Despite the wide variety of theories aiming to explain the emergence of nationalism and its social functions, there is still a serious gap in studying transformation of nationalism in an environment where comparative analysis of nationalist discourse of post-soviet Armenian context is almost nonexistent. The 1988 "Sharjum" for the constitutional right of Nagorno Karabagh to demand a referendum and the 'No' movement to Turkish-Armenian Protocols in 2008-09 constitute two different moments of social mobilization in Armenia and Diaspora. 1988 'Sharjum' was largely a spontaneous rise of discontented masses in the Soviet Republic of Armenia that sought to resolve its territorial dispute with Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan over the region of Nagorno

Kharabagh. By the spillover effect 'Sharjum' eventually brought to demanding independence of Armenia from the Soviet Union. The 'No' Movement, in contrast, largely originated from different Armenian diaspora communities abroad and were directed against the political decision of

President of Armenia to sign the 'The Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey' and 'Protocol On the Development of Relations Between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey'[1]. Despite that two decades separate each event they have in common a strong nationalist discourse as a vehicle of mobilization; something that the given study aims to explore.

Thus, as the hypothesis of the given study goes, the nationalist discourse of the 1988 'Sharjum' responds to what may be labeled as pragmatic type[2] of nationalism, whereas the discourse of the 'No' movement seems to fit more into "ethno-symbolic" (Hutchinson 1987; Smith 1986) type of nationalism with some elements of "banal" (Billig 1995) or everyday nationalisms incorporated in it[3].The above mentioned categorizations being more of 'ideal type' descriptions emphasize the relative importance of some prevailing elements of discourse in a given time and space. This means that 1988 'Sharjum' also contains elements of ethno-symbolic nationalism simply those were brought to surface by pragmatic rather than 'irrational' means. Thus the above mentioned hypothetical categorization is operational as it is based on the nature of the mechanisms and motives that activate a certain type of nationalist discourse. The study will thus examine the factors that explain the 1988 'pragmatic' type of Armenian nationalist discourse and the 'ethno-symbolic' type of the 'No' movement.

As the main unit of analysis is the nationalist discourse, methodology used in this paper is the discourse analysis of newspaper articles, interviews as well as the analysis of historical documents and events in general.

The study consists of two sections devoted to the 1988 'Sharjum' and 2008-09 'No' movement respectively. The first one gives an overview of the historical, political, economic, ideological origins of 'Sharjum' aiming to explore the underlying factors that contributed to the mass mobilization in 1988. It also looks at the dynamics of 'Sharjum's' nationalist discourse and analyzes its connections with the theoretical proposition made in the hypothesis. The second section discusses the mobilization factors surrounding the 'No' movement, the patterns of diaspora participation and the role of collective memory symbols in the nationalist discourse of the 'No' movement. In the conclusion, some links are drawn and patterns of development are identified based on the findings.

Literature Review

Despite the wide variety of existing theories of nationalisms, most scholars agree that nationalism is a peculiarly modern phenomenon. What those theories question is the causes of nationalism, its relationship to modernization and political power, whether it is weak or a strong agent of change. With respect to these, three main antinomies rise inside the nationalist discourse: the essence of nations as opposed to their constructed nature, the antiquity of nation vs. its modern character and cultural basis of nationalism contrasted with its political aspirations and goals (Smith 1998). Smith (1998) later goes on to say that depending on which side is taken by the specific school those may be very generally synthesized as objectivist, who press the role of culture, more specifically language and subjectivist theories for which nations are formed by popular will and political action. One implication of this theoretical debate is that for objectivists nations and

national sentiments are found as far back as the 10th century, whereas for subjectivists both were products of the 18th century. (Guenée 1985; Guibernau 1986; Renan 1982; Tipton 1972).

However incomplete and simplistic ones they appear compared with reality, these clusters and categories help to systemize and synthesize the enormously wide variety of existing mosaics of theoretical debate, which in turn give an opportunity to draw links and conclusions and imply those to specific cases.

Located in the objectivist camp Elie Kedourie's approach (1993) may be viewed as one very much affected by the Kantian conceptions of human beings as autonomous, which in turn has brought the replacement of religion with politics. Once synthesized by Fichte (1988) with Herder's (2002) doctrines about natural language differences within humanity, these ideas gave birth to 'mature' romantic doctrine of nationalism. This implies that individuals achieve an independent and autonomous state through the unique culture of their natural community. Meanwhile, Kedourie regards nationalism as an extremely powerful force: its appeal is explained by social breakdown occasioned by a collapse in the transmission of traditional values, and the rise of a secular, educated generation willing to gain power but deprived of opportunities to attain that power (Kedourie 1993). Much of the features mentioned by Kedourie are relevant to the Armenian 1988 movement as the deep sense of uniqueness of national culture has historically been one of the main features of Armenian nationalist discourse. Nevertheless cultural component alone is not sufficient to explain the movement of 1988: that is why some elements of modernist argument are relevant as well.

