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Report on the classification and identification of dominant discursive themes and on the main factors that influence or shape conflict discourses

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Executive summary

This report is the Analysis Report of data collected during the Oral History research process on Task 2.2 of WP2 of RePAST. The total amount of data (163 transcripts of face-to-face in-depth interviews) comes from the field research that started in eight different case study countries (Cyprus, Greece, Bosnia, Kosovo, Germany, Poland, Spain and Ireland) according to DoA and ended on May 15.

The research protocol and methodological aspects of the Oral History research part of the project were detailed in Deliverable D2.2 "Selected and Analyzed Documentation and Visual Sources for the project Data Platform" (submitted July 2019) and the full data corpus (transcribed interview texts) was presented in Deliverable D2.3 "Recordings and transcripts of the interviews" (submitted September 2019). A brief reference to the main methodological points regarding the collection and analysis of the research data is also included in this report.

In line with the initial research design and subsequent research protocol, semi-constructed face-to-face research interviews were conducted with individuals who had personal experience of the main events of the conflict, as well as individuals who had shaped their understanding of the conflict in secondary/transmitted way. The research was conducted in eight different case study countries (Cyprus, Greece, Bosnia, Kosovo, Germany, Poland, Spain, and Ireland). The fieldwork phase started at M6 and ended at M15, in accordance with the DoA.

Data collection and fieldwork were the main work of activity 2.2.2 (Conducting Interviews / M6-M15). According to the research protocol developed by the leader of Activity 2.2 (CUT) and agreed by all partners involved, interviews were conducted under a common methodological framework with interview guides based on common themes for all eight different case study countries. Recordings were transcribed and translated into English following the detailed guidelines provided by Task Leader. A detailed account of the research protocol can be found in Deliverable 2.2 of WP2, submitted in July 2019.

This report begins with an introduction to the objectives of the field research, the specific conflict that each case study country focused on, followed by a description of the field research process and the full list of research participant data. The current Deliverable 2.3 consists of 8 appendices, one for each case study country, containing the translated interview transcripts. Although Deliverable D.2.3 is confidential, the translated transcripts it contains have been carefully anonymized in accordance with the explicit guidelines of RePAST's independent research ethics expert.

RePAST's Oral History research project aims to extract data from the "past" while maintaining a clear focus on the "present" and "future". Each of the 8 case studies has its own particularities that derive from the socio- political context in the space-time frame in which they evolved. Nevertheless, the analysis of the oral testimonies of the participants showcased common patterns whose examination will shed light on the causes and circumstances of the past conflicts. At the

same time the examination of these recurring patterns can provide evidence that can be further exploited toward avoiding future resurgence of these conflicts.

Following a brief presentation of the main narrative patters emerged from the analysis:

"Personal within the boundaries of the Dominant" narrative pattern - The vast majority of all participants' narratives, however different in some respects, did not go beyond or against the dominant narratives of the communities or groups in which they identified as belonging. Identity (national, community, ideological) is built on the logic of historical mythology and is so powerful that it prohibits deviation or contradiction to the dominant narrative of the group.

"Trauma & Victimhood" narrative pattern - The constant presence of the consequences of trauma, or its constant reminder to members of society, deprives them of the ability to treat the past as the past; therefore, the past is something they cannot overcome. The failure of the next generation to deal with the past causes the vicious cycle of trauma to continue. The most violent and recent conflicts under study, were not conflicts in which the parties claim the position of "winner", but conflicts in which each side seeks to prove that it was the victim of the other side in order to achieve political, economic, or social goals. "Victimhood" and "blame game" are probably the most difficult obstacles to achieve reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

"Left-Right Ideological Disputes" narrative pattern - The existence of two distinct and opposing ideological fields of confrontation emerges as a common pattern. Although ideological clashes can lead to serious confrontations and conflicts, as historically proven, at least theoretically they offer better conditions for future rapprochement. Since they are not divisive at the deeper level of national identity, they seem to be a factor that can be more easily mitigated over time. On the other hand, it is also a factor that is highly dependent on the current social and geopolitical conjuncture.

"Distrust on Media" narrative pattern - The vast majority of the respondents' view the role of the media negatively, both during the conflict and in the aftermath. There is a significant age difference in media use preference. Only a few of survey respondents indicated that they are "heavy users" of Social Media, with daily presence and content production. A significant number of respondents expressed concern about the role of Social Media in public life and its influence on shaping public opinion. Nevertheless, the role of Social Media was not considered critical or decisive in any case study.

"Avoidance Strategy" narrative pattern - Whatever the type and form of the troubled past, it is better not to talk about it in the present. Based on the reports of the majority of respondents in most countries under investigation (mainly Ireland, Germany, Greece, Spain, Bosnia, and Cyprus), dialogue, debate, and any kind of reference to the troubled past are avoided diligently. The reluctance to discuss the troubled past is manifested on many different levels. There is the almost unanimous opinion of all respondents that daily contact with members of the other community is a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence in the future (a contact that in most cases already existed in the past before the conflict). In the vast majority of cases, younger people with transmitted

experiences of conflict appear to be more receptive to the prospect of closer contact with members of the opposing community. Nevertheless, this seems to be truer in theory than in practice

"Caretakers of Normality" narrative pattern - Regarding the role of women in the respective conflicts in almost all of the case studies, women with personal experience reported that they had a rather marginal or secondary role in the conflict. Women are not reported to have an active role in critical decision-making processes or to be actively involved in violent incidents in the conflict. Despite the events of the conflict, the daily needs of those left behind remained real and pressing in adverse circumstances: children to survive, elderly to care for, family ties and households to maintain. These general tasks were the main responsibility of women. Both men and women fought, each in a different way and in a different area. In this dipole, however, it seems that the men fought for the present while the women fought for the future. of the total number of respondents in the survey, no respondents indicated that they had been victims of sexual abuse during the conflict. All reports conveyed information about other individuals. The issue emerged strongly in the cases of Cyprus and Kosovo.

"Prevalence of National over European Identity" narrative pattern - The idea of a common European identity seems to be a goal that is difficult to achieve. The EU is perceived mainly as an "economic" institution, dealing mostly with economic and financial issues (monetary issues, trade issues, etc.) - a perception that may act as a divisive rather than a unifying factor between the member states of the Union. The economic crisis of 2009-2019 has only deepened the divisions and made them more visible. "Solidarity" was a widespread expectation, but in many ways, it does not seem to have been fulfilled. On the contrary, the EU's attitude towards its internal divisions generates resentment and frustration. The majority of respondents see the EU as something far removed from their everyday lives and pressing national problems, as a bureaucratic institution with vague powers and unclear responsibilities, as a mechanism that is slow and cumbersome and lacks proactive initiatives. In the few cases where the EU does act, it does so for financial reasons and in a punitive rather than solidarity mindset.

1. Introduction – On Memory

Memory has often been contrasted with history. Authentic memory produced in small communities vs. ideologically charged official histories. First-hand witnesses to the past vs. academic historians. Nonetheless, there is a common thread that binds all the contrasting sides together, and that is "remembering" - it's all about remembering. So let us leave aside this rather unproductive controversy and focus instead on the different ways of "remembering" in culture, or even "forgetting" in a state of postcolonial aphasia, as Ann Laura Stoler (2011) writes. In both cases, the issue is how we deal with memory - whether we preserve it or let it fade.

Memory is one of the most fundamental elements of our human existence. It is what holds groups together (Bell, 2003:70) and what makes us aware of our social selves (Brewer, 1991) and the uniqueness of our experiences (Zoellner & Bittenger, 2004). Although Maurice Halbwachs makes it clear in The Social Frameworks of Memory (Coser, 1992) that memory is dependent on the individual, memory always exists within social relationships and contexts (Nora, 1989). Even personal memory is a profoundly social phenomenon. Indeed, no memory is ever purely individual, but is always shaped by collective contexts. Aristotle's definition that "memory derives from the past'' sounds self-evident, but it is nevertheless a very one-sided way of looking at things. Collective memory is also a kind of enactment of the past, not some distant, archeological presence, but a central part of the human time we inhabit here and now (Halbwachs, 1941, 1992 (25), Douglas, 1986, Scharz, 1991). As Halbwachs first conceptualized it, collective memory is constantly experienced and socially constructed in the present, where it takes on its material, cognitive, and emotional meanings (through communication and narrative) for the individuals and communities that bear it. Memory exists in "dialog" between two temporalities, the past and the present. Current events and beliefs guide our interpretation of the past, while schemas and frames of reference learned from the past shape our understanding of the present (Schudson, 1997). Therefore, memory is a process, not a product, and a process that is neither linear nor logical, but rather dynamic and contingent (Zelizer, 1995: 221).

2. Memory and Oral History

History reassembles past events to place them in a context in which they can be examined and interpreted. It does not encompass the entire past or its remnants, but rather is a version of past events that refers to dates, names, and phrases that no longer affect people's lives. In contrast, the collective frames of memory represent "currents of thought and experience within which we recall our past only because we have lived it" (Halbwachs, 1980:64). The way individuals interpret or understand historical events and how they are incorporated into collective memory is of paramount importance. In interpreting a historical event, it is not only the processes and means by which the past is transmitted that matter, but also how the past is realized and translated. Kansteiner (2002:180) argues that collective memory is a collective phenomenon but manifests

itself through the actions and statements of individuals. Accordingly, while it may contain events that are historically and socially distant, it represents a negotiated product that primarily serves contemporary interests.

The difference between collective memory and history is that the former is linked to the past through an organic relationship, since it contains those elements that can survive in the collective consciousness of the group that maintains them. In this way, the group becomes aware of its identity through temporally enduring feelings and images that form the thrust of its thinking. The need to write the history of a period or a society arises when tradition and social memory reach back into the distant past, thus creating the need for documentary evidence to ensure that memories are not forgotten. In the absence of a group of people who were directly involved in the events, it is essential to consolidate memories into a written and coherent narrative. Contemporary events are experienced and interpreted by contemporary people in light of retellings of "history," in terms of a sequence of events that occurred in the past (res gestae) (Assmann, 2008); "history," whether in spoken or written form, is already imbued with a narrative structure that promotes the organization of action, experience, memory, and representation.

Memory enables the group to achieve a sense of continuity through time via a sequence of interconnected images, creating the impression that the group is a constant, changing and evolving only in terms of its relationships and contacts with other groups. The succession of one group by another - when the membership of the group changes - may create differences or variations in terms of its interests and needs. Memory forms a central theme in the construction and reproduction of group identity, especially at moments of crisis when individuals remember the past with particular intensity. When identity is challenged, undermined or disrupted, memory is reconfigured to create unity and cohesion to support perceptions of individual and group identity (Bell, 2003). At the national level, especially on critical issues, collective memory can become a powerful tool for the ruling elite when their authority is challenged.

Within a group, new generations may still carry the memories and traumas of the previous generation. Hirsch (in Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi & Levy, 2011:347) introduces the concept of postmemory as the experience that the "generation after" has with the memories of those "who witnessed cultural or collective trauma," which allows a kind of access to the "*experiences of those who came before, experiences that [the generation after] remember only through the stories, images, and behaviors under which they grew up*." These experiences are conveyed to the new generation in such an intense way that they seem to become their memories. As they grow up with these inherited memories dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, their "*own belated stories are displaced by the stories of the previous generation, shaped by traumatic events they can neither understand nor re-create*" (Hirsch 1999, 267).

Halbwachs (1980) distinguishes between collective and individual (autobiographical) memory. Individual memory is specific in that it refers to events experienced by a person who was present at the time of the event. In contrast, collective memory goes beyond the perspective of individual memory and includes information that is far removed from personal experiences. Van Dijck (2004,

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p. 261) proposes a conception of individual memory as a cultural phenomenon that "encompasses both the activities and the products of remembering". Experiences are inscribed in the present to be recalled in the future. These experiences are "*filtered through discursive conventions, social and cultural practices, and technological tools*" (ibid: 261). Sontag rejects both the existence of collective memory and collective guilt, proposing instead the notion of "collective leadership". According to Sontag, collective memory is not remembering but "*being fixed with the images that hold history in our minds*" (2003, pp. 76-77). Thus, she introduces into the debate on collective memory the role that ideologies play in defining a stock of specific images that subsume collective ideas to evoke predictable thoughts and feelings. Shocking photographs may shock, Sontag argues, but they do not contribute to a better understanding of conflict narratives or inform historical facts (Sontag, 2004, p. 115). As Conway writes, "*memories [...] are complex transitory patterns of activation across a stratified and structured knowledge base*" (1997, p. 24). When participants are associated with negative collective events (related to family members and/or members of the group), more memory processes are provoked (Paez, Basabe, & Gonzalez, 1997).

Language is a primary element in understanding the material and social world, as one can interact and conflict with the other through the process of dialog. People have the ability of choice through a system of values, ideas and practices that allows them to place themselves in the material and social world, beyond the boundaries of traditional structures such as family, social class and religion. Language is a key element in understanding the material and social world through the process of dialogue in which people interact and their opinions collide. By breaking down social determinism, individuals have a choice to place themselves in the material and social world through a system of values, ideas, and practices, beyond the boundaries of traditional structures such as family, social class, and religion. A different view of history from the people who experienced the actual events helps societies understand their shared values, history, and culture as the basis of their membership in a larger society. According to social representations theory (Moscovici, 2000), there is a distinction between the objectified representations - hegemonic narratives - and the subjectified representations - personal narratives. The dominant narratives can be studied as modulating factors in relation to the symbolic core of social representations of the past, as well as organizing principles in relation to the quality of inner group and outer group relations. This is made possible by the continuous invocation and preservation of national identity. The role of memory in the construction of identity makes it malleable in terms of how collective memory is structured. Consequently, the same analogy applies at the collective level with regard to the narrative construction of memory.

For decades, European integration, which mainly concerned the economy, trade and production, was the primary issue for decision-makers. Issues of peaceful coexistence and democracy were addressed on various occasions in the past, but never implemented. The integration of member states with different historical experiences makes the issue European Integration far more complex. Although in many cases the prospect of EU membership substantially supported peace processes (Ireland, Cyprus, Bosnia), in reality the main incentive for accession was purely economic. In order to achieve reconciliation and mutual understanding between formerly hostile member states, the

recording of collective memory and mutual understanding between states is crucial. Recording the perspectives of ordinary citizens who either lived through the events or faced the repercussions of these events has the potential to become a common legacy for future generations of European citizens. This process will help to limit the power of the past and redefine the capabilities of the present that will provide a sustainable foundation for the future.

Humans are by nature storytellers, an element that comes into play in all manifestations such as legend, myth, epic, history, motion pictures and television programs (McAdams P., 1997). Oral history refers to the process of interviewing people to elicit information about the past and create a narrative account of past events (Abrams, 2010). Passerini (1979) supports that oral sources emerge from subjectivity. They do not consist of static recollections of the past, but of memories that belong in a system of collections of the interviewee's own life stories, memories, and experiences. Life stories form cultural constructs that "draw on a public discourse structured by class and gender conventions. They also draw on a wide range of possible roles, self-presentations and available narratives" (James, 2000, p. 124). Oral material is often excluded from the official narrative of past events. Historians have argued for many years about the respective merits of "elite" and "non-elite" interviews. However, they have recognized that expanding the network of interviewees in ways that include the non-elite version of history allows them to "reconstruct the social acculturations of barracks life" (Ritchie, 2015, p. 7). Seeking out elements excluded from the official historical narrative is a form of democratizing the historical narrative by engaging segments of the population whose social, political, and personal perspectives would otherwise have remained excluded from the official narrative.

Oral history can become a tool for transforming history by changing the focus of history and opening up new areas of inquiry. It can bridge the gap between generations, in terms of education and the outside world (Thompson, 2000). By uncovering these voices, our knowledge of the societies we study is expanded allowing us to understand the factors that reform our lives. Oral history consists of an oral culture that is far removed from the objective account of the official historical narrative. There is a distinct difference between official history and the stories of ordinary people. History is constructed on the basis of facts, while personal stories deal with meanings. The objective narrative of the "past is constructed" while "history is made" and is evaluated at the level of narrative criteria such as "credibility and coherence" (Thompson, 2000, p. 28).

It therefore represents a form of historical narrative "created by 'ordinary' people and contextualized by the professional historian, offering us a fascinating alternative to the construction and imagination of 'histories' beyond the more conventionally understood 'texts'" (Beard, 2017, p. 2). In contrast to official historiography, oral history could be described as an approach that moves from the general to the particular; narrators selectively emphasize those elements of official history that have most influenced them. As Wertsch underpins, even when a group experiences common events, individual interpretations will vary. The bias of the oral history narrator contrasts sharply with the impartiality of the historian and the "objectivity" of the official story (Portelli, 1998; Thompson, 2000). Moreover, the study of oral history can shed light on events that have been

forgotten or intentionally omitted from official history and reveal the ideological conflict between the different political actors involved in a historical event. According to Leavy (2011), oral histories are surviving knowledge of individual actors based on their life experiences and encompassing their behaviors, rituals, attitudes, values and beliefs. The significance of oral histories lies in the engagement of the participant and the researcher in a process of uncovering these experiences. This process is collaboratively shaped through reflection and connection of experiences, thus producing knowledge (Leavy, 2011).

Portelli (1998, p. 64) attributes the importance of oral histories to their ability to provide information about illiterate people or social groups "whose written history is either missing or distorted" and to uncover the daily lives and material culture of these people and groups. In this sense, the weight of oral history lies not in its confirmation or reproduction of the official narrative, but in its ability to present history through a different lens. In personal narratives, the boundary between the official historical narrative and the narrator is permeable. The narrative reveals the narrator's interpretation of the past as well as his or her concerns in relation to those of the group to which he or she belongs (Perks & Thomson, 2003); the personal "truth" may coincide or clash with the shared imagination. Personal truth, emotions and feelings, motives and intentions can be revealed through personal narratives: a process vividly described by Thomson & Bornat as "the unpicking of layers of memory to dig back to reach a hidden truth about someone and their involvements" (Thomson & Bornat, 2017, p. 238). Oral history testimonies, according to Portelli (1998, p. 68), have a "different credibility"; although they do not always match factual evidence, they are significant because they convey imagination, symbolism, and desire. In a broader sense, there are no "false" oral sources because even if the statements are false, they are still "psychologically true." This makes oral sources perhaps as important as factually true accounts.

3. Methodology Notes

RePAST's Oral History research project aims to extract data from the "past" while maintaining a clear focus on the "present" and "future". Methodological problems concerning demographics or other types of participant characteristics were solved according to the following basic rationale: one of the basic divisions in our sample concerns people with personal experiences of past conflicts and people with transmitted experiences of the same events. A specific age range for the first group cannot be defined, since their age depends on the actual time when the conflict took place. However, the age range of the second group can be defined as 18-35 years, considering that the members of this age group: a) have predominantly transmitted experiences of conflict and b) belong to the age group that is widely considered to be the "driving force" for both economic developments and social changes.

C.U.T. as the lead partner of Task 2.2 established a common methodological framework for the fieldwork in order to obtain comparable research data from the eight (8) case study countries (Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Ireland, Germany, Poland, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina). The proposed methodological framework was discussed in detail and agreed between all partners involved. The

main points of the common methodological framework of the Oral History research, especially regarding sampling, were:

All sides of the conflict should be represented under the following recruiting pattern:

(a)   Individuals with personal experience of the conflict (conflict's generation) – 10 participants

(b)   Individuals with transmitted experience of the conflict (post-conflict generations) – 10 participants

The female sample should be slightly larger than the Male sample, according to the general gender balance rule of RePAST.

The final sampling / recruiting plan implemented was the following:

- Total number of participants per case-study country: 20

- Persons having personal experience: 10

- Persons having transmitted experience: 10

- Age of persons with personal experience: - (depending on the case) –

- Age of persons with transmitted experience: 18 – 35

- Female participants: 11 - 12

- Male participants: 8 – 9

Two different Interview Guides were used (translated accordingly), one for those with personal experience, and another for those with transmitted experience. Common guidelines were discussed, agreed and shared concerning the Transcription and Translation of the recorded interviews' material.

The total of the processed research data in common form (Word.doc files) was uploaded in digital analysis software (NVivo 12. Pro) and coded under the following codebook:

Name	Description
Emotions	
Contact	Contact (interpersonal contact) and level of prejudice (e.g. can contact reduce prejudice between the conflicting parties?)
Positive Emotions	Positive Emotions
Resentment	Resentment/Discrimination

Rival groups relations	Description of relations between members of the rival groups
The Other	Prejudices and Stereotypes (image of the 'Other') - Attitudes toward the 'Other'
Traumas	Traumas (personal / collective)
Trust	Trust between opposite groups throughout the conflict timeline (past/present)
Europe - European Identity	Europe - European Identity
Expectations	Expectations from the EU
Identity	European Identity
Role in Conflict	Role of Europe in the Conflict
Views	Views on the EU
Experiences	Experiences of the Conflict
Gender	Observations regarding the Gender attitude towards the Conflict
Living Memories	Experiences of people regarding the difficult past under investigation. Living Memories of Conflict
Not Dominant Discourses	Different views towards the Dominant Discourses
Past shapes Present	How the Past Shapes the Present
Media	Media
Conflict Sources	Sources of Information during the conflict
Media-Social Media Country	Role of Social Media in Socio-Political Situation in the Country
Now Sources	Sources of Information present
Participation Social Media	Participation in Social Media
Personal Opinions	Personal Opinions on the Role of Media
Reconciliation Media	Role of Media in Peace and Reconciliation
Proposals for the Future	Proposals for the Future - Record – if any - frameworks of a solution to the conflict

Sources of Information	Sources of Information
Education	Role of Education in shaping perception/narrative about the conflict Education and Collective Memory within the groups under Study (analyses each conflict group separately)
Evaluation	(Participants') Evaluation of Sources
Family	Influence of family environment in shaping perception/narrative about the conflict - Relation of the Family to the Events
Friends - Social Interaction	Role of the social environment in shaping perception/narrative about the conflict Interaction and Prejudice / Differences-Common Views Based on Gender
Media - Social Media	Media - Social Media
Who's Blame	Liability regarding the conflict

4. Bosnia and Herzegovina

4.1 Bosnia and Herzegovina - Brief background of the conflict

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has been a battlefield for more than a millennium, where the world's major religions, civilizations, cultures and empires have clashed. During the World War II BiH was a part of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and one of the bloodiest battlefields of the war and the Holocaust. With the help of Haj Amin el Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and the Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler the Bosnian Muslim leadership, with the help of the puppet regime of the NDH under Ante Pavelić, undertook the systematic extermination of the Jewish, non-Muslim and non-Croatian population of BiH (Schechtman, 1965). Two Waffen SS divisions and other Nazi and fascist formations were formed to advance the goals of the Third Reich and Islam. The goal was to achieve autonomy and independence for BiH under Muslim rule (ibid.). The NDH adopted the Nuremberg racial laws and began the incarceration of Jews, forcing them to wear a yellow ribbon with the letter "Ž" (židovi - Jews) (Abramski-Bligh, 1990). On September 25, 1941, a legislative decree authorized the establishment of labor camps for undesirable and dangerous persons, which was the basis for the establishment of the Jasenovac concentration camp in Croatia.

There were over 100,000 Bosnian Muslims available to fight, and they were part of different formations (Ustasha, Home Guards and NDH Army). Yahil (1990) highlighted that the Bosnian Muslims even sent their people to the Russian front to fight as part of the Nazi German forces. By 1944, two Bosnian Muslim Waffen SS divisions were created (Handžar Division and Kama Division) to address the ''Jewish Question'' (Redzić, 1987; Bender and Taylor, 1969). Although a considerable part of Bosnian Muslims collaborated with the Nazis and the NDH puppet regime, it must be duly mentioned that thousands of Bosnian Muslims together with Croats and Serbs fought fiercely against the Ustasha and the Nazis; BiH and its people ''gave'' to the anti-fascist coalition formed around the Yugoslav Communists the base from which the series of offensives against the Nazis and their collaborators were organized. It is doubtful whether Hitler and his allies would have been defeated in 1945 without the fervent resistance of these Bosnian-Herzegovinian guerrillas.

Beginning on August 13, 1942, when the anti-fascist resistance had not yet been effectively organized, 5,500 Jews were transported from the NDH concentration camps to Auschwitz (Paris, 1961). The largest concentration camp in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the Kruščica (Travnik) camp, established in April 1941; many Bosnian Jews were killed there. The NDH had a total population of 40,000 Jews, of whom 11,000 lived in Zagreb and 10,500 in Sarajevo (Levin, 1968). Of the 10,500 Jews who lived in Sarajevo before the war, only about 800 survived the Holocaust. Most Bosnian Jews did not survive the first wave of killings, and the survivors joined the guerrilla movements or fled to the Italian Zone (Dedijer, 1992; Freidenreich, 1979:871-872).

The massacres of World War II represented an unresolved trauma in the post-war period when these ethnic groups lived in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) under the leadership of Josip Broz - Tito. Đureinović (2018, p. 111) argues that World War II was the founding event and the main source of legitimacy for the post-war SFRY, framed as "the common struggle against the

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occupiers and the domestic traitors". The communist regime led by Josip Broz Tito successfully suppressed nationalisms in Yugoslav republics, but in no way prevented the bloody wars that ravaged Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

In 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared independence from Yugoslavia, paving the way for other nations of Yugoslavia. In 1992, Bosniak Muslim and Croatian nationalists in BiH formed a tactical alliance to outvote Bosnian Serbs in a referendum on independence. However, the Bosnian Serbs boycotted the referendum because it was known in advance that the majority of Bosniaks, in agreement with Bosnian Croats, would vote for BiH's independence from Yugoslavia, (similar referendums had previously been held in Croatia and Slovenia, which subsequently declared independence). BiH declared independence on 1 March 1992, against the wishes of Bosnian Serbs and Serbia, which had de facto led Yugoslavia without serious opposition since 1991, when Croatia and Slovenia left the federation.

The war in BiH officially began in April 1992 when Serb paramilitary forces and the Yugoslav People's army (YPA) began shelling Sarajevo as a result of BiH's declaration of independence. The Muslims controlled the latter, but they were by no means able to offer more resistance. However, some scholars argue that the "Bosnian" part of the Yugoslav disintegration dates to July 1990, when Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) of BiH was formed under the leadership of Radovan Karadžić (Veledar, 2011; Čekić, 2004).

During the war, alliances changed often. For example, in 1993 in Herzegovina, Muslims and Serbs turned together against the Croats; in northwestern Bosnia, conflict broke out between opposing Muslim armies; and in central Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croats and Serbs continued to fight together against the Muslims (Glenny, 2003). Due to the fighting on several fronts, the UN also responded by creating safe havens in Sarajevo, Gorazde and Srebrenica. The latter was besieged two years later (July 1995) under the leadership of Ratko Mladić, resulting in the worst post- World War II genocide in Europe, when some 8,000 men and boys were separated from their families and executed. The Dayton Peace Agreement was signed in Ohio, USA, on 14 December 1995 (Bildt, 1998, p. 392).

However, the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not end with the signing of the Dayton Agreement (only the phase of direct physical violence ended). There was neither a resolution of the conflict nor a reconciliation between the opposing sides. The basic contradiction that caused it remained and remains to this day. The conflict continued in the institutions of the common state of BiH (Burton, 1990:147). Therefore, the post-Dayton reality is the one that maintains a toxic climate in BiH, as there are at least three (ethnicized) segments of society in the country that have different interests. The tool of conflict management between them, represented by the model of consociational democracy, prevents the fulfillment of the interests of all these segments of society (Bosniak, Serb and Croat). However, there are also people from all ethnic groups who reject the ethno-politics practiced by "ethnic leaders".

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If ethnopolitical conflict is closely related to the provisions of the Dayton Agreement, other crucial sources of conflict are still relevant. These sources are the economic situation, corruption, trust in the judiciary and the inability to participate in the political process.

Last but not least, we can highlight the words of political analyst Tanja Topić, who wrote: "*As long as there is a current quasi-political elite, most of whom participated in the preparation of the war, its participants and advocates of war policy, medicine for the political and nationalist tensions in BiH" will not exist*''(Delo, 2017).

4.2 Bosnia – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

Many of the respondents with personal experiences of war were still children when the war took place. Most of their memories come directly from their own vivid memories and the events that most affected their senses - loud noises, a general sense of panic, and the perceived despair of their parents. Other participants were in their twenties - some still in school and some young professionals. These people, much like the younger participants, usually recalled the most vivid memories and the breaking points in their lives that the war had brought - the moments when their lives had changed forever. Many of the participants speak of war experiences and events as if they were ordinary things, no different from their everyday lives today. They also emphasize the efforts made by their elderly family members and others around them to maintain as much of a "normal life" as possible. Due to the fact that the conflict was relatively recent, many of the younger respondents (who were part of the group of those having transmitted experience) also reported their own memories from the time of the conflict, referred to as "childhood memories".

> *"...People worked, there were drama shows, art exhibitions, they struggled to achieve some minimal normality, and to show that, even in such circumstances, it is possible to live".* (BA_F_P_2)

> *"And, we had this quarter, which had storages inside the buildings, where the kids would come together during the day, talk and play as much as they were able to play, and once the warning sirens would sound, everyone would be like "let's go kids, the shells are dropping" … The situation was so simplified, so that we actually had our own childhood, no matter how 'abnormal' it was from today's point of view, but for us, it was all we had. It was, like, it is what it is, we're at war, people are dying, but in a child's head all it mattered was to have toys and to run around the courtyard and that's it, although some things have surely scarred us for life".* (BA_M_T_2)

Participants who were children during the war tended to speak with more emotional charge about their experiences compared to participants who were in their adolescent years during the conflict. The latter group demonstrated a more rational approach to recalling certain events, although both groups' memories were traumatic. Nonetheless, regardless of their generational differences, both groups talk about how deeply the war affected their futures. This trauma that these people carry with them carries over into other aspects of the conflict, particularly the elements of the story that are yet to be explored.

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When it comes to the dominant discourses about the conflict in the country, virtually all but one of the participants have fairly similar opinions about these discourses. For example, six out of seven respondents with personal experience - all Bosniaks - see Srebrenica as an officially established genocide. However, one of the participants, of Serbian origin, believes that the Srebrenica genocide was used to vilify Bosnian Serbs and the Serbs of Serbia, claiming that Bosnian Serbs have, throughout history, always been victims and never perpetrators.

"Regarding the Hague proceedings, I think that was all just a burlesque – the Serbian nation was on trial, and, ultimately, Serbs have never been a genocidal nation throughout history… Never! If we go back further into history, I'm not saying the history of the Balkan wars, but going back to the time of Dušan the Mighty; the Serbs have never, throughout history, been aggressors or conquerors, but they have defended their territory, which turned to be true, and we also defended our territory in '92 up until '95". (BA_M_P_4)

Each of the participants was able to talk about some of the most intense events from their lives during the conflict. Respondents who were children during the war largely talked about their initial fascination with the sudden appearance of troops in their area and the change in the general atmosphere among people in their hometowns.

"However, as '91, '92 came around, they realized, and in certain moments I, of course, sensed that something was happening in the municipality we lived in. There was suddenly an army, police force, where I, as a kid, found it interesting to observe." (BA_M_P_3)

Moreover, participants who were in their twenties during the war usually spoke of how their lives and personal and professional plans were drastically changed by the conflict. Many of them recalled feelings of fear, insecurity, and their journeys to safety away from BiH.

"After that day, we stayed for another ten days, until we managed to organize – a friend of my sister's worked at the airport, so she told us which day to come in order to catch a plane. We picked up my sister's kids and left for the airport. Even that departure with the plane was one of personally frustrating experiences. We went to Belgrade, since that was, I think, Yugoslav People's Army plane, we even sat on the floor of the plane. And when the plane was taking off, we all just slid away, I was holding one child, my sister held the other, you know when the plane is ascending, and everyone just fell over us, we barely managed it, huh." (BA_F_P_2)

Bosnia and Herzegovina was, as several interviewees said, "small Yugoslavia", with 17 minorities and 3 constituent peoples a representation of peaceful and successful coexistence. Participants recall having neighbors and friends from different ethnic backgrounds. However, for most participants, the postwar period meant returning to an unfamiliar environment, even though many had returned to their hometowns. Not only had interpersonal relationships changed, but many of

their old friends and family members were no longer alive, and society had changed completely after the war:

"After the War, all of the standards were disrupted. All of the standards. People who used to do honest work became inferior, and those who were war profiteers ... Corruption and all that ..." (BA_F_P_1).

Some of the participants indicated that there was generally a much greater sense of optimism, hope and desire to rebuild the old life that people had known before the conflict:

"People wanted to rebuild everything, work, move forward, we talked about going back to school and so on" (BA_F_P_1).

Respondents with personal experience showed little hope for reconciliation in the near future. The perception of constant inter-ethnic tensions and rivalries is common among the participants. On a personal level, some of the participants talked about their friends and even family members of other ethnicities, but these examples are understood as exceptions and are not a reflection of a general social situation.

4.3 Bosnia – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

Overall, participants expressed dissatisfaction with the inability of the people, and especially the political elites, to work on reconciliation and contribute to the progress of the country. This mentality then, according to the participants, influences other aspects of the present in relation to the conflictual past, with one of the biggest aspects being the historical narrative that circulates in the public sphere. Regardless of nationality, participants expressed concern about the trifold narrative of history being told:

"I always say, everyone here has three truths." (BA_F_T_8)

At the same time, educational institutions have yet to find a way to present the war to students in an unpretentious manner. Coupled with the fact that each of the constituent peoples in BiH has its own version of history, the lack of educational efforts to educate the younger generations about recent history could be almost detrimental to timely recovery and reconciliation. The trifold division in BiH also plays a notable role in education. In many cantons in BiH, education is organized on the principle of "two schools under one roof", where two different ethnic groups are taught in the same building, but the building is physically separated so that students have no contact with each other. In addition, each of the groups provides their students with different curricula, textbooks and study materials, which further reinforces the division between the ethnic groups. Nonetheless, the fundamental issue in education regarding the conflict is that virtually none of the participants remember studying the conflict up to the university level. Almost every respondent with transmitted experience had commented on the issue of not learning about the war in BiH at school:

"… Because most history classes in all high schools in Republika Srpska finish with the end of World War II, so we don't get the Cold war, and most of it, but it's usually

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skipped… or not talked about at all, and the war in BiH is one of the things that are skipped." (BA_M_T_3)

In home environment, the conflict is not necessarily understood as taboo, but the generations that witnessed it prefer not to talk about it; especially the men who have been at the frontlines. Some of the speakers observed how their family conversations about the Bosnian War are mainly based on anecdotes with colleagues and friends, which make talking about such a topic much easier:

"As I told you before - you have my dad who rarely talks about fear, casualties or anything that he experienced, but he talks about some humorous things that occurred during the war" (BA_F_T_6).

Even those who have lost family members are rarely indulge in speaking or discussing about the Bosnian War in any way.

Political elites in BiH, as perceived by our interlocutors, thrive on the sentiment of war. It has been said that political elites maintain their power over people by constantly circulating war-related talk, creating further divisions between the three ethnic groups. The rhetoric of the politicians and the media was acknowledged to be highly manipulative and absolutely harmful to the future progress of the country as well as the people.

"There are at least three different sides, three different versions of events mixed with a lot of personal feelings, and the media works under the control of political parties, nationalists, and that's why I say that the war never truly ended." (BA_M_T_2)

In evaluating their sources of information about the conflict, almost all of the interviewees with transmitted experience indicated that although their emotional perceptions of the conflict were shaped by their personal surroundings, they relied on their own efforts to form credible opinions about the war. Thus, the possible inconsistency of sources has less of an impact on participants' opinions and perceptions of the war. If anything, some of the participants took the differences between their sources as something positive, which further contributed to their personal growth and reduction of prejudice.

"Mostly, today, the group of friends with which I hang out talks about it, it's not a taboo.   And we sit, and we talk, and everyone has different experiences, and everyone read different things in different books, and so everyone just elaborates, we have a discussion on   the topic and… Neither school, not family. Simply, the different experiences among people have formed my opinion on everything." (BA_F_T_9)

"I would say I was the one who formed my own opinion. No one else, I'd say. Once I started to attend those seminars and discuss such topics, I could see the things that had been done in the War, and I don't know… And of course, the personal research I've done online. I think that neither my friends, nor family, nor school had persuaded me to believe some things. It's all, how to say it… We have a habit of listening to our parents, as we do to our teachers in school, but I think it's necessary to listen to ourselves and build our own individual opinion, […]". (BA_F_T_8)

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To summarise the main points, ethnicity in BiH plays a major role in the perception of the history of the war. Each of the ethnic groups has developed "its" historical narrative about the war; many of them are not factual timelines. When it comes to education, the inter-ethnic divisions extend to education, where the war is still treated as taboo and not discussed at all in schools. Hand in hand with education, political elites and the politically controlled media are seen as the most dangerous entities in the country. War-related public debates disseminated through the media enable the political elites to maintain their power, win votes and manipulate the public to deepen ethnic tensions.

4.4 Bosnia - Gender

Among participants with personal experience of the conflict, memories appear to be perceived differently by gender. Considering that BiH is a predominantly patriarchal society, it is not surprising that men spoke about the war more in terms of the military, strength, and direct conflict. In comparison, women were more responsible for taking care of their families, providing for their children and other family members, even during the conflict. Of course, their view of the conflict is more emotional, as they had to be at home waiting for their male family members to either return from the front or never be heard from again:

> *"My mother often mentions the moment when the family found out that my uncle had died. Um, there was a white car, which would come once or twice a week, I'm not sure exactly, but they all got so scared when that Golf had turned into someone's driveway. It was because, that Golf would bring the information about the people in the War. Everyone was just afraid of that Golf and that day, unfortunately, the same Golf came into my nana's driveway, which is when they found out that my uncle had died". (BA_F_T_9)*

The emotional and mental burden of such a role has been greatly overlooked in BiH, where most of the historical narrative revolves around the male participants in the war and their role in the conflict is glorified. The biggest difference in gender perceptions of the war lies in the roles that men and women took during the conflict. The women participating in the interviews view the conflict largely through their experiences as caretakers of their families. Their decisions were largely influenced by the people these women were surrounded by, overshadowing their personal desires or plans:

> *"[My mother] would go on all these trips to retrieve the food that they had left from the drops… And she would scavenge for that food and hike all the way back home and have it on her back and hide it in her room for her children that she had – she had two daughters" (BA_F_T_7).*

Their role was to maintain, as far as possible, "normality" in the lives of the people around them. The men who participated in the interviews seem to have a more rational approach to discussing the war.

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Among the participants with surviving experience of conflict, the gender differences in understanding and perception of conflict are quite clear. In general, men are perceived as more prone to discussing the conflict than women. Men are also perceived to have a more vindictive attitude than women. Several respondents said that women show more empathy regarding the issue of war; they are more concerned with the human, emotional side of the conflict (which more or less follows the previously mentioned pattern of participants with personal experience).

> *"Most of the men, as if they're somewhat colder in regard to that. Girls, girls take it to heart more, we're horrified more by it." (BA_F_T_9)*

> *"Women always have more empathy, so they always ask how could the sniper shoot a child that was playing in front of the house, or how could they bomb women and children, while the men are always saying how if there's another war, they'll show them. Women have more empathy about it." (BA_F_T_4)*

There are gender differences in the understanding of war. As mentioned earlier, women are considered to have more empathy when it comes to talking about war. Mostly, women tend to consider the emotional burdens of people affected by the war and the current state of their lives· At the same time, some of the participants indicated that women in their social environment are not that interested in talking about the war. On the other hand, men are seen as more intensely involved in discussions about war:

> *"Like, men are always more intensively involved in it, while women are…. Reserved and more reasonable thinking about it"* (BA_M_T_1).

Men tend to take a more extroverted approach (sometimes in nationalistic tones) when it comes to conflict. "War" as a theme creates an atmosphere of brotherhood among the men and in this way strengthens their sense of belonging to a group (group: "I was there too - We are the ones who know better").

4.5 Bosnia – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

Overall, the EU is seen as an institution of stability and prosperity for the majority of participants with transmitted experience of the conflict. Moreover, it is seen as a 'place' of better standards and opportunities and even of greater mobility. At the same time, several participants expressed a negative attitude towards the notion of the EU, stating that it is an institution with many prejudices and controversies.

> *"Well, Europe was a good idea, which turned out to be not so great, especially with those rightist parties which have risen, I don't know, probably as a result of the migrant crisis, or some general, economic crisis. But the idea as such is good, but how long it'll keep on going is questionable, because I can see that all of the states have started to only look out for their own interests, so we'll see." (BA_F_T_4)*

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The role of "Europe" in the Bosnian war is presented as very poor, flawed, insufficient and minimal. None of the participants expressed a positive opinion about Europe's role in the settlement of the war. Resentment towards Europe's role in the conflict was very visible in their responses.

> *"Bad. Bad, really bad. Uh. Without initiative, without the wish for the War to stop. Look, Europe…. 300-400 million of people, I'm just giving the numbers, but, they couldn't have stopped the five years of War in this region. And they have all the power of the world, especially then. They have a bit less authority than they had had then. And they couldn't stop the War. It was like, "we don't want to come in between, but you guys can go ahead and kill each other a bit".* (BA_M_T_1)

Participants talked about how the EU has put itself in the position of observer rather than mediator in the conflict. The general mentality regarding the EU's role in the Bosnian war is that it did not rise to the challenge, but instead stood on the side and watched armed violence happen before its eyes.

> *"That kind of distanced role of an observer was, in reality, horrifying. They came here and watched us, Balkan hordes, while we slain each other; they assessed the numbers and potentially provided arms". (BA_F_P_2)*

The majority of participants indicated that their sense of European identity is present because BiH belongs to the European continent. Moreover, participants largely associate European identity with certain values and norms, such as awareness, tolerance, diversity, sophistication, etc. Based on such impressions, the expectations are for the EU to contribute to at least some form of progress for BiH. Some participants expressed the wish that reconciliation processes would be more promoted by the EU in the near future, as for these participants this would be the sign that the country is finally moving forward and getting closer to EU accession.

Similar to the individuals in the interviews with transmitted experiences, most individuals with personal experiences view Europe as an institution of civilization, standards, and safety. In contrast, some participants expressed reservations about Europe, stating that in their eyes it is an institution of contradictory values and injustice to smaller countries.

> *"I think it's two-faced and not fair to the Southeast. It's not fair when it comes to you, Slovenians and Croatians, either. I have information that you are being asked the least in the European Parliament, let's put it that way. Now, only imagine our situation. The politicians encourage the idea of entering the EU, and there are solutions being sought so that BiH, together with Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro enter the EU. However, I don't think that is the best solution, at least for us, small nations […] it's not the best solution to be a member of the EU – imposts are great, so are taxes, salaries are not too good…" (BA_M_P_4)*

Almost all of the participants feel that they are Europeans. Some feel as such because of their respect for the values propagated in Europe, others see themselves as Europeans only because BiH is geographically part of Europe. Expectations of the EU are fairly unanimous among participants -

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progress, improvement and possible reconciliation. There were minimal deviations from these three concepts among the participants.

When it comes to identity, the already confusing question of "national" identity overshadows any possible question of "European Identity". Identity in terms of national affiliation can be divided into three groups among the participants according to their answers. The majority of those who participated in the war in some way have a strict sense of nationality - Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats. On the other hand, some Bosniaks who were born at the end or after the war do not mind having a single identity, namely a Bosnian or Bosnia-Herzegovinian identity:

"I would say I'm Bosnia-Herzegovinian, but here, if we define ourselves as that, we become a minority". (BA_F_T_5)

For these two trends, the ratio of responses is 1:1. It should be noted, however, that the Bosnian or Bosnia-Herzegovinian identity is chosen mostly by those who declare themselves to be Bosniaks, while the Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats would rarely say that they are "Bosnian".

"I am Bosnian. Even though I declared myself as a Bosniak on the last census survey, I am still a Bosnian. I could have declared myself as other, but I didn't do that. In other countries, your ethnical and national affiliation is always the same. In our country, this corresponds with your religious affiliation, which is wrong. We should all be Bosnians with different religious affiliation." (BA_F_T_13)

"I would abolish it, because when you go outside you will not be a Bosniak but Bosnian. It is the same when you come out and tell them that you are Serb and they ask you from where, and when you say from Banja Luka they told you that you are Bosnian. The biggest nonsense is that we have Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats. My identity is not Bosniak, Serbian or Croat, I am Bosnian." (BA_M_T_12)

"I am a Croat in nationality, or better yet, Bosnian Croat. Bosnian Croat because I'm from Bosnia and Herzegovina." (BA_M_T_10)

4.6 Bosnia – Media

From their perception of the media coverage during the conflict, participants reported from personal experience how the media contributed to the overall sense of panic and fear among the population through propaganda and the dissemination of politically charged messages. Additionally, the involvement of the international media is seen as negative rather than positive, in the sense that the international media took sides and thus promoted only one nation from the war, which subjectively affected the perception of their audience. Additionally, participants emphasize the national divisions among media outlets throughout and even after the conflict.

"When the war broke out, BiH ruptured on three sides. It was divided into three nations, and the media followed this logic. Everybody had his own truth – Croats, Serbs, and Muslims. I say Muslims because they were called so until 1993, when they decided at the

Congress to call themselves Bosniaks. Everyone had their own media and then you had the international community after Dayton with fourth truth. The truth is one, but we have four truths." (BA_M_P_7)

Across the board for the same group of participants, the most used sources of information nowadays are the Internet and social media. Several respondents said they also watch television, and one expressed using traditional newspapers as well. There is a unanimous perception of the role of the media as crucial in shaping public opinion, but in a negative way. It is said that they are very politically charged and the majority of the media are under the control of Bosnian political elites, who are then able to send nationalistic and divisive messages to the public.

"I think they have a very specific role. Very specific role, um… unfortunately, in some way, we've become the society of ignorance, you know. Through those divisions, you have "my media, their media". It's interesting that, for example, when you watch some event, you have three different representations of it by three different media outlets." (BA_P_M_3)

The general impression of the media in terms of reconciliation is that the media actually has a counterproductive role in this sense - it contributes to more division and tension between nations in the country. Social media, much like other media, is seen to have immense influence on public opinion and perception of the situation in the country. Nonetheless, participants also expressed concern about the negative influence often seen through the spread of politically charged messages:

"But when talking about the big media houses, they don't work of reconciliation, on neutralizing nationalistic and political attitudes, but rather encouraging them, and that holds them in power" (BA_M_P_4).

All respondents have little to no personal participation in social media, merely as viewers.

Regarding the group of participants with transmitted experience, most popular media outlets among the participants are television, the Internet, and social media. The role of media is considered to have great power, but this power is not properly used. The media in BiH are said to lack independence and to be highly prone to political control, which has a detrimental effect on people's opinions and prejudices.

"The Media have an enormous role, but the state is bad. It's bad due to their manner of reporting, and they're having many problems as well. I think they're very much under political influence, it is very obvious which media belongs to which side. There are very little independent media outlets remaining, this is where the issue of reporting comes in." (BA_F_T_5)

When it comes to promoting peace and reconciliation, the media is said to have the opposite effect for most participants. Some participants spoke of diligently searching for organizations and groups that promote reconciliation in the country, but such sites are not popular with the public:

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"When we look at the activities of certain international organizations, with which I work with a lot, there are some attempts in building peace, but the number of visits of such Facebook profiles are very small" (BA_M_P_3).

Similarly, the role of social media is perceived to be very influential in the society. Nevertheless, the lack of social media literacy among the general public (mostly older generations of users) is considered very dangerous, as many of the users cannot decipher the difference between fake news and more objective news. Consequently, social media illiteracy contributes to interethnic tensions, enables political manipulation and hinders reconciliation.

"All of us today are logged into Social Media platforms, and whatever is on there, we see it as the truth, especially older generations. They don't know about fake news and have no tendency to check the credibility of the sources. Thus, they easily believe some information is true […]." (BA_F_T_8)

Partly, participants have either refrained from answering the question of participation or if they have answered, they did not participate in social media. The few participants that do participate in social media, do so, as they report, very carefully and selectively, so they would not attract any negative attention to their participation. Here, we should also say that social media platforms (such as Facebook and Twitter) are used as a source of information (for example they follow Dnevni Avaz and search for the news on Facebook, not on Avaz's website).

"I'm taking this approach where I talk about reconciliation processes, but I don't write things that would necessarily offend anybody else, because if I have to offend someone, that's just because I'm frustrated, but I don't know that I'm gonna gain anything from that offense. I think it's unnecessary." (BA_M_T_3)

4.7 Bosnia – Overall Remarks

In the early post-war period, it was noted that people in BiH were more optimistic and hopeful about the future. The general mentality was for a collective effort to restore the country and return to life as people had known it before the war. As the political elites held power in both political entities (the Federation of BiH and the Republic of Srpska) and the country by perpetuating the three different streams of nationalist rhetoric (Bosniak, Croat and Serb) and made little effort to improve the state, many people began to lose hope and feel neglected. As discontent grew among the population, interethnic tensions returned, gradually creating a state with three separate nations forced to share one country.

While the younger generations understand the sensitivity of the issue, their opinions on the war are largely influenced by their everyday surroundings. Interestingly, most of the young people's families rarely talk about the war, but their social circles, educational institutions, and work surroundings are virtually relying on the topic of war:

"My dad participated in the War and he tells anecdotes from that period, but we never actually discuss it" (BA_F_T_8).

Furthermore, the younger generations, much like their parents and family, with some exceptions, hang out in same-ethnic groups and shun the other ethnicities for two reasons. First, they personally feel some form of resentment because of what their parents and other family members went through in the war; and second, they fear their parents' reactions when they learn about friends from other ethnic groups. But in all of this, a pattern emerged among respondents of different ethnicities - each group's historical narrative was different from the others.

For those who participated in the war, the trauma is immense. Overall, for each of the people who either fled or fought in the war, there is at least one vivid memory of the war that can be considered a turning point in their lives. Furthermore, the trauma does not stop there, but is passed on to the next generations where children live with parents who suffer from PTSD and have to bear the consequences. Many of them had normalized such behavior and abuse and justified it with the war:

> *"[PTSD] is something that really, really, really damages people, to the point that they think completely illogically in some situations. My – my father has verbally abused me, mentally abused me, financially abused me, emotionally abused me… sometimes, he would even like, pull my hair and hit me in the face, he would abuse my mom in front of me and these kinds of things really affect people, they really, really… it's not easy to go through that, you know." (BA_F_T_7)*

The issue of the Srebrenica genocide is perhaps the most divisive. The Bosniak population is angry because many Bosnian Serbs do not accept the numbers of victims and thus show no respect. In the eyes of the Bosniaks, this trivializes their tragedy.

> *"This [reconciliation] can't happen until Bosnian Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina admit what happened. Until they deny Srebrenica and draw Ratko Mladić on their buildings while presenting him as a hero, we won't get along with each other. "(BA_F_T_13)*

The Serbs, on the other hand, express anger that since Srebrenica was officially declared a genocide by the ICTY, there has been, they argue, a general misunderstanding in the world about Serbia and the Serbs as genocidal.

> *"When it comes to Srebrenica, I believe that there was a crime there, at least one thousand people were killed… at least. But definitely not eight thousand and things like that... […] So, basically, I'm not "a classic Serb" […] who says that there's no genocide, and that there's nothing there besides lies. I say that something happened, as crimes happened in the whole BiH, on every side. […] Of course, on the other side, denying crimes that evidently happened from the Bosniak side, which is currently happening with Dobrovoljačka Street". (BA_M_T_3)*

Bosnian Croats, as the smallest of the three largest ethnic groups (defined as the "constituent peoples" of BiH), are not happy that their victims, lost in the war and killed by both Bosniaks and

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Serbs, are not sufficiently recognized. Thus, the Srebrenica genocide as a whole becomes a traumatic aspect in the lives of each of these groups, but in different ways.

Each of the constituent peoples in the country potentiated their own subjective ideas about war. In the interviews, some participants expressed frustration at having to contend with three existing streams or interpretations of dominant discourses, as well as the nationalist rhetoric that is constantly propagated by the political elites and the media, which is also controlled by the political elites. A common perception among the participants is that the majority of the population is highly susceptible to such rhetoric, which exacerbates inter-ethnic and inter-religious tensions and divisions among the population.

When it comes to administration and justice, there is also much discontent among the participants. In particular, the division of BiH into two entities and three constituent peoples has a huge impact on people's daily lives. This problem then spills over into other elements of life, including the judicial system. Because of the organization into entities and cantons, the flow of information in the judicial system is overly complex and often not effective at all. Most of the comments that have been made regarding the justice system have been about Srebrenica, the victims, and the trials of convicted war criminals. It is said that each of the entities protects its own group members, which ultimately impedes justice.

For many participants, cultural identity is linked to the Balkan region, rather than BiH in particular. This is the only aspect of life where the majority of participants do not distinguish between national groups living in BiH. Nevertheless, language, religion and even economic development differ greatly between people. Although they are practically the same or at least very similar, the language differences between Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian sometimes cause inter-ethnic tensions because language is a strong indicator of one's nationality in the Balkans (Velikonja, 2003; Grodach, 2002). Saying "kafa" instead of "kava" (the Serbian and Croatian word for coffee) can lead to verbal altercations in some cases. The same goes for religion - each of the ethnicities is mentioned interchangeably with the religions associated with that particular ethnicity. The following abstract demonstrates the existence of three imaginary communities in Bosnia that distinguish themselves through language and religion, creating symbolic boundaries that exclude the 'other' through religious and ethnic lines.

> "In other countries, your ethnical and national affiliation is always the same. In our country, this corresponds with your religious affiliation, which is wrong. We should all be Bosnians with different religious affiliation". (BA_F_T_12)

According to Velikonja (2003), Islam, Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism had profound impact on the evolution of the three major national groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina turning religious affiliation into "the badge of nationalism" and nationalism into a "sacred duty" (Velikonja, 2003: 15-16). Almost all participants talked about their disapproval of the political elites in the country, regardless of their personal preference. According to the participants, the political elites in Bosnia-Herzegovina have remained unchanged since the end of the war and are seen as one of the main reasons for the stagnation and lack of progress in the country. The politicians are seen as only there

to either cause incidents among themselves or to constantly manipulate the public by spreading war stories and ideologies. The overall impression regarding political activity and representation of the people is rather negative.

"I don't know, I've finished both high school and almost my college education as well, which lasted a bit less than ten years, and the politicians have remained unchanged, same faces, as if there's no one new […]." (BA_F_T_8)

"I'm not interested in politics either, when you see that here, there are no real politicians. There are no politicians who actually does politics, who is well-read, intelligent, smart, who works for politics, but it's just for the money, to take advantage of being in such position and then run until someone sees what they're doing." (BA_M_P_5)

One of the best indicators of people's sense of economic security is the extent of migration to work and live in other countries, preferably EU countries. As the most desirable destination to live, Germany has become an image of opportunity and high standards. On the other hand, the thought of joining the EU means economic security and even economic growth for most participants. The EU is seen as an institution that would implement standards in BiH that would help the country progress and reach the standards of an average EU country. People have recognized the potential of BiH to be a prosperous country, but they have also said that there must be a third party that invests in the development of the country.

"Whatever you're interested in, you can find in Europe, there's jobs as well. Here, people do whatever they can for 200, 300 Convertible Marks, just to survive today, whereas there, that would be paid much, much better. There're more jobs. Here, there's not enough firms and people who would employ, and that' is." (BA_M_P_5)

"There are institutional mechanisms in Europe that are good, which we can use and learn from them to organize ourselves into a society which will be comfortable to live in and function in." (BA_F_P_2)

"To me, all of the states that are already EU Member States, have much better standards than in those that are not in the EU. They're also well-ordered in every possible sense, more orderly than other states that are not in the EU, and safer as well. We had an opportunity to travel to some countries that are Member States of the EU, so we could see some things regarding organization and social awareness, and how the cities look, and so on… In general, I think that the EU Member States have much better standards than the non-EU countries." (BA_F_T_6)

5. Cyprus

5.1 Cyprus - Brief background of the conflict

The island of Cyprus, which had been under Ottoman rule since 1571, came under British control in the Cyprus Convention of 1878. Crucially, this agreement took place in a historical period that marked the height of both European nationalism (mainly in its Romantic connotations) and European imperialism. In this context, Cyprus would become part of the vast British Empire on the one hand, and an essential part of the Greek world (Hellenism according to the vocabulary of the time) called Megali Idea (the Great Idea) on the other. Cyprus was part of a larger political movement that sought the liberation and unification of all Greeks living under Ottoman rule. Since the epicenter of the Greek world, the Greek state, had been established since 1832, the Greek Cypriots, who formed the majority of the population on the island, demanded enosis, which meant the unification of the island with the "mother state" of Greece. On March 10, 1925, Britain formally declared Cyprus a Crown Colony. In 1931, renewed calls for Enosis from the Greek Cypriots led to the first massive popular uprising, which was violently put down by the British. From then on, Enosis became the main target of the Greek Cypriot community. The 1950s proved pivotal for the future of the island. The efforts for Enosis, culminating in the guerrilla struggle of the EOKA, led to fierce reactions from both the British and Turkish side (Turkish Republic and the Turkish Cypriot community). As a result, the independent Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960 with London-Zurich Agreements (1959).

