</sup> Also interviewee 5 adds that "we have officially 38 registered members but the number of participants in our own activities is more than 400."<sup>301</sup> Respondent 6 claims that "the members' family and children are also our natural members even if they are not officially registered to our association."<sup>302</sup> In addition, respondent 2 says that "we do not

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<sup>299</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>300</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>301</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>302</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

aim to increase the number of members because we have much more followers, thanks to facebook and sms groups.”<sup>303</sup> In other words, separately from the number of members, they have much more supporters attending the activities of Azerbaijani civil society organizations.

Even if Azerbaijani associations in Turkey seem like just addressing to Azerbaijani identity, they also consider whole people of Turkish origin as their natural members because from their perspective while Turkey is their own homeland, people from Turkish origin living in Turkey are also part of these Azerbaijani civil society organizations. The perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations is reproduced through the civil society organizations activities from the eyes of diaspora elites.

#### **3.1.4. Aims and Activities of Azerbaijani Association's Establishment in Turkey**

After the collapse of the USSR, the emotional bonds with the Azerbaijanis have become more visible or more accessible for Azerbaijani people living in Turkey due to the opening of physical border between Azerbaijan and Turkey. As a result of powerful emotional, cultural and historical bonds with Azerbaijan, the aims and activities of Azerbaijani civil society organizations have been determined on the basis of these bonds with Azerbaijan. According to respondent 1:

one of the major aims of these civil society organizations is the promotion of Azerbaijani culture, traditions, and customs, historical past and future in Turkey because Azerbaijan is not known deeply by Turkish citizens. Turkish citizens are not aware of Azerbaijani people's population living in Turkey. There is a need for powerful network like diaspora organizations to enhance the recognisability of Azerbaijanis in

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<sup>303</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

Turkey. Approximately 3 million Azerbaijani Turks have been living in Turkey.<sup>304</sup>

Also respondent 1 gives an anecdote related to past perception of Turkish people about Azerbaijanis:

after Azerbaijan's border gate opened to Turkish people with the collapse of the USSR, Turkish anchor-man Mehmet Ali Birand came to Baku. And when he was aware of Azerbaijani people's language which is so close to Turkish, he was shocked.<sup>305</sup>

This anecdote is interesting to reveal the limited information flow from strictly closed Soviet boundaries. Interviewee 10 reflects the general view of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey that:

Azerbaijani people living in Turkey are also Turks and their belonging as homeland is Turkey. We do not feel like minority in Turkey because 4 million Azerbaijani Turks have been living in Turkey for many years without any conflict. One of our aims is to introduce Azerbaijani identity in Turkey as an important part of Turkish identity because some Turkish people are not aware of Azerbaijani people's Turkish origin and called them as Azeri which has been started to be used by Russians to lose Azerbaijani people's Turkish origin.<sup>306</sup>

Expanding the relation between Azerbaijan and Turkey on the basis of brotherhood is a need for us. As stated by respondent 4:

the establishment of association aims to promote Azerbaijani diaspora organizations. Both people living in Azerbaijan and Turkey are Turks so we are two brother states which were explained by the Heydar Aliyev's own words: 'we are one nation, two states.' Nations need diaspora organizations but very few people living in Turkey become aware of 3 million Azerbaijani people living in Turkey. Because of the demand for

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<sup>304</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>306</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

strong diaspora network, we decided to open Azerbaijani civil society organization.<sup>307</sup>

Interviewee 9 also emphasizes that “consolidation of brotherhood between Azerbaijan and Turkey is one of our substantial objectives.”<sup>308</sup> As stated by respondent 6:

the network of association provides strong dialogue between Azerbaijani people especially when considering the difficulties of city life. Another objective of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey is the establishment of more strengthened dialogue both between Azerbaijan and Turkey and between members of Azerbaijani civil society organizations as a part of civil society organization’s function.<sup>309</sup>

Respondent 5 specifies their aim that “the social solidarity and cohesion between Azerbaijanis and Turks is one of our aims to alive our culture and diffuse our customs to our children.”<sup>310</sup> As part of this solidarity, respondent 1 says that “in order to prevent the loos of cultural heritage of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people from Kars, Iğdır, association has always got in contact with the State of the Republic of Azerbaijan.”<sup>311</sup>

Conditions and problems of students coming from Azerbaijan have been followed by these civil society organizations. Respondent 10 predicts that “there have been approximately 5-6 thousands student in Turkey coming from

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<sup>307</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>308</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>309</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>310</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>311</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

Azerbaijan.”<sup>312</sup> Interviewee 1 depicts that “in case these students have any monetary or health problems, we try to help them.”<sup>313</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture has given Turkishness document to Turkish student coming from foreign countries because in Turkey university fees are different for Turks.<sup>314</sup> The integration of the students from Azerbaijan in Turkey is part of solidarity between Turkey and Azerbaijan also for diaspora organizations. Hence, facilitating the integration of students coming from Azerbaijan has become a purpose of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey.

This keeps alive the solidarity between Azerbaijani people inside the Turkey. The consolidation of the relation between Azerbaijanis inside the Turkey from other regions is one of the basic criteria of diaspora organizations while diaspora organizations try to establish link between two states. The connection between Azerbaijanis can also be consolidated with the establishment of Azerbaijani civil society organizations’ offices in different countries of Turkey for powerful diaspora network. Some Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have offices in different cities of Turkey. Respondent 4 indicates that “we attempt to increase the number of offices in fifty cities.”<sup>315</sup> This will be important to enhance Azerbaijani diaspora networks all around the Turkey in the near future.

In addition to solidarity between people living in Azerbaijan and Turkey, some of the representatives of Azerbaijani civil society organizations are sensitive to the cohesion with Azerbaijanis living in Iran. Administrator 3 from Azerbaijani

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<sup>312</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>313</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>314</sup> Azerbaycanlı Öğrencileri Milyonlarca Lira Zarara Soktu Öğrenci – Elçilik İhtilafı Meydana Geldi. (1996). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 311, p.45.

<sup>315</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

civil society organization especially underlines his political stance with these sentences:

While talking about diaspora, the geography of South Azerbaijan where 50 million Azerbaijanis come to our minds. This is the main reason of disagreement between our association and diaspora community. Defending the rights of a great number of Azerbaijani people living in South Azerbaijan under the power of Iranian authority should be among the main issues of diaspora because there have been serious assimilation policies implemented to Azerbaijani people in Iran. Unfortunately, people including the deputies are not aware of problems of 35 million Azerbaijani Turks living in Iran. Our goal is to point out the problems of South Azerbaijani people living under the power of Iranian authority in Turkey to increase sensibility of people in Turkey in addition to meeting the need of Azerbaijani people in Izmir. We give support to the policies for prevention of assimilation over Azerbaijanis in Iran because especially after the establishment of North Azerbaijan, national awakening has been accelerated among South Azerbaijani people. South Azerbaijani people are aware of their Turkish identity, basic human rights and of also their national rights. The solution of their problem could lead to the establishment of South Azerbaijan Independent Turkish State; however, we give support not to armed struggle but to democratic struggle of South Azerbaijani people, as in the North Azerbaijan's unarmed struggle for independence from the USSR. This has been considered as natural outcome of Soviet order because the USSR started to be disintegrated as a consequence of political atmosphere of these times.<sup>316</sup>

Some of the civil society organizations argue that very few people deal with the problems, demands, national and human rights of Azerbaijani people living in Iran. Most of the diaspora elites called this territory where high density of Azerbaijani living as South Azerbaijan. These are important for the recognition of Turkish identity of Azerbaijanis living in Iran. Furthermore from the perspective of interviewee 3:

Azerbaijan is Turks' native country (homeland) from the old times. Just as the independence of North Azerbaijan, the South Azerbaijan will be

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<sup>316</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012



independent and united with the north as the fall of Berlin wall and as the unification of Germany because both south and North Azerbaijan was united in the past. The region of South Azerbaijan under the hegemony of Iran consists of majority of Turkish nation. If there is a democratic election in Iran, the fate of Iran will depend on these Turks. Unification of Azerbaijani historical lands makes direct pass possible through Central Asia.<sup>317</sup>

Not only the lands of Iran, where Azerbaijanis living, but also Azerbaijani people living in Iran is considered as indispensable part of Azerbaijani identity. From the perspective of respondent 2:

Azerbaijani Turks' geography is composed of both North and South Azerbaijan where Azerbaijani people have been living throughout the history. Very few people deal with South Azerbaijani people's problems, demands, national rights and human rights. In this sense, right to educate in mother language is one of the important rights to reveal South Azerbaijani national identity because in Iran, harsh assimilation policies have been implemented over 7 million children living in Tehran and who have forgotten to speak in Azerbaijani language.<sup>318</sup>

These are important for the recognition of these Azerbaijani people's different identity from Iranian identity for powerful national identity.

On the basis of aims of Azerbaijani associations, they have organized activities regularly. "Seminars", "celebrations", "memorial ceremonies", "national days of Azerbaijan and Turkey", "festivals" have been organized by civil society organizations of Azerbaijanis in Turkey as their main objective. As stated by the respondent 2: "the main reason of the establishment of association is to organize Nowruz."<sup>319</sup> Another purpose told by respondent 8 is

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<sup>317</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>318</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*

to share the memories of Azerbaijani people in Azerbaijan Republic with organized activities. We seek for standing by Azerbaijani people both inside outside the Turkey in sensitive national matters, like the Khojaly Massacre. Azerbaijani civil society organizations try to announce Azerbaijani people's memories to the world for raising awareness of people in the world.<sup>320</sup>

According the interviewee 1 "the truths about the Azerbaijani historical land should be publicized in Turkey with activities organized by associations."<sup>321</sup> Activities carried out by Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have targeted to keep alive the Azerbaijani culture and to inform people about the sensitive issues in Azerbaijani history through activities of Azerbaijani diaspora.

Most of them organize "nights", "meetings" and "conversations", "conferences" about the "important days" or "national days of Azerbaijan and Turkey". Important days of Azerbaijan are "the establishment of the ADR on May 28, Red Army invasion into Baku on April 27, Black January on January 20, Salvation of Baku by Ottoman Army on September 15, the death anniversary of Heydar Aliyev, Mammad Amin Rasulzade and Elchibey, 45-46 Movement in South Azerbaijan, the Khojaly Massacre and Nowruz." National and historical days of Turkey like the anniversary of Ottoman Empire's anniversary<sup>322</sup>, Week for Martyr and Ghazi<sup>323</sup>, August 30 Victory Day of Turkey<sup>324</sup> are also celebrated

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<sup>320</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>321</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>322</sup> Karaca, A. (1999). Büyük Coşku İçinde Kutluyoruz. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 330, p.2.

<sup>323</sup> Şehitler ve Gaziler Haftası Kutlandı. (2000). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 330, p.25.

<sup>324</sup> Karaca, A. (1998). 30 Ağustos Başkomutanlık Zaferinin 76. Yıldönümü. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 322, p.31.

by Azerbaijani civil society organizations because of Azerbaijani people's relation with Turkish identity and Turkish culture. Interviewee 1 indicates that:

we organize nights. Mostly Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people attend these nights. Traditional songs and dances are performed by Azerbaijani people to protect Azerbaijani cultural heritage in these nights while people have tried to adapt living in cosmopolitan city of Istanbul. You can find different Azerbaijani cuisine with enjoyable conversation in these nights. Azerbaijani women cook traditional Azerbaijani cuisine for these nights.<sup>325</sup>

Administrator 5 from newly established Azerbaijani civil society organization plans that "we will organize high capacity activities like conferences and contact meetings to increase awareness of people about Azerbaijan and their culture."<sup>326</sup> Respondent 1 expresses that "regular meetings are arranged among the members of association to inform members about the developments and current issues of association."<sup>327</sup> Also Respondent 2 mentions that:

the First Congress of Azerbaijani Turks living in Turkey was hold in Izmir, Çeşme on April 23-24, 2011. Eighteen Azerbaijani civil society organizations from Turkey, Azerbaijan and Europe participated into this general meeting. After the general meeting, an edited book was published.<sup>328</sup>

The aim of the congress is to provide unification between Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey, to increase the awareness of Azerbaijani cultural values among Turkish people, to attract attention to human rights abuse of Azerbaijani people in Iran, to developed diaspora relation with Azerbaijani civil

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<sup>325</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>326</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>327</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>328</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

society organizations from all over the world, to emphasis visa exemption and to announce the real historical truths of Azerbaijan.<sup>329</sup>

Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey dealing with recognition of rights of Azerbaijanis in Iran, have mostly prepared organizations about them. Respondent 2 points out that:

musical organizations about South Azerbaijan attracted attention of Azerbaijani people like ‘poet Shahriar night’, ‘folk hero of Sattar Khan night’ or like ‘Tabriz night’, where musicians from England, Holland and South Azerbaijan attended. Association has celebrated ‘the Independence Day of South Azerbaijan Pishavari State on December 21’ and has organized conferences about ‘the 45-46 Movement in South Azerbaijan.’ In order to advocate the rights of South Azerbaijani people in the world, on 12 May 2013, ‘the First International South Azerbaijan Council’ was gathered in Ankara. Also ‘the Awakening of Turks Conference’ was organized in South Azerbaijan.<sup>330</sup>

One of the significant activities of Azerbaijani civil society organizations is Nowruz (The New Day), annually celebrated, to say welcome to new season after coping with the harsh conditions of winter. Respondent 1 remarks that:

Nowruz is accepted as an indispensable part of Turkish culture. Nowruz is celebrated with a great enthusiasm. Artists, coming from Azerbaijan, sing traditional Azerbaijani songs. We attempt to keep alive our old Nowruz traditions and rituals as in our childhood. In Nowruz, germinated wheat seeds are signs of the awakening of nature and land in the spring to welcome the New Year.<sup>331</sup>

“The Khojaly Massacre” is commemorated by all Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey every year. Awareness raising activities all around the

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<sup>329</sup> Kurultay Kararları. (2011). in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye’de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, pp.366-367.

<sup>330</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>331</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

world about the Khojaly Massacre have gained speed by diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan. Also, some of the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations have been supported by the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic against Armenian diaspora organizations. At this atmosphere, Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey like Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in other countries prepare memorial programmes and conferences about the Khojaly Massacre. Respondent 4 underlines that “we attempt to create public opinion by pushing political authorities to accept the Khojaly Massacre as genocide.”<sup>332</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture has kept the Armenian cruelty into their agenda and condemned the massacre in Azerbaijani villages by Armenians in Yerevan, Gyumri, Kars, Kağızman, Sarıkamış, Ardahan and Baku throughout the history.<sup>333</sup> As asserted by Abdullah Çay “the Azerbaijani population’s proportion was 83.7 percentages from the year 1828 to 1912 before the Tsarist Russian occupation to North Azerbaijan. However, this percentage has decreased to 4.12 after 1918.”<sup>334</sup> As stated in the Journal of Azerbaijan Culture, association has tried to inform people about the Armenian cruelty in Khojaly. For this aim, association made campaign to collect aid for the refugees. Also association made public demonstrations and marched protests. In order to remark the attention of politicians and people for Armenian attacks, association applied to Turkish Assembly.<sup>335</sup> For instance, Respondent 7 reports that “one billion signatures were collected by the supporters of Azerbaijani civil society organizations. Books have been published for the Khojaly Massacre’s anniversary in 2013 to attract the

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<sup>332</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>333</sup> Feyzi Aküzüm'ün Konuşması Azerbaycan. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 256, p.54.

<sup>334</sup> Çay, A. (1986). Azerbaycan’da Ermenilerin Yaptıkları Katliam ve Terör. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 256, p.61.

<sup>335</sup> Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği’nin Hükümete ve Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisine Müracaatı. (1993). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 290, p.22.

attention of politicians”<sup>336</sup> Respondent 11 deliberates that “there is misinformation on the massacre so we should clarify this misinformation and increase the awareness of people on this issue.”<sup>337</sup> In order to analyze the Khojaly Massacre from the academic perspective, Respondent 10 mentions about “academicians and people, who witnessed to slaughter, were invited with the panel related to Nagorno-Karabakh.”<sup>338</sup>

Many of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have organized tours to Azerbaijan or have attended official visits in Azerbaijan to pursue their connection with Azerbaijan. Interviewee 1 denotes that “these tours have opened the way to meet new friends while visiting their old friends or relatives living in Azerbaijan.”<sup>339</sup> Respondent 10 plans:

tours for Azerbaijani people in Turkey who missed Azerbaijan as their ancient land of their ancestors but who cannot afford the cost of tours so financial support is necessary for these tours. The reason behind the idea of planning the Azerbaijan tour is that some part of sense of belonging of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people who grew up with the stories of their grandpa or grandma about the ancestral land of Azerbaijan, is in Azerbaijan. Among these people, there are also first generation migrants who have remembered their migration history or were born in migration path and cannot find opportunity to go Azerbaijan.<sup>340</sup>

Administrator 1 from the Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey indicates that:

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<sup>336</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>337</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>338</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>339</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>340</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

we organized a theatre in Turkey. This theatre came from Azerbaijan but its name is Yerevan State Theatre. Its name is important because it reflects the time when Muslim's population of Yerevan had been much more than the Armenian population approximately a century ago. One of the theatre performances was about Armenian cruelty in historical past of Azerbaijan. The other one was related to the life of Heydar Aliyev.<sup>341</sup>

Furthermore, Respondent 10 says that:

we arranged theatre tours in Turkey, Iğdır, Kars, Amasya, Manisa, Uşak, Aydın, Kuşadası, İzmir in 2013. For this tour, Yerevan State Theatre performed 'Arşın Mal Alan' which is about the love story between poor young man and rich young lady.<sup>342</sup>

The content of activities carried out by Azerbaijani civil society organizations have been generally about culture and history because of the richness of Azerbaijani culture and their changing boundaries in their history. According to interviewee 10; this is why "there are lots of commemorative days of Azerbaijan while %25 of Azerbaijani lands was under occupation of different nations."<sup>343</sup> The activities carried out by Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey with their diaspora connection of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey and of Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world, which have made contribution to the reproduction of Azerbaijani culture.

The impact of cultural activities carried out by Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have been considered as substantial to intensify members of Azerbaijani diaspora organization's cultural relation with Azerbaijani identity so in addition to memorization of national days of Azerbaijan, most of the

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<sup>341</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>342</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*

activities have been carried out by Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey based upon Azerbaijani culture. Respondent 2 says that:

Association arranged concert programs based on Azerbaijani culture, including different types of Azerbaijani classic music, modern music and traditional music like mugam, folk music in provinces of Iğdır, Kars, Ankara, Amasra, Izmir, and Istanbul cities of Turkey to keep alive Azerbaijani culture in Turkey.<sup>344</sup>

However, it is still not easy to cluster people together with these Azerbaijani civil society activities because people mostly busy with their daily life. Respondent 2 underlines “people’s daily life challenges which have absorbed people’s whole energy such as health problems, education problems or house rent payment problems.”<sup>345</sup> The necessity to civil society organizations in their daily life has been diminished gradually. In terms of effectiveness of Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey respondent 1 says that “Azerbaijani Associations has no longer an urgent requirement in Turkey as in the Soviet times or as in the beginning of the dissolution of Soviet era.”<sup>346</sup>

Approximately, people participated to these activities have been more or less same. However, as administrators of Azerbaijani civil society organizations indicated, more people should be included in these activities in order to increase the impact of civil society organizations. Respondent 11 argues that:

although the number of participants for some activities like the musical night is more than others, there are also activities implemented with broad participation. The activities that we carried out attract the attention of our members who are from Ardahan, Iğdır, Kars.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>346</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>347</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013



The young generation of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey do not generally show interest to Azerbaijani civil society organizations' activities except the Azerbaijani cultural and musical nights because they are mostly born in Turkey and they have started to live in central cities of Turkey far from their ancestors' homeland or family elders' birth place in Turkey, so young generation feel like they are Turkish citizen and they have adopted Turkey as their main homeland even if they know their Azerbaijani history. Interviewee 11 interprets young people's view that:

although they prefer joining musical nights, most of the young people are not actively involved in Azerbaijani civil society organizations' due to their depolitization with a path of being an active member of any civil society organizations because facebook has become more useful for socialization for them.<sup>348</sup>

According to respondent 1 "young Azerbaijani people still embrace their culture, and bear trace from their ancestral homeland."<sup>349</sup> The reason of the fact that these young people embrace their culture is clarified with the words of respondent 6 that:

our children and young Azerbaijani people are an integral part of Turkish culture. This perception would be different if we and our children lived in Europe or somewhere outside the Turkey. Because of the cultural proximity between Azerbaijan and Turkey, we do not need to protect our culture carefully in a foreign atmosphere while Turkey is not foreign for us.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>349</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>350</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

These people's social adaptation of Turkish culture has been realized smoothly due to the Azerbaijani cultural proximity with Turkish culture. Contrary to Azerbaijani people who migrated to Turkey, Azerbaijani people who migrated to European countries have felt like foreigners in Europe because of cultural clash between Azerbaijani and European people.<sup>351</sup> It can be seen that young generation have considered Azerbaijani culture as one of the parts of Turkish culture from the eyes of diaspora elites. There is not a strict separation between Turkish people and Azerbaijani people living in Turkey. As depicted by diaspora elites, Azerbaijani people living in Turkey have internalized themselves as a part of Turkey as their new and permanent homeland. Maybe this perception would be different if these young people lived in Europe or far away from Turkey. However, the perception of Azerbaijani people which is reflected by diaspora elites differentiates from generation to generation. Now, young Azerbaijani people living in Turkey do not worry about losing their cultural values.

Actually, the most remarkable obstacle while bringing together to Azerbaijani people in Turkey has been financial difficulties to implement activities at full capacity especially in international organizations. Respondent 2 gives example that "Azerbaijani civil society organization in Izmir established Azerbaijani radio between 1995 and 1997 but it continued only two years due to the lack of financial support."<sup>352</sup> About the effectiveness of their activities, they all mention about the lack of money to organize large scale and influential organizations. Respondent 6 exemplifies that:

our impact area is limited with 300-400 people. There is a potential to raise number of participants but for comprehensive Nowruz festival with the participation of 5 thousand people, we need financial support.

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<sup>351</sup> Azərbaycan Dernekleri ve Federasyonları'nın Konfederasyonu Kuruldu. (1999). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 328, p.43.

<sup>352</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

However, we do not want to get money from other institutions because we do not want to be under the effect of these institutions.<sup>353</sup>

In this sense, preservation of their independent position in decision-making process as civil society organizations becomes prominent. Respondent 3 specifies that:

we just use our own financial budget. This is why we thing professionally but act as an amateur because it is important to preserve our civil society characteristic. If we were under the control of the State of Azerbaijan, maybe we would have enough money to carry out activities in a big capacity but we would not have realized our project as we wanted. We don't want to be puppet association. Therefore, we have lots of dreams but we do not have enough money.<sup>354</sup>

Most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations with which I made interview haven't received any economic support from both the State of Azerbaijan and Turkish Republic. Also, they have received no support from any other supportive mechanisms except for membership fees or any other voluntary supports by association's members. This is why most of the organizations' capacity has not developed as they imagined, so their impact area has stayed in a limited frame.

The effective participation of these civil society organizations is also based on the inclusion of more people into activities by adopting "non-discrimination policies between Shiite and Sunni Muslims" or "equal gender policies" or "inclusionary policies for all Turkish identities along with Azerbaijani identity." Respondent 2 shares that:

our association incorporates into Turkish people who migrated from Azerbaijan to Iğdır, Kars, Van, Ağrı or Turkish people, who are settled Azerbaijani Turks in Kars, Iğdır in the times of Ottoman Empire while

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<sup>353</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>354</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

this region was under the occupation of Russia, or people who migrated from South Azerbaijan to Turkey and or people who are from Borchali.<sup>355</sup>

Borchali is located at south of Tbilisi and the crossing point of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Most of the population overwhelmingly is composed of Azerbaijani people.<sup>356</sup> Respondent 2 expresses that:

Turks from Borchali namely Karapapakh or Terekeme are Sunni Muslims different from general pattern of Azerbaijani Turks belief, Shiism. Although our religious belief is different, people from Borchali become one of us. Besides, women could participate in whole activities with men without any discrimination.<sup>357</sup>

Respondent 1 gives an example of “their weddings’ tradition where women and men can dance together and sit together in Kars.”<sup>358</sup> These non-discrimination policies have impact upon the diverseness of members from different beliefs or from different gender by respecting all people without making separation between generations. Generally most Azerbaijani civil society organizations’ administrative structure contains women and youth branches in itself and those who haven’t any branches plan to establish these branches for strong civil society cooperation between different generations and genders.

The Association of Azerbaijan Culture have active women branch as one of the oldest Azerbaijani civil society organizations. Women branch of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture carries out activities for cohesion and solidarity

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<sup>355</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>356</sup> Nesipzade, N. (2007). Türk içinde Türk Yurdu Borçalı’ya Bakış. *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 371 pp.36-37.

