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0009-0008-1277-1036

DOI: 10.59523/1829-4596.2023.1(26)-80

FATE OF THE ARMENIAN GOVERNORSHIP OF NAKHJEVAN IN 1919*

Keywords: Nakhjevan, Armenian Governorship, British Military Governorship, Gevorg Varshamian, General Grigory Shelkovnikian, General Keith Maitland Davie, Muslim Council.

Introduction

Nakhjevan, a district of the Republic of Armenia on the left bank of the Araxes river, borders with Iran and has been an administrative enclave since 1921. From 1828 to May 1918 it belonged to the Russian Empire as a unit of the Armenian Region (Oblast) and the Yerevan Province. In 1918, due to the collapse of the Tsarism and the rise of the Bolsheviks in October 1917, Transcaucasia established its own administration to withstand the social chaos and disintegration of the Caucasus Front. Local Turks, supported by the Ottoman Army and Baku nationalists, attempted to establish a separate administration subordinated to Turkey or Baku but were unsuccessful during the mutiny that occurred from 2 to 25 March 1918. After the Armistice of Mudros, Armenia faced significant socio-economic problems. On 17–18 January 1919 these were further exacerbated by the fighting against the

* Submitted on 11.IV.2023, reviewed on 27.IV.2023 and 15.V.2023, accepted for publication on 16.VI.2023.

autonomous South-Western Caucasian Republic. This republic was organized and controlled by the Ottoman Army and was ruled from Kars by a Muslim shura composed of the local Ottoman dwellers (who were not Tatars of the Eastern Transcaucasia¹). Nakhijevan was proclaimed to be a constituent part of the republic. The shura neglected the clauses of the Armistice of Mudros that led to an open hostility of Armenia and the Entente Powers. Moreover, the Yerevan government was opposed by the Nakhijevan Muslim Council itself.

It should be added that the British adopted an anti-Armenian stance from the very beginning: on 15 January 1919, they supported the Baku nominee as a temporary Governor-General of Karabakh, with its 95% Armenian population. Naturally, this person encountered stubborn resistance.² Then, on 29 and 12 January 1919, the British replaced with their forces two pro-Turkish puppet units: the short-lived Republic of Arasdayan (Araxes) (5 December 1918 – 17 January 1919) and the Kars shura. They took necessary measures to push back the 9th Turkey Army to the border of 1914.

Since the British authorities replaced Armenians in Nakhijevan on 3 February and then regained control over the region on 3 May, it's essential to clarify the duration of the British governorship there, the role of the Armenian administration in the district, and the reasons why it ended so abruptly on 25 July 1919, with such tragic consequences. I

¹ In 1914 Armenians composed 29,2% of all population in the Kars Oblast, Ottoman Sunnites i.e. Turks, Turkmens, Karapapakhs only 20,2%, Kurds 15,4%, Asiatic Christians 8,6%, Yezidis 7%, Tziganes 6,6%, Shia Tatars 6,5 %, Russians 5%. Thus 42,8% of the population was Christian and 41,9% Muslims – see: **Кавказский календарь** 1914, Отдѣлъ статистическій, 234–237. Also: **L'Arménie Transcaucasienne** 1919, 5.

² On 21 January 1919 the Armenian Government decreed its centralized authority in Karabakh and furnished the District Council of Zangezur-Karabakh with relevant powers: The National Archives of Armenia, fund 199, reg. 1, file 38, p. 5 (following: NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 38, p. 5).

have come across four different dates of the termination of British military power: 6 and 30 April, 3 May and 1 June. In this research, I focus on the period from 3 February to 3 May 1919, during which the British and Armenians entered into two bilateral agreements regarding political control in Nakhijevan. The subsequent period from 3 May to 25 July is of Armenian rule. Therefore, I do not think that the days of control recorded by the British as 26 January – 1 June 1919 are correct. If there are two agreements between the Republic of Armenia and the British Command, they should serve us as the basis.

The British involvement in Armenia-Turkish Military Withstand

On 26 January 1919 General G.T. Forestier-Walker informed the Armenian Prime Minister that he had stopped the fighting between the Republican and Tatar-Ottoman forces in Nakhijevan, cancelled the plenary powers of the Armenian Governor G. Shelkovnikian, who had been appointed by his Cabinet on 14 January, and instead appointed Lieutenant Colonel F.E. Laughton as the British Military Governor.³ On 3 February 1919 the latter signed an agreement with the Armenian Foreign Minister S. Tigranian, stipulating that Armenian troops would remain in Davalu but withdraw to the north of the river Uva.⁴ The British army remained in the region until 7 June 1919, when it was evacuated as part of the general withdrawal from Transcaucasia. This withdrawal, with the transition from British to Armenian rule in

³ NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 212, p. 28.