The independence of 1960 dissolved all hopes of the nationalists of both communities for a double union with the motherland (Enosis - annexation to Greece and Taksim - disunion and separation). T The Greek Cypriot side, despite signing the agreements of independence, proved unwilling to comply with the realities of independence. With Makarios' 'Thirteen Amendments' in 1963 Greek-Cypriots important parts of the constitution of the new state were called into question. As a result, intercommunal violence broke out on the island in the 1960s, culminating in the Turkish invasion of the island in July and August 1974. The invasion, apart from the geographical division of the island, resulted in the displacement of more than 215,000 Greek Cypriots. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that nearly 61,500 Turkish Cypriots had been gradually displaced since the 1950s and the guerilla warfare between the EOKA and the TMT (Turkish Resistance Organization), the pro-partition paramilitary organization founded in 1958 as a counter- organization to the EOKA. The guerrilla war between the two paramilitary organizations had intensified the involvement of Greece and Turkey (the two 'motherlands') on the island and led to the height of nationalism on the island (Papadakis, Peristianis, Welz, 2006).

In 1963, Denktash urged the Turkish Cypriots to move into ghettos (enclaves) (Κτωρής 2013; Tamkoç 1988) to protect themselves from acts of aggression by the Greek Cypriot nationalists. Due to the deterioration of bi-communal relations, the United Nations (UN) unanimously decided in March 1964 to establish the UNFICYP (which still exists in Cyprus today) to prevent the resurgence of hostilities between the two communities and to restore law and order (Vural & Ozuyanik 2008;

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Fisher 2001; Richmond 1999 & 1996; United Nations 1964). In 1967, Grivas (the leader of EOKA), backed up by the military junta in Athens, returned to Cyprus and began his efforts to undermine the Republic of Cyprus (ROC) (Richmond 1999). Enosis and Taksim remained the main aims of the ruling political elite in both communities. From 1968 to 1974, interlocutors from both communities participated in a series of intercommunal talks under the auspices of the UN, but these did not produce any results (Çarkoğlu & Sözen, 2004a; Fisher, 2001). The 1974 coup d'état in Cyprus led to the collapse of the Greek Junta. At the same time, it provided Turkey with the justification for military intervention based on the articles of the Guarantee Treaty. As a result, a de facto partition occurred, which enabled the leader of Turkish Cypriot, Denktash, who always advocated a "two-state solution", to achieve partition (Nuttall C., 2012) and establish the Turkish state North Cyprus in 1983, of which he became the first president. Although the newly established state did not receive international recognition except from Turkey, Denktash considered the issue closed. He often argued that "there is not and never has been a Cypriot nation" (Denktash 1982, 13), but Greeks and Turks are forced to live side by side. "The only thing that is truly Cypriot are Cyprus donkeys," he would say" (Nuttall C., 2012). The Turkish Cypriot leadership focused on cultivating a post-memory based on traumas, killings and atrocities (Greek Cypriots), as well as strengthening the belief in the existence of historical ties with the motherland. On the other hand, the Greek Cypriots started a diplomatic struggle at all levels claiming that it was not an ethnic conflict but an international conflict (OP Richmond, 1999) because of the invasion and presence of Turkish troops in Cyprus.

From 1974 to the present, negotiations to resolve the Cyprus Issue have repeatedly reached an impasse. While negotiations continue, the Cyprus Issue is hampered by an increasingly unstable global and peripheral environment (especially in the Middle East) and an international economic recession that has lasted (and still continues) for almost a decade. In this context, energy issues are intermingled with the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) problem (an issue of utmost importance for a country's national sovereignty), further complicating current discussions for a viable solution in Cyprus.

As an international problem, the Cyprus Issue involves various international actors, but their importance has varied over time. In general, there are five main actors: 1) Britain, 2) Turkey, 3) Greece, 4) the Greek Cypriot community, and 5) the Turkish Cypriot community. During the Cold War and after the Cold War, the United States played (and continues to play) a crucial role in shaping and developing the Cyprus Issue.

Greek Cypriots are the largest ethnic group in Cyprus. During the period of British rule (1878-1959), the Greek Cypriot community identified with the wider Hellenic world and adopted an attitude of romantic nationalism. The basic political goal of the community during these years was enosis with Greece, which automatically meant the end of British rule. Historically, the Greek Cypriot community went through a process of belated nationalism that had its roots in the 19th century. Thus, Greek Cypriots believed that their struggle against British rule and enosis was just in ethical terms: since they constituted the majority of the population on the island, they had the right for

self-determination which, in addition, had been part of the UN Atlantic Charter since 1941. The Turkish invasion in 1974 exacerbated this sense of ethical right (and wrong) on the Greek Cypriot side.

On the other hand, it should be stressed that the Turkish invasion also complicated matters within the Greek Cypriot community; especially on the important issue of ethnic identity. Many Greek Cypriots see themselves as Greeks first and foremost and place little to no value on a Cypriot identity. Others, especially those on the left, prefer to emphasize their Cypriot identity.

Compared to Greek Cypriots, the Turkish Cypriot community is much smaller. Moreover, Turkish nationalism formed much later within the Turkish Cypriot community compared to Greek-Cypriot nationalism. This can be explained by the fact that Turkish nationalism was developed much later, with the Kemalist movement in the early 1920s. A major impetus for Turkish nationalism within the Turkish Cypriot community was given by the intensity of Greek nationalism and the urgent demands for enosis by the Greek Cypriot community. Moreover, the Greek-Cypriot pursuit of enosis, especially in the 1950s, decisively pushed the Turkish Cypriot community to the side of the Turkish state, which acted as a guarantor against Greek Cypriot hostility and political practice. Thus, the fundamental goal of the Turkish Cypriot community was the partition of the island (Taksim). In the period of 1963-1968, Turkish Cypriots were forced to live in enclaves protected by UN forces due to Greek Cypriot aggressiveness. The Turkish invasion of 1974, which resulted in a "transfer" of Turkish Cypriots to the northern part of the island, was welcomed by the Turkish Cypriot community as a "journey to freedom". Throughout the Cyprus Issue period, the aim of the Turkish Cypriot community was/is twofold: to prevent the Enosis of the island to Greece and to protect its interests and security. However, a large number of Turkish Cypriots were deeply dissatisfied with the fact that Turkey exercised absolute political and military control over the Turkish Cypriot community after the Turkish invasion, while a large number of Turkish nationals, mainly from Anatolia, were "resettled" in the occupied areas in the northern part of the island. In this context, Turkish Cypriots were aware that the Republic of Cyprus is the only state officially recognized by the international community, even after the proclamation of Turkish Republic from Northern Cyprus, which is recognized only by Turkey, remains economically isolated and exclusively dependent on Turkey. With regard to national identities, as with Greek Cypriots, there is a range of views within the Turkish Cypriot community. Some Turkish Cypriots see themselves as Turks living in Cyprus. Others see themselves primarily as Cypriots.

As part of the powerful British Empire, Cyprus served Britain's strategic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and symbolized its great power status within the international system. Therefore, until the 1950s, the British refused to withdraw from the island, as such a move would symbolize their dramatic decline as a great power (Britain had withdrawn from India and was humiliated in the 1956 Suez Crisis). To this day, Britain maintains its concrete interests in Cyprus, with British forces stationed in two sovereign bases in Akrotiri and Dhekelia.

5.2 Cyprus – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

Considering the invasion of Cyprus in 1974 as a milestone in the conflict (Turkish Army), it is easy to understand that there are still generations on both sides who either actively participated in the conflict or have vivid memories of that time. Almost everyone on the island has been directly or indirectly affected by the events of 1974. The violence of the pre-conflict and conflict period is well embedded in the minds of participants on both sides.

"She took a white garment, put it through a hole, and began to cry out, 'Do not shoot, we are unarmed, and we are women and children.' Immediately the soldiers broke open the door and entered. They told us, 'Hands up! Come out one at a time'. We got out and they began to brutally beat some of us. A tall man, Giannis Konstantinou was his name, was there with his wife and children. He was wearing gray colored clothes. A poor man, a laborer. They beat him brutally and tore his clothes in front of us. What we had with us, water, and milk, they stepped on them. All the men were beaten up". (CY_F_P_5)

"Fear. Fear of the war. For example, we saw gunfire for months. We saw bullets and bombs. Now it's the technology of pushing a button and not seeing what's being fired. When he fired a machine gun, we saw the Greek Cypriot fall over and drop dead. We were really close to it. We saw the war up close. I hope something like that does not happen again and that our children don't experience a war like that. Because that's a bitter thing. Traumatic events have happened. Some have lost their families, lost young children. 19-year-olds have lost their lives. May there never be another war. May there be peace." (CY_F_P_12)

In contrast to the memories of violence mentioned above, almost everyone remembers a harmonious and peaceful life and coexistence in the time before the conflict, especially in the (then densely populated) rural areas.

"By ourselves (Turkish and Greek Cypriots) we can coexist harmoniously, as we have done in the past. There were two Turkish villages in this area. We had a great time! My father had many Turkish Cypriots as friends and when they needed help, he always helped them. And they would come in return and help him with the harvest. And my father gave them money when they needed it. In those days, you couldn't be afraid. Everything was good." (CY_F_P_1)

"They were very good, they were very good. Actually, my main friends were Turkish Cypriots and not Greek-Cypriots. Especially those Turkish Cypriot girls who worked for us were my best friends. Therefore, because we trusted the Turkish Cypriots and worked with them, we had nothing to fear..." (CY_F_P_3)

"...Besides, the Turkish Cypriots were like brothers with the Greek Cypriots. When Grivas' followers appeared, we came into conflict because of them. For example, my father's partner was a Greek Cypriot, they poured concrete. The whole neighborhood, the children, there was socialization". (CY_F_P_12)

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What is striking, as might be expected, is how different the narratives of the two communities are: For the Greek-Cypriots, the events of 1974 were a total disaster (a sentiment naturally accompanied by a sense of defeat and betrayal), while for the Turkish Cypriots it was a life-saving development that guaranteed their security, a "peace operation." In a long-ago conflict like the Cyprus conflict, where many significant factors are involved, apportioning blame is, as one would expect, very complicated. What is interesting here is that the majority of participants from both communities mentioned the negative role of the EOKA B'[1] and the Greek junta in the conflict. Although the Greek Cypriot participants try to undermine this role (compared to the unequal event of the Turkish Army invasion of the island), it is evident that they acknowledge to a certain point the negative role of the EOKA B' and the nationalist discourse that led to the events of 1974.

> *"In the meantime, on the other side, in ... [name of village inaudible], our military troops advanced and occupied Tristeno. Supposedly, our troops felt like 'heroes' and so they did what they did [.....] The arrogance of those who ruled the country at that time. Also, by those who wanted to gain political power on the island and the hatred among the people because of that. During that time, no one could think of what it would cause. Everyone thought only of themselves without considering what the consequences would be for Cyprus. The actions of EOKA B caused many problems without considering that Turkish Cypriots are also part of this island. They always thought that Cyprus was Greek. Ok, maybe there were Greeks on the island, but so many other people inhabited Cyprus too". (CY_F_P_3)*

> *"But in a military conflict, you can't expect only one side to exercise power; the other side will also exercise power if they have the opportunity; they either exercise power or give up the fight. Greek Cypriots in the north left. They did not have the power to stay because there was also the treachery. All weapons were damaged: those who sought the partition of Cyprus achieved their goal!". (CY_F_P_1)*

> *"Some people had betrayed the Cypriots; that is for sure. We have been waiting for almost 45 years for the 'Cyprus secret files' (Fakelos Kyprou) to be opened to find out what had really happened. They won't find anything because those who betrayed Cyprus have been promoted, they have powerful positions, and they might even be in the government. So [laughs] everything will be forgotten". (CY_F_P_1)*

> *"When I was in 4th grade, in July 1974, the Peace Operation was carried out. In March 1975, after the Peace Operation, we moved to a town in Northwest Cyprus... [Who's to blame?] The South. The Greek Cypriots. They fought among themselves, Makarios and*

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[1] EOKA (National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) was a Greek-Cypriot guerrilla organization that acted against the colonial government in the years 1955-1959. The goal of EOKA was Enosis (Union) with Greece. EOKA II was an underground organization founded in 1971 by General George Grivas, the military leader of EOKA. In collaboration with the Greek junta, it targeted President Makarios. The goal of EOKA II was Enosis with Greece.

Grivas supporters, then they turned on us. We didn't do anything wrong anyway. It was their own problem." (CY_M_P_12)

"Well, the main culprit is mainland Greece. Secondly, it's the Greek Cypriots, that they believed them. Because now they have found out that they can't get along with the mainland Greeks. You know that there are many differences between them. We had much more in common". (CY_M_P_15)

"Now, when you say "the main culprit", we were already in conflict, but with the July 15 that the Greek Cypriots carried out, they wanted to turn Cyprus into ENOSIS, so we had to resist. So when you say "blame", at one point the Greek Cypriots are to blame. We have endured them and in the end, as you know, the island was divided into two, each living on their own side." (CY_M_P_18)

Archbishop Makarios (the then president of Cyprus) is for Greek Cypriots the most important and decisive figure during the conflict. His decisions and the way he handled the situation were of utmost importance for the final outcome of the invasion of '74. Needless to say, their opinions are of course strongly influenced by their ideological orientation, therefore some of them judge him in a negative way, while others consider him a heroic figure.

"My opinion is, and I am not changing it, that the reason for the dramatic events of 1974 was the inability of the Makarios government to enforce law and order in Cyprus. All those who planted bombs...(angry) 'Put them behind bars! Arrest them so they don't multiply!' On the one hand Makarios put these people behind bars and on the other he let them go; because he was the leader of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus. The inability of the government to disarm these people; they let them do whatever they wanted. They threatened and they put bombs everywhere. If a government does not have the courage to confront a difficult and dangerous situation, both they (the government) and the country will collapse. This is the reason why we were destroyed; this is the reason why Cyprus was divided" (CY_F_P_1)

"In 1975, either in January or February. So I went to see Makarios (he was where PIO is now) and as soon as I got there I saw Makarios walking down the stairs. I started crying and got down on my knees. Makarios spoke to the guard and said, 'What does this lady want and you are pushing her back? Let her go now!' I went down on my knees. 'What is your problem?" asked Makarios. 'They killed twelve people from my family, my father, my husband... All of them. Now I live in a house in St Grigorios and they want me to leave this place; and they have cursed you.' He told me, 'I can't believe that such a thing is happening. Listen...' He leaned down, I kissed his hand, he caressed my babies and told me, 'I have a meeting now and I can't be late. Go upstairs where Mr Papadeas' office is and tell him what you just told me so he can write it all down.' Makarios also told me, 'Don't get upset about anything. You will go back to the place where you live now. We will give all these houses to the families of the missing persons' And that is indeed what happened". (CY_F_P_5)

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"Yes, [I blame] Makarios. He tried to stand up against the military dictatorship in Greece. Actually, since 1973 there was supposed to be a coup anyway, but they delayed it for a year. In an overnight he wanted to expel all Greek officers from the island to send them back to Greece. He couldn't do something like that. I believe that the Greek junta had come to terms with Turkey for the first round only" (CY_F_P_4)

The Missing persons' issue is of enormous importance to some participants, especially on the Greek-Cypriot site. This makes sense, since most of the issue arose from the invasion of Turkish Army on the island in 1974. A smaller part of the problem also affects Turkish Cypriots, (mainly due to events that occurred in the period before the conflict), but one gets the feeling that it is not emphasised as much by the Turkish Cypriots, compared to its priority for the Greek Cypriot site. In any case, the severity depends on whether or not the missing persons issue relates to the personal/family level. But on a broader collective level, it is evident to the Greek Cypriot site that greater symbolic value is ascribed to the missing persons issue than to those who have lost their lives - and, at least for the Greek Cypriot site, this value transcends generations.

"When I say as Greek Cypriot, 'The Turks killed us,' the Turks also have missing persons, and they also say, 'Greek Cypriots killed us.' But not everyone is the same. We should distinguish between those who did what they did and the rest, we have to understand and support each other" (CY_F_P_5)

"We have about 2-3 missing persons from Lapithos. One was identified two years ago, he was shot and they threw him in a burrow. There were also about 6-7 people, I don't remember exactly, who were trapped in Lapithos." (CY _F_P_2)

"The stories were mostly about people who had died or those who were considered missing persons. More specifically, I heard stories about Asia, where there were the most people who are now considered missing. One can understand from the stories that everyone was concerned about finding the people of Peristera; and today we learn that their bodies were found in water wells. There were about 90 people from Peristera who were never found, and that is why it was so important for the community to learn about them." (CY_M_T_8)

"Yes, this woman came to our school with photographs of her family members, and she was wearing black clothes and crying. All the students were crying and we were worried and moved about what happened. What worried us the most was that people were becoming refugees, that there were missing people, and that there were still people crying for their family members who were missing during that time. We were in first grade in elementary school. Even our teacher was crying". (CY_F_T_7)

For almost everyone on the island, the Turkish invasion was a life-changing event. Thousands of refugees moved hopelessly from north to south and, on a much smaller scale, vice versa. Infrastructures and life support systems were either completely destroyed and had to be repaired for a long time or had to be rebuilt on a makeshift basis from the beginning. The island's economy

and productive fabric were badly shaken and on the verge of collapse. The road "back to normality" was a long one for almost everyone.

"I remember there was chaos for those who wanted to get an exit permit from Nicosia. We wanted to study abroad and we needed an exit permit [...] The refugees lived in tents near carob trees and pines. They were also living in the military bases [...] My family was in the military bases because there was nothing else in Mersini. The Turks were very angry with the people in Mersini". (CY_F_P_4)

"I remember there was a day when I had no money to buy milk and bread for my babies! I remember I was sitting out on the porch thinking, 'What are my babies going to eat today?' There was a woman, her name was Maria Karanika, God Bless her! There was a group of women from Ammochostos, and they told me, 'We are trying to help families that have   problems because of the Turkish invasion. We will give you some money to make ends meet'. They gave me five Cypriot pounds; five Cypriot pounds for me! I bought food and milk for my babies. My babies arrived without shoes and [inaudible 50:42] a shoemaker gave them shoes. I praise the Lord! [Crying]We bought clothes, shoes, and in the end we got houses too; these do not belong to us! It is not our place here, but … Our husbands never came, our houses and villages they did not give them back …" (CY_F_P_5)

"Yes, it was hard [to adapt to the new situation] because we were back to square one. Because our parents, our mother and fathers, were also zeroed out because of the wars in 1963. The Cypriot community, I mean the Turkish Cypriot community, became even poorer converting their money in 1963. So this was the second blow, between 63 and 74 they got poorer and poorer, and in the 80s it started to get better." (CY_F_P_12)

"The biggest problems that society experienced was displacement, there was the problem of displacement, plus employment. I mean, being cut off from one place and coming to another, settling down in a house, then- Well, I'm speaking in general, at some level I must have created some job opportunities as a university graduate, but for others there were some problems." (CY_F_P_18)

5.3 Cyprus – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

The family is, by and large, the main source of information about the conflict - and this despite the fact that a large number of respondents with transmitted experience mentioned that the conflict is not often discussed in their family environment.

"At home, because my mother is a refugee, I can tell you she never talks about the invasion, many refugees I know too. Growing up, I started asking her about the invasion, but she usually speaks in a fragmented, descriptive way because she doesn't want to describe her experiences and pain." (CY_F_T_6)

"No. We don't talk about it much, just sometimes when we're ungrateful my dad brings it up, you know, like where he's from and what he's been through, what real suffering is and what real problems are, but it's not a topic that we bring up every day and it's not kind of pressurized on us or pinpointed" (CY_F_T_13)

"But in general, none of my grandfathers want to talk about what happened in 1974 because it's a taboo subject for them. Maybe the first time my grandfathers talked about 1974 was when I was fifteen years old because they don't like to talk about what happened." (CY_F_T_7)

"My family definitely, alongside the experiences that I had through my family. It falls under the edification that you have by your family, the experiences and the sensibilities" (CY_M_T_10)

The present contact between the two communities has improved compared to the pre-2004 period, but it is striking that the transmission of the experience of conflict from previous generations still has a great influence and shapes the "impressions" (or even the stereotypes) one has against the other. In this way, feelings of suspicion, fear and mistrust are perpetuated, making any efforts at reconciliation even more difficult. The situation is so polarized that there is no longer room for a "cypriotic nationalism': the ethnic community identity (Greek/ Turkish Cypriot) still outweighs a national (Cypriot) identity. Optimistic forecasts for the future are therefore not permitted.

"But, well, the first time it was accompanied by the sense of... You know"stay away from the Turks" "They did this to us in 1974," and they did the invasion and took the island and they are dangerous and they cannot be trusted. I mean, not perhaps in the exact words, I think the main feeling I can recall from that is the sense of, "stay away from that community that committed these atrocities and inflicted the suffering on our people [....] So, of course leads to this kind of polarization, the separation of the two communities, and of course you feel like in a way I would be doing something wrong if I were to go and try to become friends with   the Turkish Cypriots [...] In the case of Cyprus, we don't really see much of nationalism in the sense of "I am a Cypriot". We don't really see that. much. We see more of a sense of "I am a Greek", "I am a Turk", and okay, from my experience especially the "I am a Greek" part. And yes, there are many young people who willingly take that on" (CY_F_T_9)

"...we all experienced ethnic discrimination in the South one way or another, those of us who were Turkish Cypriots, and for many of us It led to what I would term a "healthy skepticism" of the Intentions of Greek Cypriots, and like, it definitely discarded the opinion that I used to have that, you know, "Cypriots are meant to live together, the South doesn't hate us, that's just propaganda." I found out that that was wrong very firsthand, they clearly - some of them hate the shit out of you. That definitely influenced my opinions, because like I said, I carry a very significant amount of skepticism when it comes to reunification because I simply don't think the other side would want that at all,

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because they don't like us. You wouldn't share your house with roaches. It's kind of how they see you. So..." (CY_M_T_14)

School and education in general do not seem to be the primary source of information. Neither side has a well-structured and engaging curriculum that relates to the conflict period. For the Greek Cypriot side, the burden is largely on teachers who are individually responsible for talking to students about the conflict (usually according to their individual views). It was clearly stated by the majority of respondents that the overall approach promotes ethnocentrism, fear of the opponent, victimhood, negativity and mistrust on both sides.

"In elementary school, we never learned in detail of what had happened. When we went to high school, we learned what had happened. Actually, we never learned in detail about 1974 through our teachers [...] our teachers never talked to us directly about 1974. They did not give us a common and specific narrative about what happened in 1974." (CY_M_T_8)

"They told us that there was a Turkish invasion of Cyprus and that Turkey occupied half the island [...] there was really no reference to what was before 1974 and in general to the historical events of that time [...] I was shocked, we felt that Turkey was the main enemy spreading destruction. This is a feeling I have had for many years." (CY_F_T_6)

"It was from a teacher who was a refugee and was very emotional about it. I remember that her crying when she talked to us about the places in the North. In this way she also passed this thing on to us". (CY_M_T_8)

It seems that the "dominant/official narrative" about the conflict for each side is not promoted through school textbooks or the organized educational curriculum, but rather through a series of symbolic actions and commemorative events. These actions seem to be very effective, as almost all interviewees mentioned them on both sides. The symbolic effect of these actions is so strong that educators are not allowed to openly express a contrary opinion.

Education is a key factor in the creation and maintenance of collective memory. However, in the post-confrontational era, a different emphasis is placed on the role of education. This reveals a significant gap between theory and practice. The educational curricula of both sides have not been developed with the aim of building peace. On the contrary, they have contributed - in a rather instrumental way - to the perpetuation of bigotry, prejudice, fear and stereotypes between the two sides. Education has the power to either defuse or exacerbate conflict. In the case of Cyprus, education supports the conflict through the divisive dialectic it uses, the main purpose of which is to achieve the goals of both sides. The divisive methods used by the official narrative aim to (a) construct the 'other' based on the actions of the 'other', which highlights the importance of collective memory for present and future actions, (b) construct history by evoking emotions, and (c) construct the 'other' as an 'other' who is blamed for the current situation. In this way, an ideolgical conflict is maintained through which each side attempts to counterpose its own alibi to

that of the "other." The failure to establish an official history that exposes the wrongdoings and acknowledges the suffering of both communities is a sine qua non for reconciliation.

"I can't remember if we've watched any videos about it, I'm pretty sure we did. We've seen the pictures, the famous ones [...] the bathtub.2 We've also seen the picture of the whole village3". (CY_M_T_11)

"I also remember some demonstrations when I was in primary school, like the day of the pseudo-state4, when we demonstrated with the slogan "Turks out of Cyprus". (CY_F_T_7)

"Maybe it was in history class because we referred to Cyprus and we participated in national commemorations back then. I mean, my generation was used to participate in national commemorations at school [...] More specifically, the most important thing was the slogan 'I don't forget and I keep on fighting' [...] National commemorations and celebrations, or texts and poems that we read or learned at school. There were also some commemorations organized by the refugees, where songs were sung by different choirs; these songs were about Ammochostos, Keryneia." (CY_M_T_8)

"I remember a very minimal reference by the school and my teachers; although when this happened it was always accompanied by a sense of fear of saying something or avoiding saying too much [...] Teachers felt uncomfortable raising the issue or saying something that crossed the line, or they were afraid to express their own views. I felt like there was always a sense of "this is a forbidden topic to discuss" just because they didn't want to show their own views on the situation." (CY_F_T_9)

"For example, the philologists at the lyceum have some knowledge, but they are afraid to disagree and express a different opinion that may be different from the dominant and from the curriculum they have to follow" (CY_F_T_6)

It is obvious that there is not a commonly accepted "narrative" about the conflict – and that stands for both sides. For Greek Cypriots narratives are heavily influenced by the ideological point of view one has and for Turkish Cypriots it is evident that there are differences between the Turkish Cypriots originated from Cyprus and Turkish Cypriots originated from Turkey (when their families

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2 In an upsurge of ethnic violence that began on December 21, 1963, two women and three children were murdered in the bathroom of their Nicosia home, where they had been hiding from Greek Cypriot militants. The house has been turned into a museum displaying pictures and stories published in international newspapers about the atrocities committed by Greek Cypriot during and after 1963. The Turkish Cypriot committee that set up the place called it: 'Museum of Barbarism'. School visits there are regular and compulsory.

3 Mass executions of Turkish Cypriots by Greek Cypriot extremists took place in 1974, in the villages of Maratha, Aloa, Sandallaris and Tochni.

4 Refers to the demonstrations organised every year by the Greek-Cypriots on the anniversary of the so-called "declaration of independence" of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' from the Republic of Cyprus on 15 November 1983 by the Turkish Cypriot Parliament.

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transported to the north of Cyprus mainly in order to change the demographics of the Island on the island). Therefore, at any given occasion in both sides, the issue is a cause of heated debates.

"Yes, I remember, for example, the celebrations for the independence of Cyprus and the demonstrations against the pseudo state; the students were divided, depending on their ideological background. Some held Greek flags, others Cyprus flags, still others held the flags of Grivas and Hammerheads and were extremely identified based on their incomplete knowledge on the subject." (CY_F _T_6)

"It was actually during a lecture in the university, I was studying in a university here, and we had a lot of Turkish citizens... and I'm not sure in which class it came up, but it was about these events and I had a really big argument with one of the Turkish citizens because, I don't know how to put it, but he was putting down the Turkish Cypriots like we couldn't defend our country and "we had to come and save you [....]Yeah, the typical, stuff and "your blood couldn't even fill your flag" [...] the Turkish Cypriots blood couldn't fill their flag, that's why it's more white than red" (CY_F_T_13)

"I remember some of the people had a hatred for it. I remember some of my friends actually having hatred for these people, having arguments and the teacher trying to calm things down all the time, like "Stop fighting. These are the events that happened. You need to learn these things, it's your lecture, and you need to know the history. So don't argue about it and don't break your heart arguing about it," because every time this topic came up, there was a huge argument in class between my friends. Like, people can have different opinions about it, but at that age they took it too far [...] can't remember exactly, but some of them were offended by being called "Turkey-Lovers", the other side was offended by being called "Greek-Lovers", Cypriot Greeks. So both sides were sort of deserters or traitors ..." (CY_M_T_11)

"Like, my class was neatly divided into these two views that I talked about before, the ones that want peace and the ones that kind of want separation because they don't really trust the other side [...] all the time. Everybody did, all the time. Even the shyest person in the classroom would have a different opinion. That's just the way it is. Heated topic, pretty good topic..." (CY_M_T_14)

It is worth mentioning here that the Turkish Cypriot respondents pointed out the frequent changes in the history books of the Turkish-Cypriot Community in the north of the island - changes that depend on the respective changes of government and on whether the respective government ideologically takes a "hard line" towards Greek Cypriots or wants to strengthen the reconciliation efforts.

"As far as I can remember the courses we were taught in secondary school, history lessons from the books. I even remember that we had to take Cyprus history two or three times, and each time it was different, like the events, but different ways of looking at the events. So that was the most interesting part. I mean, the dates and people were

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the same, but the way the authors of the books looked at the events was different [...] one of the books was very nationalistic, I can remember how one side was portrayed as evil and the other as suffering. The other one was more natural, so it was more evenly portrayed [...] if I remember correctly, I had two history teachers in high school that I remember well. So, we had two different books taught by the same teacher in two different years, and I remember feeling like, you know, you're learning a subject that you already know, but after someone tells you something about that subject, you feel like you've turned 180 degrees, like you have no idea about the subject. I had Cyprus history, I was like "I already know the events that happened" but after the second one I was like "Oh, I didn't really know what happened" so I felt confused. Two different books given by the same lecturer, you know, the elections, the ministries and the government change every four years, I think it was a change in the education system...". (CY_M_T_11)

While both sides seem to adopt a very cautious attitude towards the other group, they almost unanimously agree that frequent contact with the other group on a day-to-day basis is the only way to reduce prejudice and eliminate stereotypes on both sides. A large number of respondents point to personal experiences of contact with members of the other group and (surprisingly) to the fact that they have not found the differences they were absolutely convinced existed.

"I actually remember a scene in the Uni. like, walking in one of the student area, like, it's a place where there are cafes where students sit and chill, and there was this group of 30 people, all in gray tracksuits, and they were sitting on the other side of the chair talking with their coffees in their hands, I thought, "Oh! Cypriots!", i was still thinking they were Turkish Cypriots, but learned that day that they were Greek Cypriots, some of them were Greeks too, not Cypriots, but Greeks. I would say in high school that if that happened they would kill me." (CY_M_T_11)

"On a sociological level, I think it's ridiculous what's happening. It's ridiculous that there are closed barricades, and you can't engage with the people you live in the same place with. (CY_F_T_6)

"Once I went to the camp where there were and Turkish Cypriots and I realized that we are much the same with these people. We have a lot in common and the things that connect us are more than the things that divide us. Just as we want a sustainable solution to the Cyprus problem, they also need the same and they don't want to be dependent on Turkey. They are also suffering; we should not think that the Turkish Cypriots are the ones who hold the 37 percent of our island." (CY_F_T_7)

"Before I first met Turkish-Cypriots of my age, I didn't know what they were like. When you are 9 years old, you don't know what a Turkish-Cypriot is. You think they are Turks from Turkey. Later, when I was a teenager, I had more nationalistic views. I was discouraged by my parents from getting involved in more radical groups, and I had arguments with my parents when they became more open-minded while I was in the

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radicalization phase [...] When I grew older and studied abroad, I met for the first time Turkish-Cypriots properly[...] When I went to study, I happened to meet many Turkish Cypriots. For example, smoking cigarettes outside a café. There was then a table where Greek-Cypriots sat and one with Turkish-Cypriots. It was like the situation in Cyprus; the café was like Cyprus, and you would see 10 Cypriots smoking cigarettes outside. You would recognize each other, greet each other in Greek, and you knew who the nationalists were [...] There were also Turkish Cypriots who spoke some Greek, went to our parties, participated in Erasmus projects with Greek-Cypriots and some even attended the Greek Nights. And you see the same thing in Cyprus, where there is a small group of Turkish-Cypriots who are very friendly to Greek-Cypriots." (CY_M_T_10)

"Young people don't know what a Turkish Cypriot means! It happened once that a Turkish Cypriot woman called Ayssan joined us in a restaurant. While she was leaving, me and some friends of mine entered the restaurant. Me and Ayssan hugged and kissed and I introduced her to my friends. After Ayssan left, the thirty-year-old daughter of my friends said to me, 'Is that Ayssan?' I replied, 'Yes' - 'Is she Turkish Cypriot?' - 'Yes, she is' - 'So this is what Turkish Cypriots look like?' (laughs ironically) - 'What did you expect them to have horns? Turkish Cypriots are people too!' I always tell this story because it illustrates the problem." (CY _F_P_3)

Social interaction seems to mirror the classroom environment, as mentioned earlier when discussing the issue of conflict: strong opposing views, often extreme, lead to (sometimes serious) internal conflict in the social environment. A number of respondents said that one way of dealing with disagreements that do not go all the way is to silence the issue of "agreeing to disagree".

"Yes. We agree to disagree, and if it gets to the point where we start arguing, I would probably end (the conversation)." (CY_F_T_13)

"Yeah, we've broken friendships because we've had disagreements. I'm always in favor of my generation inheriting what our families believed and we didn't live the events." (CY_F_T_6)

"We discuss sometimes, but very rarely. A friend of mine I know, we don't agree; about how we see the world, how we want the world to be and what the solution to the Cyprus problem is, we don't agree either. But we talk very little and on a descriptive level." (CY_F_T_7)

"It's very different. I have friends who don't like Greek Cypriots at all. I have friends who don't ... I wouldn't call their opinion a "dislike," but rather it's this healthy skepticism that I carry. I have friends who want reunification at any cost. I have friends who don't like the Turks, so they like Greek Cypriots". (CY_M_T_14)

5.4 Cyprus – Gender

Gender differences are evident in the participants' interviews. Male members of the group with personal experience who had actively participated in the battlefield tend to focus more on military details of the conflict period. On the other hand, female members of the same group are either trying to survive by being caught in the middle of the conflict or trying to live up to expectations as caretakers and keepers of a basic sense of everyday normality.

"The next day they came and gathered us all together in the churchyard nearby. All the women and children. They separated the men and put them elsewhere. They took us to the port, the Limassol, its old location is now a marina, they separated all the men, women and children and lined them up. They put a machine gun between us". (CY_F_P_12)

"In another case, they gave a broom to one Greek Cypriot to mop the Turkish Cypriot neighborhood. I and some other women accompanied her. An old Turkish Cypriot woman came out of her house to bring us some water, as it was August and very hot, and when she put out her hand to give me water, a soldier came and hit her hand with a stick and said, 'They are not allowed to drink water,' and pushed her away. She went away crying." (CY_F_P_3)

"You don't think about anything during that time. You try to survive". (CY_F_P_5)

"My mother was crying all day and I was trying to survive at school". (CY_F_P_3)

A recurring and spontaneously mentioned theme, mostly from the site Greek Cypriot, is that of sexual violence during the conflict. Although none of the interviewees had personally been the victim of such an act of sexual violence, individual participants indicated that they had witnessed such incidents directly or indirectly at first hand.

"The next time they decided to take us to Tetrakomo. It was known that in Tetrakomo We heard that women were raped there... I was very young at the time and I didn't know what rape was [...] The Red Cross came and took me to a clinic that, I later learned, took people who were in the enclave for medical examination. I was alone in a room, sitting on a table; a woman came with a notebook and said to me: (speaking louder, emphatically and ironically to emphasise the woman's indifferent attitude) 'Did they rape you?' I replied hesitantly, 'What'? She said impatiently: 'Girl, did the Turks rape you'? I told her hesitantly, 'No'. She said impatiently, 'Now come on! Is it true that they did not rape you?' I stood still. She left and another woman came in; she was calmer. She followed the normal procedure; she wrote my name down, she asked me if I had any relatives, etc." (CY_F_P_3)

"The Turkish soldiers brought an English woman there with her baby. His legs were bleeding, so they told her to stay with us. My niece asked her, 'What happened? Why are you like this?' She replied, 'I was with my husband and we went to a house. I was wearing my nightgown and a woman gave me the clothes I am wearing now. The Turks

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ordered us to surrender and my husband refused. The Turks entered the house and shot him; but he is not dead, he is wounded. I was mistreated by many' [...]I tried to get him, but as I was also holding my daughter, I could not. A young woman came and told me: 'Leave Costas to me. I will go and get him'. She went to get my child, but as soon as she held him, a Turkish soldier dragged the child out of her hands and then molested him. Just like dogs!". (CY_F_P_5)

There was a woman dressed in black, about mid-50s, and a woman who was raped, and she was covered in blood; I'll never forget those two women. They brought all these people in buses, they took them out of the buses, they walked about 20-30 metres and came to us. We had army trucks and we helped them...The woman couldn't sit down and I told her, 'Please, sit down', I hadn't noticed...And she started cursing, 'There were 20 from the front and 20 from the back', I swear that's what she said. The murders of Romanou were also carried out by Turkish Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were also the ones who continued to rape." (CY_M_P_4)

Women mostly had the role of passive bystanders to the conflict, but in a number of incidents reported by the interviewees, women had the courage to lead the situation in order to survive, and did not even hesitate to confront weapons. The same courage and strength were also shown when they were the ones who had to find ways to cope with everyday life after the conflict ended, as they had almost no resources.

"My mother insisted: 'Giorgos won't go. Wherever he is I will also be there. You won't separate us. You will leave us here.' So they let us there [...] My mother realized that as our fellow villager translated he was omitting some things. So my mother started to speak to him in Turkish. When my mother started speaking in Turkish the Chief's mood changed; it was like when you give sweets to a baby and calms down…He said to my mother: 'Where did you learn Turkish?' My mother replied: 'We live together with Turkish Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots work for me'". (CY_M_P_4)

"One day they came to our house. My husband was participating in the war. Everybody was called into arms and they went to the war. We were at the veranda in our house and I was holding my son, who was a baby. They came and they opened the door and they wanted to get two little children because, they claimed that these two children had laid two posters of Makarios. And I intervened and I threw them out. I did not let them come inside. They threatened me with a gun but I was not scared. I pushed them and pushed them and finally managed to get them out. I turned to one of them and I told him (angrily): 'If you are a man go there to stop the Turks, who slaughter people, who plunder, who kill'. If I did not show to him that I was not scared, he could have killed me. I continued: 'Are you not ashamed of yourselves?' And I spat on him. He left". (CY_M_P_1)

"I remember that there was a day that I did not have money to buy milk and bread for my babies! I remember I was sitting outside at the veranda and I was thinking: 'What

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will my   babies eat today?' There was a group of women from Ammochostos[5] and they told me: 'We   try to help families that have problems due to the Turkish invasion. We will give you some money so as to get by'. They gave me five Cypriot pounds; Five Cypriot pounds for me! I bought food and milk for my babies. My babies arrived without shoes and a shoemaker gave   them shoes. I praise the Lord! [Crying] We bought clothes, shoes and in the end we also got   houses; these do not belong to us! It is not our place here but…Our husbands never came, our houses and villages they did not give them back…" (CY_M_P_5)

A number of respondents reported that men were more active in engaging and discussing the issue of conflict than women. Some suggested that this is related to understandings of masculinity (implying a conflictual worldview) and femininity (implying a more emotional worldview and avoidance of tension). However, the issue of relationships between the two communities also concerns women, albeit in a perhaps less extroverted way. Female interviewees from both communities indicated that they are actively involved in inter-community reconciliation activities.

"Yes, I think the males are more kind of patriotic and more like nationalistic compared to the females [...] I don't know, probably because they've been passed down stories and, you know, they usually kind of represent manhood and strength and being a soldier etc. being strong and brave. I think they'll probably be fed more of that when they're children, or teenagers, compared to females who look more vulnerable, more innocent and more kind of like the victim […] Because what we've been explained and the stuff that we've learned from, the wars, the stories that were passed down, was that women were not soldiers, they would   either be raped or they'd be killed, and they were mostly hiding throughout the war, or at least if there were some brave women, they would do more domestic stuff like cooking or nursing or looking after the children which makes them more of a victim because they were the ones afraid when the men were out there fighting". (CY_F_T_13)

"They were males and I am female.. Ok I didn't get angry alone with them...However, is that I understand where we lead at the end of the day and ok there were extreme and conflict in their dialogue and in their tone of voice with a characteristic type of speech. They were trying to impose their opinions by shouting. Ok it was very bad because I don't like shouting and it affect me at emotional level. I like to discuss with a good dialogue ok yes, but in decent and mature frames. I am 22 years old and i believe that is not appropriate for me to shout". (CY_F_T_7)

"The women are more, as far as the majority is concerned, are more passive, they don't want to talk about it, the men are more hateful, feel more hatred towards the other side." (CY_M_T_11)

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[5] Famagusta

"Yes, the women are peace loving and the men want to fight. It's really like that. For example, all my friends - it's not that I don't have male friends who don't want reunification, I do, but all my female friends from school want reunification." (CY_M_T_14)

"So, there were many times that I participated in bi-communal projects and my grandparents were like, "Oh, you're going to go there with them?" or they told my mom and dad, "You're really going to let her go to the other side? Is it safe for her?" (CY_F_T_9)

It seems that the majority of the women who have had personal experience of conflict prefer to maintain a non-engagement approach, at least in the domestic environment. Exceptions to this pattern are two female interviewees who adopt a more active/militant and extroverted stance due to their personal interest in the missing persons issue.

"My mum doesn't really talk about it. I haven't really heard her side of the story". (CY_F_T_13)

"I grew up in a house where my father had a stronger opinion. My mother didn't usually

participate in political discussions because she didn't want to berate [...] In our house, because my mother is a refugee, I can tell you that she never discusses the invasion, like many refugees I know too." (CY_F_T_6)

5.5 Cyprus – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

There is a visible divergence in respondents' views of the EU. The majority of Turkish Cypriots view the EU not only positively, but as an ultimate goal that must be achieved at all costs - even against Turkey's will. In contrast, Greek Cypriots express a more cautious (and sometimes even negative) view of the EU, under the impact of the recent financial crisis and the imposition of direct cuts on clients' bank accounts ("bail in" of deposits), but also of the financial memoranda and the subsequent surveillance period - events for which a large part of Greek Cypriot public opinion clearly blames the EU.

"In truth, I believe that we didn't deserve this life. Now I'm 55 years old, every day we wanted something to get better, wanted to see some improvement, we waited for this since our childhood, now I'm in my mid 50's and it didn't happen. We want to become European for the sake of our children. We want to live in our own world, how should I say, in freedom. Here we do live to but knowing that we have darkness ahead. Because we have no opportunities. We couldn't even make it into the European Union. Whatever Turkey says happens and we have to obey. We want an opening up to Europe, for our children, for them to be able to see ahead". (CY_F_P_12)

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"Umm, the golden land, the Promised Land, the place whose walls only let a select few inside and the rest are left to rot on the outside. That's Europe for you-for us". (CY_M_T_14)

"In economy I don't know if Europe helped us; neither with memorandums solves nor anything crucial". (CY_F_T_7)

"The Euro. It is a currency that serves the interest of only one country: Germany". (CY_M_T_8)

The complexity of events associated with political, economic and social developments in the EU, and the interests at stake, is a volume of information that is almost unmanageable for the average citizen. This leads to an overall picture of a weakened and problem-ridden EU that cannot live up to expectations.

"The purpose is just a union of European states in order for peace to be preserved. In financial terms we know what it means to join the EU! Greece pay the price, Cyprus follows, the Italians support Greece, the Greeks support the EU…I do not know…It is a vicious circle. The British abandon the EU. If the EU exists only for the interests of certain people then Europe will not be united". (CY_M_P_2)

"What I believe? Finally, I believe that our expectations were more than what Europe offered us and I don't know if is the Europe of the people or.. Basically, no I know; is not a Europe of people, it's a Europe of Capitals and of richer, fraudster's people as it's now, unfortunately…" (CY_F_T_7)

"When the European Union was formed we had high hopes that it will offer and help people. But, unfortunately, until now various powers that do not want the strengthening of the EU undermine it; and the EU does not realize that it is undermined and is weakened". (CY_F_P_1)

Both sides are dissatisfied or frustrated with the EU for different reasons. Both sides feel that their expectations of the EU are not being met because the EU is either weak or indifferent to the problems they face. This sense of displeasure with the EU is reflected in their views on whether they believe the EU is part of their individual and cultural identity (whether they actually feel 'European'). Greek Cypriots feel let down after pinning their hopes for a solution to the Cyprus problem on the EU and wanting to return to their lands and homelands from which they fled in '74. For the Turkish Cypriots, irrespective of the fact that the EU is (or should be) the ultimate goal, their feeling of having been abandoned by the EU is evident, as they remained for decades in a regime of non-recognition of their statehood and, consequently, in a blurred status quo regarding their formal "identity".

Once upon a time we believed that Europe would help us but now, I think, also needs some help [laughing]. Now that we know more of the ways Europe functions I do not think that there are many chances that Europe could help us […] when we realize the

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ways that Europe functions I think that we only dream. Since Europe cannot intervene and defend a weak country, how can we expect anything from Europe?" (CY_F_P_3)

"But at the end of the day what is the European Union? What is the purpose of joining the EU? To get some benefits? Or to contribute?" (CY_M_P_2)

"I have the Schengen visa, so legally I'm European enough. But do I feel European? No. I feel abandoned by Europe, I'm like the orphan that they gave up for - No, not the orphan, I'm like the black kid they gave up for adoption, because they're ashamed of. That's what Turkish Cypriots are; we've completely been abandoned by Europe […] so, if we're going to boil It down to a Schengen visa, I have one, so I'm European.". (CY_M_T_14)

"How can I feel European? I am in my country and I do not have basic human rights; I do not have my house, I cannot go and pray in the church of my village. What kind of European am I? Europe should have safeguarded all those rights. Supposedly they are safeguarded; I do not see something like that. I am forcefully against Europe". (CY_F_P_5)

As is to be expected after all the above, national identity prevails over European identity for the vast majority of respondents. However national identity is not an easy topic in Cyprus. Interestingly, a number of participants mentioned that they tend to refer to themselves in public as 'Cypriots' rather than Turkish or Greek Cypriot. They would only specify if they were Greek or Turkish Cypriots if asked specifically. Many of the respondents who expressed a negative attitude towards the EU also said that they did not culturally identify with Europe as much, as they were closer to the cultures of the South-Eastern Mediterranean or even Middle East.

"Yes I do [feel European], as another identity which isn't above my national identity [...] I believe that you shouldn't put the European identity above the national". (CY_M_T_10)

"I'm a Cypriot. That's what I tell. I don't say I'm a Turkish Cypriot or I'm Turkish. I'm a Cypriot. Like, my culture is very close with Greek Cypriots, like we drink same coffee, we have the same lifestyle, ok I have similarities with a Turkish person as well, but I feel more similar to a Cypriot". (CY_M_T_11)

"Well from the very simple of the common language elements, for the culture, the fact that our both dialects which are both different from the mainland Greek and mainland Turkey. The… and even other staff, I mean if you put a Greek Cypriot with a Turkish Cypriot next to each other it would be very, very difficult to choose who the Greek Cypriot is and who is the Turkish Cypriot. And the culture, the traditions, the songs, there are many common elements in a way. So for me saying I am a Greek Cypriot, what's the point? So it would only be if someone asks me which side are you, in that case it would be like, yeah they want me to clarify if I am a Turkish Cypriot or a Greek Cypriot. I won't

really answer "I am a Greek Cypriot" by instinct. And as for the European part I mean it is clear". (CY_F_T_9)

"Me personally no... Since I am not a European; I am a Levantine. I think that is what most of the Cypriots feel as well. Just like the Lebanese, the Syrian…I will not say the Egyptian. Our mentality is different from the Europeans". (CY_M_P_4)

"No [I don't feel European] because I am not European, my way of life, my culture…I am not European. I am a Levantine that is how I feel […] I eat more food, I smoke and I am more cordial than Europeans. I met many people from Europe because I was an Erasmus student. We are very different. For example, I hug and kiss my friend; they are more restrained. We live differently. For example, my dream is to have a land which I could cultivate, they dream of working in a big company. Our targets are different from Europeans". (CY_M_T_8)

Both sides accuse the EU of inaction as regards its contribution to the solution of the Cyprus problem. Both sides consider that the EU does not exhaust the possibilities of intervention at a practical level, but merely either has observer status or makes encouraging statements whenever a new rapprochement is attempted. Both sides would like the EU to intervene more dynamically.

"Just conveniently watching on the outside, they don't do nearly enough". (CY_M_T_14)

"I won't make any comment on Cyprus because Europe has never done anything about Cyprus; on the contrary they harmed us. It has never imposed its will. Whatever we negotiate with Turkish Cypriots Europe says 'Ok, good work, do it'. All European announcements regarding the Cyprus dispute are identical: 'Yes, we hope and we will contribute for a just and viable solution…blah, blah, blah'… For four years the same things! Sometimes I wonder aren't they bored to say the same things? They do nothing at all". (CY_M_T_8)

"Also, maybe I don't feel European because we didn't take enough support from Europe. I believe that Europe didn't help Cyprus enough for example in Cyprus problem". (CY_M_T_7)

5.6 Cyprus – Media

Few participants with personal experience of the conflict said they had had a TV device in '74. The vast majority cited the radio as their main source of information in conjunction with newspapers[6]. Radio fulfilled the need for immediate access to information in times of crisis, even for those who

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[6] The publication of the Greek-Cypriot newspapers (with the exception of Machi (battle) – the mouthpiece of the putschists) stopped after 20th July 1974, because of the censorship imposed by the putschists. The publication resumed on August 2nd, 1974 after the efforts made by the then acting president of the RoC, Glafkos Clerides.

were on the battlefield. For Greek Cypriots in particular, radio news additionally served to boost morale, often at the expense of the accuracy of the information conveyed[7].

> *"My brother, I will never forget it, was all the time on the radio, as we all were, very nervous, in order to listen to the news and be informed of what was happening [...] We could only listen to RIK or Bayrak, from which the only thing you could listen to was, 'We threw the enemy into the sea!' [Ironically] Bayrak claimed that it was broadcasting from the seabed! And we were counting the Turkish airplanes that were shot down by our military and we were wondering: 'When are they going to run out?'". (CY_F_P_3)*

> *"Of course we did but the radio did not say anything. They did not give any information so as to guide people and know what to do. [Ironically] The only information that came out of the radio was that military reserves should join the army and played marching music. Is this serious?" (CY_F_P_5)*

> *"I had a small radio with me in the land rover; sometimes I could listen to RIK but most of the   times I was listening to some curious things. It was more of propaganda that the news. They were broadcasting things that we were not experiencing at the frontline: 'Where are the dead bodies in the sea or that the sea was full of blood?', as they were broadcasting [...] They were broadcasting that the seas was full of blood by Turkish bodies that the Turks were retreating...But we were there, in the frontline. These were for those that stayed behind". (CY_M_P_2)*

The majority of respondents cited the Internet and social media as their main sources of information; some respondents also reported watching television or reading newspapers regularly. Some respondents justified their preference for the Internet as a source of information with the possibility of independently compiling the desired information from any and any number of sources.

> *"I have realized that as soon as the news begins information is 'constructed' and that it is more about deception than 'real' news. Thus, I prefer to get information on my own, from the Internet or anywhere else. For years now I cannot turn the TV on the watch the news they way they present them to us [...] that is why from the Internet you can learn sometimes the truth. TV and radio are 100% under control and that is why the Internet keeps bothering them. Especially the politicians and the political parties, it is their headache. I do not know what ways they will use in order to take control of the Internet as well. Right now, though, it   is the only weapon at citizen's disposal so as to resist against the current situation". (CY_M_P_2)*

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7 After the coup d'état on 15 July 1974 the state-run radio and television (CyBC-Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation) were operating under the control of the Greek-Cypriot putschists. The main source of information for the Turkish Cypriots was Bayrak Radio - established after the bicommunal clashes in December 1963 - that operated during the war transmitting in both Turkish and Greek.

The credibility of the media in Cyprus is close to the lowest possible level. The overall view of the respondents about the media is negative. They do not consider them credible in any way, but rather see them as driven by various political interests, which they often openly represent in public. It is worth noting that this view was expressed by both Greek and Turkish-Cypriot participants and concerns the media of both communities.

> "Journalists should say the truth; the way things are. They should not be any bribery and support those who pay or know them". (CY_F_P_5)

> "…I think our media is biased at the moment because of all the stuff that- like, politically biased, because of all the stuff that's happening in Turkey at the moment, and all the stuff that's being imposed by Erdoğan and the rise of Turkish citizens on our side of the country". (CY_F_T_13)

> "I believe that all media in Cyprus are out of date, they are controlled, and they are used as part of marketing for politicians, people of powerful position in the administration and the government etc. The citizen does not listen to the news; it is 'misleading' that he/she listens to". (CY_M_P_2)

> "Television is garbage, newspapers are garbage, radio Is garbage […] newspapers are garbage. Dead medium". (CY_M_T_14)

> "Everything is so disappointing. The mass media misrepresent everything, and they present the news the way they want to; you cannot learn the reality". (CY_F_P_3)

The overall negative attitude of the vast majority towards the Media also includes the feeling that the media's attitude does not help the reconciliation efforts of the two communities to have a prospect of a peaceful solution to the problem. The few who did not have an absolutely negative viewpoint simply said that it depends on which media we are talking about, as others take a more consensual approach, while others take a more nationalistic stance. Also contributing to the overall negative perception of the media is its perceived detrimental role in the reconciliation efforts of the two communities. The few participants with a more neutral view of the media distinguished between different media outlets and clarified that some take a more nationalistic stance than others.

> "No. They only care about their interests. They do not promote peace". (CY_F_P_1)

> "No, because they want to survive by taking advantage of hatred. There was a television program under the title Βiz-Εμείς by the RIK and they terminated it because some people did not like listening to the Turkish language! So, they stopped funding the program". (CY_F_P_3)

> "Most of them no; maybe about one per three or one per four [...] Because of their ownership, is a crucial factor who is the owner of the media". (CY_F_T_6)

repast

O2.3 - Report on the classification and identification of dominant discursive themes and on the main factors that influence or shape conflict discourses

"It depends on what news you listen to actually. There are some who are in favor of creating peace, and there are those who are in favor of it staying the way it is". (CY_F_T_13)

Respondents' views on the role of the media in Cyprus are rather divided. Some believe that the media have an important role and a strong potential for influence; others expressed the opinion that the media lack the necessary power to play a significant role at the socio-political level. However, negative comments were also made on both sides about the media's relationship with political power. Concerns were also expressed about misinformation, particularly in relation to Social Media.

"Everything. It affects a lot, media can change everything. If they use it wisely, they can change everything. If they know how to promote things, they would change everything". (CY_M_T_11)

"Their role is important; they influence people. Problems come out through the media. They are the so-called 'Fourth Estate'". (CY_M_P_4)

"I don't really think it has any affect. Because they do what they want". (CY_F_P_12)

"Which politician cares about the opinions expressed by anyone on social media? I don't think politicians are concerned with the opinions expressed by citizens on social media." (CY_F_T_6)

"I believe that all media in Cyprus are out of date, they are controlled and they are used as part of marketing for politicians, people of powerful position in the administration and the government etc. The citizen does not listen to the news; it is 'misleading' that he/she listens to". (CY_M_P_2)

"It comes down to whether or not you believe what you see on social media. For example, if someone reads a post on Facebook and that leads him/her to research that post further, then of course that helps. But if one sees a post and say 'Ah, that's fake news, forget it'...". (CY_F_P_3)

5.7 Cyprus – Overall Remarks

The Cyprus problem has been perhaps the definition of "intractable conflict" for over 4 decades. At the internal level on both sides, the gravity of the problem is enormous and almost overrides the debate on any other issue and goes beyond anything. There are many factors involved in the problem: besides the two communities Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, the role of Turkey, Greece and Britain should be seriously considered. Logically, narratives, approaches and 'interpretations' of events are diverse, especially for the events before 1974. Despite the narrative diversity, there is a basic dominant narrative (under the highly simplistic structure of 'we are the good guys - they are the bad guys') that is increasingly being challenged, especially by younger

generations who are trying to maintain a more objective approach in evaluating the historical narratives transmitted to them.

"I think that the perception for the events of 1974 is interwoven with political ideology, political ideology, well I think that's a culture, a perception of life which is also interwoven with many other things [...] There's a big division in their opinions about how events unfolded leading up to the invasion. But there is no difference in their descriptions of how the invasion has occurred and, for example, that helicopters came. There is a big division in their opinions about what preceded up to the invasion." (CY_F_T_6)

"…or, from the murders, Greek Cypriots committed against Turkish Cypriots in the period 1963-1964. All testimonies that we have research and found say that our police were involved. Why did no one put policemen on trial and ask them, why did they do all those things?" (CY_F_P_3)

"I'm working with TED, which is a Turkish organization, directly from Ankara, and they still practice hatred, I can say that. They definitely do build up the children to believe that the cause was the Greeks and the Turkish was the savior and we should always be grateful that Turkey came to save us, and that was a great time of suffering. As if we were the only ones that lost, as if like, we didn't kill the Greeks and the war was one-sided". (CY_F_T_13)

"[My parents] When i was telling them that they killed this many people in one place, they were often replying like "But we did this at this place at this time, why are you looking at things biased?" (CY_M_T_11)

The difference between generations obviously plays a crucial role in both the perception of the present and the understanding of the past. Personal experience of events dominates everything, and memories are usually still very intense and vivid. Younger generations, to whom these memories have been passed on, seem more willing to move into the future and find a peaceful solution. But it is not certain whether they are ready to compromise, and if so, to what extent. On the one hand, the younger generations seem willing to find a solution, but on the other hand, they need to do so without "betraying" the older generations who have witnessed the conflict. The fact that generations of people who had personal experience of the conflict are still alive (and broadly managing political power on both sides) is an obstacle to finding a solution, as the weight of personal experience still dominates and strongly influences everything. Many reported feeling that citizens are unable to influence developments, as the geopolitical stakes are very high and go beyond the borders of Cyprus to affect the wider region of the south-eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East.

