

NAKHIJEVAN FROM THE TREATY OF BATUM AND THE MILITARY CAMPAIGN OF A. OZANIAN TO "REPUBLIC OF ARASDAYAN"

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The article has been delivered on 08.09.2022, reviewed on 10.04.2023, accepted for publication on 11.04.2023
DOI: 10.53548/0320-8117-2023.1-49

Outline

Nakhijevan is the region in the southern part of Armenia and in the north of Araxes River (border with Iran). Since 1828 to the World War I it was part of Armenian and Yerevan provinces. The collapse of the Russian Empire by the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 created favorable conditions for Ottoman and then Kemalist Turks to advance on the Eastern Armenia, Yerevan and Nakhijevan. On March 3, 1918, the Soviet Russia ceded to Turkey by the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, Kars, Ardahan and Batum. Later on the Treaty of Batum was signed on June 4, 1918, between Ottoman Empire and three new independent Transcaucasian States of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. In compliance with it Turks legalized their aggression and occupied vast territories of the Republic of Armenia, including Nakhijevan (on July 18-20, 1918). This occupation finished on November 25, 1918, due to the Turkish defeat in the World War I, affirmed by the Mudros Armistice of October 30, 1918. All these months the local Moslem National Council served as a body of self-government. Besides, after their evacuation, Ottoman forces left a regular army battalion in the area and proclaimed here on December 5, 1918, the quasi-state formation, called "independent Arasdayan Republic".

Here we examine the developments at the district of Nakhijevan during the Batum negotiations of May 1918, and consequences of the Treaty of Batum, until the Turkish defeat in the World War I that led to the proclamation of this Ottoman-created political unit. We tried to evaluate how political and military events affected the native Armenians and Tatars in the region. The core of our research had been historiography of Armenia, Iran, Turkey, USA and Great Britain with additional analysis of the datum, reports, documents, narratives and relevant events, important for the formation of new ethnic pattern in Nakhijevan.

Introduction

An Armenian district Nakhijevan saw many invasions, massacres and relocations; it had also witnessed more than two thousand years of socio-economic relations, large-scale trade and wide cultural ties, in common with ruinous Turkish-Persian wars and political subordination to the Persian Empire in 1507-1828. Lat-

er, in 1921 Nakhijevan as an enclave was transformed into an autonomous republic of Soviet Azerbaijan. As such, it has not land border with the republic, he was submitted to. Three neighbors of this region are Armenia with the common border line of 224 km, Iran with border of 163 km and Turkey with 12 km respectively. Although Turkey has narrow and short common frontier, it has much more connections and influence on Nakhijevan than two other neighbors.

During the First World War and after the Bolshevik rising (in 1917-1921) Nakhijevan witnessed acute military clashes and intense bloodshed. After the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, signed on March 3, 1918, situation in Armenia was tense and National Dashnak party of Social-Revolutionary nature had limited defense activity in western and eastern Armenia. Actually, Bolsheviks had only stimulated fast-moving evacuation of the Russian Army from the Caucasus Front and restricted their political support by the sole declaration of the Armenian right for self-determination.

From February 10 and especially after March 3, 1918, Armenia was under new wave of Turkish attack and it was only on May 21-29, 1918, in the victorious Battle of Sardarabad, that Armenian forces stopped the main direction in the advance of the Ottoman troops. Thus, they saved the eastern heartland of Armenia from the Turks. This was an important and fateful victory in the war with the Ottomans, which saved Yerevan for a moment and changed the main direction of the Turkish campaign, which was redirected onto Tiflis and Baku. Owing to this success in common with fights near Bash Aparan and Karakilisa, Armenia established on May 28, 1918, its independence as the First sovereign Republic.

At this moment and even earlier, the Moslem National Council of Nakhijevan had proclaimed its own independence on March 7 (February 22 by Julian calendar) of the same year.¹ Its members talked with Armenian National Council of Nakhijevan and suggested to join to Iran together. Since all three nations, united in the Transcaucasian Federation, considered themselves to be a part of democratic Russia, Armenian local body did not accept the plan. Armenians said they were the part of their native Erevan Governorate as a member of Transcaucasian federative unit. As we see, the MNC proclamation of independence had been done during intensive and lost clashes with the Armenian National Council on March 2-25, 1918, in the main city of the district². However, the rebellion of the MNC was suppressed and its not-realized "independence" was finished with the last day of March fightings. After that and until the last days of May two elected – Armenian and Moslem Councils kept some kind of fragile peaceful co-existence. The city of Nakhijevan itself was divided into Armenian and Tatar segments³. And at a stage o

¹ Միմոնյան 1996, 201, Հոհրաբյան 2000, 79, Зограбян 2012, 78-79:

² The National Archives of Armenia, fund 314, register 1, file 163, folio 9 (following: NAA 314/1/163/9).

³ In Tsarist Russia, the Turkish-speaking Shia population of Transcaucasia was called the Caucasian Tatars, to distinguish them from the Sunny Turkish dwellers of the Ottoman Empire. In Iranian publications, the Turkish-speaking population of Nakhijevan is regarded not as an immigrant element from Arran and

its own independence, new Republic of Armenia clearly regarded and formally requested this region as the motherland of the new State, which had been a component of the Erivan Province (Gubernia) since 1849.

The Occupation of Batum by the Ottoman Army

The Ottoman Army continued its advance after the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, which was violated on May 15, 1918. Only one day before Vehib pasha explained to Armenian delegates, that his Empire was interested in two routes to Baku. The eastern road went to Gandzak, Evlakh, and valley of Kura. The second way stretched via Sharur, Nakhijevan, and Zangezur⁴. At the last end, on May 26 the Turks pressed the Transcaucasian delegation in Batum by categorical ultimatum⁵ and got an agreement with three freshly proclaimed independent republics. It was easy done, since Turkish forces reached only 7 kilometers far from Yerevan and 10 kilometers from Vagharshapat (Echmiadzin). So, on June 4, 1918, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan signed the Treaty of Batum with Ottoman authorities. As G. Makhmourian comments, this Treaty contained huge predatory territorial augmentation of Turkey, including practically all Nakhijevan uezd (4482,9 sq. km), with its south-eastern sub-district of Ordubad (680 sq. km) reserved for artificially formed Transcaucasian Azerbaijan⁶.