⁴ NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 209, p. 37; Ավետիսյան 1996, 192: Նախիջևան Շարուրը 1993, 80: Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունը 2000, 87: Зорбян 2012, 181.

Nakhijevan, was decided on 6–30 April and then executed on 3–20 May 1919.⁵

After Mudros, the British deployed their forces in Baku, Batum, Tiflis, Kars (12 January – 8 June 1919), Shushi and Yerevan (7 February – 28 August 1919), where they stationed their Southern Command of the 27th Division from 4 April to 14 June.⁶ The presence of British forces served multiple purposes: 1) to exploit the natural resources, economic and strategic advantages of Transcaucasia, 2) to safeguard their routes towards India, and 3) to prevent the restoration of any Russian influence to the south of the Caucasus range. They also strived to counter the Bolshevik propaganda in Turkey and Iran. Generally, the main Entente powers followed their secret agreements of 1915–1916 to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

Furthermore, the British governorship in Nakhijevan (which lasted only from 3 February to 3 May 1919), with its troops stationed since 15 February⁷ of the same year, preserved peace and stability in the district. The soldiers kept order and had a reasonable degree of control over the situation, although they left the area well before the final decision of the Paris Peace Conference. However, on 13 May 1919 Nakhijevan was transferred to Armenia by British General K.M. Davie

⁵ See the letter by the Commander of the British forces in Transcaucasia Major General W.M. Thomson to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia H. Kajaznuni, dated 6 April 1919: NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 243, p. 99; **Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունը** 2000, 97–98. On 12 April he invited the Government of Armenia to enter its Army into Nakhijevan: NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 22, p. 68; **Նախիջևանի Շարուրը** 1993, 65. The meeting of the Prime Minister A. Khatisian with the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in the Orient General G.F. Milne on 30 April 1919, when the latter confirmed the withdrawal: NAA, f. 1021, r. 2, f. 1023, pp. 1, 6.

⁶ NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 12, p. 127; **Hovannisian** 1971, 61, 163, 202; **Մախ-մուրյան** 2001, 65–67.

⁷ **Hovannisian** 1971, 232.

on behalf of all Allies, and the Paris Conference always regarded all Yerevan Province as a indubitable part of the Republic of Armenia.⁸ Two British Governors, Lieutenant Colonels F.E. Laughton J.C. Simpson, commanded a battalion here.⁹ And the Armenian government worked urdently to control this very important region.

The Armenian Entrance to Sharur-Nakhijevan

The British decision to withdraw from Nakhijevan, announced by the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Transcaucasia Major General W.M. Thomson to the Prime Minister of Armenia H. Kajaznuni, in a letter of 6 April 1919,¹⁰ created a new danger of inter-ethnic strife affecting from 54,209 to 83,374 local Armenians and refugees.¹¹ The Armenian government discussed the matter and agreed to General Thomson's note of 14 April, which assigned the district to Armenia. On 17 April the Minister of the Interior A. Khatisian consulted with General Davie in Alexandropol, and D. Kanayan had drafted a plan discussed by Davie and Governor Simpson two days later. Although this scheme was elaborated by a special committee in cooperation with Khatisian, governor-to-be Gevorg Varshamian and

⁸ It was Bolshevik Moscow power that on 30 June, 1920, for the first time announced Nakhijevan as a disputed territory (**Нагорный Карабах** 1992, 519). In a Russian-Armenian agreement of 10 August 1920, they recorded that this, now disputed district would be occupied by the Red Army, without any prejudice to its further fate (NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 581, p. 262; **Геноцид армян** 2003, 125).

⁹ **Махмурян** 2002, 53.

¹⁰ NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 12, pp. 86–87; **Зюграбян** 2012, 203.

¹¹ The second data refers to Sharur-Nakhijevan combined; thus Armenians constituted 39,6 or 36, 8 per cent of all inhabitants. The Musulman population was equal to 81.191 and 139.684 dwellers or 59,3 and 61,5 per cent, correspondingly. See: **L'Arménie Transcaucasienne** 1919, 51.

War Minister General H. Hakhverdian,¹² Drastamat Kanayan (Dro) was its main author.