<sup>357</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>358</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

of Azerbaijani women by advertising association both in Turkey and in foreign countries.<sup>359</sup> Also, women branch showed their reaction to Armenian invasion in Azerbaijan.<sup>360</sup> Association's women branch organizes tours. Branch is also concerned with the massacre of Bosnian people by Serbians.<sup>361</sup> Women branch also puts emphasis on women rights. Members of women branch celebrate International Women's Day.<sup>362</sup>

Additionally, interviewee 1 identifies "their associations' women and youth branches as an important part of administrative structure by emphasizing equality of men and women in their traditions."<sup>363</sup> Respondent 2 says that "our association thinks about opening women or youth branches."<sup>364</sup> Like respondent 2, respondent 5 hopes that "they open new branches in the near future."<sup>365</sup> In addition to women, youth and culture and art branches of association, respondent 9 alleges that "branches of academicians, artists and other professionals will be

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<sup>359</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.59.

<sup>360</sup> Azərbaycan'ın İncisi Şuşa'nın Ermenistan Tarafından İşgal Edilmesini Azərbaycan Kadınları Lanetledi. (1995). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 303, p.46.

<sup>361</sup> Dünya Kadınlarına Mesajı. (1993). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 290, p.11.

<sup>362</sup> Dernek Çalışmaları. (2005). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 359, p.38.

<sup>363</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>364</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*

opened in future.”<sup>366</sup> This variety of branches makes possible unification of people under a single roof like diaspora organizations from different perspective.

Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin easily attach themselves to Turkey as their real homeland because they can keep alive their cultural, political, historical aims, thanks to their activities of diaspora organizations in Turkey from the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey. Members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations’ perception of homeland has attempted to be shaped by Azerbaijani diaspora elites. Azerbaijani civil society organizations can be smoothly articulated into the Turkey’s political, cultural and social system, so they do not feel like alienated in Turkey. In this sense, Turkey becomes their real and actual homeland while lost Azerbaijani lands are their ancestral homeland.

### **3.2. Three Dimensions of Azerbaijani Diaspora Organizations in Turkey**

The aims and activities of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey make possible three dimensional interactions of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey with Turkey, Azerbaijan and other Azerbaijani diaspora organizations outside Turkey.

Diaspora organizations include relations in terms of three different dimensions. These relations are generally based on the ground of injustices and human rights abuses suffered by co-diasporics.<sup>367</sup> The first dimension of relation of Azerbaijan civil society organizations in Turkey is between Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey and State of the Republic of Turkey. For Azerbaijani diaspora

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<sup>366</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>367</sup> Werbner, P. (2002). The place which is Diaspora: Citizenship, Religion and Gender in the Making of Chaordic Transnationalism. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28 (1), p.125.

elites in Turkey, Turkey is real and actual homeland for Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin. On the other hand, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey want to establish connection with their abandoned homeland but these people's ancestral homeland is inaccessible for Azerbaijani people because of Armenian hegemony over their ancestral homeland. Therefore, Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey get in touch with the Republic of Azerbaijan which is now accessible for Azerbaijani people in Turkey after the collapse of the USSR. Furthermore, Azerbaijani diaspora members in Turkey have emotional link with the lands of the Republic of Azerbaijan based on Azerbaijani common culture of their co-ethnics. The third dimension of the relation of Azerbaijan civil society organizations in Turkey is established between Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey and Azerbaijani diasporas in other countries through diaspora consciousness relied on common history, common national aim and common culture. Diaspora consciousness is generated by transnational diaspora networks.<sup>368</sup> Solidarity between diaspora members' co-ethnics in other countries of settlement has been improved<sup>369</sup> through the relations with these three dimensional relations. Diaspora communities attempt to use their diaspora network to be influential in domestic and international politics<sup>370</sup> which directly affect the perception of homeland. Moreover, diaspora network has impact on the foreign policies between the country where they live and their nation-state was established. In other words, diaspora organizations want to undertake effective role over the international policies between Turkey, as their real homeland, and Azerbaijan, as their

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<sup>368</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.281.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.* p.279.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.* p.279.

accessible second homeland after the dissolution of USSR by facilitating Azerbaijani diaspora networks throughout the world.

### **3.2.1. The Relations with Turkey**

Most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have ties with Azerbaijani civil society organizations in different cities of Turkey. Also, relation with civil society organizations are not limited specifically to Azerbaijani civil society organizations.

According to interview with respondent 7; they have relations with other civil society organizations in Turkey about “South Azerbaijan, Western Thrace”.<sup>371</sup> Administrator 5 from one of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations specifies that “we have connection with Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Izmir and civil society organizations, near to Izmir, in Ödemiş, Tire in addition to the regional civil society organizations in Izmir such as Ardahan, Iğdır, Kars.”<sup>372</sup> Respondent 2 states that:

they have connection with different Azerbaijani civil society organizations like Azerbaijani Turks migrated from Borchali to Amasya, Kayseri, Sivas, Tokat. It has been known that there are 56 Azerbaijani villages in Amasya. Also, we have ties with Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turhal, Adana, Eskişehir. We established connection with Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turhal via facebook.<sup>373</sup>

Most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations with which I made interview have given support to other Azerbaijani civil society organizations that

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<sup>371</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>372</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>373</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013



are in their own side and sometimes they have carried out common activities. Interviewee 6 remarks that “we gave support to other Azerbaijani civil society organizations’ activity about the Khojaly Massacre because we did not carry out any activity related to the Khojaly Massacre for this year.”<sup>374</sup> Respondent 2 exemplifies “their common activities with other Azerbaijani civil society organization in Istanbul about 21 Azer.”<sup>375</sup> Moreover, according to respondent 1 who “has informed their members about the Azerbaijani civil society organizations activities for encouraging participation of their members if they want”<sup>376</sup>, Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey communicate with each other about their activities. Each Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey has tried to promote conferences, celebrations, memorial days and national days organized by other civil society organizations as a significant part of diaspora network.

Conversely, Azerbaijani civil society organizations criticize inactive Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey when asking about their contact with them. The Respondent 4 stated that “most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey are inactive even if they have are still considered as operative.”<sup>377</sup> Respondent 11 exemplifies that “indeed, if there are 50-60 Azerbaijani associations in Turkey, just 12-13 Azerbaijani associations are active.”<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>375</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>376</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>377</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>378</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

Most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations have connections with civil society organizations related to Turkish identity in Turkey. For example, the administrator 3 from Azerbaijani civil society organization says that:

besides the Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey, we are affiliated to Turkish World Organization and BAK-TÜRK Federation whose members are associations related to Crimea, Kirkuk Turks, Balkan Turks, Western Thrace Turks, and Azerbaijani Turks.<sup>379</sup>

In addition to civil society organizations related to Turks in Turkey, for respondent 10; “universities and municipalities in Turkey have been good partners to carry out mutual activities.”<sup>380</sup>

However, besides these strong relations, respondent 10 argues that “there have been some political fragmentations between civil society organizations in Turkey.”<sup>381</sup> Respondent 1 says that “some of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey separated from one of the federation supported by the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic because of the disagreement on the political perspectives.”<sup>382</sup>

For the establishment of permanent relations between Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey, political views of these Azerbaijani civil society organizations become significant even if they give priority to national solidarity on the basis of the promotion of Azerbaijani identity and Turkish identity instead of political fragmentations between Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. For the powerful diaspora network, firstly the cooperation between

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<sup>379</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>380</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>382</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey become prominent. This provides coherence while reproducing diaspora consciousness in their living place, Turkey.

### **3.2.2. The Relations with Azerbaijan**

The relation between Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey and Azerbaijan as their accessible ancestral homeland is significant in terms of connection with their co-ethnics. Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin consider Azerbaijan as their second homeland because although the lands of the Republic of Azerbaijan are not their real homeland where their ancestors migrated to Turkey, the State of Azerbaijan is the political representative of Azerbaijanis.

Except for few of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey, Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have different communication networks with Azerbaijan. While some of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have been continuous dialogue with civil society organizations in Azerbaijan, others, that never established connection with civil society organizations in Azerbaijan, plan to establish strong mutual relations with civil society organizations in Azerbaijan. Additionally; respondent 5 says that “we have not any relation with Azerbaijani civil society organization outside the Turkey but we want to develop cooperation in the near future.”<sup>383</sup>

Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey that have been connection with civil society organizations and institutions in Azerbaijan, have regularly carried out common activities, meetings and visiting with each other. The Association of Azerbaijan Culture has connection with Azerbaijan Science Academy and Motherland Association. They organized activities like literature

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<sup>383</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

symposium in Baku in 1991<sup>384</sup>, First International Presentation of Azerbaijan Symposium in Tabriz in 1999<sup>385</sup>, and Second International Folklore Conference in 2004.<sup>386</sup> Respondent 10 indicates that “in every 3 or 4 year, World Azerbaijani Congress (DAK) has been made in Baku. 5 thousand people have attended and it has 600 delegates from all over the world.”<sup>387</sup> Interviewee 11 mentions about:

their cooperation with ‘the Azerbaijan and other Turkish Speaking Nations Cooperation Centre in Baku’, ‘the Hüseyin Cavit Culture Center in Baku and in Nakhchivan’, ‘the Research Center for Turkish World in Baku’, ‘universities in Azerbaijan’, ‘the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences’, and ‘the Non-Governmental Civil Society Organizations Confederation in Azerbaijan (AKDEM) in terms of organizing congresses, exhibitions, and joint programs.’<sup>388</sup>

Respondent 7 states that “political parties in Azerbaijan have recognized us and have established ties with the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey.”<sup>389</sup> In addition to the collaboration with the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic, respondent 10 points out their associations’ relation with “the Head of Department of Non-Governmental Organization.”<sup>390</sup> Respondent 3 shares his opinions that “we attended to a big

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<sup>384</sup> Karaca, A. (1999). Mutluluğunu Yaşıyor. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 325, p.5.

<sup>385</sup> Karaca, A. (1999). İsa Kamber’in Türkiye Ziyareti’nin Yankıları. *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 328, p.5.

<sup>386</sup> Tan, N. (2004). Sempozyumu Yapıldı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 353, p.33.

<sup>387</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>388</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>389</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>390</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

meeting at the end of 2012 for 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Musavat Party.<sup>391</sup>

In addition to the relation with civil society organization, political parties and other institutions in Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan government is also influential in the connection with the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey as the political representative of Azerbaijanis. However, the State of Azerbaijan has also attempted to use diaspora power for its own political purposes. In this respect, the relation between Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey and strategies of Azerbaijan government and the State of Azerbaijan on the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations are constructed and these strategies are crucial.

Powerful Azerbaijani diaspora network on the basis of Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world is crucial for a strong foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In this sense, Azerbaijan government feel the need of the absence of powerful Azerbaijani diaspora networks against the Armenian diaspora after the insoluble disputes so the state policies have effect on the relation with Azerbaijani diaspora organization in Turkey. Respondent 1 argues that:

the State of Azerbaijan has needed to establish Azerbaijani diaspora throughout the world to protect Azerbaijani rights against powerful Armenian diaspora organizations because of the occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenians and the Khojaly Massacre. The Azerbaijan government needs diaspora organizations to reinforce cooperation between Turks and Azerbaijanis in abroad against Armenians' and Rums' diaspora organizations. With this cooperation, the purpose is to reveal the truths of Azerbaijani history and propagate these truths in the world political agenda but Azerbaijani diaspora organizations especially in Turkey have newly organized and not developed enough to pursue effective policies. However, for diaspora organizations, voluntary lobbying activities should be encouraged but this should not be encouraged by taking control of civil society

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<sup>391</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

organizations through the economic aids from the government of Azerbaijan.<sup>392</sup>

Also interviewee 2 advocates that:

Azerbaijani diaspora organizations have fostered by the State of Azerbaijan to create its own diaspora organizations so some of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations perceiving themselves as the lobby of 50 million Azerbaijanis, have not felt like that they have been part of these state supported diaspora organizations while they are not the citizens of Azerbaijan.<sup>393</sup>

There have been some disagreements between the State of Azerbaijan and the Association of Azerbaijan Culture after Heydar Aliyev was in power because the association has been the oldest Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey and had good relations with Elchibey government but Heydar Aliyev's government did not accept association as the representative of whole Azerbaijani people living in Turkey. Contrarily, association declares that Heydar Aliyev has not represented the entire State of Azerbaijan, there has been also opposition parties like Musavat who has represented Azerbaijani society. Also, from the perspective of association; this association and its branches contributed to national struggle of Azerbaijan with the great leader of Mammad Amin Rasulzade before Heydar Aliyev.<sup>394</sup>

The Association of Azerbaijan Culture made comparison with the democratic elections in the time of Elchibey and undemocratic elections in the time of Heydar Aliyev. There were accusations of fraud in elections. Moreover,

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<sup>392</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>393</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>394</sup> Karaca, A. (1996). 28 Mayıs İstiklal ve Hürriyet Bayramının Coşkusu. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 309, pp.5-6.

international monitors reported numerous cases of irregularities including ballot-ringing since 1993, these accusations have presented in every elections of Azerbaijan both in parliamentary and presidential elections.<sup>395</sup> Furthermore, Central Election Commission has always been dominated by New Azerbaijan Party.<sup>396</sup> Even if improvements were realized in every election, beyond any doubt, elections were not democratic.<sup>397</sup> Although the 2005 parliamentary elections drew an unprecedented number of registered candidates, it successfully limits competition.<sup>398</sup> Representatives of association went to Azerbaijan as observers of presidential election of Elchibey. According to their observers, the entire election process was entirely fair.<sup>399</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture has been closely followed the political atmosphere of Azerbaijan as in the election made on November 12 1995<sup>400</sup>, November 5 2000<sup>401</sup>, September 15 2003<sup>402</sup> and November

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<sup>395</sup> Swietochowski, T. (1999). Azerbaijan: Perspectives from the Crossroads. *Central Asian Survey*, 18 (4), p.419.

<sup>396</sup> Altstadt, A. (2003). Azerbaijan and Aliyev. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 50 (5), p.9.

<sup>397</sup> Swietochowski, T. (1999). Azerbaijan: Perspectives from the Crossroads. *Central Asian Survey*, 18 (4), p.419.

<sup>398</sup> Valiyev, A. M. (2006). Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 53 (3), p.22.

<sup>399</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Heyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçimlerine Gözlemci Olarak Katıldı. (1992). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 285, pp.23-24.

<sup>400</sup> Karaca, A. (1995). Milli İradenin Tecellisi Önlendi. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 305, p.3.

<sup>401</sup> Karaca, A. (2000). Azərbaycan Parlamenti Seçimleri ve Sonuçları. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 336, p.15.

<sup>402</sup> Ünal, C. (2003). Azərbaycan'da Devlet Başkanlığı Seçimlerine Bakış. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 350, p.3.

6 2005<sup>403</sup> which considered as fraud both by association and international authorities. The Association of Azerbaijan Culture demands for human rights and democratic rights especially just election for political order of Azerbaijan with the economic development.<sup>404</sup> Respondent 11 introduces that:

there have been three different groups of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey. One of them is Azerbaijani people whose ancestors had to migrate from West Azerbaijan to Turkey before the establishment of the USSR or during the first years of the USSR. This first group's children were generally born in Turkey and they are not the citizens of Azerbaijan. Others are Azerbaijani people who came to Turkey for education or work, but they are not citizens of Turkey but the citizens of Azerbaijan. The last group of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey is both citizens of Azerbaijan and Turkey but they were mostly born in Azerbaijan. When considering these three groups, the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's activities based on Azerbaijani citizens living in Turkey would be more applicable but the condition is different for Turkish citizens of Azerbaijanis living in Turkey.<sup>405</sup>

Hence, the government of Azerbaijan should develop policies for diaspora organizations by taking into account these three different groups of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey. Thereby, Turkish citizens of Azerbaijanis in Turkey are not part of the State of Azerbaijan but their roots come from historical lands of Azerbaijan. However; these lands were no longer controlled by the Republic of Azerbaijan. The attempts of the State of Azerbaijan for establishing diaspora organizations in Turkey cause contradictions between Azerbaijani civil society

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<sup>403</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneğinin 6 Kasım 2005 Seçimleriyle ilgili Bildirisi. (2005). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 362, p.3.

<sup>404</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği'nin Azərbaycan Cumhuriyeti'nin Çeşitli Sorunlarına ilişkin Görüşleri. (2000). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 333, p.5.

<sup>405</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013



organizations while some of them want to be independent from the politics the State of Azerbaijan as a civil society organization. Respondent 3 advocates that:

diaspora organizations supported by the State of Azerbaijan are not necessary in Turkey because before the Republic Azerbaijan and after the USSR, responsibilities of diaspora organizations have been undertaken by our association. Apparently, 70 million Turks' homes are diaspora for us. Therefore if the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic wants to carry out diaspora organization, they should encourage this in France, Europe, Belgium, and America, where Armenians have more intensely lived, or in South Azerbaijan where 30 million Azerbaijani people have lived under the repression of Iranian government.<sup>406</sup>

Thus, it can be inferred from that Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Europe, America and Iran are more critical instead of Turkey from the perspective of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. Besides, for successful diaspora relations in abroad, the government of Azerbaijan should foster the collaboration with other Turkish nations' diaspora organizations. According to respondent 11:

the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's impact area is not just Azerbaijani people but Turkish people from Turkey, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, North Kurdistan, and Balkans to capture more united perspective in abroad for strengthened diaspora but the State of Azerbaijan's politics are not sufficient in this respect.<sup>407</sup>

In addition to Azerbaijani civil society organization in collaboration with other Turkish nations' diaspora organizations, there were two state bodies for lobbying activities in abroad. First one is the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic dealing with the cooperation of the whole

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<sup>406</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>407</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

Azerbaijani people in the world. Second one is the Embassy of and the Consulate of Azerbaijan interested in Azerbaijani people living throughout the world.

### **3.2.2.1. The Impact of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic**

The State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic has tried to get in contact with the Azerbaijani civil society organizations both in Turkey and in other countries with the purpose of constituting strong diaspora networks in the world. This state body summoned all Azerbaijani civil society organizations to hold a meeting in Azerbaijan. This meeting was implemented to express entailment of cooperation between Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world and the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic to put the historical truths of Azerbaijan into world agenda. Some civil society organizations attended this meeting. Respondent 1 mentions about this meeting that:

the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic summoned us to a meeting held in Baku. I attended this meeting as a president of association. In this meeting, Azerbaijan Republic's president made a speech to remark the significance of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's cooperation with the Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world. It is stated in this speech that 'Azerbaijani civil society organizations are the diaspora organizations of the State of Azerbaijan to undertake worldwide promotion of Azerbaijan by uncovering the historical truths of Azerbaijan. Embassy and Consulate of Azerbaijan will collaborate with you' however these promises were not backed out.<sup>408</sup>

Respondent 10 gives support to the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's politics by these words:

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<sup>408</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

When the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic has started to be active, they wanted to talk with us. We found this favorable with one condition. The diaspora organizations should not give any harm to Turkey's politics. The State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic accepted this and also wanted to cooperate with Turkey to establish united Turkish diaspora in the world. Therefore, first meeting was held in Izmir, in 2012 with the participation of Azerbaijani civil society organization from 47 different countries.<sup>409</sup>

There have been some criticisms from Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey about the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic. Although the State of Azerbaijan's institutions have made efforts to show how the cooperation between Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all around the world is essential, there has not been any developed cooperation until now. Also, the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic does not see Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey that want to be independent from the State of Azerbaijan, as legitimate. Respondent 7 gives example that:

we do not take any economic assistance or moral support from the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic so the attitude of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic keeps our diaspora capacity in certain limits.<sup>410</sup>

Azerbaijani diaspora organizations should be more effective to amplify the interaction between Azerbaijanis and Turks throughout the world so the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic should promote these diaspora organizations in the direction of establishment of the powerful diaspora relations. Respondent 8 criticizes "the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's attitude which has gradually weakened these civil society

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<sup>409</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>410</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

organizations' communication with the State of Azerbaijan.”<sup>411</sup> Respondent 7 perceives that:

the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's effort is into the direction of turning Azerbaijani civil society organizations as one of the state bodies of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic. Efforts of the State of Azerbaijan for the unification of Azerbaijani diaspora have not been sufficient as in the example of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic's organization in Izmir in 2012 where just two or three Azerbaijani civil society organizations are informed about these meeting.<sup>412</sup>

Another criticism from respondent 2 is that:

the word Azerbaijan does not just refer to Azerbaijan Republic but it also includes South Azerbaijani geography as a part of the historical geography of Azerbaijan. However; the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic is not concerned with South Azerbaijani geography as a part of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations. This is one of the reasons why our association does not reach an agreement with the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic. Also in North Azerbaijan, the State of Azerbaijan has endeavored to create its own civil society organizations through the organizations of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic. Some of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations have started to operate as civil servants of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic. Unfortunately, these civil society organizations make whatever the government wants because they are subsidized by the Azerbaijan government.<sup>413</sup>

Promotion of Azerbaijani diaspora organization by the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic for effective interaction between

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<sup>411</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>412</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>413</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

Azerbaijanis and Turks against Armenian diaspora is significant. However, because Azerbaijan diaspora elites who are Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin are not citizens of Azerbaijan but citizens of Turkey as their homeland, so they just want to collaborate with the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic, not want to be under control of these state institutions.

### **3.2.2.2. The Impact of the Embassy of Azerbaijan**

Most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations, especially the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Ankara and Istanbul, where the Embassy and the Consulate of Azerbaijan are located, have cooperation with the Embassy of Azerbaijan or the Consulate of Azerbaijan as the representative of the State of Azerbaijan in Turkey.

This can be inferred from respondent 1's answer that "our relation with the Embassy of Azerbaijan had been more effective before federation moved from Ankara to Kocaeli."<sup>414</sup> The Embassy of Azerbaijan generally participates into Azerbaijani civil society organizations' activities or is informed about the content of these activities. Respondent 3 from asserts that:

we attend to the Embassy of Azerbaijan's meetings as they participate in our activities because the Embassy of Azerbaijan is representative of the State of Azerbaijan. As long as the Embassy of Azerbaijan has adopted policies for the benefit of Azerbaijan, we have continued to give support to them.<sup>415</sup>

Furthermore, Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey give support to organizations of the Embassy of Azerbaijan for the overall benefit of Azerbaijan as one of the important state representatives in abroad. Both

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<sup>414</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>415</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey and the Embassy of Azerbaijan promote to each other's organizations. Respondent 4 says that "we have close relation with the Embassy of Azerbaijan and we act together with the Embassy of Azerbaijan."<sup>416</sup>

For the benefit of society this civil society organization has particularly emphasized their intermediary role between Azerbaijani people in Turkey and the Embassy of Azerbaijan to find solutions to Azerbaijani people's problems in Turkey. One of the civil society organizations' administrator 6 with whom I made interview mentions about their common values with the Embassy of Azerbaijan:

We have common values with the Embassy of Azerbaijan. This is the culture of Azerbaijan. The source of culture is Azerbaijani society and we can inform the Embassy of Azerbaijan about difficulties that Azerbaijani people had in Turkey.<sup>417</sup>

Hence, these civil society organizations get in contact with the Embassy and Consulate of Azerbaijan. Respondent 1 declares that "information exchange with Embassy is important to reveal the truths of Azerbaijan in Turkey."<sup>418</sup>

With the exception of respondent 7 who argues that "the close relation with the Embassy of Azerbaijan is inappropriate because the Embassy of Azerbaijan implements the policies of the State of Azerbaijan."<sup>419</sup> However, this cooperation between the Embassy of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey does not mean that the Embassy of Azerbaijan, as one of the State of Azerbaijan's mechanism can maintain the control of Azerbaijani civil

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<sup>416</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>417</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>418</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>419</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

society organizations in Turkey, for most of the Azerbaijani civil society organization with which I made interview. Respondent 10 shares that “we have continuous relation with the Embassy of Azerbaijan and have organized common activities with the Embassy of Azerbaijan but we do not perceive the Embassy of Azerbaijan as our superior authority.”<sup>420</sup>

Besides, in some cases, there have been contradictions between Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey and the Embassy of Azerbaijan. As mentioned by respondent 2:

In preparation stage of the congress about Azerbaijani people living in Turkey by our federation consisting of several Azerbaijani civil society organizations, the Embassy of Azerbaijan considered themselves as the representative of the State of Azerbaijan against these civil society organizations and wanted to realize congress organization. Of course, the Embassy of Azerbaijan is the one of the state mechanisms of Azerbaijan in Turkey but we are the representatives of Azerbaijani people in Turkey. At the end, the Embassy of Azerbaijan did not attend the congress but our relation with the Embassy of Azerbaijan has proceeded at a certain level.<sup>421</sup>

It is implied from this case that these Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey want to be free from these state mechanisms in decision making process and want to become Azerbaijani people’s representatives as civil society organizations. In other words, these Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey do not desire to be the governmental Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey or be part of state control Azerbaijani diaspora. With the words of respondent 2: “we haven’t any problem with the State of Azerbaijan, in contrast, we want to see Azerbaijan as developed country like Turkey but we are not the associations of the State of Azerbaijan or the Embassy of Azerbaijan.”<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>421</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>422</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

State authorities of Azerbaijan are mostly confused about who are Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey. From the perspective of respondent 2:

these Azerbaijani civil society organizations' members are usually the citizens of Turkey, not the citizens of Azerbaijan. We are citizen of Turkey and we are Turkish people originated from Oghuz Turks, but Azerbaijani people living in Turkey should not be considered as a separate ethnic group in Turkey, instead we are the backbone of Turkey.<sup>423</sup>

Therefore, state authorities of Azerbaijan try to control not only Azerbaijani citizens of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey but also Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey. This leads contradiction between Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey whose members mostly Turkish citizens and Azerbaijani civil society organizations whose members are mostly Azerbaijan's citizens because most of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey want to be free from the politics of the government of Azerbaijan to become independent Azerbaijani diaspora organizations. Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey on the one hand try to be independent from the government institutions of Azerbaijan related to Azerbaijani diaspora organizations such as the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic and the Embassy of Azerbaijan. On the other hand, they consider themselves as a part of Azerbaijani diaspora and mostly support the diaspora activities in abroad against the Armenian diaspora activities.

