Historical citizenship in the Soviet border region: The Armenians of Nakhijevan

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Introduction

The region of Nakhijevan has a long history that dates back to around 1500 BCE. In the past, the Persians, Armenians, Mongols, and Turks all competed for control of the region, but in 1828 Russia gained control over this region, and in 1924 it became an independent Soviet republic[1]. The region was inhabited by two main ethnic groups. Before the formation of the Soviet Union, a major part of the population consisted of Armenians, and they were mainly living in rural areas of the region and were engaged in economy. Around 40% of the population of Nakhijevan was Armenian up until the 1917s[2]. The other ethnic group consisted of Azerbaijanis. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Nakhijevan remained as an exclave of Azerbaijan. Nowadays no Armenians live there.

The relation between those ethnic groups was organized by the Soviet authorities. People were able to practice their social rights within the state. My argument is that Armenians were not discriminated by Soviet authorities and they lived side by side with Azerbaijani people and there was a relative peace during that time. One of the reasons was that the idea of "Soviet citizenship" was developed during those years. People considered themselves to be Soviet citizens and this feeling did not bring tense to the relations between these ethnic groups. Moreover, within the years of Soviet Nakhijevan, people who lived in that territory were given a special treatment. Soviet authorities considered Nakhijevan a borderland, and the people who weren't born there, needed to have a permission from local authorities to enter the territory of Nakhijevan. Armenians living inside Nakhijevan were exempted from this rule. This means that Armenians of Nakhijevan were treated as full citizens of that state. I argue that Armenians of this region agreed to practice their rights despite the fact that it was governed by Soviet Azerbaijan as for them the idea of citizenship was connected with their place of birth.

The research is organized in a way that addresses the following questions. The first chapter focuses on the concept of citizenship from social perspective. It also presents the understanding of borderland as territory and gives a historical glance to the territory of Nakhijevan. In this chapter I ask how citizenship is linked with history. How do we understand the connection of citizenship with the state from social perspective? Why Nakhijevan is considered to be a borderland? How did historical events have an impact on the formation of Nakhijevan as an autonomous republic?

[1] https://www.britannica.com/place/Naxcivan-republic-Azerbaijan, (26/12/2022).
[2] Ivanov, Vladimir. "Dearmenizacii Nakhidjevana v XX v", pp. 20-21. In: "Nakhidjevan v XX – nachale XXI vekov: nekotoriye fakti". Ed:V. A., Zakharov, Russkaya Panorama. Moskva, 2011. Hewsen, Robert. "A Historical Atlas", Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press. 2001, p. 226.

The second chapter deals with the experience of Armenians and their rights in the Nakhijevan Soviet Socialist Republic. In this chapter relying on my Oral History interviews I examine how citizenship was perceived and implemented in the Soviet Union. How did Armenians experience their social rights? What kind of relations was between Armenians and Azerbaijanis to that of state authorities?

Such kind of research with the concept of historical citizenship that focuses on the region of Soviet Nakhijevan has not been carried out yet. The main source of my research is based on Oral History interviews. I have conducted my research in Armenia with people who were born in Nakhijevan and now are citizens of the Republic of Armenia. I have not included archival materials in my research because they are rare so in this case personal memories of the people are the most important sources. Beside using sources that are written in English, I used Armenian and Russian sources as well, and my research discusses both Armenian and Azerbaijani historiographies.

The case of Armenians residing in Nakhijevan during the Soviet period is relevant to discuss today, because it can be applied to other peripheral regions of the Soviet Union in the future and consider these issues that are based on practicing social, cultural and economic rights of citizenship. There are a lot of similar issues which in their turn, can cause geopolitical, territorial, cultural, as well as national problems. All these problems are rooted in events that occurred at the beginning of twentieths century. The preconditions of making such research with the concept of historical citizenship carries the idea, that the policy which was implemented by Soviet authorities for the formation of nations, gave rise to above mentioned problems that have not been solved yet.

Methodology and Fieldwork

The sources of this paper are oral history testimonies. Choosing this methodology is essential because such kind of research referring to the topic of Nakhijevan is rarely done. Through conducting interviews with Armenians, who spent their childhood in Nakhijevan interesting and important facets of its history in the Soviet period could be revealed.

Oral history provides a different perspective on history and a method to recover that past. Oral history also indicates, that by obtaining historical materials directly from the people, a more legitimate version of history can be created, even though it does not suggest, that every person's perspective on history is equally legitimate, or that every voice must be heard. Oral history suggests, that we rewrite history to reflect the ways in which human ethnic minority overcame or failed to overcome particular issues, how they welcome or refused change, and how they improved or failed to improve their own and their children's quality of life.[3] Thus examining the case of Armenians of Nakhijevan with this methodology highlights some particular issues that were not solved by local authorities.