"There was an invasion; there was occupation. They bombarded us, they killed and raped us. We should speak aloud about all those things and demand our rights". (CY_F_P_5)

repast

O2.3 - Report on the classification and identification of dominant discursive themes and on the main factors that influence or shape conflict discourses

"…Because I don't like nationalism. I think we're all one, and we may be different but we should always be united. I don't believe in practicing hate and blame, a war isn't caused by one side, and I just don't believe that we should dwell on hate because people make mistakes, and I guess most of the people at that time didn't even want to be in that position, didn't want to be in that war but that's how life turned out". (CY_F_T_13)

The long-running conflict sometimes goes through periods of recession, sometimes through periods of tension - but in any case, especially for Greek Cypriots, their attitude towards the issue is strongly influenced by the existing political/economic circumstances. In particular, the financial crisis of 2015 is repeatedly mentioned spontaneously by Greek Cypriot research participants. Dissatisfaction with the EU's attitude towards Cyprus during the financial crisis and the subsequent harsh economic monitoring period influences the general sense of pessimism for a solution to the Cyprus problem in the near future. Another circumstance that seemed to be of interest to Greek Cypriot respondents (but was reported to a lesser extent) was the discovery of natural gas deposits in the region - a fact that is likely to have an impact on the resolution of the problem, although not necessarily in the desired way. Turkish Cypriots, on the other hand, seem to be clearer in their goals and more stable over time: they want the problem to be solved for their vast majority and for them to join the EU as a united Cyprus. However, understanding the difficulty of achieving this goal, they also seem pessimistic about the future developments of the Cyprus problem (should be also noted that research interviews had been conducted during the presidency of Mustafa Akinci who is considered as a pro-solutionist political figure).

"Unfortunately, today is financially destroyed. I could say that they 'trapped' us. Our politicians lured us to put money in banks and they were the first to…Today in Cyprus there is a financial robbery. We had deposits of 75 million, foreign capital, and one day they came and told us: 'There is no money in the banks'. Where is this money go? It was lost in offshore investments, toxic bonds, virtual loans, sharing among various benefiters…we have reached the point of billion deficits and island, whose population is 700.000 people. With 75 billion deposits we should have been the richest people on earth. Instead we are in debt and we know nothing of the people who are responsible for that". (CY_M_P_2)

"But, unfortunately, Europe, as I understand, favors those who are rich. And I am really sorry because we had a lot of dreams for Europe, but, unfortunately… […] They want money from ordinary citizens; but, ordinary citizens cannot pay his/her debts. Should not the EU have told them: 'Gentlemen stop!' People used to pay their debts, but since the bail-in, they cannot". (CY_F_P_1)

"Cyprus is important because of natural gas. Because they want to have a share on the gas they might be interested in solving the dispute, but I do not know what the result is going to be". (CY_M_P_2)

"Of course, it does affect me because i would want it to be solved in one way or another. It's like a thing that's not been solved. It's like, you have this problem, but in the middle

of the   problem you stop working on it, so the problem doesn't go away. It's not going to go away, ever. So you need to, somehow, solve this problem, in some way. Whether it is peace or something else, cause it's constantly repeating. The topic is brought up by the media, by the people and it's like heating up, and they let it cool down a bit, then a few months heat up again. This is wrong. They need to find a way and solve it in a way that benefits everyone, or at least the majority, so these people, not my generation but maybe the next generation, don't have this problem". (CY_M_T_11)

"Really, what we want couldn't happen but, we want one single republic. For everything to be as it was before, but for us, Turkish Cypriots, to have rights too. For example, there was the first ministry, now 5 ministries could be called ours. Ours as in both sides being partners and sharing the same rights. I would want that kind of a republic". (CY_F_P_12)

"I think they are quite happy with the situation because it has advantages for both sides, as in the British still have their armed forces here and they still kind of have... I don't want to say colonization but kind of, they did colonize here and they do have their advantages because it's kind of like a base for them. And also for the Greek Cypriots, Greece also has their arms here, which is also a part of Europe, so I don't think that they would allow a peace treaty". (CY_F_T_13)

The "solution" to the Cyprus problem is expected by the vast majority of respondents from both communities, suggesting that the issue is ripe for substantial progress at the level of citizens. Especially the younger generations, who are probably tired of experiencing the repercussions of events that happened decades ago, express this expectation angrily.

"It should be a shame for Europe. You know how small Cyprus is in the world. We're like what an ant is to a person and if Europe cannot solve this issue, like, what is it, why can't you solve this issue? People managed to get to Mars, to space, and it's 2019 now and we're still discussing this topic? Europe should fix it, or not Europe, United Nations maybe. A bigger force should be like "This is bullshit. This way or another way you will solve it", use some force because both sides are discussing and everyone is giving their own opinions and the meetings between the two presidents are happening but… [Someone has to] draw the line and say "You either fix it or I fix it". (CY_M_T_11).

6. Germany

6.1 Germany - Brief background of the conflict

In the framework of the RePAST project, the focus lies on Germany's 20th century past, i.e. the rise of National Socialism, World War II and the Holocaust on the one hand, and the division of Germany after WWII, the emergence of the GDR out of the Soviet zone of occupation and the German reunification on the other hand.

Adolf Hitler's seizure of power in 1933 marked the beginning of a remilitarization of the German society and the implementation of anti-Semitic and racial ideology, eventually paving the way to WWII and the Holocaust. The Second World War began in September 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, followed by a military offensive against France and the Benelux countries, the 'Battle of Britain' in 1940, the invasion of the Soviet Union, the Balkans and Greece in 1941. After the Stalingrad defeat, Germany proclaimed 'total war' in 1943. The landing of American, Canadian and other Allied troops in Normandy in 1944, increased bombings and the advance of Red Army troops on the Eastern front marked the beginning of the end of the war, leading to Germany's capitulation on May 8, 1945. Millions of civilians and soldiers died in WWII, including six million Jews and thousands of members of other 'non-Aryan races' who were deported and killed in Nazi concentration camps, murdered in countless massacres all over Europe or died as forced laborers in subhuman conditions.

At the end of the war, Germany was divided into Soviet, American, British, and French occupation zones; the former Reichshauptstadt Berlin was divided into four sectors. Growing conflicts of interest between the victorious powers led to the beginning of the Cold War in 1947. The division of Germany was confirmed in 1949 by the establishment of the Federal Republic Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). While the FRG was integrated into the military alliance of NATO and became a founding member of the ECSC, the forerunner of the European Union, the GDR joined the Warsaw Treaty organization and was integrated into the Eastern Bloc. The construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 cemented the status quo. The political thaw of the early 1970s brought significant changes when the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany signed the Basic Treaty with the GDR in December 1972, which regulated relations between the two German states and led to the constitutional recognition of the GDR by the FRG and other Western states. The 1980s proved to be a turning point and the beginning of the rapid decline of the socialist camp, beginning with the upheaval in Poland in 1981, the increasing debt of the GDR and extensive borrowing from the FRG in 1983 and 1984, the election of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985, and ending with the street protests in East Germany in 1989 and finally the fall of the Wall on November 9 of the same year. On October 3, 1990, the GDR became part of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Back in the WWII, on an international level, there were two major warring alliances: The Axis powers (Germany, Japan, Italy and subsequent signatories of the Tripartite Pact) and the Allied forces (France, UK, Poland, the Soviet Union, the United States, and other states). On a national

level, Adolf Hitler's inner circle included people like Joseph Goebbels, Herman Göring, Heinrich Himmler, or Max Amann who were the most powerful men in the Third Reich. Most of them were in charge of one or several of the various NSDAP-affiliated organizations and ministries, such as the SS (Schutzstaffel), the SA (Sturmabteilung), the Gestapo (Secret State Police), or the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, as well as the Wehrmacht, the armed forces of Nazi Germany, that consisted of the Heer (army), the Kriegsmarine (navy) and the Luftwaffe (air force). Other important institutional actors aiming at implementing the Nazi ideology throughout the German society included the DAF (German Labour Front), the Hitler Youth, and the League of German Girls. German resistance to Nazism was limited to a number of individuals and groups, such as Georg Elser, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Weiße Rose, Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg and other members of the 20 July plot, or the Rote Kapelle. After WWII, the question of German guilt and the involvement of individual and collective actors in Nazi crimes have been the subject of countless debates and controversies. Most of the major Nazi perpetrators were either dead, convicted in the Nuremberg and other trials, lived out the rest of their life unpunished or managed to disappear and changed their identity, also with the help of the foreign intelligence agency of the Federal Republic BND. The question of the responsibility of the ordinary population, and their direct and indirect involvement in the Holocaust, proved equally problematic. The roles Germans attributed to themselves in war and Holocaust atrocities alternated, oscillating between the four poles of self-victimization, passive follower behavior, psychological repression and full-fledged responsibility. Also, the role of the Allied forces became a recurring subject of discussion. For many Germans, May 8 was experienced as a day of defeat rather than liberation. War incidents like the bombing of Dresden in February 1945 nurtured accusations on the German side of Allied war crimes.

The post-1949 period was particularly marked by the Cold War and the East-West. In the first two decades, the Federal Republic of Germany was under conservative rule, with Konrad Adenauer (1949-1963), Ludwig Erhard (1963-1966), and Kurt Georg Kiesinger (1966-1969), all Christian Democrats, as chancellors. Kiesinger had to hold together a coalition with the Social Democrats, which held the chancellorship from 1969 to 1982, with Willy Brandt (1969-1974) and Helmut Schmidt (1974-1982) as heads of government, followed by the CDU/FPD coalition under chancellor Helmut Kohl (1982-1998). While German policy in the 1960s was characterized by mutual antagonism, the 1970s heralded an era of rapprochement between the two German states in the wake of the Willy Brandt'Neue Ostpolitik' (New Ostpolitik). On the other side of the Iron Curtain, communist leaders established a new political system characterized by the duality of party and state apparatus and heavily influenced by the Soviet model. In 1971, Erich Honecker succeeded Walter Ulbricht (1950-1971), who had been ousted from power with Moscow's consent, as the new Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the SED. While there had been some acts of public resistance to the SED regime in the GDR's history, such as the 1953 uprising or the public self-immolation of the Lutheran pastor Oskar Brüsewitz, organized resistance emanating from the church and the peace movement occurred especially during the years of economic crisis in the late 1980s. After the fall of the Wall, several former GDR Politburo members, high-ranking political and military officials, and soldiers were convicted of shooting at the inner-German border.

Even though there have always been voices of resistance to the hegemonic position of National Socialism and the Holocaust in official German historiography after World War II, and conservative circles have repeatedly "advocated normalization of the burdensome past in order for Germans to regain a needed sense of national pride" (Langenbacher 2010: 29), Germany's Nazi past remains an important driving factor for the country's pro-EU orientation. But it remains to be seen whether the imperative to remember will endure. Official narratives about Germany's troubled past are increasingly being challenged, renegotiated or dismantled - now in more subtle and effective ways than everbefore - due to ongoing changes in the German political landscape, demographic and generational shifts and, more importantly, the rapid transformation of the media ecologies. The rise of the anti-EU party Alternative for Germany (AfD), the number of eyewitnesses dwindling every year, and the pluralization of perspectives in light of migration, Europeanization, and globalization (Assmann 2013) have significantly altered the dynamics of collective memory, as has the decline of mass media hegemony through the rise of participatory media technologies.

Spurred by the EU crisis and fears over the influx of refugees, the Alternative for Germany entered the German Bundestag in 2017, and since then high-ranking party members have repeatedly called for a reorientation of Germany's commemorative culture. The AfD, known for its programmatic focus on anti-migration, anti-EU, anti-gender mainstreaming and other issues, is attracting voters in the East as well as West Germany, but the party is growing in popularity, especially in East Germany. In 2014, one-sixth of Germans said they wanted the Wall back - most of East Germans and Alternative for Germany supporters (INSA 2014). Germany's communist past and the on-going 'East-West divide,' almost 30 years after reunification are seen as one reason for the rise of anti-EU populism in Germany today. Explanations on the reasons for East Germans' increasing support for Euro-skepticism point to post-communist realities. Some researchers blame the authoritarian political system of the former GDR for the lack of civic democratic education for East Germans (Schroeder 2015). For others, the problem lies in how reunification was experienced as an "annexation" by many East Germans (Meyen 2013). As socialism was demonized in public discourse, East Germans struggled with the devaluation of their biographies. This sense of disappointment and contempt in the face of a "failed" reunification was passed on to the next generation: Today, more than half of East Germans feel 'East Germans' rather than 'Germans' and a quarter disagree with the statement 'I am a European citizen' (INSA 2014). This is particularly interesting considering that the German Democratic Republic, as a unique example in European history, joined the European Community without an accession procedure, unlike other Eastern European states (such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, Croatia, etc.) that had to go through bureaucratic, democratic and economic accession exercises.

Interestingly, after 1949, the two German states took different approaches to the process of their 'mastering of the past' (Vergangenheitsbewältigung)." While the 1950s marked a period of collective silence in the Federal Republic about Germany's legacy of World War II and the Holocaust, it was not until the late 1960s that the generation born in the 1940s began to question their parents' generation about their involvement in the crimes of World War II and sparked national discussions about the Germans' relationship to the troubled past. In East Germany, the

GDR was seen as the result of the anti-fascist struggle of German communists. In this sense, the communist rulers refrained from discussing the question of guilt in their own country, as National Socialism and fascism were clearly associated with the capitalist government in Bonn (Müller 2008).

The rise of the Alternative for Germany and the discussion they spark on what is called 'Erinnerungskultur' (culture of memory) of National Socialism and the Holocaust should be considered in the Oral History work package. The East-West divide of Germany is still a topic, too, and the same goes for the collective memory of the GDR. The GDR history writing—despite its dictatorial memory stance—generally allows for a more nuanced picture, as the 'socialist dream' is also associated with humane goals such as solidarity or equality, whereas the limits of what can be said are much more restrictive in the case of the Third Reich (Sabrow 2009). In general, it would be important to ask about the perception of the EU, a 'European collective memory,' and the role of Germany in Europe/in the European Union in light of Germany's troubled past.

6.2 Germany – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

Older participants reported their strong personal memories of the end of World War II, describing their suffering in a difficult situation. Generations born after World War II have experienced the separation of Germany into West and East, but the majority mentioned that at the family level, they have not transmitted experiences through narrations, because the older usually avoid discussing this matter. Holocaust is especially mentioned as a completely avoided issue in the family environment.

"I know very well that my mother was a woman in ruins, even until she worked in her village again, and so was my grandmother. She also went to the fields and then stubbed potatoes and everything so that we had something. But we were lucky to also have a garden. A house and a garden". (DE_M_P_3)

"Money wasn't used that much because you couldn't buy anything [laughs] until the currency reform in June 1948. Before that, for example, an American cigarette cost ten marks. The cigarettes were a currency in their own right; for a carton of ten packs, for example, you got a few pounds of butter, or I don't know a bicycle. Everyone smoked, of course, and a lot was smoked against hunger, too. In addition to food and clothing cards, there were also tobacco cards". (DE_M_P_5)

"My family was in Dresden, so I wasn't born yet. And yes, that was very bad with the attack on Dresden [in February 1945]. And then, so my father was gone, but my mother was in Dresden with four children, but then she had to leave the apartment because then communists wanted to go in, and everything was destroyed and the Russians came, that wasn't very nice for my family. My mother then came to a refugee camp where I was born. The famine, it must have been quite horrible. My older brothers and sisters, still remember it and, of course, even today, every time they see fireworks they think of the bombing of Dresden, the war. They don't like such loud firecrackers today […] That was interesting. We didn't talk much about the Holocaust. So I don't know if my

*mother really didn't know anything about it, but she did know that the Jews were being
taken away. But she probably didn't know what happened to them. My father knew I
think, more about it, but he never talked about it".*

(DE_F_P_1)

*"Yes well, so war means that there has always been such strong traumatization in my
family". (DE_F_P_9)*

*"Little. So I have actually experienced both parents as, how should I say, traumatized
and when I say traumatized, then I mean no good nerves. So little was said about what
happened". (DE_F_P_10)*

Concerning the period of Germany's separation to West (FRG) and East Germany (GDR), as it's
expected, opinions differ greatly, depending on whether respondents are West Germans or East
Germans but also whether they are East Germans who escaped the GDR early or the East Germans,
who remained there until the fall of the Berlin Wall. West Germans have no strong memories of
this period. The fall of the wall and the subsequent reunification of Germany did not bring about
serious changes in their lives. On the contrary, East German respondents have strong memories of
life in the GDR. In general, a situation of oppression and lack of freedom is described, with
particular emphasis on the prohibition of free exit and entry into the country. However, the
memories mentioned are not completely negative. Many respondents referred to the everyday life
in the GDR and the facilities provided by the State to Citizens (e.g., guaranteed jobs, day-care
facilities for children, etc.) - opportunities that they are deprived of in their today's life and are
reminiscent of them. Having said that, it is important to note that no people experienced any kind
of severe repressions following the division of Germany or in the GDR (e.g., imprisonment, killed
family members) were part of the sample. The fall of the Berlin Wall is almost described by all the
respondents as an extremely happy event, which everyone remembers in vivid detail. The joy of the
East Germans was of course incomparably greater. One of the survey participants likens the feeling
to that of winning the first lottery ticket.

*"Yes, I went to the West because I did not get along with the regime in the GDR at all, in
no way, neither politically nor in the private sphere. I had to drop out of school at the
polytechnic secondary school because for political reason I was not allowed to go on
high school in the GDR, and that actually gave me the decisive reason to leave the GDR
in one   way or another [...] Of course I associate my childhood, my youth, with the
GDR. It was a   state that seemed to me in relation exactly the same as it was before,
only that they had changed their uniforms. Instead of the Gestapo, it was later called
Stasi and otherwise, it was also a dictatorial state for me, which again forced its
population to do what they had todo and shouldn't do. There was no free space, except
in the own flat or in the own allotment garden, otherwise, it was for me – in quotation
marks – the "largest prison in the world". (DE_M_P_2)*

"Well, my childhood was great, there's nothing to complain about. There weren't any bananas, but they came in a package every Christmas. But we didn't miss anything as a child, so I can't say anything bad about the GDR". (DE_F_P_1)

"Then you wish some things back. It was quieter. But it is more pleasant to live like that now. To be able to move freely. But it was definitely calmer. We had a lot of conveniences, which fell away immediately after the fall of the wall". (DE_F_P_3)

"Yes, everything. And that's why we were doing relatively well because we had everything ourselves, but also had to process everything ourselves and that's one of the topics. We still learned a lot of manual work. We still know how to deal with these things and that is the bad thing that today the youth is actually a throw-away society. Let's buy new, throw away. That was not possible for us at all. Not yet possible for me either. I just had to do a lot myself and improvise, but it was always possible. And we did that". (DE_M_P_3)

"There were actually beautiful things. Especially in the GDR, the day nurseries also taught us how the children were brought up, how all that... that's completely different now, how it is today. The shops that existed back then, what was developed there… We lived well! I say we did not starve, but what was missing very much - me personally - was the freedom to travel. I would never have left, I never had the reason". (DE_F_P_8)

"So we used to think, we always imagined it that way, you know sometimes you imagine it that way: "Oh, if I would win the lottery, I would do this or that", and it was similar: "Oh if the border is open, then we would do this and that and then they all come to us and so on". So that is how it was, so in that sense whether that is possible or not. And then when the border was open and we crossed it for the first time again, my brothers of course stopped at the border and my brothers went up to the border towers and into the border buildings and looked at all that because if you drive through there so often, it wasn't really possible. My brother took pictures everywhere, you couldn't believe it, it really wasn't believable in the beginning". (DE_F_P_6)

"Fall of the Wall. I sat on the couch and cried out of joy". (DE_F_P_8)

In the case of Germany, the "conflict" had nothing to do with a lack of trust between two opposing sides. The partition of Germany was the result of the enforcement of external decisions, which had nothing to do with any kind of internal conflict. Political leaders (especially in East Germany) were perhaps distrusted, but this distrust did not automatically extend to the population. However, it is obvious that during the partition, participants experienced different situations depending on where they were. West Germans, who had no personal or kinship ties with East Germany, have neither in-depth knowledge on the living conditions there, nor seem to understand the experiences of East Germans. On the contrary, those who lived there or had personal or family ties with East Germans seem to show greater understanding and empathy for the difficulties experienced by those who lived can see the mistakes that were made during the post-reunification period. A number of

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interviewees express dissatisfaction about the dismantling of many Eastern industrial structures after reunification through the "Treuhand". The necessary transition period towards essential reunification has cost rising unemployment, and therefore loss of professional identity and emotions of powerlessness towards capitalism.

> *"That was also the problem of the GDR, that simply the professions they had, those were no longer needed. A lot of money was put into the retraining of people and and and and, but that is being done I've been told". (DE_F_P_7)*

> *"We had industry with us, our city in East-East Germany had been a town with 30,000 inhabitants, and has risen to 70,000. They have only built, built, built. We had all the coal mines, we had the power stations, the gas works, briquette factories, glass factories, a glass grinding shop. Well, we had industry and it really had all the work and with one blow   everything was tight. Closing time". (DE_F_P_8)*

Although, as mentioned above, there were no two opposing groups, traces of prejudices and stereotypes among West and East Germans can be traced in the interviewees' responses. The distinction between *Wessis* (a nickname given to residents of West Germany) and *Ossis* (a nickname given to residents of the GDR/East Germany) is often used by the elder generation. West Germans seem to be annoyed when they perceive the East Germans' attitude as "demanding" and "pressing", noting that this does not promote equality between Citizens of the single common German state. East Germans, for their part, believe that the West Germans have an attitude of arrogance, considering them "second-class citizens" (something that has been confirmed by other relevant surveys e.g., Meyen, 2013). Without this being explicitly expressed in the respondents' answers, it is clear that in the older generations at least, this feeling still exists to some extent. Specific interviewees (mainly West Germans), referring to the characteristics of the East German regime, convey these negative elements to the East Germans themselves, considering that they may in some way constitute elements of their personalities.

> *"Not that much changed for us. We've all got used to the fact that things are different now. You can see that many East Germans still have this behavior in them. From the GDR times. And they think they are the King. I can only tell it the way I heard it. That people behave in an impossible manner. Or they believe: "Now you all have to be there for us. And everyone needs to follow us". Of course, it doesn't work that way. Now that has changed a bit and we stood like stupid because of course we never got to know anything like that". (DE_M_P_3)*

> *"Many didn't know anything about the GDR. So many West Germans only talk about "Germans" if they mean West Germans, that's still the case today. And today you sometimes still see it on the news, that they talk about it as if they weren't Germans at all, sometimes I think: "Wait a minute, they've always been German, what are you actually talking about?" (DE_F_P_6)*

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"They were just spying on everyone and so on – even within the family, as one has heard, that even relatives have spied on each other – e.g., the parents and vice versa. It's clear, of course, that it cannot go on like that at one point. Everyone was afraid of others. Just don't say anything. We have also noticed that […] I would just prefer them [the East Germans] to adapt a little more to today". (DE_M_P_3)

"I had contacts later as a teenager, I was also in the GDR. Even today I think that the GDR are the right Germans. I think they stand for tradition, empire, Weimar Republic, Nazi zone and then there was socialism over there, but that was bullshit. I think they are more German than the West Germans, from the character". (DE_F_P_9)

6.3 Germany – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

Again, the West or East German origin seems to play a significant role in the overall approach of the issue. For West Germans, the fall of the Berlin Wall played a subordinate historical role. Consequently, the conflict caused by this fact is considered less important than other problems. As is expected, this is strongly evidenced by younger generation West German participants with no family or any other kind of ties with East Germany. All of them recognize the importance and the positivity of the reunification of Germany but just as a historical fact without any further emotional investment in it. The low interest in the topic is striking, considering that they did not even ask their parents how they experienced the time of division or the fall of the Wall because it does not play a major role in their family history. An exception can be made for young people living in Berlin who are – even today – more confronted with the GDR past.

"Relatively unemotional. I never knew anyone who was affected in any way. Even now I may know two people who grew up in the GDR. That's why somehow it never touched me. And now I never have the feeling 'oh it is so great that we are reunited' […] so if we were still separated I think it would be bad in my opinion. But because I don't know it any other way   it's not such an important part of our history for me […] Personally, it never affected us that   there was a wall. That's why I don't think it played such a big role […] I think it's good, it was a country that was artificially divided and then came together again". (DE_F_T_1)

"So it's something positive. So it is a positive historical event. It is not an emotional topic in my family". (DE_F_T_4)

"For me personally, the topic didn't play such a big role at first because I was born after the fall of the Berlin Wall and my parents were still very young at that time. My mother was 18 and my father was twenty when the wall fell. They weren't so firmly rooted in working life […] On the other hand, they were simply busy with other things, they had to work, raise a little baby. There wasn't so much time to reflect. It just wasn't the topic […] As I already said they were both very young. But I don't know where exactly they were or what they have done". (DE_F_T_5)

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"… my parents talk a lot about the German division and thus also about the reunification. Because it was an important event for my family and it had a great impact on my parents' lives. From that point of view, I grew up with it [...] Both were in West Berlin. My father then worked in the media again, when he was even younger. He was a newsreader there and was able to announce that the wall had fallen. So they were both in West Berlin at the time". (DE_F_T_7)

On the other part, young East Germans find themselves feeling the need to justify where they come from. Although distinctions and stereotypes like "*Ossis*" and "*Dunkeldeutschland*" (= "Dark Germany" for East Germany) are often used as a joke mostly by the elder generations, it still plays a (subconscious) role for the younger generations, too. For this reason, East German youths feel the need sometimes to overcome these stereotypes and consciously distance themselves from prejudices (right-wingers, Ossis, Stasi past, etc.). This defense of their origin is mostly based on memories that have been transmitted from the family environment - to whatever extent. It is worth noting here that certain respondents mentioned that they feel this pressure be exerted not so much by their social circle and their daily interactions but by the Media which often reproduce directly or indirectly similar stereotypes.

"I don't know. I can't say that I feel like an East German. Not at all. For a very long time, I had total problems with it, with Chemnitz and the label you get as an East German. Not from my immediate environment, but from the media. And I didn't feel like I belonged there at all and was always super happy that I was the only one at school who came from Munich. But all this makes me feel like a German, of course. But as an all-German." (DE_F_T_8)

"And in my family, as I mentioned earlier, not much was said about it. Nevertheless, I have the opinion that somehow not everything is quite knotted with the East. And that has to come from somewhere, and that's why I think it's also coming from the media". (DE_F_T_8)

"And I think it never goes out of your mind. I mean for me there is in principle also still the east, and with all people who come from the east it is also first of all like "oh you come from the east". You perceive that somehow different than when he tells you he comes from Hamburg". (DE_F_T_8)

"I don't usually talk to him about it, he didn't experience it directly. I mean, he grew up in the afterlife. As I said, he is always a little bit ashamed for being an 'Ossi'". (DE_F_T_1)

Interestingly enough, for younger East Germans, the stories of their parents and grandparents play a major role but the focus of these memories does not rely mostly on the dominant image of the GDR (Berlin Wall, Stasi) but the positive sides of everyday life (job guarantees, day-care places for children). For this reason, young East Germans seem to be more empathetic and understanding about living conditions in East Germany during the division and more willing to justify people's

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behaviors and choices at the time. Family is an important source of information for young East Germans, while for young West Germans hardly plays any role because no relative stories are told nor the division is a topic for discussion in the family environment. Therefore, East Germans talk about "everyday stories" more often but again this is something that depends on the family's ties to specific events or not. What is observed is the existence of either strong or weak family ties to specific events of the past, so the narratives and thus the transmitted memories vary in detail and significance. In any case, for young East Germans family stories have a strong influence on remembering. Almost all interviewees see positive aspects in the GDR but the emphasis is placed strongly on the memory of the oppressive regime.

> "Of course, I also think it's good that in the GDR there was a place for everyone at a daycare center, that everyone had affordable living space. These are definitely the advantages of the system, and I see them too. I also think that it is much worse today than it was then. That   this basic security was there: everyone had health insurance and all these things I see absolutely positive. But I think the system as a whole is negative. As soon as people are locked up. I think that is the opinion that most people share: that there were positive things, of course, but that the negative was more serious". (DE_F_T_7)

For the majority of interviewers, family first and then education are the main influences of their views. In many cases, information at school is compared to information about the same events deriving from the family environment. In terms of education, the vast majority of respondents reported their dissatisfaction with the fact that the particular period of modern Germany's history is so degraded in importance in History classes. They also criticize the fact that the severity of the Nazi regime has overshadowed every other recent German historical period such as the period of division, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the reunification of Germany into a single state.

> "For a very long time, we had felt the 3rd Reich - which is also important. But then the school   year always came to an end and you noticed that you don't get through with the material that way and then it was more like this: "Germany was divided into 4 parts, assigned and a little bit of what was then split off. Then there was the wall, then the wall fell again. Period". Then maybe you only did a little bit about the GDR, that is with the Stasi. But that was so incredibly superficial. In contrast to all the other things, you've learned in history. Maybe they'll go through that in Leipzig in more detail than we did in Munich. I don't know". (DE_F_T_1)

> "Unfortunately, in my year History class more or less stopped there. In the history lesson they talked about it, but only a little. This is a topic that was actually still too topical for history   lessons. In social studies, that was completely excluded. In school, this was almost not a topic at all [...] The Cold War would definitely have been exciting, to learn more about interrelationships. And in my opinion, if I remember correctly, history lessons started all over again after the end of the Second World War: with the Greeks. Of course, I knew some things about history, because as a child I have noticed a bit on

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the sidelines, but the circumstances surrounding it, that's a pity that it was completely ignored in school. And the Second World War is certainly an important topic, but partly - yes, not overly - it has not been overly over-thematized. It has been dealt with very extensively. Unfortunately, the second turning point in German history, more or less, in more recent history or the history of recent times, has not been addressed at all". (DE_F_T_10)

"But I always found that very unfortunate. I mean in principle it's a very important part of our history. But it completely goes down and is overshadowed by the 3rd Reich. That then so little has gone down, I think. Sure, you heard how we were divided after the Second World War, that the GDR didn't have so much then and we had everything here and they had about nothing. And then of course you know the stories that people wanted to flee, then they were shot at the border. Or that there was always an attempt to tap into West German television. A bit of what is already in the textbooks. But I think that only takes an extremely small part in history lessons". (DE_F_T_1)

In general, it is mainly the young East Germans who recognize that there may still be different attitudes and perceptions between the two sides but they either work alone on a subconscious level or concern other, older generations but not their own. They strongly believe that unified Germany is an obvious self-evident fact and they wonder why there are still sources that sustain in public discourse the discussion about differences and disputes between the two sides even today.

"I do not think it is necessary to bring about a great reconciliation. And to say "West and East" must belong together - because that is self-evident to me. We have lived so long that is one thing. That's why you don't have to make a big distinction. That's why in my opinion the task of a chancellor is rather somewhere else. Or let's say so, the task of a chancellor is to call these things into the memory of the population on 3 October, to find clear words there. And also to demonstrate the achievements of unity. And that the people do not forget that, but otherwise it is not great the task of the chancellor – in my opinion - to speed up big any initiatives or to put them into the world […] That's an interesting question. Especially because the division no longer exists for me personally. It can, of course, be that this division is still very present for other people. But it is difficult for me to talk about a division that no longer exists for me. Let's say that if this division still exists, then it's definitely good to be interested in each other […] But I think, even in our generation, you have this wall in your head. If you say "ok you are Ossi". I wouldn't say "I am a Wessi" right now. But still, I don't wanna move in this corner of Germany right now". (DE_M_T_2)

6.4 Germany – Gender

Germany has the fewest references on the gender issue among the eight case-study countries. Several times, interviewees seemed puzzled with the relative questions having difficulties identifying any significant gender differences in dealing with the events of the conflict, believing

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that gender wasn't a factor that played any role in the events. Germany, at the social level, is a country with a high degree of gender equality; therefore, the issue appears self-evidently resolved, without playing any visible role in recent historical events. This may be one explanation for the fact that only occasionally comments on gender can be identified in the interviews of the particular case-study of Germany.

> *"As a woman, [born in Germany] means freedom and equality to me as far as possible. So when I look at other countries, what women have to endure, then I thank my God every day that I was born here". (DE_F_P_10)*

Despite all this, some individual comments indicate that indeed there are (or were) some specific gender-related issues, but no sense given that it was something generalized or something that was going on extensively, but it was more of individual behaviors and specific incidents.

> *"There were a lot of girls in my class who were expelled from their homeland and who were actually on the fringes. They were mocked for being badly dressed and so on". (DE_F_P_7)*

> *"No, I think that's a personal view. I wouldn't attribute it to gender, right now. Rather how my parents dealt with it. They both have their Stasi files, but my father has dealt with it intensively, researched them, read many books and watched many documentaries. So it's a very intense debate. Whereas my mother prefers to be done with it. She feels that dealing with it doesn't get her anywhere. She wants to put an end to the story".* (DE_F_T_7)

6.5 Germany – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

The case-study of Germany demonstrates by far the strongest positive identification with the idea of Europe, both at the level of collective perception, and in that of personal identity. The comments of the vast majority of respondents (if not all) were positive to enthusiastic. It is worth noting here, that the majority spontaneously mentioned what they considered to be "European value" (cooperation, peace, open borders and free movement of citizens, common market, etc.). That way, the idea of Europe itself turns out to be the ultimate value.

> *"That's hard to say, I don't know any other way. The EU already existed and I have grown up with it. So I cannot say what it would be like if I did not have it." (DE_F_T_1)*

> *"That we are already a big community and that there is no other way. This cooperation must actually become even better, so that we and the other European countries too ... Yes, that everyone is doing well. And when I think of Europe like that, I also think that we actually need to think much more globally". (DE_F_P_10)*

> *"Europe, I am thinking of the Euro, which I was very happy about. I don't mourn the D-Mark.   I really thought introducing the Euro was a great idea. And I think the idea of*

Europe is really good and I think it's good that the borders are open, without border controls, I think it's also great". (DE_F_P_6)

"I see it positively. For me, it's like a patchwork carpet where individual patches come together". (DE_F_P_7)

"I think the EU is great. What does it mean to me? Freedom to travel. So that I can fly into the EU countries with my identity card. Without having to apply for a visa. For me, everything else is a political association of countries". (DE_F_T_4)

"I think I would defend that to others. Europe, this European idea - I think it's good, especially important. In any case, I am a representative of European togetherness and community and see that as something special. In other words, it works by and large. That we are, by and large, a community, something of which we can be proud […] The cohesion of different nations. I think it's a great thing - something we can be proud of. And for me personally: Freedom above all else. That people can come from other countries, that I can go to them. That I would be safe and protected there and vice versa". (DE_F_T_7)

"First thing I can think of? That Europe belongs together. It is one for me. Also by the open borders, that contributes already in a large part to it". (DE_F_T_8)

"Europe is actually the ideal case for me - in other words, it really is now. So now that we have a duty-free Union and we can move freely without having a different currency in each country and a barrier at the border. I also think that we Europeans should actually grow together more than we already are". (DE_M_P_2)

"To Europe, or to the European Union? I am very positive about the idea of a united Europe because I no longer believe in the whole concept of the nation-state. But I think we should stop giving ourselves these borders. And that's why we should start to see ourselves as Europeans […] One always says: is the cradle of democracy. Europe should have a leading role. As a Western role model, or as a role model for other nations. At the moment we live in the longest peaceful period in Europe, so you can say it is going in the right direction. So that is something to be proud of. Above all, the achievements of the European Union. And in my opinion that is also the basic problem, because, in my opinion, the European Union has quite a problem with its external perception that it should actually have what it has achieved, what... everything is often taken for granted. We were born in the European Union, so we take it for granted, it has always been that way and it is nothing special". (DE_M_T_2)

Despite the almost entirely positive attitude towards the idea of Europe, both its modes of operation and its choices in dealing with major problems (such as refugees) are being criticized.

"And I also think it's good if Europe doesn't become such a Europe that is closed off, but if it's an open Europe, I'd really like that. I actually think we have come quite a long way with Europe, and I would find it a pity if they were to destroy it again now. Because I find

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these strange, solitary, national thoughts very bad. I find this Austrian very bad, very bad, and also the Hungarian I find bad and the Poles also are crazy and I find that quite terrible, really [laughs]. And I also think the ideas of Macron, the ideas he has are partly really good. But we are reluctant, and I think we should be a bit more open. The fact that England is withdrawing is really bad, I think, and I think a lot of English people think it's bad, they probably didn't think it wouldn't work out and a lot of them probably didn't participate in the referendum because they thought "We'll stay in anyway", I think. And I know a lot of English people who live here in Germany, so two and they think it's terrible and a lot of young people think it's terrible and I think it's terrible too". (DE_F_P_6)

"I think it is also good that we have addressed Europe, because this is always a bit in the background, and it is taken for granted although it shouldn't be taken for granted. It means work. Or when you hear things like: "Those who are nobodies in politics, they all go to Brussels" [pause]. I've noticed that a lot lately: Europe is wobbling quite a bit. All the countries around. I mentioned it before: Hungary, Poland, Romania, Italy. The one [Macron] in France can't get his concept through at all. Yes". (DE_F_P_7)

"Sometimes complicated and a lot of bureaucracy, so it's a little lame". (DE_F_P_9)

"I think Europe has more of a problem with the fact that so many walls are being built within Europe, not especially with the old one in Germany". (DE_F_T_1)

"Good idea, I think the current version is ridiculous. But to see Europe as a big country, or how you want to express it, is a good idea". (DE_M_T_3)

"I am very critical of the construct of the European Union because it does not actually serve to bring Europeans together, but above all to serve capital and economic interests. So free flow of work, but people who want to come to us from outside, for example, are prevented from dying in their thousands, in their tens of thousands. That is why I am very critical of the EU as an institution". (DE_M_T_6)

For the vast majority of interviewees reunification of Germany, it was more of an "internal" rather than an international issue. Europe is not perceived as a possible way out of the conflict - Europe has bigger and more important problems to solve than the inner-German one. For this reason, the EU's role in this issue is mentioned as non-existent to minimal. They recognize, however, mostly elderly generations that the whole endeavor should not have taken place before the agreement of the rest of the European states (and most likely USA too), while the most central role is attributed to the then Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev.

"I think America has played a major role, but whether Europe has done so much about it. I don't think so. Have you ever heard of it"? (DE_F_P_1)

"Yes, I think, Gorbachev was very important, that he agreed to it and I think the French talked about it and that they agreed to it was important for us, that it worked, because otherwise, it would not have worked". (DE_F_P_6)

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"[Did Europe played a role?] No, not at all. That was a German thing". (DE_F_P_6)

"I don't know that. It was always discussed as a German only problem". (DE_F_T_5)

"So, Europe itself I do not know, but in any case it would not have happened without the great nations. Neither Russians, nor Americans, and so on. There had never been a reunification without them. Yes, and especially Gorbachev. They played a major role. If they had said 'no', oh no, he wouldn't have said 'no'. He would have said 'njet'". (DE_F_P_8)

"Europe? Europe less but the Russian president at that time, the Gorbachev has initiated it". (DE_M_P_4)

"Nah, it's a German issue. I do not think this is a European issue that a European institution should be dealing with. It is a purely national issue. And if you look around Europe, it is a unique topic. Because of our history. So it's a purely national issue, and I think it's being dealt   with very well in Germany, sometimes very, very well in Berlin. Where you still have some of   the Wall or the memorial centre on Bernauer Strasse. I think it's a purely national task to remind people of this - and not a European one". (DE_M_T_2)

The value of National identity is appreciated, but meticulously separating the past from the Nazi regime. However, certain interviewees mentioned that they primarily feel more European than Germans. Some respondents adopt a more globalized perspective appreciating, even more, the value of the European than their National Identity.

"I always say, perhaps national pride is also partly misinterpreted. I don't see national pride in being a Nazi or anything. I always say that I am also proud to be German, Germany is a beautiful country, the Germans are industrious, they are hard-working, you can't say it any other way. And I am proud to be a German, I say that quite honestly". (DE_F_P_8)

"I don't know exactly what is meant by national identity, i.e., that one feels German? So I am actually proud to have been born in Germany because I think it is a country that is economically very strong and therefore I would never have the feeling to hide it. I know that there is a generation that was a bit uncomfortable with it, but I don't think we belong to it. I think we can now be proud to come back from Germany". (DE_F_T_1)

"Yes, I have to say, I am actually proud to live in Europe and to be born in Europe. Nowhere else do people live as long without war as we do here. Europe belongs together. It is one for me." (DE_F_P_8)

"I think if you meet other Europeans abroad, you have a stronger sense of togetherness. I've noticed that again and again abroad when you've met someone from Italy or France. It wasn't as if you had met someone from your own country, but in North

America, in particular, there was a greater sense of togetherness. There I see this European identity." (DE_F_T_1)

"Yeah, it means a lot to me. I think it's good and I think it's important when you see Europe against the rest of the world. If you compare Europe to America or Australia, we have a much better position or a much better status when we are together than when we are so many small countries. We have a much bigger weight as Europe, I think that's important." (DE_F_P_6)

6.6 Germany – Media

Older generations' respondents recall either specific broadcasts in East Germany or the way East Germany was presented in West German Media.

"Of course, there was always the Black Channel with Schnitzler on Monday evening. Everything was bad there. So, the class enemy, the class enemy". (DE_F_P_8)

"Exactly, they've depicted the East as something derogatory. It was really devalued. I think it was like this: "We're democrats and they're communists over there. And they live worse and don't have a great standard of living like us". (DE_F_P_7)

For younger generations, almost everything is happening online. The majority reported the use of popular news media, i.e., the major online newspapers and news media outlets. Interviewees positively noted that media offers are abundant, documentaries in particular. The media libraries of ARD and ZDF were mentioned particularly often. It should be noted here that a number of respondents mentioned Television as well. Therefore, there's no excuse for not being informed while you live in a Media environment in which you can find everything you want if you seek for it.

"Television, by social media do you also mean media and news apps? Or just social platforms, like Facebook, Instagram ... I would really only count social media as something like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and news apps I would digital media. And I use them all. Newspapers, especially apps. I have NTV, CNN and the Tagesschau". (DE_F_T_1)

"Television. Internet. I watch a lot of entertainment, but I also like documentaries. There are some of these channels, ZDF Info is the name. Or also ZDF neo likes to bring documentaries. I also like to watch them. Or Arte". (DE_F_T_10)

"Anyway, I don't have a TV or a radio. Only my mobile phone. In any case, I have the Tagesschau app for daily news, then a Spanish and French newspaper as an app. The BBC app, but I don't read it that often. Because of Social Media, so Whatsapp, Instagram, Snapchat". (DE_F_T_4)

"Online. So generally everything I consume happens via the laptop. Twitter, Newspaper, literally anything". (DE_F_T_5)

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"A lot online, the SZ, actually everything online. The time. Sometimes mirrors. Most of the time I see some topic at the Süddeutsche and then I see what the others have written about   it - for example the FAZ. I'm actually such a "docu-shower", especially in winter, when the evening is long. And then a lot of what the ARD and ZDF media libraries have to offer. Out of   curiosity, how the documentaries are made. But then there's always something about it that I think's quite good". *(DE_F_T_8)*

"I watch the news very regularly, especially ARD and ZDF. You can also get a lot of information over the Internet. I read the Handelsblatt relatively regularly. If I want to be informed about news, I watch the journal today. Not the Tagesschau - that's too old-fashioned for me. I watch ZDF. Or read the FAZ website [...] As I said, there is a lot on this ZDF channel. You can feel like you're looking at everything from "Life in the GDR", "Life in the West", "Life after the Fall of the Wall", "The winding-up of many companies". How the companies then developed... so there's felt thousands of hours of material. If you are interested in it, you can certainly inform yourself extensively". *(DE_M_T_2)*

Media criticized for their role in reconciliation, which is non-existent. On the contrary, according to the majority of the interviewees, Media insist on one-sided reporting, preserving stereotypes and prejudices.[8] Therefore, Media are perceived as maintainers of the status quo rather than a unifying force.

"This constant reunification issue in the media bothers me. Where people keep asking: 'Are we one Germany now?' or 'How is the East doing?', 'What is the West doing?' These   comparisons and juxtapositions still exist. I think if you want to have a Germany, then you shouldn't look for the differences, but perhaps for the similarities". *(DE_F_T_8)*

"I can't say that I feel like an East German. Not at all. For a very long time, I had total problems with it, with Chemnitz and the label you get as an East German. Not from my immediate environment, but from the media. And I didn't feel like I belonged there at all and was always super happy that I was the only one at school who came from Munich. But all   this makes me feel like a German, of course. But as an all-German". *(DE_F_T_8)*

"And I believe that it is also influenced by the media. I mean you get it again and again, now that there have been all the protests in the East, but also long ago, and it has always been   the case that the NPD is elected more in the East, and no matter after which elections I find   it always very emphasized. So that's in the East. I think it already emphasizes that the East is different from the West. And that's actually funny. For us,

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[8] It should be noted that young respondents with East German origins previously mentioned the media as a pressing factor for their personal identity, constantly reminding them of the differences between East and West - differences that they themselves do not experience in their everyday lives.

for our generation, there shouldn't be any difference - in the East/West view. But there is, I still think". (DE_F_T_1)

"I don't think the media generally do a good job. Especially when it comes to topics where you can make headlines, such things tend to get even stronger. So, to reinforce an East/West division by making statements rather than by enlightening it. So above all with media that reaches the masses. I lack a neutral reporting that is not designed for profit. I think that's the problem that the media in Germany are profit-bound. That's why they will always act in such a way that they make maximum money - which is understandable. That's why exciting topics or more neutral ones won't fall by the wayside". (DE_F_T_1)

The views on the role of the Media in general and Social Media in particular, are quite diverse. Most do not believe that the Media and Social Media play a critical role in what is happening in the country. Fewer are those who believe that they do (or could) play a role, especially in interacting and sharing views on a specific topic within Social Media. Many expressed concern about what is being written on Social Media can be serious and credible, as it can be nonsense and misinformation. Most of them are rather "silent users" of Social Media reporting that they don't actively participate/post to Social Media very often.

"So, I find in the social media it is not so strong so. At least I never noticed it that way. I don't think it's used that way. Rather with news and reports on television, or even through films". (DE_F_T_1)

"I have a feeling it's not a big deal. If then only by contributions or Posts by classical media, thus on-line newspapers. So otherwise, I have never come into contact where this was discussed in social media". (DE_F_T_7)

"I do think Social Media has an influence. It can be both: good and bad. But right now, I think everyone is focusing too much on their own bubble". (DE_F_T_8)

"It will certainly be discussed more emotionally. Everybody can express his opinion, which is often also nonsense, and then x people write their own opinion on it again. For me, social media and politics do not belong together". (DE_M_T_2)

"Oh, yes, I find social media, first pass over the journalist as a gatekeeper and in principle make everything visible and audible. Of course, this is still subject to strong restrictions, but some people can make themselves audible that would otherwise not be heard in the media landscape. And then there are other discourses about the GDR and reunification. There, for example, East Germans meet who didn't find all this so bad. Those who also criticize reunification as a process in itself. Social media could play a role here, so yes". (DE_M_T_6)

"I think it has become very strong. I'm not like that, I use them, but it's not my life". (DE_F_P_9)

"I can't say that much because I'm not so present in social media. So I don't have that much of an idea who's saying something there. So I don't know, if maybe there are people who post something there if they just post bullshit, but that doesn't matter, they can post bullshit about East or West, but they don't know what that will bring". (DE_F_P_6)

6.7 Germany – Overall Remarks

Generally, German division and reunification are perceived as a purely historical topic – especially by West Germans having no ties to the East. GDR history plays no role for young West Germans in particular. There was no genuine distrust between West and East Germans. Political leaders (especially those in East Germany) were perhaps distrusted, but this distrust did not automatically extend to the population – therefore, we can't really talk about "rival groups". It is true, however, that after the fall of the Wall many East Germans developed an aversion to West German behavior (considering East Germans as second-class citizens). Today, East and West Germans, mostly those of elder generations still talk about the "other" side ("Ossi"/"Wessi") but for younger generations, the East/West divide seems to vanish. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents recognize the need for deepening reunification and equalizing the life and labor conditions for all German citizens, no matter West or East. Labor Laws framework, Housing, and incidents of Violence namely mentioned as problems that (unified) Germany should deal with priority.

"The two states should grow together even more, it would have to become more just, I'd prefer that. So, first of all I would make sure what I said before, that everyone gets the same salary and not only East and West, but also the women, that if you do a job, that this job is paid equally, no matter where you live and what you are, that is very important, that would be a big approach. And also, that in East Germany more of the larger companies get settled and also establish their head offices there. Not only that they build a hall there and collect many subsidies, but that the head office is also there, this is very important". (DE_F_P_6)

"I am quite radical in many things. Many things I would do differently. Equality in housing policy. So I wouldn't let them go on like this, that everything goes into private hands and the state has no power beyond that". (DE_M_P_3)

"Yeah, what would I wish? That the youth has work and doesn't have to hang around, because we certainly have some who don't want to go to work there and then they just attack people and become criminal and that's what they had less over there [in the GDR], if they attacked someone over there then they just locked him up directly". (DE_M_P_4)

"I also do miss a lot in labor law today. That a lot of people or a lot of areas have gone out of union-related matters. We have seen – even in America after the First World War – how the trade unions have gained power. Of course, things don't always go so

smoothly there either, I don't want to say at all, but I think we need a greater trade union culture to strengthen workers' rights more". (DE_M_P_2)

The "past" is still an issue for German society, even if an overall declining interest in WWII is evident. The "need to remember the past" mentioned by several participants as an obligation that should be kept - not for "self-punishment" reasons but as a global example reminding everyone of the devastating consequences of War. In a relative context, certain participants express their worries about the rise of the far-right ideology, making obvious that according to their opinion, the answer to the question about remembrance of the past or not, is directly related to your attitude towards the problem of the extreme-right ideology invigoration. Needless to say, of course, that extreme-right is almost solely focused on specific issues and perhaps, first of all, Refugees.

"So, I wish for Germany that we remain an open society. And that we can call things by their name, that doesn't go so well. Well, that's possible, as we live in a democracy. Actually, everything is going pretty well, I think. It is only at the moment that this whole asylum problem and so on, which is already occupying Germany, is actually happening. With the AfD, there is only the discussion about refugees, they do not have another idea. And I think that perhaps we have focused far too much on refugees. In my case, this is even truer because they were working for me". (DE_F_P_7)

"I think I'd be much more open about what problems we have. For example, there may also be problems with refugees. Because I have the feeling that so many rights have the feeling that nobody talks about it, so I have to do it. They have to act themselves. I do think that if there was an incident, which unfortunately happens from time to time, our government would say too little about it. "Ok, we may have problems here and there," so that one is open. And people notice that there is also an attempt to change something. Then I think many would not have the need to turn to the AfD. I think a lot of people have the feeling that the government doesn't care, or it is swept under the table. And I think that's why many people think they have to choose the AfD. And I believe that if this is discussed openly, i.e. made into an open discussion ... that would be better. Because right now people don't get a proper explanation when something happens. As an example, when you hear again that a refugee raped a girl. And then the government doesn't say anything about it, and it's never explained that the same thing happens among "Germans". I think this whole issue is being dealt with completely wrong. And such a case is then hefted by the media or the AfD. But there is no statement from our government. So that one puts it into perspective - how much happens in Germany so that one sees, that is not a problem of and by refugees who do something like this. Which does not make it any better, but then the issue would not be so one-sided and pushed aside by the government and I believe that this is why the AfD is so popular". (DE_F_T_1)

"I see so many books there [points to the shelf] about just war traumatization and so on. What that means and I would like to have more exchange, also with the young people.

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So, some survivors are still alive, then there are the children of these survivors and then there are the children of the children of the survivors and somehow to create such a forum. So that one really promotes this understanding for each other more that would be something I would wish for. Such exchange circles somehow". (DE_F_P_10)

Satisfaction with the standard of living in Germany is also at a very high level according to the answers of most respondents. The Economy factor seems to be the one which produces feelings of security, satisfaction with the material standard of living, and feeling of pride for the leading role of Germany in the global economy (especially among younger respondents, economic achievements are perceived very positively). At the same time, no fundamental distrust can be detected. Trust in Politics and Media seems to be at the same high levels. Public Media are highly trusted; the public broadcasters stand out most positively as "mediators" of History. Also, there seems to be a strong "pro-democratic" consensus in Germany (but it might be necessary to maintain a reservation, which is related to the nature of the sample of qualitative research and so it is likely opposite views to be under-represented). Religion doesn't seem to be an important issue, given the fact that it was never mentioned by anyone during the interviews. No negative comments were made concerning any kind of freedoms and rights within the German state. Freedom of expression is highly valued, therefore opinions about past conflicts do not seem deeply divided in the sample.

Europe and the EU are almost equated. Europe is something taken for granted and is not questioned. The division of Germany and its overcoming is not put into a larger European context, considered solely as an inter-German issue. Europe is primarily perceived as an economic area but at the same time, it is also an area invested in values (cooperation, mutual support, freedom of movement without border controls, etc.). Therefore, at the Identity level, a strong pro-European feeling is remarkable. Nevertheless, individual comments were made concerning the dominant role of Germany in the EU's structure (mainly by insisting to impose economic models on countries that are unfit to).

"Yes, I have to say, I am actually proud to live in Europe and to be born in Europe. Nowhere else do people live as long without war as we do here." (DE_F_P_8)

"What would I wish for Germany? ... That it no longer dominates all countries in Europe but that equality is created, that Germany's economic strength is used not only for Germany and Germans but for all people in Europe and for all people who want to come to Europe". (DE_M_T_6)

"Inside Europe or where? Politically and economically well positioned so that all people can live well in it. Equality is a big point, social equality". (DE_F_T_5)

"I have the feeling that media make a great contribution that the topic is present in the media. What I think is important is that it still is. That there are really a lot of good documentaries that deal with the topic, that also shed retrospective light on it. There are also many feature films that are great. Where you can understand both sides. The thoughts of GDR loyal citizens and GDR refugees can be well understood. And I think the

media are doing a great job of it. Especially since there are many possibilities to inform yourself. In my opinion, one is not bombarded with it. But if you look actively and google, then I think there are a lot of great offers. So that you can intensively deal with the processing. So I think the media do a great job of it". (DE_F_T_7)

Addressing the historical past seems to cause a visible dichotomy in German public opinion: on the one hand, some support the need for remembrance while on the other, there are those who are tired of this constant and exclusive focus of this memory of the past on the Nazi regime and the Holocaust, considering that is time for Germany to move forward and beyond this point. One way to overcome this dichotomy is to adopt a broader, more global perspective of things, as this is an area in which everyone can agree on shared goals for the future, whatever their perception of the past. A need to revise the recent German history (mostly the GDR period but other neglected historical periods as well) is evident.

"We have not had a war for so long and I also hope for the children, for the grandchildren, for everyone that there will never be a war again and above all that it will not start from German soil. That was the bad thing, that idiocy. And you should – you shouldn't forget that." (DE_F_P_8)

"I wish they would make people more concerned about our past. And learn from mistakes of the past, because I have the feeling that we're not doing this at all right now." (DE_F_T_1)

"I think it is really good that we, as a country, have tried to come to terms with this and admit our crime and I would now also like to see this for colonialism, that it is finally recognized that this was the first genocide. The Nazi regime was only the second, but with the colonies in south-west Africa, what we did there, that we exterminated a whole people and this chief, who defended himself against us there for nine years… I wish that this would be dealt with in the same way as the Nazi regime was dealt with. And we would have to get there now, and also work through this and that we see that we also have a great responsibility there and that we actually have to give them something for what we have done there, so that would be important. That would really be a step that we would still have to take." (DE_F_P_6)

"More global thinking. I can't express it any other way. I observe so much rushing against each other and over each other here. So, if I had the power, or if I was heard, I would try more to stop it. To strengthen more solidarity. So, this greed for profit on the part of large companies also ensures that people act more against each other than with each other." (DE_F_P_10)

7. Greece

7.1 Greece - Brief background of the conflict

The 20th century was a time of turmoil and instability in Greek political life. In this framework, especially in the post-WWII era and the political implications associated with the Cold War, the political landscape was marked by the conflict between the Left and the Right, which led to the population being divided between the two camps. Although this conflict had long been present in political life, it culminated around the middle of the century and led to the Greek Civil war. The Right won the war and dominated the political scene in the years between 1950 and 1967. From the 1950s onwards, after almost a decade of war events and deprivation, the situation improved and Greece experienced a period of progressive urbanization, modernization and economic growth. The countryside was gradually abandoned and people, especially the youth, moved to the cities or even abroad. Greece gradually changed from a rural to an urban society. The city became a place of desire that offered a better life in terms of access to facilities (such as electricity and water), education, jobs, culture, entertainment, but also consumer goods (Close, 2006:107-110). The period between 1950 and 1967 could arguably be characterized as a weak democracy in terms of the coexistence of the state with a strong parastate, a constitution and a para-constitution, which, as Ilias Nikolakopoulos noted, created "a peculiar combination of authoritarianism and democracy, exclusion and welfare, ideological regression and cultural spring" (Nikolakopoulos, 2010:9)

The Greek military dictatorship was established after a coup d'état led by a group of colonels on April 21, 1967. The three main leaders of the coup were Georgios Papadopoulos, Stylianos Pattakos and Nikolaos Makarezos. The Colonels legitimized their coup by portraying it as a reaction to a perceived 'communist threat' - the existence of which was never proven (Clogg, 1976:84) - and to the impotence and corruption of politicians. Within this rhetoric, they called their coup the "Nation-saving Revolution''. The main ideology espoused by the regime identified with national consciousness (ethnikofrosyni). Within this ideological framework, anti-communism had the central place during the junta period both as theory (anti-communist rhetoric) and practice (political persecutions) (Papadimitriou, 2010:105). The obsession with traditional anachronistic values was overemphasized within a nationalistic discourse and conveyed through infamous slogans such as "Homeland, Religion, Family" and "Greece of Hellenic Christians". Acts of opposition were criminalized, while torture became a state practice, although the colonels denied its existence (Pollis, 1987:604). Opposition to the system was dealt with by the leadership using the usual strategies dictatorships use against dissidents: at a first level, through dismissal from their jobs and stigmatization; then through arrests, interrogations, house arrest, imprisonment, torture, and exile. These tactics were not only used against communists; any act of resistance - regardless of ideological background - resulted in being branded as an opponent of the social order. This led to numerous arrests of activists and politicians (including those from the right-wing spectrum) (Close, 2006:190). However, it seems that society did not accept the junta but tolerated it - as evidenced by the public enthusiasm after the overthrow of the colonels in 1974 (Meletopoulos, 2006:267) -

while opposition took various forms and was expressed by people from different classes and political ideologies (Rizas, 2010:94-96).