### **3.2.3. The Relation with the Azerbaijani Diaspora**

Azerbaijani expatriate people did not migrate just to Turkey but they migrated to other countries all around the world. Azerbaijani migrants dispersed

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<sup>423</sup> *Ibid.*



more than one place so there are Azerbaijani diaspora organizations all around the world.

10 million Azerbaijani people live as immigrant all around world in five continents.<sup>424</sup> Substantially, these Azerbaijani people are the part of Turkish World as a whole.<sup>425</sup> This is important for the unification of Turkish people particularly in foreign countries where Turkish people have needed diaspora organization for lobbying activities to draw attention to occupied lands of Azerbaijan.<sup>426</sup> Mostly Azerbaijani people who migrated from South Azerbaijan live in the continent of America. Small number of Azerbaijani people migrated from Turkey after 1970 and from the Republic of Azerbaijan after 1991 to America. 3 million Azerbaijani people in Turkey, 2.5 million Azerbaijani people in Russia, 700 thousand in Georgia, 500 thousand Azerbaijani people in Ukraine, 30 thousand in Sweden, 100 thousand in Germany and 20 thousand in Holland live in Europe.<sup>427</sup> Azerbaijani people living in Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland and Germany mostly migrated from Turkey. Generally, Azerbaijani people living in England, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, Austria, Estonia, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, and France migrated from Iran or the Republic of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani people in Asia continent live in Bangladesh, India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan,

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<sup>424</sup> Aliyev, Z. (2011). Azərbaycan Türkleri Nerelerde Yaşıyor / Azərbaycan Diasporasının Yayılma Coğrafiyası. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.77.

<sup>425</sup> Kurultay Bildirisi. (2011). in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.349.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.* p.350.

<sup>427</sup> Aliyev, Z. (2011). Azərbaycan Türkleri Nerelerde Yaşıyor / Azərbaycan Diasporasının Yayılma Coğrafiyası. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.77.

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, China, Oman, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran. According to latest research, Azerbaijani people in Africa live in Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic. Approximately 8 thousand Azerbaijani people live in the continent of Australia.<sup>428</sup>

Most of them have relatives, friends and members from different Azerbaijani civil society organizations throughout the world especially in America, Europe in the countries of Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Canada, Holland, France, Australia, Iran, New Zealand, Russia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan Republic, Russia. Respondent 1 claims that “he has Azerbaijani relatives and friends in Germany and America. Also, some Azerbaijani people who solely were born in the lands of Erivan Khanate found to chance to use their right to be citizen of America.”<sup>429</sup> Respondent 2’s “Azerbaijani friends and relatives mostly live in South Azerbaijan, Europe, America, Canada, Ukraine and in Russia.”<sup>430</sup> Respondent 4 says that “he has Azerbaijani friends deal with Azerbaijani diaspora activities in German, Holland, Belgium and France.”<sup>431</sup> Interviewee 7 tells that “he has Azerbaijani relatives and friends from Australia, Belgium, Switzerland

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<sup>428</sup> Aliyev, Z. (2011). *Azerbaycan Türkleri Nerelerde Yaşıyor / Azerbaycan Diasporasının Yayılma Coğrafyası*. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye’de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.78.

<sup>429</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>430</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>431</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

and Germany.”<sup>432</sup> Respondent 10’s has connection with his Azerbaijani relatives and friends in “New Zealand, Australia, Germany and America.”<sup>433</sup>

Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey have contact with Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world with the exception the few of the newly established Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey as respondent 5’s association which “plans to make contact with Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world in the near future.”<sup>434</sup> Interviewee 9 claims that “we are in contact with Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Europe as brother associations even if we have not organized common activities with them yet.”<sup>435</sup> Respondent 3 indicates that:

we attended meetings in Holland, Switzerland, Germany and France. Also, we are in with solidarity civil society organizations related to Azerbaijan, Anatolia, Kirkuk, Western Thrace, North Caucasia, and South Azerbaijan throughout the world.<sup>436</sup>

Respondent 1 asserts that:

diaspora organizations including the Azerbaijani diaspora and Turkish diaspora organizations from all over the world have made organizations in cooperation with other civil society organizations against the Armenian and Rum Diaspora organizations.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>433</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>434</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>435</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>436</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>437</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

For instance, Congress of Turkish States and Turkish Nations' Friendship, Fraternity and Solidarity had been organized since 1993 with the collaboration of the Association of Turkish States and Turkish Nations' Friendship, Fraternity and Solidarity and the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency.<sup>438</sup> In addition to Azerbaijani civil society organizations, other Turkish state representatives and Turkish nations under the domination of foreign state's delegations have attended this official meeting with the participation of the representatives of associations related to Turks to develop socio-cultural and economic relations between Turkish communities and states.<sup>439</sup> Diaspora organizations of Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world also cooperate with the other Turkish civil society organization in the world. Respondent 4 depicts that "we need diaspora organization especially outside the Turkey as in Europe, America or Asia for powerful cooperation among Azerbaijani people."<sup>440</sup>

Second Congress of Azerbaijani Turks made in Washington with the participation of Azerbaijani civil society organization from America, Canada, Turkey, Azerbaijan, South Azerbaijan.<sup>441</sup> The main focus of the congress was the problems of South Azerbaijani people.<sup>442</sup> According to interviewee 6, "the connection between South Azerbaijan is very delicate issue so that Azerbaijani

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<sup>438</sup> 3'üncüsü Çeşme Altın Yunus'ta Yapıldı. (1995). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 305, p.27.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.* p.27.

<sup>440</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>441</sup> Azerbaycan'dan Haberler. (1998). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 321, p.46.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.* p.46.

people living under authority of Iran are not damaged.”<sup>443</sup> Establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan has accelerated the national movements in South Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan Science and Culture Research Center was opened in Tabriz and immediately the Association of Azerbaijan Culture established contact with them.<sup>444</sup> Azerbaijanis from all over the world have fought for their democratic and human rights together in abroad. These Azerbaijani people started to inform people in abroad by publishing journals and newspapers and propagated their struggle for independence in 1980s in abroad.<sup>445</sup> Respondent 6 says that “the South Azerbaijan Turkish Council was established and our association is among the administrators of this council like associations from Europe and America to maintain relation with South Azerbaijan.”<sup>446</sup>

In 1999, Azerbaijani Associations and Federations in Europe kept together in Germany and took a decision for the unification of Azerbaijani associations and federations under the Confederation of Azerbaijani Associations and Federations from the countries of Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Poland, France, England, Holland, Canada, America to support Azerbaijani lands under occupation of Iran and Armenia by enhancing Azerbaijani culture and Azerbaijani identity.<sup>447</sup> Respondent 8 tells that “our association has links with Azerbaijani

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<sup>443</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>444</sup> Karaca, A. (1999). Mutluluğunu Yaşıyor. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 325, p.4.

<sup>445</sup> Azerbaycan Dernekleri ve Federasyonları’nın Konfederasyonu Kuruldu. (1999). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 328, p.43.

<sup>446</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>447</sup> Karaca, A. (1999). İsa Kamber’in Türkiye Ziyareti’nin Yankıları. *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 328, p.5.

civil society organizations in Germany.”<sup>448</sup> Respondent 10 indicates that “our associations have good relations with Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Europe and we also joined the meetings in Germany.”<sup>449</sup> Respondent 2 predicts that “there are still 500 thousands of Azerbaijani people living in Georgia, Borchali as in the Darband, Russia. We participated into summer festival in Borchali last year. Also, we visited Azerbaijani theatre in Darband.”<sup>450</sup> Furthermore, the Association of Azerbaijan Culture in Turkey has connection with World Azerbaijanis Congress.<sup>451</sup> The Association of Azerbaijan Culture has membership in the Turkish World Solidarity Group (TURDAY) and they held a press conference about the recent situations of Armenian invasions.<sup>452</sup>

Through the cooperation between Azerbaijani civil society organizations, meetings and conferences have been organized in different countries with the participation of associations from Europe and America like “World Turkish Azerbaijani Diaspora Community in Turkey for advocating Azerbaijani rights for the Khojaly Massacre and Nagorno-Karabakh dispute.” However, according to respondent 3 “for the development of diaspora cooperation between Azerbaijani civil society organizations, there has been need for development of financial capacity of these civil society organizations.”<sup>453</sup> Respondent 8 from newly opened

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<sup>448</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>449</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>450</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>451</sup> DAK’ın Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği’ni Ziyareti. (2005). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 359, p.39.

<sup>452</sup> Türk Dünyası Dayanışma Grubu’nun Basın Toplantısı. (1993). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 290, p.34.

<sup>453</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey expects that “their activities’ scope should be extended to develop broadened diaspora network and solidarity between Azerbaijani people and Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world.”<sup>454</sup> Respondent 10 focuses on:

Azerbaijani civil society organizations disconnection with each other, so the federation established on the basis of the unification of these disorganized Azerbaijani civil society organizations for strong Azerbaijani diaspora. As an aim of diaspora, which means sow widely, we should carry out lobbying activities and raise awareness of people in Europe in collaboration with the other civil society organizations in Europe against the Armenian diaspora organizations, which will be expecting to continue their activities more intensely in 2015, because there is lots of misinformation especially on Nagorno-Karabakh issue.<sup>455</sup>

Thus, Azerbaijani people migrated from their ancestral homeland not only to Turkey, but they voluntarily or involuntarily migrated to different countries in the world for different reasons throughout the Azerbaijani history. Among these migration areas, Turkey was special for Azerbaijani people. Due to the effect of historical past of Azerbaijanis and cultural and linguistic similarities between Azerbaijan and Turkey, Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey depicted that Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin who migrated to Turkey before the collapse of USSR, internalize Turkey as their real homeland. In order to realize an effective reproduction of diaspora consciousness between these dispersed Azerbaijani people by enhancing Azerbaijani identity and Turkish identity as a upper one, connection between Azerbaijani diaspora organizations from all over the world is substantial with the collaboration of Turkish diaspora organizations in the world.

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<sup>454</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>455</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

### 3.2.4. The Political Relations of Azerbaijan-Turkey-Diaspora

Both Turkish Republic and the State of Azerbaijan have their own international politics to promote their own national interest. Although the relation of these two states is based upon the brotherhood, there are some contradictory policies which cause conflict between these two states. In this case, members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey who are Turkish citizens, not citizens of Azerbaijan support generally Turkey's own interest as their real homeland from the perspective of the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites. These elites expect to good relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan for the ultimate aim of Turkish nation because they are aware of that ancient Azerbaijani geography as their ancestral homeland as their indispensable part.

Turkey's politics are based on the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and stability in Caucasia.<sup>456</sup> Bolsheviks relation with the new Turkish Republic's leader, Atatürk was peaceful for pragmatic reasons in favor of secure frontiers of newly established Turkish state. Atatürk bequeaths that:

today the USSR is a friend and an ally. We need this friendship. However, no one can know what will happen tomorrow. Just like the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires it may tear itself apart or shrink in size. Those peoples that it holds so tightly in its grip may one day slip away. The world may see a new balance of power. It is then that Turkey must know what to do. Ally Soviets have under their control our brothers with whom we share language, beliefs and roots. We must be prepared to embrace them. Being ready does not mean that we will sit quietly and wait. We must get ready. How do people get prepared for such an endeavor? By strengthening the natural bridges that exist between us. Language is a bridge... Religion is a bridge... History is a bridge... We

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<sup>456</sup> Aydın, M. (2012). Kafkasya'da Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikalarının Değişen Dinamikleri. in M. Aydın (eds.). *Kafkaslar Değişim Dönüşüm: Avrasya Üçlemesi III*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, p.207.



must delve into our roots and reconstruct what history has divided. We cannot wait for them to approach us. We must reach out to them.<sup>457</sup>

The brotherhood relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan was based on the time of Elchibey. With Elchibey, Azerbaijan government's policies turned increasingly towards Turkey. In fact, Elchibey was decidedly pro-Turkish, secularly oriented, pan-Azeri and anti-Iran.<sup>458</sup> Elchibey inspired by Turkey in terms of democratization and secularism.<sup>459</sup> The first president of Azerbaijan primarily visited to Turkey after the collapse of the USSR to escalate diplomatic relations with Turkey.<sup>460</sup> From the point of respondent 7:

there has been sustainable political relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan since the beginning of Elchibey power but Heydar Aliyev 'one nation two states' policies are not sufficient in some aspects because of the continuing visa requirement for Turkish citizens. Furthermore, Turkey's policies related to Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are not sufficiently sensible. This has been negative effect on the brotherhood relation between these two states.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, Retrieved August, 3, 2013 from <http://atam.gov.tr/ataturk-hakkinda-ozbekistanda-yayinlanan-bir-kitap-turk-halkinin-buyuk-evladi-ataturk/>

<sup>458</sup> Cornell, S. E., (1998). Iran and the Caucasus (The Caspian Region). *Middle East Policy*, 5 (4), p.57.

<sup>459</sup> Ergun, A. (2012). Azerbaycan'da Sovyet Sonrası Dönemde Değişim ve Dönüşüm. in M. Aydın (eds.). *Kafkaslar Değişim Dönüşüm: Avrasya Üçlemesi III*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, p.36.

<sup>460</sup> Karaca, A. (1992). Azerbaycan'ın Milli Mücadele Kuruluşu Milli Musavat Halk Partisi 3.Kurultayı Vatanda Yapıldı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 288, p.4.

<sup>461</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

Turkey is Azerbaijanis own homeland. As stated by Atatürk; “Azerbaijan’s sadness is our sadness; Azerbaijan’s happiness is our happiness.”<sup>462</sup> The evaluation made by respondent 9 about the two states’ politics is as follows:

The negativity in both states has affected each other because although each state is independent and has its own policy agenda, there has been national unity and solidarity between these two states and between these two societies. At this point, if analysis is made for Turkey’s relation with other Turkish states, the uniqueness of the relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan will be apparent.<sup>463</sup>

In 1994, the president Süleyman Demirel says in his speech that:

Turks living in Azerbaijan and Turkey are brothers and sisters. The freedom of Azerbaijan was welcomed happily in Turkey and Turkey is always supportive of Azerbaijan. The interest of these two states cannot be separated. It is crucial to protect the Azerbaijan’s independence while its 20 percentage of lands is under occupation of Armenians. Azerbaijan’s independence will be remarkable with its wealth resources and culture.<sup>464</sup>

Respondent 9 explains that:

the connection between Turkey and Azerbaijan is so powerful. Also, Turkey is beyond the Azerbaijan in terms of favorable opportunities so Azerbaijan has attempted to gain from the experiences of Turkey while establishing long-term polices.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> Cumhurbaşkanı Süleyman Demirel Biz Azerbaycan’ın, Azerbaycan Halkının Arzusu İstikametinde Yönetilmesini İstiyoruz (28 Mayıs İstiklal ve Hürriyet Bayramında Yaptığı Konuşma). (1994). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 297, pp.9-10.

<sup>463</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>464</sup> Cumhurbaşkanı Süleyman Demirel Biz Azerbaycan’ın, Azerbaycan Halkının Arzusu İstikametinde Yönetilmesini İstiyoruz (28 Mayıs İstiklal ve Hürriyet Bayramında Yaptığı Konuşma). (1994). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 297, pp.9-10.

<sup>465</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

In a large extend, Turkey's international politics have relied on the economic and strategic policies when considering the energy potential of Caucasian region.<sup>466</sup> The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline has sustained the relation between two states. Azerbaijan civil society organizations in Turkey promoted these two states collaboration in every sphere of life. According to interviewee 1:

thanks to new energy policies between Azerbaijan and Turkey, the brotherhood relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan is consolidated as it should be. We always said that we are brothers, one nation and two states. Actually, these new energy projects have been precondition for strong relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Turkey.<sup>467</sup>

In 2000, the scope of the Turkish President Sezer's meeting held in Baku is about the brotherhood relation between two states for mutual economic cooperation and investment (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline) with the political cooperation in terms of Nagorno-Karabakh dispute's solution for the benefit of Azerbaijan's territorial unity and for the support of Azerbaijan in international political arena in the eyes of international organizations.<sup>468</sup> Especially with Justice and Development Party (JDP) government, the priority has been given to new energy agreements and economic cooperation like Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan projects without considering the cultural and historical connections with Azerbaijan.<sup>469</sup> Respondent 11 describes that "the intimate relations with these two states are not

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<sup>466</sup> Aydın, M. (2012). Kafkasya'da Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikalarının Değişen Dinamikleri. in M. Aydın (eds.). *Kafkaslar Değişim Dönüşüm: Avrasya Üçlemesi III*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, p.207.

<sup>467</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>468</sup> Cumhurbaşkanı Sezer Bakü'de. (2000). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 334, pp.69-70.

<sup>469</sup> Aydın, M. (2012). Kafkasya'da Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikalarının Değişen Dinamikleri. in M. Aydın (eds.). *Kafkaslar Değişim Dönüşüm: Avrasya Üçlemesi III*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, pp.210-223.

always based upon cultural proximity, but these two states have needed each other especially for the economic progress which includes new energy corridors.”<sup>470</sup> Another reason of these strategies of Turkey was its internal problems with European Union, Kurdish question, Kurdistan Worker Party (PKK) terrorism, and the closure case of JDP.<sup>471</sup> At this political atmosphere, Turkey has adopted the policy of zero problems with neighbors in international politics.<sup>472</sup>

Apparently, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been used by the State of Azerbaijan in return of economic cooperation in terms of energy politics with Turkey.<sup>473</sup> The collapse of the USSR in 1991 has led the way to the involvement of international actors in the region of post-Soviet countries. Opening up the natural gas reserves to the world market, international powers began to rival and to make alliance to come up as a player. Additionally, Azerbaijan emerged as an important actor in the context of its relation with international actors in energy politics. Especially, it is hard to develop normal connections between Turkey and Armenia because of the Armenian’s genocide allegation and frozen conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh. However, United States of America (USA) and West put pressure on this issue to normalize relation between Turkey and Armenia. In the case of negotiations between Turkey and Armenia, Azerbaijan’s reaction plays an important role because Azerbaijan is important for Turkey with respect to its

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<sup>470</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>471</sup> Aydın, M. (2012). Kafkasya’da Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikalarının Değişen Dinamikleri. in M. Aydın (eds.). *Kafkaslar Değişim Dönüşüm: Avrasya Üçlemesi III*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, p.210.

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.* p.210.

<sup>473</sup> Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği’nin 39. Genel Kurul Toplantısı Yapıldı. (2004). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 353, p.6.

energy resources and energy potential.<sup>474</sup> Moreover, the relation between Azerbaijan and Turkey is based on ethno-cultural ties.<sup>475</sup> Therefore, Azerbaijan has attempted to utilize its own strategic position by threatening Turkey for the relation between Armenia at the expense of its energy resources.<sup>476</sup>

Azerbaijani people together with Azerbaijani people living in Turkey reacted to the protocol signed between Turkey and Armenia in 2009 because protocol includes an article about the opening of border between Turkey and Armenia by ignoring the Armenian invasion in Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>477</sup> Later, the Prime Minister Erdoğan made a press statement that “until Armenians leave from the Azerbaijani lands, Nagorno-Karabakh, Turkey does not accept to sign agreement with Armenia. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk group, England, Russia and France should solve the dispute as soon as possible.”<sup>478</sup>

Administrator 10 from Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey interprets the two states policies from the crisis of Armenian boundary. He shares his opinion that:

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<sup>474</sup> Kasim, K. (2009). Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia Triangle. In *Journal of Turkish Weekly*. Retrieved May 24, 2011 from [http://www.gab-ibn.com/IMG/pdf/Re13-\\_Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia\\_Triangle.pdf](http://www.gab-ibn.com/IMG/pdf/Re13-_Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia_Triangle.pdf)

<sup>475</sup> Çetin, T. & Oguz, F. (2007). The Reform in the Turkish Natural Gas Market: A Critical Evaluation. *Energy Policy*, 35 (7), p.3857.

<sup>476</sup> Kasim, K. (2009). Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia Triangle. In *Journal of Turkish Weekly*. Retrieved May 24, 2011 from [http://www.gab-ibn.com/IMG/pdf/Re13-\\_Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia\\_Triangle.pdf](http://www.gab-ibn.com/IMG/pdf/Re13-_Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia_Triangle.pdf)

<sup>477</sup> Ünal, C. (2009). Ermenistan Açılımı ve Protokola Bakış. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 376, pp.4-5.

<sup>478</sup> Türkiye ile Ermenistan Arasındaki Sınır Kapılarının Açılıp Açılmama Konusu Atv’de Tartışıldı. (2009). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 375, p.4.

although we migrated from historical lands of Azerbaijan, we are Turkish citizens who live in and who were born in places near to Armenian boundary and while Armenia has still accepted the eastern part of Turkey as the part of West Armenia, the policy pursued about opening the boundary between Turkey and Armenia is particularly our interest. At this point, Azerbaijan should solve Nagorno-Karabakh problem with Armenia in the direction of its own interest because Turkey's first aim should be the recognition of Turkey's legal boundaries from Armenian authorities instead of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Primarily, Turkey should guarantee its own security to solve the problems related to Azerbaijan. Hence, Azerbaijan also should firstly take into account Turkey's political position before asking for help from Turkish authorities against Armenia.<sup>479</sup>

Interviewee 8 makes an assessment from the opposite side that "the politics implemented by Azerbaijan and Turkey is favorable but the president of Turkey should show an interest in Nagorno-Karabakh dispute as in the case of Syria."<sup>480</sup> Respondent 3 claims that:

although there have been small problems between the politics of Turkey and Azerbaijan in the past related to Armenia, these two states have always been in collaboration with each other because these two societies have interlaced each other culturally, politically and economically. Small problems should be ignored with the idea of 'one nation two states' for Azerbaijan and for Turkey. Both states should advocate positive policies for well-being of their societies.<sup>481</sup>

However, for sustainable politics between Azerbaijan and Turkey, most of the administrators of Azerbaijani civil society organization agree with the respondent 3's view that "clarification of the difference between societies of

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<sup>479</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>480</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>481</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

Azerbaijani people and Armenian people for Turkey with regard to Turkey's foreign policies has been crucial."<sup>482</sup> Unfortunately, according to respondent 6:

sometimes governments do not consider these two close societies' requests during the policy making processes as in the visa procedure for Turkish citizens but there has been a mutual sympathy between Turkish and Azerbaijani societies. Societies' sensibility should not be ignored by state authorities. For instance, there have been different examples of visa problems like families of students studying in Azerbaijan and who faced difficulties due to the visa requirements.<sup>483</sup>

While producing policies for internal security, these relatively comprehensible choices of state policies which ignore public authorities should stay in a minimal level. Most of the administrators of Azerbaijani civil society organizations with which I made interview advocate that it will be good to ease the visa procedure or to lift visa requirements. From the other side, they are aware of the fact that these visa requirements are necessary procedure for being a state because Azerbaijan political authorities have endeavored to protect their internal security. This seems logical for respondent 1 especially:

when thinking about the continuing border crisis in the lands of Azerbaijan, the internal security of Azerbaijan becomes prominent issue. Moreover, visa procedures applied by the State of Azerbaijan to Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people are not so deterrent.<sup>484</sup>

Respondent 9 elaborates the procedure of visa that "it takes approximately thirty minutes. There is not so much burden of documentation for visa procedure, just passport and two photos are necessary for Turkish citizens."<sup>485</sup> Additionally,

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<sup>482</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>483</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>484</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>485</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

interviewee 10 tells that “there is not a serious visa problem between Turkey and Azerbaijan. There is different visa line for just Turkish citizens in the airport. This visa requirement is just a political decision of the State of Azerbaijan.”<sup>486</sup> From the perspective of respondent 9:

visa application should be considered as one of the state choices to protect state unity. Especially, Azerbaijan’s richness in terms of gas, petroleum and the world thread from Armenia, Russia and other terrorist forces have been taken into account. The strategic position of Azerbaijan should be considered by the State of Azerbaijan for the procedure of visa to provide internal security of state.<sup>487</sup>

Hence, Azerbaijan visa policy has been conceived as one of the duty to control state security and unity. Besides, as respondent 10 states that “visa procedures are not as an insolvable problem between two states.”<sup>488</sup> However, there are some complaints about visa requirement. Administrator 2 from Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey point outs that “visa policy applied to Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people are perceived as an indicator of not to be accepted ourselves as a citizen of the State of Azerbaijan while he identifies his homeland both with Turkey and Azerbaijan.”<sup>489</sup> From his point of view, this procedure has been undesirable and disagreeable. Besides, there is a desire for visa exemption from the perspective of Azerbaijani people who get annoyed from the visa policies of the State of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijani civil society organizations’ hopes are in the direction with more sustainable politics between Azerbaijan and Turkey in the future. Through

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<sup>486</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>487</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>488</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>489</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013



the development of the relations between two states, the level of collaboration between them will reach the expected level. These sustainable politics can be strengthened with the cultural similarity of these two nations. Also, most of them bring their Turkish identity into forefront while explaining “one nation two states” politics between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Respondent 5 asserts that “I wish that the dialogue between two states will become much better in the future when compare to current situation. These two states should follow one policy because we come from the same nation.”<sup>490</sup> Respondent 10 evaluates that “the relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan could be more developed but their relations have not been developed as it should be.”<sup>491</sup>

Most of the administrators of these Azerbaijani civil society organizations put emphasis on the necessity to consolidate the brotherhood relation between Azerbaijan and Turkey for increasing the credibility of the idea of “one nation two states” politics instead of two states politics. Emphasis upon one nation and brotherhood relations between two states should be endorsed by well-supported policies. For instance, Turkey’s changing behavior about opening Armenian border has been so constructive in the eyes of Azerbaijani civil society organizations. Azerbaijani diaspora organization of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey mostly have made interpretation about the politics of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey on the basis of Turkey’s political stand against the Republic of Armenia. Azerbaijani diaspora organizations identify themselves with their opposite side, Armenian diaspora organizations. Therefore, the brotherhood relation between Azerbaijan and Turkey depends on Turkey’s attitude towards Nagorno-Karabakh or Turkey’s border politics with Armenia.