He wanted to incorporate Sharur-Nakhijevan in three stages: «Davalu and the rest of the Vedichai-Sadarak zone [on] May 1–5, Bash-Norashen to Nakhichevan [on] May 5–10, Nakhichevan to Ordubad and Agulis [on] May 10–15. The 1/2 Rajputs¹³ move into Sadarak and stand guard along the railway from that pivotal village to Nakhichevan, a distance of some 40 miles. British observers should be sent to the occupied settlements to witness that he is treating all nationalities equally, as he intends to disarm the entire population irrespective of race».¹⁴

Having accepted the Armenian scheme, General Davie informed the Prime Minister on 24 April that the integration of Nakhijevan was to begin on 1 May 1919. Military Governor J. Simpson was ordered to send 100 soldiers each into the villages Davalu, Sadarak, Yaidji and Jagri to keep them under the control. The Armenian detachment included 2,000 infantrymen, 4 field guns and 4 squadrons of cavalry.¹⁵ This work was completed on 30 April, when General G. Milne, Commander-in-Chief of the Black Sea Army, visited Yerevan. During his meeting with acting Prime Minister A. Khatisian, General Milne informed that his troops would be withdrawn from Nakhijevan in three

¹² **Նախիջևանի Շարուրը** 1993, 65–66, 90–92; NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 92, p. 230.

¹³ Rajputs are landowners and warriors from the 2nd social strata of Kshatriyas; they belong to different religions and live in central, western, eastern India, in southern and eastern Pakistan. By mid-June of 1919 Rajput battalion as a detachment of the Indian Army and a unit of the British Imperial Army had helped to install Armenian administration at Kars and Nakhijevan: **Hovhannisian** 1982, 62.

¹⁴ **Hovannisian** 1971, 239.

¹⁵ NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 43, p. 130; NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 92, p. 233; **Hovannisian** 1971, 240.

weeks. General Thomson demanded that the entry into the region had to be peaceful and the entire operation had to be carried out with the direct participation of General Davie.¹⁶

Then, on 3 May 1919, Gevorg Varshamian was appointed Governor of the Nakhijevan Region (Oblast) by acting Minister of the Interior, S. Manasyan, and Khatisian met with General Thomson in Tiflis. The British threatened to ban the repatriation of Armenians into Nakhijevan if their Artsakh compatriots did not surrender to the Governor from Baku. However, this threat proved ineffective. Khatisian described his policy as identical to the Turkish one and categorically refused to discuss any conditions.¹⁷ On the same day, General Davie and Commander of the Yerevan District D. Kanayan issued a joint «Order to the Population of the Nakhijevan District».¹⁸ This document, called «The Davie-Dro Declaration», began: “The War is finished, the suffering and torture of the people must come to an end”, because the Yerevan detachment headed by Kanayan had come to ensure peace for all inhabitants. The Commander of the Yerevan District demanded absolute discipline from his men. He appealed: “I am also addressing you, inhabitants of Nakhichevan. I have come to Nakhichevan with my troops on the order of my government and the Allies to bring back to their homes both Armenian and Muslim refugees”.

So, the Armenians returned home to cultivate their fields and to restore a peaceful life without racial or religious prejudice. Every soldier and militiaman had to protect every life and property, to maintain good neighborhood, freedom and equality. However, all the

¹⁶ NAA, f. 1021, r. 2, f. 1021, pp. 1, 6.

¹⁷ NAA, f. 201, r. 2, f. 82, p. 1; NAA, f. 1021, r. 2, f. 962, p. 36.

¹⁸ NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 212, p. 194; **Նախիջևան Շարուրը** 1993, 102–104. Its English translation: United States National Archives, Record Group 256, class 184.021/doc. 15 (following: US NA), cited in **Hovannisian** 1971, 243. Also: **Հոն-րաբյան** 2002, 93–94.

lands confiscated from Armenians had to be returned to their owners, government instructions had to be obeyed and the Transcaucasian banknotes, called Bones, were put into obligatory circulation, since the local population widely employed Turkish currency. There would be no requisitions, and the army's purchases would be paid for in cash. Otherwise, his servicemen (soldiers) would face martial law.

However, Thomson created new obstacles. That's why General Davie and A. Khatisian made their urgent trip to Tiflis from 8 to 11 May. The matter is that the British strived to counterweight the Armenian success at Nakhijevan by subordinating of Zangezur to Baku. On 9 May 1919 one of his colleagues went to Goris with armoured cars where he received a reply that Armenians would fight any British troops in case they tried such a thing.¹⁹ W. Thomson then blackmailed that he would forbid Armenian repatriation in Nakhijevan if the Yerevan Government didn't surrender Karabakh with Zangezur. On 7 May 1919, through written communication and during the meetings on 9–10 May in Tiflis, Khatisian and General Davie neutralized Thomson's reluctance. Acting Prime Minister Khatisian angrily explained that he had no control over the Regional Council in Zangezur. General Davie added in a letter to Thomson of 7 May: "As to the question of suspending the movement into the Nakhichevan area, I feel strongly that this will be fatal to our prestige and will have a disastrous effect on the situation amongst the Tartar population not only in the Nakhichevan but also in the Kars area. I beg that the repatriation and advance be allowed to continue as arranged. If this is suspended, it will