Although opposition to the regime took various forms and was expressed both within the country and abroad, for the purposes of this study the focus will be on the underground organizations that formed and operated primarily through 1970 and on the student movement that led to the Polytechnic Uprising in November 1973. Although organized opposition and participation in the anti-junta movement was generally not a massive phenomenon (Clogg, 1976:278), the Polytechnic Uprising contributed to establishing this youth as "collective national heroes" (Karamanolakis, 2010:10). The Polytechnic Uprising became a lieu de mémoire (place of memory) according to Nora's definition, which states that it is "any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage" of any community"(Nora, 1996: xvii).

7.2 Greece – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

The imposition of dictatorship demanded the politicization and participation of women. During the military dictatorship, dissident women took a radical position and rebelled against a set of cultural and political rules, some pre-existing and some introduced by the regime. This opposition, together with the authoritarian and anachronistic nature of the dictatorial regime and its strict measures and actions, arguably led to a challenge in gender relations (ibid.: 185), especially given the low interest of the majority of the female population in politics.

> *"I went along with two or three of my friends by the square, where there was a strange atmosphere, a strange quietness. While generally and especially during these days, a lot of people went around in the square, shopping. It seemed to me weird that there was a strange silence." (EL_F_P_6)*

There are also references to the Civil War in the narratives, suggesting that political division was still a recent memory influencing their attitudes, and that politics was central to their daily lives.

> *"At home, always, I was hearing that the Right has brought us a lot of bad things. He was a   free man, he was well educated, almost chased because he had a communist file, although   he was not, because he had communist friends. I was listening to him, to his stories, at the table, about the Communists who saw them as heroes, because they freed the region from the Germans, they gave great battles in Pyrgos against the Germans. And all this, despite the fact that he did not take part in the armed struggle of EAM or ELAS and so on. Just as a young man then, because he was 16-17 years old, he wrote slogans on the walls against the Germans [...] These memories I have from my father. (EL_F_P_1)*

While many respondents today see today's divisive rhetoric and the rise of the far-right as related (or roughly related) to the ideology and rhetoric of the junta era, others today see no connection to

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that era and state that the whole period is forgotten or should be forgotten, that there are no remnants of that era in Greece today.

> *"We already see far-right phenomena that should not exist. But we need to know, we need to learn what happened because we need to know what to avoid." (EL_F_T_4)*

> *"Because basically, why should I judge now the effects of the dictatorship, after fifty years, half a century [laughs], as an effect, since we are now in a very nice and democratic regime? I do not think that it is something that concerns us and that we have to make some references. I believe that we should not try to find the effects of the dictatorship right now, after so much time has passed, because whatever was left, whatever bad thing, it has been eliminated." (EL_F_P_3)*

The two most important events mentioned in the interviews are the Polytechnic Uprising and the Turkish invasion in Cyprus. Meanwhile, the commemoration of the Polytechnic Uprising could be called a lieu de mémoire for the period of the dictatorship. The post-conflict period in Greece is defined as "metapolitefsi" (regime change), which means the transition from dictatorship to democracy. As one of the interviewees notes, "metapolitefsi" usually refers to both the period of change but also to the whole era that followed, up to the present day. He notes that for him:

> *"The metapolitefsi is a specific moment, plus a whole course because even now we say that we are in the period of the metapolitefsi. Which is a bit wrong in my opinion.". (EL_M_P_9)*

The period of the fall of the junta and the change of regime is described by almost everyone as a period of restoration of normality, with Karamanlis playing the role of the central figure in this change. Although Karamanlis was a right-wing politician and associated as an opponent of the left and the center, he was welcomed after the fall of the junta.

> *"We were happy. We were happy that the dictatorship fell. We brought Karamanlis in the fair [laughter]. Clearly, people returned from exile, prisoners went free. The conscription stopped afterward…. Okay, all these people I saw on the seafront, when Karamanlis came over here, I was wondering where have they been all this time?". (EL_F_P_2)*

7.3 Greece – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

The vast majority of respondents with transmitted experience (7 out of 10) indicated that their family played the most important role in their perceptions of and attitudes towards the period of the dictatorship. For those whose family actively participated in the resistance to the dictatorship, family memories and narratives seem to overshadow any other source of information, and narratives sometimes seem like something taken for granted:

> *"Definitely, I was influenced. Because I had also -that is without even reading anything-, I had already formed an opinion. Let alone when we are hanging out and somebody*

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believes that all this is a lie, regarding what happened, especially that night; that nobody died and things like that. I will react immediately, and I will say that, because of what I have heard from my Dad, I believe the exact opposite. However, without having read anything specific. So, since I was little, this has definitely influenced me, in forming an opinion". (EL_F_T_2)

A research gap and a lack of information about the school and education system are evident. Official curricula and textbooks pay little attention to this period. In contrast to school history textbooks, the significance of this period is highlighted in the Polytechnic Uprising commemoration on November 17, as this date has become an official school holiday, celebrated every year through plays, poems, etc. as an official school celebration. All the respondents with transmitted experiences referred to Polytechnic Uprising and its celebration in school. According to the respondents, the focus is on Polytechnic Uprising and always on the occasion of the anniversary and the preparation of the school celebration, while there is a lack of information about the dictatorship period as such. Many of the respondents feel that they do not have enough knowledge about the subject, with a few exceptions, including people who have the transmitted experience of their parents.

In almost all interviews, discussions about the junta were not conducted in the friendly/social environment of the interviewees. When it was talked about, it was on a few occasions (e.g., on the celebration of Polytechnic uprising anniversary).

7.4 Greece - Gender

The legal framework serves as a good indicator of women's position and status when seen as a reflection of social norms and the state's conceptualization of women's duties and rights. The existing legal framework defined gender inequality, especially in relation to women's position in the family.

The subordination of women within the family and society, as well as their financial dependence on their husbands, became even more evident in Family law, which perpetuated the notion of the patriarchal family (Kounougeri-Manoledaki, 2003:10-11). Based on the Family Law, "The man is the head of the family and is responsible for decision-making within the family, while the woman is responsible for managing the household". Within this legal framework, the most significant right was women's suffrage, granted in 1952. In their overwhelming majority, women voted the right, and the traditional notion that women had little or no interest in formal politics persisted (Pantelidou Malouta, 1990:104-105). In the early 1960s, gradual steps, despite the repressive atmosphere, would change the social milieu in urban areas. Gradual urbanization and modernization affected the status of women. The city offered women more opportunities in terms of education, job market, but also in terms of culture and entertainment. The educational system, characterized as "inhospitable" for women until the middle of the 20th century (Maragkoudaki, 2003:11), transformed especially with the educational reform in 1964, a while before the junta imposition. Dictator Papadopoulos in one of his speeches defined the role of the Greek woman as

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follows: "The Revolution sees the Greek woman in her primary biological role, that of mother, it honors her under this capacity with deep awareness of her importance and it will try -for her and for the nation- to secure the Greek Mother help of the State that is due to her." More so, making a cultural reference to gender roles, the time of the dictatorship, when television was in its infancy and under state control, as Paparzi and Tsangaris noted (2008:32-34), television advertising focused on the role of women only as that of "housewife" or as "sexual object" but never as "working woman". The final reference, as far as gender relations are concerned, is to the early days of the imposition, when the regime banned miniskirts for girls and long hair for men, a reference to the regime's attempt to control sexuality and preserve morality (Close, 2006:187).

The imposition of dictatorship demanded the politicization and participation of women. During the military dictatorship, dissident women took a radical position, rebelling against a set of cultural and political rules, some pre-existing and some established by the regime. This opposition, together with the authoritarian and anachronistic nature of the dictatorial regime and its strict measures and actions, arguably led to a challenge in gender relations (ibid.: 185), especially considering the low interest in politics shown by the majority of the female population.

While half of the male respondents perceived differentiations between women and men at the time, the female respondents commented either directly or indirectly on this, concerning the social situation and milieu in relation to women.

> *"It was a time when women were not so busy because, first of all, the percentage of women who were being educated at that time was much smaller than men. We had not reached the current level, that you see that girls will certainly be educated. Therefore, there was a delay regarding the participation of women in some things in relation to men. […]. So, yes, there was a difference." (EL_F_P_6).*

Also, comments regarding gender-related mainly to the role of women in the resistance to the dictatorship.

> *"Yes, in the dictatorship there were these. There was a separation, there was no gender equality. This was manifested everywhere; it was not manifested only in the workplace. It was also manifested in the fact that women were housewives, there was still that, there were male-dominated professions, as they are today, but then this phenomenon was much more intense. Yes, there were these things, there was a separation between men and women in many respects. There were also professions forbidden for women, but also in entertainment, there was a fender distinction in the way of entertainment, let's say, it was obvious. But these do not seem to me to be due to the dictatorship, I do not think it was intended to emphasize gender inequality, I do not think so. They were phenomena that characterized the era in general, not only Greece, but also Greek society as a society that is part of a more western-like way of life. There were, but I do not think dictators encouraged or intensely cultivated this separation (…) No, no. In these resistance activities during the dictatorship, gender equality was fully cultivated. It*

was one of the aims of the movement, to have gender equality, to eliminate this distinction between the male and the female". (EL_M_P_8)

For the majority of respondents, the gender of those who are part of their friendship environment does not seem to play a role in their perception of the dictatorship, and most respondents do not recognise gender differentiation in the views of their friends. However, comments were made about women's lack of interest in politics.

"No. It is just that more men deal with politics in general. That is, while the woman has the possibility and it is obligatory for the parties, in any case, to have a specific quota, yet women do not deal with politics". (EL_M_T_10)

7.5 Greece – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

Among participants with personal experience of the conflict, there are two perceptions regarding respondents' views of Europe. The first refers to those who do not trust Europe and are pessimistic about its future and relationship with Greece.

"So, I am clearly against Europe. You will tell me, you have to stay inside the borders. Yes, stay inside the borders, but not as they used to consider them. We can be out of Europe, just like England says. There are special regimes that we can do and transactions; we do not need to be closed and isolated". (EL_F_P_1)

The second group refers to those with positive feelings towards Europe and the EU, who have a more optimistic view of the future. They see Europe as an umbrella, a shield. Also, within this group there are those who believe in Europe and those who are disappointed in Europe but still want a united Europe.

"The future is a relevant issue. Europe is always by our side" (EL_F_P_3)

Regarding the European identity, it can be stated that it is not an integrated identity for the majority of the respondents, while some feel intensely the Balkan identity rather than the European identity.

"Because, as I said earlier, my features are better suited with the Balkans, not that they are identical, I do not say they are identical but are better suited. As I said earlier, we have a common history, we have almost the same food, we have a common culture, something that unites us, there is a thread on which we can rely on. Unlike others with whom we do not have something to create a bond, this bond that is imposed on us is artificial, not real, it is not based somewhere." (EL_M_P_8)

The recent crisis has worsened Greece's relationship with Europe and brought back old divisive rhetoric, especially regarding Germany's role in both the EU and the Greek crisis. In many cases, their views on Europe are associated with those of Germany.

> *"I think it should be truly a Europe of Europeans and it is not. And that is unpleasant because we are talking now about a German Europe in essence, German or French",* *(EL_F_P_6)*

Expectations sometimes seem to be related to respondents' political identity, the same goes for their views on Europe and their sense of European identity. Most respondents who belonged to the left feel disappointed by EU policies, especially in recent years and during the crisis, and have lost faith in their expectations.

> *"So, I was expecting that we would work for the people of Europe, the workers. Europe had very good features, or the leaders were probably better. Now Europe is not what we wanted. Or what some people envisioned to be after the War. A Europe with closed borders, which is now full of extreme elements, with the yellow vests, which intervened in Yugoslavia and dissolved it, which set us on the wall.*
>
> *And others. It is not a good Europe. It is an evil one. And I do not see it evolving positively. I do not see a future, if Lepen, and the others pick up, I do not see that this has a future. It will probably be only a financial, I do not know"* *(EL_F_P_2)*

For participants with transmitted experience of the conflict, the idea of Europe seems in many cases to be associated both with specific terms such as 'organization', but Europe is also implied to refer to specific countries rather than an entity.

> *"I mean for us, Greeks, European has to do more with organization, program, order; mainly these I would say, the way of thinking. Regarding the first three, I think I have taken something, and I am European. Regarding the way of thinking I have something, but I have a lot of the Greek also"* *(EL_F_T_2)*

One can note a distinction between the cultural-historical and the financial aspect of the concept of Europe. In the minds of most respondents, Europe and the EU exist as two distinct concepts.

> *"For the European Union - I would say in order to separate it - I think there is a distinction that has a strong historical basis between Europe and the European Union. In my mind, I would say that the European Union is something that is deeply problematic. I think I have a negative tendency. Now, regarding Europe, it is difficult to evaluate in a few words the production, the historical evolution, which I imagine, -without being sure, I am not a historian-, it is not only a civilization, we cannot homogenize it only into one civilization, but there is also this, it is also a part of this story. There are too many elements that are extremely fertile in terms of civilization, culture, the history of societies, which were born in what we call Europe, in the European continent."* *(EL_M_T_7)*

There is a sense that anti-European rhetoric has intensified during the recent crisis. Some of the interviewees grew up in the milieu of crisis-ridden Greece, as best expressed in the words of one of the respondents:

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"I do not know if the lesson of writing in high school has helped me, but I think of it as a hug that acts as a protection. But this hug can be either a hug of care or a suffocating hug that creates pressure to you and a sense of lack of freedom. I do not have so much knowledge, but I know it has helped the economy, travel, it helped trade; something very important, which is human rights. But I do not know if it is because of the country I live in and grew up, but there is a very strong belief that Europe is not a good thing because at the moment there is a feeling that it is hostile to us and all that. (…) Because, since I remember going to school and learning things, and having in mind that I get knowledge consciously, I was in high school. So, I remember myself since that time, having an economic crisis. So, since I remember myself, we are in a constant quarrel with Europe; that we are not right as a country, that we owe them, but also that they owe to us, that they do not treat us nice, that they do not protect us, that they are exploiting us. In my mind, Europe is neither good nor is it bad. (…) It is very common to hear from one of your professors that "Germans did this, the French did that and now see what Europe does to us, it takes advantage of us, it finds us weak and wants to ruin us". It was very common to hear it in school, both in junior high school and high school and in the University." (EL_F_T_1)

This rhetoric was also reproduced by the media and helped to fuel anti-European sentiments:

"Media play also their role in the crisis when they say for example that "The bad Europeans make us pay and they are all against us". It is neither true nor false; it is a matter of perception. Everyone is doing his own job". (EL_M_T_9)

In many cases, expectations of Europe are associated with the word "support", either for Greece or for all EU member states. While few of the respondents indicated that they would prefer Greece not to be a member of the EU and that they were against it, most of them expressed concerns about trust issues. Some of them stated that the European attitude towards Europe is harsh and mostly strict (especially those belonging to the center-left political spectrum).

"The strongest countries should be helping the less powerful countries, not to burden them more, in the context of austerity, for the improvement of things. That is, I cannot imagine how, through austerity, through these programs that were then given with the austerity, the economy, how a country can be saved from an economic destruction, if it has nothing to produce, if it cannot produce anything and has no profit from it? I give an example. Because there is always a process. They lend us, we cover some things, but some new things are created because we do not have something to gain, we have no profit. So, to conclude, cooperation should be much better, it is not ideal. It's good, but it could be better." (EL_M_T_8)

On the other hand, there were others who put their trust in Europe, which they consider an advantageous and more powerful partner than Greece, and believed that Greece should organize itself and adopt a more responsible attitude, and for this Europe's help is of the utmost importance.

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"I would take care, as far as it is possible, that my country gains a dynamic in its relationship with Europe, but with a decent face. Because you may want to be accepted by the big Europe, which I consider to be a panacea for us, in the sense that we have no other open arms to go to, also economically. But in order to be accepted by all these peoples and states, we must also have a corresponding attitude and a corresponding face. Therefore, the whole level of the country should be upgraded on an economic basis, on the basis of the dignity, in relation to the institutions, in the sense of the rules that they define in all things". (EL_F_P_3)

Another issue related to Europe are concerns expressed by some respondents about the rise of the far-right, linked to fears about the unity of Europe and highlighting a sense of insecurity/uncertainty.

"That a neo-Nazi movement is slowly and tantalizingly re-emerging, and that it will slowly destroy any ostensible unity in Europe and lead people to live again the same story. Or anyway, that's my fear." (EL_F_T_5)

Expectations sometimes seem to be related to the political identity of the respondents, the same goes for their views on Europe and their sense of European identity or not. Most respondents who belonged to the left feel disappointed by EU policies, especially in recent years and during the crisis, and have lost faith in their expectations.

"So, I was expecting that we would work for the people of Europe, the workers. Europe had very good features, or the leaders were probably better. Now Europe is not what we wanted. Or what some people envisioned to be after the War. A Europe with closed borders, which is now full of extreme elements, with the yellow vests, which intervened in Yugoslavia and dissolved it, which set us on the wall.

And others. It is not a good Europe. It is an evil one. And I do not see it evolving positively. I do not see a future, if Lepen, and the others pick up, I do not see that this has a future. It will probably be only a financial, I do not know." (EL_F_P_2)

On the contrary, those who belong to the center, center-left or right wing seem to believe in Europe and the EU and have expectations, especially if Greece takes on a more responsible role and organizes the state and its interests.

"From Europe, I expect for Greece to play a more active role in helping our country overcome the problems that are not only financial, but also administrative ones; but to a certain extent also defense and foreign policy issues. I expect more coherence in this area. The help that has been offered to us during these years of economic crisis is already very important. I do not share the views of people who believe that the EU has exploited us to cover its own other problems, in these years of economic collapse in our country". (EL_M_P_9)

7.6 Greece – Media

For those respondents with transmitted experiences, the sources of information largely related to social media. However, in some cases, it seems that learning about news and being informed is not of great importance to their everyday life. At the same time, many respondents seem to question mainstream media (both television and press) and acknowledge that they choose certain sources to inform themselves that are in line with their general views.

For respondents with personal experience, there seems to be a great deal of distrust today about the role of the Media today, including the news that is being broadcasted and their agenda. Although there has been distrust of the role of the media in previous years, the 2015 referendum reinforced this perception as the mainstream media were accused of promoting a particular viewpoint regarding the referendum and its outcome. This also resulted in the distinction between mainstream/private media and state/public television, a distinction mentioned in many interviews, while both are equally seen as untrustworthy. The majority of respondents with personal experience do not use social media extensively, if at all, and they mainly refer to Facebook. Mostly, they relate their non-use of social media to their age.

In general, we observe a distrust of the media, especially television news, in both groups. This could also be related to the past years of crisis. The year of the referendum and the election of a left-wing government have brought about a new division, which is also reflected in the media, between the public/state TV (ERT) and the private broadcasters. This has led to an escalation of distrust of the media from both sides (Left and Right). They point to the role of the media, and in particular TV as the one that shapes "consciousness", forming and shaping opinions. Also, many of the respondents from both groups indicated that they have stopped watching television news, although this refers particularly to those respondents with transmitted experiences who get their information mainly through social media.

7.7 Greece – Overall Remarks

The trauma of the division between the two political camps (Left and Right) seems to be an issue not only related to the period of dictatorship, but also deeply rooted in the civil war trauma, as also mentioned by the interviewees. Regardless of whether the interviewees acknowledge a legacy of the dictatorship period, most of them recognise a rather strong division in the current political and social milieu in Greece. Both the civil war and the dictatorship are still issues that have left an open wound in the public discourse, and there seems to be a need for more research, especially on the issue of dictatorship.

Education seems to have been of great importance in the lack of knowledge of the period of the dictatorship among those who have transmitted experience. As an event in Greece's recent history, it is often marginalized in the school curriculum and only addressed on the occasion of the Polytechnic Remembrance Day. It seems that there is a need for more information, research and analysis on this topic in schools.

Education reappears as a subject also regarding the future of the country. It is the most mentioned concept in all the interviews regarding the problems of the country and it is proposed as a priority for the amelioration of the political and financial situation.

While sometimes implied and others clearly stated, "division" seems to emerge in the majority of interviews as a recurring theme in Greek history and contemporary politics. Many interviewees called for the need for unity and solidarity in the country. For some of them, the issue of division also relates to the macro level, i.e., the division within Europe, the two-speed Europe (rich and poor) and the need for unification at this level as well. Many respondents also mentioned their distrust of politics and stressed that Greece needs worthy leaders, so that bribery and nepotism are eliminated. Some were also greatly disappointed with the left-wing government in Greece, which they had expected to be something new and different from the previous governments.

European identity seems to be challenged in many cases. Due to recent rhetoric and discourse in media and politics as well as the economic crisis, European identity is questioned by both generations. Steps to strengthen European identity should be considered, such as commemorative days for events related to Europe's and Greece's common past or the integration of Europe's recent history and culture into the school curriculum. There is a lack of information and knowledge about the history of Greece and Europe as an institution. Greece's entry into the EU seems to be blurred in the narratives of most respondents. It appears to be a neglected part of Greek contemporary history, both in institutions (such as schools) and in public memory.

Divisive rhetoric has been reinforced and issues that belonged to the past (such as in or out of the EU) have been revived. In general, as far as Europe's role in the conflict is concerned, there seems to be a lack of knowledge in both groups. Apart from the role played by some European countries in supporting the resistance in Greece, there are uncertainties and information deficits acknowledged by the vast majority of respondents.

8. Ireland

8.1 Ireland - Brief background of the conflict

"The Troubles", is the name coined for a 30-year conflict in Ireland, specifically concentrated in the northern Irish state, border counties in the Republic of Ireland, with secondary conflict in the rest of Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, was the longest continuous post-WWII conflict in Europe. The Troubles are considered to date from 1968 to 1998. Although there were periods of conflict in the 1920s, 30, 50s and early 60s predating the Troubles and ongoing inter-community has continued to post the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

The Northern Irish conflict has its historical origins in the colonization of Ireland by British, Protestant settlers in the 16th century and the division of Ireland into an independent Irish state and a British Northern Irish state in the early 20th Century. The Northern Irish state discriminated against Irish nationalists who were mostly Catholic. In the 1960s, Nationalists organized in civil rights campaigns as well as paramilitary campaigns. British Unionists, often supported by the state, mobilized in opposition to Irish nationalists. In 1969, the British military arrived to stop the violence, but this escalated into a 'war' between the Irish Republican Army and British forces. Between 1968 and 1994, over 3.500 people died and over 35.000 were injured in Northern Ireland as a direct result of the fighting. Robberies, bombings, assassinations, and terror tactics spread to engulf Great Britain and the Irish Republic, greatly decreasing security and personal freedom. At the height of this conflict, Northern Ireland was governed by direct rule from London. The 1998 Good Friday Agreement and the 2006 St. Andrews Agreement re-established a devolved government through the power-sharing Northern Ireland Assembly. This Assembly attempts to balance the interests of the region's two main religious and political groups - the Unionist parties, which are generally supported by the Protestant community, and the Nationalist political parties, which traditionally draw Catholic support. However, the Northern Irish parliament is deeply dysfunctional. The state relies heavily on funding from London and the parliament has been suspended since January 2017. The British governments have been unable to restore the Northern Ireland parliament and struggle to resolve the issue of the Irish border in negotiating the British exit from the European Union.

The Troubles is an inter-generational conflict extending over 30 years, with significant pre- and post-conflict dynamics additionally. Historically the conflict has gone through a number of stages, which may be useful to briefly mention here, in order to give a more detailed picture of the conflict's timeline.

Pre 1968: A Unionist Majority organized a segregated state. Voting was property dependent, and Catholics were gerrymandered politically, denied access to housing and state services. Employment was also controlled by Unionist associations, which maintained closed shops. The Orange Order marched in July each year as a show of cultural domination. The police were supported by a range of volunteer trained and armed auxiliary forces, which maintained state power.

1968 Civil Rights Movement: A movement for housing, education, employment, and voting equality began in 1968. It was large, peaceful, and called for substantive, economic, social and political change. It was repressed by the Northern Irish Unionist State and the formation of extra-parliamentary unionist forces.

Pogroms in 1970 and 1971 by armed unionists in Belfast, in particular Bombay Street, saw urban riots and refugee resettlement south of the border. The British Army was called in. Initially welcomed by the Catholic population, house searches began a conflict between the British Army and IRA. Internment without Trial was brought in and the majority of those arrested and interned were Catholics. Thousands joined the IRA.

Bloody Sunday 1972: British Army Shot and murdered 14 unarmed civilians on an anti-internment march in Derry. Violence escalates.

Sunningdale Agreement 1973 & Ulster Workers Strike: Offering power-sharing between nationalist and unionist parties is proposed by British and Irish Governments to end the conflict. Orange Order, Unionist dominated trade unions, and worker councils and unionist paramilitaries begin Ulster Workers Strike. Workplaces are shut, electricity and food are rationed and controlled by unionist paramilitaries. Barricades and roadblocks were erected across Northern Ireland. Sunningdale collapses.

1974-1979: After IRA Ceasefire fighting resumes. IRA expands the use of explosives and expands the bombing campaigns in England. Unionist paramilitaries assassinate republicans and engage in attacks against Catholic Areas

1980-1982: Thatcher comes to power in the UK. Promises hard line against IRA. Hunger Strikes begin opposing the criminal status of republican promises, demanding political status. Bobby Sands elected as MP. First hunger striker to die. 12 more die. 100,000s march in the Northern Ireland Republic. British embassy burnt down in Dublin. Sinn Fein emerges as a mass political organization.

1980s: Violence continues in 1980s, IRA begins the second campaign in England, bombing British state and military targets.

1989-1994: UVF & UDA violence increases, IRA infiltrated by British State, failed attacks. IRA ceasefire 1994

1995-1998: Drumcree conflict erupts. Orange Order tries to march through the catholic area of Lisburn, and Garvethy road is blocked by residents. Orange Order mobilizes each year to force march through the area. Parades Commission set up to try negotiating Orange Order parades.

1998 Good Friday Agreement Signed: Omagh Bomb by Dissend republicans, kills 20+, peace marches in catholic areas, signal resistance to any further violence

2000s peace and reconciliation process begins: Violence continues around Orange Order Marches in July. Power-sharing agreed, education remains segregated. IRA decommissions arms. Efforts to integrate the police force.

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Brexit & Collapse of Stormount: Power-sharing collapses under the RHA scandal. Northern Irish population votes remain, despite DUP support for Brexit. Unionists lose their majority in Stormount. No power-sharing 2017-2019. DUP join minority government with Conservatives to push through Brexit. Border worries continue. The population is now 50/50.

Trying to map the field of central political actors involved definitely, we can start by pointing out the *British State*. British States' position and its parties were fairly uniform during the long conflict. The primary state response was focused on counter-insurgency and a military strategy combining tactical urban and rural combat, with infiltration and intelligence work by M15. Politically the official position was that the British State was a peacekeeper between two warring factions; Catholics and Protestants. The explicitly pro-unionist political position was taken up by the British Right, Conservative Party (Enoch Powell relocated to Ulster and became an Ulster Unionist Politician). Another significant political actor involved in the conflict was the *Unionist political establishment* in general. In 1968, the Ulster Unionist Party had been in power for almost 50 years. Formed from an alliance of landed aristocracy, urban unionist middle class and elements of the working class, it administers the Northern Irish State and maintains economic and political power. It was supported by a militarized police force and volunteer secondary police, drawn from the UVF, which maintained a heightened law and order policing. During the Troubles, the Northern Irish – Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) continued as a unionist dominated police force. After the Good Friday Agreement, the name was changed to the PSNI and attempts were made to integrate Catholics into the force. At the end of the major political actors' list, we can find a cultural unionist organization such as *Orange Order*, a religious organization such as *Paisley Free Presbyterians*, and paramilitary organizations such as *UVF* and *UDA*. A number of important secondary, social-cultural and paramilitary forces existed to sustain and defend unionism. The Orange Order, a cultural and political organization that celebrated victory over Catholics, Unionism and maintained closed shop practices in employment and public services remained powerful throughout the conflict. Ian Paisley Free Presbyterian Church was the center of powerful religious evangelical right driving counter-protests and street violence against Catholics. The Free Presbyterian Church has formed the social base of the modern Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). Finally, the UVF and UDA reformed themselves during the Troubles, as an-extra state paramilitary forces engaged in violent attacks, acts of terror and community enforcement within protestant areas. They colluded with both the unionist northern Irish state and British security forces. Today they remain present in working-class areas of Belfast and County Antrim, running both community services and engaged in illegal and semi-legal activities.

In a more detailed break-down of the above list, related to the British we can find:

Unionists identify as British and seek to keep Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom. Unionists typically represent the Protestant religion and have dominated Northern Irish politics since the foundation of the state. Unionism is represented by the Ulster Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party.

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Loyalists are paramilitaries seeking to defend Northern Ireland's British status. The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) was founded in 1912 and was revived in the 1960s. The Ulster Defense Association (UDA) was formed in 1971 and became the largest loyalist paramilitary group in Northern Ireland. Both groups ended their campaigns in 2007.

Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) was the police force of Northern Ireland until 2001. Strongly associated with Unionism, it was frequently accused of discriminating against Catholics and of colluding with loyalist paramilitaries. Some 319 members of the RUC were killed and almost 9,000 were injured during the conflict.

The British Military was first deployed in Northern Ireland in 1969. Initially, a short-term measure, they remained for 40 years.

The Government of the United Kingdom ruled the island of Ireland until 1922 and since then ruled the six counties of Northern Ireland. In 1972, the UK government dissolved the Northern Irish parliament and ruled Northern Ireland from London. Various governments began peace negotiations throughout the 1970s and 1980s, which eventually led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998

Related to Irish, we can find:

Nationalists identify as Irish and are primarily of the Catholic religion. As a minority in the Northern Irish state, they suffered discrimination. Nationalists believe the island of Ireland should be one country. Nationalism is represented by Sinn Fein and the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP). Sinn Fein is historically associated with violent opposition to British rule while the SDLP is associated with non-violence and civil rights campaigns.

Republicans generally refer to those who support the use of violence to overthrow British rule in Ireland. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was originally formed in 1913 to fight for Irish independence from Britain. A 'Provisional' IRA was revived in the 1960s and became the predominant paramilitary organization fighting against British rule in Northern Ireland. It became a well-armed and well-financed guerrilla organization that targeted the British military and British civilians. The IRA decommissioned its weapons in 2005. Some dissident organizations, such as the Real IRA, reject the 1998 Peace Agreement.

The Government of the Republic of Ireland historically claimed a right to the territory of Northern Ireland. Various Irish governments worked with British governments on peace negotiations. However, many Unionists opposed the involvement of the Irish government.

As part of the Good Friday Agreement (1998), the Republic of Ireland renounced its historical claim to Northern Ireland.

8.2 Ireland – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

For those in the south and border, the past experience of the conflict strongly shaped the present. Participants faced the realities of living campaigning seeking truth and justice surrounding the

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murder of family members, their injuries and British state collusion and cover-up of the violence they experienced. Feelings were raw; there was general distrust for politicians and institutions based on the experience of this campaigning being frustrated. In the North, the violence had a vivid impact on the realities of the present. Experiences of violence and conflict have been suppressed and efforts had been made to keep these experiences away from their children; one feels to avoid some type of feeling that the psychological and emotional damage caused by The Troubles would 'contaminate' their children. The uncertainty of Brexit and political instability meant some were more open to discuss and explore these feelings than before, but there were visible signs of distress when in conversation. Those who had direct experience of conflict were 50+ so it is not possible to analyze a generational shift here. Those from Catholic backgrounds who had experienced violence did not consider themselves Republican or political until someone in their life was murdered and were largely frustrated and angered by their experience, while those from mixed and Protestant background were more anxious about the future, scared of the return to violence, guilty and disturbed by the level of violence that occurred and understanding of the mistreatment of Catholic in Northern Ireland.

"You kind of just live with it. We used to hope we would get answers but then you have to look after the living. Because I spent a lot of time on the campaign, and I would be forgetting about what is going on here [her home]. So you have to hold on a minute for your own sake. Because when I was campaigning, when I was in Cyprus when 9/11 happened. That would remind me of the bomb. It would affect my sleep and I'd be thinking about it, about Parnell Street and that moment in history. That is when my mind would dwell on it, in the nighttime. If I see a thing that is a bomb, it can happen. And then I came off the campaign. The memorial wouldn't bother me. but if it was something like one of the big incidents happening, then I think I'm in the middle of Parnell St or Talbot street and there are all these people dead". (IE_F_P_1)

"I have known quite a few young people who have lost their lives. I went to college with a girl. Her family got a bit in there and Mary was killed. Her parents were killed. Her sister was killed. Her brother was left in a wheelchair. So we were waiting for him to say what he wanted to go anywhere to dance, we went outside Belfast. We went to go outside like anything we tried to have a normal teenage life". (IE_F_P_14)

"Well in 94 you had the Canary Wharf bombs. But what happened then was Republican strategy was different. Newry seldom saw any trouble in the last ten years. Because that would have been like bombing your own town or causing problems in your own home. So, they then moved their strategy to attack London and to move the war there. So we got our own sense of normality to suppose by that stage. By '98 I was working completely different jobs, driving all over the country and doing just getting on with life. When you went to Belfast you knew there were certain areas that you were just wary of. You were just a wee bit more concerned about going into areas. And one of the things that I always did was when I'd buy a car, I'd ask the car dealer to not pout a

sticker on. So obviously when you buy a car they put a sticker on the back that says Joe Bloggs from wherever he's from. And I just had a habit of taking those things off my car and even on your number plate at the bottom your number plate. And that was because you didn't want to be driving up the Shankill Road and people see your car and know you were from Down There were Protestants living. It was predominantly Catholic, so you didn't want people making assumptions about you. You just wanted to remain as anonymous as you possibly could be. And you learn very quickly to speak in the same way as somebody else speaks in the area that you were in. So you adopt that a twang if you were in Belfast to talk back to Belfast person, and the same in Derry. It's just the way you did. You fitted in to do whatever you had to do to make a living". (IE_M_P_20)

"I suppose you have to get back to normal. At the end of the day, I wasn't the mother I was the sister and it's like everything else when they're dead they are dead, you can't bring them back. You have to look after the living and look after what you have. You get used to that, it is pushed under the carpet, so you kind of just have to get on with life. If you are not going to find out the truth after all the Ministers you went to, and the European Courts, and the advocates form human rights, we never got anything out if them". (IE_F_P_1)

"Hopefully it's more or less the same. I'd hate to think that we'd be entering into another War or something like that. You wouldn't want any more violence. No. Of course at my age, and I have family and grandchildren, I just want life to be nice. And to be safe". (IE_F_P_4)

Emotions are mostly negative for the majority of participants with personal experience of the conflict. Anger, fear, disdain, and frustration for participants from the border and south who are the most active in truth and justice campaigns. Anxiety, fear, possible PTSB and suppressed mental and emotional distress for the rest. A number of participants spontaneously mentioned that they prefer not to discuss these experiences on the one hand because it is highly traumatic and on the other because they believe that something like this is pointless with no chance of having any practical results. Early violence by Unionists and the Ulster workers' strike in 1974 were important memories for northern participants of Protestant backgrounds. The Dublin and Monaghan bombing for border and Dublin participants, massacres in the early 1990s committed by the UVF and UDA, as well as the Omagh bomb were also important events raised.

"What can you do? There's not much you can do about it really. I'd met a few people up there that had things happen to them, like people who had their husbands killed in the electrical shop. I met a woman who got a rubber bullet and lost her eye. Everyone has stories but nothing was done about any of it for any of them. You can go everywhere to try and get justice. But there's no justice really. There's no justice for anybody". (IE_F_P_1)

"Looking back I should just say surely left a mark on this experience that you can't forget. I don't really like talking about it that much especially to people who are not from here at my table talk about trouble. I don't like in particular to talk with people about it who are not   from here. I would rather not talk about now". (IE_F_P_15)

"But then every time we watched the news or seen things happening you had one side carrying out an awful attack on either police or army or the Protestant population. And then you had the other side like the Shankill butchers, and you had different things happening on both sides and they were both carrying out these awful things. And there was no one could say it had any moral high ground [...] The other significant event of the conflict which I think a turning point for everybody was the Omagh bombing in 1998. So, for Bloody Sunday when I was a very young child, to Omagh when I was a father and had a child. And it was the 15th of August, that was a holiday... So we were all off work and there was an INF parade or something. And that was the other big event because that was when everyone said this can't go on. Not in my name or anybody else's name, no. Because historically with a lot of the things you may not have supported them, you didn't condone them, because it was seen as 'they did that to us so we're doing that to them'. There was all this thing. Even saying that I feel horrible to say it, but we probably should have condemned it more back then". (IE_M_P_20)

For older participants, the early Civil Rights Movement is seen as positive, while the violence that erupted and continued throughout the 1970s is seen as deeply traumatic. The 1980s for older participants involved some degree of distancing from the conflict, emigration or working in the area, and a small reduction of violence. Interestingly the hunger strikes were not discussed spontaneously by participants which considered the 1990s as the worst. The ceasefire, the peace agreement and the early days of the post-conflict society are generally looked on by all as favorable and relieving. At the same time, is considered as something that buried The Troubles rather than deals with them. The continuing segregation and the current political uncertainty are opening up again this undealt past.

"I think it was after the ceasefire. I remember that I was actually shocked at how happy they were on the Falls Road […] I can remember those images in the media. I can remember people being just ecstatic the whole day. And they sold out of Guinness on the Falls Road, I heard that as well". (IE_F_P_1)

"People for them had died. For me it was different. For being just a victim with injuries. You know something's going to come along some day and ask me something about it, but nobody ever ever did. And I always thought the Irish governments were afraid. I don't know, something happened. It was just 'hush. hush - under the carpet." (IE_F_P_4)

"We continue to be segregated so that has to be overcome definitely. Well, we only have just to find a way to be educated together". (IE_F_P_15)

"I would still experience prejudice there between both sides and that still exists to this day. I would always say the only way to stop that is to educate together and that still hasn't happened". (IE_F_P_8)

"When the army came in, initially were viewed as protectors of the people. But this changed very quickly. You know some of the regiments were put in had come directly from Egypt and places like that where they had been used in a different way. And therefore, they were going to treat Northern Ireland in the same way. So they're quickly moved from being protectors of the people to a force that were brought in to protect the Catholic minorities and some of the enclave areas in Belfast who were being burned out of their homes because the loyalist populations saw them as taking over homes that should have been for loyalist people or Protestant people". (IE_M_P_20)

"So one night I remember 13 bombs going off in the center. That was tough. So our teenage years were troubled; it was probably of where we lived. My mom always said that we lived in a grey area. We were neither one community or the other. We would need an orange or green. We were grey because we didn't have the support of some community. It was a difficult time in Belfast because this was the 70s… This was the 70s with everything that was going on between our nights' bombings and shootings". (IE_F_P_14)

"Well with Brexit, I don't know... If Boris Johnson gets in, I don't know... He was offered this Brexit and then I think he's taken the back seat. I think he might be sorry they went for Brexit. The only thing is what will happen with the job losses. What's going to happen with jobs here. Putting up a border like. Now the border would not bother us because we wouldn't be going up North. But at the same time, for what? Why are they do this? is it just to have an upper hand? And not bothering what the people here think. I know they voted for it but I think they were hoodwinked into doing that. I don't think anyone expected this to happen with Brexit. And it is going on and on. You know the English they have to have their own way. It is sad to say. But like they wouldn't even change currency. So what would we expect them to do? Generally, they won't change. It is us that have to change because they won't budge on anything. There's no compromise with them". (IE_F_P_1)

Interestingly throughout the interviews, a complex set of relations were discussed between the 'supposed' rival groups. Pre-1968 participants remember mixed estates, but also that Catholics were directly 'pushed out' by the Orange Order and paramilitaries or left because of fear. Protestants and Catholics in the North remember having friends from both communities, and southern participants have had a long experience of interaction across the border, but segregated schooling contributed to constructing and limiting friend groups.

"We grew up there and we had a very happy and mixed childhood with Protestants and Catholics all together. We danced around bonfires, we had street parties. There was absolutely no hint, no idea of what will follow". (IE_F_P_14)

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"I remember my grandfather said that the 'Only good Catholic is a dead catholic', and I remember that even then I was thinking that this was wrong, thinking that I was playing with Catholic children". (IE_F_P_15)

"Well, the saddest thing for us was the local authority housing - we were meant to be shared   housing. So this meant people from both religions, it was probably 80 percent Catholic and 20 percent Protestant. But that was fine because my dad worked with these men and the hard workers came from both sides of the religious divide. So we grew up with these lads, we   played football, we played cricket, we played tennis... It was a lovely estate we grew up in and my parents still live there and which meant we all integrated. But as The Troubles caught a hold each of those families withdrew and left the area". (IE_M_P_20)

"We've been very mixed. We'd play ball games together. Ball game. [...] So we grew up in the 50s early 60s. And it was great. Rather than talking about specific events I remember, the feeling I had as I was playing and growing up the youngest of five was the best. But the rest seemed to be segregated. We saw each other. I knew John and I have to say I liked Fred. I would see them from time to time… until basically, The Troubles kicked off." (IE_M_P_16)

8.3 Ireland – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

The Troubles shaped participants with transmitted experiences of conflict in how they understood the present in a number of ways. Firstly, for those from Northern Ireland and the Border, not from Republican families the past was largely silenced. History was forgotten. People who lived through The Troubles did not want to pass on the legacy and damage of the experiences of violence. Consequently, those who were younger felt they have limited knowledge of what happened. The violence of the past shaped how participants attempted to deal with current social and political realities. With the suppression of personal and social experiences, the political uncertainty of Brexit produced a general sense of uncertainty. For younger generations, this meant reanalyzing the past. History was seen as poor or limited thought. Participants from Republican families diverged from this pattern. They have a heightened sense of History and Historic events, and an acute awareness of what they consider as a disregard for Northern Ireland by the British State and British people. That explains the dynamics of Brexit logically as a fallacy of British imperialism and superiority embedded in its nationalism/unionism. For participants from the Republic of Ireland, and not from the Border, The Troubles were more distant. A sense of a guilty ignorance about the day-to-day realities of the conflict and a fear of its return is evident to those participants. This fear is mostly expressed by their opposition to the Border and their worry about actions that would destabilize the North and the Island in general.

"Yeah. I always remember asking my granddad about it and my granddad wouldn't, he'd say 'you're too young' wait to be older. I think there's quite a lot of effort to not

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expose kids to political affairs despite everything. I think it was their wishes of others, not to bring me into that at all". (IE_M_T_13)

"I constantly think about the legacy of The Troubles because I am very careful not to be insensitive or, how would I say the words - I don't want to be reckless. I also don't want to be clumsy because there is a legacy of militarism in the North. But also there is a legacy of deep pain felt by two communities in the North. Even me that I'm from a border county I have to recognize. I didn't grow up in six counties. I had a bit of a distance from it even though I know many people personally affected by it. I said that when I'm talking about the legacy of The Troubles in social media. I generally try to hold a criticism about the British deep state because, in my opinion, the maelstrom that arose in the late 60s would have been the cause of the whole situation of partition". (IE_M_T_13)

"Yeah. Because I live by the border and those things haven't gone away. A lot of the fundamental problems are still there. Not all of them obviously, a lot of the tribalism is still there. And I think recent political events have stoked up a lot of old instincts on both sides... it's a big risk zone. It only takes us a few headbangers for things to kick off again […] But now they do this Brexit thing especially if that there's a border poll. All it will take is one atrocity and it only takes a few people with some weapons to create a lot of damage and then things are going to kick off again". (IE_M_T_17)

"You know there's been a lot a loss of life and a lot of suffering here. There is a lot of wounds need healed and low. I think like the North has made a really big effort to move forward. It's so volatile. I'm so easily rocked that I would be afraid of what could happen in the future. So my big concern is the implications of Brexit and why that is going to affect the North from   the size of the cross community stop. I just hope that trouble does not come back again. You know when you think about that reporter getting shot in Derry very recently there are signs   and evidence of things moving in the wrong direction. Nobody wants to think that". (IE_M_T_18)

One way or the other seems like the conflict affected the vast majority of the population either in a direct or indirect way. Most directly and personally affected were those who live by the borders. Almost everyone knows families and people who were murdered in The Troubles or experienced sectarian divisions such as riots, disorder, social unrest, protests or even interpersonal threats making them feel unsafe. Those with indirect experience of the border, they have personal experience of the border mostly at the checkpoints or had been told family experiences and stories of violence and conflict. Finally, those at the South had interactions and experiences either indirectly through the 'spill-over in the south' or through northern border friends or family. The main generational shift seemed to be, in the context of current political and social instability in the North, in particular regarding Brexit and the Border. The younger generation below'30s was eager to delve back into History, trying to understand their own past and the roots of the conflict, and thus be able to explain and comprehend better the current complex situation. In contrast, older

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generations want to continue to a degree of "moving on" and forget the past. Younger generations' Protestants with 'soft' nationalist background seemed much angrier towards conservative Unionism, while young Republicans want higher engagement by both communities and an honest effort to 'get past' the sectarian divides.

It seems to be a general belief that the past has been suppressed and a "culture of silence" has been imposed. Younger generations (mostly those of Republican background) were less likely to compromise and follow the dominant narrative of "moving on". The idea of a simple ethno-national and religious division as a dominant narrative was largely rejected, and more complex or mixed identities and relations were surfaced. Worth mentioning here, that in contrast to ethno-national narratives, respondents had an acute awareness of class and its relation to the conflict.

> *"Maybe growing up in a post-conflict era, we haven't seen the same experiences; we didn't have to experience that loss, that pain. That's maybe a different perception".* (IE_M_T_12)

> *"That's a big fear. I think we'd all feel a lot less safe. There would be reprisals. And again, it will inevitably spill over the border again like before".* (IE_M_T_13)

> *"So, for me, it wasn't just a name on the map were some other atrocities happened. I'd been there […] I know it can sound stupid, but it was very real. But at the same time unbelievable that all those people had died. I think that maybe I didn't understand it at the same time but my family and everybody was just heartbroken".* (IE_M_T_6)

> *"Obviously a lot of people have a living memory of border checks and all those things over there… people that I trust do not seem too impressed with the idea of a hard border. So I don't think that it will be short order checks. You know, it's impossible to without political implications".* (IE_F_T_9)

> *"I think The Troubles completely impacted everyone on this island. I think that people don't recognize where they're coming from. I also think that people in the South can have an aspiration for a unitary state but on the other hand, I think that is too Quixotic, that's the right word […] I would like to see things moving forward based on what really matters – and that's the working class that should become a class for itself rather than a confused amorphous thing created by some horrible sectarian divisions".* (IE_M_T_13)

> *"Oh yes. Yeah absolutely. I think we need a united Ireland and I think we're not even starting to discuss it. And that's where it starts off, with a conversation. The politicians in power do not want to discuss this. […] It's inevitable, it will be in my lifetime, and it's just whether or not we're going to do it through peaceful means and collaboration. Or we're going to let the shit hit the fan and then have to deal with it, possibly with the reintroducing of violence into our society and having to deal with it again. Or we can actually start now with just sharing ideas and having a conversation, god forbid".* (IE_F_T_2)

"My parents had a strong rule in that they would have never open discussion about The Troubles and you know it's really hard to speak about this. I don't really know exactly why was like that". (IE_F_T_9)

Family was the key source of information: stories, narratives, and experiences, events and actions happening with or in relation to their family. Republicans who had experiences of violence against them passed the memory through generations. Protestants, even those who were not Unionists, they do have parents, grandparents or relatives from Unionist tradition and experiencing guilt and shame about the violent rhetoric of Unionists. Those from the border and south, without strong Republican family and relational ties, also spoke of the family as being the most important factor in shaping opinions to the conflict, with the family providing balance or emotional perspectives along with direct historical knowledge.

"Yes. Definitely my dad would have been of the opinion that working class Protestant and Catholic communities in the north were deliberately antagonized by the British establishment and pitched against each other. So I suppose the fact that they have more in common than they are different. I suppose I would probably get that from my dad". (IE_F_T_2)

"Yeah. I think my father influenced me because of his socialist theories and I suppose frames". (IE_F_T_18)

"[We didn't discuss the issue because] *I suppose there was a feeling that didn't really affect us, what was going on. The think of it wasn't really here it was up the North".* (IE_F_T_3)

"Certainly, I felt quite you know, reactionary, maybe is not the right word, but I felt that the narrative and my uncle and so on it's something that I can see it positively. I would not think that it's a kind of narrative I would have wanted to align myself with ever. But also I can't deny that it's something that shaped my immediate family and the way we live". (IE_F_T_9)

"My auntie had a close call when there was the bombing down the dock in 70s. There's a pub down there that was blown up. She left about five minutes before the bomb went off. That was the closest. And she still alive, just left a few minutes. Clear of the blast but that night was horrific […] Like generally when we're growing up the narrative was always the IRA are scumbags, the UVF were all scumbags. It was all Britain's fault. That was pretty much the family narrative". (IE_M_T_17)

Across the board, from the south, border, and north, participants spoke of education as being limited in regard to analysis and even basic History of the conflict in Ireland. There was a feeling that History was suppressed, so as not 'inflame tensions' or cause problems. Younger generations were particularly disappointed with this. Older generations felt that it was problematic because it helped limit their knowledge and keep divisions in place. Different but individual comments expressed by Republican families' background respondents and one participant who became a teacher in a cross-community school in the 1980s.

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"Yeah, I think we went to a secondary school which is in a very working-class Protestant area and troubles were not discussed that weren't even mentioned in the playground. It was more basically what area you came from on who's fighting who at the end of the day the more those communities fighting with each other and leaves their communities rather than you know you're a Protestant and Catholic or whatever". (IE_F_T_18)

"No, honesty, no. Definitely, it was not on the curriculum". (IE_F_T_3)

"I have very patchy memories of History. We did cover a lot of Irish history in the first two years but to be honest I don't think I'm in a position to remember what exactly". (IE_F_T_3)

"Not in primary school, in secondary school, we had a really dry curriculum. But it was actually better because we did finally cover the recent conflict which is notable because other schools, e.g. Protestant schools didn't. It was very much based around key dates and points. It wasn't a blow-by-blow or all the murders and stuff like that. It was only the notable events and political direction of each of the players rather than a 'more free' narrative. We didn't really talk about it". (IE_M_T_19)

"I can't remember anything from primary school. Maybe a random teacher would make some comments if something happened again. But in secondary school, I did history for my leaving semester. When I was in the fifth year, I think would have been around 97, That's when it would have started on my leaving cert curriculum. I can't remember exactly what they would've covered in the Junior Cert cycle. Maybe they touched on it. And can't really remember [...] In fact, it was like the curriculum was designed to not deal with the troubles whatsoever and didn't even show up even passively". (IE_M_T_6)

At the level of social interaction, the main and interesting finding was that friends were in the majority of cases, across contexts and generations, seen as a release from The Troubles, conflict, and politics in general. This was also a point of major interaction across communities in the north, with some older participants discussing their cross-community friends as a source of difficulty for their families. In the south, the same pattern of friends and social cycle existed, with the exception of Republican families, with aspects of friends formed around political and cultural Republican activity. Generally, respondents' comments confirm the (rather obvious) thought that friendship reduces prejudice.

"I had friends from both sides of the border who talk about it and the rest…". (IE_F_T_3)

"Like I had a mixed group of friends and still do. They are fairly heavily derived from the Nationalist side, but a lot of our family had different experiences. Like [name of friend] he is half-Catholic and half-Protests but his granddad was shot by the UVF for being Catholic. He has a very strong 'I just really don't want anything to kick off again' approach". (IE_M_T_19)

"So you know, we didn't take it too seriously. We thought that was fun. It's almost like you kind of as a child, you know an adolescent or whatever. You just deal with things in a different way. And we certainly didn't let things like that put us off and we just carried on with life". (IE_F_T_18)

8.4 Ireland – Gender

Gender was raised as an issue in a number of ways. Violence was committed against women throughout the conflict, both by state forces and within the policing of the communities. Religious conservatism reinforced sectarianism and limited women's participation in society. It was noted by a number of participants that direct violence, arrests, murders occurred more often against men, one participant joked that all the 'good men were in prison' and the low-level violence of the post-conflict society, in particular between working-class areas was carried out by young men and reinforced toxic masculinity. The two most disliked forces in the conflict, the Orange Order and Unionist and Republican paramilitaries were dominated by a masculine bravado.

"And it was also sex discrimination. She regretted that farm was given over to the two boys, the two sons of the family and couldn't be passed on to herself. She hated the fact that when she was living in Belfast it was difficult to get a job as a married woman. She couldn't even get a TV or get a loan and move on. But she was quite strong. So my mum got a job in Belfast City Hospital she was a geriatric nurse and she worked four nights a week over the weekends and during that time The Troubles started [...] There were no protective measures tied to you. It was just terrible for mothers and girls". (IE_F_P_14)

"Yeah. Yeah I knew my male friends might be more inclined to be able to justify the IRA and I see my female friends just as more likely to condemn it [...] I mean I have friends that were released under the Good Friday Agreement. They were men. So I probably know more men that would have experience of The Troubles anyway. Therefore, maybe I hear more male opinions than women. But I think that's just because women had less direct experience. You know I think it's just coincidence [...] They don't understand that especially young angry men tend to get involved with these things. And that maybe we need to forgive the young angry man who grows up to be older men with experience of bad things that happen". (IE_F_T_3)

There seemed to be little difference along gender lines in terms of the analysis of narratives and positions on the conflict. The main difference was that women were more likely to invoke concepts of motherhood, their mothers' feelings, their feelings, and care towards their children to explain their analysis of the conflict and men were more likely to talk about male friends and mentors and protection of their children. Concerning youth social interaction, there were most common views across genders, although a minority reported that young men were more likely to be 'staunch' (hold strong opinions).

"Yeah, I think males always are more staunch and like a bit more defensive about [...] You know they would be very defensive and awkward about it. Whereas the women I

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feel tend to be more relational and more like less stuck in the idea that they are their identity and their you know their background and heritage. And I don't really know any woman who speaks strongly about any Protestant traditions… I guess there are some. I guess yeah". (IE_F_T_9)

Although gender-related issues were reported, the gender-factor did not seem to be highly prioritized in the overall respondents' comments.

"Not really. I don't think male and female was the main differentiator. I think the main differentiator was in class or place. Like middle-class Catholics and working-class Catholics wouldn't see the conflict in the same light and the same with the Belfast Protestants, working-class and so on…" (IE_M_T_19)

8.5 Ireland – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

The views expressed in the EU were very diversified not only between groups with personal or transmitted experience of the conflict but also between younger and older respondents. In any case, the overall feeling from the interviewees' comments was that the EU as a concept is rather distant from the everyday life of the citizens.

Mainly, among participants with transmitted conflict experience and secondary with those with personal experience, views on the EU were very mixed. As a whole, the EU was viewed positively by some as a means of economic and political cooperation, indifferently by many, in a sense distant or not relevant to the day to day lives of people, outside of building roads and for some, it was viewed negatively, particularly in light of austerity policies imposed by the ECB during the financial crisis, and seen as been supported by the EU and the refugee crisis where the EU was seen to have '*let refugees and migrants die in the Mediterranean'*. Europe was seen to have a limited role in the conflict, with the people of Northern Ireland the primary subjects or agents, the British and Irish States the second and then to agree the EU considered in terms of legal structures and negotiations with the USA, and in terms of investments.