Paul Thompson observes "*The strongest argument for a completely free-flowing interview is when its main purpose is less to seek information than to record a 'narrative interview, a "subjective" record of how one man or woman looks back on their life as a whole, or part of it. Just how they speak about it, what they miss out, how they order it, what they emphasize, the words they choose, are important in understanding any interview; but for this purpose they become the essential text which will nod to be examined*".[4] So complying the memories of ordinary people who lived during the Soviet era in the Nakhijevan Soviet Socialist Republic, would depict some aspects of history that cannot be found in any archival sources.

Not only oral history is a means or tool for recovering history, but also it is a theory of history that contends that the history of ordinary people and the dispossessed must be recorded. The idea of documenting ordinary people's lives, that is the "inarticulate": and those "hidden from history," as the literature sometimes calls them, drew oral historians from all across the world during the 1960s uprisings. They are no longer part of history since they have no memoirs, records that have been preserved, or paper trails that could be used to identify them.[5]

It is important to notice that the research subjects of interviewees are Armenians who were living under the rules of Azerbaijani authorities during the Soviet Union. All interviewees

[3] Okihiro, Gary. "Oral History and the Writing of Ethnic History: A Reconnaissance into Method and Theory", The Oral History Review Vol. 9, Taylor & Francis, Ltd, 1981, p. 46.
[4] Thompson, Paul. "The Voice of the Past", Oral History Third Ed., Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 227.
[5] Charlton, Thomas; Myers, Lois; Sharpless, Rebecca. "Handbook of Oral History", AltaMira Press, 2006, p. 114.

are middle aged, so the research discusses the middle period of the Soviet Union. The subject of the paper is the citizenship and I deal with issues how Armenians experienced their social rights in Soviet Nakhijevan. Regarding the fact, that much information was not published during that time from Soviet Armenia concerning Nakhijevan, that is why one of the major reasons to rely on oral history methodology would be useful in carrying out this paper. Additionally, it is significant, because one argument frequently used to oppose research into the history of minorities and the poor, is the notion that these groups leave behind little, that may be used for historical study.[6]

Another aspect that should be emphasized is that my oral history research includes both women and men. While conducting interviews I noticed, that women were portraying their daily life with enthusiasm. We should be aware that gender can influence what is remembered, when responding to narrators in oral history interviews, since what is significant for one gender may not be salient for another. Women have traditionally been encouraged to express their emotions, so it makes sense that they would remember them more vividly than men.[7]

Oral and written documents are different from each other, as the archival historian is limited by written word, and is unable to look deeper beyond what the author of a given document assumed, what they believed should have occurred, or what they desired for others to believe occurred; in other words, the line between the behavioural and ideational is blurred, and a historian is unsure of the historicity of such evidence. On the other hand, an oral historian, who uses a record, that they have prepared with an interviewee, is able to participate in conversation with the historical actor, and witness human behaviour up close in all its complexity and under a variety of circumstances.[8]

So all Armenians, with whom I conducted interviews, are historical actors and eyewitnesses of events that happened during those years and I acknowledged and assured the research's anonymity. Therefore, the texts do not include any identifying information or names. I decided to maintain their anonymity although I had verbal consent to reveal their identities or status.

[6] Ibid., p. 128.
[7] Raleigh, Valerie. "Recording Oral History", A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences, second edition, AltaMira Press, 2005, p. 50.
[8] Okihiro, Gary. "Oral History and the Writing of Ethnic History: A Reconnaissance into Method and Theory", The Oral History Review Vol. 9, Taylor & Francis, Ltd, 1981, p. 33.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Frameworks

1.1. Defining the Concept of Citizenship

The formal status of being a member of a political or legal institution, along with the associated rights and obligations, has historically constituted the core of citizenship. This fundamental conception of citizenship dates back to the Classical Era and developed from two broad conceptions that originated in ancient Greece and Imperial Rome respectively. These conceptions later developed into what are now known as the "republican" and "liberal" interpretations of citizenship.[9] In order to carry out this research I am going to deal with the other concept of citizenship, citizenship from a social perspective. To analyse how Armenians of Soviet Nakhijevan perceived their citizenship, it is useful to draw on Thomas Marshall's framework on citizenship from social-democratic approach, since in the Soviet period, social component of citizenship became a major aspect of practising the rights of citizenship in the state, and so Thomas Marshall's framework can be applied to Soviet context.

According to Thomas Marshall, the social component of citizenship encompasses "the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being in accordance with the standards prevailing in the society".[10] Moreover, in Thomas Marshall's concept of citizenship "ideals, beliefs and values" play an important role.[11] In addition to that Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon conclude "in a welfare state citizenship includes an entitlement to social provision" which will be regarded " within an aura of dignity surrounding "citizenship" and "rights".[12]

The rights of citizenship, according to Thomas Marshall, are an embodiment of larger social, political, economic, and legal structures in a society, as well as discourses to promote those structures. According to him, citizenship is divided into three categories: civil, political, and social. He sets out an interpretation of the development of these rights, saying that in the 18th century, civil rights became a part of universal citizenship, in the 19th century, political rights became universal, and in the 20th century, social rights were established.[13] "The rise of