Another scholar, A. Gharibyan, believes that Turkey imposed its conditions at Batum because the Armenian diplomats knew nothing about a signal success, gained by their Army near Sardarabad. He writes: "It is difficult to imagine what fate of the Armenian nation would have been if it did not display such examples of struggle and heroism in the May battles [of 1918]. The Armenians' success was indubitable and could go on, but our delegates in Batum, being unaware of the victories of their own forces, let the Turks dictate the points of the signed contract."⁷ He adds: "General Andranik believed that they should continue the successes and make Turkey sign a beneficial treaty for us. Though it is difficult to say whether Caucasian Armenia, which was full of about half million Armenian refugees and had only 2 dozen thousand not efficient soldiers, could provide serious successes against the superior Turkish forces. However, Turkey recognized the independence of Armenia, but Kars, Ardahan, Kaghzvan, Otlis regions, half of the Yerevan district, all of the Surmalu unit, three-quarters of Alexandropol and Ech-

Shirvan, but rather as people, who lived in Iran, south of Araxes, and then moved gradually into Nakhijevan since the end of the XVII century. These masses were Turkified within Iranian frontiers during and after the Tamerlane and Turcoman invasions of XIV-XV centuries.

⁴ Hovannisian 1967, 195.

⁵ NAA 222/1/141/236.

⁶ The ancient Armenian name of Ordubad was Vordvat. See: Makhmourian 2016, 348. The text of the Treaty of Batum see: Բաղալյան 1962, 172-178 and Ազառյան 2002, 85-87: The map that compares the borders of 1914, with the treaties of Brest Litovsk and Batum see: Reynolds 2011, XVIII.

⁷ Cand. of Sc. in Hist. Alik A. Gharibyan is an Associate Professor at the Chair of the History of Armenia, Professor of the Department of History at the Yerevan State University. See: Gharibyan 2014, 20-21.

miadzin districts with the city of Alexandropol, together with the one-fifth of Sharur-Daralagyaz districts were taken away. Nakhijevan was also captured from Armenia"⁸. German Ambassador to Constantinople J.H. von Bernstorff made a very pertinent remark: "Turkey left only Lake Sevan for Armenians, where they can swim, but they don't have a place to come out and get dry"⁹.

Gaining an agreement, the Ottoman forces advanced into Sharur-Nakhijevan. They were attracted by the Alexandropol – Echmiadzin – Nakhchevan-Julfa railway, since it facilitated the southern direction of their assault onto Baku. Y. Murgul represents also an official explanation, given by Vehib pasha at the Batum Conference on May 14, that this line would "be used for the transfer of the Ottoman soldiers into Northern Iran; and as the war against the Britain was going on, Transcaucasian railways would be under Ottoman control"¹⁰. However, first of all the Ottoman army needed oil with the Turkish-speaking population; and it tried to avoid any large-scale collisions with Iran – big, neutral State under the Allied military control. At the last end, the Treaty of Batum was signed but not ratified by Armenia and was completely rejected by all Allies of the Ottoman Empire. Germany, Austro-Hungary and Bulgaria demanded to respect the borders of Brest Litovsk, which did not gave Nakhijevan and all territories east of Kars and Batum to Turkey.

As we see, the Treaty of Batum was not quite legal but real achievement for Turks, because it formalized their further expansion and wrecked any possibility to ameliorate the situation in the Ottomans provinces of Armenia. These provinces were ruined and devastated by the total annihilation of Genocide, with the wholesale massacre of indigenous population and without any perspective of repatriation for hundreds thousands of refugees. It's a well-known fact that Ottoman Minister of War Enver pasha planned to occupy all Armenian territories and to divide them between his Empire, Georgia and Azerbaijan, implementing his favorite strategy of "Armenia without any Armenians"¹¹.

That's why immediately after June 4, 1918, the Turks shaped an Eastern Army group and created an Army of Islam at Elisavetpol. They continued their advance and on June 16 entered from Persia the railway station of Shahtakhti in Nakhijevan. It was only July 10 when the Ottoman 36th Division attacked the Armenian Julfa from the Persian side of the border; four days later their 11th Division entered Sharur and two regiments of the 33rd Division moved across Shahtakhty to seize the city of Nakhijevan. On July 16 Turkish soldiers began their large-scale advance into the district and after two-days fight captured the entered the main city on July 19. All this period, from July 14 and during the August around 15.000 Armenians of Sharur and 38.500 Armenians of Nakhijevan districts were subject

⁸ Gharibyan 2014, 21.

⁹ Gharibyan 2014, 21.

¹⁰ Murgul 2007, 50. The date of May 11 was not quite correct.

¹¹ The number of refugees: Քաղցնիւի 1921, 50. On Enver: Stuermer, Harry 1917, 48.

to killings in thousands and total deportation into Daralagyaz. These massacres and other Genocidal actions were completed by regular Ottoman detachments, accompanied by Tatar and Kurdish gangs¹².

Since Armenia was too weak to withstand Turkish demands, registered at the Treaty of Batum, its 1st and the 2nd Divisions of the national Army Corps obeyed the ceasefire, ordered by General T. Nazarbekian. In his turn, Andranik Ozanian,¹³ who had reorganized the Western Armenian Division into an Armenian Special Striking Detachment on April 23, stressed the compulsory terms of the Brest Litovsk. So, he rejected to surrender and blamed the Armenian National Council, headed by Dashnaktsutyun, for betrayal. On June 6 his Detachment moved from Dilijan for Daralagyaz then Persia. Owing to this act Andranik was dismissed from the Armenian army. However, he moved to Nakhijevan to fight against the Ottoman Army and to combine his unit with the British forces in Northern Iran¹⁴.