¹⁹ NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 303, pp. 34–35; NAA, f. 200, r. 2, f. 37, pp. 9–17; US NA, RG 256, 184.021/23; **Գրիգորյան** 1989, 84–86; **Нагорный Карабах** 1992, 230; **Махмуриян** 2002, 70–72.

affect ...the refugees, the Army and the very existence of the Armenian government itself. I cannot urge this too strongly".²⁰

Finally, they obtained Thomson's consent and returned to Armenia on 12 May. On 14 May 1919 General Davie, Khatisian, Governor G. Varshamian and other officials had entered the city of Nakhijevan. Then came the expeditionary force and 50,000 refugees; 8,000 more had died of hunger and deprivation.²¹ The newcomers were greeted by Lieutenant-Colonel Simpson, the Rajput guard of honour and Kerbalay Ali Khan Nakhichevanski,²² the former local war minister and a Colonel of the Russian Army, along with other members of the Muslim Council.

"When Davie announced that Sharur and Nakhijevan were to be temporarily united with the Armenian Republic by decision of the Great Powers", decried the injustice. On 16 May he and his team declared that they would work only with a civilian governor without other Armenian officials and categorically forbade any repatriation. Then Khatisian promised at the session of the Muslim National Council to establish a mixed administration with a Muslim Assistant Governor. He explained that Armenian troops would only maintain order, but the right of Armenian refugees to reclaim their properties to reclaim their property was inviolable.. He also proclaimed "a new era of friendly relations" and Davie repeatedly cited "His Majesty's Government".²³ As a result the local ring-leaders obeyed.

²⁰ In detail: **Нованнисян** 1971, 244; **Зюграбян** 2012, 213–216.

²¹ NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 52, pp. 8–9; NAA, f. 1021, r. 2, f. 962, p. 36; **Зюграбян** 2012, 208; **Հոհրաթյան** 2002, 99–101.

²² The former war minister of the short lived Arasdayan Republic, announced by the retreating Ottoman Army on 5 December 1918, and proclaimed to be incorporated into the puppet «Autonomous South-West Caucasus Republic» with the center at Kars on 17 January 1919. The «South-West Caucasus» was declared to become an administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire.

²³ **Нованнисян** 1971, 245.

A week later, on 20 May 1919, 2,000 Armenian infantrymen under Major General G.H. Shelkovnikian, with 4 field guns and 4 cavalry squadrons, including the steadfast Sasun squadron led by Mushegh Avetisian, entered Nakhijevan. On 4 June the Armenian government united the Sharur-Daralagyaz and Nakhijevan districts into a short-lived Governorate-General under the leadership of Shelkovnikian.²⁴

Since April this administrative unit had been subdivided into the districts of Goghtan (Ordubad), Nakhijevan, and Sharur, with their respective administrative centres in Agulis, Nakhijevan, and Bash-Norashen.²⁵ Regarding the events in May and June, the British Armenian historian Acaby Nassibian noted that the fate of this district was decided not by the Muslim rebellion of 20–25 July, led by Turkish officers, but elsewhere. She meant that this outcome was produced in London, where politicians understood the vulnerability²⁶ The politicians in London understood the vulnerability of Armenia and realized that the withdrawal of their troops would lead to catastrophic bloodshed in the region. So it came as no surprise to the British policymakers in London and Paris that the fierce fighting in the district in July was far beyond the strength of the Armenian Army. With the retreat of the British detachments, this newly formed state had to endure an extremely hard time of Tatar and Turkish warfare all over its territory, from Kars till Zangezur, Karabakh and at Vedi-Basar, 20 miles from the capital.

²⁴ **Նախիջևան Շարուրը** 1993, 68–69; **Makhmourian** 2016, 350; also: NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 193, pp. 222–225 rev. and **Gharibyan** 2014, 187.

²⁵ **Hovannisian** 1971, 238.

²⁶ **Nassibian** 1984, 157.

Armenian Governorship and its problems

The Armenian administration of Nakhichevan clearly saw that Kerbalay Ali Khan Nakhichevanski, Samed Bey Jamillinski eagerly obeyed orders of the Ottoman colonel Halil Bey. As G. Makhmourian notes: In the middle of April 1919 the Ottoman High Command “sent Halil on a mission to Nakhichevan; he was appointed chief of staff of all Muslim forces in this district. He was supported with money, ammunition and up to 3,000 soldiers from the Turkish 11th Caucasus Infantry Division quartered in Bayazet. The local population was obliged to undergo military training, and those villages which were not eager to fight, were suppressed”.²⁷