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<sup>490</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>491</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

In this respect, the fact that Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey involve in these two states policies is crucial to analyze their role in brotherhood relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Administrator 2 from the Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey makes a point of “their catalyst role between two states to consolidate these two states brotherhood relation.”<sup>492</sup> According to respondent 4, “Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey haven’t any direct effect on these two states politics.”<sup>493</sup> Even if “Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey cannot be regulator of these two states politics”<sup>494</sup> as stated by respondent 3, they have accelerator effect upon these two states politics. For example, these Azerbaijani civil society organizations have endeavored to inform people for creating public opinion by publishing announcement and by arranging organizations. One of the examples of this effort given by respondent 2 is “organizing effective petition to interfere the Turkey’s Armenian border politics. By this way, they have tried to make contribution to the brotherhood relation between Azerbaijan and Turkey.”<sup>495</sup> Information flow for Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey is substantial for powerful diaspora relations. It is not possible to be indifferent to politics between Turkey and Azerbaijan so respondent 6 elucidates that:

we try to make contributions to these policies by getting in contact with the state authorities like deputies in both states. It is expected that these deputies will carry their opinions in party meetings or in any other

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<sup>492</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>493</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>494</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>495</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

meetings to take attention of political authorities for the problems like visa policies.<sup>496</sup>

In order to transmit some complaints to Azerbaijani political authorities, these civil society organizations in Turkey have reported the problems to the authorities of the State of Azerbaijan. These are important for these civil society organizations in terms of effective policies. Most of the civil society organizations have qualified themselves as corner stones of these two states brotherhood. Azerbaijani civil society organizations' administrator 3 in Turkey believes that:

their network consisting of Azerbaijani civil society organization and student groups from all over the world, are more effective in state policies through lobbying activities, as in the crises of the acceptance of Armenian genocide in France. For instance, the demonstrations were organized in front of the Embassy of France in Turkey to protest approval of Armenian Genocide in French Parliament.<sup>497</sup>

Respondent 10 emphasizes that:

although some civil society organizations in Turkey disagree with the existing political authority of Azerbaijan, we should not interfere with the internal affairs of Azerbaijan if we are the citizens of the Turkey. Therefore, Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey should give priority to freedom of Azerbaijan instead of dealing with Azerbaijan government in power. If they want to deal with the internal politics of Azerbaijan, they should apply to get citizenship from Azerbaijan.<sup>498</sup>

Surely, Azerbaijani civil society organizations are the actors of Azerbaijan's international politics apart from the internal matters of political parties within the Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey

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<sup>496</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>497</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>498</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

have tried to find solutions for misunderstandings between these two states by using their diaspora network. However, the perception of homeland of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin through the eyes of Azerbaijani diaspora elites is decisive in this relation because lands of the State of Azerbaijan are not the real homeland of their ancestors where they migrated to Turkey but homeland of their co-ethnics. On the contrary, Turkey becomes their homeland after Armenian occupation and long-lasting Soviet invasion in their ancestral homeland called as West Azerbaijan from Azerbaijanis and they are affiliated with Turkey through citizenship. Thus, Azerbaijani diaspora elites do not accept the State of Azerbaijan as their own representative but as representative of their co-ethnics who are citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a result, as it can be inferred from the interviews, they see Azerbaijani diaspora network above the Azerbaijan government. From their perspective, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations from all over the world can be the transnational representative of all Azerbaijani people instead of the State of Azerbaijan's national institutions.

### **3.3. The Impact of Media on the Diaspora Communities**

The physical boundaries of Azerbaijani ancestral homeland can be reimagined through the transnational media network. By this way, members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey can establish connection with their ancestral homeland while protecting Turkey as their real homeland in their minds. From the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites; although Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin accept Turkey as their real homeland, Azerbaijani diaspora members in Turkey keep their connection with their ancestral Azerbaijani homeland through media channels by using media network of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey.

Media and internet connection of diasporas foster the global diaspora networks instead of triangular relation of diaspora with homeland and host land.<sup>499</sup> In general, media technologies which are utilized by diaspora organizations sustained the reproduction of diaspora culture and transformation of diasporic identities.<sup>500</sup> Usage of electronic media with Scannell's own words "bring about new possibilities of being in two places at once."<sup>501</sup> This first place is where diaspora members actually take place and the second place is where they receive the broadcast. By this way, diaspora media enable them "the opportunity of producing new spaces where remote localities and their experiences come together."<sup>502</sup> Space of communication, produced by media, facilitates the integration of diaspora members through the reimagination of boundaries of diasporic communities.<sup>503</sup> In this space visible cultural components are promoted as a priority of media.<sup>504</sup> One of the basics of diaspora is diaspora members' self-

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<sup>499</sup> Baumann, M. (2000). Diaspora: Genealogies of Semantics and Transcultural Comparison. *Numen*, 47 (3), p.331.

<sup>500</sup> Tsagarousianou, R. (2004). Rethinking the Concept of Diaspora: Mobility, Connectivity and Communication in a Globalised World. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 1 (1), p.62.

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.* p.62.

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.* p.62.

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid.* p.63.

<sup>504</sup> Qiu, H. (2003). Communication among Knowledge Diasporas: Online Magazines of Expatriate Chinese students. in H. K. Karim (eds.). *The Media of Diaspora*. London, New York: Routledge, p.156.

mobilization around their awareness of themselves as a diaspora into transnational linkages of media communication.<sup>505</sup>

Hence, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' network is undergirded by their publications, by social media networks, telephone networks and mail networks. Media channels facilitate the cooperation with Turkey, Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani diaspora organizations from all over the world. This cooperation includes political, cultural, historical, social and economic connection between where they live, Turkey, where their co-ethnics live independently, Azerbaijan, and where Azerbaijani diaspora members live throughout the world. While the integration of Azerbaijani people through the reimagination of ancestral homeland's boundaries by media channels, most of the Azerbaijani people with whom I made interview pursue Turkey's interest over Azerbaijan in case of any contradiction because of their relation with Turkey, their real and actual homeland, as their birth place with the citizenship rights.

### **3.3.1. The Impact of the Publications of Azerbaijani Civil Society Organizations in Turkey**

With the exception of oldest Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey, newly established Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey did not published Journals regularly. The Association of Azerbaijan Culture's journal was one of the oldest publications of Azerbaijani diaspora, published regularly.

The Association of Azerbaijan Culture's journal's first volume was published in April, 1952, namely 'Azerbaijan.' Mammad Amin Rasulzade had been the editor of journal until he was dead in 1955. Then, A. Vahap Yurtsever

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<sup>505</sup> Tsagarousianou, R. (2004). Rethinking the Concept of Diaspora: Mobility, Connectivity and Communication in a Globalised World. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 1 (1), p.63.

and Ahmet Karaca undertook the responsibility of editor respectively. At the beginning, the Association of Azerbaijan Culture's Journal published in every month but it publishes in every three months regularly because of the association's financial problems.<sup>506</sup> The content of it includes topics about all kinds of news from Azerbaijan especially which are related to freedom of Azerbaijan and news from Turkey especially which serve purpose of Turkish nation.<sup>507</sup> It gives place to news about the international politics of Azerbaijan, Russia, Iran, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan's relation with other foreign countries, for instance, news about military cooperation between Russia and Azerbaijan as part of balance politics or Turkey and Armenia relation.<sup>508</sup> The Journal of Azerbaijan Culture follows the reaction of international media and international civil society organizations about the Khojaly Massacre.<sup>509</sup> In the Journal of Azerbaijan Culture's news about the foundation of new Azerbaijani associations from all over the world has been shared. For instance, the foundation of Caucasian Union was established in Buenos Aires.<sup>510</sup> The journal as the publishing organ of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture has been sent to foreign countries, America, Germany, Canada, Argentina, England, Italy and Egypt.<sup>511</sup> In

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<sup>506</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.55.

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.* p.55.

<sup>508</sup> Basından Haberler. (2002). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 340, pp.42-44.

<sup>509</sup> Yürükel, S. (2007). Azərbaycan ve Türk Formu. *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 370, p.31.

<sup>510</sup> Kırıkkale'de Azərbaycan Gecesi Şirvanlı. (1953). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 10, p.22.

<sup>511</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneğinin 1952 Yılı Çalışma Raporu. (1953). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 12, p.15.

addition to the Journal of Azerbaijan Culture, there are publications of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture written by Azerbaijani intellectuals in Turkey. These publications are about the historical truths of Azerbaijan, speeches of Mammad Amin Rasulzade in Muslims' Conference, Azerbaijani national struggle, communism, democracy, memories of these intellectuals throughout the national struggle and South Azerbaijani Turks.<sup>512</sup>

Some published journals did not continue for a long time. Respondent 11 stated that "some subsidiary publications have endorsed our association by sharing our activities in their journals like Serhat Culture".<sup>513</sup> In order to publish much more regular journals, Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey make future plans by taking steps to increase their capacity and to ensure continuity of publications. Interviewee 9 claims that "publishing a journal about the activities is among our main objective."<sup>514</sup> Respondent 4 says that "we will try to make our journal of Azerbaijani Turk weekly, which publishes in every fifteen days."<sup>515</sup> Respondent 2 tells that "their journal namely Contemporary Azerbaijan lasted just 6 months."<sup>516</sup> Therefore, mostly unprinted publications via internet like blog sites or facebook or private internet web site of civil society organizations have been seemed more advantageous than journals to reach Azerbaijani people. Respondent 1 signifies that:

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<sup>512</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği 30. Dönem Genel Kurul Toplantısı Yapıldı. (1986). *Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.82.

<sup>513</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>514</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>515</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>516</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013



we have an internet web site to write the recent issues regularly and contact with people instead of publishing journal especially when financial issues of printing and distribution have been concerned. We can reach much more people via internet when compared to published journal in twenty first century.<sup>517</sup>

All these publication are important to reinforce and increase the effectiveness of Azerbaijani civil society organizations throughout the world. By these publications, Azerbaijani diaspora elites can reproduce Azerbaijani people past memories together with the imagination of ancestral Azerbaijani homeland of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin.

### **3.3.2. The Impact of Media on Following the Current Events**

Most of the administrators of Azerbaijani civil society organizations with which I made interview indicate that they follow current events both in Turkey and Azerbaijan through social media networks like blogs, twitter, facebook of Azerbaijani civil society organizations from all over the world, mail groups, newspapers, televisions of Azerbaijan and Turkey. Respondent 1 says that:

I follow Turkish news very often from Turkish TV channels. For news about Azerbaijan, I follow several facebook pages (diaspora Azerbaijan, Istanbul Azerbaijan, Istanbul Türkiye Azerbaijan, Milli Azerbaijan Diasporası, Kafkas Karşılar, Sosyal Demokrasi, Atatürk) and mail groups especially about the sensitive issues of Nagorno-Karabakh and South Azerbaijan. I also watch Azerbaijani television, İçtimai TV.<sup>518</sup>

Both respondent 2 and respondent 5 say that “they try to follow the current news of Azerbaijan and Turkey.”<sup>519</sup><sup>520</sup> Moreover, respondent 7 denotes that “I try

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<sup>517</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>518</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>519</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

to keep informed about the current news of Azerbaijan and Turkey through television and internet.”<sup>521</sup>

Following the current events is important to be informed about Azerbaijanis all around the world and to defend their co-ethnics rights. This also enables the continuous relation with Turkey, Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani diaspora organizations from all over the world. Especially, the important news and delicate news about the Khojaly Massacre and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict attract their attention.

### **3.3.3. The Impact of Social Media on the Azerbaijani Diaspora Network**

The communication between Azerbaijani civil society organizations and their members has been established via mail groups, web sites and social media networks such as facebook, blogs and twitter. Internet enlarges the network and speeds up the flow of information between civil society organizations from all over the world. Strong cooperation with Azerbaijanis is important for powerful Azerbaijani diaspora network.

From the perspective of respondent 2 “the means of communication are essential because merely the conferences, panels or meetings do not sufficient and it is hard to hold people together so activities’ impact can be accelerated by utilizing from the media.”<sup>522</sup> In order to increase the number of participants of Azerbaijani people into activities implemented by Azerbaijani civil society

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<sup>520</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>521</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>522</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

organizations, message, mail groups and social media groups have been used. Interviewee 1 asserts that “we have approximately contact list of 700 people in our message groups and mail groups.”<sup>523</sup> Respondent 9 expresses that:

we can reach all of our members from our contact list in telephone. Our communication network is too wide. We immediately get in touch with members via telephone, mail or message groups. We particularly use internet, social media. News, related to our activities, is published in media and regional journals in Turkey.<sup>524</sup>

Interviewee 1 explains that “our association has its own web site. We have much more followers when comparing to other associations. In order to attract attention of our followers to Azerbaijani culture, we use our websites by sharing Azerbaijani music videos.”<sup>525</sup> Moreover, administrator 11 mentions about “their web sites to announce their activities to their members.”<sup>526</sup> Respondent 6’s argument is that “on the one hand, the social media networks should be kept under control. On the other hand, we can easily reach to Azerbaijani people and can immediately learn what is happening in the world, thanks to these social networks.”<sup>527</sup> Respondent 10 admits that “our federation does not use social media effectively because in this structure, some information should stay in private.”<sup>528</sup> Additionally, respondent 8’s association use “facebook, internet and telephone to

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<sup>523</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>524</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>525</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>526</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>527</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>528</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

reach their members.”<sup>529</sup> Interviewee 9 emphasizes that “our association use written and visual media to inform Azerbaijani people about our organizations.”<sup>530</sup> Respondent 2 says that:

our association has mail group, namely, Azerbaijan Diaspora to reach our members and to communicate with other associations’ administrators in Europe, America and Russia. Besides, social media networks are important communication channels to establish strong dialogue for national unity between the members of diaspora organizations. This is indispensable part of the contemporary world. Through the social media networks, mail groups, messages systems of telephones each diaspora organizations could reach approximately 30000 people and establish new dialogues with Turks like in Darband and Borchali by using the advantage of social media networks. Also, we come into contact with the Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turhan via facebook.<sup>531</sup>

By considering the establishment of new connections, Respondent 4 claims that “the social media networks like facebook absolutely accelerate the effect of diaspora organization.”<sup>532</sup> The effect of civil society organizations as diaspora organizations has also been spread through media channels, televisions and newspapers. The connection established via media between Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey and the relation between Azerbaijani diaspora organizations from all over the world are promoted. Apparently, social media networks have developed diaspora relations in terms of Azerbaijanis and Turks. Especially, social media has made easy the connection of diaspora organizations and their members through the reproduction of Azerbaijani diaspora culture with

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<sup>529</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>530</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>531</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>532</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

transnational bonds which eliminate the physical borders and enable the imagination of the ancestral Azerbaijani homeland in their minds. Although these physical boundaries of ancestral homeland of Azerbaijan can be reimagined through the media channel used by Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey, Turkey remains as their actual and real homeland because some parts of Azerbaijani lands, especially their ancestors' migration place, are not physically reachable area for Azerbaijanis unlike Turkey as their birth place. Also, today's the Republic of Azerbaijan is historical place of Azerbaijan, but not the place of their ancestors' migration place. Therefore, Turkey is their real homeland while the lands of the Republic of Azerbaijan are their second homeland because this independent State of Azerbaijan is the homeland of their co-ethnics. In the next chapter, reconstruction of the perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey is examined by analyzing the Azerbaijani geography and Azerbaijani cultural and linguistic bonds with Turkey.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PERCEPTION OF HOMELAND

Azerbaijan nation's historical experiences could be perceived away from the Azerbaijani geography, thanks to memories of Azerbaijanis about their migration history and cultural heritage. Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin's attachment to Azerbaijan could be reimagined through the diaspora organizations in Turkey as expressed by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in interviews. Ethnic myths of common origin, historical experiences and some kind of connection for geographic place generate collective diasporic identity.<sup>533</sup> This collective diaspora identity is endorsed by historical experiences and cultural memories of people from Azerbaijani origin, through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations and its network. This chapter aims at indicating the effect of Azerbaijani geography and Azerbaijani cultural and linguistic bonds with Turkey in shaping the perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey.

#### 4.1. Reconstruction of the Perception of Homeland through Historical Geography

Nations' perception is bound to geography, the lands in which their nation-state was established and to their ancestral and historical lands. Azerbaijani people exposed to so many border shift in their history, so perception of homeland from the side of geography was distinctive when taking into account the changing political power over the Azerbaijani historical lands.

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<sup>533</sup> Vertovec, S. (1997). Three Meanings of "Diaspora," Exemplified among South Asian Religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6 (3), p.278.

Azerbaijan had been suffered by being maneuver area of the regional and great forces in history, thus its administration had been changed many times. Therefore, Azerbaijanis have been exposed to multiple and competing identities as Turks, Iranians, Muslims and distinct Azerbaijani identity. The strategic position and geographical position of Caucasia have increased the importance of the region. Due to the Azerbaijan's border with Iran and Russia, Azerbaijan remains between important world powers. Because of the richest oil field of Azerbaijan, great numbers of regional and international powers have begun to deal with Azerbaijan oil for their economic and political interest in the nineteenth century.<sup>534</sup> In addition to this, while the overwhelming majority of the Azerbaijanis live in neighboring Iran which is a multinational state, approximately eight million Azerbaijanis live in the Republic of Azerbaijan.<sup>535</sup>

Azerbaijani diaspora had to migrate involuntarily from their ancestral homeland. Dr. M. Kengerli indicates that "regimes, doctrines and ideologies are temporary but our homeland and nation are permanent." Azerbaijan does not mean just the northern part of Aras River but also southern part of Aras River where most of the Azerbaijani population have been lived.<sup>536</sup> The Republic of Azerbaijan State is surrounded by the Caspian Sea to the east, Russia to the north, Georgia to the northwest, Armenia to the west, Iran to the south and through Nakhchivan Turkey to the northwest but the historical geography of Azerbaijan is

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<sup>534</sup> Alkan, H. (2010). *Azerbaycan Paradoksu Azerbaycan'ın İç ve Dış Politikası*. Ankara: Usak Yayınları, pp.37-38.

<sup>535</sup> Shaffer, B. (2002). *Borders and brethren: Iran and the challenge of Azerbaijani identity*, Cambridge: the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs John F.Keneddy School of Government, p.1.

<sup>536</sup> Sultanoğlu, V. (2000). M. Emin Resulzade'nin Güney Azerbaycan Uğrunda Çalışmaları. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 333, p.16.

broader than the Republic of Azerbaijan's boundary.<sup>537</sup> Historically, the geography of Azerbaijan is surrounded by Darband to north, Borchali to northwest, Turkey to west, including to Hamadan to south, Caucasian Sea and Iran to east.<sup>538</sup> The region which is known as West Azerbaijan was the part of Erivan Khanate once a time. Later, Armenians occupied West Azerbaijan later.<sup>539</sup> Turks' roots in the Caucasus dates back at least to the seventh century and their power was accelerated in the region with the arrival of Oghuz Turks accepted as first settler of present-day Azerbaijan in around the ninth century and as the ancestors of modern-day Azerbaijanis.<sup>540</sup>

In this sense, Azerbaijani diaspora elites' migration history in their memory is worth to be examined for the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey who migrated before the collapse of the USSR because migration history of Azerbaijani people directly affect their perception of homeland.

#### **4.1.1. Migration History**

The political turmoil in Azerbaijani lands started with the wars between Iran and Russia and the wars between Ottoman Empire and Russia and continued throughout the Soviet era and this led to migration of Azerbaijani people from the ancestral homeland of Azerbaijanis to all around the world.

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<sup>537</sup> Alkın, S. (1996). Azerbaijan'ın Tarihi Coğrafyası. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 312, p.35.

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.* p.36.

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid.* p.35.

<sup>540</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.26.



One of the remarkable places of migration place of Azerbaijanis is Turkey because Azerbaijani people feel intimate to Turkey in terms of their origin. At the beginning of nineteenth century, Azerbaijani ancestral land started to be occupied by the Russia. Azerbaijani geography was under occupation of Safavid Iran from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>541</sup> Following the death of Nadir Şah who terminated the Safavid domination, several independence khanates emerged in Caucasia. In fact, these independent khanates in the lands of Azerbaijan prevented the unified authority in Azerbaijan.<sup>542</sup> Thus, Russia's interest and Russian military involvement in Transcaucasia started in the time of Peter the Great between 1683 and 1725.<sup>543</sup> Azerbaijan, divided feudal Khanates in seventeenth century like Ganja Khanate, Shaki Khanate, Baku Khanate, and Nagorno-Karabakh Khanate<sup>544</sup> exposed to Russian invasions and came under the Tsarist Russia in 1828.<sup>545</sup> The Russia firstly captured the control of Georgia with Borchali, Kazah and Şemşeddil Sultanates. Then, Car-Balaken, Ganja, Nagorno-Karabakh, Shaki, and Shaki fell under the hegemony of Russia.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> Altstadt, A. (1992). *The Azerbaijani Turks*. Stanford: Hoover Institution, p.2.

<sup>542</sup> Altaylı, S. (2011). Karabağ-Batı Azerbaycan Ermeniler. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.121.

<sup>543</sup> Swietochowski, T. (1995). *Russia and Azerbaijan A Borderland in Transition*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.3.

<sup>544</sup> Karaca, A. (1980). Azerbaycan'ın Yakın Tarihine Bakış. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 233, p.

<sup>545</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1952). Azeraycan Cumhuriyeti Hakkında Umumi Malumat. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 1, p.5.

<sup>546</sup> Muradov, N. (2011). Azerbaycan Tarihinden Kronolojik Kesitler. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.29.

The borders of Azerbaijan are determined by two treaties, the Treaty of Gulistan and the Treaty of Turkmenchay between Russia and Iran. Firstly, frontier changes were imposed by Treaty of Gulistan. At the end of Gulistan Treaty, Iran lost extensive territory. After the Treaty of Gulistan was signed by Russia and Iran, Azerbaijan divided into two as north under Russia and south under Iran in 1813.<sup>547</sup> Nevertheless, this treaty did not cease hostilities and frontier disputes between the two countries. Hence, Russia continued its encroachment on Iranian territories to the south of the provinces, demarcated with the Treaty of Gulistan.<sup>548</sup> As a consequence of violence of the Treaty of Gulistan, the second Russo-Iranian war, which ended up with the Treaty of Turkmenchay, began in 1825. This treaty is important for the determination of the present boundary between Iran and Azerbaijan.<sup>549</sup> At the end of these treaties, although the land of Azeria was divided into equal parts, larger proportion of Azeri-speaking population remained in Iran. The new frontier followed the Aras River and divided the territory of Arran from the historical core of Azerbaijan.<sup>550</sup> Despite the formal division of Azerbaijan, direct ties between the Azerbaijanis on the both sides of the border

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<sup>547</sup> Muradov, N. (2011). *Azerbaycan Tarihinden Kronolojik Kesitler*. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, p.29.