Ozanian rejected the Treaty of Batum because it deprived the new Republic of all the Western Armenia with the greater part of Eastern Armenia. The losses stretched from Van and Bitlis until Surmalu, Nakhijevan, vicinities of Erevan and Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin). General Andranik also hoped that good relations with Bolsheviks could help to save the eastern part of the Erivan Province, including Nakhijevan, and to liberate those Western Armenian lands, which were free of the Turkish yoke only three months ago.

We should note that A. Ozanian, promoted on January 29, 1918, to the rank of Major General, was very experienced and gifted. So, on April 6 in Alexandropol he had warned Commander of the Armenian Corps Lieutenant General T. Nazarbekian that the main target of the Ottoman Army was located at the Caspian shore, very far from the borders, drawn at Brest Litovsk or Batum¹⁵. That's why Ozanian elaborated his own rescue strategy. G. Makhmourian recorded that "striving to rescue this ancient land, General Andranik Ozanian had marched there with his Armenian Special Striking Detachment of 1.400 men, in common with 20.000 refugees under its auspice. Andranik had rejected the Treaty of Batum, as far as it did not decrease the Brest Litovsk losses and did not create any guarantees for security. On June 7, 1918, General had conducted his fighters into Persia, where he could unite the British troops. However, having discovered that this is impossible, he returned to Nakhijevan"¹⁶.

¹² See: NAA 200/1/212/88-89, Зограбян 2012, 113-115, 124, Aliprandi 2016, 26, Մախմուրեան 2017, 213-214:

¹³ Andranik Ozanian (1865-1927) – a freedom fighter, a national hero and an outstanding figure in the Armenian national liberation movement. Actually, one of the most prominent leaders of all the liberation groups, fighting in Western Armenia.

¹⁴ Քաջունի 1921, 10, 33, Murgul 2007, 57:

¹⁵ Չելեպյան 1990, 441, Սիմոնյան 1996, 86-87, Մախմուրեան 2017, 215:

¹⁶ Մախմուրեան 2017, 212:

Ottoman military interference and renewing massacre in the region had naturally met a strong social reaction in Yerevan. Isn't it that according to the Treaty of Batum the Turkish army immediately subordinated on July 18-19, 1918, all district to its own rule. There was not any talk about local "independence" of March 7-25, 1918. Now, in July, all the region was regarded as an Ottoman domain, violently separated from Yerevan Province.¹⁷ So, the Turks profited from Treaty of Batum and declared Nakhijevan their own territory. This action was gladly welcomed by the local Tatars who met the Ottoman soldiers with Turkish flags and fair obedience. On August 15 sultan Mehmed VI officially endorsed this situation by his personal declaration.

Local Moslem dwellers willingly accepted the Ottoman administration, especially elaborated after the seize and massacre in Baku, that took place in the middle of September.

The Turkish Army remained in Nakhijevan from July 20, 1918 to November 25, 1918, in Goghtan and till January 26, 1919, in the main part of the district. Though according to Mudros Armistice (of October 30, 1918) and Instructions, given by the commander-in-chief of the British forces in Western Transcaucasia General Major G. Forestier Walker on behalf of all Entente Powers on January 7, 1919, to the commander of the Ottoman 9th Army Shevki pasha, Turkish troops were ordered to withdraw to the borders of 1914, evacuating Kars, Nakhijevan and the whole region¹⁸. But it was not done. The Turks waited until the British come and establish on January 26, 1919, their own Military Governorship in Nakhijevan.

During this period between Mudros and British arrival, first, the short-lived independent "Republic of Araxes (Arazdayan in the local term)" was proclaimed on December 5, 1918, for Surmalu-Sharur-Nakhijevan. Its announcement was a reaction to the activity of Erevan and its new Cabinet, formed after on November 4, 1918. On November 27, 1918, the Minister of Interior Aram Manukian¹⁹ had responded to an application by Poruchik (Lieutenant) G. Ter-Harutyunian and appointed him as regional commissar of Nakhijevan²⁰. The latter met tough resistance of the district Moslem Council and could not enter his post. Then, the Moslem dwellers proclaimed their "Republic" and the Government of the Republic of

¹⁷ Makhmourian 2016, 347-349.

¹⁸ NAA 200/2/39/8-13.

¹⁹ Aram Manoukian (1879-1919) – national hero and first Minister of Interior of the Republic of Armenia; one of the leaders of the successful self-defence in Van (April 19 – May 17, 1915), then the Governor of Vaspurakan province in May 20 - July 31, 1915. In 1916-1917 he was a member of the Armenian National Bureau in Tiflis and worked with refugees. Then commissioned by the Armenian National Council to Yerevan, where was appointed by the city Congress on March 6, 1918, its Dictator. Was the chief military and civil administrator, who secured all necessary supplies for the Sardarapat battles in May; actual head of the Republic Armenia until July 23, 1918, and Minister of Interior from June 30 till his death of typhus in January 29, 1919.

²⁰ NAA 222/2/448/1-2. The date of November 30, 1918, recorded in Зограбян 2012, с. 143 is not quite correct.

Armenia created the Military Governorship, appointing on January 14, 1919, General Major G. Shelkonvikian as its chief²¹. The local Moslems and Ottoman commanders understood well that "Republic of Araxes" was not viable: it was small, weak, could not stand the Armenian Army and no State was interested in its "independence".