Dro reasonably asserted that he had to control Kars with Nakhichevan in order to keep Yerevan secure. And when the British Army Command became aware of the intense Pan-Turanian activity in these two regions, it arranged for their additional inclusion in the Republic of Armenia. By order of 4 April 1919, General K.M. Davie was appointed to lead the Southern Command of the 27th Division. His sector included Yerevan, the neutral zone of Borchalu, entire Nakhichevan and the Province of Kars. Forty nine Imperial officers were put in charge of the troops in this area. Davie was instructed to hand over Kars Province and Nakhichevan to the Armenian government untill the final settlement at the Paris Peace Conference.²⁸

The British were aware that the Muslim Council of Kars had never cut connections with the 9th Ottoman Army quartered at Erzerum. Due to their total disobedience, the “Autonomous South-West Caucasus Provisional Government” and all Turkish officers were arrested on 12 April 1919, and deported. On 19 April Kars Province was handed over to the Armenian Governor S. Korganian. The Turkish population

²⁷ Մախմուրյան 2017, 218:

²⁸ Hovannisian 1971, 215; Nassibian 1984, 156.

welcomed the repatriation of Armenians and remained quiet even sending a letter of gratitude.²⁹

Regarding Sharur-Nakhijevan, the Armenian government planned to incorporate this fortress of Yerevan into the Republic as one of its provinces. Besides, the Armenian leaders strived to reach the borders of Iran, to exploit the railway Yerevan – Julfa and thus to keep the southern gate of international trade safe and secure. Their installation in the district was paralleled with the quick (rapid) evacuation of the British troops, though it was evident that the Armenian army, administration and refugees needed time to accommodate (adjust). Despite this, the Armenian Governor Varshamian had only two weeks of stability. On 1 June 1919 the Colonel J. Simpson's battalion headquarters departed from (left) Nakhijevan. The total evacuation of the British troops had been completed on 7 June 1919.

The Armenian administration had to deal with the grave problem of repatriation. Approximately 50,000 souls streamed back to their native villages, where they were not welcomed by Muslims, who had to return all the grabbed lands and property to their former Armenian owners. At the same time, most of refugees disregarded government's efforts to regulate the repatriation, although the government provided all assistance it could. The Cabinet allocated one million rubles to stock food and supplies at stations along the routes of return; a special committee of the Parliament appointed administrative commissars for each reoccupied village, district, and county. A mounted militia of 100–200 men was organized for each county. It selected officials to arrange the resettlement of refugees. Roadside rest, food, and medical stations were established to keep these people on the main roads in order to avoid incidents. In the first stage, only native inhabitants could return. After that, the commissars were to determine the remaining vacant

²⁹ **Махмурия** 2002, 63–64; **Gharibyan** 2014, 187.

land for the repatriation of other refugees as well. In addition, the Parliament appointed its own commissars, native to each of the affected districts, to act as the highest authority during the reparation operations.³⁰

On 6 June 1919 the government also joined the district of Daralagyaz to the province of Nakhijevan. The capital of the province was credited with 15,000 rubles and from 14 June to 10 July 1919 this new unit was guided by the Governor General G. Shelkovnikian.³¹ It did not help, as the main problem of the authorities was their military weakness: Armenians desperately needed foreign armed assistance. Though the locals were divided “into rival groups of Turks, Tatars and Kurds, almost all were united in irreconcilability to the alien Armenian Government, - notes Prof. R. Hovannisian. - ...The departure of the small but awe-inspiring British contingents ... gave reason to believe that the Armenia’s good fortune would not last long”.³² His opinion was proved by the reports of 12 and 15 June from the Chief of Staff of the Yerevan Detachment, Captain S. Pritomanov; from General H. Hakhverdian; and by the letter of 3 July 1919 from D. Kanayan to the Minister of the Interior S. Manasyan.

Captain S. Pritomanov informed that Muslims from the city of Nakhijevan under the command of Kerbalay enlisted volunteers and prepared for mobilization. They attacked Armenian soldiers near Ulnia-Norashen and Shahtakht and took six women and one man captive from the villages of Sultan-Bek and Badamlu. In other villages (Dasharkh, Engija) they propagated to prepare for an insurrection. Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armenian Army, Major General Hakhverdian told about three officers from Baku, who

³⁰ **Hovannisian** 1971, 247.

³¹ **Նախիջևանի Շարուրը** 1993, 68–69:

³² **Hovannisian** 1971, 248. Also: **Զոհրաբյան** 2002, 115–117.

consulted the leader of the Nakhijevan Muslim Council Sultanbekov in Engija, delivered 2,000 infantrymen and 2 cannons to this village and prepared a large-scale uprising in the district. In his turn, Commander of the Yerevan detachment wrote that there were no Armenian judicial bodies in Sharur; the district commissar could not visit the Muslim villages and was completely disregarded. Kanayan required to send more civil officials and military units to this area.³³

As for the Diplomatic Representative of Azerbaijan in Erevan, Mohammed Khan Tekinskiy, he emphasized in his telegram to the Foreign Minister M. Yu. Jafarov on June 22 that "Armenia was the only veritable enemy of Azerbaijan. The future of the nation summoned the Republic of Azerbaijan to rise". However, "whether the barriers between Russian Armenia and Turkish Armenia would be lifted was incumbent upon the decisions of the Paris Peace Conference and the actions of the Allied Powers." (it would be stylistically better to leave a passage as one quote)³⁴ Taking into account that Ottoman Turks and Tatars of the region prepared to fight as a combined force, the conditions for Armenians were worsening every day.