The founder of the modernist school in nationalism studies, Ernest Gellner, holds just the opposite position form that of Kedourie. While Kedourie emphasizes the power of ideas which act as a homogenizing force, Gellner argues that it is the need of cultural homogeneity amongst modern societies that creates nationalism (Gellner 1964; 1982). Nationalism thus becomes attached to modernity, and is seen as a weak force by itself that results from the transition of 'agro-literate' societies, regulated by structure, to industrial societies, integrated by culture. Important components of Gellner's complex and ambiguous explanation include the unevenness of industrialization; the leading role of excluded intelligentsia in the invention of the nation; mass public education; and the discrepancy between the romantic aspirations of nationalists and the utilitarian outcomes (Gellner 1983).

Once applied to the case of 'Sharghum' in 1988 these modernist frameworks also seem to be not of direct relevance. Mass industrialization period in Armenia started with the Soviet period where elite mobilization seemed meaningless at least due to obvious reasons of their carefully planned elimination policies. Though 1988 may be viewed as elite initiated but still those elites were guided not only by the romantic ideology of the past but by the same pragmatic utilitarian views. Thus there was actually no real contestation as the modernist paradigm suggests, simply because most of intelligentsia happened to be the power holder during the industrialization period and especially after that. Nevertheless the modernist paradigm provides insights into the underlying motives of marginalized intelligentsia's behavior.

In addition to the above mentioned, several theorists identify the rise of the modern bureaucratic state as a central factor in the genesis of nationalism. John Breuilly (Breuilly 1982) argues that a conflict began to emerge between the claims of the state and civil society in the seventeenth century to which nationalism seemed to offer a superior, historicist solution: state is an outgrowth of a historical community. This is exactly what people had in their minds back in 1988. Anthony Smith (Smith 1981) also prescribes a pivotal role to the modern scientific state but the problem of legitimacy is more far reaching. Nationalism he thinks arises out of moral crisis of 'dual legitimation', where divine authority is challenged by secular state power ; from this situation, three solutions-neo-traditionalist, assimilationist and reformist-emerge, all of which are conductive to different forms of nationalism. The 1988 movement initially can be labeled as assimilationist in nature though later gained many aspects of reformist mode as well.

Smith also refutes the common idea that modern nationalism is simply the later politicization of purely cultural or ethnic sentiments, and that the distinctive feature of modern

nations is their sovereignty as mass political communities. In the study of Armenian nationalisms such a separation is much more feasible. The debate around this separation has taken many different shapes. John Breuilly wished to reduce the use of the term 'nationalism' to a purely political movement; and Eric Hobsbawm also argued that nationalism's only interest for the historian lay in its political aspirations (Breuilly 1993; Hobsbawm 1990). Smith finds such a usage very restrictive. According to Smith it underestimates important dimensions of 'nationalism' such as culture, identity and 'the homeland', and pays little attention to the character of the object of nationalist strivings, that is the 'nation'. The result is a serious underestimation of the scope and power of nationalism, and of its ethnic roots. This is the point made also by John Hutchinson in his analysis of cultural nationalism.

However Hutchinson does not deny the importance of 'a political nationalism that has as its aim autonomous state institutions'. But he thinks that we cannot overlook the significance of cultural forms of nationalism; despite their much smaller scale and often transient character, we must ascribe proper weight to "… a cultural nationalism that seeks a moral regeneration of the community" (Hutchinson 1994: 41). Under the influence of Herder, this kind of cultural nationalism was present especially in Eastern Europe in the mid to late nineteenth century. "It could be found both among populations that existed only as ethnic categories, without much self-consciousness, such as the Slovaks, Slovenes and Ukrainians, who had few ethnic memories, distinctive institutions or native elites; and among well defined nations with definite borders, a self-aware population and rich memories, like the Croatians, Czechs, Hungarians and Poles; or among peoples with religious memories and institutions like the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians" (Hutchinson 1994: 17–18, 21–22).

Hutchinson draws three conclusions from his analysis of the dynamics of cultural nationalism. The first is 'the importance of historical memory in the formation of nations'. The second is 'that there are usually competing definitions of the nation', and their competition is resolved by trial and error during interaction with other communities. And the third is 'the centrality of cultural symbols to group creation', which are only significant because 'of their power to convey an attachment to a specific historical identity' (Hutchinson 1994: 29–30).