It was obvious that 700 Turkish regular soldiers under the command of Halil bey and Yusuf beg could not resist to the Armenian Army, and the British forces were coming. That's why the Ottomans convened on January 17-18, 1919, a special meeting in the city of Kars and proclaimed their new "South-West Caucasus Republic"²². This new puppet union demanded its autonomy in the Ottoman borders, kept the Turkish flag, coat of arms, language and money. It pronounced also as its territory all the area from the Black Sea, border of 1914 until Surmalu and Nakhijevan; prohibited any repatriation and was ready to kill Armenians, who would like to restore their homes and property. Thus, it was quite natural that this "South-West Caucasus" did not get any British support, who preferred to replace its pro-Ottoman administration with their own Governors: one in Kars and another – Lieutenant-Colonel F. Laughton with 800 soldiers in Nakhijevan. The British Governorship confirmed Armenian civil administration in the district, though it stopped repatriation of Armenian refugees here.

Taking into account the Instructions, given to the Ottoman Army on January 7, 1919, and its hostile initiative of January 17, the British began to establish their on Military Governorship of Nakhijevan. On January 26 General Forestier Walker sent a letter to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia H. Kajaznoui, sealed by the stamp of the British 27th Division on January 28, 1919²³. This message informed that Captain, Lieutenant Colonel ad int. F. Laughton had been appointed the Military Governor of Nakhijevan. The British detachments entered this district on January 29, and gradually increased their garrison to 800 soldiers. It was only February 3, 1919, when the Foreign Minister of Armenia S. Tigranian signed an Agreement with F. Laughton on withdrawal of Armenian Army from this district²⁴, and February 10, when its detachments were called back to its northern border.

So, we may record that the "Republic of Arasdayan (Araxes)" had been visible only from December 5, 1918, till January 17, 1919. And in contrast with numerous paper testimonies, remained by the local Moslem Council, we have no many documents on behalf of this administrative entity.

²¹ NAA 199/1/14, part I/132; also: Նախիջևանի Շարուրը 1918-1920 թթ., Փաստաթղթեր 1993, 61, Зограбян 2012, 162-164: The day of December 5, 1918 is fixed by the Erevan newspaper "Zang" of the same date: Զոհրարյան 2002, 41, Зограбян 2012, 162.

²² Hovannisian 2011, 280.

²³ NAA 200/1/212/28-29.

²⁴ NAA 200/1/209/37; published in: Նախիջևանի-Շարուրը 1918-1920 թթ., Փաստաթղթեր 1993, 80, Ավետիսյան 1996, 192, Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունը 1918-1920 թթ. 2000, 87:

What depends on Sharur, when the the Army of the Republic of Armenia had come to establish its administration here, the local Moslems had surrendered on December 22 and adopted their subordination to Yerevan authorities. Then in the first days of January, 1919, Sharur leaders of the "Republic of Arasdayan" opened their ten-days peace negotiations in Yerevan. At the same time they established contacts with the British, who were invited to replace Armenian administration. They had a reason to do so, since the Republic of Armenia had already announced Nakhijevan its territory and appointed its Military Governor.

Andranik in Nakhijevan after the Treaty of Batum

Now let's analyze the activity of Ozanian in the district under discussion. It was already on May 29, 1918, that Minister of War Enver pasha sent an instruction to his commander of the 3rd Army Vehib pasha, that Armenia should be surrounded and removed from Karakilis and Nakhijevan to make it have no borders with Georgia and Persia. This new-arising State should be tightly packed from all sides by the Ottoman Empire and Azerbaijan²⁵. As far as Turkey needed good pretext to substantiate its further expansion, the Moslem dwellers of Nakhijevan sent a lot of petitions, asking Ottoman commanders to come and to prevent any consolidation of this district with the rest of Armenia²⁶.

We should note that Nakhijevan was part of Armenian and then Yerevan province from March 21, 1828. The surrounding areas to the east, west and south of this district were old and historical Armenian homelands. When the treaty of June 4, 1918, gave a pretext to separate this region from its Motherland, "the Armenian population of Sharur-Nakhichevan [endured] during the Turkish occupation nothing but genocide in all its manifestations"²⁷. Let's note that in 1916 the district of Nakhijevan had 122.208 dwellers, 51.365 of them were Armenians (42%) and 69.716 Shia Tatars (57%). A lot of Armenians fled from their homes and there were only 38,500 of them in June, 1918. In Sharur Armenian population was scarce, though in 1916 there were 90.250 dwellers in whole Sharur-Daralagyaz district, 29.165 of them were Armenians (32,3%) and 57.982 Shia Tatars (64,2%)²⁸. Besides, "in 1903 there were within the jurisdiction of the prelate of the Armenian Church of Nakhichevan 94 functioning churches and 12 major monasteries, in addition to several other abandoned and dilapidated religious and strategic sites. ...During the encounters in the summer of 1919 between the Armenians and the Moslem insurgents, 45 Armenian villages were destroyed and 10.000 Armenians massacred"²⁹.

²⁵ Murgul 2007, 63.

²⁶ Murgul 2007, 64.

²⁷ Հոհրաբրյան 2002, 3:

²⁸ Кавказский календарь на 1917 годъ 1916, Отдѣль статистическій, 218-221.

²⁹ Ayvazian 1990, 9.

The Armenian hero understood very well that apart from his volunteer unit, Nakhijevan had limited facilities for defense. And really, only highland villages of Goghtan succeeded in their stubborn resistance. Having it in mind, on June 7, 1918, Andranik leaved Dilijan and moved towards Nakhijevan. The Turkish side proclaimed that "Armenians were threatening the Ottoman units with their activities [there] and preventing employment of all forces"³⁰. The Nakhijevan Moslem Council had mistakenly reported about 4000 Armenian infantry, 1000 cavalry, 8 machine guns and 6 pieces of artillery, which ostensibly arrived at this district on June 20, 1918. In a reality, the Striking Detachment entered the district of Nakhijevan on June 17 and arrived its main city on July 18 with only 1400 men at a disposal. Then, on June 21, 1918, General Andranik moved towards Khoy, forced the Ottoman unit on the Julfa bridge to retreat, but his successes did not last long. After the fierce fights in Persia, on June 22-23, the Striking Detachment was forced to retreat, first Julfa and later Goghtan.