<sup>548</sup> Ganji, M. H. (2006). Stages in the Shaping of Iran's North-Western Boundaries. in P. Mojtahed-Zadeh (eds.). *Boundary Politics and International Boundaries of Iran*. Florida: Universal Publishers, p.45.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.* p.41.

<sup>550</sup> Swietochowski, T. (1995). *Russia and Azerbaijan A Borderland in Transition*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.7.

continued with an active economic interaction, family ties and constant migration.<sup>551</sup>

These boundary shifts also brought demographic changes into these lands.<sup>552</sup> Within the scope of Russian authorities' assimilation policies and settling policies, Armenians were placed to Nakhchivan, the lands of Erivan Khanate and Nagorno-Karabakh<sup>553</sup> from Ottoman Empire, Iran and Lebanon.<sup>554</sup> The fact that the Ottoman Empire defeated the Russia in 1876-1877 paved the way for Armenian rebellion in both Azerbaijan and Anatolia. Russian authorities began to give support to Armenian gangs against Azerbaijani people. Armenian gangs continued to raid the Azerbaijani villages and killed most of them with the support of Tsarist Russia in 1905. As a result of the political fragmentation, the Armenian pressure over Azerbaijani people accelerated and so many Azerbaijani people brutally killed or migrated to Turkey especially after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Revolution of 1905 in Russia.<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>551</sup> Shaffer, B. (2002). *Borders and brethren: Iran and the challenge of Azerbaijani identity*, Cambridge: the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs John F.Kennedy School of Government, p.43.

<sup>552</sup> Muradov, N. (2011). Azerbaycan Tarihinden Kronolojik Kesitler. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, p.30.

<sup>553</sup> Yenisey, G. (2011). İki Yüz İl Birlik Peşinde. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, p.48.

<sup>554</sup> Altaylı, S. (2011). Karabağ-Batı Azerbaycan Ermeniler. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, p.122.

<sup>555</sup> Muradov, N. (2011). Azerbaycan Tarihinden Kronolojik Kesitler. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, pp.34-35.

The wars between Iran and Russia and the wars between Ottoman Empire and Russia led to emigration of Turks from the ancestral Azerbaijan homeland in exchange for Armenian immigration.<sup>556</sup> As respondent 3 states that:

Azerbaijani people encountered another migration wave because of the Russo-Turkish War in 1877-1878 with the other wars such as Crimean War and Sheikh Shamil Movement. Not just Azerbaijani people but 8-9 million Turks and Muslims had to migrate from the regions of North Caucasia, Crimea and Balkans. My family migrated to Kars from Gymri when Gymri was occupied before 150 -200 years.<sup>557</sup>

Respondent 4's "ancestors migrated to Turkey during the Russo-Turkish War. Most of his ancestors were killed by Armenians during the migration."<sup>558</sup> The pressure from the Russians and Armenians over Azerbaijani people continued after the war. Interviewee 6 predicates that:

incursions in the villages of Azerbaijanis also continued with the forced migrations between 1880-1890 when some Azerbaijani people crossed the Aras River and came to Turkey while others chose to go to Baku. My grandfather had 4 brothers and one sister. My grandfather and his sister crossed the Aras River to escape from Armenian cruelty while his brothers stayed in their village. However, after they passed the river, my grandfather exiled to Siberia and his sister married in Iğdır. Seven years later, he escaped from Siberia and he found his sister in Turkey. Afterwards, my grandfather guided people who newly came in order to establish their life in Turkey. All these migrants started to establish their new life from the beginning. Later, I heard that my family's village in West Azerbaijan was totally ruined and Azerbaijani people were killed by Armenians.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>556</sup> Altstadt, A. (1992). *The Azerbaijani Turks*. Stanford: Hoover Institution, p.100.

<sup>557</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>558</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>559</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

However, one of the bloody invasions of Armenians in Azerbaijani villages started between the years 1918 and 1920.<sup>560</sup> Armenian attacks in Azerbaijani villages reached to top between the years 1915-1920. With the agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Azerbaijan, 5th Caucasian Infantry Division united with the forces of Azerbaijan by the name of Army of Islam on June 4, 1918 under Bolshevik domination. Army of Islam seized Baku on September 15, 1918 with the support of Ottoman 15th Division.<sup>561</sup> According to reports of 9. Army's General of Şevki Pasha; before Turkish Army receded from Azerbaijan in 1918, Armenian forces had slaughtered Azerbaijanis in villages of Nakhchivan and Iğdır. Muslim and Turkish villages had set into fire. So many people died or escaped to other side of Aras River and had migrated to Turkey.<sup>562</sup>

According to Russian census statistics, 500000 Turkish lived in the lands of Erivan Khanate before these attacks.<sup>563</sup> The wildest slaughters of Armenian were experienced in Gymri, the lands of Erivan Khanate with Urmia, Hoy, Maku, Salmas.<sup>564</sup> Almost all families of Azerbaijani diaspora elites with whom I made interview were forced to leave their villages in the lands of Erivan Khanate. Respondent 1 summarizes that:

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<sup>560</sup> Muradov, N. (2011). Azərbaycan Tarihinden Kronolojik Kesitler. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, p.36.

<sup>561</sup> Bala, M. (1954). Kızıl Rus İstilas (Azerbaycan Tarihinden). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 25, p.3.

<sup>562</sup> Uzundere, E. (1995). Rus İşgalinde Iğdır ve Ermeni Mezalimi. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 304, p.12.

<sup>563</sup> Aslan, Y. (1993). Bugünkü Ermenistan Arazisinden Türklerin Kovulma Meselesi. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 290, p.8.

<sup>564</sup> Karaca, A. (2004). Azerbaycan'da Ermenilerin Soykırım Hareketleri. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 354, pp.14-19.

we mostly came from Armenia not Azerbaijan. Once upon a time, in Armenian lands, Azerbaijani culture was dominant. My family migrated from the lands of Erivan Khanate to Turkey by crossing Aras River where people have had bad memories in the years of 1915-1920 because of the pressure from their Armenian neighbors and Russian authorities with the reducing power of Ottoman Empire. Before the USSR, Azerbaijani people had to migrate due to the sudden incursions of Armenian and Armenian savageness. Before these incursions, in the times of deportation of Armenians from Anatolia to Yerevan, the neighborhood relations between Azerbaijani and Armenian people were so nice and kindly that there was not intermarriage between these two societies. In the time of Tsarist Russia, our family represented ‘gılabalık’ like a headman in their village, so their economic conditions were good. They crossed the Aras River with camels. With these camels they also helped other migrants who tried to cross Aras River without taking money from them.<sup>565</sup>

The migration wave of Azerbaijani people from their ancestral lands to Turkey, which was accelerated with the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, continued with World War I (WWI) and Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>566</sup> Azerbaijani people were slaughtered when the communist regime seized the power with October Revolution in 1917.<sup>567</sup> Throughout the Soviet regime, Armenians continued to ethnic cleaning of Azerbaijanis especially in Yerevan and Nagorno-Karabakh with the support of Russian authorities.<sup>568</sup> A lot of Azerbaijani people living in these regions had to migrate to Turkey, Azerbaijan or Iran to survive

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<sup>565</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>566</sup> Karabağ, M. R. (2011). Amasya Karapapakları, Göç, İskan. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye’de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, pp.163-164.

<sup>567</sup> Karaca, A. (2004). Azerbaycan’da Ermenilerin Soykırım Hareketleri. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 354, p.16.

<sup>568</sup> Altaylı, S. (2011). Karabağ-Batı Azerbaycan Ermenileri. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye’de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.121.

from Armenian cruelty.<sup>569</sup> Although some of the migrants preferred to go interior regions of Turkey like Sivas, Tokat, Amasya and Çorum<sup>570</sup>, Azerbaijani people migrated in the eastern border line of Turkey near to Azerbaijan like Kars, Iğdır, Ardahan and Ağrı.<sup>571</sup>

After the Soviet occupation in Azerbaijan in April 27 1920, the mass migration wave started primarily towards Turkey and other European countries because of the pressure from Russian authorities, Armenian cruelty and political condition of WWII.<sup>572</sup> The pressure over the Azerbaijani people in the lands of Erivan Khanate had also continued in the times of the USSR from Armenians and Russians so interviewee 10 tells his family's migration story:

My family who did not migrate before the USSR had to leave their homes and although his family gave support to Leninist policies of the USSR against the incursions in the time of the Tsarist Russia by believing Lenin's slogan of 'determination of their nation's own destiny, they had to migrate to Turkey in Stalin era (1927).' Later, my family as a representative of gılaba in their village like system of aga, who control some part of plot, supported the Musavat Movement whose leader was Mammad Amin Rasulzade for the establishment of the Transcaucasia Democratic Federative Republic (TDFR) consisting of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia but Azerbaijan tried to include the North Caucasian Republic and the Provisional National Government of the South-Western Caucasus established in Kars into these federation. Therefore, movement to establish first nation-state of Azerbaijan started in Tbilisi. Although, Stalin tried to kill nationalists who gave support to Musavat Party, Turkey accepted them as migrants. Azerbaijani migrants

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<sup>569</sup> Karaca, A. (2004). Azerbaycan'da Ermenilerin Soykırım Hareketleri. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 354, p.19.

<sup>570</sup> Karabağ, M. R. (2011). Amasya Karapapakları, Göç, İskan. in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.168.

<sup>571</sup> *Ibid.* p.167.

<sup>572</sup> Azerbaycan Dernekleri ve Federasyonları'nın Konfederasyonu Kuruldu. (1999). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 328, p.43.

settled in the east border line cities of Turkey especially Kars and Iğdır because Iğdır is the city where Azerbaijani people have mostly lived as from the time of Seljuq Empire as part of Nakhchivan.<sup>573</sup>

At the beginning of 1920s, some of the supporters of Musavat Party and nationalist had to migrate to Turkey or other neighboring countries of Azerbaijan in order to escape from capital punishment.<sup>574</sup>

Furthermore, few of Azerbaijani people who were captured from Germany in WWII, changed their sides from Russia to Germany in WWII. They could not return to Azerbaijan SSR after the war and preferred to live in Turkey.<sup>575</sup> Azerbaijani people who fought on the side of Germany against Soviet Russia in WWII, accepted as migrants by Turkey in 1948.<sup>576</sup>

Before the Russian domination over Caucasus, Armenians and Azerbaijanis lived peacefully in their villages. Even they spoke each other's language; they had trade relations with the exception of mixed marriage. The mixed ethnic cohabitation of Azerbaijanis and Armenians ruined with the Russian colonial rule.<sup>577</sup> With the migration history of Azerbaijani people, Azerbaijani people attribute to symbolic meaning to Aras River. In the mind of Azerbaijanis in

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<sup>573</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>574</sup> Bölükbaşı, S. (2010). Azerbaycan'da Ulusun İnşası: Sovyet Mirası ve Karabağ Sorunu'nun Etkileri. in W. Van Schendel, E. J. Zürcher (eds.). *Orta Asya ve İslam Dünyasında Kimlik Politikaları: 20. Yüzyılda Milliyetçilik, Etnisite ve Emek*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p.64.

<sup>575</sup> Kurultay Bildirisi. (2011). in C. K. Mehmethanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye'de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. Izmir: Etki Yayınları, p.347.

<sup>576</sup> Od'lu. (1974). Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği'nin 25. Kuruluş Yıldönümü Kutlandı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 209, p.29

<sup>577</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.52.



Turkey; Aras refers to cruelty, blood and fragmented families.<sup>578</sup> Aras has been mentioned in Azerbaijani music, poems, idioms, proverbs, stories because historically, it has left trace in people's memories with wars, migrations and fragmented families.<sup>579</sup> The symbolic meaning of Aras River also is shown in poem:

Aras was divided  
Its sand was scattered  
What was my sin?  
I was separated from my mother<sup>580</sup>

There have been also Azerbaijani people who were born in one of the village of Kars without migration to Turkey but stayed in the side of Turkey after the demarcation of boundaries like respondent 2:

whose father's relatives stayed in the other side of the border when boundaries are demarcated. When borders were divided in the lands of Erivan Khanate, some regions stayed other side of border like Nakhchivan and Kars. Therefore, some of his father's relatives stayed in the other side of borders without migration while his father stayed in Kars. However, his mother side is from South Azerbaijan, Urmia. His mother's family migrated firstly to West Azerbaijan than to Turkey in 1931.<sup>581</sup>

Furthermore, respondent 7 expresses that:

both his grandfather and grandmother lived in the boundaries of Erivan Khanate which comprised Yerevan, Iğdır and South Azerbaijan. My

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<sup>578</sup> Alpaslan, İ. (1979). Azerbaycan'ı Bizden Ayıran "Aras". *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 231, p.40.

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.* p.41.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.* p.40.

<sup>581</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

family did not migrate when the boundaries were divided. Their village stayed in the boundaries of today's Turkey.<sup>582</sup>

Both their grandfathers and grandmothers told their migration experience with tearful eyes like living these barbaric days again. Respondent 8 states that “my grandfather cries whenever he remembers his brother's shot in midstream of Aras River. His family expatriated to Kars in the time of Kaçakaç when lots of people lost or left behind their family, brothers, sisters, friends or wives.”<sup>583</sup> Interviewee 9's grandmother also cries:

when she remembers bad memories which have been full of agony. Her family migrated to Turkey from Karakoyunlu River in Armenia. Starting with the decline of Ottoman Empire, pressure from Russians and Armenians was accelerated. In 1907, her village was raided by Armenians and she and other twelve children were kidnapped by Armenians. She was rescued by my grandfather's father. Then, she married with my grandfather, their village was set fire in 1918-1919 and they lost their relatives. Unfortunately, these years were war era in history and most of the nation killed each other.<sup>584</sup>

A lot of family broke up with these migration waves. Hence, respondent 10 argues that “these Azerbaijani people tried to establish their new life at the east border line cities of Turkey with the hope of return to their ancestral land one day because they expected to the collapse of the USSR in fifty years.”<sup>585</sup> This is why most of them settled in the east border line cities of Turkey. Respondent 6 says that “with the hope of returning to ancestral homeland, most of them left their

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<sup>582</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>583</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>584</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>585</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

properties behind, wealth in their villages.”<sup>586</sup> First generation of Azerbaijani people’s living places did not so well-groomed in order not to plan to stay in Turkey permanently. Also these Azerbaijani people coming from the lands of Erivan Khanate gave the name of their villages stayed in the lands of Erivan Khanate to their new villages in Turkey. Respondent 1 says that “Azerbaijani people had to leave their all assets behind in their villages, so they kept fresh their hope to turn back their villages because of the fact that they preferred to live in the east border line of Turkey which is close to their ancestral lands.”<sup>587</sup> Interviewee 10 explained the reason why Azerbaijani people in Turkey chose this region for living, it is the closeness of this region to Azerbaijani lands and Azerbaijani people:

One of the important reasons was their hope for returning their villages one day. For instances, going the border line of Azerbaijan just takes 15 minutes by horse drawn carriage from their new villages in Turkey and it is possible to see Azerbaijani people living in the other side of boundary from this distance. They exposed to compulsory settling policies of Turkey because his family migrated after the establishment of the USSR. Even if state authorities tried to send them to villages, like Muş, Bulanık district, abandoned by Armenians for exile, they always turned back to Kars.<sup>588</sup>

One of the interviewee 1 also tells his memory about his grandfather. “My grandfather hides the money of Tsarist Russia into a chest for years with his continuous hope to turn back to his village. After his grandfather died, his father and uncle found this chest and then burned this money.”<sup>589</sup> Burning this money

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<sup>586</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>587</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>588</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>589</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

can be interpreted as a metaphor like burning their hopes to turn back to Azerbaijan. Although their grandfather has believed the possibility of turning back, his children accepted Turkey as their living place. With these migrations' wave to Turkey, Respondent 10 claims that "approximately 3 million Azerbaijani people migrated to Turkey from Azerbaijani, North Azerbaijan, Armenia, South Azerbaijan and some regions of Georgia".<sup>590</sup>

Azerbaijani people had to migrate to Turkey after important historical turning point like Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, the Russian Revolution of 1905, Armenian invasions in Azerbaijani villages in today's Armenia between the years of 1918 and 1920, WWI, Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet era and WWII. Because of the repression to which they exposed in their villages, they abandoned their villages. Due to the protracted political turmoil in Azerbaijani ancestral homeland, Azerbaijani people who migrated to Turkey lost their hopes to turn back to their own villages. And according to interview conducted by eleven Azerbaijani diaspora elites; they decided to settle down in Turkey permanently

#### **4.1.2. The Perception of Homeland of Azerbaijani Diaspora Members in Turkey**

Azerbaijani diaspora elites' feelings about where they belong to generally depends on their migration history when taking into account the interviews. For Azerbaijani diaspora elites who migrated from today's Armenia, construction of their perception of homeland is too complicated because Azerbaijani nation's independent nation-state as political representative of Azerbaijani nation was established outside the boundaries of their ancestral homeland in Armenia. They also migrated to Turkey and from their perspective, Turkey can be easily

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<sup>590</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

internalized as a homeland with the reconstruction of perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora elites.

According to most of the administrators of Azerbaijani civil society organizations with which I made in-depth interviews in Turkey, Turkey is their homeland because Turkey is where they were born. Respondent 1 gives answer to the question of ‘where are you from’ as “I am from there.”<sup>591</sup> He also gives examples from his grandchild, “who supported Turkish team when a national football match played between Azerbaijan and Turkey. Therefore, Turkey is our living place and our homeland. We do not plan to turn back to Azerbaijan in the future.”<sup>592</sup> Similarly, interviewee 10 explains his feeling about where he belongs to by the national match example. “If two states’ football team play national football match, Turkish National Team will be supported by Turkish origin of Azerbaijani people in Turkey.”<sup>593</sup> Like most of them, respondent 6 indicates his homeland as “Turkey.”<sup>594</sup> Furthermore, respondent 5 explains his homeland as “Turkey where he was born and he raised in Iğdır.”<sup>595</sup> Another respondent 10 says that “I am from Kars.”<sup>596</sup> Just few of them like respondent 8 describe their

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<sup>591</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>592</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>593</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>594</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>595</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>596</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

homeland as “Azerbaijan.”<sup>597</sup> From the speech of the leader of Azerbaijan National Center in Turkey, Dr. Mehmet Azer Aran:

Azerbaijan with its historical geography and map is our original homeland. However, Russians and Armenians policies for dividing Nakhchivan from Azerbaijan by establishing artificial Armenian are based on the purpose of disrupting the unity and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan geography.<sup>598</sup>

Additionally, respondent 7 advocates that “I am Oghuz Turks living in Turkey and my homeland is Turkey.”<sup>599</sup> In a broad sense, respondent 2 introduces his root that “I am Turk and I am Turkish citizen. I am also Azerbaijani Turk and Oghuz Turk living in Turkey. Both Turkey and Azerbaijan as south and north are my homeland.”<sup>600</sup> Respondent 4 underlines that “Azerbaijan means a lot in terms of homeland because my ancestors came from Central Asia to Azerbaijan. Thus, Nakhchivan, Yerevan and South Azerbaijan can be assumed as my homeland.”<sup>601</sup> In the First Congress of Azerbaijani Turks living in Turkey, Azerbaijani Turks, who do not live in the Republic of Azerbaijan, were defined as part of Oghuz Turks living in Azerbaijan geography. The origin of some of the Azerbaijani people living in Turkey is Kars, Ardahan, Iğdır, Ağrı, Muş, Van regions where Azerbaijani people have lived throughout history. Others had to expatriate from their ancestral land of West Azerbaijan, South Azerbaijan, and Caucasia to Turkey

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<sup>597</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>598</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir’de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.61.

<sup>599</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>600</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>601</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

because of the social, economic and political reasons.<sup>602</sup> Furthermore, respondent 7 claims that “Azerbaijan is one of my homelands but Turkey, Central Asia and Turkestan are my homeland too because I am Oghuz Turk and the places where Oghuz Turks have lived have become my homeland.”<sup>603</sup> Hence, some of the interviewees perceive the concept of homeland so broad. In addition to Turkey and Azerbaijan, they include some parts of Iran where Azerbaijanis live, Nakhchivan, today’s Armenia, Central Asia and Turkestan, there hasn’t been a strict separation between Azerbaijan and Turkey because in these lands Turkish people have always been living so from this perspective. Or some of them recognized themselves as Caucasian as in below poem because of their ancestors’ origin:

I am Caucasian, my origin is Azeri  
My generation came from the lands of Erivan Khanate  
My village is Saraçlı, Aralık  
God rest my soul father Caucasias<sup>604</sup>

Respondent 8 implies that “my real homeland as my living place is Turkey while Azerbaijan is my other homeland.”<sup>605</sup> These Azerbaijani diaspora elites are Turkish citizens without keeping their Azerbaijani identity and their ancestors’ historical lands in their minds. Respondent 6 implies that “while Azerbaijan was our past, Turkey has been our future”<sup>606</sup> so these two lands are inseparable parts of their whole life with their memories. Respondent 4 asserts that:

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<sup>602</sup> Mehmedanoğlu, C. K. (2011). Önsöz. in C. K. Mehmedanoğlu (eds.). *Türkiye’de Yaşayan Azerbaycan Türkleri*. İzmir: Etki Yayınları, p.5.

<sup>603</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>604</sup> Saraçoğlu, A. (1995). Baba Kafkaslıya. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 304, p.32.

<sup>605</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>606</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

I feel like belonging to both Turkey and Azerbaijan. Both of them are essence for me. Shortly, I am Turk, so every place where Turkish people live is my homeland such as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Turkey. My homeland is Turkey now because pan-Turanism lost its importance and also every place where I can speak my language is my homeland.<sup>607</sup>

According to respondent 10:

using the name of Azeri by Russian authorities was a part of weakening the national sentiment of Azerbaijani people because the name of region where people speaking Turkish have lived was Turkestan, not divided as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, etc. in the past. Using the word Anatolian Turk or Azerbaijani Turk is too long. Thus, I am Turk and I speak Turkish. This is my belonging. In the times of Soviet, people supposed that we came from the Russia because of the Soviet Russia domination over the lands of Azerbaijan..<sup>608</sup>

Besides, respondent 10 exemplifies the story of their family name while explaining his belonging. "In their family name the word Azeri was chosen by his grandfather in order to identify their Azerbaijani identity for future generations of their family."<sup>609</sup> Also respondent 10 wants to point out how Azerbaijani people differently recognize themselves in terms of their religious belief:

Azerbaijani people who are Shiite generally describe themselves as Azerbaijani but Azerbaijani people from Sunni sect introduce themselves as Caucasian or Terekeme or Karapapak. Also in the Republic of Azerbaijan, because of the definition in constitutional law, people introduced themselves as Azerbaijani but in daily language they say that they are Turk because they speak Turkish.<sup>610</sup>

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<sup>607</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>608</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>609</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>610</sup> *Ibid.*



Respondent 3 emphasizes that:

I am Anatolian Turks and I am from Turkey. Azerbaijan is also half of my heart like bearing feelings to their mother and father, so if Turkey is my motherland, Azerbaijan also becomes my fatherland as our ancestral homeland from this perception. It is difficult to make differentiation between Turkey and Azerbaijan.<sup>611</sup>

Azerbaijani diaspora elites with whom I made interview always emphasize the specialty of Azerbaijan when they describe their homeland as Turkey. Azerbaijani nation living in both Azerbaijan and Turkey belongs to the same identity. Their cultural belonging, their identity, and their birth place have been important criteria while defining their perception of homeland and this has explained the reason of different conceptualizations of homeland from interviewees. In this sense, respondent 10 advocates that:

our political belonging to Turkey is our choice but our cultural belonging to Azerbaijan is based on our roots. Also, the political map does not overlap with our cultural map because today's Azerbaijan Republic covers small place of real historical geography of Azerbaijan. Our cultural bonds are too close to the culture in Turkey.<sup>612</sup>

Azerbaijani diaspora elite's loyalty to Turkish identity as their upper identity was accelerated after the over lasting repression of USSR over Azerbaijani national identity through the prevention of connection between Azerbaijanis inside and outside the borders of Azerbaijan SSR. Therefore, desire to turn back to ancestral homeland in today's Armenia became a dream for the first generations of Azerbaijanis who came to Turkey. Thus, by taking into account their Turkish identity, they describe themselves as Anatolian Turks,

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<sup>611</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>612</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

Oghuz Turks or Caucasian Turks. They have also internalized Turkey as their homeland in addition to their awareness of their Azerbaijani origin.