This does not mean that cultural nationalism is a regressive force. It may look back to a presumed glorious past but it doesn't stay there. Certainly Armenian nationalism of 1988 though being ethno cultural in its origin was certainly not oriented towards past. Following Hutchinson I believe that in Armenian case of 1988 those memories of the golden age were meant to be used as modernizing and integrative device which can offer an alternative political model whenever the statist type of political nationalism has failed. If we take into account the nature of soviet political nationalism it becomes obvious why a more culturally oriented type of nationalism was flourishing back in 1988. But it is also true that we often find the two kinds of nationalisms alternating in strength and influence; as political nationalism weakens, cultural nationalists take the opportunity and try to address frustrated and oppressed community needs.

The later case of Armenian nationalism studied here is the 'No' movement which is also discussed within this general framework of ethno symbolism (Hutchinson 2005; Hutchinson 1987; Smith 1986, 1991) though with a different emphasis. With some modifications of an ethnosymbolist approach, in this context I define nationalism as a constant interpretation and reinterpretation of symbols which are perceived by a given generation as having the same meanings as they used to have for previous generations. This definition relates to but at the same time differs from that of Billig's 'banal nationalism'. Billig(1995) paid special attention to the rhetoric of nationhood and its capacity to mobilize western societies. He questioned the proposition that the word 'nationalism' refers to something that is not located on the periphery. According to Billig reproduction of nationhood occurs daily based on a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices. He introduces the term *banal nationalism* to cover the above mentioned complex of ideological habits. He argues that those habits are not removed from everyday life; daily the nation is indicated or flagged in the lives of the citizenry. Thus Billig talks of unconscious habitual patterns of collective behavior (1995) while my definition will be stressing

the role of unconsciously perceived but consciously interpreted symbolic structures of everyday life.

Nevertheless, I take Billig's famous concept as an important synthesizing, intermediary tool that may help to fix blurred demarcating lines between different types of nationalisms. It is, I claim, best suited to describe the 'No' movement against Turkish Armenian Protocols. It will be argued the transformation of nationalist discourse from a pragmatic, ethnosymbolic type towards more a
'banal' type of nationalism is quite logical. One of the basic assumptions of this study is that everyday life of a group is closely associated with an ongoing search after non fragmented identities. We couple this with the fact that in contrast with 1988 movement 'No' movement was mainly initiated by Armenian Diaspora for whom collective memory is one of the main means to keep the continuity of identity. Everyday nationalism reflects various important aspects of that permanently ongoing process. Once Billig's tool is applied rationally (Hardin 1985b; Walzer 2002) and more irrationally (Greenfeld 2005), objectivist and subjectivist interpretations of nationalism seem arbitrary as all these aspects manifest themselves in everyday, banal life depending on the given context.

The Rise of 'Sharghum'

Fueled by new anti-Armenian incidents and by the perceived sense of willingness of the Soviet leadership to review the situation, Kharabagh Armenians organized a massive petition drive to the Supreme Soviet of USSR, followed by a formal request to be attached to Soviet Armenia[4] voted upon by the government of the NKAO. By the third week of the February, 1988, when the petition had been rejected in Moscow, demonstrations broke out in Kharabagh and soon after in Yerevan, reaching unprecedented proportions (Libaridian 1988b: 86). Deep rooted identity issues and general concerns with the Soviet system were gradually added to the demand for Kharabagh's reunification: language, pollution, democratization and official recognition of Armenian genocide of 1915 (Chorbajian, Donabedian & Mutafian 1994) all were united to form a huge melting pot of grievances. In December 10, 1991 a referendum in Nagorno Kharabagh indicated its desire not to be part of Azerbaijan and proclaimed its own independence, later that month USSR collapsed. On September 21 1991 95% of eligible voters went to polls and voted for independence.

However, complete independence was not something that was on the immediate agenda in
1988. In an interview conducted by Vazgen Manukian on March 1990 he said: "It is not incidental that even the Kharabagh question, which is not a simple territorial problem, brought our people to the idea of independence, wittingly or unwittingly. In dealing with the issue of the reunification of Kharabagh, every radical step we were taking brought us closer to the behavior of an independent state" (Libaridian 1991: 40).

While discussing the immediate objectives of the national movement of 1988 Gerard
Libaridian writes: "The national democratic movement, first known as Karabagh Movement, led by the Karabagh Committee and institutionalized by the Armenian National Movement (ANM), questioned the validity of the paradigm based on fear, raised serious doubts on the imminence of Pan-Turkic danger, reestablished the right to determine a national agenda, and reintroduced rational discourse as the means to answer questions (Libaridian 1991: 2).

These objectives were widely believed to be attainable within the structure of the Soviet state though many argued for the incompatibility of those objectives and Soviet state. Rafael Ishkhanian in his article "The Law of Excluding the Third Force" argued that the reliance on Western, European, Russian or other governments has failed to resolve any aspect of the Armenian question. Such a strategy has had tragic consequences for the Armenian people. The lesson that can be drawn from history asserts Ishkhanian, is to adopt a strategy that relies on

Armenian's strength and resources, not those of other powers. He thought that in the context of Armenia's national movement, the logic offered leads to a redefinition of national interests and Armenia's relations with its neighbors (Libaridian 1991: 9–38).