In such conditions of rapid evacuation of the Russian Army and large-scale Ottoman advance, the national hero and commander of 1.400-3.000 men Armenian Special Striking Detachment Andranik Ozanian tried to neutralize Turkish, local Tatar and some Persian pretentions. He was also in deep antagonism with authorities of the first Armenian republic because of its weak self-defense efforts. Andranik tried to unite with only one capable side – with the British, to guard, if possible, nearly 60.000 Armenians, who lived in Nakhijevan or came with him as 20.000 refugees³¹ and to impose its military control all over this district to unite it with Armenia. He did know that the Republic of Armenia ceded this soil to Ottomans, that's why he had conducted his fighters into Persia to unite the British troops. His maneuver was not successful and he was forced to return into Nakhijevan. This return increases fighting efficiency and improved the Armenian demographic situation in the region, which was free of hunger. Besides, striving to evade an Ottoman pursue the Detachment had exploded the railway bridge and tunnels, damaged several kilometers of its permanent way.

According to Andranik's expectations, the indigenous population and their authorities evaded both on June 18-20 and on July 2-10 active self-defense and didn't try to accommodate refugees. Then, taking into account that Germany, Austro-Hungary and Bulgaria did not recognize the text of Batum, which was much worse than the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, Andranik had convened in Nakhijevan on July 13-14 in the monastery of St. Karapet³² at Aprakounis a conference with the head of the local Armenian National Council Karapet Aghayan, its Prelate Doctor of theology Sion, chief of the district's self-defense stuff Ervand Kharazian,

³⁰ Murgul 2007, 135-136.

³¹ Մախմուրեան 2017, 212: Hovhannes Hakhverdian was the first Armenian Minister of Defence; he served in June 30, 1918 – March 27, 1919.

³² Monastery had been established in 1381 on the basis of medieval University, which functioned in 1369-1391. Here an idea was coined that the nature has its beginning but no end.

delegate of the Gokhtan ANC and Mayor of Agulis Artavazd Martirosian. They decided to support the Treaty of Brest Litovsk and thus that Ozanian's Detachment would subordinate to Russian central Government and Nakhijevan is declared to be an inseparable part of Russia; that all the population would disarm and the region would obey the martial law.

The very same day, on July 14, ex-assistant of General Ozanian and now commander of 3rd battalion Captain Khachatour Bonapartian sent a telegram to an Extraordinary Bolshevik Commissar for the Caucasus affairs S. Shahumian at Baku. By this message military A. Ozanian requested to inform Moscow about decisions, adopted at Aprakounis. Andranik had also promised to prevent invasion of the Turkish Army into Nakhijevan and expected further instructions³³. He also did understand that would fight against the Ottoman army without any substantial reinforcements.

The Last Military Efforts of Andranik in Nakhijevan

All villages in the Turkish occupied areas were abandoned by their native population and kept under continued attack and looting. Five Armenian villages at Sharur were scattered over the region and could not help each other. Thus defending them was very hard and needed much troops and weapons. In Nakhijevan Ozanian had to disarm big Moslem villages, situated on the road and controlled by the Ottoman officers. Only after this action he could fight Turkish army and defend the center of the district. And he really disarmed the village Yayji on July 16 and sieged Nehram on July 17. Yayji had been blocking movement on the highway of Julfa - Aza³⁴ for more than a year, its barbarous inhabitants invading that territory with unbridled fury.

However, after the success in Yayji, stubborn resistance of Nehram's dwellers under the Turkish Captain Halil bey took too much time and meanwhile the Ottoman detachments entered vicinities of the district's capital. The Striking Detachment did not manage to come and help quickly. It could only assist 400 local soldiers under Poruchik (Captain) Ervand Kharazian to evacuate 8.000 Armenians from the city. That's why on July 20 his soldiers retreated Goghtan and being conferred with a delegation from Agulis, Ozanian's men decided to move into Zangezour, which had been reached on July 23³⁵. Yes, the national hero had not immediate collision with Ottomans Nakhijevan, but he did not succeed in defense of it.

Generally, Armenians were extremely vulnerable and lacked State management; so massacre and displacement tactic of Vehib and Khalil pashas worked. A dweller of Agulis H. Hakhnazarian refers, that after Nehram: "General Andranik retreated to Julfa, whence he moved to Goghtan together with the Armenian refu-

³³ Հոհրաբյան 2000, 118-119, Մախմուրեան 2017, 213:

³⁴ Aza(t), Verin and Nerkin were Armenian villages in Goghtan, 17 km west of Orudbad, on the left bank of Gilan – left tributary of Araxes.

³⁵ Քաջունի 1921, 75-77:

gees from Nakhijevan, Yernjak and Western Armenia who were following his troops. Taking up temporary living in Tsghna village of Goghtan, he occupied himself with the reorganization of his scattered forces, intending to later advance towards Zangezur. ...However, the Turks of Ordubad kept the only road leading to Zangezur blocked so that the General decided to fight his way out by force"³⁶. As a participant of evacuation, the same author testifies: "The entire district of Nakhijevan, including Hin Jugha (old Julfa), Kznut and numerous other prospering villages, was totally devastated and stripped of its Armenian inhabitants"³⁷.

Noticeably, that Nakhijevan and Zangezur were the last Armenian districts of defense after the Treaty of Batum, led by General A. Ozanian. He did not achieved his aim in the first area, but the second one, where Ozanian remained till November 28, 1918, and fought against the Ottoman regulars very well, was saved from Turks³⁸. We can add, that Andranik tried to move into Zangezur through a smooth road extending along the Araxes riverside. However, Turkish inhabitants of Ordubad and Agulis were horror-stricken at the presence of his troops and refugees. They had particularly grown terrified after the seize of the big village Yayji on July 16, since it possessed guns and large manpower. The Moslem National Council of Ordubad hurried to send a delegation to Agulis with a request that the local Armenians should save them from the imminent danger³⁹.