"Well, I'm very positive about the EU, like the rest of us we were so shocked when England didn't want to be part of it. We all thought, 'what's wrong here?'. So I was very pro-Europe. I think being part of a bigger group is better". (IE_F_P_4)

"I like that so many countries and lots of languages and cultures all within a relatively short distance from each other and all that kind of stuff. And I like the progress that has been made since World War II in Europe. I like the removal of borders and break down barriers and all that. Basically, I think European societies become more integrated into some levels, I think it's a good thing. And the boundaries between people are lessening and that helps". (IE_M_T_17)

"I suppose you're slightly aware that a lot of those European countries were at war with each other at one stage but somewhere along the line they've had to just make discussions draw borders whatever. Get on with each other. I think it's great that Europe

at this moment in time is at peace. Yeah. So from that perspective, I think that's a good point for Europe as well that they're united against I suppose war". (IE_F_T_18)

"Well what do I think it is? Like for us like I think it's a positive thing because we all know that we need the economic support, market and trade deals. And I think it's a good thing to be involved in". (IE_F_T_3)

"To be of a great honest, that's probably irrelevant in your day-to-day living. But it just means things like, free travel and being able to travel anywhere within the 27 states. Your passport and you can go anywhere within those 27 without having a visa. And without having to worry that you may end up in trouble. That business can be done. I could do business for somebody in France and Germany and Poland in the UK and Ireland just as easily as I can do it with a shop down the street. Those sorts of things". (IE_M_P_20)

"First of all, I think that social Europe is a good aspiration but the European Union does not represent a social bloc - it represents an imperialist bloc in Europe. In Europe itself, the conflict between German imperialism and on the periphery Greece, Portugal, Ireland, and Spain is very real - especially for the ravaged by austerity. So the narrative of a social Europe it's a bourgeois ideology - it's own making the reality of what actually happened. For the people of Greece and even for the people of this country the division was too deep. In Europe, capitalism is the mode of production - it makes costs of inequality. So the idea of a social Europe is based on capitalism. And then when you're talking about the borders in your life, just think the horror of the life of people trying to escape from conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa and just be alive and dying in the Mediterranean. So, let's not talk about a social Europe". (IE_M_T_13)

"I think Europe is pretty much essential for us. We don't have the economy that England has. We are an island on the periphery of Europe. And if we were cut off or we cut trade ties with Europe we might be in big trouble. And I think that it's nice to be able to freely travel around different places in Europe. So I'm a fan of it. But I wasn't a big fan of the Troika and those a lot of years of austerity. But overall I think it's a good thing that we're all getting along, apart from the British". (IE_M_T_7)

Only a tiny minority expressed a limited sense of European identity, paired with either Irish or Northern Irish identity. A strong majority expressed no European identity. A minority of those expressed dislike for the concept, seeing it as an exclusionary concept and reserved for the middle and upper-class identities in major capitals and those who worked within the European institutions themselves. There was an expectation that Ireland as a member of the EU and a small country would be protected from Britain, in terms of support for the backstop and no border on the island of Ireland. It was expected that if conflict did occur, the EU would support peace.

People with personal experiences of conflict, in particular, had a different view of the EU which was generally more polarised. Northern participants with direct experience of the conflict saw the EU more positively and themselves as more European, as part of a process of rejecting Britishness and Unionism and engaging with an Irish identity linked to Europe. Southern and Border participants with direct experience of the conflict by contrast either viewed the EU negatively or as ineffective and disengaged from their experiences. Europe by northern participants was seen to have a role in the post-conflict context but not so much during The Troubles. There was across the board an expectation that the EU would support the Republic, and limit the possibility of a border on the Island.

"As being European.? I think that only people from a certain income level would describe themselves as European. Maybe people with plenty of money. I can't see someone like a Polish person for example. I think that day-to-day no one who would call themselves European and I certainly wouldn't. I think that saying somebody that are European it's like making a point, like saying you're from the States (USA) or something like that, you're almost saying in a way that you're higher up. Like you have higher standards you know [...] It's because you have a stereotype in your head of what European and it's just not like Ireland. It's just not Irish people. That's all. You know we're just not European. Yeah. End of the story. That's the way I feel about it". (IE_F_P_8)

"I don't feel European. I am Irish". (IE_F_T_10)

"Well, I think I would say I'm Irish and European. Ok, I would rather be European than British. Yeah. And I would rather be Irish than British. So to me it sounds much more global saying you're European. What I would say is Irish first". (IE_F_T_18)

"I don't feel any strong sense of being European and I don't think no one ever have. I think it's funny because a lot of people in Northern Ireland and probably a lot of people in the south as well, they don't feel European as people in mainland Europe. I've heard people saying 'I'm going to Europe' and stuff like that. You know, that sounds more like an American thing to say. I think a lot of people don't have a strong sense of European identity and aren't in the same way Europeans as people in France, Germany, and Spain would". (IE_F_T_9)

"I am Irish and European. Born here, live there. Have your family here, work there. I don't know how to draw a difference between cultures. Most people are the same with just superficial differences. Before it used to be, that you were from Europe, but you weren't European, you were from Italy or from Ireland or from England or from Germany. But now it's like you're Irish and European. That's more of a common framework that most European people have now". (IE_M_T_17)

"Yeah, yeah I feel European. When I was in college we had a lot of Spanish students and there was a fairly international feel to it. I didn't feel like the Spanish were foreigners, if you know what I mean". (IE_M_T_7)

Eventually, the Brexit issue overshadows any other discussion about the future. Spontaneous comments of concern were made mainly about the issue of borders and the next day of Brexit.

"I think with Brexit and the possibility of a hard border no one knows what's going to happen. The possibility of customs checks by border officers is a realistic one. Certainly, there's a good chance of it happening. Almost every European foreign minister has come out in support of Ireland regarding looking out for our interests. Now obviously this comes in the context of Britain leaving the EU, that the EU is looking after Ireland because the EU looks after the EU's Interests. And that is to be expected. And if Ireland were leaving the EU and Britain was staying, I would expect them to have the same opinion, but just in favor of Britain. And it sounds good, and it's nice to hear". (IE_M_T_6)

> *"And I can't see them [Europeans] bothering about a tiny little country who's part of the P.I.G.S side of Europe. I can't see them, if Britain goes, having any input into what's happening in Northern Ireland and the country being divided. I mean it's probably a death knell for any resolution. I mean they don't have to adhere to European law anymore. I'd say it's a huge worry for people living up there".* (IE_F_P_8)
>
> *"We don't want to see the border in Ireland. I don't know…They must try to find another solution. Also, keep in the back half of the UK".* (IE_M_T_12)
>
> *"Well as far as Brexit goes I think that Europe is at this moment in time, firmly behind the Republic of Ireland or Ireland in the sense that they do not want a hard border between southern and Northern Ireland and consider that that's all part of taking on board the Good Friday Agreement".* (IE_F_T_18)
>
> *"You know I always took it for granted that both the North and the South were in Europe or the European Union".* (IE_F_T_9)

8.6 Ireland – Media

There were a variety of sources engaged by participants with personal experiences of conflict. Participants with direct experience skewed older and living in Northern Ireland. Radio was still a common source of Media on both sides of the border, with RTE and Radio Ulster cited. In addition, participants who lived in Northern Ireland mentioned the BBC and the Guardian as sources. A small number of direct experience participants considered themselves highly interested and engaged with the Media, and read a wider range of Irish (Independent, Irish Times), British (BBC, Guardian) and international press such as CNN, Russia Today, as well as blogs, Facebook groups, and others. There was generally a greater skepticism from participants with direct experience on the border and south, because of the perception that the Media had failed to investigate and unearth cover-ups and abuses by the British State in particular. Northern participants from Protestant and mixed backgrounds were more likely to listen to the BBC. The southern and border participants saw the Media negatively; they were skeptical of its aims and goals and its bias and silence in reporting on and analyzing collusion and mistreatment. Northern Protestant background and mixed background participants saw the International Media and BBC and Guardian as more neutral and local media as

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more sectarian. In keeping with this, the Media was seen as having overall a negative role in peace and reconciliation. For northern participants, it inflamed divisions. For border and southern participants, it covered up the past; justice and truth was a key stepping stone for real peace and reconciliation.

Social Media was considered more negatively by participants with direct experience, this was potentially mediated by the more general media skepticism and age. Participants saw Social Media as inflaming tensions and continuing conflict. Participants with direct experience did not actively participate in social media (posting) and generally avoided engaging with sectarian or conflict-related content.

> *"They [the Media] should have been asking for the truth of it, to know why they did it and who did it. They know who did actually its that no one was ever brought to justice". (IE_F_P_1)*

> *"But good things don't make the news. It's only shootings, bombings and the nasty things that make the news. You know, my wife asks, 'is no bloody good news? Is it all bad news?'. That's what news is […] In the mornings when I get up I turn on BBC Radio Ulster and listen until about half 8 when I head off to the office. Then it switches to Newstalk or RTE One. And then I get the news from the Republic of Ireland and so I get different contexts". (IE_M_P_20)*

> *"You try to calm down and watch movies. I'm tired of this story and the galloping sectarianism. I'm hating what I see on the BBC. I don't watch the news anymore. I don't think that things can be stuck because of the paramilitaries. People know who they are. They've been covered up". (IE_F_P_14)*

> *"First thing in the morning I would like to get off the BBC, I don't like watching politicians talk about anything. I don't like the extremes, Sinn Fein, the DUP, you know…". (IE_F_P_15)*

> *"I'm a bit of an exception I think. I'm still very much watching Sky News, Channel 4 News; I love that one. And I have a news app. But I'm not following news like on the Journal [Irish Digital news site]. I'm not at this 'chasing newspapers' thing as my daughter would be […] Internet on my phone. I go to apps on my phone and through Facebook. I watch the news in the evening […] I surprised myself I've signed up for Washington Post and The New York Times. I really like them. And The Guardian always comes up, and Irish Times, Irish Independent, Daily Mail for gossip". (IE_F_P_4)*

> *"I watched comments [on Social Media] even from some people that I know. I mean people that are very loyalist. But then it's the abortion and the gay marriage and they comment on posts the opposite views. It annoys me". (IE_F_P_15)*

Following more or less the same pattern, there were too a variety of sources engaged by participants with transmitted experiences. A large number of participants considered Social Media as their primary source, either friends and discussion trends or accessing news sources, such as

online papers and channels via Social Media. Younger participants were more likely to cite Social Media as their primary source. Radio was still a common source of media on both sides of the border, with RTE and Radio Ulster cited. In addition, participants who lived in Northern Ireland mentioned the BBC and the Guardian as sources. A small number of participants considered themselves highly interested and engaged with the media, and read a wider range of Irish (Independent, Irish Times), British (BBC, Guardian) and international press such as CNN, Russia Today, as well as blogs, Facebook groups, and others.

Opinions on the Media were mixed. There was general media skepticism, but that was filtered through experiences and differentiation of sources. The first consideration, expressed by a minority of participants directly was that the media supported and reproduced the ideology of the ruling class, or that it defended the establishment. Another position was that the media logic was commercial and entertainment and with that, it feeds off conflict, violence and the threat of violence for its own sales and profit. RTE the Irish national broadcaster was at best seen as something in the background, unimportant and at worst a deeply problematic and biased source of Media. British Media such as the BBC and Guardian were seen as, in a wide range, objective and factual to ignorant and biased in its reporting (or lack of reporting on Ireland). The variety of interpretations of the Media in general feeds into perceptions of the role of the Media in peace and reconciliation. Particularly participants living in Northern Ireland, see the Media, in particular local news radio, as feeding sectarian division to sell papers and retain listeners. There is also a noted sectarianisation to news, with specific publications more sympathetic to Unionism or Republicanism. In the Republic of Ireland, the Media is more associated with the suppression of knowledge on conflict, or the suppression of a comprehensive analysis, which explains and explores the roots and underlying social, political and economic conditions which contribute to the Troubles and current division, instead a 'cheap' sensationalization, mostly directly against the IRA and republicanism dominates.

Perspectives on the role of Social Media were also mixed. Some see it as a more open forum, where people can express themselves, were a logic of Media can exist outside of newspaper and corporate mediators and where pages and sources, in particular truth and justice pages and for example 'crimes of Britain' can document and discuss the abuse, violence, and mistreatment of the establishment and in particular the British state, which would not otherwise be viewed and read. There is also a view that people express more sectarianism online and that it keeps alive divisions into a new generation. This was particular to northern and border older members. It was mentioned that positions and discrimination that would not be expressed in person appear online, on Social Media and that is a problem. A final position came from more politically active participants that Social Media was contested and could be used by the right, center and left and needed to be engaged with, it couldn't be ignored. The major of participants used Social Media to consume, they read posts, access links shared by friends and were members of group pages. A small minority said that they actively participated in Social Media, writing posts, commenting, etc.; they tended to be male, politically engaged (socialist and/or republican) and young.

"The way that I grew up understanding The Troubles, although there were some Republicans   that were eventually allowed on TV, they were never actually allowed to tell their story. It was responding to the narratives created by somebody else usually either the BBC or UTV or maybe smaller nationalist newspapers but it was always there was always their narrative. You heard what they were saying about you... I think with that kind of skewed narrative that emerged is now being dramatically taken down. The release of these findings over 30 years or 40 years, where you're learning about collusion and stuff like that. On the Republican side, the Republican dirty laundry was aired as it happened, as the conflicts arose. Whereas British dirty laundry there was a 30-year delay". (IE_M_T_19)

"Obviously, it's a status thing to people; I actually see it to my cousins who are with the Unionists. I see them posting about it. There's a kind of bravado posting things like 'here's me on a march' or 'here's what I mean' and there are other groups supporting the opposites.   I think that Social Media brings that to people". (IE_F_T_9)

"Well, I think it could because it could get more voices out there. Let's say in British and Irish Republic, In Irish media in the Irish Republic media you don't hear Northern voices. You don't. Whether it is about The Troubles or about Brexit, but you very rarely hear actual Northern people's voices, accents being heard. Whether a unionist, nationalist or other; you just don't hear them. And that's not fair. That's not the Media doing us a service, either the British people or the Irish people of the Republic. They're not doing the service by excluding those voices". (IE_F_T_2)

"I read newspapers, and watch TV a little bit. I listen to the radio, and apps or websites on the Internet and social media. For Irish news, it would be RTE or Newstalk. And online it is a toss-up between the Guardian and Spiked". (IE_F_T_2)

"Internet and TV. There would be online newspapers, the Guardian, Irish Times. Sunday Business Post, Reddit, BBC, Sky News or RTE news. Not so much radio. I would watch it watch sometimes LBC clips on YouTube. But not too much radio". (IE_M_T_17)

"[I'm not posting on Social Media] Just because I think it's personal. I don't think anyone should know my political views, I think that is personal". (IE_F_T_3)

"Not really, I don't really express myself on Social Media. I think it might be a bit different if you live in the north...". (IE_M_T_12)

"I express myself quite frequently on Social Media. The reason I do that it's a political purpose. I am very careful about what I post on Social Media regarding the legacy of the conflict. I have many political views of the conflict, although some people may not know the full extent of The Troubles. I constantly think about the legacy of The Troubles because I am very careful not to be insensitive or - how would I say it... - I don't want to be reckless. I also don't want to be clumsy because there is a legacy of militarism in the North. But there is a legacy of deep pain felt by the two communities in the North. Even

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me that I'm from a border county, I have to recognize this. I didn't grow up in six counties. I had a bit of a distance from it even though I know many people personally affected by it. I say this every time I'm talking about the legacy of The Troubles in Social Media. I generally try to hold the British state and the British deep-state criticism because, in my opinion, the maelstrom that arose in the late 60s was the cause of the whole situation of partition and all the contradictions that were there at the same time". (IE_M_T_13)

"I rarely comment on Social Media because I'm not motivated. it's not really a conscious decision. I just don't comment on things". (IE_M_T_7)

"I rarely comment; I get more of a lurker, I like just to suck it up and read the negative comments. I do like the odd stuff but I don't really comment. I just don't like engaging with people on Twitter. I don't want to have this argument over the phone; I could just not". (IE_M_T_17)

"I just never have [comment]. It's a waste of time. Yeah, it's not for me". (IE_M_T_6)

8.7 Ireland – Overall Remarks

The 'official' primary narrative of The Troubles has many components. Firstly, that the conflict was an ethno-religious conflict between 'two warring tribes'. Secondly, this conflict could have been avoided through gradual political reform and compromise. Thirdly, the IRA was the primary 'villain' of the conflict, murdering innocent people for a fantastical romantic goal of a united Ireland. This case study contradicts all of these dominant narratives, offering a far more complex and socially and politically sophisticated analysis and experience of The Troubles.

Overall, there is a repeated narrative from participants concerning the *distancing* and *silencing* of experiences. These are the 'official' or public conceptualization of moving on and forgetting, the community aspect of silencing by paramilitary and political forces that are used to maintain power within an area, the institutional silencing which cut across the conflict to include state and religious institutions who covered up abuse. Then finally participants identify the process of silencing as internalized, participants silenced themselves as a coping mechanism. These feed into a discussion of trauma. Rather than a conceptualization of direct violence by paramilitaries as the main cause of trauma, trauma is considered by participants in a way that weaves it through the family, social, public, and material conditions of the island. Trauma meant that violence was witnessed and located spatially and relationally, trauma was also built into the routine violence, the border checks, death threats, the school stories. It was built in the fear of the other, in particular Unionism and the Orange Marches of July. It was also built into the internal policing of communities, in particular, protestant background participants discussed their inability to act against the unionist cultural and paramilitary dominance of their community, and the enveloped sense of guilt and shame at their silence.

The concept of 'moving on' was less significant than a focus by participants on wanting stability and social progress. The threat of violence, a border that dis-stabilizes the current arrangements, and the conservative block on issues such as Marriage Equality and Equal Rights were seen as important considerations. No one wanted a return to violence and were wary of British and Unionist political efforts which could potentially lead to that as well as dissident republicanism. Politically there was the presence of a 'both sides were to blame' for the past, i.e., both the IRA and Unionist Paramilitaries and Orange Order. This was accompanied by a general anti-Unionism. In both cases, the IRA as the primary blame was not felt by participants. Both sides' arguments tended to identify the civil rights demands by Catholics as legitimate while the violence, in particular assassinations and bombing, as illegitimate. Others placed primary blame on Unionist forces for the Troubles, the suppression of the civil rights movement, pogroms, the Ulster Worker Strike, Orange Marches, the violence of the UDA/UVF, and the conservatism of the DUP. The violence was universally condemned, with some limited support or understanding why the IRA attacked as it did from Sinn Fein's leaning supporters. Beyond this, healing and justice were the themes instead of simply moving on.

Identity - officially considered in terms of the division between Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist - was generally resisted. A more complex identity formation was evident. Protestant background people who rejected unionism, Catholics who rejected republicans. A focus on class politics, the idea that identities such as catholic and protestant were used to divide the working class. Understanding of the material aspects of discrimination, the block on access to jobs, services, housing during the troubles. There was a general demand for de-segregated schooling today. Other identity formations were between those who were religious and traditional from 'both communities' contrasted to those who were secular and modern and class between the new middle class and the working class in the north. Irish versus Northern Irish were the strongest character of distinction along with the 'official' narrative of ethno-nationalism, with Catholics universally considering themselves Irish, and Northern Irish as a Unionist construct, and Protestants more conflicted over their national identity, with some movement from Northern Irish to Irish because of Brexit.

Collective memories of education generally demonstrated a limited or silence around the conflict, in the education system. History was largely suppressed or limited institutionally, with minor individual teachers as expectations. Collective memories of identity were more concentrated in-home environments and among friends, with family establishing attitudes to the conflict in Ireland and experiences, and friends exploring the boundaries of these experiences and relationships. Space was a major marker of collective memories of conflict. The contested boundaries of urban space in the north from 1968 through the conflict and in the post-conflict society is marked by boundary areas, separations of Catholics and protestants, those from the border and south have some interaction with this too when in the north, commenting on the marker unionist symbolism, Union Jacks (British Flags) and Paramilitary flags. The July Orange Order Marches are particularly significant points that mark the northern experience of space. The border, its physical presence in terms of checks, and the division and interaction of communities along the border is an important

territorial marker and for those from the south, space is signified by separation from the spaces of the northern conflict. Both republicans and unionism hold collective memories, symbols, and events as lifelines of their traditions. Most participants felt a minor or secondary relationship to the cultural and political inscription of events, history, and memory, emphasizing instead the personal, social and community loss of conflict and aspects of the political-personal the way in which politics and culture intersect with employment, the economic, political stability and the general well-being of those to the participants.

Traumas are widespread and inter-generational. Those with direct experience of conflict often had multiple direct experiences of violence and large numbers of secondary experiences. They had often left the north to escape these issues and revive them in personal, communal, and political events of the present. Those with secondary experience or transmitted experiences often were suffering from trauma too as they were closely interconnected to the traumas of others. One participant had moved to the town a year after a massacre and attended school with peers who had lost siblings and parents, and they saw what was considered attacks of provocation by the British security forces as well as routine harassment from British security forces. Other participants without direct trauma nonetheless felt trauma as they knew people who had been killed, imprisoned, or injured. People in Dublin had relatives killed or injured in the bombings there. People from the border downplayed trauma but had memories of both British security checks, fears for families across the border, and lived in an environment where there was bitter anger from republican families who had lost or seen family members imprisoned. There was also a more collective trauma across the Island, feelings of loss, guilt, shame, and anger over the violence, and in many cases, the lack of justice and continued segregation, a limited or hollow peace process where material conditions had not improved for a majority.

Discrimination marked Catholic northern families, women's experiences, and the identities and experiences of Protestants who had rejected Unionism. One woman from a mixed background, discussed discrimination greatly, spatial discrimination growing up, discrimination in employment and access to services, and the continued segregation of education as discriminatory. The original demands of the civil rights movement and the politics which suppressed those were heavily criticized as they provided a path forward. There was a limited prejudice and stereotyping of the 'other'. Many commented that the political forces in the unionist communities, Orange Order, Ian Paisley, and his church and Unionist politicians manipulated and stoked violence for their own end. This was partially felt towards the republican leadership and Sinn Fein, although the starting reasons for the conflict, civil rights demands were justified. People discussed earlier discriminatory attitudes in particular fed by family attitudes. People from Unionist backgrounds were told and grew up in a culture that saw Catholics as sub-human and a violent threat. Steps like internment which were arrested without trial accused members of the republican organization were celebrated at the time. Every participant agreed that interpersonal contact can reduce conflict, and they expanded on this citing the need for 'real' relationships, not fig leaves; de-segregated schools, housing, and new political identity formation were cited. Trust was most strained in the 1970s. The reaction and strength of Unionism and the civil war features of street violence and murders

retained a general fear and distrust. This distrust has been lessened in the post-Good Friday Agreement context, but issues like school segregation and sectarian politics structures, the Orange Order Marches, and Media feed a continuation of distrust and division.

A number of divergences from the official narrative of the conflict identified: Silence and suppression were more important than the concept of "moving on". People focused on stability and political progress as their concerns. Unionists took far more blame than official narratives, and there was a general breaking from unionism in the protestant community. Class was an important factor and consideration. Religion was a political-social force rather than a homogenizing category that divided people into Catholic or Protestant. National identity was largely Irish. European identity was largely a distant and detached concept.

Talking about "national identity", nationalism is a complex issue in Ireland. Nationalist is a concept used to describe the entire Catholic population of the North of Ireland. It is also used to delineate between Republicans, who are secular and left-leaning or they believe in the legitimacy of the armed conflict and Sinn Fein and Nationalists who are aligned with SDLP, who are more Catholic religious and conservative. Nationalism also describes a more general Irish identity which is left-wing, center, and right-wing. British Nationalism is an inaccurate concept, as Unionism (wanting to maintain the British Union describes this form). English Nationalism is disconnected from Northern Irish Unionism in the sense of home county or core (English nationalism) and periphery, a colonial mindset of unionism which is present in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Unionism is largely right-wing politically.

General dissatisfaction with civic life was evident across the majority of the participants from all parts of the Island. In the north civic life was considered damaged by sectarianism and in the south by corruption and commodification. The economy was generally considered stagnant in the north and their worries of recession across the whole Island, as well as work underpaid and precarious among young people. Administration and Justice were questioned across the whole island, with survivors of violence in the conflict most negative about justice, as well as young people. Social welfare was not discussed to a great degree. Representation was very negatively viewed, Stormont in the north had not sat for 2 years and there was dissatisfaction across the board on this, and the representation in the south was viewed negatively.

Language and religion were not raised as social threats by participants, but a cultural identity was present in a number of ways. Firstly, unionist cultural identity was seen as a threat because of the Orange parades, the threats of violence by unionists, and the continued power and position of the DUP and paramilitaries. British cultural identity, connected to the Brexit vote, was considered a threat as it was largely ignorant of the situation in Northern Ireland and the wishes of the majority, such as no border and wanting to remain in the EU. There was also a limited fear among Protestants in the north and moderate participants in the south of republican aspirations, such as a united Ireland pushing a polarisation of and reopening sectarian politics. Economic development was considered an underlying threat and fear by a majority of participants. It was considered that working-class communities in the north have been 'left behind' in the post-conflict context, and

recession or economic disaster such as hard Brexit could severely damage an already marginalized set of communities. There was fear of recession more generally the uneven economic development and distribution of wealth across the Island.

A general distrust of government interests and representation across the Island was evident through the participants' comments. The DUP and Sinn Fein received criticism, in particular the DUP in the north and Fine Gael and Fianna Fail in the south, all there was a general anti-politics, politicians do nothing sentiment which cut across ideological party positions. Examples of popular engagement in politics such as referendums on Marriage Equality and Repealing the 8th Amendment (abortion access) were viewed favorably while the political system as a whole across the whole island was not. Related to governmental distrust, a general feeling of economic insecurity was also strongly evident. Poor employment prospects in Northern Ireland, low wage work and high cost of living in the Republic of Ireland. Threats of recession and fear of a recession were also evident. The question of economic security within the EU was mediated by the realities of Brexit, that it would create an economic disaster for in particular the border region but influencing the whole island. Economic security as such was positively correlated with being within the EU, in reaction to the scenarios of Brexit.

Freedom of expression was not something that came up directly as in favorable or unfavorable conditions. In particular questions of personal religious and political views were not expressed as contested or under threat. Instead, minor and conflicting views on the state of public expression of political views and freedom of group expression were evident. People largely preferred not to express their political views, interwoven with cultural and national identity online, on Social Media and there were restrictions in terms of family reaction to liberal or anti-sectarian political positions in the north. Despite this people generally saw views as expressed and that expanded by Social Media, because of the lack of corporate or state mediation of Social Media sites. Consideration such as the strict discrimination legislation has to see charges brought or restrictions on dissident republican pages were not brought up. There was, on the other hand, an eluded to an institutionally driven culture of silence across the Island in regard to the Troubles. This meant that experiences and in particular aspects of power, in terms of who committed crimes, remain unspoken. Future suggestions for conflict resolution included desegregation of schools (an almost universal demand from respondents), investment in community resources, housing and employment. No hard borders and continuing engagement as part of a wider European Community-Project were also strongly supported.

To sum up the main findings: 1) Family as the key mediator of memories of conflict, 2) General distrust and dissatisfaction with Institutions (political, media, wider power structures, including to a degree the EU), 3) Irish identity and mixed national identities are significant, 4) European Identity is not significant, 5) Strongest blame is with the Unionists and British State for the Troubles and they are the biggest fear today, 6) Strong opposition to a Border (support for no border), more limited support for a united Ireland, and general disagreement with any return to violence in relation to a united Ireland, 7) Class, social identities and other identities strong mediators of recent

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consideration on the positives and division on the island, and 8) Brexit is a major source of uncertainty, that uncertainty being social, political and economic.

"Well, I think like people like are being ignored. I think when you look at the kind of experts that were interviewed in the Media. They're so worried in the UK about what's gonna happen to them economically, the border is very much down the line even though they will have no choice. They voted, basically, with the intent of not letting anybody come into the country. I mean I believe it was a racist vote. If that's what they asked for that's what they'll get. But I think they're pushing Northern Ireland away and it is getting very far down the line. They're more concerned what's going to happen economically than anything else". (IE_F_P_8)

"We continue to be segregated and that has to be overcome. Definitely. We only just have to find a way to be educated together. You can also see differences like the starting points [...] We need to find more ways to come together. We must try harder to find that". (IE_F_P_15)

"The only thing I can say that would work is integrated education. Just have all the kids at the same school". (IE_F_T_18)

"I would call for a new Ireland with a brand-new constitution, using the best democratic practices. The best the world has ever seen and recognized rights for travelers, unionists, Irish speakers the whole lot of us. I want a secular society. And the families who suffered might find some reconciliation in that process". (IE_F_T_2)

"I would like to see a peaceful reunification, but this is not going to happen by any stretch of the imagination". (IE_F_T_9)

"Put children together and that would be the solution for the next generation and the generations to come. Get children together and keep them together. Let them play together". (IE_M_P_20)

"I think Ireland's been changing rapidly in the last few years. The population ις growing, certain problems that have been ignored for example public transport, housing, healthcare, they've been ignored for so long. I think we've gotten to a point now we are big enough and mature enough to deal with these things [...] If we had done this stuff in the 80s we wouldn't have problems for housing, and we'd have a proper infrastructure with public transport as well. All these issues need to be met. But regards the North it all depends on how Brexit works out. I think it all comes down to Brexit. If it goes bad, I think it's maybe a hardening on both sides". (IE_M_T_17)

"Well, they should have just found who did it and get it over with. That all they had to do. Then people wouldn't need to be going on and on about it [...] I'd like to know why they did it. Was it worth it"? (IE_F_P_1)

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9. Kosovo

9.1 Kosovo - Brief background of the conflict

Kosovo was part of the former Yugoslavia after the dissolution of Ottoman Empire and the declaration of independence of Albania in 1912. Kosovo remained part of Yugoslavia until 1989, when Milosevic announced the annexation of Kosovo, from an autonomous region within Yugoslavia to an integral part of Serbia by 1990. The problems in the former Yugoslavia were present throughout the late 1980s, culminating in one of the most important events in Kosovo's history, the commemoration of the 600 years of the Battle for Kosovo, where Milosevic announced his rhetoric plan for what the Albanians in Kosovo considered to be Greater Serbia (Morus, 2007). This is not to say that the Albanians in Kosovo did not have ambitions to either join Albania or form an independent state. On July 2, 1990, the vast majority of Albanian members of the Provincial Assembly voted to declare Kosovo a Republic within the Yugoslav Federation, which led the Serbian government to respond by dissolving the Assembly and the government of Kosovo (Malcolm, 1999) removing any remaining autonomy in an unprecedented unconstitutional move. The Serbian government then passed another law on "labor relations" which led to the expulsion of all Albanian workers (estimated at 100,000) in state-owned enterprises.

In this situation, the Kosovo Democratic League (LDK) was formed in 1989 by intellectuals gathered around the League of Kosovo Writers. It called for a national boycott of all '*violently imposed institutions*' including the elections organized by the Serbian state as well as the population census. LDK managed to organize Kosovar elections and the author Ibrahim Rugova was elected the President of Kosovo. Under his leadership, Kosovo's problem became known for peaceful resistance and non-violence although, the first armed groups had already started to appear as of 1993 through another political organization; LPK (People's Movement of Kosova) which was mainly organized in Europe. During the 1990s, Kosovo Albanians were living in a completely parallel system that included parallel schools,[9] universities, and healthcare.[10] The 1990s present the most violent period of the conflict over Kosovo with Kosovo Albanians forcibly recruited to fight in wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and also being killed in the Yugoslav Army for disobeying orders. Additionally, systematic violence was exercised in high schools, even by releasing unknown gas[11] before Albanian pupils entering the school causing the abandonment of schools by Albanian children (Mertus, 1999) and organization of parallel schools by funds gathered in the Diaspora in EU and USA.

From 1996 onwards, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) became part of the political scene, albeit very discreetly. The KLA's first public appearance was on 28 November 1997 (Albanian National Day) at a funeral ceremony for a primary school teacher killed by Serbian forces. From that point

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[9] https://prishtinainsight.com/kosovo-commemorates-parallel-schools-1990s/

[10] http://www.chuv.ch/bdfm/cdsp/MemoireGashi.pdf

[11] http://denmystiskasjukdomen.se/en/summary-of-the-poisoning/

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on, the KLA began liberating smaller towns, from where it organized resistance, while supporters of the peaceful movement remained in the towns. A new peak of violence erupted in 1998 after Serbian forces attacked some villages where they apparently committed crimes against civilians. This led to more Albanians supporting the KLA, who tried to defend the villages. In March 1998, Serbian police attacked the KLA commander's region (Racak) Adem Jashari, killing most of the villagers in a three-day battle that displaced hundreds and killed more than 50 members of one family. A few months later, the Racak massacre was condemned by the head of the OSCE Verification Mission in Kosovo, calling it a war crime and a crime against humanity.

On March 21, 1999, NATO began a 78-day war against Yugoslavia. During this campaign, led by NATO, the Serbian army and other paramilitary units committed numerous crimes, which were documented by HRW in the report "Under Orders". The KLA managed to control a small percentage of territory during this period through a guerrilla warfare strategy. This led to a great mobilization especially of the youth of Kosovo for the KLA, but also to a great support from the diaspora by contributing money to the foundation called "Vendlindja Therret" (Homeland Calling). In June 1999, NATO and the Serbian Army signed the Technical Military Agreement in Northern Macedonia, which called for the complete withdrawal of the Serbian military from Kosovo. The KLA was demilitarized and demobilized that same month. In the first years after the war, Kosovo was administered under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and the UN established the UNMIK mission, which was responsible for rebuilding Kosovo, including societal institutions. The Provisional Institutions of Serf-Governance (PING) were established. The KLA leadership established a political party headed by the KLA political representative Hashim Thaci who won several elections. After several failed attempts at international negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia, Kosovo Parliament signed a declaration of independence in February 2008. Kosovo is currently recognized as a state by more than 110 states, including most EU countries (except Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Slovakia and Romania), although the northern part of the country is still not controlled entirely by the Kosovo Government.

If we want a list of the main actors in the Kosovo conflict, it would be more or less the following:

The Serbian state: as an authority, the Serbian state played a very important role in the conflict development and transformation. Leaders such as Milosevic, Milutinovic, Sainovic, Jovanovic and others were directly involved in political and strategic decisions during the conflict. Most of them were later indicted by the ICTY for war crimes.

Kosovo: The parallel structures and the "state" of Kosovo in the 1990s is also the other most important actor in the development of the conflict. With a willingness to negotiate and a non-violent approach to the conflict, the Kosovo team won several key decision-making centers in the US and EU on an emotional level. Ibrahim Rugova, Fehmi Agani, Bujar Bukoshi, and others were major players.

KLA: The Kosovo Liberation Army entered the scene in the mid-1990s and gained popularity and decision-making power. In 1998, the representative of the KLA, Hashim Thaci, led the Kosovo delegation in the International Conference for Kosovo in Ramboulliet, France, where the Kosovo

delegation agreed to the proposal that Kosovo should be a part of Yugoslavia with the right to self-determination at a later stage, mediated by the Quint states and the United States, which was not signed by the Serbian part. This led to NATO intervention in Yugoslavia.

The EU played a very important role in Kosovo in the 1990s and in the post-war period. The EU currently has the largest mission in its history in Kosovo, called EULEX. In addition, all negotiations for the normalization of Kosovo-Serbia relations have been mediated by the European Commission in Brussels.

The USA is another key player in the Kosovo conflict. Since the 1990s, the US has supported solutions to the Kosovo problem. U.S. representatives played a crucial role in convincing the KLA to demilitarize and demobilize in 1999 and play an important role in negotiating the post-war normalization process in Kosovo. Due to the NATO intervention in Kosovo, there is a strong bilateral relationship between Kosovo and the US.

Non-Statutory groups are also among the important key figures for peace and reconciliation in Kosovo. Northern Kosovo is hardly controlled by the Kosovo Government, leaving this in the hands of non-state groups, often supported by the Serbian state, to destabilize the region. Recently, there have been attacks and killings of politicians who do not toe this line.[12]

Northern Kosovo: Is the territory that has not been under the Kosovo Government control and is mainly under the Belgrade influence. It has tendencies of conflict flashpoints and violence from time to time although there is an ongoing dialogue for more than a decade. The Kosovo Serbs found themselves in a difficult position between Kosovo and Serbia.

It is also useful if someone has four important abbreviations in mind: UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo), KFOR (Kosovo Forces under NATO command), EULEX (EU mission in Kosovo) and ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia).

In the same vein, the timeline of the major (milestone) events of the Kosovo conflict is as follows:

Milestone event	Description	Actors involved
March 1998	Attack on Jashari Family where Jashari Family was killed which triggered mass mobilization in KLA and turned the sporadic violence in systematic war.	KLA, Yugoslav Army and Police
NATO campaign March-June 1999	NATO bombing of Yugoslavia: for narratives and commemoration see also: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/how-belgraders-remember-the-nato-bombings	NATO, KLA, Serbian State, etc.
End of war 10 June 1999	The signing of the technical military agreement of Kumanovo	NATO, Yugoslav Army

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[12] Assassination of Oliver Ivanovic, a moderate Kosovo Serb leader.

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March 2004	Violence incited by the media which led to civil disobedience and displacement of many Serbians from Kosovo. 19 killed and many injured. Mostly Albanian by KFOR. Dozens of orthodox churches burned and damaged.	KFOR, Albanians, and Serbs
Feb 2008	Declaration of Independence of Kosovo	Kosovo, Serbia, the US, EU, etc
Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue	From 2011-ongoing, Kosovo and Serbia are negotiating and conducting "peace-talks" in order to normalize relations	EU, Kosovo, and Serbia

The Kosovo and Serbia conflict is still very vivid in the collective memory and many developments tend to be a reaction to the war conflict narratives. The conflict is not violent overall, but has the potential to become sporadically violent in more sensitive areas where there are ethnic tensions. Overall, the entire region is being pushed towards the European agenda, i.e. good neighborhood policies and integration conditions, whereby peaceful steps towards normalization of the situation are developing.

9.2 Kosovo – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

The narratives of those with personal experience of the conflict are heavily influenced by their personal experiences. As a result, they often (if not constantly) refer to memories of that past, citing facts and circumstances that strongly shaped their overall view and assessment of the conflict's outcomes. Among almost all participants, the pattern of victimhood clearly emerges: no one claims "victory," but all firmly believe that justice will ultimately be achieved only if the "other side" clearly acknowledges that they were the perpetrators of the horrific crimes that occurred during the conflict and, consequently, are the ones who are and should be held responsible. In this common frame, it is not only groups that claim to be victims of the war or the regime, but rather victims of the other side. In the case of Kosovo Albanian, respondents say they are victims of the Serb side, and Serb respondents claim they are victims of each side, including the will of the "West" to dominate the region. The Serbs see themselves as victims of NATO bombing and aggression. Therefore, Kosovo Albanians see themselves as a victim of Serbian aggression and violence, while Kosovo Serbs see themselves as a victim of Albanian-led unrest that prompted NATO to intervene.

 However, it is interesting to note that participants with personal experience show a higher level of empathy and understanding of the violence of the conflict and see the possibility of reconciliation as a timely imperative. Several respondents from this particular group believe that the causes are deeply rooted in the past, which they often mention.

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"We should not talk too much about who is guilty, the guilty party, as we know, is Serbia [...] the main guilty party Serbia cannot say that it is not guilty of fomenting the conflict and violence." (XK_F_P_1)

"I think that Belgrade's policy pushed Kosovo Serbs because we got along well with them, the children played together, they grew up together, my son played basketball with them." (XK_M_P_7)

"[...]we should also take into account the historical context of this country, where there has been constant injustice for many centuries, and normally, the last war was a reflection of the events that took place in 1830 until the declaration of independence of the Albanians, and also after the declaration of independence the intention of the neighbors to devour the land of the Albanians [...]." (XK_M_P_3)

"They [the Serbs] had the old century claims [over Kosovo], they loved the war, they had the war in Kosovo very easily because they came militarily well prepared and came with the greatest hatred for the Albanians and felt a kind of spiritual pride that allowed them to commit massacres." (XK_M_P_3)

"...in certain situations, we also argued that this is how it should be [...] we tried to remember that this war in Kosovo was not a wish and a pleasure for anyone, especially not for the Albanian side, but there was violence, and we wanted to emphasize that and not just let it stand as something that just happened and now we live on." (XK_M_P_3)

As the conflict is still relatively recent, memories are vivid and intense. Most narratives are characterized by fragmentation and recollection of personal experiences. In the vast majority of the interviewees' narratives, violence is omnipresent, which makes dealing with these memories even more painful.

"...this is the worst thing I experienced when I went to a hospital where [name] was a doctor, when I treated some injured people and when a small child was taken to [name of hospital]. It was very sad, there were a lot of injured people on stretchers ... it was very hard, if I remember, because I saw her [the child] die ... I realized that we had no way out. We often panicked because we heard about a massacre, a massacre there, massacres everywhere ... We waited a long time for it to happen to us too." (XK_F_P_9)

"...Honestly it was like a nightmare, it was like a horror movie, it was like hell. I remember my nanny, her family members came and they told us that they were ordered to leave because the bombing will start [...] so it was the eve before the bombing started." (XK_F_P_20)

"The worst moment was when I went to move a large number of people from their place in this refugee camp [...] they were ordered to leave because of the Serb aggression, and I did not know that my wife and children were among them. I happened to meet them, but I had only 1 minute and 30 seconds to stay there." (XK_M_P_2)

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"[...] on 22 March the weather was cold and there was snow. The Serbian police just signaled that they were going to kill people in the city and in our neighborhood and in another part of the city [...] my wife managed to leave the balcony in time. I saw those with black gloves, white uniforms and Serbian paramilitary militia masks. They had already killed people, but we didn't know [...] they started shooting the children and many of the people on the balconies [....] many of my grandchildren were in my house but luckily they were not hit [we then left and] we didn't know where to go so we came to a small hill and we took the road to [name of village], we had fled but we didn't have any food with us [...] we slept in different places, outside in the open with only one blanket." (XK_M_P_5)

Nonetheless, the participants in this group recall the good neighborly and everyday relations they had with the people on the opposing group and, in many cases, the fact that the outbreak of violence caught them quite unprepared. It is noticeable that there was a lack of media and sufficient communication in some parts of the region at the time the conflict broke out. Therefore, although it sounds strange, it was unusual, but not unheard of, for some people in Kosovo who lived under a certain regime and did not follow politics, not to be informed about what was happening. When NATO began its campaign against Yugoslavia, this came as a great surprise to some.

In a powerful passage of the narration of a Serbian respondent who was living in a village outside Pristina and was trying to protect her Albanian neighbors from Serb paramilitaries who made almost no exceptions in harassing both Albanians and Serb residents of the region. After this incident, and in a reversal of fortune, it was these same Albanian neighbors who protected them from similar actions by the Kosovo Albanian paramilitaries.

"We were in our apartment and I can explain two things to my perception: evil has no religion and evil has no ethnicity, because evil is something that just grabs you and makes whatever value you have disappear. So, I remember some unknown people. I don't know if these people were part of the army or not. People who were not from [name of a village] told me not to protect the apartment of my Albanian neighbor, who was also my nanny. I remember a pig was walking by and I told them to send the pig outside. They [the paramilitaries] told me "you whore, you Albanian whore!". Remember what I told you, that evil has no ethnicity. After the Serbian army left, the Albanians came back - when I say Albanians, I don't mean my neighbors, but some people outside Pristina. [...] They told us even worse things than the first ones and it immediately occurred to me that we were not welcome. Then my nanny was the one who fought for us. She was the one yelling at the boys, "Go to hell. Go to [an area in Central Kosovo, a stronghold of the KLA], why are you bothering us?" (XK_F_P_20)

At the level of remembrance of the events that preceded the conflict, what is undoubtedly mentioned by almost all Kosovo Albanian participants is the policy of violent segregation in several important areas of daily life imposed by the central Serbian Government. Segregation began with

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all the obvious elements of ethnic cleansing such as segregated hospitals, schools, markets and other institutions. Kosovar Serbs had established official institutions, while Albanians organized a parallel life in the 1990s. Perhaps the most important and sensitive institution was that of Education.

Education plays an important role in the Kosovo conflict. Since the opening of the University of Prishtina in 1970, it has been seen by Kosovo Albanians as a source of political awakening. Interviewees with direct experience of the conflict see the narratives emanating from this educational institution as directly linked to the peaceful movement of Ibrahim Rugova as well as the establishment of Kosovo Liberation Army.

> *"I recall that our university was a source of education and economic development in Kosovo, reaching the highest levels between 1974 and 1981. During this period, there was a time when we were able to live normally, but since 1981, the unrest began. We were two autonomous regions within the framework of Yugoslavia and 6 different republics in the Federation of Yugoslavia, but we were not equal with the others."* (XK_M_P_5)

Most of the Kosovo Albanian respondents remember the 1990s for the violence and segregation of institutions. Parallel life was the way Kosovo Albanians' education and public life were organized. In particular, this played an important role in the education of Kosovar youth, where students provided massive support to the KLA. The parallel education system was organized illegally in private houses, where students attended classes secretly and for limited periods of time. This is mentioned by an interviewee as one of the main initiating factors of the conflict, referring to the creation of a collective memory in Kosovo regarding the events of the 1990s.

> *"We studied in basements, we studied all over private houses. Unfinished houses were full of dust and very cold. It was just a very gloomy environment to study in. I'm talking about 1992 and 1993 when we were excluded from high schools and we were forced to continue secondary school in these private houses. We then lost a year because classes were completely disrupted by Serb violence. I mean, the Serbian police, the Serbian state apparatus, and the army that followed us at every turn and followed us in every region, and of course, that a young person in these circumstances continues to accumulate anger and continues to accumulate hatred towards the violator of his rights."* (XK_M_P_3)

> *"I attended primary and high school in [name of village], it was the time when after two years of high school we were forced to move to a private house because we were expelled from school [...] we were in a graveyard house where the parallel teaching system was held [....] the teachers didn't get a salary and taught us secretly, the police came to check because it was illegal, we didn't have the right to do this private home teaching and the teachers were often mistreated when they were caught by the police."* (XK_M_P_8)

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"Two of my children have finished high school in the basement cellars" (XK_M_P_7)

The transition to the normality of daily life after the end of the conflict seems neither smooth nor easy. A large number of residents had to be displaced during the war and an equally large number were forced to emigrate to other countries after the war, in search of a better future that could not be found in Kosovo due to the prevailing conditions in the post-war era. This transition was abrupt or even traumatic for many, regardless of the ethnic group to which they belonged, as the following passage from an interview with a participant from Kosovo Serb reveals.

"I can tell you my first experience in Pristina after UNMIK and KFOR arrived...so ok, let's say the Serbian structure disappeared - when I say Serbian, it's not only Serbian, but all the locals I knew were completely gone. So we didn't even have money for a sack of potatoes, and my mother found out that there was an American family living in a house in [place name], near the house where my cousin lived, and she went there to ask if there was any chance of a job for me and my sister to save us from starvation. So that's how it started... this American police officer took me and my sister to a job interview in Pristina. Imagine me, I mean from the [place name] suburb with nothing but an old black shirt and black pants, surrounded by beautiful, well-dressed girls. I didn't have a penny and I never had English in school, I only had Latin and French, but we took a test and we had this trial period of three months to get used to the American environment in [place name] and I was the one who finally got the job. So I started to adapt, it was like all of a sudden you wake up and your life is completely different, it was like all of a sudden the whole Western world was reflected in Pristina, everybody speaks English, all of a sudden everybody knows how to use computers, everything else was gone, the traditions and the values that I knew were gone." (XK_F_P_20)

9.3 Kosovo – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

The majority of participants belonging to the transmitted experience of the conflict group have a rather negative attitude towards the possibility of reconciliation between the two communities and - as already mentioned - show a lower level of understanding and empathy for the opposing side, compared to members of the personal experience of the conflict group. It is worth noting here that despite the expected age difference between the members of the two groups, several members of the group with transmitted experience have memories of themselves either from events of the conflict itself or from its immediate consequences. Therefore, many participants from this group are being skeptical about the reconciliation possibility because it seems either to be implemented at a very slow pace or have weak chances to be achieved at all in the future.

"We didn't experience the war directly, but we experienced torture, we experienced pressure, the restrictions on movement, and the family was separated. Some were in Germany while the mother stayed in Kosovo with the children and for us it was still more difficult to move and travel to a safer place." (XK_M_T_16)

"I think it takes more time and communication to reach a better understanding between an Albanian and a Serb." (XK_F_T_14)

"I think slow steps are discussed for the next 20 years and if we continue with this pace of development, maybe we need another 20 years until we have a good level of understanding." (XK_M_T_11)

Another type of inter-differentiation that is evident in this group is that some of its members focus on the devastating economic and development consequences of the conflict in Kosovo, while others focus on the loss of human lives. The first group tends to materialize loss of property and damages (even on trifles such as the lack of cigarettes) and the second group is far more concerned about human loss. Undoubtedly, the existence of personal / family losses during the war plays a crucial role in the way the conflict is assessed in the present.

"In the wider family circle we have been damaged by human loss. My brother-in-law was killed in front of his children. His family is devastated. I heard his family pointing to the place when we returned to Kosovo, and they are still reliving it very badly because they saw their father being shot. People whose family members were killed, or some whose whole families were killed, are forever affected by that. You can see that even if you don't know the story, you can see that something horrific has happened." (XK_F_T_10)

"We used up the reserves we had, we had no business left. Before the war we had our pharmacy business with 3 small shops. At that time we lived on that, but they no longer exist. We were left with no income as a family, but since the house hadn't burned down, we were able to secure some income from welfare and find a way to continue a business similar to the one we had before the war." (XK_M_T_11)

"I noticed the economic side the most because the schools were closed, my mother was a teacher and went without the standard salary." (XK_F_T_17)

"[...] my mother, who is a passionate smoker, couldn't get cigarettes and I remember there were bombs and everything, but my mother and her friends, who were also smokers, tried to find cigarettes and share them, like smoke half the cigarettes and then save the other half for later." (XK_F_T_19)

Although parents try to protect their children from exposing them to negative information and thus to war, the family seems to be the main source of information about the 1990s conflict in Kosovo for members of this group. Nevertheless, we should also reiterate the role of personal experience, even at a young age. The family environment shares common experiences and memories for which there seems to be a common consensus - as well as for negative feelings towards the opposing side (Serbs or Albanians). Therefore, there do not seem to be any reasons or sources of disagreement and tension in the family context. It is also noteworthy that in the narratives of a large number of participants in this group there are references to migration, dislocation to neighboring countries or even flight to safer areas during the war.

"I first heard about it, mainly from family members, because it had been discussed for many years, what happened in Bosnia. We had the same fears that what happened in Bosnia will happen in Kosovo. So the conversations about the war started early, as children we were curious, but we didn't know the seriousness of the war, and we didn't know how much damage a war can do [...] At the beginning of the war in 1998, we managed to get outside the borders of Kosovo to Macedonia, and from there we continued our emigration to Scandinavian countries, namely Norway." (XK_M_T_16)

"I can't say that I remember when I first heard about the war because we didn't talk about it much in the family. I think that my parents, like other parents, tried to save their children from very bad news [...] But still I can say that the family was the first to tell me about the war, I can't remember who was the first, probably it was grandmother because she was the closest to me". (XK_F_T_18)

"I was very young and during the war we were in Germany [...] I only remember that my mother and father noticed that the war started. My mother watched TV and it was the first time I remember my mother crying. I just walked up to her and asked her what was happening, and mom told me that my grandfather was in Kosovo and couldn't get out of his house. She tried very hard to explain to me what war was, but at that age I didn't understand that much, but when I heard my mother I felt that it was not a good thing." (XK_F_T_15)

"Yes, from time to time we remember the moments of fear because we experienced many of them during the war events and the worst was there in the village when we had no way to break through. The memories come back to our minds every now and then when we remember the experiences during the war." (XK_F_T_14)

"We went to Germany and found out through the news. I listened to my nanny and my father talking, I watched the news about the massacre, then the parents were frantically watching the news, trying to contact the family we didn't know where they were, at that time technology was not like today, only by phone, tried to contact relatives who didn't know where they were, my mother tried to contact her grandpa and grandma who were separated during the war, someone went to Macedonia, someone to Albania. That was the first time I realized that the war had started. As children we were not allowed to see all this on television". (XK_F_T_10)

Education is the second - and perhaps equally important - source of information and knowledge about the events of the conflict in Kosovo. Many of the participants in this group, who also have personal experiences and memories, recall events of the conflict that took place while they were at school and teachers were trying to explain what was going on. Apart from the violent events of the conflict per se, the memories of the violent segregation imposed on the education system by the central government during the period before the conflict are also indelible.

"I was in 7th grade when the shooting happened at school, but we didn't know where or how it came from. The teachers said that the Serbian police was shooting" (XK_F_P_14)

"I was in the second grade when we were for the first time driven out of schools by force by Serbs and I remember that we went to school the next day, but we were not allowed to go inside the school. For several months we were schooled in private houses by people of good will, and from that point on, as a child, I realized that this situation was not normal." (XK_M_T_16)

"I was in primary school at that time and the schools in the community [place name] were closed. I remember that when we started again, we were not taught according to the Yugoslav curriculum, as we were used to. We no longer spoke the Serbian language". (XK_F_T_17)

Both sides recognize that there is a kind of introversion in their education system and either case the causes and events of the conflict are presented in a one-sided way – if they're even presented at all. History books among Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs show a one-sided narrative on historic events including the last war and generally contain insufficient references to recent history and conflict. During the research interviews, it was obvious that the role of oral history was very important in creating narratives about the past. Most interviewees refer to oral history sources, more often than official history textbooks.

"[...] It was ridiculous that in 7th grade, when we were learning the countries of Europe and the last one was Albania, my geography teacher just said, "Kids, the only thing we need to know about Albania is that in 1918 it prevented Serbia from getting access to the sea - and now you're released and you can do whatever you want." So, in any case, my education has influenced what I think, I mean the whole system of the curriculum of primary and high school, you know Kosovo in history and literature, but not in terms of my relations with the rest of the world." (XK_M_T_19)

"[Information I have about the conflict comes] mostly from the older ones because they experienced the war in their own way and the stories from those who were personally involved are more emotional from their perspective of what they experienced [...]." (XK_M_T_16)

"[...] we didn't hear anything about the war in school with the curriculum we had". (XK_F_T_12)

"No, [we didn't learn anything about the conflict] as part of the lessons. Nobody talked about the war in school anymore [...] the war was never discussed in school". (XK_F_T_14)

Discussions in the social circle have a rather inevitable character: they are not pursued, but often occur. Although avoided as a topic of conversation, the trauma of war is still present and evident even to the group with the transmitted experience of the conflict participants. Serbian participants mentioned the feeling that the topic is mostly silenced and replaced by discussions about the future

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and the reconstruction of the country. In terms of social interaction between the two opposing groups, rapprochement seems to be difficult: during their (rather limited, mainly displacement-related) contacts, the Serbian side is focused on equating the NATO bombing of Belgrade with what happened in Kosovo, which is completely unacceptable from Kosovo Albanians.

"I noticed that in debates with Serbs, when we met again after many years, I had some very bad debates because they tried to equate the bombing in Belgrade with the war in Kosovo - actually not even equate it, but to say that what happened in Belgrade was more tragic, without mentioning the wars that the Serbian state has waged on other neighboring peoples." (XK_F_T_18)

"[We don't talk about it so much], we started to live our normal routines, and people have difficulties managing their everyday life, they have children, they worry if they have fever or not, things like that. But you can say that 20 years after the war, people's mental health is something to worry about because there was a lot of trauma for everybody, whether you were directly confronted with the war or not." (XK_M_T_13)

"Not so much [talking about the conflict] because I think it was also something like a general policy of the country after the war was over, let's just pretend that nothing happened, so let's talk about the project of 'recovery or restoration of Serbia' or whatever it was called and let's generally build Serbia, bridges were rebuilt, reconstructions, things like that." (XK_M_T_19)

9.4 Kosovo – Gender

When it comes to gender issues, narratives of incidents of sexual violence during the war seem to overshadow everything else. It is estimated that approximately 20,000 women (and men) were raped during the conflict, mainly by the Serbian Army, but for obvious reasons, the actual number of rape victims is extremely difficult to ascertain (Abrahams, 2001; Di Lellio & Kraja, 2020). These discourses are not only about rape as a weapon of war, but also about how to deal with it in post-conflict settings. Most women who were exposed to sexual violence were never able to talk about it or be part of the Kosovo government's reparations scheme due to stigmatization and problems in the social context. Nevertheless, this discourse feeds into the main war narrative of victimization by Serbian aggression.

Nevertheless, it is noted that this particular discourse is male dominated and not openly talked about, therefore the interviews do not provide fruitful material to work with. The discourse is mentioned, thoroughly but the observed pattern was that interviewees almost always did not talk about sexual violence until the interview was over and the recording stopped. Interviewers reported a sense that participants (mostly female) wanted to talk about it but did not want to be recorded, or in other words, whatever they said should be at an oral level and remain so. The few recorded mentions in the research interviews illustrate the widespread fear and attempts by women to disguise their appearance so as not to attract the attention of Serbian soldiers and paramilitaries.

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"We were in danger when we returned from [place name], together with [person name], who was still very young. I knew that the mother wore a cloak and a headscarf because we were afraid. We often got news of rapes and we came across the river where many had been killed the night before." (XK_F_P_9)

What is striking is that this kind of narration is the one that is transmitted to younger generations haunting their imaginary about the war and what could possibly happen to them in a similar situation.

"It was very difficult for an 11-year-old child to hear about the war all the time, the environment at that time was terrible, there was a lot of sexual harassment. It was impossible to go to school and not hear all these stories about sexual harassment, at least for the place where we lived. Talking about my personal experiences as a child and also those of my friends, I felt very unsafe during that time and prayed that no rape would happen. (XK_F_T_18)

"I know about sexual violence during the war, but not from personal experience or from close relatives". (XK_M_T_19)

Differences in men's and women's discourses about the war experiences as well as on how to deal with the past are not directly expressed by the participants, but are revealed in the way they deal with and evaluate the different war-related situations. It is interesting to note that the female participants are more willing to identify and point out these possible differences than the male participants.

"I think yes [there are differences], women experienced the war more intensely, maybe because women are more intelligent, I see this in myself, when I discuss something about the war with my brother, with whom we have 1 year difference, my arguments are closer to the heart and I feel much worse than him, who thinks that things were not so tragic. It depends on the man, of course, but maybe there is a difference in the female nature, which is more gentle and sensitive." (XK_F_T_10)

"I think so [there are differences] because men are more vulnerable [...] My mother was the one who risked so we could have bread to eat." (XK_F_T_12)

"I really can't say for sure if there are differences [between men and women]." (XK_M_T_19)

"I really don't know [if there are differences]." (XK_M_T_13)

Usually, women participants use emotional descriptions in their memory narratives, many of them having to cope with truly extreme situations in the midst of the conflict.