#### **4.1.2.1. Turkey as New Homeland**

Azerbaijan and Turkey are the lands of Turks, so Azerbaijani diaspora elites have not forgotten their Azerbaijani identity even if they have settled in Turkey. They reconstruct Azerbaijani diaspora consciousness through the Azerbaijani civil society organizations. Hence, according to Azerbaijani diaspora organizations, Azerbaijani diaspora members in Turkey express Turkey as their first real homeland. Secondly, they mention about Azerbaijan as their second ancestral homeland. These Azerbaijani people's perception of homeland is shaped by Azerbaijani diaspora elites by using the Azerbaijani diaspora networks.

“Most of the Azerbaijani people living in Turkey have adopted Turkey as their own homeland”<sup>613</sup> as stated by respondent 11. Turkey was described as homeland where Azerbaijani people continued their national struggle.<sup>614</sup> Azerbaijani diaspora elites have generally made comparison between Turkey and Azerbaijan while asking the question about their perception of homeland and they firstly express their feeling for Turkey. Interviewee 9 defines his perception of homeland as such “we are Azerbaijani Turks living in Turkey as Turkish citizen, so our homeland is Turkey.”<sup>615</sup>

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<sup>613</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>614</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği 27. Dönem Kongresi Yapıldı. (1979). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 229, p.109.

<sup>615</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

These Azerbaijani diaspora elites with whom I made interview are not mostly first generation of their family, living in Turkey. For instance, respondent 1 predicates that “my grandfather firstly came to Turkey, so I am third generation living in Turkey.”<sup>616</sup> Also respondent 3 informs that “from my mother side, I am the second generation but from my father side whose family migrated to Turkey in 1930s, I am the fourth generation living in Turkey because my father’s grandfather was born in Kars.”<sup>617</sup> Respondent 10 adds that “my father and my mother were born in migration path while coming to Turkey, so I am second generation living in Turkey.”<sup>618</sup> Respondent 4 tells that “he is the fifth generation of his family living in Turkey.”<sup>619</sup> All of them have built their own life in Turkey with their children who are Azerbaijani migrants’ third or fourth generation living in Turkey. This birth place has emotionally attached these people to Turkey as homeland. This can be inferred from the interviewee 7’s expression that “I missed Azerbaijan as Iğdır, where I was born. Izmir where I live always reminds me Baku.”<sup>620</sup> Respondent 4 argues that:

I always miss Azerbaijan and I am aware of my Azerbaijani Turk root but I was born in Turkey. For this reason, I belong to both Turkey and Azerbaijan. Therefore, I try to visit Azerbaijan as our homeland every year for short time periods because of the economic burden.<sup>621</sup>

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<sup>616</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>617</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>618</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>619</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>620</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>621</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

Respondent 3 illustrates Turkey as the place “where he was born, he went to school, he graduated from university. Shortly, Turkey has become his homeland where his whole life has been passed with their families, so he defines himself as a person of this land.”<sup>622</sup> According to respondent 1 “his birth place is one of the important factors which have attached him to Turkey.”<sup>623</sup> Respondent 6 elaborates that “Turkey refers to my birth place as homeland and Azerbaijan refers to my ancestors’ birth place as homeland.”<sup>624</sup>

These Azerbaijani people have legally bound to Turkey with the citizenship rights. Also as asserted by respondent 10 “these people have never needed for citizenship application in Azerbaijan because of their perception of homeland.”<sup>625</sup> From the perspective of respondent 2, “he is affiliated with Turkey through citizenship rights even he describes his homeland both as Azerbaijan and Turkey.”<sup>626</sup>

Azerbaijani diaspora elites with whom I made interview are not the first generation of Azerbaijanis who migrated to Turkey, so their birth place is Turkey. This bond attaches them to Turkey in addition to their citizenship bond with Turkey. They also make their future plan in Turkey with their family members. These conditions make Turkey as their new real homeland from the eyes of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey. Moreover, they maintain their Azerbaijani

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<sup>622</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>623</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>624</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>625</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>626</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

origin's existence in Turkey through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey.

#### **4.1.2.2. Azerbaijan as New Accessible Homeland**

Azerbaijani diaspora elites felt that they belong to Turkey despite their ancestral and their emotional ties with Azerbaijan. Even they miss Azerbaijan where their relatives and their friends live; they always know that they will turn back to Turkey when they go to Azerbaijan.

Respondent 1 indicates that “missing the Azerbaijan means missing our friends in Azerbaijan.”<sup>627</sup> Also respondent 2 states that “I have more friends in Azerbaijan than in Turkey.”<sup>628</sup> Respondent 11 expresses that “Azerbaijani people living in Turkey migrated too much, so their living area was changed. Because of that reason, places where they have missed have been multiplied in the last twenty century but now they reside in Turkey.”<sup>629</sup> Respondent 3 mentions that “we miss the places such as Azerbaijan, Crimea, Kirkuk, Western Thrace where our people live and even we have so deep relation with Azerbaijan.”<sup>630</sup>

According to them going to Azerbaijan is just a visit. Their tendency to travel in Azerbaijan does not depend on the idea of settling in Azerbaijan. “Settling in Azerbaijan has never become dream”<sup>631</sup> of respondent 4's future life

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<sup>627</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>628</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>629</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>630</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>631</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

“because his whole family live in Turkey.”<sup>632</sup> Also, respondent 7 states that “I do not have any desire to settle in Azerbaijan, I rejected the offer to become a citizen of Azerbaijan in the past.”<sup>633</sup> Respondent 3 changes his opinion “about living in Azerbaijan, even if, he thought settling in Azerbaijan in the past.”<sup>634</sup> Respondent 6 says that “Azerbaijan is the place where we do not plan to live, but we have emotional link with Azerbaijan and we always want to see Azerbaijan in prosperity.”<sup>635</sup> Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey prefer to live in Turkey for the rest of their life; respondent 4 stated that “both Turkey and Azerbaijan have reflected their own essence due to their Turkish identity.”<sup>636</sup> Hence, administrators of associations with whom I made in-depth interviews and their families have permanently settled in the different cities of Turkey and they do not have any plan to go back to Azerbaijan in the future unlike their first generations’ expectation. Respondent 10 says that “when we went to Azerbaijan, after three days, we have started to think about turning back to Turkey which is our real home. If it is asked that where we want to live, we will choose Turkey as our living place.”<sup>637</sup> There is always yearning for Azerbaijan inside their heart but they know that they will always come back to Turkey. This is why they do not have any economic relation with Azerbaijan and they have never made a future plan for the economic investment in Azerbaijan. All interviewees depict that “they do not have any

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<sup>632</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>633</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>634</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>635</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>636</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>637</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

economic relation with Azerbaijan and they do not think about economic investment in Azerbaijan.”<sup>638</sup> Unlike general perception about diaspora members’ desire to turn back<sup>639</sup>, Azerbaijani diaspora members in Turkey do not exert any effort to return. Their ancestral homeland stays in Armenia and even if their elderly people had desire to return, they adopt Turkey as their new homeland but it was not possible due to the fact that border of Soviet is closed for the outside world. Azerbaijani people’s national sentiments about Azerbaijan were triggered by Soviet domination over Azerbaijani lands. While these lands were unreachable area from them, their perception would be more emotional.

There was so much oppression exercised upon the people in the USSR. That is why Azerbaijani people in Turkey and in Soviet extremely limited communication channel with each other. Respondent 6 points out that “communication with Azerbaijan was almost cut off, so it was difficult to get in contact with our relatives.”<sup>640</sup> In general, people acquired information from the unofficial ways. The news coming from Azerbaijan was also too scarce and limited. Thanks to the radio and television and few people who could cross the borders like musicians and politicians, limited information on the USSR was obtained. Respondent 9 gives examples that “our relatives living in the Azerbaijan SSR, who tried to establish contact with Turkey, illegally watched Turkish television channel, TRT1.”<sup>641</sup> Respondent 3 depicts that:

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<sup>638</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondents

<sup>639</sup> Safran, W. (1999). Comparing Diasporas: A Review Essay. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 8 (3), p.257.

<sup>640</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>641</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

although establishment of communication was so hard in Soviet era, some people could come to Turkey by way of state channel like musicians. At his atmosphere, our association achieved to bring children from Azerbaijan for April 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day.<sup>642</sup>

Also respondent 10 says that:

there was a tourist train from the USSR (Baku-Erivan-Gumru-Kars) to Kars which has started to operate at the time of Russian occupation of Kars. This train was an important link between the USSR and Turkey both for communication and trade.<sup>643</sup>

Respondent 11 tells that:

people generally established link with Azerbaijan through the art with musicians coming to Turkey for concerts. Besides, the musicians coming from Azerbaijan to Turkey, the cassettes, transported by ships, enabled valuable cultural interaction.<sup>644</sup>

However, respondent 1 claims that "my father opened the Yerevan radio for listening to Azerbaijani traditional music but when this radio started to make propaganda of Soviet policies he turned off the radio."<sup>645</sup> Radio and television were not reliable sources because of their Soviet propaganda but Azerbaijani people living beyond the borders could listen their traditional music through radio. Very few people could across the borders and in general, the USSR did not give visa to people who want to come from Turkey. Respondent 6 shares his memory that "I could not take visa from the Russian Consulate in Turkey even if I had invitation from Azerbaijan." Respondent 10 states that:

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<sup>642</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>643</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>644</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>645</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013



the communication method that people found was also interesting. Because of the censorship exercised by Soviet authorities, people could not write the real things in their letters so they preferred taking a photo to reflect their situation under the authoritarian regime of the USSR. If the family had given pose by sitting down in the photo, this would have referred to bad one. If the family had given pose by standing up in the photo, this would have referred to good one. However, every family member laid down the floor in my family photo. This means everything was too bad and they were almost dead under the regime of Soviet domination.<sup>646</sup>

Starting with the Brezhnev era and continuing with Gorbachev era, authoritarian regime of the USSR started to introduce more soften policies especially with the perestroika reform policies and the communication could be provided through letters. However, Soviet authority checked the content of these letters. Respondent 1 elucidates that “the letters, sent to Azerbaijan SSR, were reached in three or four months in these times.”<sup>647</sup> As explained by respondent 10:

in 1960s, letters started to come from my relatives in Azerbaijan SSR but the content of letters were about how the USSR was the best regime for them because these letters were initially controlled by Soviet authorities. Then, these letters reached us.<sup>648</sup>

A memory written by Ramiz Özler Otaylı in the Association of Azerbaijan Culture’s Journal is too impressive for comprehending the connection with the Azerbaijan SSR:

I left my birth homeland of Azerbaijan and came to my new homeland Turkey. When I came to Turkey, we corresponded with my uncles living in the USSR however they could not send letters to us because of the repression from Soviet authorities. After fifty years, Soviet authorities

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<sup>646</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>647</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>648</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

gave permission for correspondence but we lost our connection with my uncles. We did not know their living place after all this time. Surprisingly, one of my uncles achieved to find us through our relatives. After all years, this first letter was the best moment in my life. Nevertheless, Soviet authorities kept controlling these letters because my poem which I wrote for my uncle did not reach him with my letter.<sup>649</sup>

Despite the censorship, most of the people started to communicate and find their relatives in the Azerbaijan SSR. At the last period of the USSR, respondent 6 expresses that:

meetings and congresses were organized in Turkey and limited number of people started to come from the Azerbaijan SSR, so the interactions between them have begun. Also, people could find opportunity to talk people in Azerbaijan via telephone.<sup>650</sup>

When a person crossed the border of the USSR and came to Turkey, every people became curious to learn the situation in the USSR by inviting them into their houses. Azerbaijani people in Turkey tried to predict their relatives' condition living in Azerbaijan from these neighbors coming from Azerbaijan SSR. Azerbaijani people living in Turkey also tried to find their relatives through people who could cross the border of the USSR and some people succeeded to find them. Respondent 2 summarizes that:

in 1980s, one of our relatives came to Kars to find us. When the border gate was opened to pass Azerbaijan after the demolition of the USSR, I visited Azerbaijan and found our relatives who had come to Kars in 1980s with a telephone number. With the help of my relatives, I found my other relatives. I learned that my residual relatives had to migrate not only to Azerbaijan (Baku) due to the pressure from Armenians but also to Russia (Moscow) and Ukraine for economic reasons.<sup>651</sup>

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<sup>649</sup> Otaylı, R. Ö. (1979). Dayıma Mektup. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 229, pp.59-60.

<sup>650</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>651</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

After the implementation of new reform policies in the USSR, Soviet authorities lost their control over Union Republics.<sup>652</sup> By the late 1990, Soviet system entered into its collapse period.<sup>653</sup> From the perspective of Sakwa; the lack of political, social and economic viability and the lack of national legitimacy caused that Soviet system ended.<sup>654</sup> National grievances inside the USSR arose as a response to communist oppression, particularly, after the Gorbachev, opportunity structure was emerged with the decentralization policies according to Brzezinski.<sup>655</sup> Therefore, nationalist demonstrations were held in addition to protests due to the complex ethnic structure of Union Republics with the support of national elites who stayed with ordinary people against Moscow.<sup>656</sup>

After fifty year from the Soviet domination, as depicted by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey with whom I made interview, most of the Azerbaijani origin living in Turkey gave up believing the possibility of collapse of the USSR because they did not predict that the Union's authority could last more than fifty years. Respondent 1 remarks that:

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<sup>652</sup> Leslie, H. (1997). *Post-Communism: An Introduction*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, p.109.

<sup>653</sup> *Ibid.* p.111.

<sup>654</sup> Sakwa, R. (1999). *Post-Communism*. Buckingham: Open University Press, p.28.

<sup>655</sup> Suny, R. (1992). State, Civil Society, and Ethnic Cultural Consolidation in the USSR-Roots of the National Question. In G. Lapidus, V. Zaslavsky, P. Goldman *From Union to Common Wealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics* (pp. 22-44). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.24.

<sup>656</sup> Leslie, H. (1997). *Post-Communism: An Introduction*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, p.109.

the collapse of the USSR was a nice surprise for us. It was also unexpected for people living under Soviet authority. It was a great pleasure for me while people living under Soviet authority established their own states and one of these states is Republic of Azerbaijan which is special for me.<sup>657</sup>

While some people surprised with the collapse of the USSR, some of them expected the collapse of the USSR with the limited information that they could acquire. Interviewee 2 believes that:

It was not possible to hold people under the Soviet captivity by using force for long time. Certainly, these people would gain their independence. This is what I expected. Turkish people are one of the nations who lived under hegemony of other states. These people have been living as slavery while they do not have any right to talk their native language. Therefore, Turks living under the hegemony of other states like others, nations will gain their freedom one day. Nations should be free for the world peace.<sup>658</sup>

Feyzi Aküzüm as one of the administrators of the Association of Azerbaijan Culture indicates that “we would wait for the independence of Azerbaijan like other Turks under the domination of other states.”<sup>659</sup> Administrator 3 from Azerbaijani civil society organization in Turkey tells about their administrative structure before the collapse of the USSR:

they had advisory council that made forecast about the USSR from several aspects such as educational and military life, so they prepared the possible collapse of the USSR. The predictions from their advisory council made easier to establish link with Azerbaijan after the collapse of the USSR.<sup>660</sup>

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<sup>657</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>658</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>659</sup> 28 Mayıs 1918-Münasebetiyle Azerbaycan Balosu Muhteşemdi. (1981). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 236, p.41.

<sup>660</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

Independence of Azerbaijan was dream of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin in Turkey according to Azerbaijani diaspora elites because the Soviet authority lasted more than it was predicted. Both limited connection with the Azerbaijan SSR and repressive policies of the USSR lost the hopes of Azerbaijani people in Turkey for independent Azerbaijan. Respondent 6 states that:

although at the time of the USSR, imagination of independent Azerbaijan state was unimaginable for most of the people but I wrote poems about the imagination of independent Azerbaijan in 1980s before the collapse of the USSR. The independence of these nations under the Soviet rule was my desire since my childhood because these Azerbaijani people are also one of us and at the end, my desire came true.<sup>661</sup>

Respondent 10 explains that:

the belief for the demolition of the USSR was always within our hearts and we never gave up believing. The information coming from the USSR actually reflected the real situation of the USSR as in the poets of Nazım Hikmet or Bülent Ecevit. Ecevit's poet was like that 'I looked at the mirror and I saw you, my brother'. This means that what I also refer to you, Azerbaijani people.<sup>662</sup>

These restrictive communication channels between Azerbaijani people in the Azerbaijan SSR and Azerbaijani people in Turkey were so precious in that time and with the collapse of the USSR, the curiosity among people have increased and emancipation of Azerbaijani people was one of the excited moments of Azerbaijani people in their life, so the interaction between them suddenly accelerated. As stated by respondent 1:

now people coming from Azerbaijan and Turkey for both sides have normalized when compared to first times of the opening of border. At the beginning, people coming from Azerbaijan to Turkey or people coming

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<sup>661</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>662</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

from Turkey to Azerbaijan have been excitedly welcomed and our neighbor in Turkey was so excited for finding their relative living in Azerbaijan. This became general pattern of these times. Contrary to this historical pattern of Azerbaijani people in Turkey, my whole relatives migrated to Turkey from historical lands of Azerbaijan.<sup>663</sup>

From the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites, in those times, Azerbaijan was the place that Azerbaijani people missed so much in Turkey because they could not cross the borders in Soviet era. Also, the feelings of Azerbaijani people living in the USSR about Turkey corresponded to the feelings of Azerbaijani people living in Turkey about the Azerbaijan SSR. People both living in Turkey and Azerbaijan imagined other side of border with their Azerbaijani brothers and sisters. Realization of their dreams became possible after the dissolution of the USSR with the opening of Soviet borders.

Thus, a lot of people started to find their relatives. Interviewee 4 found “their relatives after the collapse of the USSR.”<sup>664</sup> Finding relatives from both sides continued during 5 or 10 years after the opening of the border between Azerbaijan and Turkey. Respondent 11 exemplifies that:

some families started to follow missing person reports from the newspaper of Vatan Cemiyeti and Vatan Derneği as one of the best way to find their unknown relatives or their relatives mentioned by family elders while others could not find opportunity to find their relatives. With the first excitement, most of the people found their relatives.<sup>665</sup>

Also some of them do not have relatives living in Azerbaijan. Respondent 2 asserts that “my all relatives came to Turkey in 1985 so I do not have any

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<sup>663</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>664</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>665</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

relatives in Azerbaijan.”<sup>666</sup> Relatives of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey were slaughtered, or migrated to Turkey and other countries from the lands of Erivan Khanate. However, some of them could not find opportunity to search their missing family members like respondent 5 “due to some economic woes or lack of interest.”<sup>667</sup>

The limited connection network between Azerbaijani people living in separate parts of border in the time of the USSR has affected Azerbaijani people’s life after the collapse of the USSR; members of families were strictly separated by borders because of the repressive policies of Soviet authorities. Respondent 7 shares his grandfather’s story that:

one of our relatives who came to Iğdır in Soviet era looked for my grandfather and he asked him coincidentally about my grandfather without knowing who is he but due to the oppression of Soviet era, they lost their connection. After the collapse of the USSR, some people came to our house and asserted that they are my grandfather’s children. Then we have kept on seeing them as our stand-in parent.<sup>668</sup>

Furthermore, in Stalin era, almost all ethnic groups of Turkish identity in Caucasia exposed to the program of mass deportation.<sup>669</sup> Respondent 4 puts emphasis on that:

Soviet authorities forced members of same families to migrate to different places and so for some people, it was not easy to get in touch with their relatives and friends because they did not know where their relatives migrated. One of our relatives found and visited us in Soviet era

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<sup>666</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>667</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>668</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>669</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.85.

but later he died, so we lost our connection with them because he married with Russian people and families' young members who generally provide connection between family members from both sides were under the influence of Russification policies and were assimilated, so we lost our connection with them due to the loss of older family members.<sup>670</sup>

As a part of Stalin's national delimitation policies which constructed nation-states with defined borders, Azerbaijanis were no longer nominated as "Turks."<sup>671</sup> With the consolidation of Bolshevik authority in Caucasia, The Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic was established in March 1922.<sup>672</sup> The Transcaucasian Federation was abolished and three titular nations of Caucasia were named as Union Republics.<sup>673</sup> Nakhchivan became the part of the Azerbaijan SSR as an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics in 1922.<sup>674</sup> Also, Nagorno-Karabakh received the status of Autonomous Oblast under the Azerbaijan SSR on July 7, 1923.<sup>675</sup> In order to diminish the impact of ethnic groups, the national identity was emphasized in Soviet republics.<sup>676</sup> Soviet regime tried to divide Turks living in the USSR by disintegrating their cultural belonging

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<sup>670</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>671</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.84.

<sup>672</sup> *Ibid.* p.72.

<sup>673</sup> *Ibid.* p.84.

<sup>674</sup> Swietochowski, T. (1995). *Russia and Azerbaijan A Borderland in Transition*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.106.

<sup>675</sup> *Ibid.* p.107.

<sup>676</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.80.



under Turkish identity.<sup>677</sup> Respondent 4 states that “Russification policies were implemented in Soviet era by giving Turkish people different national name like Uzbek, Turkmen, Kazak, Azeri were a part of assimilation to prevent unification of Turks living in the USSR.”<sup>678</sup>

The name Azerbaijan is generally used to denote the land north of Araxes. However, the use of the adjective Azerbaijani for referring to both the language and people has become controversial because some of them assumed that it rooted from Stalinist era.<sup>679</sup> According to this view, indeed, the correct ethnonym should be Azeri or Azeri Turk. But the adjective referring to the country remains Azerbaijani and no one would say Azeri economy, administration or else.<sup>680</sup>

The name ‘Azerbaijan’ has been traced back to Atropatenes, a Persian lord in the time of Alexander the Great or, more poetically, to Azer, the Persian word for fire, on the grounds that it describes the Zoroastrian fire-temples of the region. Until modern times, the word ‘Azerbaijan’ was more often applied to the northern Turkic-populated part of Iran than to the modern-day state of Azerbaijan in the twentieth century, outsiders tended to call Azerbaijanis either ‘Shirvanis’ (from around Baku and Shemakha), ‘Caucasian Tatars’, ‘Turks’, or just ‘Muslims.’ Their own self-identification was flexible.<sup>681</sup>

In 1936 when Stalin was constituted, the word Turk was prohibited and Azerbaijani Turks with Azerbaijani Turkish started to be used because Russian

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<sup>677</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1952). *Milli Birlik. Azərbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 7, p.1.

<sup>678</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>679</sup> Swietochowski, T. (1995). *Russia and Azerbaijan A Borderland in Transition*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.preface.

<sup>680</sup> *Ibid.* p.preface.

<sup>681</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.27.

authorities attempted to prevent solidarity and unification of Turks.<sup>682</sup> Therefore, Soviet authorities gave different names to Turkish societies living in the USSR.<sup>683</sup>

According to De Waal, one of the characteristics of Soviet policies was that borders of Union were closed to outside the world.<sup>684</sup> The oppressive regime of the USSR gradually decreased during the mid-1950s even Soviet system totally relied on coercion.<sup>685</sup> Soviet system was lack of civic freedoms.<sup>686</sup> As it is understood from in-depth interviews, Soviet people did not have freedom of travel to outside the boundaries of the USSR except the privileged ones. These policies emerged growing inequalities into society.<sup>687</sup> In this sense, Marquis de Custine's description, "the prison house of nation" for Tsarist Empire was used for Soviet imperialism.<sup>688</sup> Started with Khrushchev's speech to condemn Stalin policies over Soviet people as a de-Stalinization campaign, Khrushchev as new Soviet leader

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<sup>682</sup> Vahapzade, B. (1996). Dilimiz Azərbaycan Türkçesi Milletimiz de Azərbaycan Türküdür. *Azərbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 307, p.12

<sup>683</sup> Nerimanoğlu, K. V. (1996). Dilimiz Varlığımızın Tasdikidir. *Azərbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 307, p.19.

<sup>684</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.71.

<sup>685</sup> Leslie, H. (1997). *Post-Communism: An Introduction*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, p.103.

<sup>686</sup> Sakwa, R. (1999). *Post-Communism*. Buckingham: Open University Press, p.23.

<sup>687</sup> *Ibid.* p.29.

<sup>688</sup> Suny, R. (1992). State, Civil Society, and Ethnic Cultural Consolidation in the USSR-Roots of the National Question. In G. Lapidus, V. Zaslavsky, P. Goldman *From Union to Common Wealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics* (pp. 22-44). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.22.

adopted new strategies both in domestic and foreign policy.<sup>689</sup> The last Soviet leader of Gorbachev speeded up the reformation in economic and political area, so perestroika was applied for economic change accompanied with political reforms like glasnost and demokratisatsiya in order to prevent the collapse of communist power.<sup>690</sup>

Thus, with the opening of border, so many Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people in Turkey started to cross the border to see these new accessible Azerbaijani land and interact with Azerbaijani people living in the Republic of Azerbaijan because most of the Azerbaijani people were so excited for the first interaction between their Azerbaijani brothers and sisters. Interviewee 8 mentions that “the acceleration of communication with the Azerbaijani people who are our relatives, our nations, our blood brothers has made us happy.”<sup>691</sup> As narrated by Azerbaijani diaspora elites, Azerbaijani people’s feelings with the collapse of the USSR were generally happiness and most of them crossed the border in the first years of the establishment the Republic of Azerbaijan. Interviewee 2 says that “I felt so happy when I heard the collapse. After the collapse of the USSR, we immediately passed the borders and went to new Azerbaijan Republic.”<sup>692</sup>

Interviewees’ first visit to Azerbaijan was generally coincided to beginning of the years 1990s when the USSR was dissolved. The collapse of the USSR has increased the interaction of people from both sides of border; by this

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<sup>689</sup> Leslie, H. (1997). *Post-Communism: An Introduction*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, pp.103-104.