Armenian Administration in the District of Nakhijevan

The Armenian administration in Nakhijevan tried to establish peaceful inter-ethnic relations. A resident of Agulis, H. Hakhnazarian, witnessed that after a short visit of six British officers to their city at the beginning of March 1919, these relations improved considerably everywhere.³⁵ Later on, "when the district of Nakhijevan became part

³³ NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 50, pp. 40, 44, 46, 50; **Зограбян** 2012, 228.

³⁴ **Hovannisian** 1971, 249.

³⁵ Agulis was the centre at the district of Goghthn, unit of the Vaspurakan and Syunik Provinces. It's toponym meant «rich with gardens», had been recorded in 11th century, and the spot itself became a city in the 17th century. Lower and Upper Agulises are located 7 and 10 km to the north-west of Ordubad; in

of the Republic of Armenia, Governor General of the district Gevorg Varshamian visited Agulis among other places. The inhabitants of the township gave [him] a splendid welcome. ...Vahab Effendi, who worked as a teacher in the Turkish quarter of Agulis, conveyed the obsequious obedience of all the local Turks to the Armenian authorities".³⁶ As we see, people wanted and could leave peacefully under the Erevan-appointed administration without any deleterious influence from outside.

We should note that repatriation of about 50,000 souls included provision of seeds, repair of the devastated houses, establishment of ceramic and carpentry workshops, etc. Thus, General Inspector of Sharur-Nakhijevan Aram Makarian reported that by 28 May 1919 his administration had opened a hospital, several mills and food stations in Bash-Norashen, Khanlukhlar and Nakhijevan. The station in Nakhijevan provided food for 150 Armenians and 150 Turks equally since 15 May 1919; the station in Khanukhlar fed additionally 176 people from the Assyrian village of Siagut. Each received 675 grams of bread and one fish daily. On 27 May the Mayor of Nakhijevan had a conversation with Varshamian and expressed his willingness to obey Erevan's instructions. He was informed of the future general elections in the city on the condition, that the Muslim and Armenian sides would each elect 8 representatives. The mayor's promises contradicted to the situation in the city, where the entire Armenian quarter had been destroyed and its European-style buildings had been pulled down to basis. All its

1904 it had 2205 Armenian and 731 Tatar dwellers who lived in 11 quarters (8 of them – Armenian) and kept 2 bathes, 100 trade shops, Gymnasium for Girls and library with reading hall. The city of Agulis was the capital for the district Goghtn – famous with its fruits and musicians. Parents of the eminent composer Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978) – Yeghia and Gumash were born here. See: **Հակոբյան, Մելիք-Բախչյան, Բարսեղյան** 1986, 27: **Այվազյան** 2005, 14.

³⁶ **Hakhnazarian** 2013, 155.

hospitals, schools and churches were demolished and preserved bloody stains on the walls. A lot of damage was inflicted after 3 May 1919, but the British authorities did not prevent these actions.³⁷

Although the officials appointed by Erevan tried to establish peace and cooperation, the situation deteriorated as the Ottoman Army prepared to attack. This new Turkish-Tatar mutiny took place from 20 to 25 July 1919. Well-coordinated and fierce fighting took Armenian civilians and soldiers unaware. The operation was led by Hall bey in Sharur with 30 Turkish officers (including gunners) all around the province, who were commissioned from Erzerum. The rulers of Baku appointed officers and allocated 25 million Russian gold rubles. As a result, the Army of the Republic of Armenia lost 26 officers and 200 privates, and withdrew after six days of intensive fire, while the Tatar-Turkish bands demolished 45 villages and killed 10,000–12,000 people.³⁸ After 25 July 1919, there was no Armenian administration in this country. In August 1919 Samed bey Jamalinskiy was appointed the local Governor General, while Halil bey, Commander-in-Chief of the Tatar troops, asked for new officers from Erzerum.³⁹

The U.S. Vice-Consul H.A. Doolittle reported to his Diplomatic Mission at Paris: “The Turks apparently intend the total extermination of the Armenian race. Turkish emissaries inspire (are stirring up) the warlike attitude of Azerbaijan and are arousing the Tartars in the districts south-east of Erivan along the Persian border where Tartar forces have been massing for some time, with the purpose, according to information received by Armenian government, to totally wipe out or drive away Christian population and to connect up Turkey and

³⁷ NAA, f. 201, r. 1, f. 621, p. 2; **Зограбян** 2012, 222, 225.