"There aren't really any differences, you can assume that they had different experiences with these situations, for example my father had to join the military and my mother was supposed to work in a hospital, but I don't remember any differences." (XK_M_T_19)

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"I remember we were forced to drive through a river [river name] and the car stopped because all the water came in. There were the police, and they all had their lights on our side... that's when I remember being very scared and my husband gave me a gun and told me 'if they come for you, pull the trigger yourself and don't give in'. I'm sorry... At that moment I was very scared but at the last minute the car started and we were able to drive away." (XK_F_P_9)

Interestingly, one female participant refers to her important role in a miners' strike in Pristina in the period before the outbreak of war and her active participation in field operations during the conflict. Her example should be considered rather unusual, as she characterizes the province where the strike took place as "patriarchal" and mentions that she was the only woman who attended the strike's meetings.

"In the 1990s, I found myself in [place name], a patriarchal province that is still patriarchal, but it was very important that when the constitutional amendments began, debates were organized in municipalities and I participated in some of those debates where I was almost the only woman there among many men who often allowed me to speak first out of pride, and [....] I felt good because I had the chance to contradict what I thought was wrong, and I felt good because of the fact that all my colleagues had respect for a woman who was there [...] I remember the miners' strike, I was the key person in the organization where I worked with many men". (XK_F_P_1)

Several female respondents with personal experience of the conflict from both communities said that the return to normality after the end of the war was far from easy, while some did not hesitate to say that normality remains a challenge today and has not been fully achieved.

"Unfortunately, my ethnicity was my biggest problem. Actually, I was afraid to tell others who I was, because even in [place name] there were attacks and people would stare at me when I told them I was from the Serbian community, but as I said, evil has no ethnicity. When I go to Nish or Belgrade, they ask me where I'm from, and when I say 'Kosovo' they just stare at me confused [...] At the beginning [after the war] it was [difficult], but later I started to improve my English, improve my Albanian, but also my social behavior skills in order to survive, because I promised myself that I will never be hungry again." (XK_F_P_20)

"I remember when we came back to the house [after the end of the war] there was a lot of graffiti of female genitalia and very dirty that looked like rape and Serbian inscriptions like "Serbian people rule", "Death to Albanian people", Serbian cross with 4 s... when I came into the house, my mother's father told me not to see these things because they were very sad." (XK_F_T_18)

"I didn't have the best days after the war because my husband died, I was still very young...I had health problems, I had some epileptic seizures. I was afraid that they

would all come back in my life, I was constantly accumulating stress, everything was transmitted to me in that way. I've been in treatment for 3-4 years now, I've been in therapy and I don't have the seizures anymore." (XK_F_P_9)

"It's interesting how I feel... even 20 years after the war we haven't gone back to normal, I'm still asking for normality. I say quite honestly, things need to become more stable and normal [...] 20 years after the war, the main and primary problem is that I don't feel good, I feel very bad again." (XK_F_P_1)

9.5 Kosovo – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

With few exceptions, the vast majority of respondents, regardless of their individual characteristics, express positive views about the idea of European Union and say they feel European in one way or another. European Union is generally attributed to positive characteristics, mainly related to freedom of speech and movement, economy and political stability. Many of them refer to the past by recalling the historical role of the region (especially Albania) in shaping certain European realities in the present, and through this mention indirectly express their displeasure with the current status of Kosovo, which has remained an EU "candidate member country" for several years. Some of them also express frustration with the lack of progress in European integration, a view that seems to mirror Brexit-related developments.

"Yes [I consider myself a European], [Europe is for me] the concept of freedom in the sense of free movement, free education, prosperity and peace of mind." (XK_F_T_14)

"Yes, in many ways [I feel European]. I love Europe very much because it gave me a good education and work ethics [...] I feel European not only because of the fact that Kosovo is part of Europe in the geographical sense." (XK_F_T_15)

"Being a European for me means to, having freedom of movement, having educational and work opportunities, living the life you want [...] We are close to Europe, we are part of it. I don't think I have a difference when I am compared to some Norwegian, English or Austrian [...] Even if we are not there, yes, I feel European". (XK_F_T_17)

"I live in Europe, even if you look at it historically, I think Europe is our product, we are the ancient Pellazg people and then there is Illyria, we are part of Indo-European languages, archeological discoveries every day indicate that we Albanians helped Europe to form many of its states, namely Serbia was formed by the Kelmend tribe, Montenegro was built over our land, Macedonia too, so why not be a European? I think that others can't be more European than me, we are in the center of Europe and we helped Europe to develop." (XK_M_P_5)

"I think that Europe should be more benevolent towards us, because although we are a small nation, we have given different personalities in warfare like Skënderbeu or in humanism like Mother Theresa [...] we should be considered as an integral part of Europe, not only geographically, but also in other forms European Union". (XK_F_P_1)

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"I think that Europe is a very good foundation for us, I am very sorry that European integration halted because of what is happening due to Brexit, I think it is very harmful for EU integration [...] for us European integration will be the main push in terms of European values because I am concerned about European values [...] Yes, absolutely [I feel European] [...] we are young Europeans here, we are not grown up and we are not from Azerbaijan just yesterday." (XK_M_T_13)

"Europe is a great idea that has gone terribly wrong in practice recently, but if you ask me, I'm still for and not against the idea of European Integration and European values, at least what they represent in theory." (XK_M_T_19)

Although the majority of respondents use historical and/or geographical criteria to underpin their sense of European identity, a small proportion of them express skepticism or even rejection of European identity and specifically of the European way of life, placing their national (and mostly cultural) identity above and beyond everything else.

"I'm very much against Europe, we're not mentally prepared to live as Europeans, we're forced to live as Europeans, we're forced to have children's rights, we're forced to have women's rights, LGBT rights, in our culture these things don't exist. It is possible that in a family of 16 there are many children, we have never mistreated children - what rights do they want? They will eat, play, clean up and go to school, and when they come back they have to do what the parents tell them, that is our culture. Women's rights for which woman? The one who is married to a man who lives in a house with four siblings and she demands her rights? If you can't have your rights when you only lived with your partner, are you now demanding that you have rights when you live with your husband's parents? The LGBT rights where? If we understand that Hasan is wearing a dress he will be beaten with a stick, no one in the village would accept that - it's our culture and we can't get out of our skin. Your mother can't wear a mini dress because we don't have that in our culture, and you can't wear it either. We [...] still live in the community, we still live 15-16 people in one house and we are unemployed." (XK_M_P_6)

"My parents are Albanian, is not that I have some kind of higher feeling and I feel very Albanian, but I am Albanian and European at the same time. But I would say that at the moment I feel more Albanian than European." (XK_F_T_18)

"Personally, I think Europe is more developed than Kosovo, but not that I want to live there [...] No, not yet [I don't feel European]. Because I see very many differences between us and Europeans. That's why I say no, not yet, we aspire to become Europeans, but we are not yet [...] We are in Europe, but compared to other countries, we are far away, compared to their rights, their benefits, and their standard of living." (XK_F_T_12)

Both participants with direct experience and younger ones with indirect experience of the conflict agree that the EU's role in the Kosovo conflict was regional rather than central. Although it is

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acknowledged that the EU had a generally supportive role towards Kosovo (namely on Kosovo Albanians), it is not seen as one of the main actors in the war. This secondary role is also acknowledged by the opposing group (Kosovo Serbians). Interestingly, a Kosovo Serbian participant refers to the EU's role in the conflict as "added spice". The main role is recognized by both sides in the US and perhaps in individual European countries (such as Germany or the UK), but not in the EU as a whole.

"The role of Europe was not dominant, Europe was only our ally like America." (XK_F_P_1)

"'Additional spice', they are not entirely to blame, but they were an additional spice, that is, their involvement was fueled by our misunderstanding and bad behaviour from both sides." (XK_F_P_20)

"It's not that they didn't play a role, I know countries like Germany and others tried to help Kosovo, if they hadn't, things would be different and not the way we are today." (XK_F_T_10)

"I have always heard and known that America was involved in the war and the attacks against Serbia [...] European countries are usually not willing to get involved much because they want to be more discreet [...] I think Europe is not as clear as America [...] [America] has clear ideas, Europe is more attracted to other choices" (XK_F_T_15)

"I think Europe's role is more humanitarian and gradually becoming politically influential." (XK_F_T_18)

"The role of Europe cannot be mentioned without mentioning the United States of America. Only in addition to them [USA] their role was important for Albanian affairs in general." (XK_M_P_4)

"I still think that we cannot talk about Europe as a whole, depending on our perception we have one opinion when we talk about Germany, we have another opinion when we talk about Britain and we have another opinion when we talk about Italy...it depends. Especially countries like Germany and the UK were extremely important, but I think they were complementary to the US, which always had the initiative. I think that without the help of some European countries we could not realize our freedom, because the U.S. also had the support of other European countries in one way or another, but always under the umbrella and the care of the United States." (XK_M_T_11)

"My opinion is that the crucial role for Kosovo was played by Britain, which pushed America to get involved, and at the moment when such a big player was involved in this game in 1999, America was the top player against Russia [...] Europe was forced to run after America. I think there has always been some support in Europe because the EU protects human rights, but the defining moment was when Britain pushed America to get involved and Europe undoubtedly went along with it. My personal opinion is that

Europe always tries to solve the problems diplomatically, even urgent matters."
(XK_M_T_13)

The EU's role in Kosovo is recognized as more important in the post-war era. Several respondents mentioned the EU's contribution both in the humanitarian field and in the country's reconstruction efforts, while isolated incidents of corruption were mentioned that occurred in the context of the EU's relevant aid projects.

"They are part of NATO and tried to bring peace [...] For example, most of them have been contributing for many years through the organizations we have in Kosovo, starting with UN and EUlex - that was the first project they applied in Kosovo." (XK_F_T_17)

"It also had an impact on socio-economic development, but I think that much more could be done because even in the EUlex project corruption came up [...] I think they didn't try enough to study the problem, try to deal with it and solve it more, create some new jobs and tell them how much they contributed. I think they have contributed, there's no denying that, but I don't think they've done enough because they're still working with people who are corrupted... I may be a little cynical... I don't know." (XK_F_T_18)

"Europe helped us a lot [...] we got more funding, food, weapons, logistics and we should be very grateful that the European community restored Kosovo in a very short time." (XK_M_P_6)

Although elements of European identity are evident, as noted above, there is criticism of the EU's lack of progress and inability to grant Kosovo Visa Liberalization, even though Kosovo has already met all the criteria set by European Commission in 2018. The specific issue exacerbates the divisive perceptions between the two communities, as Kosovar nationals cannot travel to the EU due to the visa regime, while Serbs can.

"Since the end of the war, Europe has always been here because the integration of Kosovo into Europe needed rules, in a way that more or less controls what we do so that we can enter Europe [...] at the moment, Europe has a big impact on Kosovo because we are not able to do visa liberalization [...]." (XK_F_T_15)

"For some things I don't know, but for other things I think [Europe] is very unfair because they excluded us too far from visa liberalization, for example, why can't we travel freely like everyone else? I think we are being discriminated against". (XK_F_P_9)

Expectations for the future of the EU do not seem to be very high. The feeling that seems to prevail has to do with "correcting injustices" done to Kosovo (an issue clearly related to Visa Liberalization), but also with the feeling that the US is still seen as the "powerful ally" compared to the EU.

"Of course, being a small and isolated nation, we focus on strong states like the United States of America and we feel that they are our protectors. But our thoughts are in Europe, regardless of any distortions." (XK_F_P_1)

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"Unfortunately [I don't expect] clear solutions and I fear it will bring us more suffering. Now is not the time. We have had enough." (XK_F_P_20)

"I don't see them helping us with anything, they have helped us, but now I think that those in Europe give us criticism but nothing else concrete, apart from the projects here and there, but that's nothing really visible." (XK_F_T_12)

"[I expect] that the liberalization process will end, that Europe will be more understanding of us because we are the only such isolated state and considering that Kosovo is a new state and needs to develop economically, it needs to build business networks and let young people out to learn about other cultures and bring them back to Kosovo - we need visa liberalization because isolated people cannot create a good state." (XK_F_T_15)

"Just treating us as we are, we are a young nation, new generation in Europe, many of us are workers there, they should stop categorizing us according to enemy propaganda and come and see how good and hospitable people we are, people of the word, people who know how to love someone and they will understand that we deserve more." (XK_M_P_2)

"I expect Europe to continue coordinating its work, to continue coordinating its policy with the Americans and to integrate Kosovo as soon as possible." (XK_M_P_4)

"I think that Europe has not treated us properly as a society and as a state in the middle of Its territory, I think that maybe there are many different factors that have prevented them from offering us more support, and I don't think that this discourse will change in the future." (XK_M_T_11)

9.6 Kosovo – Media

Both communities agree on the overall negative assessment of the media and its role during and after the conflict. Respondents agree that the coverage of events at the time was one-sided and manipulative. Kosovo citizens relied heavily on the media during the conflict (radio was mentioned prominently even though the incidents took place in the late 1990s). Interestingly, many of the respondents noted that today's media coverage of events is very similar to the media coverage at the time of the conflict; the media practices used today appear to be a continuation or reflection of those used in the past, with the absence of violence being the only difference.

"Brainwashing, complete brainwashing from both sides that could be relied upon [...] In terms of the media, not much has changed. The Serbian media are unfortunately still under the influence of Belgrade. Some of them are partially independent because of the sources they have, but still they cannot be completely independent. The same goes for Albanian-language television and radio [...] My relatives keep calling me as if it were the time before the war, when news about food shortages, etc. was broadcast. I even posted a photo on Facebook of me eating plasma biscuits [Serbian brand of biscuits] and

telling people, 'Please, we have what we need, it's all supplied by the Northern Municipality of Kosovo' [territory not fully controlled by the central Kosovo Government]. "(XK_M_P_20)

"The media was tremendously important, even if it was just a transistor in my hand, because there was no news on the major radio stations for almost 24 hours [...] I followed the news around the clock, except for when I was sleeping, but we often stayed awake." (XK_M_P_4)

"We followed the Serbian and Albanian media at that time - the state-controlled Serbian television, which made a lot of propaganda and distracted the public in a hostile way with false information. This also happened mainly through state radio stations, which were almost completely controlled by the state, on the other hand we also listened to Radio Kosova of Freedom, which was also propaganda, but propaganda with a different purpose than Serbian propaganda [...]." (XK_M_T_11)

For respondents with personal experience of the conflict, the way the media operates in Kosovo is directly linked to the role it played during the war. Their continued association with political elites and certain individuals who played a crucial role in the conflict is perceived as contributing to a selective presentation of issues aimed at maintaining support for these elites. This is negatively perceived by respondents in this group as an attempt to manipulate their audience in relation to the past. Distrust seems to be the widespread feeling towards the media in Kosovo, across all ethnic and age groups. Certain media outlets (such as the Albanian-language Deutsche Welle) seem to be strongly identified with the war period and are still seen as "war media" today.

"[...] the media manipulates the citizens too much, we were constantly told about the 100% customs tax we impose on Serbia, and the media boasted that we turned back 3 trucks of Serbian goods at the borders, but all that just to divert attention from certain other issues, like the non-liberalization of visas, people don't even have bread to eat, that's the way the war media still plays with people." (XK_M_P_6)

"I have the impression that they [the media] do not deal with all the issues that the media should deal with in order to uncover the realistic situation in Kosovo. To cover economic development, educational development, political development. General interest and political culture. I mean, the media are hiding many things. They don't just pretend to be a part of politics, but just by hiding many things, they are a part of politics." (XK_M_P_4)

"I think they [news portals] are not quite realistic. It depends on who supports the news portal, a political party or a person they promote more. [...] I think there should be some criteria for the media not to publish what they want and things about certain people and how they acted [during the war] and maybe not been like that." (XK_F_P_9)

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"Interestingly, the radio I listened to during the war was DW. Immediately after the war I went back to my radio one day and my mother-in-law and my wife came and asked me if I still listened to DW. That is, they thought it was a medium of war." (XK_F_P_1)

Younger participants are more exposed to the media in terms of their memories of the conflict. Their lack of direct experience with violent events makes them more susceptible to seeking information about the conflict. Consequently, they are more likely to follow journalistic and media productions about the conflict than those who directly experienced the conflict. Their access to social media was greater than those with direct experience. Almost all respondents with indirect experience of conflict said that they mainly get news from social media on a daily basis. It should be noted that distrust of social media was also observed among older participants. It was lamented that the Kosovar audience consumes a lot of unfiltered content on social media. Older participants pointed out that social media has a notable impact on post-conflict narratives of coming to terms with the past because users post content that is not only speculative but potentially harmful.

"Social media for us is mostly [...] more propaganda than the news...depends on what kind of news, but more propaganda than news." (XK_F_T_14)

"There are groups posting material on social media and this has become a mechanism for propaganda by political parties and those in powerful places (government). The advantage of social media is that what everyone thinks is posted there, and it's almost impossible to distil that into intelligible conclusions. But you can see that certain posts and comments on those posts support certain groups and policies." (XK_M_P_4)

The overwhelming majority of respondents did not believe that the media in Kosovo played a positive role in achieving peace and reconciliation between the two communities. This is because the media is perceived as exclusively financial-gain oriented, and this goal is better achieved by maintaining tension and confrontation.

"The role of the media in Kosovo is a very commercial one, with which I am not at all satisfied [...] in 80% of the cases, the media in Kosovo have not promoted peace, but conflict." (XK_F_P_1)

"I would say not [promoting peace and reconciliation], maybe very few, but most media and journalists don't care about the consequences of what they publish." (XK_F_T_10)

"The media plays a big role [...] but no, I don't think it promotes reconciliation". (XK_F_T_15)

"I think they [the media] do very little, and that is because of the lack of initiatives or the lack of a certain platform that should come from the government organization and our authorities, and the lack of general will for such initiatives." (XK_M_T_11)

9.7 Kosovo – Overall Remarks

The Kosovo conflict largely begins in 1989, but its origins lie much deeper in the divided society of Yugoslavia. During World War II, Kosovo was occupied by the Germans and Italians and was therefore subordinated to Albania. This has always been a topic of discussion in ethnic relations between Serbs and Albanians. The main narrative of the Second World War is that of German occupation and collaboration with the Germans. For Kosovo Albanians, the German occupation is not seen as a period of historical stigmatisation because it is compared to the series of crimes committed by Serbs in 1911 and 1912, when Kosovo was unable to join the newly independent from the Ottoman Empire Albanian. The Serbs see Albanians as Nazi collaborators in World War II because of the "Scanderbeg Division" which consisted mostly of Albanian recruits. Albanians see Serbs as Chetniks during this time and Serbs see Albanians as Nazi collaborators.

"I remember her [Serb classmate in German school] saying that we have always been a part of them, and I tried to argue that Yugoslavia should not be considered just Serbia, but that Yugoslavia was like Soviet Union not just Russia, and that we were not a part of Yugoslavia before, but we were forced to be because we wanted to be a part of Greater Albania, and then the argument went to the Illyrians to show that we don't have the same culture or the same language, it was our luck to be a part of Yugoslavia at that time." (XK_F_T_15)

"Inevitably every time the blame lies with the political elite because they can channel things to go or not to go in a certain direction, but we should also look at the historical context of this country where there has been constant injustice for many centuries and it is normal. that the last war was a reflection of the events that took place in 1830 until the declaration of independence of the Albanians, and even after the declaration of independence the intention of the neighbors to engulf the lands of the Albanians, we see that even after such wars conflicts are divided into 5-6 countries." (XK_M_P_3)

The Kosovo conflict is primarily an ethnic conflict. Although about 95% of Kosovar Albanians are Muslim and the Serbs are Orthodox, the conflict over religion has only been seen from one side. Serbian Orthodox Church has always supported the policies of the Serbian state against the Albanian Muslim population, while for Kosovar Albanians religion seems to play a much smaller role in the conflict. Kosovo can be described as an ongoing conflict with low intensity of violence and rare outbreaks of interethnic violence in the northern part of Kosovo, where the majority of the Kosovo Serbian population lives.

Kosovo is currently home to 1.8 million people. The population is 90% Albanian and an estimated 5% Kosovo Serb. Two major population shifts took place during the 1998-1999 conflict. The first massive displacement of Kosovo Albanians in 1998-1999 where more than half of the population fled the country to neighboring countries of Northern Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro. A second displacement took place with the entering of NATO forces in Kosovo in June 1999, where the Serbian population fled Kosovo in fear of retaliation by Kosovo Albanians. According to UNHCR, about 200. 000 Kosovo Serbs left Kosovo. Another aspect of population movement indirectly

related to the conflict and the past is the "brain drain" and the migration of young people to Europe. Kosovo has experienced the fastest population decline in Europe due to economic migration and political instability. According to the latest estimates, Kosovo has lost about half a million people to migration to the EU in the last decade.

> *"My family got lucky and went to Canada as refugees and decided not to come back, we are divided as a family, I am still in Kosovo, my mother joined the family and another sister stayed here". (XK_F_T_17)*

Victimhood pattern emerged strongly throughout the participants' narratives. Both groups (with direct and indirect experience of the conflict) emphasized that they were victims - not only victims of the war and the regime, but rather victims of the other side. This attitude reveals a kind of impasse: Kosovo Albanians still refer to Serbs as "the others" (tjetri/ tjerët) and so do the Serb minority in Kosovo to Kosovo Albanians. In general, the attitude is that "we have to move on", but where the debate gets stuck is that in the process of moving on there is the condition that "the other side starts apologizing", something that neither side seems willing to do, even if they acknowledge the need to do so. The goal of the future peaceful coexistence of the two communities seems to be very different in the perception of the two communities. Among the Serb minority in Kosovo there is a hope that "one day NATO will leave, and we will have to live together again", which is also not far from Kosovo Albanian thinking - apart from the fact that all Kosovo Albanian respondents have ideas of never returning to the past (which means living under Serbia) and Serbs usually mean by living together as in Serbia.

> *"That's my general point, that Serbian people always did things, although it becomes very difficult when you get into the details of who did what, but definitely people should be responsible, maybe many people, thousands of people who were responsible. I don't buy this idea of collective guilt, so the whole population should be ashamed or something like that for example. I don't feel shame, but I do feel guilt, even though this thing happened on behalf of a group of people that I represent. I'm just saying I'm not obsessed with being Serbian, but still there's something to deal with." (XK_M_T_19)*

> *"[...] Serbia should leave Kosovo, no matter what the consequences will be [...] the main culprit is Serbia cannot say that they are not guilty". (XK_F_P_1)*

The coexistence of the two communities was a complicated issue before, during and after the war. Most of the respondents have active contact with people from the other side of the conflict. Kosovo Serbs work and are active in Kosovo with the majority of Albanians and their relations with Albanians are very good on a personal level, despite the conflict narrative and troubled past. Kosovo Albanians acknowledge the need to have contact with the other side of the conflict, but the difference is that those with direct experience are more likely to talk about it than those with indirect experience of the conflict. One of the main obstacles to this cooperation is language. Kosovo Albanian and Serbian are two fundamentally different languages and therefore for someone to have a regular relationship and contact with the other side requires a whole new language. For generations, Albanians learned Serbian, but Serbs did not learn Albanian, and this has

now ceased for two decades. Very few Serbian primary and secondary schools have classes in Albanian and the same is true for Albanian schools.

Moreover, there is a small number of families of mixed ethnic origin in Kosovo, and they suffered twice as much as others. First they were pressured by the Serbs because "their mother married an Albanian" and after the war they were pressured because "their mother was a Serb". It was not uncommon for some of these mixed marriages to fail during the war for political reasons. The pressure continued to grow in such families for several years after the war.

Although indirect experiences are generally perceived as easier to cope with by the respondents, they have also had terrible indirect experiences. One of the respondents, who is Kosovo Albanian but lived with her family in Belgrade at the time of the conflict, explains that they were put in danger by the military in Belgrade because of the NATO bombings and they were blamed because many already knew they were Albanian. In the post-war period, they decided to return to Kosovo because of the pressure, but encountered a similar situation of pressure because they were previously in Belgrade. She explains that her family was in distress from both sides.

"[...] we were in our yard [Belgrade house] playing with my sister and cousin and at that time a unit of paramilitaries came by, they seemed to be one of Arkan's units because I heard that Arkan's units were in that part of the city and they had automatic weapons pointed at children. But as a child you didn't know what the risk was, and the fact that I lived in Belgrade made me think that they didn't want to kill me because I knew their language or because I didn't know what I was thinking then as a child...They could have actually killed me [....] they looked very prickly with their beards and their colored faces, so frightening to see them, but as a child I didn't perceive them as a danger [...] The problem we had after the war was that we didn't get any help, even though our house was totally damaged, only the walls were left standing [...] maybe it was because we weren't there during the war". (XK_F_T_18)

The women's perspective is generally absent. Gender, sexual violence, rape, female victims are less often discussed than general aspects of war. Women are also less often included in explaining the events of war. When interviews were arranged and interviewees were selected as women their families often suggested that men should talk about the war **because they might remember better and know better what happened**. This may indicate that at a general level men manage the dominant narrative, confirming the fact that they control the family narrative in the domestic environment.

10. Poland

10.1 Poland - Brief background of the conflict

Poland is a country of sharp political conflict these days. Based on the media coverage, one gets the impression that this conflict has radicalized and intensified in recent years, especially after the 2015 parliamentary and presidential elections which were won by a right-wing party "Prawo i Sprawiedliwość" (Law and Justice). Paradoxically, both the ruling party and the main opposition party - "Platforma Obywatelska" (Civic Platform) - have their roots in dissident milieus and anti-communist opposition, which participated in the social movement of "Solidarność" in 1980-1981 and to the Roundtable Agreement and democratization of Poland in 1989. Even more, paradoxically, one of the main areas of this political conflict, which has since led to a sharp social rift and the deepening of the gap in Polish society, is the interpretation of the country's contemporary history - or rather the memory of its recent past. Without great exaggeration, one can speak of the ongoing "war of memory" in Poland in recent years.

There are different battlefields in this "war." The most remote in time is the interpretation of the interwar period, when Poland regained the independence it had lost at the end of the XVIII century. But much more intense is the one related to the experience of World War II, the first post-war years when the new political order was established, and then the whole period of communism / real socialism from 1945 to 1989. But the decisive battleground seems to be the perception and evaluation of the system change in 1989 and the following years of "system transformation", which is mainly understood as a "transition" to liberal democracy and market economy.

One may wonder how this is possible in a seemingly homogeneous Polish society where the two largest political camps still historically legitimize themselves - on a symbolic, but also on a biographical level - with the anti-communist democratic opposition and the mass social movement of "Solidarność": its experience, its historical significance and legacy. No (post-communist) communist party - which could try to oppose this dominant "anti-communist" historical narrative - failed to reach the electoral threshold in the last national elections in 2015 and is not represented in parliament for the first time since 1989. Other left-wing political parties and milieus are even weaker in Poland today - although they are much closer to the mainstream historical memory.

The keen interest in which historical narrative will prevail and become the "official" narrative is evident in recent years by a growing number of activities and productions, some of which are listed below:

Scholars (mostly historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and others), invigorated by generational change, are scouring the archives and re-reading the documents to reinvent the narrative about the past. Initiatives like these come from both Liberal and Conservative actors.

Monuments and acts of commemoration are being introduced (or debated upon) in the public sphere.

Historical museums open (both on the local and national level) and their exhibitions are widely discussed both among the professionals and the public –drastic and controversial changes are being introduced in public funded institutions.

A relatively significant number of artifacts and cultural production (both high and popular) is devoted to the troubling elements of the Polish past and they spark public discussions and controversies. Among them, films such as Pokłosie (Pasikowski), Ida (Pawlikowski), Wołyń (Smarzowski), works of art, exhibitions, literary works, theatre performances, comic books, etc.

New research institutions are being launched devoted to memory studies, critical historiography, cultural studies of the Holocaust, class-oriented studies of the postwar history of Poland, etc. with numerous academic conferences and publications.

The conflicts over the shape of the past seem to be re-enacted in the public space by various, heterogenic acts of commemoration or interventions in the visual public space.

To a significant extent, these conflicts shape Polish political as well as cultural sphere nowadays and influence the attitudes towards European integration, the so-called refugee crisis, the reproductive rights battle (strongly connected with the participation of the Catholic Church authorities in Polish politics).

The current anti-elitist political discourse (as represented by the ruling party) aims to take control of one's own history (the narrative about the past) and emancipate oneself from the oppressive framework of the "western", the "modern" and the "liberal".

The historical periods of the recent past around which the debate about the "correct"/official narrative of history revolves seems to be the Second World War and the Holocaust, and the postwar period in the People's Republic of Poland.

The outlines of the respective debate can be summarized as follows:

World War II and the Holocaust

- Pre- and post-war pogroms of the Jews performed by their Polish neighbors as well as (direct and indirect) involvement of the Polish people in the persecution of the Jews during the war.

- Divisions such as urban vs. province context or "folk" vs. "intellectual" memory.

- The role of the Catholic Church in stirring up the anti-Semitic sentiments.

- Competition of the victimhood (Polish/Jewish) as reflected in the common knowledge and sentiments, in memorization practices in historiography and culture generally.

- Polish-Ukrainian conflict (including its class background).

- Polish-Russian conflict (including the "Jewish Bolshevik phantasm". The Katyń Massacre lie and repressed memory)

- Polish-German conflict (including the context of relocations and later question of the retributions; forced labor and resettlement camp for Germans in postwar Poland)

- The conflict over the "Warsaw Uprising", its meaning and its memorizations

Postwar and the People's Republic of Poland

- The persecution of active opposition to the communist state (the so-called "cursed soldiers")

- Mass resettlements of people, losing/gaining property and the forced "Polonization" of the "regained" territories (party's propaganda)

- A fundamental change in the Polish social structure; ethnic homogenization, urbanization, open access to free education, etc.

- Waves of Jewish emigration 1956, 1968 and the mobilization of anti-Semitic sentiments

- 1968 participation of the Polish army in the invasion of Czechoslovakia; student protests, the crisis at universities

- Deteriorating economic conditions and strikes of the 1970s and 1980s; Workers Unions strikes

- Repressions against people involved in the democratic opposition (writers, artists, students), etc.

- Conflict over the transformation of 1989 – as to whether it was justified to let the communists remain involved in the creation of the first parliament, etc. – the discourse of treason.

- Conflict over the leadership of the Solidarity movement; erased or unwritten histories of people involved (including women)

Post War and Transition Liberal Economy Period Timeline

While the historical timeline of the WWII events is more or less well known, it might be helpful to mention here the timeline of the second period, namely the post-war and transition liberal economy period:

1989   In his first speech as Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, announces the policy of the so-called "*thick line*" which has been interpreted as unjustified lack of punishment for crimes committed by the communist regime of pre-1989 Poland.

1993   An Act on Family Planning penalizes abortion unless there is a serious threat to the life or health of the pregnant woman, there is a case of rape or incest or the fetus is seriously and irreversibly damaged. The law still remains in place today.

1996   Introduction of the lustration law, i.e. the policy limiting the participation of former communists, and especially informants of the communist secret police in public life

1997   The first post-communist Constitution of Poland was passed which redefined the concept of the Polish nation in civic rather than ethnic terms. Article 35 guaranteed the rights of national and ethnic minorities, while other provisions prohibited discrimination and political organizations that spread racial hatred.

1998   Establishment (by force of legal action) of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN),

research institute with lustration prerogatives, specializing in the legal and historical examination of the 20th-century history of Poland (especially Nazi and Communist crimes committed in Poland between 1939 and 1989)

1999   Poland joins NATO

2000-2002 The book "Neighbours – The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne,

Poland" by Jan Tomasz Gross' is being published and the Institute of National Remembrance launched an investigation into the crime in Jedwabne: the mass murder of the Jewish population of the town perpetrated by local Poles. "Wokół Jedwabnego" ("Around Jedwabne") by P. Machcewicz & K. Persak eds. (1.500 pages) publication following the investigation confirmed Gross's thesis as well as revealed several other pogroms in the region. Major public discussion on the crimes committed by the Poles against the Jews and the Polish-Jewish relations takes place in Poland (with films by Agnieszka Arnold, and a book by Anna Bikont). In July 2001 President Aleksander Kwasniewski, in the presence of an international audience, including relatives and countrymen murdered, apologized "*on behalf of those whose conscience had been touched by this crime*".

2004   Poland becomes a member state of the European Union in 2004, both the President and the Government were vocal in support for the integration.

2004   The Warsaw Uprising Museum opens in Warsaw.

2010   Polish Air Force Tu-154 aircraft crashed near the city of Smolensk, Russia, killing all 96 people on board, including the President of Poland Lech Kaczyński and his wife. The flight's purpose was taking many high-ranking Polish officials to ceremonies marking the 70th anniversary of the Katyń massacre. Various conspiracy theories about the crash have since been circulated, including that the crash was a political assassination. Polish and international investigations did not find any evidence supporting this version. There have been numerous conflicts over forms of memorization - monuments, demonstrations, works of art devoted to the event as well as exhumations against the will of the families.

2013/14 Opening of the Polin: Museum of the History of Polish Jews on the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto.

2016 Parliament passes the resolution on honoring the victims of the genocide committed by Ukrainian nationalists against Poles and the president of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko paid tribute to the victims of this event in front of the Volyn Massacre Monument in Warsaw, by kneeling in front of it.

2017 Opening of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, and controversies that follow

2017 Opening of the Markowa Ulma-Family Museum of Poles Who Saved Jews in World War II

2018 Passing by the parliament the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance introducing changes, including the addition of Article 55a, which defines the following crime: "ascribing Nazi crimes to the Polish Nation or the Polish State"; and Article 2a, concerning crimes perpetrated against Poland or Poles by Ukrainian nationalists. The amendment has caused major international controversy.

Within the RePAST research project, we are trying to understand Polish memory wars looking into vernacular historical experiences and memories of ordinary Poles living in different parts of the country. Still, it is hard to understand them without reference to the top-down historical politics.

As the key experience of conflict, we chose martial law that was introduced by the Polish government in December 1981 aiming to silence down social unrest and disempower independent trade unions of "Solidarność", which were seen as a danger to the political hegemony of communist mono-party regime (before, in summer 1980, after long protest and negotiations, the government accepted "Solidarność" and allowed its legal registration). Though this was not the only historical experience of confrontation between communist authorities of Poland and "society", we decided to treat it as a symbol of postwar conflict in the country and we asked our interview partners, how did they experience and/or remember it.

10.2 Poland – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

Most of our interviewees in this group, except for one, were born few years after the war. Their narratives are dominated by elements of their everyday life , and they generally "normalize" their lives in socialist Poland - or under "communist rule," as the official memory of today would call it.

Those who were farmers, both men and women, emphasize the experience of hard work and great devotion to their land and farm. They also speak of visible improvements and progress, especially in the 1970s, when the new policy of rural modernization was implemented (access to agricultural machinery, social security for farmers, better prices for agricultural goods). These improvements sometimes continued into the 1980s, according to some of our narrators, which does not fit the mainstream historical narrative that emphasizes the "system decomposition" and complete economic depression that began with martial law. This is another point where personal memory is not in line with the official narrative.

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"Yes, really. And a lot, a lot of land for that. So [A., village in central-west Poland] was developed at a very high level. Thanks to the PGRs, because there was a sheep farm, there was a plant that processed it, leather was tanned. Let's focus on the skins. There were sheep, skins and sheepskin production, but not only sheepskins, because there were pillows, hats and gloves, everything as it is today [...] Those were the 1980s and 1990s". (PL_F_P_6)

Those who were not farmers usually mention in the interviews that they worked in various institutions: in a factory, in school or other public educational institutions, in local youth or sports organizations, etc. There is no doubt that these types of institutions had important emancipatory functions, especially for women, as they provided access to new social roles and social advancement opportunities that were not tied to the household or agriculture. Yet we spoke to people (with few exceptions) who remained primarily anchored in their localities. This is the main place from which they observe rather than participate in the events of big history.

"Mom in '80s... When we moved here, she immediately worked in the school common-room. No, in a kindergarten, first as a teacher, and then in a day-care centre. From what I can remember, she was a manager, and then some kind of sociotherapy centre, because my mother is also in this... Oh, Jesus... In the PTP, the Polish Psychological Association. She's a member of the PTP, she's a therapist...". (PL_F_P_4)

"I remember that my husband was going to Gdańsk to get a TV set as a result of an acquaintance he had. My brother worked in that enterprise and got a TV set. And my husband went to get a TV set. And he came back with this TV set. Gdańsk Główny, the riots, it was December. And the main riots, there is no phone, there is nothing. The man knew nothing, only what he heard. And on December 12th he was to leave, so I found out later. He left Gdańsk for Gniezno on 12 December, his mother-in-law is in Gniezno, but he didn't get home anymore, because the whole Gniezno was surrounded by a cordon of police and army. He didn't have a pass and had to go back to his mother, so he didn't make it (to the house)". (PL_F_P_6)

"Martial law, well, this one I remember: my daughter was born, and I had 11 diapers. I stood in line to get them because there was an 8-year difference between the children, so there were no such diapers yet [...] That's how it was, I stood for 11 diapers, so much for the assignment, one blanket and nothing else. And here I had, like, two more flannel diapers". (PL_M_P_2)

The above quotation is a good example of the position of the observer who does not really participate. The interviewee tells the story of her husband - not even herself - who just happened to be affected by the introduction of Martial Law on 13.12.1981. She was neither a victim nor a heroine, and we do not learn what our interviewee thinks about these events, how she judges them. When asked further, she said that she is not involved in politics at all. At the same time, she is now a *memory activist* and leader of the local initiative to commemorate the local participants of Wielkopolska Uprising 1918 and World War II. This activity led to the installation of several

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memorial installations in the village and several publications. Both events are placed in the context of the struggle for national independence - against foreign oppressors. In both cases it is about German occupiers, but the message also seems to be directed against Soviet domination of the country between 1945-1989. The small monument dedicated to John Paul II, "*the Polish Pope*", stands next to it (as it does in most Polish towns and larger villages today), but as another sign of independence, not just religious commitment, makes all these initiatives part of the same patriotic narrative - completely detached from the actual biographical experience of the people who support them. In this case, our interviewee even declared distance from the Church. As if history and memory politics were "invented" from the outside and served to inscribe local historical actors into the larger national story and memory, all with the illusion of a grassroots initiative actively supported by the local community.

> *"...How much pleasure was there in the fact that the whole village gathered and walked somewhere to the church, to the Christmas mass. The whole group of us always left. One cannot deny that this was the time, this was the life. I'm glad it opened. I'm glad you can leave. I've always dreamt about being able to travel. And that's probably the biggest plus. I am frightened by the lack of water, I am frightened by politics..., not politics, but global warming. I do not understand politics, but I do not want to get deeper into it. It is not my area". (PL_F_P_6)*

Apart from the specific participant, Catholic religion in general seems to be deeply rooted in Polish culture. Participants mention conformity and loyalty to the communist regime, while at the same time considering their personal backgrounds as coming from regular churchgoers, as "Catholic families". Therefore, the role of religious belief is crucial in the overall construction of National Independence and thus National Identity.

> *"In [A., village in south-eastern Poland] Church has been an important institution for a long time, the most important one for a long time, because I say this is just the specification of the inhabitants and probably priests also worked well on it, and, well, everything about the priest is almost sacred. But the priest worked there in [C., village in south-eastern Poland], he was more involved in the life of the school, he always gave the best junior high school student awards, from himself, [unclear], he also had an influence there, so he took care of this cooperation with the school, with people". (PL_F_P_14)*

> *"The Church always played an important role. Very important. Our parish was built in the 80- ties. The church was built, that's how we belonged to [A., a town in south-eastern Poland]. People here, it was just something beautiful, this road like a procession lead here, [C., D., E., villages in south-eastern Poland] at the celebrations to [A., a town in south-eastern Poland], in faith. I remember those times, my childhood, my youth. It was beautiful, it was beautiful, just this community in faith so... Jewel, a jewel for us. The church is a jewel for us". (PL_F_P_16)*

"In 1990 I got married, I got married in church. I mean, I never had... I think it was in those earlier years, maybe 70s. When I often talk to my friends, the military, they tell me, you know, we went with my wife, we had a church wedding somewhere, about which nobody knew, and so on [inaudible - 00:29:02]. Those public officers, maybe earlier and so on, that's how it was...the atmosphere in the rural environment was also different, there was no attempt to stigmatize them, even those public functionaries, and so on, because the rural community has... Well, it functions differently. Probably even today...For a few years now we have had a new parish priest, very active, renovating the church, organizing a parish and so on, very... In a positive sense". (PL_M_P_5)

"Yeah, well, you know, they were born in Catholic families, both of them, and then... Always... Somewhere in me, there was always going to church on Sundays, so somehow it wasn't new for us, but back then it was like goin' to church illegally, so to speak…[even my father who was a military officer]… damn it, he was going to the church, indeed". (PL_F_P_4)

One of the most interesting interviews was with a local politician from the same generation of participants with direct experience. Coming from a peasant family, he became involved as a young man in youth organizations which were active at the lowest local level but were linked to the ruling communist party. Later, in 1980, he became a member of the Polish United Workers' Party (the ruling mono party in Poland before 1989). He continued his political career after the change of system in the "post-communist" party and was a member of parliament from 1994 to 2015, and later a member of self-government (voivodeship parliament). His popularity in the village he comes from and in the neighborhood gives him political support (expressed in elections) that is exceptional for a left-wing, "post-communist" politician in today's Poland. When asked to reflect on the system change from his biographical perspective, he said, among other things:

"I feel that the people who fought for a free and democratic Poland have the right to accuse me of not supporting them. I acted within the framework of this system by carrying out social activities for the people, which gradually led to democracy and democratic elections. On the other hand, if I can say for myself, I have nothing to be ashamed of, except that I did not resist when martial law was in force, I did not start [...] doing anything against martial law. Apart from that, I have nothing in my life to be ashamed of". (PL_M_P_5)

Older respondents who lived through the World War II and the Nazi occupation feel that the reinterpretation of historical events and the acts of commemoration associated with them are confusing. At the same time, it is also a way to justify their stance and lack of response to the imposition of martial law. The example of January 21st celebration of the liberation of the city of Gniezno by Soviet troops, is typical: for those who were in favour of the previous regime, it is a day celebrating freedom from Nazi occupation - but for today's prevailing interpretation (mostly narrated by the Right), it is the beginning of a new occupation, this time by the Soviets.

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"Well, an example, which is taking place here in Gniezno 21st January, is the day of the city's liberation by the Soviet Army. There was a time, also in the current times, when people from Law and Justice [party], who – when they hadn't been in Law and Justice – went to the same monument, like usually, a speech, an anthem, flowers and so on…. And for some time now, they've been saying that it's the day of enslavement […] they tried to insult the elderly people who came here". (PL_F_P_6)

10.3 Poland – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

The family seems to be the main source of information and influence for participants with transmitted experience. Many Polish families still live with vivid memories of World War II, personalized by the oldest family members - or with stories about war experiences shared during their lifetime. In many cases, these are traumatic memories of persecution, such as imprisonment in Nazi concentration camps or Soviet Gulag, deportation, forced labor, and so on. In the shadow of these immediate experiences of physical violence, all other family events are perceived as historically less important or simply as normal, everyday life. In family memories, the communist period generally did not seem to be delegitimized as abnormal.

"From the stories of my parents, my grandparents, my grandmother, my grandfather died in Auschwitz, that I remember, I remember, that the Germans killed my great-grandfather, and then my grandfather later, too, so they also told us that the Germans tortured my grandfather, that it was hard, that it was hard for us here". (PL_F_T_20)

"My wife's grandmother remembers how the Germans came here during the war, they had to hide in the woods, grandmother here is already 90 years old. But she is still healthy on her body and mind, she remembers everything. And today we had a grandmother at school who told us about the old days, probably also around 90 years old, from [name of a village], a historian invited her, and it was certainly interesting". (PL_M_T_15)

"Yes, great-grandfather, like my great-grandmother, for example, they were running away, hiding somewhere [...] even after that [the WWII], because the persecutions were different, [in quotation marks] 'bad guerrillas' and people were running away, leaving whole houses, belongings and running away just to survive [...] Yes, [this story] It's been talked about [in the family]". (PL_F_T_19)

"They never mentioned it, and I think it can be said here that it proves that they were rather satisfied with the Third Republic as such, they never complained about the transformation. Rather, they understood it in such a way that the People's Republic of Poland is known to be a bad system, and now we have democracy, and it is as it is, but it is certainly much better than it was before". (PL_FM_T_9-10)

"My parents are more right-wing… I think that my family is rather conservative, and so am I". (PL_M_T_1)

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Some of the older participants in the group with the transmitted experience, also mentioned some of their own memories from the time of Martial Law, although these memories were rather vague due to their young age and were mostly related to incidents from their personal lives.

> *"However, I think, you know the inconveniences and so on, because when we talk about those times, it's exactly what my parents say, and probably in December, after the outbreak, after martial law was declared, I had some health problems, I think I had pneumonia or something like that, and that's exactly what had to be done, my dad sometimes said that he had to go 10 kilometers to [name of a town], he had to run away on foot somewhere, because after midnight he left the hospital from where I was, and he had to run away from the police, and so on, so on, so that he wouldn't be caught, because he didn't have a pass; and what was told, of course, it was recalled, but at the same time, well, my parents were aware that something is off, something is off. But as I say, it's only today, one sees things a little bit differently, from the perspective of those decades". (PL_M_T_12)*

> *"It was hard, the money was there, there was nothing to spend it on […] Personally I don't remember it, I was a little girl, but in our house, for example, there wasn't so much poverty, there wasn't any at that time, I didn't feel it that way. I remember, for example, that there were some sweets for us there, it wasn't enough, because it wasn't available". (PL_F_T_19)*

Unlike the family, school history classes are not the main source of information about the communist past for most young people in Poland. The main reason for this lack is the history curriculum, which is arranged chronologically at each level of education. This means that students repeat the medieval or early modern period of history several times in their school career, but rarely have the chance to learn anything about the country's post-World War II history, let alone about European and world history. Contemporary history is often covered only superficially and hurriedly towards the end of the school year, or skipped altogether because it is more important to prepare students for final exams. Nevertheless, much depends on the individual initiatives of teachers and tutors, who can try to fill this systemic gap with their own educational initiatives - such as museum visits or extra lessons.

> *"Well, we had a wonderful history teacher […] she had a very nice speech […], she was just talking about how it happened here, and there those events happened. And she was able to make this lesson interesting through her class. In turn, I had a teacher who couldn't do it, gave us a subject, read it […] there was very little of this contemporary history […] Finally, we focus on the different medieval ages, and we do not learn from the mistakes that occurred only the day before yesterday". (PL_M_T_1)*

> *"We didn't even get to martial law. We were supposed to read the history of the Polish People's Republic for the final exams. As if it were the least significant epoch, and in fact from an educational perspective, it should probably be the first one to be discussed. But*

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in fact, there was nothing about it, so we just glued together such patches as we wanted. We did not think that martial law was a more complex thing". (PL_FM_T_9-10)

In the comments of some of the participants from the group of transmitted experiences, it appeared that there is a strong interest in the past, aimed mainly at the formation of a historical narrative that interprets the past in terms of the present. This need seems to stem from the belief that a kind of "memory war" is being waged (which is why certain participants seem to be more militant as "memory activists") - which is more or less true, considering the facts in Polish politics, especially in the last 5 years. The constructed historical narrative can refer either to the distant past or to the recent past. In relation to the recent past, even the family narrative is strongly challenged: Parents interpreted martial law as a necessary intervention by communist authorities to maintain order in the country and protect society from an invasion by Soviet troops. Our interviewee rejects this narrative as misinformed, if not directly manipulated, by the official propaganda of the time, offering a possible example of historical-political radicalization of the "children's generation."

"I mean, yes, about strikes and so on, but from what I remember, for example, we often talked about martial law, and indeed then the propaganda of the People's Republic of Poland had a great influence on what was happening in people's minds, because the argument that there were Soviet troops here, in Ukraine these dozens or several dozens of divisions, made an impression on people. Later consequences connected with the curfew, with restrictions of freedoms and civil liberties, that's what we talked about, that's what we talked about. Of course, from today's perspective, we know that it looked a bit different, at least, but then, well, people had no way of knowing its backstage and its kitchen". (PL_M_T_12)

"Because reminding of this story does not only affect me or [my collaborator in the village], but, the whole community, that we can remind here. A lot of people got interested, I also had classes in a school in [name of a village I], in [name of a village II], in a kindergarten in [name of a village I], for kids such educational program, I had history lessons, patriotism lessons for younger children. And to my great surprise, these people became interested, I still have contact with some of the children, I correspond. They want to study history thanks to me, they want to study archaeology, because I was also at archaeological excavations when I had an internship in the Museum of the Origins of the Polish State in Gniezno, and here I help these kids somehow, I am looking for some free workshops, internships, apprenticeships, whether for students or high school pupils. And these people already want to, they are interested, now they want to study archaeology, they want to study history, they read, and this is the biggest award for me. The fact that I have interested someone in my passion and that someone will be able to continue it in the future". (PL_F_T_7)

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10.4 Poland – Gender

In terms of the direct experience of the conflict group, and particularly those with a rural profile, it is difficult to capture relevant gender differences. Most of our interviewees lived very pragmatic lives, oriented mainly towards everyday problems in two basic, interrelated dimensions: work and family. In the case of farmers and village life, these spheres were often not separate. When gender differences emerge, they are linked to the everyday life. For example, some female participants in our study recalled economic difficulties, the unavailability of goods, the system of vouchers, and the enormous effort that had to be made to obtain basic products for the family. Older participants compare the situation then and now and recognize that some things seem to have improved in rural communities.

> "And a woman, here in our community there are women who work hard, but the young ones, try to look nice, try to have a beautiful home. And for sure it has changed, in this respect, it has also changed". (PL_F_P_16)

> "Well, you know, the year 1989. I also felt very strongly about the cancellation of food cards myself. And I did not realize this until recently when I was also given these food ration coupons in this very Chamber of History. And so I realized: God, how we lived! I had four children and I had to buy everything on cards [...] No bus, no phone. To get anything, there was a bus at 5:00 a.m., sometimes I even went with the children at 5:00 a.m., to stand in lines, to be able to buy anything for these coupons. Shoe coupons, diapers, soap, TV, for every single thing we now have from choice to color. For soap, for sugar, for flour, for shoes, for socks, for clothes, for everything there were cards. For everything. Even candy, chocolate". (PL_F_P_6)

There is no evidence from the interview data that women are excluded from social or professional development opportunities. Women have historically had, and continue to have, opportunities to engage in community-based activities and hold high-rank positions. For older participants, community activities were part of their participation in collective activities organized by the communist regime of the time. Individual participants refer to self-organized initiatives (such as the Housewives' Association and the Powerpuff Girls), while others refer to locally organized activities aimed at women in the community.

> "We did integration activities, therapeutic activities, theatre, and music activities, and the culmination of this was a theatrical performance in which all project participants, older, younger, and all participated. And that's where the Powerpuff Girls came from. And the Housewives' Association came out sort of naturally, because in November this project in Światowid has ended, in February there were elections for a village leader, I won these elections, I became a village leader and we stated that in that case, we would establish a Village Housewives' Association…" (PL_F_P_4)

> "No, absolutely, only women, one man in [C., village in south-eastern Poland], so when it comes to headmastership, women are usually directors, at least here it was always so.

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Oh, maybe not 30 years ago, because I also took over a post from a man who retired, so there used to be more of these guys, in fact, and now it's a typical women's business, so to speak". (PL_F_P_14)

"I started my social activity here, in that reality, in the People's Republic of Poland, as a youth activist of the Voluntary Fire Brigade, People's Sports Teams. I was the "host of the costumes" there, so I used to carry the costumes to sports competitions on a bicycle. My mother was washing them for me, but she said that she would do it only if I brought her the cards for the detergent, otherwise she wouldn't wash them for me. And later I was active in a youth organization, in the Union of Socialist Rural Youth, in the Union of Socialist Youth of Poland". (PL_F_P_5)

"No, there's no such thing in [A., village in south-eastern Poland], there's a housewife's club in the neighboring village, we have a church choir that rather brings women together, although there are also a few men there, so women go to such meetings. Somewhere in the Centre for Culture and Promotion, there was an attempt to do some aerobics, something, but it was those younger girls, still young married women, who were very interested in it. Well, the library is public, so they can have that, but the main one is the singing group, the choir as we say, goes to various performances, that's the place for women". (PL_F_P_14)

Despite the general feeling that there is no serious problem of gender inequality in Polish society, there were isolated comments from respondents (mainly younger participants) which suggested that either things are not as they seem or that much more needs to be done. The notion of "feminism' appears to be highly politicized in some cases, given certain participants' references to women's involvement in the right-wing movement.

"I have this feeling that sometimes the right-wing treats me as a woman, as if I was a person of worse sort, in this sense [...] I mean, I'm surprised when a woman says she's not a feminist, but she accepts the [right-wing] movement. In the sense that it accepts that women should be socially and legally equal to men because they are also citizens. So, as if they accept it, but they are not feminists. So, what is the point? Because I do not understand. Because, of course, if you accept it, you are a feminist or a feminist in general. So, I really don't know, maybe it's some kind of family influence? If there are such traditional roles that a woman cleans and takes care of children, and a man goes to work, and if, for example, a parent does not explain to a child that it should not be like this, or it is like this, but it is not so good at all, it seems to me that these girls necessarily translate it into their behavior [...] There is the famous book "War has nothing to do with women" and I think nationalism has little to do with it and it's pretty random. Sometimes maybe some kind of family patterns, upbringing. Such attitudes are certainly fostered by such a strong faith and the influence of men who are simply close to them". (PL_FM_T_9-10)

10.5 Poland – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

Europe, European Identity, or other European issues were not topics that were mentioned spontaneously and extensively during the interviews. Unless asked directly by the interviewer, most of our respondents would not mention this "point" in their biographical narration.

When contacting our interviewees and at the beginning of the interviews, we emphasized that although we are part of a large European Project REPAST, we are Polish scientists who work on a daily basis for the Polish Academic institutions- Polish Academy of Sciences. Especially in one of the communities we studied in Eastern Poland this was not a sign of over-caution on our part, but a necessary condition to be able to conduct the research at all. It was more than obvious that if we had presented our work as an "external" European project, many of our interviewees would have refused to participate.

The above-mentioned region selected for this research voted almost unanimously against Poland's accession to European Union in 2003 in the National Referendum. We asked our interviewees about their attitude towards the EU today, 15 years after this vote. Our interviewees explained their decision at that time (as individuals, but also of the whole community) as being rooted in the rational fear of being subordinated to a distant and abstract political and legal power that had an impact on their lives and work. This power was perceived as alien and negative because it tried to influence what people thought and did. This attitude has only partially changed. No one said they were wrong in 2003, but there were individual voices who explained with some embarrassment how their community had voted in the referendum. Although, they admit, they have benefited a lot from accession as farmers or landowners who have received direct financial support, they also stress the need to adapt to European legal rules, which they find difficult and often unreasonable (or at least see no point in implementing). Several respondents found it unfair that Polish farmers do not receive the same support from the EU as Western European farmers.

> "…I have never thought about what I think about whether we are in the Union or not. I'm using these European Union funds, different funds, for example in school, some interactive teaching boards, some tools for work, all the time I see these "financed by EU" and so on, so in this respect, I really cannot complain, because there is always something there in the Union, and even like... Well, these EU projects, there is a great deal of it". (PL_F_P_4)

> "It's not perfect anywhere, but when it comes to some economic issues, and once again it will apply here more to agricultural issues, it doesn't look so good, I think […] Farmers have these subsidies, but not all of them, because we have these conditions...". (PL_F_P_8)

> "From what we can see, it is difficult, precisely with England and from what I have also read, that other Member States have also begun to think about whether or not to leave the EU, because the EU also imposes a lot of political issues and controls on the Member States, for example through these limits for farmers". (PL_M_T_3)

In the second region we studied, attitudes towards UE are much more positive and also more differentiated. Our interviewees usually emphasized pragmatic "advantages" of Polish presence in the European Union - ease of going abroad (and "openness of borders" in general), direct support for Polish farmers or access to European funds for public investments. Few of the youngest, however, spoke about more abstract and autotelic democratic or humanistic values supported by the European Union. It is significant that the youngest of our interviewees, who had graduated secondary school was planning to study abroad - preferably in the UK. He explained his decision pragmatically (chances for a better career), but - from the context of the whole interview - we also interpreted it as an escape from intolerance and right-wing populism in Poland.

> *"That's right. Young people should rather be liberal nowadays. They should appreciate the fact that there is a European Union, that there are open borders". (PL_FM_T_9-10)*

> *"Well, a European, it means open borders for me and the fact that you can move around, today you're here, tomorrow you're there. I think that it is mainly our children who are Europeans, who are citizens of the world. "Mom, you know what, in two days I am going to London", for example. "What is the point?" I don't know, "I have an appointment with a colleague" or, I don't know, "some kind of shopping for something there" [...] I know such young people. For them, there is no problem with moving around. They want to, all right, today here, tomorrow there. Even the concept of home for them is different, for them, home is where they are now, not necessarily in our village". (PL_F_P_4)*

> *"I have just argued here with a nationalist friend of mine, the one I mentioned, he pointed out that a great deal of money has been transferred to the European Union treasury by paying such contributions, we pay large contributions, and if we didn't we do this, we could invest in the state. This is, of course, his view, and is it true that he is a little bit right about this, because we could, as an independent country without any Union, survive somehow, but the Union also gives us a significant income, because it is supposed to act as if the rich are supposed to help the poorer ones, If I remember correctly, we also have the opportunity to simply travel throughout the entire European Union, so that is a huge plus. It seems to me that we need the European Union, and that is why we will not have any conflicts of the kind that occurred in the last century". (PL_M_T_3)*

Our participants mostly perceive European Union pragmatically and usually do not develop a feeling of being a "European citizen" or a "member of the European community". Nevertheless, the lack of identification with Europe, especially at the level of shared values, is a broader problem and not only a Polish peculiarity (Miller and Day, 2012). What seems to be the real problem at a deeper level is that "Europe" and "European Issues" are used instrumentally in current Polish politics.