Ishkhanian discussing post-independence objectives very insightfully notes: "We must prepare for independence so as not to be surprised by it as we were in 1918. First the Armenian nation must attain sovereignty and independence psychologically, mentally, morally. That is why we must eradicate the idea of relying of the third force and we must establish relations with our five neighbors. And it is necessary-and very important today-that we re-Armenize today's russifying Armenia, considering that many of the independentists cannot even sign their names in Armenian, that others don't know Armenian in general and write in Russian only and are shouting independence (Libaridian 1991: 34–35).

Thus we see that nationalist discourse back in 1988 was largely referring to the deep rooted identity elements, had clear cut objectives like democratization and quest for justice in general and sometime later already clearly and openly articulated the quest for an independent state. Nevertheless clear and long term strategies of the independent state were not largely prevailing in the discourse of 1988 'Sharghum'. This among other factors was first and foremost connected to the growing violence in Kharabagh, and the need to address the devastating consequences of the earthquake that hit the country in 1988.

Ethno symbolic or pragmatic nationalism?

"Sharghum" as the ideological base and institutional arrangement preceding the conflict was largely a strong identity based discourse accompanied by rebirth of national consciousness, quest for historical justice, as well as elimination of everyday unjust treatment. One may trace various justifications of these trends in 1988 public discourse which among other things was also directed against Azeri falsifications of history, demanded the revival of national language (Erekoyan Erevan, 1989; Ishkhanian 1989; Meliq-Baghshyan 1989) and elimination of everyday unjust treatment (Ayvazian 1987; Paskevichyan 1987) .

Moreover, research shows[5] that most Armenians believe that the memory of the genocide contributes to the Armenian national identity along with the language, culture and history. In the Armenian collective memory, the Turkish speaking Azerbaijanis do not possess a unique ethnic identity and are considered part of the "genocidal" Turkish nation, responsible for massacres, ethnic cleansings and the destruction of Armenian culture. As a consequence, Armenians also feared from a genocide of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians (Gamaghelyan 2010), in case NK would become part of independent Azerbaijan. The nationalistic public rhetoric of the Azerbaijani authorities often directly called for war and ethnic cleansing[6].

Regarding this issue Libaridian says in an interview just at the beginning of 'Sharghum' in February 1988 "Now the description of the situation as strictly territorial or nationalist makes it a very abstract issue. People don't become nationalist just because they are Armenian or Turkish or Russian. They do so because they have serious grievances. So in order to understand why several hundred thousand people in Mountainous Kharabagh are appealing to the Soviet authorities in Moscow, or according to the reports, a million people in Yerevan are demonstrating in the streets, you must realize it is not just a question of abstract nationalist aspirations. It is a question of survival, particularly for Armenians who experienced the total disintegration of their community during the genocide in 1915. Armenians refuse to see another region of historic Armenia under cultural, economic and political pressure, become disintegrated, as it is now becoming. The region has lost significant part of its Armenian population during the last fifteen years. It used to be 95% Armenian. In this context it is more than just an abstract question of nationalism" (Libaridian 1988a: 161).

The relatively quiet years of Armenian and Azeri coexistence after annexation of Kharabagh to Russia at the beginning of the 19th century may be considered as such only at surface while the hope for justice (Grigoryan 1989; Karapetyan 1989) and collective memory and the quest for recognition of Armenian identity have been bubbling underneath the surface. One justification of

the above mentioned statement is that as soon as the Soviet system created some opportunities for the expression of grievances in 1987, legally well-defined packages of Armenian complaints came directly afterwards. Both in Armenia and in NKAO largely spontaneous rallies were organized that gathered hundreds of thousands of people demanding the unification of Armenia and NKAO. In February 1988, the soviet of the NKAO passed a resolution (Sovetakan Kharabagh 1988a) requesting secession from the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) and its incorporation into the Armenian SSR proceeded by number of other decisions.

For example the decision[7] of the Soviet of NKAO made on November 4 [th], 1988 "On the amendments and changes in the constitution of USSR and the election of USSR people's deputies" (Sovetakan Kharabagh 1988b) was mainly highlighting the following points:

- ☐ The Soviet in the line of the policy of 'perestroyka' mentions the timely nature and the extreme necessity of political reform, amendments and changes in the Soviet Constitution.

- ☐ People's deputy council of NGAO finds that in the situation of tense interethnic relationships reform is possible only through synchronized development of one united multinational state based on free self-determination of nations and the principle of social federalism.