³⁸ NAA, f. 199, r. 1, f. 9, p. 91–91 rev.; **Հոհրաբյան** 2002, 152–156, 166–167; **Makhmourian** 2016, 358–364; **Armenia in Documents** 2020, 165–167.

³⁹ In detail: **Karabekir** 1960, 328–330.

Azerbaijan by means of a broad Mohammedan belt".⁴⁰ G. Makhmourian presents archival records on victims: "The British and especially the American Relief officers, who fled Persia from this city on July 28, 1919, had testified the tremendous quantity of beheaded and mutilated human corpses in the river of Araxes at the bridge of Jugha. All tributaries of the river had been blocked up by the dead bodies. American establishments and warehouses all around the district had been robbed and destroyed".⁴¹

This revolt against the Armenian authorities continued until August 1919, when the U. S. Colonel William Haskell, the High Commissioner to Armenia appointed by the Paris Peace Conference, arrived in Yerevan on 21 August. He negotiated an American General Governorship in Nakhijevan and signed a draft agreement with the Prime Minister in Baku on 29 August 1919 to administer the neutral zone of Sharur-Daralagyaz and Nakhijevan under an American Governor General.⁴² However, (due to the lack of a military force,) only relief officers were accommodated in the area. This situation preserved until 12–25 July 1920, when the Armenian detachment under General Shelkovnikian implemented its military expedition to Sharur-Nakhijevan. This new, successful process was drastically altered by the Red Army intervention and by the subsequent Treaties of Moscow and Kars signed in 1921.

To summarize, the Armenian Governorship at Nakhijevan from 3 May to 25 July 1919 was overthrown by the Muslim National Council in cooperation with the Ottoman army and the official Baku. The latter strived to occupy and annex everything it could, regardless of ethnic

⁴⁰ US NA, RG 256, 184.021/126/Encl. 1; RG 59 860J.01/30 in: M820/Roll 230/vol. 204/ NAA, microfilm collection 2.

⁴¹ NAA, f. 200, r. 1, f. 357, pp. 40; NAA, f. 201, r. 1, f. 170, p. 20; **Ավետիսյան** 1996, 193; **Մախմուրյան** 2017, 219–220.

⁴² NAA, f. 275, r. 5, f. 101, pp. 88–89; 40; **Chichekian** 1967, 61.

composition or history. The only thing that mattered was military advantage. The Paris Peace Conference never considered Nakhijevan to be Ottoman or Azerbaijani territory. However, the local Muslim National Council had remained active since July 1918 and gained much from the sovietization of Azerbaijan in April 1920.

According to the right opinion of the young scholar A. Eprikyan, the Republic of Armenia did not have enough strength to set up its control over Nakhijevan; when the British forces withdrew, the Armenian authorities could operate only in the main cities or villages. Within just two and a half months of Armenian administration and one and a half months after the British withdrawal the Erevan officials were forcefully ousted by the Turkish-Tartar mutiny.⁴³

Conclusion

The British troops did not complete their main task of securing peace and safety of Armenians. They withdrew when they decided to, clearly realizing that the Armenians in Nakhijevan would be attacked without meanings to preserve their administration. Thus, they were diplomatically pro-Armenian, but in realpolitik anti-Armenian. It is not correct that the British governorship lasted from January 26 to June 1 1919. Since their order urged a protest from official Yerevan, this governorship lasted from February 3 to May 3 1919. And the Armenian governorship functioned from May 3 to July 25 1919. The Republic of Armenia did everything to protect and revive its district, but it didn't get any reliable allies or protectors. The assistance given to his Republic was constantly too few and too late to withstand the active intrusion of Baku and the Ottoman Army. The local Tatar and Kurdish population, which feared repatriation of Armenian refugees and

⁴³ **Եփրիկյան** 2020, 98–99, 108–109, 226; also: **Makhmourian** 2020, 252–253.

restitution of their land and property, took up arms to prevent this process.

Besides, the Armenian governorship had a precarious material and political basis but its Army was quite limited. The Tatar and Kurdish majority in Sharur-Nakhijevan was aggravated by the massacres committed by the regular Ottoman Army and the local population in July – August 1918 when large numbers of the Armenian population were killed and around 100,000 were expelled from their homes. When the British support was weak during their own rule, Russia was in the civil war and isolated from Armenia, including Nakhijevan. Although we know that a military expedition to this district under General Shelkovnikian on 12–25 July 1920 was interrupted by the Russian Red Army, after the local council had twice announced its capitulation with subordination to the Erevan government on 20 and 25 July.