Hakhnazarian states: "The Turks promised one-month sustenance of Andranik's troops and the people following them on condition that they should not launch any hostility against their Turkish neighbors. They also pledged themselves to move away from the road of Ordubad-Karjevan. ...While advancing, he was paving way for his soldiers and the armless people by removing the obstacle posed by the village of blood-thirsty Turkish bandits. He was advancing rapidly, without ever stopping anywhere. He was advancing rapidly, without ever stopping anywhere for a long time". You could make an inference, that he had no intention to defend Goghtan. "As had been the case with Yayji, after his attacks against the Turkish villages, the local armed men either fled to the mountains together with the women and young fellows, or found refuge in Iran by crossing the Araxes. However, once Andranik's troops were away, they returned to their places, fortified their positions and resumed their raids against the Armenian villages"⁴⁰.

³⁶ Hakhnazarian 2013, 26.

³⁷ Hakhnazarian 2013, 139.

³⁸ Also: Avakian 2015, 101.

³⁹ Hakhnazarian 2013, 151.

⁴⁰ Hakhnazarian 2013, 151-152.

Republic of Arasdayan⁴¹ in Nakhijevan in December 1918

The war, bloodshed, and ethnic clashes during the year 1918 continued. After the Andranik retreat from Nakhijevan and during his stay at Zangezur, Ottoman troops did not enter the second region but they seized Baku on September 15-18, where massacred 29,000 Armenians. So, everywhere the Turkish army came, Armenian natives were under pressure to leave these areas or to become the objects of most cruel rule. "The Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan", which was announced by Musavatists in Tiflis on May 27-28, 1918, eagerly profited of the Turkish support and its authorities quickly began to eliminate the Armenians in Elizavetpol and Baku ex-Provinces (Gubernias). During that period, in August-October, 1918, Turkish army entered Karabagh and was prepared to deal with the rest of Armenia in cooperation with the Army of Islam, led by Nuri Pasha.

In Nakhijevan itself Turkish Military Governor was appointed, and the commander of the 1st army corps Kiazim Karabekir pasha, added to his own regular detachments local volunteer force for men 19 years old and more. These squadrons were abundantly armed with Turkish weapons, drilled by Ottoman officers and acted under their command. We can state, that since the capture of Kars on April 25/12, 1918, the staff of the Turkish 9th Division looked into a perspective of direct military intervention and further subordination of Nakhijevan to the Ottoman Empire. This district was regarded as possible Ottoman federative unit; though some leaders of the Nakhijevan MNC did not dismiss a possibility to join Iran.⁴² However, official Tehran could not interfere because its State was neutral and under the control of British Army. In contrast with Persian situation, the Ottoman Army could and designed its plans to annex Nakhijevan on its road to Baku.

After the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918, the Ottoman forces were forced to leave Goghtan on November 25, 1918, and the whole district – only in January of 1919. Taking in mind the necessity to leave the whole region, and profiting of the Moslems' fear to stand the Armenian Government all alone, the Ottomans designed to use the principle of self-determination and planned a formation of the puppet republic of Araxes. Therefore, they tried to create or to revive a political unit which has been attempted on March 7, 1918. Though this time the district was named as "Republic of Aras". Iranian scholars associate this announcement with a period after November 3, 1918,⁴³ although the Armenian media made a concrete report only on December 5 of the same year.

Jamshidi Rad, for example, refers to the Ottoman target in Nakhijevan as follows: "For the implementing Turanism and Pan-Turkism idea, this government started cultural activities including opening schools and libraries, supported by

⁴¹ According to the Armenian sources republic of Araxes had been called as a Republic of Arasdayan, though in Persian sources it is called the Aras republic, and in Turkish sources - Araz Turk Republic.

⁴² 140 ص، همان، راد، جمشیدی

⁴³ 141 ص، همان، راد، جمشیدی

Ottomans. Actually, their purpose was to capture Nakhijevan. The Iranian scholar too optimistically suggests, that 40,000 Armenians were living in Nakhijevan at this moment⁴⁴. So, ethnic tensions raised anew and the Ottoman commander K. Karabekir kept the Ottoman flag on the building of MNC. His troops continued looting and ruined all towns and villages with area, killing all native Armenians, who remained there⁴⁵. Karabekir and Khalil pasha did not went away from the district and served as official military advisors of the "Republic of Arasdayan" on the spot⁴⁶.

It is possible to consider that separation of Nakhijevan from the Ottoman Empire and its transformation into an "independence" could bring the new strategy of the re-submission of this area to Baku. Azerbaijan was regarded as "deputy" of Turkey and everything that Ottomans could not "gulp down", could be passed to their small ally. In this case, attachment of Nakhijevan also urged annexation of Zangezour and Karabagh. Three districts together paved the way to Baku. So, the 9th division of the Ottoman army, which operated from Sharur till Goghtan, had also establish instead of MNC a puppet parliament in Nakhijevan. Later on, when the "independence" proved its insolvency and an autonomous "South-Eastern Caucasus Republic" had been created on January 17-18, 1919, in Kars, Amir Beg Akbarzade was promoted as the head of the Nakhijevan government. However, since the whole Transcaucasia and this district in particular became a zone under the British control, Amir could not administer in Nakhijevan itself and had been based in Igdir – the center of the neighboring district of Surmalu⁴⁷.