- ☐ The Soviet mentions that the current structure and hierarchy of our political administrative system doesn't correspond to the theoretical model of harmonically operating democratic state and to its reasonable logic of development. Current Constitution by declaring the equality of nations and nationalities actually defines the superiority of the Union republic as compared with autonomous regions. Such political system fixes the possibility of one nation being ruled by the other. Therefore we find it necessary to amend the Constitution of USSR

  with articles that will allow national autonomies of any level to have an alternative to the existing situation (particularly, the right to be directly ruled by the state government).

Another decision of the Council of NKAO "On the measures taken to foster socio economic development of NKAO from 1988-1995" (Sovetakan Kharabagh 1988c), states that Azerbaijan continues to hinder interests of the autonomous region and creates premises for the clash of two nations. For example, events initiated by the people of Khogalu, forcing Armenians out of Shushi, massive inhabitation of Shushi, Askeran, Martuni for the purpose of changing the demographic picture, massive self-initiated constructions, which also include construction of industrial plants. Therefore the Council found that the decision number 371 regarding socio-economic development of NKAO is not being enforced properly.

Underneath the official, well written and polite language of these decisions not only romantic ethno cultural nationalism but the basic everyday survival and the long oppressed economic grievances are traceable. Some even consider the movement as the most natural reaction: "From an economic point of view I consider Kharabagh Movement to be the most natural reaction as during times of dramatic increase of goods and monetary relations when various circulation processes are multiplied, meanwhile significantly increasing people's cultural and linguistic commonalities" (Ghazaryan 1989: 3).

1988 was the time when strong nationalist sentiments coexisted with sober calls for rationality: from the one side there was growing tension because of insufficient means, from the other side there was still some hope and reliance on the state structure and basic human relations. For example, in Sovetakan Kharabagh we read: "It is time to act. During subsequent months after the decisions nothing is done for the development of Armenian residencies, and an extensive construction of Azeri villages continues. There are 1000 families in Stepanakert and only 340 temporary houses are available" (Sovetakan Kharabagh 1988d).

Nevertheless, other types of messages and patterns of behavior[8] were also prevalent "We have to be wise as never before. We will not answer. We believe that if not today, then tomorrow Azeri will apologize" (Sovetakan Kharabagh 1988e). What is also prevalent in this message is the basic identity component - Christian understanding of confession and apology.

Also quests of rationality and tolerance and the search for solution with all possible legal means have always been prevalent at least in the official circles of the movement. For example,

then the head of the "Miacum" council R. Khocharyan said at an open meeting just before the arrival of the Commission on ethnic questions. "I am sure we will meet members of Commission in the friendliest manner and will create all the conditions for their efficient work. But we will demand rather than ask. We have already solved our question back in February 20, 1988, the proof of which is the decision of NKAO people's deputies council. Let us be rational, not to allow the further exacerbation of the situation and don't give in in face of provocations (Khorhrdayin Kharabagh 1989a).

Others have been emphasizing the pernicious consequences that hatred and intolerance can have. We read: "The most distressful thing is that animosity and intolerance has become part of everyday life of many of Armenians. It is clear to me why it is so. But it is more than obvious that it is not something that our ancestors have inherited to us, and we don't have to bring up our children like that. It is extremely important to overcome the terrible temptation of revenge and don't allow illegal action. We have to struggle passionately and deliberately for our own interests, and protect our dignity. It is terrible to think that at some moment the belief in the just nature of our struggle may be vanished (Ghazaryan 1989).

Meanwhile those rational quests could not resist long in face of growing violence and pain.

Here is a letter written by a group of people from Kirovabad: "During the most important years of perestroika whose greed has opened for other's land, and why Azeri are not striking? The answer to these questions is one: it is the Armenians of Stepanakert that initiate the clashes and then blame Azeri for that. They stop the factories to the detriment of the state. This is done on purpose so that to produce weapons and explosive materials in there. Armenians are sitting on Azeri soil, meanwhile insulting Azeri. The destiny has sent them an earthquake, they should have remained salient afterwards, but not, even while mourning they don't stop their fraudulent plans to obstruct perestroika, damage the country, hinder the work of the Commission. In Kirovabad Armenians and Azeri have always shared bread. The whole responsibility for the slaughter lies on Stepanakert extremists. (Khorhrdayin Kharabagh 1989b). A response to this letter came from Maksim Hovhannisyan in the same issue of KhorhrdayinKharabagh: "People of Stepanakert are not extremists, but people who have been driven to extremism and who are demanding to reestablish Artsakh's historic rights". He concludes by calling on reason and justice.

Thus what we actually see here is the indirectly accepted extremism of nationalist discourse based on violence where none of the sides can rationally go back to the discussion of grievances and when one side's own pain is misleadingly thought to be relieved by offending the other.

Ethnicity, Collective Memory and Political Identity: the possibility of coexistence and the 'No' movement.