There is undoubtedly strong support for the EU in Poland - at least at the level of relative polling data: Polish citizens are clearly in favour of Poland's membership in the EU (91% in March 2019, CBOS 2019). At the same time, however, qualitative research interviews suggest that this support is

not based on a sense of identification with European values, but rather has to do with the way "Europe" interferes in national politics. The instrumentalisation of 'Europe' for domestic political purposes is reflected in the fact that a small number of participants were sometimes unable to separate national and European politics.

> *"Am I supposed to force the child to go to farming? I'll tell him: go to a farm, and he'll tell you: I don't want to, because I don't like it there, for example. Because the children can see that there is no income from it, they don't want to, they run away to other schools. [...] I think it's European. I don't know, maybe something will change in Brussels, huh? Diets may be, we hope so. We'll see. Soon there will be these elections to the European Parliament, maybe then something will move. I have no idea". (PL_F_P_8)*

> *"[People] were afraid that there would be some new norms, that there would be penalties, that it would be bad, there would be a new euro currency, change of money, those elderly people were also afraid, there used to be thousands [...] I don't remember for that time, you know, because I was too young, and I wasn't interested in it too much, but there was a conviction, more fears than benefits". (PL_F_T_20)*

> *"This support for the European Union in Poland is large, but the elections to the European Parliament will not be an answer to the question on the level of support, but they will, in my opinion, be an expression of national politics. Very rarely in these decisions will people be guided by a slightly broader view. No, they will be guided by the prism of politics [inaudible] and this is how it is (deliberately) created […] It is enough to put forward the idea that from tomorrow everything will be more expensive because there will be euro as currency […] there is a strong electorate, I mean, strong in the sense that believing in one person, so uncritically, that this will be a problem, and for this you are guilty, a simple answer. So, if you want the prices not to increase, if you do not want to have EUR 300 instead of PLN 1 200, because you will not survive for it, then you have to vote for me". (PL_M_P_5)*

Despite the broad support for the EU in Poland, for the majority of our participants Polish national identity seems to outweigh European one. The instrumental use of "Europe" in the domestic political scene does not seem to have changed the majority's real perception of it: The EU remains something distant - which can be supportive and helpful, but at the same time can be a threat to local cultural values and lifestyle. Therefore, expectations towards the EU are rather low and almost always linked to internal issues and problems.

> *"Am I a European? No, I am Polish. I wouldn't leave forever, except for Majorca. But I also don't know if I would like to go to Majorca so much. I love warmth, but I don't know if I could live a long time away. Without a family […] [What do I expect] from the EU? I will focus on today. If there was a change of government. The rest would be fine. That is my short opinion". (PL_F_P_6)*

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"This support for the European Union in Poland is large, but the elections to the European Parliament will not be an answer to the question of the state of support, but they will, in my opinion, be an expression of national policy. Very rarely in these decisions will people be guided by such a slightly broader view. No, they will be guided by the prism of local politics […] [Personally I feel] first of all, a Pole, secondly, a man of the left, thirdly, also a European". (PL_F_P_5)

"Well, we are in Europe, so I feel European. I guess so… but especially a Pole". (PL_M_P_11)

" You know, people are always afraid of new things, they are afraid of changes, that's one thing. It is some kind of subconscious fear, to put it simply, whether it is irrational or not, no one can really say. Above all, however, it seems to me that people were afraid of the conditions of our joining the EU, and whether we would be the "lesser citizens" or the "poor cousins" of the Union". (PL_F_T_17)

"It seems to me that this Union is too much… there they want to govern us too much because I think that the Union is the Union, but every country should have its own rules. Not that they are imposing them on us, right?" (PL_M_P_2)

"I feel, although I think I am by far most Polish. And here I would like us to keep our identity. I hope that we do not fall too much into these claws of Europe, too, right?" (PL_M_P_1)

Older participants (apparently reflecting concern about refugee and migration issues) made sporadic comments about the future of Europe and the possibility of demographic change in the population, especially in the context of religion - a topic also mentioned in the context of terrorism.

"In general, even in those world-view matters, what is happening, I think that Europe has always been based on these Christian values, I am not saying we should discriminate against other views, but you cannot... And now it is, on the contrary, views are being discriminated against, precisely those beginnings of Europe, what was created, these Christian values, where it is practically marginalized and is considered inappropriate. Here we have an example of France, where practically nothing can be done of any kind of religious symbols, moreover, it is already after the French Revolution, admittedly it is already pushed aside, but all of Europe is heading in this direction and practically. Well, Europe seems to forget its roots a little and this causes that these influences, even Muslim or Islamic, are growing. And it is so step-by-step, and let's not fool ourselves, when it comes to children, it is known, in Europe, fewer and fewer of Europeans are born, in Europe, more and more Muslims are born, and so on, it is so year after year. There will be more and more influence and unfortunately the Europeans will stop being noticed in Europe, they will look for a place somewhere on the side". (PL_M_P_13)

"There are non-believers, those people. I mean what kind of religion is it that tells them to go and kill people? Do they want to bring such people here? [...] What do we need

them for in Poland? If Sobieski stopped them, I mean the Turkish deluge, coming to drown Europe. Muslims wanted a war, so why let them in? Why help them, let them stay where they belong. They'll start building their schools, mosques, this and that, and we'll get all sorts of things happening. Even now, they offend Catholics, the catholic faith." (PL_M_P_18)

10.6 Poland – Media

Public television and radio are the most popular media providers in Poland and are also seen by our interlocutors (radio is rarely mentioned). The political orientation of public TV stations is now quite obvious - they openly support the ruling party and eagerly participate in shaping its memory politics. Independent or commercial television and radio stations vary widely - some are aligned with the government or even further to the right, such as the popular Catholic station TV Trwam/ Radio Maryja. Other commercial stations defend and promote liberal political positions. One of the most popular TV stations, TVN, is perceived to be affiliated with the main opposition party Civic Platform. The political left, which is not represented in parliament, also has no direct representation in the dominant media. It communicates mainly through internet portals and platforms.

There are quite obvious generational differences in media consumption - while younger people mainly use various internet platforms, older respondents tell about their preferences for legit TV providers. However, there are some examples of older participants trying to keep up with new communication technologies. Either way, signs of a general distrust of the media were evident in respondents' comments.

"I think that there are a lot of lies there. Because sometimes it is enough to watch 2 or 3 programs about the same thing, I mean on different channels about the same thing and it is completely different. I think that there is such big hypocrisy to attract the attention of the   audience because nobody wants to watch cool things. It's also like that. You watch the news on television, there are very few positive aspects of everything, such as bad accidents, what politician has done, what he has said to whom and this attracts people, so there are many storms caused by it that are not always necessary". (PL_F_T_19)

"There is also the question of how historical politics is conducted, what media, in general, are telling us on TV, that what we hear is not always true, but is a fragment of the reality that surrounds us". (PL_FM_T_9-10)

"So TVN, TVP and Events on Polsat, also regional television, there's Poznań […] As far as the newspaper is concerned, the same thing, I won't just read Gazeta Wyborcza, I don't know, Gazeta Polska or Rzeczpospolita, or something like that […]". (PL_F_T_7)

"And television, as I have already mentioned, at least I have noticed that there are three channels, TVN, Polsat and TVP, and now it is difficult for me to choose here because TVN

is against the ruling party, TVP is in favour of the ruling party, because it is government television, and Polsat is in the middle, and now it is not clear which source to use, so for me the best option is the Internet , to look there for things, more modern, current [...] When I go to my grandmother's, yes [smiles], then I take the newspaper and look, and wow, cool. Yeah, well, that's at Grandma's". (PL_F_P_6)

"Yes, and Facebook, and Messenger, and there... And what did my grandson set up and teach me lately? WhatsApp". (PL_F_P_6)

"Mostly TVP Info, and 'Trójka'[...] Yes, a lot, Poznań [local TV stations] [...] I don't want a cell phone. I don't want to be tied up, because I can see how these cells get lost, break down and fly out [...] Every kid now has a phone [...] They got used to it. I think it's like a disease. But it's not for us anymore". (PL_M_P_2)

Participants of younger age, who are more avid users of Social Media, expressed concerns about the amount of misinformation in the content of Social Media and mentioned that there is no way to verify whether this content is accurate or not.

"Well, social media, Facebook sometimes, well, information is always faster on Facebook than in nationwide public media. Except that you have to be careful with them because what   is given quickly is not necessarily of good quality, and is not necessarily true, there were many fake accounts created, fake news, well, now we are no longer just recipients of information, we are also authors of information. We can tweet all the time, comment, set up blogs, I don't know, set up websites, just like I set up a website about the Wielkopolska Uprising, who is to say I can't, I can, well, not necessarily, I can be an expert, I can not necessarily be familiar with it, I can give false information there, and it will be, about creating a picture of reality, history, memory, but will it be true? Well, here you can ask yourself such a question". (PL_F_T_7)

Except for the variations associated with age, it appears that on average media consumption is also a variation concerning the region. Despite the wide dispersion of the media landscape in Poland, we could definitely detect major influences of the mainstream, i.e., populist, right-wing, historical-political politics. This was particularly noticeable in the eastern region, where we conducted our interviews. Sometimes we had the impression that all our interviewees used the same phrases to talk about some current political issues. They probably heard them in the public or Catholic media, perhaps also during Sunday masses in the local church. In western Poland we could observe a much greater diversity in media consumption and consequently in political and historical views, positions, opinions and attitudes. It seems that it is not the format (Internet, TV or other media) that is decisive for the formation of people's opinions, but the content of the message they consume and the social world/communication bubble they are part of.

"I think that the attitude of the authorities towards the Church also has some significance here, because some of what you hear on television, I rarely watch, but when I turn it on, you hear something, and there are different views here. I think that [name

of a village in south-eastern Poland] is also a community firmly rooted in Christianity after all, a Catholic community, going to church and attending church". (PL_M_T_15)

"No, luckily they are [parents and grandparents] not watching that. They do not watch, they do not listen, because sometimes, when I see something on the Internet, I hear something, Radio Maryja, I am simply shocked by what these priests are saying, priests and catechists. Fortunately, my grandparents don't listen to it, although my grandmother watched Telewizja Trwam [...]". (PL_M_T_3)

10.7 Poland – Overall Remarks

The first general comment refers to the role of the Church and the Catholic religion in various important aspects of social and political life in Poland. The importance of this role was mentioned (very often spontaneously) by the vast majority of participants. In this case, too, differences can be observed between the different regions of the country.

The community in eastern Poland is in many ways more conservative and unified, including in its perception of the past, especially the communist period. This is especially true for the younger generations, who have no biographical memories of this period, but seem to be collectively influenced by the same historical-political discourse. This discourse is adopted by the political mainstream, by today's official politics of history, but additionally reinforced and radicalized in a right-wing, anti-communist direction, by the Catholic Church. The latter seems to be one of the most important public actors in the region - with direct influence on the regional public agenda.

In western Poland the influence of the Church is not as powerful. Although family transmission of historical memory is also limited and non-linear, young people seem to be very open to different influences and narratives. It is worth mentioning the case of one of our participants - a radical right-wing activist turned critical left-wing scholar and initiator of local "equality marches". Such a biographical and ideological turn is hardly imaginable for the first region.

"I attended religion classes, I feel very much Christian, I go to church, maybe not as often as I used to, but I go to church less often because of priests, because I believe in God, I do not deny it, but going to church for a priest is sick. I am going for myself, because I want to be closer to God, I want to pray. I went to school here, to our school in Wolice, and everyone was a believer, everyone went to church and teachers, but there wasn't so much instilling all these things, maybe not like this, controlling, that it was against faith. You are not behaving this way, because God said otherwise". (PL_F_T_19)

"The Church always played an important role. Very important. Our parish was built in the 80- ties. The church was built, that's how we belonged to [name of a town in south-eastern Poland]. People here, it was just something beautiful, this road like a procession lead here, [name of villages in south-eastern Poland] at the celebrations to [name of a town in south-eastern Poland], in faith. I remember those times, my childhood, my youth. It was beautiful, it was beautiful, just this community in faith so...

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Jewel, a jewel for us. The church is a jewel for us. And I understand that, for example, I have to say about it now, because I know that priests are different, they come from different houses, they have different natures. Anyway, I don't think I'm able to grasp everything, to grasp it. No. But we need them. Because, as a young person once said, Mom, if we cut it all this way, some priests will break down, others will just... The young will not come, they won't come, there won't even be someone to bury us, to give us the last anointing. If we do, too... On the other hand, I won't say anything". (PL_F_P_16)

"In [name of a village in south-eastern Poland] the Church has been an important institution for a long time, the most important one for a long time, because I say this is just the specification of the inhabitants and probably priests also worked well on it, and, well, everything about the priest is almost sacred. But the priest worked there in [name of a village in south-eastern Poland], he was more involved in the life of the school, he always gave the best junior high school student awards, from himself, [unclear], he also had an influence there, so he took care of this cooperation with the school, with people". (PL_F_P_16)

"Yes. Our family was and is religious". (PL_F_P_5)

The second overarching comment has to do with a sense of detachment from the major historical milestones under study-a detachment that is evident in different ways in the participants' interviews. The chosen milestone event – the introduction of Martial Law in 1981 stands in a sequence of events that include the socialist/communist regime, the social movement of "Solidarność", the Roundtable Agreement in 1989, and the post-Agreement "system transformation". Interestingly, the majority of older participants with personal experience did not spontaneously mention the Martial Law (although it was the most obvious direct confrontation between the Polish communist authorities and "society"). With the exception of one participant who personally experienced persecution during World War II, all other respondents were born after the war and were relatively distanced from this historical milestone. Instead, like the vast majority of Polish society during the communist period, they lived their modest, ordinary lives, their local or provincial personal stories. These are not, however, stories of them fighting with the "communist regime" or suffering violence or siding with the system and trying to legitimize it. These are all anecdotes that point to big, probably important, historical events taking place elsewhere - "in big cities," as one of our interviewees told us. Participants from the younger generation can only indirectly "remember" Martial Law and communist rule in general. Therefore, their biographical memories are even more ahistorical than those of the older interviewees and their stories even more private and less interesting.

This biographical detachment from the event of the Martial Law (the most spectacular expression of the communist regime's violence and assault on society) does not mean that there is no conflict over memory and the (dominant) historical narrative in Poland. Several respondents reported being actively engaged in commemorative practices or in other actions that could be called "politics of

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history" at the local level. This "politics of history" at the local level seems to be inspired and guided by the "politics of history" at a higher level, which is reflected in the strikingly similar ways in which our interviewees refer to historical narratives using predefined categories and ready-made schemes involving "heroes'' and "traitors'' of the country. It seems that it is not actual biographical, familial or generational historical experience, but rather membership in certain discursive groups or "public spheres'' that is crucial for the formation of opinions, attitudes and historical-political engagements. This generalization is especially true for younger people who have no historical experience of their own with real conflicts - but are involved in radical symbolic/discursive conflicts on a daily basis.

New narrative currently emerging in Poland has as its main criterion the country's communist past and attitudes towards it. The imposition of Martial Law in 1981, in a way, symbolically represents this criterion and reinforces the anti-communist and/or far-right rhetoric to distinguish between "patriots" and "traitors". Attitudes to Martial Law become a patriotic test - and not many have a chance of passing it successfully. So memory warfare is the order of the day. These patterns of thought, only slightly toned down, became the basis of the "politics of history" of the populist, right-wing government that came to power in Poland in 2015. Its central founding historical myth is the betrayal of 1989. The Round Table talks and the compromise that opened the door to Poland's democratic transformation have since been perceived not as a spectacular achievement of the peaceful revolution, but as a pact with the devil and thus a betrayal. Today's official, state-sponsored historiography of Poland's transition from communism to democracy dictates that the 1989 Round Table talks are no longer a spectacular joint achievement of the anti-communist opposition and the ruling communist party, but a betrayal of the nation. What was still on the fringe in 2013, held in the public sphere only by radical political groups, mostly young activists who had no direct experience of martial law or even any memory of "communism," is now becoming mainstream, an increasingly taken-for-granted historical narrative. A worrying number of young people seem to engage in right-wing activism, driven by the intensity and attractiveness of anti-communist discourse, as an easily accessible tool that organizes social emotions and helps explain the complex and in many cases disappointing reality.

> *"About a hundred people gathered there, maybe a little over a hundred, so we were satisfied. Because we didn't know if five people would come, or fifty or more. These were rather the upper limits we were thinking about, because [name of the city] It's not a big city and such marches didn't function very well there. But then we lived with slogans that were later shouted out in this march, slogans to which I definitely refer negatively today, because I know what they carry with them. But these were slogans like... Of course, it was as if in the context of martial law: "Once with a sickle, once with a hammer, hit the red rabble" and "And the communists will hang on trees instead of leaves". But in fact we did not think about all those people who once lived there, about martial law, but about the contemporary world and about those politicians whom we consider traitors. Absolutely wrong, of course, but then we considered them traitors, because for us they were simply not patriotic enough. And   it was easy to get into this*

sack of traitors, because we were 18 years old at the time and we thought-and people with such views in general - very schematically". (PL_FM_T_9-10)

The research data draws a picture of a Polish society highly absorbed by its internal conflicts, leaving no room for concern about broader issues related to the European or global social and political environment. As a result, while there is tremendous support for the EU in relative opinion polls, this is not enough to create a sense of belonging to the EU or to develop a robust European identity. The EU is seen as something distant and remote, to be kept at a 'safe distance' in order to reap the benefits that the EU can offer, but without risking an alien or 'European mentality' influencing and changing the traditional values of Polish society. Respondents perceived the EU mostly pragmatically and did not generally develop the feeling of being a "European citizen" or a "member of the European community".

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11. Spain

11.1 Spain - Brief background of the conflict

The main conflicts of the past that are still present in Spain's collective memory are the Civil War (1936-39) and Franco's dictatorship (1939-1977). The consequences and collective memory of these conflicts had to be addressed during the transition to democracy (1977-1981). The Spanish transition to democracy was praised as a paradigmatic case of a "transition through transaction" or a "consensual transition" and, according to the official narrative, was considered an exemplary process of political change (Fotheringham, 2014). The process of liberalization was orchestrated by a sector of the Francoist elites. Thus, the transition to democracy was in large part the result of negotiations and agreements between the old Francoist elites and those who favored democracy from within the opposition. The resulting institutional arrangements were reflected in the 1978 constitution.

The official narrative assigned equal responsibility for past crimes to both sides of the civil war, and a "pact of silence" or "pact of forgetting" (Encarnacion, 2014) was agreed upon among elites about the past, and the decision to look instead to the future rather than the past. In 1977, a general amnesty was issued that applied to crimes committed on both sides during the civil war and dictatorship. The victims of the Republican side during the Civil War and the Francoist repression were not rehabilitated and the crimes against them were not prosecuted. The Second Republic was linked to the tragic experience of the Civil War.

The Spanish Civil War resulted from a major internal conflict of ideological, social, religious, and regional character. The Republican faction (led by the legitimate Republican government and army and supported by militias of other leftist and anarchist political parties, trade unions and the International Brigades), fought against the insurgent Nationalists (supported by the fascist German and Italian armies) after the latter attempted a coup d'état. This split mirrored the political division of the Second Republic (1931-39). In a rough categorization, one could say that the Republicans were mostly urban workers, farm workers, educated secular middle class, while the Nationalists were mostly military, landowners, businessmen, Catholics.

The division also involved the center-periphery cleavage, with the Republicans more in favor of demands for decentralization and the nationalists in favor of a strong and unified nation-state. These multiple divisions and conflicts that tore Spanish society apart were deepened by nearly 40 years of dictatorship. The defeated were subjected to displacement, torture, imprisonment and death (30,000 to 50,000 people were executed for political grounds in the aftermath of the Civil War).

Since 2000, civil society initiatives have gained prominence to examine the official narrative about the conflicts of the past and to rehabilitate the memory of the losers of the civil war (e.g., by exhuming the mass graves where more than 100,000 non-combatants lie in unmarked graves, or by

promoting "truth, justice and an effective reconciliation"). The generational shift and accession of the Popular Party (in which some prominent leaders had also held positions in Franco's regime) have, among other things, helped to challenge the official narrative built during the transition to democracy. Claims against the perpetrators of crimes during the civil war and dictatorship based on the principles of universal justice (cases of Scilingo and Pinochet) have also played an important role.

The systematization of legislative initiatives culminated in the so-called Law of Historical Memory (2007), passed under the socialist government of Rodríguez Zapatero, which divided the political parties. The law of Historical Memory paid homage, for the first time in the history of Spanish democracy, the victims of the Civil War on both sides. The Catalan and Basque autonomous parliaments passed their own laws, many of which were far less "equidistant," as both regions claimed that the particularly brutal repression of the Francoist regime had taken place where nationalist consciousness was stronger. But this law was de facto abolished by Mariano Rajoy's governments (2011-2018), under which no budget was allocated for its implementation.

There are still several things that need to be done if the aim is to rehabilitate the losers of the civil war / repressed under Franco's dictatorship. For example, the removal of the dictators' remains from the state-funded mausoleum of the Valley of the Fallen and its transformation into a Memory Center, investigations on the illegally stolen children, the removal of the street names and monuments praising the victory of the winners, or the removal of medals awarded to former torturers.

As for linking these memories to European integration, since the Regeneration Movement Europe has been seen as "the solution" for Spain, a country that "cannot govern itself." After 1959, the Francoist dictatorship tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to link itself to the European Economic Community. Thereafter, the dictator began to use the image of Europe as the model of economic prosperity to which Spain should aspire. At the same time, Europe was seen by the democratic opposition as a way out of the isolation experienced under Franco, especially during the first two decades of the dictatorship. This is what lies behind an idealized image of Europe, an "uncritical Europeanism". It also explains the absence of Eurosceptic political parties in Spain. The Catalan and Basque nationalist parties of the periphery have also traditionally seen Europe as the most appropriate context to justify their status as individual nations, as it was coherent with the project of building a "Europe of the regions". However, the silence - or even the critical attitude - of EU leaders and institutions in the context of Catalonia's declaration of independence has begun to change things.

The resurgence of Catalan pro-independence positions took place in the context of the crisis, as they accused the central government for the economic situation of Catalonia, and of not letting them find their own solutions.

11.2 Spain – Participants with personal experience of the conflict

One of the defining features of the Spanish case is the idea that the conflict is part of the past and should remain in the past. The generation being interviewed was mostly still in childhood when the events took place, and their socialization was heavily influenced by the postwar period. In this respect, most of them are willing to tell the micro-history of that time, the stories of their childhood, just as they tell other stories of their youth. However, when asked about the impact of this time, discomfort emerges and they often mention that it is something from the past and as that it should remain. Respondents seem to share the idea that the past has shaped their present, and as part of the way Spanish history has gone, it has in some ways shaped who Spaniards are today. However, they are not as willing to consider that there is still room for discussion about this past, although there are issues that need to be addressed.

"We should not go back to that, no, no, no. We should get a fresh start. We shall not forget, either, that is a different thing. We shall not forget to avoid making the same mistake. But going back to that, and saying they did this, and you did that, and you hurt me in this way, and you left me this other way, no, no…". (ES_F_P_4)

"I don't know, it was one thing that will have a historical memory, but it's better to forget it". (ES_F_P_6)

"But I think, it was unrepeatable, I think it can't be repeated…". (ES_F_P_1)

The memory of the past recalled by the respondents tells two intertwined stories: their own and their parents', thus identifying the first of the relevant dimensions defining the experience of conflict: age. All the respondents that make up the sample of personal experiences are part of the civilian population that suffered the conflict, even if they did not take part in the fights. These respondents are between 88 and 96 years old, which means that they were in their childhood or early adolescence at the time, and the traumas they experience are usually associated with childhood emotions and experiences. These contrast with the experiences of their parents, who may have had a more direct involvement, fighting on one of the sides of the conflict, escaping conscription by hiding or fighting to secure the family's livelihood.

"Then, already, because I remember that my father took him because of an uncle of mine when in the year '34, that there was a revolution in Asturias that was the Republic, in reality. Well, they came in, he came in with the military, and they were looking for him, as his name was, right? and the wife and children were precisely at home, they came in and as they did not find the man, they took away my father, of course [laughter]". (ES_F_P_6)

"[My father and others] they were in the mountains, in caves that were there, they were sleeping inside the caves". (ES_F_P_2)
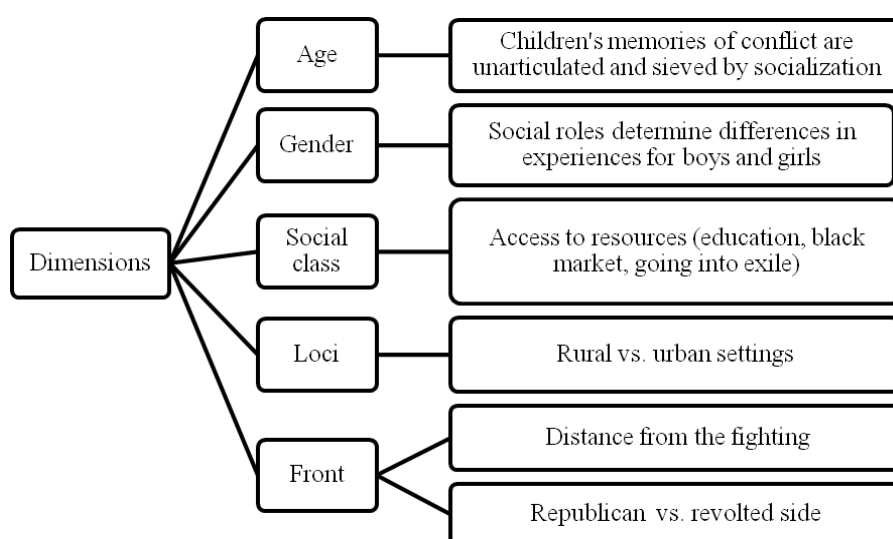
"[My father was hiding in] some caves, with another, not with him, with my father-in-law, no, with another. And one night he was in my house, and we had a dog, and he

started barking and no cars were arriving, but they came on horseback and he escaped, and another friend was in another house and went to warn him". (ES_F_P_9)

"And my mother was a dressmaker, and when she went to work, she would say to me: "come on," she would give me 30 cents, and I would go to the Tupi bar that was in Embajadores [...] We took my sister and I, who was the smallest, each one a piece of bread and I would go to the bar and say: "Give us a coffee, I brought you bread" [he laughs] and he would give us that, you know?". (ES_M_P_10)

The diversity of parents' experiences, as well as the experiences they describe, show that other intersecting dimensions define these experiences, namely gender, social class, and where they experienced the conflict (a summary is described in Figure 1 below). While age and gender define experiences that are common to all respondents but contrast with how they remember their parents' experiences, social class, where they lived, and which side of the conflict they were on creates differences in how they experienced the conflict. For example, because those from better-off families had easier access to resources, which in turn meant not only resources to avoid black market food rationing, but also access to education (even for women). In addition, there are certain intertwinings in where respondents were located during the conflict: rural vs. urban areas, distance from the fighting, and being on the side of the insurgents or on the side of the government. All of these dimensions intertwine, such that the conflict experience for those in rural areas was relatively calm as long as they were away from the fighting or on the insurgent side (where resources were distributed among the population to forfeit their support). In contrast, urban areas often suffered bombardment and food shortages, especially those on the side that still supported the government.

Figure 1. Summary of the dimensions that determine the experience of conflict.

re past

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"Well, one died as a result of the war, because besides a child, now you think of him as 16 years old, they put him in a war, and they put him in a place like that and... Well, look at what a 16-year-old boy is and they left at 16 and 17 years old, nonsense all our war […] That my older brother... They were fighting. The kids were fighting too. My older brother was 9   years old, and they fought with others who were on the other side, who were also there. In other words, they fought among themselves and some sang one thing and others sang   another". (ES_F_P_6)

"So I'm telling you, the war was a disaster, also without foundation, because what were they asking for? That was horrible". (ES_F_P_7)

"There was a lot of class hatred, and of course, because in Spain there was a big class difference and there must have been a lot of abuse, I imagine, by those who had the money. Not because of my father, who was a very good person, but there were people who...[…] You were what you were by where you were born, how you were born, and nothing else, and I think it was a class struggle, completely". (ES_F_P_6)

Location is an important factor in experiencing conflict. While one interviewee who lived in a small town that was in the middle of the fighting has a more adventurous recall of the conflict, another interviewee reports vivid memories of fear and bombardment as he experienced the conflict in two large Republican cities, Madrid and Valencia.

"Well, in my town and next door, in [name of the other town], there were the reds [laughter], as they called them, the Republicans […] I explain this by saying that the war appeared there, it was a novelty, for the adults it would be important, for the young not important, curiosity, running in the troops when they arrived there, parades that they did, some barbarity that others also did, […] finally that, for the youth, for the childhood let's say, it was a novelty". (ES_F_P_8)

"I walked across Valencia every day, you know… I remember, in the war the bombings, there was a siren and an anti-aircraft gun near the residence. Well, the siren sound and the cannon, I didn't, sleeping like nothing. Yes, I remember that". (ES_M_P_10)

Most participants' memories of the past are overlaid with their later socialisation in the early years of the Francoist regime. This implies that even if they were on different sides of the conflict, their memories of what happened are more or less similar. This is evident in the repetition of the topic "war between brothers" ("guerra entre hermanos" in the original Spanish) and in the reluctance to reopen the discussion of memory, even among those who had relatives killed in the fighting. The discourse respondents have about the conflictual past corresponds fairly closely to the dominant discourses. Since these are childhood memories, they have an inarticulate recollection of what happened that focuses on isolated anecdotes and strong feelings related to hunger and fear. For example, many of them have memories of the shootings and of seeing dead bodies lying around. The only direct commentary on discourse and politicians remains anecdotal and linked to personal preferences.

"I do not have a clear opinion, maybe I am wrong. However, I acknowledge that Franco lasted until his death, and after so many years, he did many bad things and some good. The bad was so bad that I am not sure that he cannot be justified. Now, what I do not understand at all is that we are now arguing about where he should be buried". (ES_F_P_8)

"I saw people being shot close to that church; you know. And he plunged into the river, and there they finished him off" (ES_M_P_10)

"Look, I was a child but I already liked, even as a child, I liked Largo Caballero and Azaña's speeches. I really liked them. I listened to them and I assimilated them, later on, I was deceived with some things." (ES_F_P_7)

Only one issue do the responses seem to diverge: who is to blame for the war. Most respondents agree that both sides are to blame, especially those who identify with conservative positions. However, there is also some dissidence and some mention Franco and the groups that revolted against the legitimate government as having triggered the war. The general narrative is relatively homogeneous, suggesting that the Franco regime succeeded in shaping socialization processes and thus shaping the memories of those who directly experienced the conflict, regardless of their position or their families.

"Indeed! I believe that the fascists were to blame. Because they were the ones who revolted. It was their fault because there was a legitimate government, the Republic, which was chosen through elections, the people had appointed them. If the people are wrong, they shall be the ones to rectify the mistake. But when Franco went up in arms in that boat, I cannot really remember. They should have… Before he made it to the shore, they should have sunk the boat and avoided him gaining a lot of strength." (ES_M_P_9)

"Deaths. The deaths it caused. That for me unnecessary death is unnecessary cruelty, huh? […] I don't think it was necessary and, apart from that, he was a special person, Franco". (ES_F_P_5)

"No, I don't think guilty. I would not blame anyone, that is to say, it was a political current, in which everyone wanted to be right. Ambition, ambition for power, for command, for having. Lack of values I think, lack of ethical values, the truth, because above all over money, overpower, over an armchair, there are other ethical values, right?". (ES_F_P_4)

One of the challenges of the Spanish conflict is that those that remain have memories or have been told stories by the children who lived through the conflict, not by the adults. This means that their memory is not as articulate as an adult's would have been at the time and focuses on anecdotes. All of these respondents, regardless of who they had supported during the war, remember the 1960s as the decade when they began to live slightly better, when they were already married and had started their own families.

"And we got off my brother and me, there, it seems to me by Pinto or there, to cook them, when we were cooking them, sounds the train iii. All running. Five days without food. We get to Madrid, we go to my house, well, my mother's house. And we arrived there it was, there was no roof, there was no door, there was nothing, because the soldiers, with the great cold, that it was in Madrid at that time. They had burned the window, the doors and everything, of course, I'm telling you". (ES_M_P_10)

"And I am very grateful to Catalonia […] I improved my life a lot". (ES_M_P_9)

Emotionally, this means that most of them remember the conflict as a combination of hunger and fear when they lived close to the battlefront. Many of them were very young during the actual conflict period and extend the remembrance of hunger over the following years, during the post-war period.

"[After the war] well, we were young then, I had a worse time because then I was young and no matter how little you ate, there was always something for the kids. I had a bad time, then my father went to another farm, after that he went to another one, that we walk a lot, in many small towns we walk [...] So, too hungry, and now too many things to throw away". (ES_F_P_2)

"Oh! Shoes... I put on the first 25 years old, yes. And clothes, they washed it... You sometimes had to lie down to have it washed and when... And dry it next to the fire, from the fire to put it on. It was a bad time". (ES_M_P_9)

Focusing on contacts between respondents from the personal experience sample and those from rival groups, there are mixed responses even from those who consider themselves supporters of the Francoist regime. On the one hand, some recall having good friends with whom they are still in contact and with whom they can talk about many different things - on the other hand, some participants do not recall having friends from rival groups, only vague contacts in their everyday interactions. However, in both cases, and similarly with participants who reported the opposite affiliation, they do not elaborate on the homogeneity of their circle of acquaintances. They assume that this is a by-product of the neighborhoods they have lived in and the ambiances they have frequented, rather than a conscious choice.

"I don't care if he's from the left, I have a good friend of mine, but very good, you know him. I mean, you're redder than poppies [laughs] But I get along very well with him, I say because you know how to listen and so do I, and he tells me his story, I can stand it. He's a very good person". (ES_M_P_10)

"They call me Francoist, I don't care, something has to be. But I'd rather be a Francoist than an anarchist, I prefer. And I'd rather be a Francoist than a Republican. I would never be a Republican, no, I think it's an anachronism, not even the word […] the relationship I could have was with their children at school and we never had problems, never." (ES_F_P_4)

11.3 Spain – Participants with transmitted experience of the conflict

Regarding the family as a source of information, none of the young people interviewed considered the topic taboo. The intensity of the discussion varies across families, also depending on the importance and interest they have on historical issues. Nevertheless, they all note some contradiction, as they identify the conflict as an event rooted in the past that extends its ramifications into the present. Similarly, the respondents want to assert their critical capacity and although some of them do not initially recognise this, they all agree that the views heard in the family shape the perception of this memory. All in all, the transmission of values seems to have been quite successful, as most of the interviewees hold similar views to their parents, which is not so obvious when they compare retrospectively how their parents and grandparents think about the conflict.

"Yes, that is a topic that there is no taboo [...] my grandmother had 9 children, well 8 children came out super left, and then like there's a lot of ideological closeness in my uncles, right? So, there is no subject so it creates great confrontation, so what I have told you that you can speak naturally, is that it is not a subject that has taboos, but it is not spoken about". (ES_M_T_7)

"No, it's never been a taboo subject [...] Yes, because History is very important to us because you have to know where you come from, to know what you want to do, right?". (ES_F_T_4)

"Yes, of course [they influenced me], perhaps with more left-wing thinking, or more against, everything that has to do with the Spanish right, and above all with social limitations and such, I think so [...] I don't know… like I've always had, I've considered myself left-wing, but I've never thought it might be for my family, but yes, evidently [laughs]". (ES_F_T_5)

"Yes, yes, in my house it was a subject... I mean, it's not a taboo subject, because it's always been clear what happened at that time". (ES_M_T_8)

"I see it mainly in politics and how people face one another, how the Spanish face politics. I believe that we are still nurtured by that conflict in current politics, that there is a sediment of what happened and people position themselves on the issue basically from the same point as they did in the Civil War and afterward, don't they? Because if we have not had direct experience, our families have taught us. I believe I am actually surprised by it, those young people are still marked by the conflict even if they have not lived it first hand, and by the positions that their families had in the conflict. I believe it is still present nowadays". (ES_F_T_1)

The Spanish case is peculiar because the conflict was ideological, which in turn has been sublimated so that it remains present, but mostly through silence rather than discourse. Nevertheless, engaging in a contemporary political conflict often evokes disagreements or arguments that existed in that conflictual past. For example, all respondents seem to agree that the lack of public

discussion on the issue has hindered the elaboration of a shared narrative of the conflict. Thus, what they learn is often identified as parts of the story that help them build a narrative, but they are aware that the whole picture is still missing. In addition, storytelling at home is often not taboo, but is identified as a source of conflict. In many families, grandparents tell the stories, but it's usually because they don't really talk about what happened. In other words, there is a part of the past that is there, that structures how political conflict is framed, but it is a conversation that is still missing. Labels are still used to identify political positions: Reds ("rojos") are identified as leftists and blues ("azules") as conservatives. But this could also be because the color identification is even older than the conflict. In short, familial socialization is strongly marked by the positions taken during the war (whether one's family was on the side of the revolutionaries - who usually identified with the ideological right - or on the republican side - who identified with the different nuances of the left), but this transmission is subtle and through other elements that act as heuristics as to what position to take in relation to the conflictual past. One of the consequences of the silence that dominates the memory of the conflict is that memory dies out and what young people can remember is often vague and related to the grandparents they met. The experience of those with transmitted memory is often linked to listening to the fragmented stories that their grandparents still have as children brought up during the war and post-war periods.

"Yes, yes, that is with my mother, with my father they are topics that I have been able to discuss openly, even if we have not discussed it thoroughly. I do not have the feeling that we have really talked it through, but we could. In the extended family, it is a topic that we could talk about but we have not really talked about a lot, I do not have that feeling". (ES_M_T_7)

"Of course, we never talked about how this happened to us, but little brushstrokes […] Like, for example, what I told you about being a neutral place in my town, that nothing ever happened... Those things did... but that affected them in some way, they didn't tell me anything […]". (ES_M_T_9)

"[…] there has never been any special talk about the war, my grandparents, my grandfather was on the left and then made right, my grandmother was on the left and still is on the left, but they lived through the post-war and Francoism, and discussions have been few, in any case more frank, my grandfather and my grandmother who have different visions, my grandfather says it was quite better, and that there were advantages, my grandmother criticizes it". (ES_M_T_10)

"Well, I asked him [my father] questions, but my parents always tell me to ask your grandfather". (ES_F_T_3)

"My thought was more like that: "how can there be people who are still stuck in a moment of history after so long". In other words, I remember it was like, "I just can't believe they think that way." "No, I'm sure your grandparents have told you...", my grandparents obviously didn't but, "...it's that my grandfather was from the reds, or my grandfather was a facha, my grandfather such". And I was like if your grandfather was

red, now he was saved between quotation marks, but if he was from the others: "your grandfather was I don't know what..." And it was like also understanding that this person had grown up in that, and is what he had lived and knew nothing else, and so it is". (ES_F_T_4)

"I know there were the Republicans who called them the Reds, and there was the part that was on Franco's side I guess, now I don't remember what they were called...". (ES_F_T_3)

"Well, in the family we are quite a bit [laughs], quite left-leaning, so we all position ourselves a bit on the same side [...] Well, there is some, but generally speaking, we agree". (ES_F_T_6)

"Perhaps to name it and such, but at no time have they spoken as such of the Civil War at home, […]. They are conscious, my father knows that my grandparents had a war, my mother knows what happened with her great-uncle and I don't know what, with her uncle and such, but at no time did they say "this happened like this, like this, like this". That was...we listened to something, we asked, and they told us, but they weren't going to tell us "this happened, this, this, this and this". No, not at all". (ES_M_T_11)

In terms of education and school, all respondents share the belonging to the same (educational) generation, so that the differences that emerge have more to do with their ideological predispositions than with intra-generational differences. Given the relative ideological homogeneity of the interviewees, there seems to be agreement among them that what they learned was due to their professors' commitment to making their students think, but they also mention that this was often framed in such a way that they could see the professor's ideological self-placement. In other words, there is a lack of an agreed-upon narrative. And those who did not have teachers with such a commitment during their high school years would get a superficial account of what happened and as part of the closing chapters. The other element is how they respond to whether or not the teachers showed their ideological self-placement and thus their opinion regarding the conflict. Compared to other historical periods such as the Middle Ages where there seems to be an agreed upon narrative, students can tell what their teachers believe by the presentation of the facts and they are not always comfortable with that. The dominant discourse about the Civil War articulates around two ideas that have attempted to strip it of its political potential, first, that it was a cruel conflict in which both camps committed atrocities, and second, that it was a conflict "between brothers." In other words, the issues that led to the war were not related to the political situation and both parties should be put on the same level because there were unsanctioned killings by both sides.

"I also went to a very special school, it was a school in which he cared a lot about students creating their own thoughts about things, that is, they didn't induce us to think what the teacher wanted us to think. In this case, let's say the history professor didn't tell us: "look, my political inclination is left or right", or "look, in the Civil War these were the bad ones, these were the good ones and we have to be with this side". No, it was

like: "look, guys, this happened, what do you think, how you would have acted...", things like that". (ES_F_T_4)

"I mean, already in high school, I was touched at a time like I was becoming more politicized, wasn't I? And it was a subject that for me, as it had a lot of importance. I don't know, it was at a time when I started to have as much interest in... Above all, in the Civil War, the Republic, and this professor as he also helped me a lot, right? in that process, and I began more like reading Trotskyist historians of the Civil War, more Marxist historians, Leninists, such, and well also my vision has been changing over these years". (ES_M_T_8)

"No, I don't remember, to see, it's also that there weren't many debates in that class, that is, no, more or less you in class, you know, more or less of people for where they tend and such, but of course it's all in such a superficial way because I don't think any of us really knew there, there would be some exception, but, that we were really informed, then, in the end, you fall the same, because this one that is of right, perhaps pull more towards one side, this one that is of left the same, but there were no debates in class, that I remember". (ES_F_T_1)

"No, no, well, not because besides the syllabuses, well in the second year of high school, when it was the history of Spain, at the very end, before giving, the subject of transition and such, we never had classes about it, but it is true that the Civil War and the dictatorship; yes, now that I remember, but as very much at the end of all my education in high school [...] Yes, these were subjects at the exam to go to the university, so everything was very -boom boom boom- [alluding to the fact that it was very fast]". (ES_F_T_5)

"Of course, the school, despite being a religious concert, was never exposed on the subject, Franco's subject, because History, what is given in class does not reach that point. It is more in the institute when the subject of the Spanish Civil War was spoken of and there no longer, they were not positioned anywhere, but they put them, they equaled them, they put that they were, that they did the same thing [...] I still remember the phrase that both sides did ad things...Atrocities. And it is a phrase that, despite being true, is not entirely true, that is, if you equate both, even if they do bad things, one tends to weigh more than the other". (ES_M_T_9)

Given that the conflict has been articulated along ideological lines, self-consciousness regarding group identification has faded over the years. This implies that it is not a criterion to choose friends that come out of the top of their minds at first. The position regarding what happened during the war is considered as part of the bulk of attitudes and political opinions that individuals hold. In this respect, they are aware that there is a certain degree of homogeneity among their friends, especially the closer ones, but it does not outweigh other issues of temporal importance, such as the abortion debate. Most of them would consider having friends with whom they disagree on these issues, but they consider them less close, or they avoid discussing them because they think

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the conversation would only end in a fight (only one participant clearly states that she would not be friends with someone who holds very different views than she does). This is interesting because when asked about encouraging group interactions between opposing sides, they believe that this could promote reconciliation, but none of them envision participating in these contacts. Participants are aware that exposure to contradictory sources to make it a constructive experience that bridges differences requires an effort in terms of time and openness to argument. However, they do not feel part of the conflict, they do not feel that they should be the ones promoting any steps towards reconciliation.

"Well, yes. There are times when we talk in a group of friends, and obviously, there are quite dissenting opinions [...] In a more friendly environment, probably in a bar, or something [...] the formalities are sometimes lost a little, not like in class. But at the end of the day, we know what one thinks more, what another thinks more, but no, it influences us later [...] you know that perhaps with the other who thinks more like you can tell him more things, or talk better about that subject, than with the other person". (ES_F_T_2)

"But in general with my real friends, the closest ones, we do talk a lot about it, and there are a lot of policy debates and so on". (ES_F_T_4)

"No, the subject has disappeared, from time to time something is taken out, but the problem I believe, is that there is no awareness of the need to generate opinion, we have to inform and talk about it, and think about something, it has simply been forgotten". (ES_M_T_10)

"I would not. That is, I can have friends that think slightly different from how I do, for instance in terms of being more liberal in their economic preferences, but... That I can accept. But on moral and social grounds, I do not think I could. In fact, I do not have friends that support the dictatorship". (ES_F_T_6)

"Yes, but I think that it should be taken into account, how the contact is established. I believe that we should be very careful about how the groups meet so that they discuss this, right? What cannot be done, for instance, is doing it in a social network because there we will achieve nothing and it will be like increasing tensions, I believe that how it is done should be thought about carefully". (ES_M_T_8)

11.4 Spain – Gender

Regarding the gender dimension of the conflict, concerning the group of participants with personal experience of the conflict there are no specific differences in terms of the content of beliefs. Overall, the emerging themes (violence, hunger, fear) are shared by both male and female respondents. Differences emerge in what they emphasise and how they do so. The war did not exempt them from learning the social roles they were expected to adopt as adults and how they were prepared for these roles. Male interviewees talk about their school (or rather lack thereof)

and who they played with, while girls talk more about their household and the chores, they were already responsible for. This goes in line with the scholarship on the development of attitudes and how it is shaped by social roles (Eagly et al. 2004; Ferrín, Fraile, & García-Albacete 2019).

Gender differences can also be observed with regard to the generalizability of their memories: While women focus on interpersonal relationships and often emphasize that their experience is personal and might be different in other contexts, men consider that their experience is representative of the ensemble and thus sets a rule for what happened in those years. The male interviewees seemed to be freer to walk around more freely than the girls, who were much more restrained to helping in the household, regardless of their social background. However, the fact that most of the men interviewed come from low-income households calls for caution regarding this claim. Given that women's life expectancy in Spain is much higher than men's, the sample is more accessible and therefore more diverse in terms of backgrounds. Even though women's education was not a priority in families at the time, those who came from better-off families managed to obtain an education, even to pursue a feminized career (such as schoolteacher). Moreover, their experience of war in a rural area, in the revolted side, was relatively placid. Unlike those from poorer families who were forced to work, or those who lived in urban areas loyal to the Republican government, like Barcelona, who had a fearful recall of the bombardments and the repression.

"I've had it until recently, then I threw it away because when you change and move, you throw away a lot of papers […] But she had a letter where the Women's Section told the women how we should behave with their husbands: we had to be slaves, when the husband arrived home, have his slippers if it was hot in winter, kneel down and put them on, and everything the husband asked for. And I, who have always been very rebellious, with a cause, I say to myself: "no, this does not suit me", and absurd things, really absurd, that is to say, this of equality in gender seems to me very good, the equality of woman and man, that there is no distinction of sex". (ES_F_P_4)

"Of course, you were a woman, and you were different. I finished high school and instead of saying "study a degree", that would have been the best thing that had happened to me. It didn't happen to me and my sisters; we were unlucky in that, I was unlucky because they didn't send us. They were afraid; I don't know […] we haven't been able to. I was very sorry I couldn't study, and it's not that I couldn't go, it's that they didn't just let me go, they didn't want us to go to university". (ES_F_P_6)

"First of all, there is a difference between man and woman, I don't consider it necessary, and I even consider it cruel. Women have been discriminated against for many years and are still discriminated against, maybe a little less now, but they have to work, I see how our women work, they are all women, we had this luck. Well, then I'd like it to be Spain, the first to fix the difference between man and woman […] I don't think it'll ever come, but I'd like this". (ES_F_P_5)

"There must have been many cases of abuse, especially in Asturias they talked a lot about the miners, but the miners didn't touch the women, they didn't do anything to them. And in Andalusia, is that Andalusia the difference of classes was much bigger, and there must have been some abuses..." (ES_F_P_6)

the transmitted experience group of participants with transmitted experiences, the story told by men and women does not vary substantially in terms of gender. It differs in terms of ideology about what should be done with transitional justice and memory politics, with left-wing respondents more eager to address the issue than more conservative ones. Differences are evident in terms of how vocal they are about taking a stand or how confident they feel about the claim they are making.

"Well, this that I am going to say is a bit of intuition but I have the feeling of having listened more men talk about these topics, talk about the mass graves, the Transition to democracy, talk about the war; but as I say, it is an intuition, I do not have a clear position on the topic, but I do have the feeling that I have heard more men than women, with quite some difference I would say". (ES_M_T_7)

Contrary to expectations, there do not seem to be gendered patterns in these interactions. It should be expected that women would be more prone to conflict avoidance, cooperation, and reconciliation, given that they are usually socialized in those values. The interviews show that women interviewees are more vocal about avoiding conflict with their acquaintances, but this is also mentioned by some of the men. Thus, there are no significant differences in the discourses they hold. More often than not, these stories involve grandfathers, while grandmothers, who remained focused on the private sphere, are not so present in the storytelling. Younger age participants consider the issue of gender equality nowadays as a granted given.

"At our age, no so much. But, for example, in the generation of my grandmothers, I do see that men were more politicized. Or they were more involved in unionism, party militancy, political activity, and women were always much more on the sidelines. But today, then... It is true that in the parties there are still many more men than women militants, for example. But I believe that every time, especially among young women, there is more and more political activity, and party militancy, social movements, anything". (ES_F_T_6)

"It's more because, maybe, the girls are not as sure as the boys". (ES_F_T_2)

"Men, supposedly, that is to say at least it is pi conception, more inclined to defend the uprising and women more inclined to be against the national uprising of 36. But then I think about my life, those I talk to or don't talk to, where there are more women and where there are more men, and those prejudices are broken a little bit, I think. Because I wouldn't know, in my personal experience, if there are more men or more women on each side. There are men and women everywhere. One thing are the prejudices that we

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have, that always, that is my pre-consideration is to consider that, but then I go to the experience and that pre-consideration shocks me". (ES_M_T_11)

"I mean, I don't know if more Francoists or less, but what I do know is that men are more explicit in... In having reservations openly Francoists". (ES_M_T_8)

"I haven't noticed, and if I tell you the truth, between friends is not, that is, I see them all the same in the same movement, the same struggle with very similar thoughts, then just by my circle, I see that all of them, regardless of the gender advance equally". (ES_M_T_12)

"Well, that if you are a mother you have to have dinner prepared for your husband and your children. No, I'm sorry, if I'm a mother and I arrive at nine o'clock at night from work and my husband has been there since seven o'clock because he can perfectly take care of making dinner for my children. I don't have to be there... because if I'm sick, and I'm a mother of three and my husband, and I'm sick in bed, I'm not going to get up to cook food for my husband no matter how sick he is. Or there was something that said "if my husband is pissed off and hits me, it's because I've done something wrong". I don't forgive, you know? Then came some debates that were like: "no, not all the women who suffer...", this long ago, we had 16-17, that you are learning, you are getting to know and so on, but there were people who said: "no, maybe not all the women who suffer mistreatment, it is because such, but maybe some has caused...". That now I have friends who said that, and now with 22 they don't say it, because they are conscious, because it comes to you when you're older". (ES_M_T_7)

11.5 Spain – Perspectives towards Europe/European Identity

Overall, there is an identification between Europe and the European Union, even if they are not exactly the same. Moreover, interviewees both with personal and transmitted experiences of the conflict give a general view of what the EU has meant for the country, but they do not go in-depth through the implications. Therefore, it makes little sense to discuss specifically how it relates to social cohesion, social threats, trust in politics, political and personal security, and economic security. Most of the interviewees are fairly positive regarding the EU, in line with Spanish public opinion; however, young respondents are less optimistic about it, underlining its deficiencies and problems. One of the shared elements between both generations is that Europe does not come to mind at all concerning the conflict. The conflict indeed precedes the creation of the EU and the steps of European integration, but even when they are asked whether Europe should be involved in national affairs, the responses triggered are more related to the Catalan conflict and current national affairs than the past.

In contrast to the younger cohort, the older respondents were more excited and positive about the EU (except for one who can barely read and, when asked about the issue, simply replies that she does not understand what the EU is about at all). The rest of the respondents are rather positive about Spain's membership and they identify themselves as Europeans without further hesitation.

Although none of them really elaborates on the topic, they consider that it has helped to open Spain to the world and guarantee democracy and institutions that have brought the country closer to its European neighbors. This homogeneity is illustrated by the fact that the only respondent expressed some concerns wanting even further integration.

> *"I think the European Union is good, I think it's good". (ES_F_P_1)*

> *"Europe is like a mother to us, isn't it? [...] I am delighted that [Spain] belongs to Europe, for me, it is an enormous tranquility that belongs to Europe. I'm suffering from the English, I don't know how much, with the Brexit [...] Well, let them do what they want, but I'm not with them". (ES_F_P_4)*

> *"Europe, man I liked Europe very much because for me traveling to Europe was a success [...] I like Europe, now I don't think about how badly it is doing some things, I think about the landscapes, in Paris, which has deteriorated a lot, and which is also going through a lot of pain. I also liked London very much, we went a lot of times". (ES_F_P_5)*

> *"Well, look, I think about Europe, that the best thing has happened to us is that there is a European Union, it is the best thing that has happened to us, for me. I have always voted yes because I sincerely believe, firstly, that as I see it, Europe is very small, and good very small, and has always been at war, always. And well, we have been very lucky in my generation that our children, none has had to go to war, nor our brothers, is that we have been very lucky. For me, it was the best thing they did after the war, after the Second World War, that was a barbarity and the first was another barbarity, of course, and all of them. And all of them. I'm not racist at all, not at all. To me, I'm not. We're all the same [...] And now you look, we are friends of the Germans, the French, the Greeks, the Italians. People communicate and I find it wonderful, that you don't have to be saying that I don't. I find it, like it very much, that we are like a nation, what happens is that there is still a lot to do [...] Europe helps us a lot. When were we going to have the roads they made for us? And a lot of things. We must be in Europe, I have always voted for Europe of course [...]". (ES_F_P_6)*

> *"[Europe is] something extraordinary". (ES_F_P_7)*

The young participants in these interviews cover a wide range of positions, but none of them is as enthusiastic a proponent as the respondents in the older cohort. Some respondents are more eager about the development opportunities that the EU has offered and could still offer, but they are not naïve about it being an institution with many problems. These respondents show a greater awareness of the downsides of the European project, but also of some of its failures. In terms of identity, for example, respondents mention that they know that efforts have been made to develop an affective attachment to the EU, but they just do not feel it. Others stress the fact that it is an alternative source of power to central government - having an institution that counterbalances central government is a virtue in that it guarantees the autonomy of the regions.

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"I feel European, man I feel more European than African. But what is it to feel European? I don't know, in other words, I have customs, I don't know what it is to feel European, I think I have good customs, traditions that are perhaps closer to Europe, that, to other types of oriental traditions, for example, but I am European, I don't feel European, I don't know what it is to feel European. Perhaps, I feel more Spanish than European, if you talk about feeling, but it is not, I mean I don't have, no, I don't feel anything about a nation". (ES_F_T_1)

"No. I don't feel European, but I know the problem... Well, I'm also a little bit into a course   that tells us about the European Union's communication policy, don't you? And really, I do not feel European because they have not communicated to me, they have not transmitted to me things, which the European Union has really done for me, right? So, I think it's one...   Maybe certain things have to change so that we and those who come, really start to feel like part of the Spaniards, but part of something else, right?". (ES_F_T_2)

"The European Union, what do I get?.... then as an idea, which, when it was put forward, looked very good and which, if it had got along better, would have achieved great things. It does not seem to me that what was intended to be the European Union has been developed". (ES_F_T_4)

"[…] I am aware that there are many privileges that we have that are thanks to the European Union, right? which has wonderful things, right? […] Well then, with that always, with that dream to see if it changes, or to see if, the European Parliament gains more power in relation to the rest, or I do not know, then there are other bodies, the Committee of the Regions, the Economic Committee, in other words, there are there. There are people and   there are organizations, that I think do very interesting things, that don't have as much impact or aren't as visible but are worthwhile. And that's good, but the big decisions, the macro-politics, well, it's a little bit, it's so conditioned by interests, isn't it, economic and global interests, that don't take the countries very much into account". (ES_M_T_7)

In contrast with these respondents, who could be considered supportive despite their reservations, some others are openly critical with the EU. What unites both critics and those who have a more positive attitude, is the lack of enthusiasm about the EU mentioned previously. When asked about what they expect from the EU, all of them consider that the existing status quo will remain and that they are not going to get anything very different from what they already have, reflecting the fact that lower involvement with the "European idea" leads to lower prospects from the EU.