Similarly to Armenian sources, Andrew Anderson and Georg Egge from the University of Calgary also mention that Jafar Kuli Khan Nakhchivanski proclaimed the so-called "Independent Arasdayan Republic", which claimed in December of 1918 the districts of Sharur-Daralagyaz and Nakhijevan of the former Yerevan Governorate. Though in reality he controlled only narrow strip of the land, stretched from the city of Nakhijevan till Ordubad on the left bank of Araxes. According to these authors, while waging war against the Armenia, "the Arasdayan Republic" could boast "a few thousand-strong Tatar militias armed and trained by the Turks and a regular Turkish battalion left in the area contrary to the provisions of the Armistice of Mudros"⁴⁸. Yes. We have to stress that contrary to the clauses of Mudros 30.000 to 50.000 Turkish regular troops remained in Transcaucasia and acted very urgently in favor of their Empire⁴⁹. In Nakhijevan they

44 جمشیدی راد، همان 44

45 جمشیدی راد، همان، ص 144-141

46 جمشیدی راد، همان، ص 141

47 جمشیدی راد، همان، ص 141

⁴⁸ Andersen A., Egge G., Armeno-Georgian War of 1918 and Armeno -Georgian Territorial Issue in the 20th Century http://www.conflicts.rem33.com/images/georgia/arm_geor_war/e10.html#ftnref4, retrieved 24.04.2022.

⁴⁹ In detail: Hovannisian 1971, 199-201.

had additional 10.000 men in the local detachments and 300 Turkish soldiers under Halil bey⁵⁰.

The "Republic of Arasdayan" (Araxes) could last on the paper only till January 17, 1919, when Nakhijevan had been announced a subdivision of the new - equally puppet and allegedly "autonomous" "South-Eastern Caucasus Republic" with the center at Kars. Now the Ottoman commanders demanded the territory from the western border of the Kars region till the western frontier of Syunik. They included in their claims all Nakhijevan, Sharur and Goghtan with Ordubad and Julfa. Jamshidi Rad considers that the Arasdayan [?] republic functioned until February 12, 1919⁵¹. It is not quite correct, since the British established their Governorship of Nakhijevan on January 26, 1919 and brought first of their 800 soldiers here on January 29⁵².

A. Gharibyan makes a misconception attempt to explain the situation, too. He considers, that simultaneously with wide propaganda among the Tatar and Moslem population, which should assist in the Ottoman incursion into Baku, the enemy "was intended to "stifle" Armenia from all sides, the Turkish front was in the west, the Kurds from Alashkert were in the south, in the southeast it was the artificial "Araxes Republic" which was formed from Nakhijevan and Sharur-Daralagjaz provinces by Tatar Khans. In the east it was Azerbaijan along with Tatar bands, and in the north it was the Georgian border, which was fairly well controlled by the Georgian forces, from where even "the cargoes belonged to Tiflis state were not brought out"⁵³. We have to remind that since June 4, 1918, Nakhijevan was regarded as a segment of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, there was not a least possibility for any "Republic" in August-September of the same year. Only when the Turkish army was defeated in the World War I and had to abandon all Transcaucasia, it tried to substitute some "independent" area on the banks of Araxes for its possession, controlled only since July of 1918.

The aim of the establishing of the "Republic of Araxes" was to created some Turkish enclave between Armenia and Persia, as far as Azerbaijan was far and had not been regarded by the victory Powers as its possible master, and the Ottoman army could not control it any more. However, Turkish commanders understood that this small unit was not self-sufficient and could not stand Armenian demands for sovereignty. The official Erevan had really sent its troops into Sharur-Nakhijevan, where fights continued till January 26 and even March.⁵⁴ When the British forces occupied Nakhijevan, they had not the slightest intention to recognize this occurrence and declared Nakhijevan with Sharur first, their Military Governorship, and later – on April 4, 1919 - as Armenian territory.

⁵⁰ Հոհրաբյան 2002, 38, Makhmourian 2016, 350.

⁵¹ جمشیدی راد، همان، ص 141-144

⁵² Махмурян 2001, 65-67, Махмурян 2002, 53.

⁵³ Gharibyan 2014, 41.

⁵⁴ NAA 200/1/193, pt. 1/236.

Conclusion

The collapse of Tsaristic Russia, together with inability and weakness of Bolsheviks to fight with their European Allies, led to Brest Litovsk Treaty. That was a great success for Ottomans because they gained huge territories for annexation in Transcaucasia. That's why the Turkish forces started a new military movement from Erzinka, Van and Erzerum on Kars, Batum, Erevan, Tiflis and Baku. The Treaty of Batum was the second substantial achievement of the Ottoman Empire and its army. It imposed big additional and extremely hard conditions on Armenia. The ardent efforts by General Andranik Ozanian to stop the Ottoman advancement into Nakhijevan did not gain success. His struggle in this region in June-July of 1918 finished with his evacuation into Zangezur together with 35.000 of refugees. However, his fights against the Turkish army in Zangezur actually saved this region from massacre. Contrary to Ozanian's Detachment of 3,500 men, the Ottoman troops were well equipped and well supported by local Moslem dwellers. Nether Republic of Armenia, nor any foreign power supported Andranik who was left alone. As a result, "the Republic of Araxes" (called Arasdayan) was established after the World War I on December 5, 1918. It was the substitution of the previous Turkish intervention and occupation of Nakhijevan. Step by step the Ottoman commanders and 300 officers changed the situation in the summer of 1919 in favor of Tatar element in Nakhijevan. They forced the native Armenians to flee from their homeland or surrender; though the most part of prisoners was massacred. So the Ottoman leaders formed the basis of the future Kemalists' conception, that Nakhijevan was the "Gate of Turkestan"; and "the Republic of Araxes" was the short-lived attempt of the Turkey commandment to establishing a puppet political unit in Nakhijevan, if its direct control from abroad was impossible. Since the quasi-independent "Republic of Arasdayan" could not stand Armenian demand for sovereignty, it was substituted by the same Turkish army for new and bigger puppet "autonomous" entity.