In 1918–1920 the local Muslim Council in Sharur and Nakhijevan benefited to the full from Turkish assistance. The only hope for Erevan in the second half of 1919 remained the joint assistance of the Paris Peace Conference, which sent the U. S. Colonel W. Haskell as High Commissioner to Armenia to establish peaceful coexistence, combined with the neutral Nakhijevan district as American Governorship General.

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Ամփոփում

1919 թ. մայիսի 3-ին բրիտանական 27-րդ դիվիզիայի հարավային թևի հրամանատար գեներալ Ք. Դևիի ու Երևանի շրջանի զորապետ Դ. Կանայանի՝ Նախիջևանի շրջանի ազգաբնակչությանն արձակած հրամանով Նախիջևանի հայկական նահանգապետությունը փոխարինեց բրիտանական ռազմական նահանգապետությանը:

Թեև բրիտանական հրամանատարությունը հայտարարում էր, որ բրիտանական նահանգապետությունը գործում էր 1919 թ. հունվարի 26-ից մինչև նույն թվականի հունիսի 1-ը, իրականանում այն Հայաստանի Հանրապետության արտգործնախարար Ս. Տիգրանյանի հետ փոխգնդապետ Ֆ. Լաուրթնի կնքված համաձայնագրով գործել է 1919 թ. փետրվարի 3-ից մինչև նույն թվականի մայիսի 3-ը: Գ. Վարշամյանը 1919 թ. մայիսի 3-ին նշանակվեց Նախիջևանի մարզի նահանգապետ, և հայկական նահանգապետությունը գործեց մինչև 1919 թ. հուլիսի 25-ը:

1919 թ. մայիսի 14-ին երկրամաս եկան վարչակազմը և 50 հազար գաղթական, մայիսի 20-ին՝ 2 հազար զինվոր ու չորս հեծելավաշտ: Հունիսի 14-ին գեներալ-մայոր Գ. Շելկովնիկյանը նշանակվեց Շարուր-Նախիջևանի գեներալ-նահանգապետ:

Գաղթականներին վերադարձնում էին իրենց ունեցվածքը, օգնում մշակելու հողը: Սակայն, թուրքական բանակի և Ադրբեջանի կառավարության դրդմամբ, Նախիջևանի մահմեդական խորհուրդը 1919 թ. հուլիսի 20-ին սկսեց խռովություն, որը շարունակվեց

մինչև հուլիսի 25-ը: Մարտերի ընթացքում զոհվեց 226 հայ զինվոր, ավերվեց 45 հայկական գյուղ, կոտորվեց 10–12 հազար հայ:

Քանախի բաւեր՝ Նախիջևան, Հայկական նահանգապետություն, Բրիտանական ռազմական նահանգապետություն, Գևորգ Վարշամյան, զորավար Գրիգոր Շելկովնիկյան, զորավար Քեյրթ Մեյտլենդ Դէվի, Մահմեդական խորհուրդ:

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Участь Армянского губернаторства Нахиджеван в 1919 г.

Резюме

3 мая 1919 г. приказом командира южным флангом 27-й британской дивизии генерала К. Дэви и начальника Ереванского отряда Д. Канаяна, отданным населению Нахиджеванского округа, армянское губернаторство Нахиджевана сменило британское военное губернаторство.

Хотя британское командование объявляло, что британское губернаторство действовало с 26 января по 1 июня 1919 г., на самом деле оно начало функционировать 3 февраля 1919 г. в результате соглашения между министром иностранных дел Республики Армения С. Тиграняном и подполковником Ф. Лаутоном и в результате просуществовало до 3 мая 1919 г. 3 мая Г. Варшамян был назначен губернатором Нахиджеванской области, и армянское губернаторство функционировало до 25 июля 1919 г.

14 мая 1919 г. в край прибыла администрация, а также 50 тысяч беженцев. 20 мая туда вступили 2 тысячи солдат-пехотинцев и 4 эскадрона кавалерии. 14 июня генерал-майор Г. Шелков-

никян был назначен генерал-губернатором Шарура-Нахиджевана.

Беженцам возвращали их имущество, помогали в обработке земли. Однако по распоряжению турецкой армии и азербайджанского правительства Нахиджеванский мусульманский совет поднял мятеж, длившийся с 20 по 25 июля. В боях погибло 226 армянских военнослужащих, были разрушены 45 армянских деревень, были вырезаны 10–12 тысяч армян.

Ключевые слова: Нахиджеван, Армянское губернаторство, Британское военное губернаторство, Геворг Варшамян, генерал Григорий Шелковникян, генерал Кейт Мейтленд Дэви, Мусульманский совет.