The role of collective memory is indispensable from the Armenian diaspora identity formation and transformation; it is also a decisive factor in explaining the diaspora mobilization. Scholars of ethnic mobilization have also noted that memory is an important component of identity (Esman 1994: 14). Scholars of constructivist school point out the importance of memory in the development of group identities and collective 'myths' (Connerton 1989; Gillis 1996; Hobsbawm & Ranger 1992; Walker 1994).

However, ethnicity cannot be politicized unless an underlying core of memories, experiences, or meanings moves people to collective action. Therefore the question at stake is to explore the mechanisms that provide the link from the abstract content of collective memory to unified collective action. There are several processes important when evaluating this link. First, socialization or the way in which historical memory is passed down from one generation to the other should be most important in understanding why particular memories for particular groups have political salience. The way in which these memories are passed from one generation to the other is highly emotional, often containing intensified and to some degree 'mythologized' contents that arise mainly out of fear of forgetting. Those memories are of symbolic significance that define the identity of group members and provide necessary criteria for distinction from the given larger

community that the group lives in. Despite collective memory seeming to be as an innocent tool of identity preservation that is out of political context nevertheless, it is like a sleeping volcano capable of eroding any time any of its components are endangered. Moreover it may be dangerous erosion as the underlying discourse is largely impossible to address with rational means. The last point brings as to the factor of the content of collective memory, which, as has been argued in the introduction, is nationalistic in a sense that the given generation looks at it as a rigid collection of meanings inherited from previous generations. The factor of collective memory being used by elites used for political purposes is not very relevant in the context of the 'No' movement as it largely proved to be a grassroots mobilization where diaspora interest groups and institutions regardless of their profile were united for the common purpose of preservation of collective memory and identity, which brought to political consequences only afterwards.

Anny Bakalian's ethnographic study (Bakalian 1993) supports well some of the theoretical points made above. She found that Armenian Americans' personal identification with the genocidal experience transcends generational differences. She concludes that the Armenian Genocide is a symbol of collective Armenian identity for nearly all Americans of Armenian descent. It provides Armenian Americans with a symbolic framework, supplying them with a sense of peoplehood, cultural rebirth and historical continuity. It was exactly that historical continuity that was threatened by the Armenian Turkish Protocols. The memory of genocide of 1915 is also very important in Armenia as well, and provides part of the tie between the American diaspora and Armenians in Armenia and Nagorno Kharabagh(Paul 2000: 29).

Indeed Armenian diaspora organizations increasingly relied on grassroots mobilization at times of threat to the ethnic group, particularly, when the very symbols of ethnicity (trauma, territoriality) were questioned. Since the very symbols of identity are tied to historical traumas, elite reference to these symbols is important in bridging the gap between symbolic, de-politicized identity and political activism (Paul 2000: 44). The question remains whether it is the historical memory of trauma and history tied to a given territory (i.e. the symbols) that serves to unify ethnic groups or the contemporary conflict. It seems that both may be necessary conditions predicting mobilization of ethnic groups which might otherwise lack the motive for political participation. A contemporary threat is likely to be another. However it has been argued that neither of these is a sufficient condition for ethnic mobilization in the absence of ethnic elites who are able to focus and exploit the symbols of ethnicity, tying them to current conflicts (Paul 2000: 44). This was exactly what happened when the infamous Armenian Turkish protocols were signed. The only thing that may be questioned is the degree by which the movement was an elite manufactured project, as it seems that the mass consciousness was more than ready to reorganize the drawers of collective memory pushing some contents into more visible locations. Thus elites just played their natural part of organizing and directing the movement.

The same collective memory particularly contained an explicit link between Kharabagh Movement and 'No' movement which contributed to the discourse of the unified Armenian transnation. For example, at a rally organized in Los Angeles when President of Armenia was visiting the city people were shouting: "…today Los Angeles is Yerevan. The protocols don't represent the collective will of our nation"[9], they were also accusing the responsible officials in treason of the nation. In another place executive director of ACNA says:
"Through our long history, even when all around us, and even some among us, seemed intent on breaking our will, our grassroots always stood firm – confident in our strength, secure in our solidarity, and unbowed in the face of the forces that seek our surrender. That's where our true purpose comes from: our grassroots. As a nation our strength comes from the powerful sense of heritage and identity in the beating heart of each Armenian. Multiplied through concerted grassroots action, this devotion translates into the service and sacrifice required of our nation's future. This spirit thrives in millions of devoted Armenians, sons and daughters of our ancient tribe – living in the homeland and abroad. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the grassroots drive for justice for the Armenian Genocide – a movement that, alongside our struggle for NagornoKarabagh, both honors our past and helps secure our future. All this was accomplished, against the powerful opposition of Turkey and its allies, by activists at the grassroots level, armed

with the truth, inspired by morality, and driven by a commitment to justice and a secure future for Armenia. Our grassroots will, in the end, secure truth and justice and a fair and lasting peace between a free, independent, and united Armenia and all her neighbors (Hamparian 2009b).

