

Evaluation of master's thesis *Women of Transition: Collective Memory in Azerbaijan Republic* by Husniyya Hashimova.

Husniyya Hashimova's thesis deals with collective memory of the specific group of population, i.e. women of the Azerbaijan republic in the age category of 57 years and above. In other words, from methodological point of view to participate in the study were selected 10 women in the age category of 57 to 87 years lived in the Azerbaijan Republic (the goal of choosing this age category was to experience living under the Soviet Union as well as the later transition into the independent republic).

The thesis is supplied by Appendixes A-D presenting the Participant Information Sheet (A), Participant Content Form (B), Interview Protocol (C), and Demographic Data Sheet (D).

The whole structure (chapters, methodology, research questions and answers, final findings and so on) of the thesis is very coherent.

There are two main research objectives (the stated low number of research objectives is a very good choice for master thesis to prevent vastness and potential inefficiency of research and to focus the main attention on results and their later interpretation): (i) how do the Azerbaijani women remember the Soviet past and (ii) how did the collective memory (re-/de-) construct the Soviet past?

It should be said that there is a solid theoretical frame of the presented research, i.e. Halbwach's theory (pp. 6-7), concept of nostalgia/ostalgie (pp. 7-10), cultural trauma (pp. 10-13), and identity (pp. 14-18). In addition, there is a description of methodological risks (time consuming workflows and so on) as well as other research obstacles (such as human memory and problem of recalling events etc.) (pp. 24-25).

The historical context of the study is presented by pointing the key milestones of the Azerbaijani history out (the Great Terror of the 1930s, perestroika and so on). So, this is valuable approach to tackle the most important events relevant to the future research and interviews memory based.

The findings and results of research are presented and – the most importantly – carefully interpreted in the final chapter of the thesis (pp. 58-63), where the initial inputs and objectives have been answered and solved.

Critical minor comment: I have some doubts about correctness of usage of the term the Great Patriotic War. Is it more often to use the Second World War (instead of the previous term).

As for the final evaluation I should conclude that the general design and outputs of the presented study are an excellent example of analysis and interpretation of the selected topic.

For the final grade I recommend “1” (Excellent)

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Alena Marková, Ph.D.