<sup>690</sup> *Ibid.* p.105.

<sup>691</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>692</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

mean, so many people have crossed the border of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Interviewee 1 shares his memory that:

the first time I visited to Azerbaijan was in 1995. When I was attaché in Turkmenistan, I passed to Azerbaijan from Turkmenistan. Before 1995, I went to Nakhchivan from the Turkish village of Aralık where the 'Hope Bridge' opened.<sup>693</sup>

Although there were exceptions, generally representatives of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey went to Azerbaijan maximum twice or once a year and stayed approximately one week while there were people who had never gone, or people who went every 3 years or more less, or people who went to Azerbaijan more often, 5 times a year, or people who came back to Turkey from Azerbaijan disgruntledly and haven't gone for many years. Respondent 3 shares that:

I left Azerbaijan in 1993 with Elchibey because of the coup against Elchibey government. Then I came to Turkey. I had not visited Azerbaijan until 2011. After 18 years of resentment, I went to Baku to attend the invitation of Musavat Party's 100th anniversary; otherwise I did not plan to go Azerbaijan.<sup>694</sup>

Respondent 7 asserts that:

I went to Azerbaijan in the time of Nagorno-Karabakh war in 1991. I stayed there for one year. I was disappointed when I turned back to Turkey after one year. I gave promise myself in order not to deal with the political matters related to Azerbaijan again, but people who have dealt with Azerbaijani associations in Turkey have been incapable to operate these associations. Even if there are 60 associations in Turkey about Azerbaijan, just 12 of them actively engage in the matters of Azerbaijan. This is why I have started to be interested in this federation but I still do not prefer to go Azerbaijan very often because of the disappointment in the past.<sup>695</sup>

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<sup>693</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>694</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>695</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

Respondent 5 expresses that:

after the collapse of the USSR, I tried to pass the border but soldiers did not give permission to me because I did not have visa for Azerbaijan. After this event, I have never tried to pass the border even later I got my visa but I yearn for visiting to Azerbaijan to see my relatives.<sup>696</sup>

Respondent 8 says that “I have never gone to Azerbaijan in my life”<sup>697</sup> while respondent 9 visit to Azerbaijan “5 times in a year.”<sup>698</sup> Respondent 10 tells that “I definitely go to Azerbaijan at least once a year.”<sup>699</sup> Some of the administrators also went to South Azerbaijan cities, “Urmia, Tabriz”<sup>700</sup> as respondent 2.

Initially, Azerbaijani diaspora elites visited to Nakhchivan when borders were opened for the first time. It is the easiest way to go Azerbaijan through Nakhchivan because of the division of the lands of Azerbaijan by Armenian occupation. Respondent 2 asserts that “I passed border of Nakhchivan with my car in 1990.”<sup>701</sup> Interviewee 6 claims that “I crossed the border of Turkey to go the Azerbaijan SSR, Baku, illegally at the time of Soviet perestroika from Nakhchivan.”<sup>702</sup> Also respondent 11 denotes that “I firstly went to Nakhchivan

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<sup>696</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>697</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>698</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>699</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>700</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>701</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>702</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

because the lands of Azerbaijan were separated from Armenians and it is not possible to go Azerbaijan directly from Turkey.”<sup>703</sup> Respondent 6 considers this border division as “the balance policy of Russia to cut the connection between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan.”<sup>704</sup>

These Azerbaijani diaspora elites with whom I made interview cannot find opportunity to go Azerbaijan so often because of their economic condition and their settled life in Turkey. Respondent 4 depicts that “I go to Azerbaijan not more than once a year or not more than twice a year because this depends on our economic condition.”<sup>705</sup> According to respondent 6:

Azerbaijan has become our passion with its natural and historical beauty, so most of us have tried to visit Azerbaijan as far as possible. Of course our economic conditions are important in order to visit Azerbaijan more regularly. Hence, I go to Azerbaijan once a year for a week.<sup>706</sup>

Also, tours have been organized by Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey to travel Azerbaijani people’s ancestral land, to see their brother nation and to feel Azerbaijani culture which they listened from their older relatives. Respondent 1 explains that “we do not go to Azerbaijan very often. Maybe I go to Azerbaijan twice a year. I participated into our associations’ tour organizations to go to Azerbaijan.”<sup>707</sup> Their Azerbaijan visit is generally related to their civil society organizations’ activities like official meeting with state authorities, civil

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<sup>703</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>704</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>705</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>706</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>707</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

society organizations, and political parties in Azerbaijan. Respondent 3 denotes that “our association always visits the cemeteries of Elchibey and Mammad Amin Rasulzade and Martyrs’ Lane in the official meetings of association with political parties and civil society organizations in Azerbaijan.”<sup>708</sup> Respondent 10 also asserts that “I have never gone to Azerbaijan except for the official meetings of association.”<sup>709</sup>

As a part of organized tours of Azerbaijani civil society organizations, most of them have also visited to Baku Inner City or Old City, Ganja, Kopa. Respondent 11 explains that:

our association has organized tours to go to cities of Azerbaijan starting from Baku and ending to Ganja, Kopa. At first; we visited the cemetery of Martyrs’ Lane. I personally prefer to go to opera or theatre in Baku and I met with my friends.<sup>710</sup>

Despite the strictly separated borders of Azerbaijan and unreachable Azerbaijani land where Azerbaijani people’s co-ethnics lived in the time of the USSR, they wondered these places so much after the collapse of the USSR. According to them, these places are historically fascinating. Respondent 7 remarks that:

how Ganja and especially Şuşa are special for him as beautiful historical places of Azerbaijan. Blue and green colors of Azerbaijan flag can be seen in the sky and in the lands of Şuşa as one of the amazing places of Azerbaijan which were occupied and lost land.<sup>711</sup>

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<sup>708</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>709</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>710</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>711</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

Respondent 10 indicates that “places of Martyrs’ Lane, Inner City in Baku and Caspian Sea are among the places where I imagined when I was child. Caspian Sea signifies the independence color of blue for us.”<sup>712</sup>

Azerbaijan is the place where they have found their soul of ancestors and they have felt like they are at home again like in their birth places with Azerbaijan’s traditional cuisine, historical monuments, people, and traditions. Most of the Azerbaijani people in Azerbaijan always show their hospitality towards Azerbaijani and Turkish people coming from Turkey. According to respondent 1:

Azerbaijani foods that we ate in Azerbaijan were so familiar with our mothers or maybe much more delicious in our eyes. Also, my friends in Azerbaijan always hosted me. One of the important places we visited is Martyrs’ Lane. Also the fact that how they developed Azerbaijani art in terms of literature, music, painting, opera, theatre and sculpture took our attention when compared to Turkey.<sup>713</sup>

Respondent 11 tastes “especially Azerbaijani foods like ‘piti, bozbaş, shashlik, sheker bura, pike, haş’ which are among the tastes”<sup>714</sup> Respondent 9 says that “I have participated into shows and musical nights in Azerbaijan and I have visited to important historical places there.”<sup>715</sup> Respondent 4 illuminates that:

when I go to Azerbaijan, I make a comparison between the culture of Azerbaijan and Turkey to analyze how Azerbaijani culture has affected our daily life in Turkey like food culture. I have also tried to visit the cultural places of Azerbaijan to internalize Azerbaijani culture.<sup>716</sup>

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<sup>712</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>713</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>714</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>715</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>716</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013



Azerbaijani traditional foods are the linkage for Azerbaijani people with their cultural homeland, the lands of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As portrayed by Eldar Bakhish's poem 'Vatan':

I eat the bread out of the tandir (outdoor oven)  
I eat the fruits brought from trees  
I eat the honey that runs from the beehive...  
In the end, I want from you  
One measure of land  
One handful of soil.<sup>717</sup>

Moreover, the places, historical monuments and natural beauty attach peoples to their homeland as described by the Baloghlan Shafizade's poem 'Vatan':

You are the flame of the great Zardusht's faith...  
These cliffs, these mountains are my ancestors,  
Their crystal waters flow in my veins...  
In my body are grains from their every place,  
It seems I am the sum total of those grains.<sup>718</sup>

Diaspora members have regular communication with their kin in the homeland<sup>719</sup> like the Azerbaijani diaspora elites' case in Turkey. Some of them visit and keep in touch with their relatives who migrated to the Republic of Azerbaijan (Baku, Ganja, Nakhchivan) while their own family migrated to Turkey from Azerbaijani ancestral lands. Respondent 7 indicates that "some of my relatives of my mother side, known as Kasımlılar, from Ganja and Sumgayit found me in television program."<sup>720</sup> Respondent 10 predicates that "I have lots of

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<sup>717</sup> Altstadt, A. (1992). *The Azerbaijani Turks*. Stanford: Hoover Institution, p.188.

<sup>718</sup> *Ibid.* p.188.

<sup>719</sup> Safran, W. (1999). Comparing Diasporas: A Review Essay. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 8 (3), p.257.

<sup>720</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

relatives in Azerbaijan. Besides, my wife is from Azerbaijan.”<sup>721</sup> Respondent 4 depicts that “my relatives live in Nakhchivan, part of Azerbaijani lands. My dialogue with my relatives in Azerbaijan is similar with the dialogue with my relatives in Turkey.”<sup>722</sup> Others do not have relatives in Azerbaijan because their relatives either migrated to Turkey or stayed in the lands of Erivan Khanate. Relatives stayed in the lands of Erivan Khanate would be dead whereas some of them lost their contact with their relatives who stayed in the lands of Erivan Khanate. Respondent 6 predicts that:

our relatives from the lands of Erivan Khanate were mostly killed by Armenians and the rest of them went to Turkey and my grandfather guided them in Turkey. Our family is known as Dünyamalı so I heard that in Azerbaijan, there are people from our family but I did not make a detailed search to find them.<sup>723</sup>

Respondent 11 tells that:

my family lived in a place near to Yerevan, so some of our relatives who stayed in the lands of Erivan Khanate expatriated to Nagorno-Karabakh region. After the war, our contact with them was completely ruptured. Some of them came to Istanbul and we maintained our relation.<sup>724</sup>

Families whose economic condition was good achieved to migrate with their all family members. Respondent 1 claims that “their whole family migrated to Turkey because their families had economic condition.”<sup>725</sup> Some of Azerbaijani

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<sup>721</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>722</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>723</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>724</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

<sup>725</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

people in Turkey lost their contact with their relatives in Azerbaijan due to the economic reasons. Also respondent 5's relatives have lived in Nakchivan:

Thanks to their neighbors, who passed Nakchivan, they learned that their relatives have lived in Nakchivan but they did not get in contact with their relatives because of their economic condition or their lack of interest, so they do not have any connection with them.<sup>726</sup>

Even all of them have not found opportunity to see their relatives face to face; they have kept their communication via telephone or internet. Respondent 8 declares that:

I am talking with my relatives who live in Azerbaijan via telephone or internet. I found them via a letter from Azerbaijan. The letter was sent to ask us by my uncle's child. We sent photos to each other and our communication with them have still continued.<sup>727</sup>

From the perspective of respondent 3, "people who struggled for the same purpose with me have become closer than my relatives. In other word, this friendship is also stronger than the blood tie with my relatives."<sup>728</sup> As respondent 3, respondent 6 adds that "I do not have relatives in Azerbaijan, but friends in Azerbaijan have become my relatives."<sup>729</sup> Respondent 9 tells that:

my relatives came from Nakhchivan to Istanbul to find us but I did not make a deep research to find them. However, whole Azerbaijani people are supposed to be my relatives. They are not foreign people for us because we do not make any differentiation between people living in Turkey and Azerbaijan.<sup>730</sup>

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<sup>726</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>727</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>728</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>729</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>730</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

Most of the Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey wanted to cross the border between Azerbaijan and Turkey after the collapse of the USSR when borders which were strictly impermeable have become reachable after the collapse of the USSR. The first Azerbaijan visit was a so exciting experience for them. This was the first time they interacted with their Azerbaijani nationhood. Afterwards, they have started to go to Azerbaijan regularly to visit their relatives and friends, to participate official meetings on behalf of the their civil society organizations, to eat the Azerbaijani traditional foods, to listen to Azerbaijani traditional music in organized nights, to visit important cities of Azerbaijan and to see the historical places for maintaining their emotional and cultural connections with their co-ethnics homeland.

#### **4.2. Reconstruction of the Perception of Homeland over Cultural and Linguistic Bonds**

Azerbaijan and Turkey are Turks' homeland but we cannot look Azerbaijan and Turkey just from the side of geography. The perception of Azerbaijani culture and language are significant while shaping the perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey.

Azerbaijan should be comprehended by Turkish language, historical consciousness, national culture, national art, national literature, customs and traditions.<sup>731</sup> Language with the common history and culture is the backbone of

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<sup>731</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği 30. Dönem Genel Kurul Toplantısı Yapıldı. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 255, p.66.

the existence of nation. Broad geography, borders of nation-state and citizenship do not sufficient for the belonging of a nation.<sup>732</sup>

With the common memory of diaspora members, the Azerbaijani culture is reproduced with the perception of the homeland from generations to generations. Thus, this is a continuous process to establish links between past and present. These links between culture-language-homeland are carried to future through generations. By doing so, the Azerbaijani culture and language continue to be protect even they live far away from their ancestral homeland. In this sense, the cultural proximity between Turkish people and Azerbaijani people should be considered. Azerbaijani people's integration to Turkey was not difficult for them because of the cultural similarities between Turkish and Azerbaijani people although they have acute awareness of their origin and they perpetuate their Azerbaijani culture within their diaspora community.<sup>733</sup> Culture and the sense of belonging interconnected with each other. This interconnection is promoted by tangible components of culture and language such as music, history, literature and poem.<sup>734</sup>

These tangible components with historical and cultural memories of Azerbaijanis are reconstructed by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey through diaspora activities. These components should be taken into account while analyzing the role of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in shaping the perception of homeland.

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<sup>732</sup> Alkın, S. (2000). Türk Kimliği-Azerbaycan İran Kavramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 333, p.21.

<sup>733</sup> Safran, W. (1999). Comparing Diasporas: A Review Essay. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 8 (3), p.257.

<sup>734</sup> Qiu, H. (2003). Communication among Knowledge Diasporas: Online Magazines of Expatriate Chinese students. in H. K. Karim (eds.). *The Media of Diaspora*. London, New York: Routledge, p.156.

#### **4.2.1. The Perception of Homeland through Azerbaijani Culture**

Similarities between the Turkish and Azerbaijani culture in daily life of Azerbaijanis in Turkey and in activities of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey have influence upon the perception of homeland of Azerbaijanis in Turkey reconstructed by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey who adopt Turkey as their real homeland.

Respondent 9 indicates that “for Azerbaijan and Turkey, there has not been so much diversity culturally. Cultural similarity has made Azerbaijan special for Azerbaijani people in Turkey.”<sup>735</sup> Thus, respondent 1 tells that:

we have adopted Turkey as our homeland because of the cultural proximity between Azerbaijan and Turkey. My grandfather always mentioned that their birth place is in Azerbaijan but our homeland is Turkey. However, Azerbaijan lands have an impact over us by its culture and language as my grandfather’s homeland.<sup>736</sup>

Respondent 10 argues that:

we are Azerbaijanis different from Kurdish people because we are Turk but we are also different from Turkish people because we are Shia. We are also different from Alewi and Iranian people. However, we have achieved to live together in harmony in Turkey within these cultural dissimilarities, so we have kept our culture alive for our closed society. For long time, Azerbaijani women could not marry outside the Azerbaijani society.<sup>737</sup>

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<sup>735</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>736</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>737</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

Other than the cultural uniqueness of Azerbaijan from the other nations living in Turkey, the reason of the fact that Azerbaijani people live together with Turkish people in harmony has been important due to the cultural similarity between Anatolian and Azerbaijani culture. Respondent 1 explains that:

thanks to cultural proximity between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Azerbaijani people living in Turkey have easily adopted the culture of Turkey and country of Turkey as a homeland. Although my grandfather accepted Azerbaijan as his native place, Turkey has been the real place where we live.<sup>738</sup>

Respondent 1 states that:

everything related to Azerbaijan has aroused my attention like Azerbaijani Turkish, proverbs, Azerbaijani music or its economic welfare or Azerbaijani people. For instance; students coming from Azerbaijan have faced with troubles. This makes me sad because we come from the same origin in terms of our language, traditions and customs.<sup>739</sup>

Additionally, respondent 10 states that “I have felt same emotions both in Kars and in Azerbaijan because we have memories from the past in both places.”<sup>740</sup> Respondent 6 claims that “the culture and history of our past have been attached us to Azerbaijan.”<sup>741</sup> Respondent 8 appends the “blood ties link with Azerbaijan.”<sup>742</sup> Also respondent 9 refers to

national and racial ties with Azerbaijan because of his families’ migration history from Azerbaijan to Eastern Anatolian Region of

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<sup>738</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>739</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>740</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>741</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>742</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

Turkey. They have ties with the Republic of Azerbaijani on the basis of their Azerbaijani identity like brotherhood coming from blood tie and religion tie.<sup>743</sup>

Respondent 10 mentions about their “cultural belonging to Azerbaijan in terms of traditions, customs, music, festivals, funerals, wedding ceremonies and poems.”<sup>744</sup> The Azerbaijani people’s feelings to Azerbaijan were explained in poems as such:

You are my homeland as people know  
My country, my home, my residence  
My homeland where I was born  
Heart does not leave love  
Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan<sup>745</sup>

Everybody knows my name  
I am child of Azerbaijan  
My heart calls with tar  
I am son of Aras<sup>746</sup>

Nowruz or Ergenekon has been celebrated from North Turkestan to Anatolia and Anatolia to the Balkans.<sup>747</sup> Ergenekon legend is attached to Nowruz in Azerbaijan. For centuries, Turks trapped in the inaccessible Ergenekon valley surrounding by Altay Mountains.<sup>748</sup> A blacksmith created a passage by melting

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<sup>743</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>744</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>745</sup> Samet, V. (1980). Azerbaijan. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 234, pp.20-21.

<sup>746</sup> Arasoğlu (1981). Şanımdır. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 236, p.38.

<sup>747</sup> Kırhan, T. (1995). Nevruz-Ergenekon Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 302, p.15.

<sup>748</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1995). Nevruz Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 302, p.8.



rock. This legendary escape has commemorated as a “New Year” because it happened in New Year according to old calendar, but it happened on March 21 according to new calendar.<sup>749</sup> Nowruz is always celebrated in the same date and its celebration is more enthusiasm than Kurban and Ramadan religion Bayrams in Azerbaijan.<sup>750</sup> Most of the celebrations are either related to religion or traditions but distinctively Nowruz is linked with nature.<sup>751</sup> Respondent 1 conveys that:

Nowruz is one of the significant days of Azerbaijani culture and Azerbaijani people in Turkey who celebrate Nowruz ever year as in their villages in Azerbaijan. They have maintained their Nowruz tradition both in their migrated places of east border line of Turkey and city centers of Turkey with their grandchildren. Nowruz celebrations have been almost similar as in Azerbaijan like making a fire and throwing over this fire, painting eggs, putting seven different fruits or snacks in a bowl.<sup>752</sup>

Fires name is ‘Tonkar.’<sup>753</sup> People jump up this fire by saying “let go my pain welcome to my luck.”<sup>754</sup> One day is for dead people in Nowruz as the day for memorizing dead people.<sup>755</sup> In Nowruz, everything is renewed, so children wear new clothes. The doors of houses are always open for guests in Nowruz.<sup>756</sup>

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<sup>749</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1995). Nevruz Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 302, p.8.

<sup>750</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1954). Nevruz Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 24, p.6.

<sup>751</sup> *Ibid.* p.5.

<sup>752</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>753</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1995). Nevruz Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 302, p.9.

<sup>754</sup> Karabağlı, C. (1974). Nevruz . *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 210 , pp.25-26.

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.* pp.25-26.

<sup>756</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1995). Nevruz Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 302, p.9.

Children knock their neighbors' doors to take gift from their neighbors. This is called 'bacabaca' for the development of neighborhood relations.<sup>757</sup> Respondent 10 indicates that:

Nowruz celebration does not make separation of nations or race, this celebration includes all humankind. The ceremonies are about the human like belief of eating salty bread before sleep to see your future wife in your dream. Nature and human are the principles of this celebration to welcome the spring after the harsh conditions of winter. Special to Nowruz, we have a feast day for our dead people. We celebrated this day as if they were alive. Nowruz has been celebrated according to Gregorian calendar. In every 36 years; the day of Nowruz has coincided with the date of Caliph Ali's death anniversary. When these days have been coincided with the date of Caliph Ali's death anniversary, the celebration has become more brilliant. Because of that linkage, state authorities in Turkey had looked Nowruz as Shia threat in Turkey for many years.<sup>758</sup>

Nowruz is the indispensable part of folk tradition of Azerbaijan. Its meaning is "rebirth, salvation, renewal."<sup>759</sup>

Also, respondent 1 informs that "the equality of women and men in the public areas is also an apparent characteristic of Azerbaijani people as in weddings or meetings or celebrations."<sup>760</sup> Respondent 10 states that.

women are important in Azerbaijani geography when compared to other Turkish or Muslim geography because of the Shamanist or Zarathustra tradition of Azerbaijan in old times. However, this does not mean that Azerbaijani women have acquired their all democratic rights. The effect of these traditions has felt on Azerbaijani society.<sup>761</sup>

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<sup>757</sup> Kırhan, T. (2004). Nevruz-Ergenekon Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 353, p.12.

<sup>758</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>759</sup> Resulzade, M. E. (1995). Nevruz Bayramı. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 302, p.9.

<sup>760</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>761</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

Azerbaijani music and instruments, Azerbaijani traditional foods, stories, legends and riddles, theatre, opera or poets are best known cultural patterns of Azerbaijan. Migrated people are so sensitive to Azerbaijani culture and music because of their past experiences. According to respondent 2, “Azerbaijani music, Azerbaijani instruments like accordion, Azerbaijani folk dance, Azerbaijani weddings and Azerbaijani foods are important parts of our culture.”<sup>762</sup> Respondent 3 asserts that “Kars is one of the Turkish countries where Azerbaijani culture has stayed alive with its music, folk songs, traditional clothes and operas.”<sup>763</sup> Respondent 4 points out that “we can keep Azerbaijani culture alive in Turkey with Azerbaijani music which recalls homeland in our mind.”<sup>764</sup> Respondent 10 says that:

because of the cultural similarity between Azerbaijan and Turkey, Azerbaijani traditional music has also become popular in Turkey especially 91’s election periods of Turkey; three parties chose Azerbaijani music to make their party propaganda. If Turkish people do not familiarize with the Azerbaijani traditional music, they will not internalize Azerbaijani music.<sup>765</sup>

Respondent 2 claims that “I have felt the same feelings both for the Turkey and Azerbaijan as my homelands and I experienced these feelings when I also participated into a wedding in South Azerbaijan while listening to Azerbaijani music.”<sup>766</sup> Respondent 7 indicates that “concerts coming to Turkey have been

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<sup>762</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>763</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>764</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>765</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>766</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

important linkage for us with Azerbaijani culture through Azerbaijani musicians like Zeynep Hanlarova.”<sup>767</sup> As told by respondent 8 “we learned the history of Azerbaijan from our grandfather and grandmother with tales, legends and heroic stories like Koca Kartal, Meşe Divat. Our weddings have always started with the poem which depicts bravery of Sheikh Shamil.”<sup>768</sup>

These cultural values which are reproduced through the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations have impressively attached Azerbaijani people in Turkey to Azerbaijan. According to respondent 4 “this cultural pattern is protected through generations and transmitted by elder family members to young family members.”<sup>769</sup> Respondent 10 expresses that:

we learned Azerbaijani culture through experience. My grandfather told the Sakal ile Köse story similar to the Karagöz and Hacivat. We had local theatres in festivals. Mr. Üzeyir was famous, thanks to his theatres. We had traditional musical instruments like tar and accordion in our villages. We danced in Azerbaijani folk music. In our childhood; there were storytellers who told stories from the Book of Dede Korkut.<sup>770</sup>

Stories of Dede Korkut draws frame of Turkish culture from Anatolia to Caucasia and Central Asia.<sup>771</sup> The dastans like Dede Korkut describe struggle to protect bravely homeland.<sup>772</sup> Respondent 10 adds that:

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<sup>767</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>768</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>769</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>770</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>771</sup> Ünal, N. (1992). Dede Korkut ve Türk Kadını. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 286, p.17.