"At the end of the day it is true, to a certain extent it is true, - what I am going to say is also a little demagogic, because it is not fulfilled as such, but there is something real out there, a half-truth, which is often used later as demagoguery against Europe, but there is something there - in the plan that many active policies of the European Union, which the European Union has promoted, are to achieve or maintain an industrialized north, as

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opposed to vegetable-producing south. And that is the great mantra that is repeated over and over again, against the European Union". (ES_M_T_11)

"Well, let's see, Europe or the European Union… Europe seems to me to be one thing and the European Union to be another thing, in other words, I believe that now the Europe that exists is the European Union, you ask someone for Europe and the idea that they have is for the European Union, that is really the Europe that links us, or that I have the feeling that it links us as countries, it is the European Union the institution, in other words, I do not believe that there is an idea on which the European Union is sustained, an idea of Europe that we all share, but it is more or less like a paripé, institutional that is supposed to unite us; but it seems that it is only the institution of the European Union that unites us and it is already there. So in that sense, with Europe, I can have empathy, cultural, historical, but perhaps, at some point, it seems that a European project was believed, as an idea of Europe, but when I think of Europe I think of struggle, that is what comes to us from the news, it is that the European Union is a thing that favors some, and not others. In other words, there is one thing that the European Union is conflict, and they are interests that each country is doing how it can and in the position it can, Greece bad, Spain bad, the countries of the south bad, Germany good, England that wants to go, well, there is an idea of zero union, it is an institution of struggle […]". (ES_M_T_10)

11.6 Spain – Media

There is a generational divide in patterns of media consumption. Although they still trust traditional news outlets, how they access them varies: the personal experience generation still relies largely on television and radio, while the younger one is more prone to the usage of on-demand Internet - based sources, and television to a lesser extent.

For those with personal experience of the conflict, the media landscape has largely changed over the decades, not only in terms of variety in the offer but also in the contents allowed. For instance, television would only arrive in Spain in the sixties and for twenty years there was only one channel available. Furthermore, during the dictatorship there were severe limitations to the freedom of expression and, although there were several newspapers and radio broadcasts, they offered limited diversity. Some years after democratization, in the '80s, television broadcasts were opened to private companies, increasing the offer. Nowadays, although ownership is highly concentrated, interviewees are aware that the media portray different positions, and they contribute to shaping how reality and events are perceived. Yet, they show awareness that they serve the interests and positions of the ownership. In terms of consumption patterns, they are related to those of the general population. More educated interviewees express a keener interest in the news and present events than those with lower education. In a similar vein, while all the men interviewed devote some time to media consumption, women do voice some reservations regarding contents. Most of

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the women watch the television news broadcast, but they are less keen on consuming political talk shows or just prefer other types of content more entertainment-oriented.

"And then I watch while breakfast I like to see what happens, how we get up in the morning a little bit. Then what I'm not interested in, are those other debates, those things, because they can't even be talked about because there's no moderator, I don't like that. I like it when there is moderation and one speaks, the other speaks, there is contrast, I like that. So sometimes I try. But, for example, my husband talks, watches a lot The Rattle [name of a program on a conservative television channel], I can't stand it. The other who looks like him, I don't know which is, I don't know, a Thirteen, a Thirteen chain or I don't know what, he sees it and gets consequences and everything, and I just can't stand it". (ES_F_P_4)

"I buy newspapers on Saturday and Sunday. I buy La Razón, old newspapers, La Razón, and ABC, La Razón's on Saturday and ABC's on Sunday, and that's it, you see". (ES_M_P_10)

"Well, there's everything, but let's go are exceptions. It's usually a good time, isn't it? There is always someone, in short, because of course newspapers serve their master, and they have a master. And they have a master, an owner, let's say, and then there's the passer-by". (ES_M_P_8)

Given that these interviews were conducted with persons that are around 90 years old, most of them were not even asked about their usage of social media (only one of the respondents, mentions the Internet). Despite their position regarding the conflict, all the personal experience interviews seem to agree that the media do not contribute to peace and reconciliation, rather polarizing and increasing tension whenever the issue gains salience.

"I am going to tell you, I see things on television that instead of…They worsen things by communicating so much". (ES_F_P_3)

"I think they're going more towards division than towards reconciliation". (ES_F_P_5)

"I think they're a little more rambunctious. They say things they should and things that were better concealed". (ES_F_P_7)

"I listen to TV, I watch TV and that yes, I use a lot, I don't want to ... I have, I have IPad, I have an iPhone, I have ... But no, I have of course a pc, but I don't want them to have me. In other words, I use it when I feel like it, but I don't want them to have me". (ES_F_P_4)

Regarding the respondents with transmitted experience, their age range was 19-24. Most of them lean left, reflecting on the media outlets they consume. For instance, most of them have consumed television in the past television as a source of information but not so much anymore. When they use television, they usually watch "La Sexta", a television channel that is left-leaning and mainly oriented to the broadcasting of news and political content. Nonetheless, most of them prefer an

on-demand approach to the news, accessing them through the Internet whenever they have time available. In this regard, they are aware that not all the information they find online is trustworthy so most of them rely on the websites of the traditional newspapers or well-established online ones to gather their information, such as El Pais, El Mundo, or ElDiario.es. Some of them claim that they used to browse through the websites of newspapers that offered both, the ideological positions that agree with and the ones that don't. All of the interviewees share an awareness of the biases present in media, some of them underlining that this trend has enhanced in recent years. In line with existing research, there seems to be a gendered pattern, with women interviewees declaring less interest in the news (and politics in general) than men (Kittilson & Schwindt-Bayer, 2012). Turning to their role in peace and reconciliation, they consider that the media is more interested in contributing to their ideological stances than reconciliation and rather contribute to maintaining division or even, in periods of high salience, increasing polarization around the topic.

"I think I see more La Sexta". (ES_F_T_1)

"More than watching them, I usually inform myself through the newspaper applications, which I have in the application or through Twitter or Facebook, because I'm barely at home, and no, sitting down to watch TV is more on the weekend". (ES_F_T_2)

"I don't think that the Spanish press right now is in its best moment either, of, you know, it's not that they give tremendous information either, no, like to look for good information I think you have to go deep enough, in looking for various media, contrasting, if you're really interested in something [...] Yeah, [media] they're going to give you one point of view". (ES_F_T_5)

"Man, I think that [they promote] division because people watch TV, people get hot, and people argue, TV doesn't invite you to get information, to generate opinion, and to talk to the opposite side, or the opponents. I believe that it serves to divide and to warm up the atmosphere [...] I do not see a very deep work on the television". (ES_M_T_10)

"It also depends on which press, which TV and which radio channel, doesn't it? But, after all, then it is each one with his ideology and what he thinks is going to look for a medium that is more in tune with his own because he likes to read, doesn't he? We like to read and listen to what we think, rather than what we don't think. So...". (ES_F_T_2)

"No, [they promote] the total division. Yeah". (ES_M_T_7)

"Well, [...] you have to be skeptical with the media [...] I have an intuition that there is corruption, that there is manipulation and that there are interests, behind the media and that some media give more voice to some than others, and that they criticize some more than others. But, but I only have that media image, but I don't have very clear what interest there is behind each of them, and why and who they support, it's clear that some chains pull more to one side and others more to the other, but I don't know in what way, because I'mtelling you, it's a very crazy web of interests, that I can't grab right now [laughter], I don't have the information". (ES_M_T_10)

Regarding social media, respondents with transmitted experience identify that different platforms have different finalities, thus defining their patterns of content production and the intensity of their engagement. For instance, Instagram is a network clearly focused on the production of content related to leisure and lifestyle and where women interviewees in this sample were more likely to contribute. In contrast, Twitter or Facebook, with their different formats are more opinion-oriented, both to look for information shared by other users, including media profiles, and to comment themselves. In these networks, in line with the literature on political efficacy (Preece 2016; Ondercin and Jones-White 2011), female respondents, even if they are members, are less likely to give their opinion because they consider that they do not have the skills to say anything worth reading, which they share with women interviewees from the personal experience sample but is not so present on the male sample of the same age range. Regarding the conflict, they seem to contribute to polarization because anyone can give their opinion, even if they do so without any further arguments.

"Yes...Little, to tell you the truth, but right now for example I have Facebook and Instagram, Instagram more superficial, or promoting my work, and me as a professional, and on Facebook I share my opinion, but the truth is that I use it very little. Before I had Twitter, and on Facebook perhaps I had more active moments, […] I use it to give my opinion, but not very much". (ES_F_T_5)

"Not much, I usually answer more to this kind of thing, yes, I usually answer them like "you're a liar, you've invented it". But I don't usually... On Facebook a bit more, but on Twitter on Instagram, well... I publish things that one can see what my ideology is, but I don't usually... On Facebook yes, but not much on the rest […] Yes, because in the end, on Twitter anyone gives an opinion, and if it goes viral, it doesn't matter if it's a stupid opinion and an opinion based on nothing. If it goes viral, people take it as absolute truth, and that's it. Even hoaxes that you say, fuck, it is a hoax, if it is very clear if it doesn't make any sense, this one...Today for example I read a thing about the Community of Madrid asking for these requirements to offer you a flat and asking for things that don't exist". (ES_F_T_6)

"Right now for me, where I find out the most about things is on Twitter, everything comes out instantly, everything comes out instantly on Twitter. And it's wonderful for good and for bad, but it also allows you to get to know a lot of information from many people who may or may not be in common with you, from many places in Spain and the world, and it's very strong because you get a lot of information that you didn't know". (ES_F_T_4)

"Social networks now… of course, social networks are based on the users who use them and it's true that now there is a lot of activism, "activism" [laughter] on social networks. Perhaps it will be more separate, if it does something, in the sense that [...] I don't think they solve anything. […] When you give your opinion in a social network, I don't consider

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that you are solving anything, and you don't open the door to debate either, people can indeed answer to you but there is no communication […]". (ES_F_T_1)

11.7 Spain – Overall Remarks

One of the key defining elements of the Spanish conflict is that it was articulated along ideological lines. In the 1930s, right before the Civil war and after in the post-war period, adults clearly identified with the camps and they could identify those around them. However, these differences have been incorporated into the many meanings that define individuals' political orientations and how they place themselves in the political spectrum. Although there are exceptions and nuances, broadly speaking the Republican camp has come to be identified with leftist political orientations while Franco's supporters identify as rightist, as those with a personal experience suggest. For those with a transmitted experience of conflict, their ideological orientations have become a powerful heuristic when developing an opinion about what happened during this conflictual past: those leaning left tend to be more critical and openly blame Franco for the war, in contrast, those that identify with the right show a more conciliatory attitude, focusing on the fact that the 1930s were troublesome times and the dictatorship brought economic development for many. This sublimation of the defining elements of the camps has led to several interesting outcomes, amongst others, a detachment from the conflictive memory, an ambivalent relationship between opposing camps, and a sometimes-difficult relationship with nationalism.

The generation that took direct part in the conflict has mostly passed, and those who are left feeling somewhat alien and detached to the experience of conflict. It is an event that cannot "un-happen", and it has ramifications in the present but, at the same time, no one really feels part of the camps that should reconcile. Those interviewed for their personal experience were children at the time, and, even if they are aware of what happened, they want it to stay in the past. And for those who have received the transmitted experience because it concerns their great-grandparents or grandparents. All of them show a certain awareness regarding how the conflict still structures political life and how intergroup conflict could contribute to reconciliation, but they all speak in the third person, as something affecting others.

> *"We are the great-grandchildren of the people who fought in the war. I feel it is a bit of an exaggeration that we, being those great-grandchildren, we throw grievances at each other, all of us having family in both camps or having our own problems […]". (ES_M_T_11)*

On the other hand, there is a deep intertwine between camps within the families. Interestingly, most of the transmitted experience interviewees mention that within their families, some sided with the revolting camp and others with the Republican one. This results in an ambivalent relationship with members of the other camp. Particularly amongst those with a transmitted experience, they are aware that they tend to have friends who have similar orientations to theirs, and, as a result, with their friends they usually have similar opinions regarding the conflict. On the other hand, they often have experiences within the household of coexistence of supporters of the

Republic and Franco's result. Within families, this implies that the civil war is a topic to be avoided in family gatherings because it leads to discussion and conflict. With friends, they usually apply the same avoidance strategy. Yet, the few that have attempted at truly having a discussion mention how eye-opening it was for all those involved in the conversation.

Turning to nationalism, the Francoist regime did a long job of appropriation of state institutions and symbols. The democratization period could have been a time to break with this symbolism and define one for the newly born Spanish democracy. But it was not, some symbols, like the flag, were slightly changed but overall it remained largely unchanged. This has meant that nationalism in Spain is a strong identifier of someone holding rightist positions regarding other issues because the left has a difficult relationship, and it usually prefers to avoid it. Efforts have been made at re-appropriation, but as one of the women in the transmitted experience interviews mentions, they have not yet been successful.

In terms of gender differences, the perception of the conflict is mediated by gendered social roles. In other words, the discourse is similar but what the interviewed people tend to underline fall in line with the social roles ascribed to their gender. Within those with personal experience of the conflict, these reflect on where their memories are more vivid: women tend to focus more on household-related anecdotes, while men speak more about their experience outside of the house.

One of the main conclusions of the interviews is that participants in both sets of interviews do not identify themselves as direct part-takers of the conflict, and thus, lack the resolve to take active measures in the resolution. None of them indeed has direct family members that were buried in mass graves but, even those who had relatives killed in the families hold vague memories of what happened, probably as a result of decades of silence over what happened. One of the challenges of coming to terms with the Spanish conflictual memory is that it is a story of silences, and to emerge the stories, respondents had to dig deep and reflect but they rarely felt directly apprehended. There seems to be a need to create the grounds for a conversation to be had in order to create a truly shared narrative but before this is done, there is some reluctance that needs to be addressed, amongst the older generations and the younger ones.

Moving to more specific grounds, transmitted experience respondents shared a concern about how this conflictual memory is addressed in the educational curricula. These participants expressed concern because they could clearly identify how the Middle Ages are studied in-depth and with a narrative that seems full of certainties, something that vanishes when it comes to Spain in the 1930s. This does not mean that what they are studying about the middle ages should not be revised (as some historians have demanded given the extreme inaccuracies), but it does put into the spotlight the discomfort that the 1930s-onward as a historical period represents for many high school teachers in Spain. This discomfort which fails to match students' demand to know and understand the more recent past that shapes many of today's political conflicts, even when they are not openly addressing memory-related issues.

12. Discussion - Conclusions

Each of the case studies in the research seems to have its own particular characteristics and its own particular interest in capturing Oral History. Although some general classifications can be made regarding the types of conflict, the spatio-temporal context of the past in which each of them arose defines the individual elements of each case differently. Nonetheless, there are common patterns that emerge from the narratives of participants in the RePAST Oral History Project. These patterns can shed light on the causes and circumstances of past conflicts while providing clues for preventing their future recurrence.

The patterns that emerge from the analysis of the research material relate primarily to two criteria: the temporal distance from the past in which the conflict took place, and whether the conflict was violent in nature. Based on these two criteria, all eight case study countries examined can be classified into three levels: The first level refers to case studies with troubled pasts and conflicts that occurred relatively recently and were extremely violent (Bosnia, Kosovo, Cyprus, Ireland). The second level refers to conflicts that were violent but in a relatively distant past (Spain, Greece), and the third level refers to troubled pasts where conflicts were not violent (Germany, Poland). Most of the identified patterns seem to have common features within the above levels, while a few seem to have features that relate to the three levels as a whole. In any case, this categorization is particularly useful because it allows for a more comprehensive reconstruction of the context of each conflict and facilitates the comparison between the case studies.

Oral History testimonies are direct biographical narratives or narratives of how other people's experiences have indirectly influenced individual biographies (Thompson & Bornat, 2017:236). Those with personal experiences share sensory memories of the conflict. On the other hand, those with transmitted experiences represent the ways in which previous generations' narratives of past events have shaped their thoughts, perceptions, and, to a large extent, their overall worldview in the present. Remembering the troubled past is linked to the notion of historicity, but also identity, or as Nora puts it, "*the task of remembering makes everyone his own historian*" (1989:15). It is therefore interesting to examine the relationship between this personal 'historical' narrative and the dominant narrative (within a nation, community, or group) narrative. From this investigation, the first significant pattern of the "personal within the boundaries of the dominant" narrative emerges.

"Personal within the boundaries of the Dominant" narrative pattern

When individuals with personal experience - the living sources of memory - have died, the memory is materialized/monumentalized in a process that enables its intergenerational transmission. In their new materialized form, representations of the past become "memory vehicles" such as rituals, commemorations, books, films, etc., which transmit knowledge about the past to subsequent

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generations (Confino, 1997). Nonetheless, these social productions of memory, lieux de memoire, constitute a "fractured" memory, a collection of fragments of the past that shape the memory of individuals and foster consensus and cohesion among members of a group, thus consolidating collective identity (Halbwachs, 1980; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Cassia, 2009; Burke, 2005; Green, 2004). This is the official narrative, which often excludes the personal experiences of individuals, as it aims to place the collective over personal memory to establish the "important" stories that serve the official narrative. These "materialized" memories serve as a constant reminder of the bonds between members of an imagined community and establish the boundaries that distinguish them from the "others," thus reinforcing the national identity of the group. Memory as a series of images and as a process is elaborately produced and used to express and fulfill the changing political agendas of the ruling elite and the emotional needs of individuals (Neiger, 2020). Ruling elites often instrumentalize the memory of the past as a means of cohesion among members of the group. The use of certain images of the past aims to create shared meaning and trigger predictable thoughts and feelings (Sontag, 2003: 85-86) to stimulate collective memories that fulfill their policies, aspirations, and agendas for the present and the future (Liu & Hilton 2005).

The testimonies of the research participants with personal experience of the conflicts are valuable and extremely interesting as they shed light on events and conditions beyond their historicity. They put an emotional, personal, and experiential emphasis on them recalling the consequences of the conflicts, not only at the macro level but also in the individual biographies of the ordinary people who experienced them. In particular, participants with personal experiences from the first-level case study countries (Bosnia, Kosovo, Cyprus, Ireland) provide very emotionally charged descriptions of the conflicts conveying that the conflict was the point that separated their lives in a kind of "before and after". However, the intensity of the experience depends on factors related primarily to space and distance from the epicenter of the conflict, but also to the quality of the experience, in terms of the extent to which the impact of the conflict was directly personal or related only to the overall social environment.

The younger generation takes on this heavy burden of the memory of the conflict and tries to deal with it as they move towards the future. However, in the vast majority of cases, they feel that they do not have enough knowledge and information about the past through their main sources, namely their family, education, and social environment. Thus, they are faced with the challenge of balancing between two difficult demands: dealing with the controversies of the past, but without dissatisfying the generations who personally experienced the conflicts. In all four first-level case study countries (Bosnia, Cyprus, Kosovo, Ireland), this balance is difficult to achieve. This is because it requires one of the rival communities to be willing to discard or reshape part of its narrative about the past and the conflict. It is clear from the research data that none is willing to do this. In all four cases, there are conflicting accounts of the past - in Bosnia and Ireland, more than two.

According to the above categorization - the second level of temporal distance (Greece, Spain) and third level of non-violent conflict (Germany, Poland) - it can be stated that these conflicts took place in a homogeneous ethnic environment without rival (ethnic) communities. Nevertheless, the

differences between these rival intra-ethnic groups were ideological rather than national, religious, or cultural. Although even at these levels the narratives of the past appear to be rigid, younger generations seem more willing and able to overcome the divisions of the past.

The analysis of the research data revealed that the vast majority of all participants' narratives, however different in some respects, did not transcend or oppose the dominant narratives of the communities or groups to which they identified as belonging. Identity (national, community, ideological) is built on the logic of historical mythology and is so powerful that it prohibits deviation or contradiction to the dominant narrative of the group (Smith, 1986; Abdelal et. Al, 2001; Kanchan 2006; Zheng, 2018). When a member of a group adopts the opposite narrative, she/he automatically places herself/him outside the group, which is difficult to manage in terms of identity. The group/community provides the 'sense of belonging' necessary for identity (Howard & Rothbart 1980; Tajfel 1982; Baumeister & Leary 1995; Oppenheimer & Midzic 2011; Gallagher & Cairns 2011) and in order to maintain this sense, the personal memory narrative must not contradict or deviate from the dominant narrative of the group. As a result, differences, no matter how intensely they are mentioned in the personal narrative, will not cross the boundaries of the dominant narrative, sometimes giving the impression that 'group conformity' is preferred rather than contradicted. When weighting "apostasy" and "sense of belonging" for identity reasons (Marques & Paez 1994), the second always prevails in the vast majority of cases.

Consequently, without an absolute agreement, the personal mnemonic narratives presented in this research do not go beyond the basic boundaries set by the dominant narratives. If not the support, at least the "protection" of the dominant narrative has an affirmative effect on identity. The crucial question that arises is how to achieve a critical transcendence of identity at the level of the nation/community/group, so that the adoption of a new, more inclusive, and supranational identity, the European one, becomes possible.

"Trauma & Victimhood" narrative pattern

Trauma is the expression of a collective injury that establishes the victim and assigns responsibility to the perpetrator. The experience of trauma is thus a sociological process closely linked to the (re)construction of identity (Alexander, 2004). In discussing the maintenance of large group identities, Volkan introduces the term "chosen traumas" to describe "*the mental representation of a calamity at the hands of the "others" that once befell a large group's ancestors*" (Volkan, 2010). According to Volkan, the transgenerational transmission of this traumatic event of the past to subsequent generations is a product of the past generation's inability/failure to achieve rehabilitation of victims and punishment of perpetrators (Eyal, 2004; Volkan, 2001).

Trauma embodies the impact of tragic events on the formation of collective identities, which become part of a group's historical narrative. Sontag argues that collective memory is an ideology, a collective instruction about what is important to be remembered, creating "*substantiating archives of images [...] which encapsulate common ideas of significance and trigger predictable thoughts, feelings*" (Sontag, 2004, pp. 76-77). In Cyprus, for example, memory as a set of images,

but also as a process, was gradually produced and elaborately used to express and adapt the changing political programs of the state and the configured emotional needs of individuals (Sant Cassia, 2007:71). Group members collectively share mental representations of their group's suffering. When these representations are passed on, the next generations are called upon to either mourn or undo the humiliation.

Hirsch refers to post-memory as the experience that the "generation after" has with the memories of those who have experienced cultural or collective trauma, with the experiences of those who came before, experiences they remember only through the stories, images, and behaviors they grew up with. (Hirsch, 2002, p. 76). These experiences are transmitted in a way that is so intense that the new generation identifies with the victim or witness of the trauma (Assman, 2021, Grand & Salberg, 2021). As the new generation grows up with these inherited memories and is dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, they retrospectively adopt the traumatic experiences of the previous generation and inscribe them into their own life story. The transmitted experiences of young female research participants from the Kosovo case study showed that the strongest feeling that emerges from narratives about the past conflict is that of fear - the fear of becoming a victim of sexual abuse by the opponents. It is also worth noting that some respondents admitted to symptoms of PTSD syndrome in their personal experiences. As Hirsch posits, this form of identification signifies the ability to say, "*It could have been me; it was me, also," and at the same time categorically, "but it was not me*" (Hirsch, 2002:76). This displacement of the new generation's stories by those of the previous generation distorts their own stories, which are shaped by the traumatic events they cannot understand or relate to (Hirsch, 1999, 2001, 2008, 2019; Hoffman, 2004).

In situations of prolonged experience of violence, members of society tend to selectively process the information they receive by focusing on the malicious and evil actions of the adversary that pose a danger and threat. These experiences are stored in collective memory and integrated into cultural products that are disseminated through the communication channels and institutions of society. Thus, society is deprived of the ability to properly evaluate evidence and information and is led to distrust, demonization, dehumanization, and delegitimization of the "other" (Bar-Tal, 2001, p. 608; Volkan, 2021). The constant presence of the consequences of trauma or its constant reminder to members of society deprives them of the ability to treat the past as the past; therefore, the past is something they cannot overcome. The failure of the next generation to deal with the past causes the vicious cycle of trauma to continue. According to Bar-Tal (2001:608), the ongoing experience of violence invades the personal lives of members of society by influencing their behavior.

Trauma can be instrumentalized to strengthen the bond between the members of the group and thus consolidate the group identity (Volkan, 2001; Volkan, 2010; Volkan, 2021(a)). Alexander asserts that cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been exposed to a horrific event that leaves an indelible imprint on their group consciousness, forever shaping their

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memories and altering their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways (Alexander, 2004:1).

In politics, trauma holds the potential to threaten the dominant power that seeks to fill the gaps that emerge after a traumatic experience and that threatens the collective imaginary (Habermas, 2014). The discourse of trauma is central to the official narrative; therefore, it is assigned a central role in the process of (re)constructing identity. Alexander argues that once trauma no longer evokes inflamed emotions, it loses its significance and vividness and eventually disappears. What follows is the objectification of the "lessons" of trauma in the form of museums, monuments, memorials, and historical artifacts. This "objectification" of trauma is often received with regret by those who have been mobilized by the trauma process. Yet, it is often greeted with a sense of relief in the private and public spheres (Alexander, 2004:12-13). Volkan, discussing the process of dehumanization of the Other and purification from the Other gives an example of how atrocities can occur based on this schema. In particular, he points to the atrocities committed by the Serbs against the Bosnian and Kosovo Muslims, whom the Serbs perceived as descendants of the Ottoman enemies. Based on this perception, the atrocities against these ethnic groups were "*legitimized*" and "*justified*" through the invocation of the Serbian chosen trauma and grievance that were sustained through the group's historic narrative (Volkan, 2021 (a); Volkan, 2021 (b)).

Aleida Assman points out the difference between the heroic character of the 19th and early 20th century nations and the post-colonial and post-communist nations that emerged in the mid-20th century. According to Assman, the post-colonial and post-communist nations were founded in the "*tragic mode of trauma, victimhood, and suffering*," while their collective memory focuses on their "*historical wounds*" that end up being their "badge" of a distinctive and inalienable identity (Assman, 2021:26). Of particular interest is the case study of Cyprus (post-colonial), as it relates (in comparison to the other case studies) to an intractable and unresolved conflict. In the Turkish Cypriot community, the events of 1974 are remembered as the happy end of a decade of oppression and humiliation by Greek Cypriots. For Turkish Cypriots, the journey to the north has been described as a "*journey to freedom*" (Kizilyürek, 2009). Sant Cassia (2005, p. 223) writes that in the north many monuments commemorate the "*Liberation from the Turkish Army*" (Sant Cassia, 2005:223). On the other hand, the Greek Cypriot side refers to trauma and loss as a way of reacting to the fait accompli involving a monument. At the same time, it promotes the drama of the refugees and the relatives of the missing in a way that is offensive to Turkish Cypriots, exposing them to the international community and constantly reminding them of the mistakes of the past. Selective remembrance of the past not only functions as a coherent tool between members of the two communities but is simultaneously used in an insulting manner by Greek Cypriots towards Turkish Cypriots and vice versa. An example supporting this view is the huge, illuminated flag of the self-proclaimed Turkish Cypriot Republic of Northern Cyprus, "TRNC", located in the Pentadaktylos mountain range visible from most of Nicosia the capital of Cyprus. Similarly, for the Turkish Cypriots, the signs with the photos of the Greek Cypriot missing or killed by the Turks underline the barbarity of the Turkish army. It is also worth noting that the events of 1974 and the Turkish

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invasion are repeatedly referred to as "The Tragedy of Cyprus" by the Greek Cypriot side, indicating situations of grief and sorrow.

Another significant sub-pattern that emerges from the analysis of the research material is the pattern of "victimhood" and is directly related to the level of violence of the conflict and the troubled past under investigation. In the first category of cases (Bosnia, Cyprus, Kosovo, Ireland) the sense of conflict appears to be more intense as it is more recent. Consequently, there has not been the necessary time to heal the individual and collective traumas inflicted, nor have the conditions been created to defuse the narratives of the opposing sides. The fundamental question remains, "Who is to blame?". Accountability for the conflict and the attribution of responsibility (especially their acceptance by the opposing side) is the symbolic and historical justification of one narrative over the other, and thus its prevalence as dominant and correct. For a large number of respondents, accountability for the conflict is a precondition for rapprochement and future coexistence.

Thus, the dominant logic is the blame game: the assumption of responsibility for the conflict by one side is the victory of the other. These are not conflicts in which the parties claim the position of "winner", but conflicts in which each side tries to prove that it was the victim of the other side to achieve political, economic, or social aims (Vollhardt, 2012, Vollhardt & Bilali, 2015, WHO, 2002). Of course, this is not a purely rhetorical argument, but a consequence of the truly tragic events of the war. The existence of trauma is undeniable, as is the cost in terms of human lives. Therefore, the concept of "victory" does not seem desirable from either side, for it is not a concept of pride, but one of shame and embarrassment. Under the enormous weight of the moral reprehensibility of violence and war crimes, no historical narrative can be justified, and it cannot in any way be considered a "victory."

For Bosniaks, the Srebrenica massacre is proof of Serb responsibility for war crimes committed during the conflict, while Serbs, who deny the death toll at Srebrenica, see themselves as victims of the bombing of NATO. At the same time, the Croats are distressed because their losses are not acknowledged by Bosniaks and Serbs. Kosovo Albanians blame Serb paramilitaries for war crimes committed in the late 1990s, while Kosovo Serbs see themselves as Kosovo Albanians' victims for their exclusion in certain enclaves and the forced displacement of most of their population. Greek Cypriots blame the Turks and Turkish Cypriots for the 1974 invasion, the deaths, the displacement of their population from the northern part of the island, and eventually the de facto partition of the island to this day, while the Turkish Cypriots blame the Greek Cypriots for attacks and murders on Turkish Cypriot enclaves on the island as late as the 1960s. In Ireland, the same British Army battalion responsible for the 1972 massacre of Bloody Sunday with predominantly Catholic victims was also responsible for the slaughter of Shankill Road with mainly Protestant victims a few months later. This led to the escalation of the conflict between Catholics and Irish Protestants and the strengthening of IRA through voluntary mass recruitment, ending in a vicious circle where everyone was blamed for everything. The violence is pervasive in all these cases and still runs deep in the

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minds of those who have had personal experience of the conflicts studied. None of the sides mentioned has a narrative of events of "victory" or "triumph" in their conflict with the other side. On the contrary, the narratives of all sides are about extreme events of death, destruction, pain, and utter misery. There seem to have been no "winners" in these conflicts, only "victims". Therefore, accepting the responsibility of the other side is the justification of the historical narrative and ultimately the only way to claim "victory."

Trauma correlates strongly with the nature and timing of the conflict. Consequently, the presence of trauma is more pronounced in the case studies of the first category, namely Bosnia, Cyprus, Kosovo, and Ireland. In contrast, it can be observed that in the countries of the second category (Greece, Spain) the intensity of trauma - although still present - seems to have decreased over time. It should be noted that in this case, it is not only a matter of intensity but also of substantial change in the way trauma is understood by individuals and communities/groups concerning the formation of memory of the past.

It is difficult to imagine trauma as being about the "winners" of a conflict. Because it is a strongly negative emotional experience, it remains powerful on a collective level for those who see themselves as the 'losers' of the conflict and are mainly not responsible for its outbreak. Yet, as mentioned earlier, the more intense the brutality of the conflict and the more heinous the crimes committed, the less willing the other side is to take responsibility for the crimes by claiming the position of "victor", especially when this entails taking responsibility for the horrors of the war. When the "victory" consists of the other side taking responsibility for the crimes, the trauma (which is strongly present at the collective level) also acts as evidence of victimhood: it is the victims, not the perpetrators, who hence suffer from the trauma. For this reason, the presence of the collective (beyond the personal/individual) trauma reinforces the pattern of victimhood that forms its very substance.

However, trauma does not remain stagnant over time, as the comparison of the case studies shows: The collective traumas of the Civil Wars of Greece and Spain are now considered historical records rather than recently experienced events with an overwhelming impact on the collective level. The passage of time transforms the experienced history into written history; with the passing of the last living eyewitnesses of the conflicts, the trauma loses its powerful momentum (ceases to be a lived experience for some) and transforms from a collective/victimizing trauma into a cultural trauma inscribed mainly in the collective historical subconscious of the community/group.

There is near unanimity about the negative role that the political establishments in almost all case studies played in the events of the conflicts. These establishments still seem to hold positions of power, as evidenced by the interviewees' references to "*the same political elites*". This perception creates a strong sense of futility and pessimism for the future and confirms the view that there can be no progress in the future if the same political elites who produced the problems of the past remain in power. The existence of generations that have personal experiences of the violent events complicates these goals because these generations are essentially required to overcome, in whole or in part, their personal experiences, which in many cases are severely traumatic. This seems all

the more problematic if the perception is true that the same political elites that were responsible for the conflict are still in power. The temporal distance from the events may not be sufficient to bring about all the necessary changes in the political institutions of the respective case study countries. If the same broader political mechanisms (or even the same individuals) that are burdened with the responsibility and mistakes of the past are still in the leadership positions of power, reconciliation is a very difficult task for them because it also involves, to some extent, taking personal responsibility for the past. The only way forward, then, is a renewal of the political establishment with the emergence of younger political generations who cannot bear the burdens of the past but can focus exclusively on the expectations of the future. Only then can we perhaps speak with certainty about the existence of conditions of rapprochement.

The "Left-Right Ideological Disputes" narrative pattern

As for the other two categories of countries of case studies, the pattern of "ideological disputes" is evident. In some cases, the conflicts were also violent (Spain, Greece), but time has strongly mitigated the traumatic memory, while in others (Germany, Poland) the nature of the conflict is not strongly correlated with intense violent incidents. In both categories, however, the common pattern emerges in the presence of two distinct and opposing ideological fields of confrontation.

This confrontation is part of the "left-right" dipole, but this highly simplified form is not sufficient to paint the full picture. In the case studies of Poland and Spain, it is clear that the Church played a crucial role in the crisis, not so much with its religious but with its institutional nature. In any case, the conflicts were not inter-communal but mainly ideological. This, of course, does not make them any less painful, especially when one considers the violence and death toll that occurred in both the Spanish and Greek Civil Wars and the corresponding dictatorships that emerged, either immediately after the Civil War (Francisco Franco in Spain) or a few decades later (Georgios Papadopoulos in Greece). However, the temporal distance has tempered the intensity and passion of the narratives of both sides and provided the framework for reconciliation and a look to the future, despite the existence of traumas that sometimes still influence public discourse to a considerable extent. In the other two cases (Germany and Poland), the causes of the conflict are inevitably linked to World War II and in particular the subsequent establishment of communist regimes (Eastern Germany and Poland). While in Spain and Greece the far-right dictatorships seem to be at the center of the mnemonic narratives of the past, in (former East) Germany and Poland it is the period of communist regimes. It is worth noting that while the influences of these conflicts appear at the level of public discourse, they in no way affect the institutional democratic functions of these states as a whole.

Another common element that appears in the countries studied is the rise of populist and far-right rhetoric. Certain problems (particularly the economic and the refugee crisis) have fuelled far-right rhetoric. In this context, the rise of purely far-right parties (Golden Dawn in Greece, AfD in Germany, VOX in Spain) has been observed mainly in the decade 2010-2020, in some cases testing both the resilience and tolerance of the political system (Greece). This phenomenon, even if it

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seems to be mainly cyclical, is in any case linked to the ideological conflicts of the past. The case of Poland seems to be a particular one. The prevalence of extreme conservative rhetoric, which appeared as a counter-narrative to the country's communist past, had a rather marginal character a few years ago, while today it tends to be enforced (also with the help of the Church) as the dominant institutional state public discourse. Through, mainly local, commemorative practices, this narrative reconstructs the memory of the past under new conditions of introversion and focuses on promoting national pride and "Polishness".

Although ideological disputes can lead to serious confrontation and conflict, as history shows, they offer better conditions for future rapprochement, at least in theory. Since they are not divisive at the deeper level of national identity, they seem to be a factor that can be more easily mitigated over time. On the other hand, it is also a factor that is highly dependent on the current social and geopolitical conjuncture. As a result, it is always capable of sparking serious tensions within otherwise homogeneous national communities and destabilizing the entire European edifice.

The "Distrust on Media" narrative pattern

Connerton introduced the concept of power hierarchy, according to which the memory of a society is controlled by the ruling elites through the control of information technologies. He claims that *"our experiences of the present depend largely on our knowledge of the past, and that our images of the past generally serve to legitimize a present social order"* (Connerton, 1989:3). Looking at the development of the Internet and the ability to access information in the media across spatial and temporal boundaries, Assman and Sebastian argue that societies today can critique and challenge authority and national myths (Assman & Sebastian, 2010).

Individuals are no longer mere recipients of information, but take on the role of prosumers - users and producers of content - who are given full access to an unlimited amount of information through technology and become agents of memory. This deprives governments and traditional media of the privilege of presenting their own version of events. Consequently, they lose the ability to manipulate collective memory, with the knowledge of the masses taking on a collective character. In the 2.0 web era, the traditional hierarchy over the control of memory and the shaping of identity is broken by the ability of users to search and remember, and to create content that challenges or contradicts the grand narratives. Computers and software contribute to what van Dijck calls the "*multimodality of memory*" that is, the combination of different sensory systems, such as the visual and the auditory. Multimodality, van Dijck continues, refers to the inclusion of different media platforms - for example, text, graphics, video, and sound - to present information (van Dijck, 2007:175).

In examining the ways in which media frame and shape news by referring to and using archived images, sounds, and events, Hoskins proposes the term schemata to describe the "*framework and standard that the mind forms from past experiences and against which new experiences are expected, measured, and also reflexively shaped*" (2009:36). These templates, which function as mediatized schemas, consist of a memory store at local, national, and global levels that is "*self-

consciously deployed to shape interpretations of the present while in turn renewing the past" (Hoskins, 2009:37). These images are stored mentally and are instantly retrievable whenever a stimulus is presented. Van Dijck explains that media and memory are not separate identities; media enhance, corrupt, augment, and replace memory, but "*inevitably and inherently shape our personal memories, justifying the term 'mediation'*" (van Dijck, 2007:16).

Sontag (2003) writes that public attention "*is controlled by media attention, i.e., crucially by images. When there are photographs, a war becomes 'real'*". She refers to the so-called "*CNN effect*" in the case of Bosnia, where after three years of constant broadcasting of the situation in Sarajevo, public demands for international intervention intensified. It is also interesting to note her reference to Sarajevo residents who wanted their plight captured in photographs, which supports the view that "*victims are interested in the portrayal of their own suffering. But they want that suffering to be seen as unique*" (Sontag, 2003:100).

The reconstruction of the past by journalists is of paramount importance in the development of the narrative of the past. Regarding the media's representation of the past, Edy (1999) supports that the past is presented in a much more emotional way than it is taught in the classroom. The media plays a central role in the widespread recollection of historical events that might be excluded from the official historical narrative. The past becomes a tool for the media to use as a vehicle of commemoration. According to Edy, the media conveys history to a wide audience by using historical analogies to analyze and predict current situations. They try to "*ferret out the parts of the past that seem relevant to lead to present circumstances*" (Edy, 1999:80).

The vast majority of the respondents view the role of the media negatively, both during the conflict and in the aftermath. In general, perceptions of the role of the media seem to fall under the scheme of categorizing case studies into 3 different levels: At the first level (those of the recent and violent conflicts - Bosnia, Kosovo, Cyprus & Ireland), the role of the media during the crisis is easily recalled but assessed as negative. In the case studies of the recent conflicts (Bosnia & Kosovo), the media is seen as a factor that exacerbated the conflict by spreading one-sided and inflammatory messages, obeying the agendas of political elites cultivating prejudice and hostility towards opponents. It is worth noting that in all case studies in this category, a significant number of respondents indicated that the same situation continues to a large extent to this day: Media under the strong influence of the same political elites as in the past are still considered completely disreputable, while at the same time state regulatory interventions in the media sphere are not uncommon (as recently happened in Kosovo[13]). In the second category (violent conflicts far in the past - Greece and Spain) the media are also seen as unreliable for reasons probably not directly related to the conflict but to their subsequent presence in public life (in Greece because of their attitude during the 2009-2019 financial crisis and in Spain because they are seen as factors that generally fuel conflict and tension rather than peace and stability). In the third category (non-violent conflict - Poland and Germany), there is a clear age difference in media use, with young

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[13] https://balkaninsight.com/2021/04/21/kosovo-media-criticise-call-for-state-regulation-of-online-content/
https://prishtinainsight.com/press-council-and-ajk-criticise-call-for-state-regulation-of-online-content/

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people being absorbed by social media while older people remain more loyal to 'traditional' media. However, both groups express a strong distrust towards the media, either because they hold extreme views (in the case of Poland) or because they often report one-sidedly and stereotypically on critical issues (in the case of Germany).

As mentioned earlier (and as expected), there is a significant age difference in media use preference. Only a few survey respondents indicated that they are "heavy users" of social media, with daily presence and content production. A significant number of respondents expressed concern about the role of social media in public life and its influence in shaping public opinion. There were many references specifically to social media and the fact that all opinions can be made public, no matter how provocative or extreme - a fact that does not contribute to a climate of good intentions and reconciliation. Nevertheless, the role of social media was not considered critical or decisive in any case study.

There was almost unanimous agreement that the media do not help mitigate differences and bring rival parties closer together - on the contrary, it is not uncommon for the media to provoke tensions and the resurgence of past conflicts. The vast majority of participants mentioned that this is probably done for financial profit, to attract the largest possible audience through a sensationalist approach, promoting confrontation and cultivating hostility towards the opposing group. The media appear to be intimately intertwined with both the political dimensions of conflict and the cultivation of mnemonic patterns in relation to those conflicts in the future. In this way, they act as fundamental 'vehicles' for the transmission (and to some extent the 'construction') of community memory of the past, and thus strongly influence notions of identity. The function of the media appears multi-layered and often latent.

Beyond the narrative patterns that emerge based on the three categories of case studies mentioned above, some patterns emerge from an overall consideration of the cases.

The "Avoidance Strategy" overall narrative pattern

A strong overall pattern that emerges is the "*avoidance strategy*". Whatever the type and nature of the troubled past, it is better not to talk about it in the present. Based on the reports of the majority of respondents in most countries under investigation (mainly Ireland, Germany, Greece, Spain, Bosnia, and Cyprus), dialogue, debate, and any kind of reference to the troubled past are avoided diligently. Interestingly, this reluctance to discuss the troubled past is manifested on many different levels.

At the interpersonal/family level, there is a significant number of participants who state that in their immediate or extended family circle, the troubled past is either not a frequent topic of discussion or is systematically avoided. As one would probably expect, this decision comes primarily from older people who have personally experienced the conflict. In contrast, the majority of younger participants try to obtain information about the troubled past from the family environment. The family environment is usually surrounded by a default trust that creates

conditions of a priori reliability and validity that are not questioned by the younger and influence their opinions about the facts of the past.

Even greater, however, was the number of participants who indicated that in their countries' educational systems, references to the troubled past are either completely absent from official curricula or appear at the end of (mainly history) textbooks, so that in most cases it is practically impossible to teach these topics due to time constraints. In no case, however, was there any satisfaction with the way state educational institutions dealt with the subject of reference to the countries' troubled past. The reasons for this appear to be manifold. The conflict facts examined in this research study are events that in one way or another fall within the contemporary historical period of the case study countries. It is mainly for this reason that there is some perplexity on the part of state/institutional education policymakers, as the processes of asserting one of the historical narratives as 'dominant' may still be underway and, in any case, not yet established and consolidated at the collective level. A second reason is the reluctance of educational institutions in the case study countries to fully address the events of the troubled past in the classroom for fear of creating a climate of confrontation and hostility and a possible resurgence of tensions. It was not uncommon for participants (most of whom were young) to report that teachers - especially at the primary and the secondary education level - did not seem to know or have clear instructions on how to address the specific issues. For this reason, it was often a matter of personal choice on the part of the teacher whether or not to discuss the issues related to the troubled past in class. The interviews revealed that the state tries to present a blurred image of conflict from an early age. The state upholds the idea of conflict, but at the same time refrains from taking a clear position on the events.[14]

It is also interesting to note a third level at which the "avoidance strategy" appears, namely the level of the institutional state. Here, this strategy appears in the form of an informal collective agreement (such as Ireland's 'moving on'), accompanied by measures to ensure minimal contact between rival communities (usually education and/or socio-political segregation as in Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Cyprus). The aim is also to move into the future with a "together-but-separate" model that can at least guarantee peace and stability. The vast majority of research participants sharply criticized these institutional choices, seeing them not even close to a "solution" but as a sure way to perpetuate the problem. In addition, there is the almost unanimous opinion of all respondents that daily contact with members of the other community is a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence in the future (a contact that in most cases already existed in the past before the conflict).

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[14] The resolution of the European Parliament of 19th of September 2019 on "the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe" called on Member States to: "*commemorate 23 August as the European Day of Remembrance for the victims of totalitarian regimes at both EU and national level, and to raise the younger generation's awareness of these issues by including the history and analysis of the consequences of totalitarian regimes in the curricula and textbooks of all schools in the EU*" (European Parliament, 2019. European Parliament Resolution on the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe (2019/2819(RSP). 19 September)

In the vast majority of cases, younger people with transmitted experiences of conflict appear to be more receptive to the prospect of closer contact with members of the opposing community. However, this seems to be more the case in theory than in practice. There are many reasons for this, two of which seem to be the most important. The first is that, apart from the institutional obstacles that may exist, taking such initiatives may lead to social stigmatization within the community to which they belong and therefore they feel safer not to attempt such a thing (Bosnia, Cyprus, Kosovo). The second is that they do not want to come into conflict with their family environment, which may not approve of their relationship with members of the other community and would in any case lead to embarrassment and tension (Bosnia, Cyprus). A slightly higher degree of receptivity among female than among male respondents could also be found in terms of communication and rapprochement efforts, but this too remains at a level of wishful thinking.

Nevertheless, the avoidance strategy described above may work temporarily, but it does not create conditions for genuine reconciliation and coexistence-goals that it seriously undermines. Creating an environment of daily contact at the interpersonal, social, educational, economic, and political levels, and creating the conditions for the development of an equal and fair public dialogue to evaluate the troubled past with the aim of future peaceful coexistence, seem to be the desirable solutions.

The "Caretakers of Normality" overall narrative pattern

In terms of **gender**, the pattern that emerges from the analysis of the data material in relation to the role of women in the respective conflicts could be described as 'the caretakers of normality'. In almost all of the case studies, women with personal experience reported that they played a more marginal or secondary role in the conflict (except for a few isolated cases, notably one participant from Kosovo who was actively involved in the conflict, mainly at an organizational rather than operational level). Primarily, women were not reported to play an active role in critical decision-making processes or to be actively involved in violent incidents in the conflict. All reports of being in conflict zones (mainly Cyprus and Kosovo) were rather accidental, mainly when trying to flee elsewhere accompanied by family members to escape the conflict.

On the contrary, the privileged sphere of women's activity during the conflict was undoubtedly in the background, behind the front line of the conflict, in the domestic environment, where they tried to maintain a semblance of a normal daily routine. Despite the events of the conflict, the daily needs of those left behind remained real and urgent in adverse circumstances: children must survive, the elderly must be cared for, family ties and households must be maintained. These general tasks (and everything related to them, especially on a practical level) were mainly the responsibility of women. One might say that, especially in violent conflicts, it was not uncommon for women to surpass male front-line fighters in self-sacrifice, heroism, endurance, and stamina. The difficulty of securing even the bare necessities for survival, the ingenuity, and creativity in the solutions they implemented, their constant struggle with hopelessness and despair, the fear of death as well as the fear of the unknown future, the lack of information about the fate of their own

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people at the front lines of the conflict, the often forced relocations and/or migrations, but also the insistence to maintain as much normalcy as possible, were the common components of the vast majority of female participants with personal experience of the conflict. In this way, women were the ones preparing for the "day after" the conflict, trying to maintain a sense of normalcy for the next day in the turbulent present. It was the responsibility of women to prepare the environment that awaited everyone upon their return from the front lines. Both men and women fought, each in a different way and a different area. In this dipole, however, it seems that men fought for the present while women fought for the future.

The secondary role of women in the events of the conflict was evident in the interviews: (a) in some cases (Spain, Poland), women interviewed asked the men who were present to confirm that certain events they reported had actually taken place, or (b) in the case of Kosovo, it proved particularly difficult to find women to participate in the research. As expected, the overall picture in the 8 case studies was not completely homogeneous, but depended on several factors related primarily to the nature of the conflict, but also to the cultural characteristics of each society (e.g. general level of equality and emancipation, religion, education, etc). Consequently, we find that in cases of violent and recent conflicts (Kosovo, Cyprus, Bosnia), memories are more intense and traumatic. In cases of distant conflicts, memories are less intense, and the focus is on the present and the future - while in present circumstances gender issues are not particularly important (Greece, Spain, Ireland). In the cases of non-violent conflicts (Germany, Poland), the gender factor either did not play a significant or noteworthy role (Poland), or it was an issue that seemed to be resolved at the internal national cultural level (Germany).

The issue of sexual abuse of women as a weapon of war and practice of revenge and humiliation of the enemy should be particularly emphasized. It should be clearly noted that of the total number of respondents in the research, not a single one reported being a victim of sexual abuse-rape during the conflict. All reports included information about other individuals. The problem was particularly evident in the cases of Cyprus and Kosovo. In both cases, there were isolated reports from participants with personal experience of the conflict of information or direct contact with other women who had been victims of sexual abuse-rape. There were also isolated reports from male respondents of instances of sexual abuse-rape against women that they were aware of. In many cases, women from the same group also reported that there was widespread fear of sexual abuse during conflicts if they fell into the hands of the opponents. Noteworthy are the examples of two accounts: a woman from Kosovo whose her husband, in the face of the possibility that she might fall into the hands of the opponents, gives her his revolver; also, the case of a Greek Cypriot, woman who describes the near-rape of a group of women by Turkish soldiers, at which she was also present, and how she was able to prevent it by chance at the last moment.

Sexual abuse-rape is a morally highly reprehensible act. As such, it cannot be part of the official narrative of the "victor" of the conflict (even if it is an affirmation of victory through the supreme insult and humiliation of the opponent). It is obvious that no one wants to be held responsible for the atrocities committed during the conflict. On the contrary, it is an issue that greatly feeds the

previous narrative pattern of "victimhood": It emphatically confirms who is the "victim" and who is the "perpetrator", while tarnishing the image of the one who claims to be a "victor".

Two additional observations should be made. Sexual abuse is an act of infringing female honor and thus an affront to family, social, and national honor. All types of reports of sexual abuse and rape come from the case studies in the first category (Kosovo, Cyprus, Bosnia), where the conflicts were intensely violent and relatively recent in time (Barrow, 2010).[15] At the same time, however, it should be noted that these are three countries with strong patriarchal norms, which in any case makes it difficult to admit or publicize such incidents, so they are condemned as "unconfirmed rumors" and certainly not as "verified" events of the historical past. The second observation has to do with the fact that all three specific conflict cases were not intra-national but inter-ethnic conflicts, whose opponents initially had different perceptions of their national identity. Consequently, the common cultural elements that may have united the adversaries were obviously not sufficient or suitable to prevent the commission of similar crimes.

Most of those with transmitted experiences avoid discussing the conflict with those who have experienced it personally, as this would stir up the memories and experiences of the latter group. Most female participants prefer to focus on the future and choose a consensual rather than a conflictual approach. The transmitted memories associated with incidents of sexual abuse-rape and violence against women, in general, appear to be those that are most easily remembered and have the strongest impact on participants who have not had personal experiences of the conflicts.

Among the symbols that define the distinction between "us" and "them" and the symbolic "boundary guards" that distinguish the in-group from the out-group, gender matters. Just as nationalism emphasizes the characteristics of the group to exclude the "other," women within the imagined community are defined by their characteristics in relation to men. The pattern that emerges is that of women bearing certain characteristics that are not those of men so that they are excluded from the public sphere and confined within the symbolic boundaries that define the private sphere. Women are the caretakers of normality, responsible for maintaining the family unit: the core of the nation and any national project. If the imagined community is defined by the natural ethnic boundaries, women embody the symbolic boundaries of the nation; they bear the burden for the biological, cultural, and political reproduction of the nation and the transmission of the nation's values to the descendants of the imagined community to which they belong (Yuval-Davis, 1993; Mertus, 1994).

"Prevalence of National over European Identity" overall narrative pattern

The idea of a common European identity seems to be a goal that is difficult to achieve. With the notable exception of Germany, all other countries in the case study were clearly reluctant to adopt such an approach. In all cases, national identity was found to take precedence over European

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[15] UN' Security Council recognizes the significance of such acts during war and conflict times under the Resolution 1820 / 2008 (https://www.un.org/press/en/2008/sc9364.doc.htm)

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identity. Germany was the only exception where a significant number of participants prioritized European identity over their national identity. German participants seem to have internalized the "European Vision and Ideal" more than other nationals as this is something that affects them on an individual/personal level. Similar references are also found in the accounts of participants from the case study countries with EU candidate status (Bosnia, Kosovo), but it is more than obvious that these references are expressed on an internal level with regards to the current status of these countries: The EU seems to be the solution to all the countries' problems and a "land of opportunity" at the individual level.

Of particular note is Cyprus, where the Greek-Cypriot southern part of the island (the Republic of Cyprus) is already a member of the EU, while the Turkish-Cypriot northern part (the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) is not. Turkish-Cypriot participants expressed similar views about the EU as the other participants from the EU candidate countries in the case studies. The peculiarity of the case is that the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is not an officially recognized state entity and therefore cannot be granted EU candidate status. Consequently, for the Turkish-Cypriots the path to official EU accession must lead through the resolution of the Cyprus problem and the eventual reunification of the two separate parts of the island into a single state. One can thus observe a highly idealized view of the EU among Turkish-Cypriot participants, while at the same time Greek-Cypriot participants - who have recently experienced the 2015 economic crisis and subsequent EU austerity measures - express rather negative or moderately positive opinions about the EU. For the Greek Cypriots (as for the Greeks to a large extent), the EU's attitude during the economic crisis has been punitive rather than solidary and helpful - a fact that has further alienated and distanced them from the acceptance of a common European identity.

At the level of cultural unification - a level crucial for identity formation - the EU, with the glaring exception of Germany, seems unable to play a dominant role. The EU is perceived as an "economic" institution, dealing mainly with economic and financial issues (monetary issues, trade issues, etc.), a perception that may act as a divisive rather than a unifying factor between the member states. The economic crisis of 2009-2019 has only deepened these divisions and made them more visible and obvious - despite efforts to the contrary - divisions such as North vs. South, the "rich" North vs. the "poor" South, intra-EU alliances "Visegrad countries" vs. the rest of the EU, authoritarian political choices such as Hungary and Poland against the rest of the EU, and of course divisions between the Mediterranean EU members (Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain) who have directly dealt with the refugee problem and the northern EU members who have tried to avoid it.

"Solidarity" was a widespread expectation, but in many ways, it does not seem to have been fulfilled. On the contrary, the EU's attitude towards the specific divisions mentioned above creates resentment and frustration, which makes the goal of building a common EU identity even more distant and seemingly impossible.

Holocaust commemoration has served as a transnational mechanism of solidarity and integration and has been a means of strengthening a common European historical consciousness and achieving integration. In the post-World War II period, local conflicts in Europe led to the emergence of 'local'

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memories of traumatic historical events, but they did not have the same impact as the Holocaust. The European Parliament resolution of 19 September 2019 on the "Importance of European Remembrance for the Future of Europe" calls on the Member States to: *"[…] commemorate […] the victims of totalitarian regimes at both EU and national level, and to raise the younger generation's awareness of these issues by including the history and analysis of the consequences of totalitarian regimes in the curricula and textbooks of all schools in the EU"* (European Parliament, 2019)

The common (national/supranational) identity is constructed based on events that have a global reach or whose impact, in any case, strongly affects those involved in them. These events could be called "mega-events". Examples include World War II and the Holocaust. However, it would be wrong to assume that only such events contribute to identity formation; individual conflicts of a national and/or local character can also contribute to the formation of identity elements. At regional and national levels, commemoration or de-commemoration (or the repression or silencing of memory) serves as a means of promoting inclusion and exclusion both at the intra- and inter-group levels, sometimes leading to tensions between different national memories and thus threatening European integration. The local/regional conflict events in the eight case studies may not be comparable to mega-events, but their consequences remain significant on both a personal and collective level.

The effort to create a common European Identity should hence not depend solely on the recognition of mega-events. The vast majority of research participants turn to the EU, aiming the acknowledgment of the significance and impact of the national/local events that affect them so that they can detach themselves from the national/local and turn to the supranational/regional. As the recognition of their sufferings due to the local conflicts remains outstanding, any positive evaluation of a common European Identity is precluded.

Regarding the role of the EU in the conflicts studied, it seems that for the majority of participants the EU is either powerless to intervene and impose solutions or irrelevant to the conflict as such (especially because the respective conflicts took place before the establishment of the EU). It is also not uncommon that participants often give answers to EU-related questions based on their current view of the EU rather than on their view of the EU's role during past conflicts. On the other hand, there are some specific cases where the EU had the opportunity and the capacity to play a decisive role in a conflict (especially in recent times) but chose not to (e.g. Bosnia, Kosovo).

Overall, the idea of a common European Identity still seems to have a long and difficult road ahead. In terms of negative assessments, the majority of respondents - with the exception of Germany - view the EU as something far removed from their everyday lives and pressing national problems, as a bureaucratic institution with vague powers and unclear responsibilities, as a mechanism that is slow and cumbersome that lacks proactive initiatives. In the few cases where the EU does act, it does so for economic reasons and with a punitive attitude rather than one of solidarity.

Positive views towards the EU are held mainly by participants from countries with EU accession status (Bosnia, Kosovo), the Turkish-Cypriots, and, to a large extent, Germany). For the former, the EU is strongly idealized because it can offer economic, political, and social stability and progress.

Participants from Germany spontaneously focus on the "idea of a United Europe", keeping in mind the bigger picture and the role the EU can play on the global stage.

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