Unity of the nation, service and self-sacrifice are the defining components of this argument the struggle for the recognition of the Armenian genocide being the symbol of its aspirations and goals. Here we also see how elites see the 'No' movement as a strong grassroots driven one. Among other things grassroots here also mean collective unification around symbols of past. The abstract concepts such as justice and truth eventually reduce the discourse to the biblical concept of heavenly justice rather than the pragmatic discourse of real political relations. However this pattern of inferences seems logical in the context where more long term and stable unification strategies are absent and people have to rely on meta political concepts[10] to keep the continuity and to ensure themselves against any external policy decision capable of threatening the very existence of the unified diaspora community in particular and transnation in general.

Despite this prevailing type of discourse putting the emphasize on the legitimacy of the government and one unified Armenian nation basically aspiring to the same goals, nevertheless there is also the other side of the story that consciously or not puts the emphasize at the distinction of the Armenia Armenians and Diaspora Armenians which in turn provides a useful political tool to the Turkish side for justifying their political stance and maneuver. For example, Dr. Tokatlian from University of San Andrés writes:

"In the 1990s, an important number of individual nations recognized the Armenian genocide via legislative laws or executive resolutions. The nascent Republic of Armenia, which attained its independence in 1991, had little to do with this; it was the diaspora that, after decades of efforts, succeeded in reaffirming the cause of the genocide. The diaspora was always ahead of the state in this matter. For the Armenian people, the issue of the genocide has always been a social rather than a state matter. However, it was always clear that its defense was also a guarantee of the survival of the Armenian state (Tokatlian 2009)".

Though the extent of unification of Diaspora Armenians and Armenians living in Armenia is a matter of another discussion nevertheless in this context it will be useful to look at it as a political tool used not only by Turkish but by Armenian politicians as well. A good representation of Turkish position is observable in AK party deputy's statement. He particularly said "The diaspora is projecting an extremely negative influence on Yerevan. If they manage to push this through I believe this would be a historic example how a small ethnic diaspora subverts US national interests and causes great harm to a delicate region" (Kiniklioglu 2009). Dr. Sedat Laciner, Director of the Ankara-based Turkish think tank USAK[11] said in an interview given to Turkish Weekly "As long as Armenians keep bothering Turkey like this, Turks will try to defend themselves, and even prepare themselves for a counter-act". Or "I think Armenian Diaspora is trying to take revenge from Turkey more than imposing anything on it. Second, they protect their Armenian identity via keeping the sorrows and hostilities of the past alive" (Aydemir 2009). In another quite biased and one sided article that once again circulated the idea of Turks always being nice to Armenians we read "Hatred against modern day Turks and Turkey has become an identity strengthening tool, particularly employed toward young Armenians" (Fein 2009).

An Armenian man looking across to Turkey. The countries border each other, but the historic gap between them has been wide[13].

For the official Armenian position, in its turn, the emphasis on the perceived distinction between Armenian Armenians and Diaspora Armenians was used to gain some justifications for already failed policy initiatives. Nevertheless one thing is obvious: the socio economic conditions of Armenians living in Armenia have brought the country to the point where public disenchantment grew to a constant state of nihilistic denial and where an external push such as diaspora mobilization was needed back in 2008-09 for the sober realization of the consequences of the protocols.

However this doesn't mean that symbols of collective past do not have emotional connotations for Armenians living in Armenia. Mr. Kharibyan who lives in the lush border village of Margara in an interview pointed across to Ararat, saying "You see the mountain? A lot of our history is rooted there on the other side of the border, and it will be good to be able to go there again" (Esslemont 2009). It is just that the conditions of attending the historic homeland are far more pragmatic. Thus however big the perceived gap between Armenia Armenians and Diaspora Armenians is nevertheless there is no actual or perceived gap concerning symbols of collective memory[12]. The only possible difficulty between the two is the indefinite strategies and mechanisms of approachement that may lead to unattended policy

outcomes.

Thus once the validity of the most important component of collective memory symbol, the Armenian genocide, was threatened by the protocols[14] Armenians in diaspora and Armenia unified in the 'No'movement. On October 3, in New York, Armenian President Serge Sargsyan explained to the assembled representatives of the Armenian Diaspora organizations that the commission is not to judge whether or not genocide took place, but rather "to discuss the issues of Armenian heritage in Turkey, issues of restoring and preserving that heritage, issues of heirs of victims of Genocide"

(Serge Sargsian 2009). However, Turkish President Abdullah Gul defined the sub-commission's objective as One which will provide a historical judgement. On October 6, in Istanbul, he stated, "There are all sorts of allegations about what happened a century ago. It is clear that people who do not know what happened where or how are not able to take decisions on this matter. What we hope is that historians, archive specialists study this matter and we are ready to accept the conclusions of this commission. To show that we are sincere, we even said that if a third country is interested in this matter, if French historians, for example, want to take part in this commission, they are welcome" (Asbarez 2009b).