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Մաջիդ Քարիմի (ԻԻՀ)

Ամփոփում

1918 թ. փետրվարի 10-ից Կովկասյան ճակատում հաջողությամբ ծավալված թուրքական հարձակումը հանգեցրեց 1918 թ. մարտի 3-ին կնքված Բրեստ-Լիտովսկի պայմանագրին: Օսմանյան կայսրությունը շարունակեց առաջխաղացումն Անդրկովկատում և 1918 թ. հունիսի 4-ին Վրաստանի, Ադրբեջանի և Հայաստանի հանրապետություններին պարտադրեց շատ ավելի ծանր Բաթումի պայմանագիրը, որտեղ հայտարարվեց Նախջիևանը թուրքական բանակով բռնանվաճելու մասին: Թեև հայ ազգային հերոս, գեներալ-մայոր Անդրանիկ Օզանյանը մերժեց Բաթումի պայմանագիրը և 1918 թ. հունիսի 7-ից մինչև հուլիսի 20-ը կատաղի կռիվներ մղեց թուրքերի դեմ, բայց նրա Հայկական առանձին հարվածող զորամասին չհաջողվեց Պարսկաստանում միանալ բրիտանական զորքերին կամ թուրքերից փրկել Նախիջևանի հայությանը: Չորամասը 1918 թ. հուլիսի 23-ից մինչև նոյեմբերի 28-ը Չանգեզուրում էր և կարողացավ այս երկրամասը փրկել օսմանյան ներխուժումից ու կոտորածից: Տեղի մահմեդական բնակչությունը Նախջիևանում փորձ արեց 1918 թ. մարտին անկախություն հռչակել: 1919 թ. հունվարի 17-ին, թուրքական հսկողության ներքո, Շարուր-Նախիջևան-Սուրմալուում ստեղծվեց «Արասդայանի հանրապետությունը»: Քանի որ «Արաքսի հանրապետությունը» չափազանց թույլ էր, այն փոխարինվեց մարիոնետային այլ թուրքական սահմաններում հայտարարված ինքնավար միավորով:

Քանիք բառեր` Բաթումի պայմանագիր, «Արասդայանի հանրապետություն», Անդրանիկ Օզանյան, Վեհիբ փաշա, Խալիլ փաշա, Նախիջևան, Մահմեդական ազգային խորհուրդ:

НАХИДЖЕВАН С БАТУМСКОГО ДОГОВОРА И ВОЕННОЙ КАМПАНИИ А. ОЗАНЯНА ДО «АРАСДАЯНСКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ»

Маджид Карими (ИРИ)

Резюме

Успешное турецкое наступление на Кавказском фронте 10 февраля 1918 г. привело к Брест-Литовскому договору от 3 марта 1918 г. Османская империя не придерживалась пунктов этого документа, продолжая свое наступление в Закавказье. 4 июня 1918 г. с новообразованными независимыми республиками Грузии, Азербайджана и Армении был заключен более тяжелый – Батумский договор. Его текст гласил об аннексии Нахиджевана турецкими войсками. Хотя и армянский национальный герой, генерал-майор А. Озанян обоснованно отверг Батумский договор и с 7 июня до 20 июля 1918 г. развернул боевые действия против турок,

но его Армянский особый ударный отряд не смог объединиться с британскими войсками в Персии и спасти нахиджеванских армян от турок. В марте 1918 г. местное мусульманское население Нахиджевана попыталось установить независимость. Затем в Шаруре-Нахиджеване-Сурмалу была создана марионеточная «Арасдаянская республика» под турецким контролем. Поскольку «Аракская республика» была слишком слабой, она была заменена другой марионеточной, уже автономной единицей в турецких границах.

Ключевые слова – Батумский договор, «Арасдаянская республика», Андраник Озanian, Вехиб-паша, Халил-паша, Нахиджеван, Мусульманский национальный совет.

NAKHJEVAN FROM THE TREATY OF BATUM AND THE MILITARY CAMPAIGN OF A. OZANIAN TO "REPUBLIC OF ARASDAYAN"

Majid Karimi (IRI)

Abstract

The successful Turkish advance on the Caucasus Front from February 10, 1918, resulted in the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, signed on March 3, 1918. The Ottoman Empire did not respect this document, continued its advance into the Transcaucasia and concluded on June 4, 1918, much more heavy Treaty of Batum with newly-independent republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. Its text announced annexation of Nakhijevan by the Turkish forces. Their invasion had been fulfilled by the 36th, 11th and 33rd Divisions on July 10-19, 1918. Though the Armenian national hero and General Major A. Ozanian reasonably rejected the Treaty of Batum and waged his fights from June 7 till July 20, 1918, his Armenian Special Striking Detachment could not unite with the British troops in Persia or save the Nakhijevan Armenians from the Turks. On July 14, 1918 he subordinated this district to Soviet Russia, but without any support from the Red Army. His Armenian Special Striking Detachment of 1.400-3.000 men had to evacuate with 35.000 Western and local refugees. His further stay in Zangezur on July 23 – November 28, 1918, gave better results and saved the district from the Ottoman invasion and massacre. The local Muslim population first attempted its independence on March 7-25, 1918. Then it proclaimed in Sharur-Nakhijevan-Surmalu a puppet "Republic of Arasdayan" under the Turkish control on December 5, 1918 – January 17, 1919. Since the "Republic of Araxes" could not stand Armenian demands, it was replaced by another puppet, now autonomous unit in the frontiers of Turkey, troops of which evacuated from Goghtan on November 25, 1918, and from the whole Nakhijevan on January 26, 1919. During this period the Republic of Armenia appointed its commissar of the district on November 27, 1918, and established a Military Governorship under General Major G. Shelkovnikian on January 14, 1919. On the insistence of British, it was replaced on January 26 by their own Military Governorship; so on February 3, an agreement with the Republic of Armenia was signed and on February 10, 1919, the Armenian army was called back to the northern borders of the district.

Key words – Treaty of Batum, "Republic of Arasdayan", Andranik Ozanian, Vehib pasha, Khalil pasha, Nakhijevan, Moslem National Council.