<sup>772</sup> Altstadt, A. (1992). *The Azerbaijani Turks*. Stanford: Hoover Institution, p.14.

we acquired information about the history and literature of Azerbaijan from our environment and our family. Among the migrated people, there were also intellectuals of Azerbaijani people (Ataol Behramoğlu, Artist Settar, Mammad Amin Rasulzade, Samet Ağaoğlu) who got university education related to history, literature, and art. These people contributed to intellectual development of these east border line cities of Turkey. Funerals are also special for Azerbaijani culture.<sup>773</sup>

“Azerbaijani culture was inculcated by our grandfather and grandmother through cradle songs”<sup>774</sup> as expressed by respondent 9. Interviewee 1’s first impression about Azerbaijan has been shaped by “real historical experiences, riddles, cradle songs, stories and legends told by his grandfather and his grandmother.” Respondent 1 says that:

my mother always told stories and riddles about Azerbaijan in front of stove. My father was minstrel and he sang traditional Azerbaijani songs. Additionally, Karacaoglan, Yunus Emre, Leyla ile Mecnun, Tahir ile Zühre, Nasrettin Hoca are common cultural values of Turkish world.<sup>775</sup>

Respondent 6 indicates that “our childhood passed with the tears of elderly people with their stories about the cruelty of Armenian people. Also, my mother crooned verse from the South Azerbaijan about the mountain of Heydar.”<sup>776</sup> Respondent 7 says that “one of the reasons why I have become nationalist is the stories about Armenian and Russian pressure over Azerbaijani people told by my grandfather.”<sup>777</sup>

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<sup>773</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>774</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013

<sup>775</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>776</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

<sup>777</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

“Kaçakaç” (the word is coming from escape) is one of the famous real historical experiences, full of agony, violence and hunger. Respondent 2 summarizes that:

when Azerbaijani people forced to exile from the lands of Erivan Khanate to Turkey between 1915 and 1920, Armenian people also forced to leave their home from Turkey to Armenia. Russian authorities promoted to increase the number of Armenian in the land of Erivan Khanate and establishment of the State of Armenian. Deportation affected both Armenian and Azerbaijani people. My grandmother’s first husband was killed by Armenians while they tried to flee to Kars.<sup>778</sup>

Respondent 5 shares that “my family came to Turkey in the times of Kaçakaç.”<sup>779</sup> Lots of people were cruelly killed while crossing the other side of Aras. Respondent 6 indicates that “most of the people lost their families and had to leave behind their relatives and their villages behind.”<sup>780</sup> According to Azerbaijani people who migrated from the lands of Erivan Khanate, Russian authorities had pursued a policy to increase the population of Armenians vis-a-vis the Azerbaijanis in the lands of Erivan Khanate with the pressure of Russians and Armenians.

Although there are cultural similarities between Turkey and Azerbaijan which make the internalization of Turkey as a homeland for Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey through the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey easier, they are also aware of cultural uniqueness of Azerbaijan. Thus, from the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites, cultural belonging of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey is reflected both in their daily practices and their diaspora activities in Turkey.

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<sup>778</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>779</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>780</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013

#### **4.2.2. The Perception of Homeland through Azerbaijani Language**

Azerbaijani language attaches Azerbaijani people to Azerbaijani culture. The language makes possible the connection between people living in Azerbaijan and Turkey because Turkish and Azerbaijani languages are too close to each other. Furthermore, Azerbaijani diaspora elites maintain their Azerbaijani language's unique linguistic characters. Although they generally speak Turkish in their daily life, they do not lose their local Azerbaijani language. On the one hand, they internalize Turkey with Turkish language. On the other hand, they are aware of their Azerbaijani identity through Azerbaijani local language, starting from their childhood, they spoke with their families, their friends and Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' members in Turkey.

According to respondent 3 "Azerbaijani words are pure Turkish words like lunch (günorta), key (açar), so using these words is important in order not to forget Azerbaijani language. Also, there is not so much difference between Turkish and Azerbaijani language."<sup>781</sup> As a part of Azerbaijani culture, respondent 5 indicates that "we try to speak Azerbaijani language at home."<sup>782</sup> Most of them do not particularly speak very often Azerbaijani Turkish but when people come together with other Azerbaijani people, they unwittingly start to speak Azerbaijani Turkish in their homes with their family members or "in the meetings of civil society organizations with association's members" as respondent 11 told.<sup>783</sup> Respondent 8 also emphasizes that "we protect our local language by being

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<sup>781</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>782</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

<sup>783</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

attentive to speak Azerbaijani Turkish with members of association and our children.”<sup>784</sup> Respondent 1 depicts that:

we unconsciously start to speak Azerbaijani Turkish at our home. Especially I try to speak with my grandchildren to make them familiar to Azerbaijani Turkish words like bread (çörek) or yogurt (katık). Young Azerbaijani people are not afraid of assimilation of their Azerbaijani language in Turkey like their grandfather who always speaks Azerbaijani language by remembering their birth place.<sup>785</sup>

From the perspective of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey, new generation do not have any feeling of threat for losing their Azerbaijani culture in Turkey while first generation’s bond with their ancestral lands was broken. Respondent 2 claims that “we do not speak Azerbaijani Turkish so often. Sometimes our accent involuntarily changes when we have gathered together with our Azerbaijani friends. I also pay attention to speak Azerbaijani Turkish with my wife at home.”<sup>786</sup> Respondent 6 points out that “I instantly start to speak Azerbaijan language and change my accent when I see people from our lands.”<sup>787</sup> Although Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey put emphasis on the fact that Azerbaijani language is a part of Turkish language to bring Azerbaijani identity forefront under the Turkish identity, they have tried to maintain dialectical differences between Azerbaijani Turkish and Turkish because from their perspective, Azerbaijani language protects its pureness contrary to Turkish language.

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<sup>784</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013

<sup>785</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013

<sup>786</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013

<sup>787</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013



People with whom I made interviews who were born in the east border line of Turkey (Kars, Iğdır, Van, Ağrı) have generally talked more or less similar dialect with Azerbaijani dialect in their birth places, so most of them are familiar with Azerbaijani language from their childishness and they have tried to transmit these language culture to their children and their grandchildren as one of the basic linkage of Azerbaijani culture. Respondent 4 says that:

the vernacular spoken in Iğdır is almost similar to Azerbaijani language and with our families; we generally speak a language which is similar to Azerbaijan language. Azerbaijan language has protected its essence when compared to Turkish language.<sup>788</sup>

Respondent 7 tells that “the dialect spoken in Iğdır is too close to Azerbaijani language and the nature of words has been protected. We continue to speak our local language in our home.”<sup>789</sup> Also respondent 11 claims that:

although the Turkish language is more dominant in daily languages of Azerbaijani people living in Istanbul, people still do not give up speaking Azerbaijani language. The sound of Azerbaijani language is also familiar to people who have never been in Azerbaijan, thanks to their environment of their birth places and their families.<sup>790</sup>

Turkish language with different dialects is also important from Azerbaijani diaspora elite’s perspective because people speaking Turkish language have scattered around geography where Turks have lived throughout the history. This accelerates the connection between geographies through Turkish language because Turkish language is spoken in a broad geography not just in Turkey or in Azerbaijan. According to respondent 10:

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<sup>788</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013

<sup>789</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>790</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 9 February 2013

you do not need to know any language other than Turkish into a broad geography of Turkey, North Azerbaijan and South Azerbaijan. This is because of the hereditary cultural effect of Safavid Dynasty. This broad geography was under the authority of Safavid Dynasty for years. In order to show the effect of language, the example of the meeting held in Izmir was given: ‘Azerbaijani civil society organizations from 47 different countries participated into this meeting and Azerbaijani language has connected us to each other in this meeting.’<sup>791</sup>

At this point, as stated by respondent 3, “the poem of Bahtiyar Vahapzade is remarkable that ‘even if my tongue is cut into slices, my native language will be pure Turkish.’”<sup>792</sup>

For the continuation of effective Turkish language as a connection to Turks throughout the world, respondent 7 suggests “the same alphabet for Turkey and Azerbaijan.”<sup>793</sup> In this respect, respondent 3 asserts that “the alphabet should be same. Common alphabet is important for the communication of Turks.”<sup>794</sup> Initially, Latin alphabet was accepted by Azerbaijan SSR in 1924 but after new Turkish Republic has also adopted the Latin alphabet, Russian authorities pushed Azerbaijan SSR for Cyrillic alphabet as a part of cultural assimilation in 1937.<sup>795</sup> By this way, Russian authorities exploited the education system of Azerbaijan for the assimilation of young Azerbaijanis from Turkish culture. The Russian language became compulsory in the compulsory courses of Russian history and

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<sup>791</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013

<sup>792</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>793</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013

<sup>794</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012

<sup>795</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.85.

literature in non-Russian schools during the Stalin era.<sup>796</sup> However; Azerbaijani nationalist have worked for the preservation of Azerbaijani culture and Azerbaijani literature<sup>797</sup> against cultural imperialism of Soviet system.<sup>798</sup> In Turkish Congress, the decision was taken about common language for Turks in 1917-1918. However, apparently this policy was not implemented and not promoted by the leader country of Turkey.<sup>799</sup> From the side of Azerbaijan, when Elchibey came to office, the language again changed as Turkish since the Heydar Aliyev's era. Heydar Aliyev changed language as Azerbaijani Turkish in constitution.<sup>800</sup> Thus, while unified language policies are considered as valuable for network of Turks all around the world, unified language and alphabet policies are not persuaded by both states. Respondent 5 assumes that:

Azerbaijan as homeland signifies my home town as my birth place, Iğdır, because the language spoken in Turkey is similar to Azerbaijan. There is not any differentiation between Iğdır and Azerbaijan in terms of spoken language in my eyes. Therefore, both Turkey and Azerbaijan are my homeland.<sup>801</sup>

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<sup>796</sup> De Waal, T. (2010). *The Caucasus: An Introduction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, p.85.

<sup>797</sup> Azərbaycan Kültür Derneği Yenişehir'de Yeni Merkezine Kavuştu. (1986). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 255, p.63.

<sup>798</sup> Tekiner, F. (1978). Luzern İnsan Hakları Konferansı "Azerbaycan'da durum". *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 225, p.36.

<sup>799</sup> Türk Dünyasının Kalbi Azerbaycan Konulu Panel (2004). *Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği*, 356, p.39.

<sup>800</sup> Hacızade, H. (1998). Yeni Azerbaycan İçin Yeni Kimlik. *Azerbaycan Kültür Dergisi*, 321, p.25.

<sup>801</sup> In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013

Azerbaijan is where Azerbaijani people in Turkey have cultural, traditional ties. Language, music, proverbs, family past, cultural bonds, traditions, customs, ceremonies (funerals, festivals, and wedding ceremonies), blood tie and racial tie have contributed to Azerbaijani people in Turkey to establish direct emotional and concrete linkages with Azerbaijan. These linkages of Azerbaijani diaspora members are also protected through the reconstruction of perception of homeland by Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey. In this sense, Azerbaijani diaspora relations in Turkey operate more smoothly in Turkey while reconstructing the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora members by Azerbaijani diaspora elites, thanks to the cultural and language similarities between Turkey and Azerbaijan.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5. CONCLUSION

In this study, it is understood that historical past strengthens the internalization, defense and protection of the perception of homeland by imagination of boundaries for members of diasporas. However, as stated by Smith members of nation united through common historical memories, myths, symbols and traditions, historical and political boundaries of homeland do not always coincide with the boundaries of their real homeland as in the case of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani origin who expatriate from today lands of Armenia to Turkey.<sup>802</sup> Therefore, ancient myths, legends, cultural bonds, historical experiences make legitimate the perception of homeland of diaspora members shaped by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey while they are far away from their ancestral homeland because the image of homeland can be reproduced through the transnational diaspora networks.

In the case of Azerbaijan, historical and cultural bonds attach diaspora members to Azerbaijani ancestral lands, Azerbaijani co-ethnics and Azerbaijan's political representative, the Republic of Azerbaijan but Azerbaijani diaspora elites' connection with their ancestral homeland and the Republic of Azerbaijan is much more cultural, lingual and historical because their ancestral homeland where their family elders forced to migrate from their villages to eastern borderline cities of Turkey stay in Armenia and these historical lands are not accessible homeland anymore. Additionally, according to them, political boundaries of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Azerbaijan are just the Azerbaijani nations' political representatives. Besides, they are not the citizens of Azerbaijan, so the Republic

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<sup>802</sup> Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Group, p.11.

of Azerbaijan is not their representative but representative of their co-ethnics. Although representatives of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey who are generally migrated before the collapse of USSR want to collaborate with the institutions of Azerbaijani government, they do not accept to be dependent to the State of Azerbaijan mechanisms because the representation of Azerbaijanis from all over the world is much more general issue when taking into account the fact that Azerbaijanis dispersed to different countries in the world.

In order to establish powerful Azerbaijani diaspora network, the State of Azerbaijan gives support to diaspora organizations by its political institutions and representatives, the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic and the Embassy of Azerbaijan. The State of Azerbaijan also attempts to find their own Azerbaijani diaspora organizations under the control of their policies, so the State of Azerbaijan wants to exercise power over the Azerbaijani civil society organizations throughout the world for this aim. The significant point in that case is that; Azerbaijani diaspora elites who migrated before the collapse of the USSR and chose to settle in Turkey in their rest of life are not citizens of Azerbaijan but just citizens of Turkey. For this reason, some of the Azerbaijani civil society organizations in Turkey do not want to be under control of the State of Azerbaijan, although they give support to Azerbaijani diaspora organizations throughout the world against Armenia and even if these organizations are in the grip of government of Azerbaijan, they want to be free to take their own decision. Incorporation of different Azerbaijani group with the Azerbaijan government can make possible the internalization of Azerbaijani people coming from different background into more coherent Azerbaijani diaspora organizations.

Azerbaijan's historical geography was confronted with several occupations. Both continuous border shifts and Soviet domination, particularly after the establishment of the ADR, have fostered Azerbaijani people's nationalist attempts and sentiments based on the Turkish and Azerbaijani identity. Thus, under these circumstances, Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey establish

connection with Turkey as their real homeland especially in the time of the USSR when Azerbaijanis in Turkey lost their contact with their co-ethnic in Azerbaijan SSR due to the strictly closed borders of the USSR to outside the world. Also nationalist sentiments of Azerbaijanis from all over the world have escalated after the insoluble Nagorno-Karabakh disputes against Armenia. It can be led to enhancement of nationalist movements among Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey with their historical migration memory. With the Nagorno-Karabakh disputes, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations have started to give importance to the Nagorno-Karabakh as Azerbaijani historical geography. As a result, the perception of homeland in terms of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is not fixed term, is reconstructed by Azerbaijani diaspora elites according to Azerbaijani historical experiences.

In the meantime, from the perspective of Azerbaijanis living in Turkey, some parts of Iran where Azerbaijanis live and called as South Azerbaijan by Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey are important and they are also the biggest parts of Azerbaijani historical geography. Thus, in terms of Turkish citizens of Azerbaijani people's Azerbaijani national identity, although they settled in Turkey, they feel like Azerbaijani historical lands are one of their parts.

Thus, in this historical framework, on the one hand, Azerbaijani diaspora elites internalize Turkish identity as the upper identity to promote Azerbaijani identity. Hence, this makes possible to their attachment to Turkey as their homeland. On the other hand, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations as in Turkey positioned their existence against Armenian diaspora organizations by emphasizing both their Turkish and Azerbaijani identity.

As a result of historical experience of Azerbaijani people in Turkey, they attach to Turkey as their real homeland through the common culture and linguistic values between Turks and Azerbaijanis. In this sense, Turkish identity emerges as umbrella identity over the Azerbaijani identity. This is why most of the Azerbaijani people with whom I made interview emphasized their Anatolian past

or their origin of Oghuz Turks when mentioning about Turkey as their homeland because Turkish identity as one of the upper identity enables the linkage between Turkey and Azerbaijani people. In addition to these cultural bonds, they are aware of the political bonds with Turkey on the basis of citizenship. Azerbaijani people with whom I made interview are not citizens of Azerbaijan but citizens of Turkey and they established their life with their children and grandchildren in Turkey. They do not have any future plan to settle in Azerbaijan. Their future life is in Turkey. Unlike their family elders who are the first generation of Azerbaijani migrants before the collapse of USSR and who are expected to turn back to their villages in Armenia, Azerbaijani diaspora elites with whom I made interview deeply connect to their birth country, Turkey, because their family elders lost their hopes when Soviet domination over these lands unexpectedly lasted much more than it was predicted. Thus, not only historical conditions but also the cultural and linguistic bonds enable Azerbaijani diaspora elites' attachment to Turkey as their homeland. Their attachment to Turkey is reconstructed through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations. Through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey, members of Azerbaijani civil society organizations' perception of homeland are affected by these elites perspective.

Thus, homeland making process is used by national elites to create our perception. Thus, this artificial process deeply influences the members of nation because they unconsciously identified themselves with the homeland in order not to be excluded from the society. This feeling of belonging reveals our and their strong sense between members of nation. It is expected that this sense cause the homeland-host land contradiction from the perspective of diaspora literature. However, it is not applicable for the case of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey whose representatives forced to migrate to Turkey. Because of the Azerbaijani diaspora elites' uniqueness about accepting Turkey as their homeland, Azerbaijani diaspora both in Turkey and in other countries legitimize their existence by positioning against Armenian diaspora organization. According to



Azerbaijanis, Armenians is the reason for abandonment of their ancestral land. These cruel memories of Azerbaijanis permanently reproduce through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations against Armenian diaspora. From the eyes of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey, Turkish and Azerbaijani people as a whole are in the category of “us” and Armenian people are in the category “them.”

The ongoing process of perception of homeland cannot be assessed separately from the nationalist project. The result of each process is different, so it is hard to make generalization because it has a unique structure. The perception of homeland pattern shows an alteration from nation to nation or from diaspora societies to others who live in different host lands and depends on several variables like political atmosphere of host land and homeland, the different historical conditions of diaspora members and cultural values of diaspora members. The societal influence, national pattern, the conditions of host land and homeland are important factors to evaluate diaspora perception of homeland. The perception of homeland also changes among Azerbaijani diaspora members in Turkey from generation to generation. Azerbaijani diaspora organizations administrators with whom I made interview are generally third generation of Azerbaijanis who migrated to Turkey before the USSR. Unlike their first generation, they easily adopt Turkey as their homeland but this perception of homeland reconstructed through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations with the effect of Azerbaijani historical experiences which show alteration among future generations. For instance, after the enhancement of nationalism among the Azerbaijani diaspora members in Turkey, they united Azerbaijani identity with Turkish identity as an umbrella identity due to the conflict with Armenia and USSR. Therefore; interviewees’ description of their homeland reflects this understanding. They generally express their homeland with different words by emphasizing their Turkish identity like Anatolian Turk, Oghuz Turk or Caucasian Turk. Instead, some of them use just Turkey or Azerbaijan words while explaining their belonging.

With the help of diasporas' network; historical, cultural and social memories and linguistic values are kept alive in diaspora consciousness of Azerbaijanis in Turkey. This diaspora consciousness is relied on both Turkish and Azerbaijani identity. Turkish identity is accepted as the upper identity of Azerbaijani identity by Azerbaijani diaspora elites. Azerbaijani nationalist rearticulated the diaspora consciousness not only in Turkey but also in the world through diaspora network of Azerbaijanis and Turks. Thus, transnational linkage of Azerbaijani diaspora reinforces the nation-state and national identity of Azerbaijanis. This reinforcement also paves the way for the internalization of Turkey as homeland by representatives of Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey who migrated from Azerbaijani geography to Turkey before the disintegration of the USSR. In every historical phase, the perception of homeland of Azerbaijani diaspora elites is transformed even if these Azerbaijani people adopt Turkey as their real homeland; they emotionally keep their connection with Azerbaijan's lost area as their lost homeland. The perception of homeland of acceptance of Turkey as homeland which is reimagined through Azerbaijani diaspora organizations does not mean that they ignore their historical, cultural, social connection with Azerbaijani geography. Hence, transnational linkage of diasporas fosters the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations reconstructed by Azerbaijani diaspora elites. Azerbaijani diaspora relations with its media network ease the imagination of physical boundaries of ancestral homeland of Azerbaijan where, except the first generations, they do not see their villages but imagine these holy places with their memories from family elders and reimagine through diaspora organizations and their media channel.

In this sense, the Kaiser's claim about "dialogue between past and future conducted in the present" in terms of reconstruction of national history<sup>803</sup> can be

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<sup>803</sup> Kaiser, R. J. (1994). *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Chichester: Princeton University Press, p.21.

used also for the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey. The dialogue between past through the reconstruction of national history which pass from generation to generation and future through the effect of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations' transnational networks attaches Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey to Turkey as their present homeland.

As a concept, the homeland is not fixed but it is reinvented through the Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey by positioning themselves against the Armenian diaspora. Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey changed their pattern after the dissolution of the USSR. Before the collapse of the USSR, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations legitimize their existence against the communist system of the USSR but now their existence is against Armenian diaspora particularly after the Nagorno-Karabakh Massacre. Depending on these historical changes, for instance some Azerbaijani historical geography in Armenia became their lost ancestral homeland. The perception of homeland about the lands of the Republic of Azerbaijan transformed from inaccessible homeland into accessible homeland after the foundation of the Republic of Azerbaijan. However, in the eyes of Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey, the land of Nagorno-Karabakh still remains as inaccessible even after the collapse of USSR. Thus, historical past of Azerbaijanis shapes the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations through the imagination of Azerbaijani lands while being far away from these lands, thanks to Azerbaijani diaspora organizations.

Through the transnational network, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations attempt to affect state politics of two states with regard to diasporas general interest in Turkey. Besides, the main aim of Azerbaijani diaspora members is to find out the historical truths of Azerbaijanis against Armenians in the world politics. At this point, media is a useful tool to reach people and also to remove distances between Azerbaijanis from all over the world. These transnational networks, especially the social media networks used by Azerbaijani diaspora

organizations may develop the newly emerged Azerbaijani diaspora organizations both in Turkey and both in the world.

To conclude, emphasizing both Azerbaijani and Turkish identity by Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey makes possible for Azerbaijani diaspora elites in Turkey's claim about their feeling of belonging to two different places at the same time. Transnational network of diaspora enables the multiple identities of nations. Therefore, the perception of homeland of members of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations reproduced by Azerbaijani diaspora elites through diaspora consciousness is composed of historical, cultural, linguistic and social values of Azerbaijanis. In this sense, Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Turkey adopt Turkey as their real homeland while they are aware of their Azerbaijani identity and their links with Azerbaijani geography.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A**

#### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 1, 9 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 2, 11 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 3, 28 December 2012  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 4, 28 January 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 5, 11 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 6, 9 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 7, 11 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 8, 11 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 9, 9 February 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 10, 15 March 2013  
In-depth Interview conducted with Respondent 11, 11 February 2013

## Appendix B

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you know your family' migration story?
2. What are your association's contributions to policies of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey?
3. How is your relation with the Embassy and Consulate of Azerbaijan?
4. How do you assess the politics of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the politics of the Republic of Turkey?
5. How do you get in contact with other Azerbaijani civil society organizations?
6. Could you share your ideas about the impact of media over the communication between diaspora organizations?
7. Do you follow the currents events in Azerbaijan and Turkey?
8. Where do you go when you visit to Azerbaijan?
9. How often do you go to Azerbaijan?
10. Did you have any contact with your Azerbaijani relatives living under Soviet domination?
11. How did you feel when Soviet Union was dissolved?
12. Where you from? Where is your homeland? What are your feelings about Azerbaijan and Turkey in terms of the concept of homeland?
13. What is the meaning of Azerbaijan and Turkey in terms of homeland for you?
14. What is the effect of your language in terms of homeland?
15. What do you know about the culture of Azerbaijan?
16. What is the establishment date of your association?
17. How many members do you have?
18. Could you mention about your member profile?

19. What are the aims of your association's establishment?
20. What are the activities of your association?
21. Do you have any relatives living in abroad other than Azerbaijan? If yes, do you have connection with them?
22. What do you think about the effectiveness of your activities?
23. Are young Azerbaijani people interested in your activities?
24. How do you evaluate the relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan?
25. How is your association's connection with the State of Azerbaijan and civil society organizations in Azerbaijan?
26. Do you have any connection with Azerbaijani civil society organizations outside the Turkey and Azerbaijan?
27. Do you have contact with other Azerbaijani civil society organizations and other civil society organizations in Turkey?

## TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☐

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

### YAZARIN

Soyadı : Şentürk

Adı : Sezin

Bölümü : Avrasya Çalışmaları

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : The Role of Azerbaijani Diaspora Organizations in Turkey in Shaping the Perception of Homeland

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans ☐

Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**