These inconsistent and unclear definitions and at times even contradictory interpretations of basic functions of the sub-commission and the principal disagreement with the idea of historical sub commission brought further mystification and radicalization of the discourse around protocols.

Others (Tourian 2009) have tried to rationalize the 'mythologized' discourse around protocols by taking it down to figures and economic arguments in defense of Armenian farmers. It was conceived entirely possible that Turkey could be willing to use a new type of warfare with Armenia through economic trade, by flooding Armenia with goods, destroying Armenia's agricultural sector, and then, when Armenia becomes dependent on Turkish goods in order to feed itself, changing the rules of the game to Armenia's detriment.

Again more than century long memory and distrust are revealing themselves ironically proving that economic analysis remains heavily dependent on past grievances of collective memory. Another major 'rationalized' concern was that the neoliberal dogma has become a major obstacle to the improved quality of life and a threat to the general wellbeing of the people with the economic performance of the country remaining dependent on foreign aid, without developing sufficient prosperity for the general population (Shirinian 2009). These types of ideological concerns having largely a legitimate ground nevertheless do not make necessary distinctions between the general ideological basis of the economic course, vulgar privatization and elite factionalism, factors which in case of post-soviet transition became external obstacles for the functioning of the neo liberal paradigm as such.

Nevertheless, the above mentioned rationalizing attempts didn't prevail in the public discourse underlying the 'No' movement, the latter being largely the consolidation around collective symbols such as Armenian genocide, restoration of historical truth and justice in general.

For example, the hunger strikers that protested the visit of the president of Armenia to Los Angeles were all protesting the idea and going through the self-sacrifice all in the name of the unified nation, in general, and for the memory and unsatisfied quest of justice of their ancestors, in particular. One of the hunger strikers wrote: "Most of us are starting to become delusional yet I'm still here. I thought to myself, if my great grandmother can walk across the desert with two kids in her arms, I should easily survive this. As tired/hungry as I am right now, I am ready to stay as long as need be for my country" (Jivalagian 2009).

Thus the study of the two movements shows that collective identity symbols combined with the quest for justice and national unity are their main structural components. Nevertheless the

1988 'Sharjum' was also heavily based on pragmatic discourse articulating economic injustices and basic security concerns, while the 'No' movement was largely an 'irrationally' emotional reaction to the government policy decision perceived as a threat to collective identity symbols.

NOTES

[1] See the full texts of Protocols in http://www.mfa.am/en/country-by-country/tr/

[2] Nations are considered as real sociological communities: they are conceived of as historical communities with the right of self-determination, carrying sole source of political power. This approach has been articulated by many scholars who view nationalism as largely a rational force (Hardin, 1985a; Laitin, 2007).

[3] In the context of this study everyday nationalism is defined as constant interpretation and reinterpretation of symbols of collective past which are perceived by a given generation as having the same meanings as they used to have for previous generations. Such perceptions are often unexpressed, sometimes even unconscious but always ready to be mobilized in the wake of catalytic events. An important characteristic of everyday nationalism is that there is no political state elite's control in there.

[4] See the full text in SovetakanKharabagh, February 21, 1988.

[5] See in detail http://www.acnis.am/survey/

[6] One typical instance of this is Azerbaijani president Elchibey quoted in saying "If there is a single
Armenian left in Kharabagh by October of this year the people of Azerbaijan can hang me in the central square of Baku". See in detail
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld199798/ldhansrd/vo970701/text/70701-19.htm

[7] The decision was based on the article 113 of the Constitution. See in more detail
http://www.constitution.org/cons/ussr77.txt

[8] Such as organization of scientific conferences that called for rationality and interethnic tolerance (Armenpress, 1989).

[9] Horizon exclusive. October 4, 2009. http://www.stoptheprotocols.com/videos/

[10] Such as symbols of collective memory.

[11] International Strategic Research Organization.

[12] See Picture 1 on page 40 where the depicted man represents the aspirations of all Armenians and their strong emotional link to the symbols of collective memory.

[13] Tavernise Sabrina. April 23, 2009. *The New York Times.* Skirting Thorniest Issues, Turkey and Armenia Move to Ease Tensions.
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/24/world/europe/24turkey.html?_r=1

[14] Protocols proposed to create a historical sub-commission "to restore mutual confidence between the two nations, including an impartial scientific examination of the historical records and archives to define existing problems and formulate recommendations".......