[9] Wi, Richard (Richard Paul). "Historical development of citizenship", in James D. Wright (ed.), International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences. 2nd edition, Vol. 3, Oxford, Elsevier, 2015, pp. 643–649.
[10] Marshall, Thomas. "Citizenship and Social Class". "In: Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays by T.H. Marshall". Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977, p. 76, p.78.
[11] Ibd., p. 92.
[12] Fraser, Nancy and Gordon, Linda. Contract versus Charity: "Why is there no social citizenship in the United States"? In: G. Shafir, ed. "The Citizenship Debates: A reader". Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998, p. 113.
[13] Marshall, Thomas. "Citizenship and Social Class". In: "Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays by T.H. Marshall". Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977, p. 76.

capitalism has also corresponded temporally," William Sewell goes on, "with the rise of civic equality, which establishes the formal equivalence of citizens, whatever accidental differences might exist between them in ability, wealth, or social prestige."[14]

The socialist state brought a set of material and social rights, but these were rights without citizenship. Abolition of private property and denial of the right to free association had largely emptied civil rights of their meaning in soviet-style communities. Given the passive nature of "elected" official entities, political rights proclaimed in constitutions were primarily formal. What remained, were universal social rights, which ensured some equality in mediocrity, and served as one of the foundations of people's subordination to the all-powerful paternalistic state.[15] Thus in the following chapters I reveal cases, which show that though social rights assured equality between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Soviet Nakhijevan and it gave the sense of feeling citizens of that state, Armenians were discriminated in state administrative system for occupying positions.

Golfo Alexopoulo studies citizenship as a weapon of control used by government apparatus to keep out people who were seen as a threat to the system, ensure loyalty to it, and promote an identity of a Soviet citizen. He looks into how the Soviet Union's stratification of citizens with full rights operated from the 1920s to 1938. He states that one distinctive aspect of Soviet rule was the ability to separate citizenship rights from citizenship itself; one might have the title of a citizen, while not experiencing all the rights and protections that associated with it. He suggests, that since the formation of the Soviet Union besides the category of "citizens with full rights" there also existed categories of "persons without citizenship, citizens stripped of all rights, and citizens lacking certain rights".[16] In case of Armenians in Soviet Nakhijevan I suggest that Armenians were "citizens lacking certain rights".

Another important point is that the Soviet Union uphold its citizens' ethnic identities, which in Soviet terms referred as personal "nationality" and made a distinction among the citizens subsequently. Starting from 1932 "nationality" was registered in citizens' internal passports.[17] Thus, nationality has come to be seen as an eternal, rigid characteristic that comes with birth, as opposed to pre-Soviet more fluid religious or ethno-religious identities, thanks to the practice of nationality registration in citizens' passports, which persisted until the early

[14] Sewell, William. "The Capitalist Epoch", Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 5-6.
[15] Heinen, Jaqueline. "Social and Political Citizenship in Eastern Europe", Theory and Society, Vol. 26, No. 4, Special Issue on Recasting, 1997, p. 583.
[16] Alexopoulos, Golfo. "Soviet Citizenship, More or Less: Rights, Emotions, and States of Civic Belonging", University of South Florida Libraries, 2006, pp. 488-489.
[17] Simonsen, Sven. "Between minority rights and civil liberties: Russia's discourse over 'nationality' registration and the internal passport". Nationalities papers, 33(2), 2005, p. 211.

1990s in Russia and some former Soviet republics.[18] Additionally, this technique has promoted a number of ethnic or national identities, including those that are new. The state managed or produced ethno-national identities of its citizens through registration of personal nationality, supporting processes of nation-formation based on religious, tribal, or other identities.[19] It is noteworthy that Armenians in Nakhijevan were registered as 'Armenians' in their passports(Appendix 1). I consider that this is due to the fact that Nakhijevan was an autonomous republic. While many smaller groups such as Kurds, Lezgins, Talyshed Avars or Meskhetian Turks, were registered as 'Azerbaijanis' in their passports.[20]

The Soviet Union's national-territorial system was designed to be extended downward into progressively smaller national territories (national districts, village Soviets, and communal farms) until it was seamlessly integrated with each citizen's individual nationality. The result was a massive pyramid of national Soviets made up of thousands of different sovereign areas.[21] It should be noted that the autonomy of Nakhijevan in 1923 had administrative autonomy. According to the principles of the party's national policy, the administrative autonomy could transform into a political autonomy, of which there were many examples during the years of Soviet power. A good example of this is the evolution of the Nakhijevan autonomy.[22]

Thomas Marshall opposes the coexistence of modern citizenship with a system of a social class. In contrast to a social class, which he sees as a "system of inequality," he regards citizenship as a mechanism for equality. According to him, social rights have primarily changed the patterns of inequality by raising the civil claim for a minimum level of welfare and the status of equal membership above the "market value of the claimant".[23] Following this viewpoint, I depict that the social rights brought equality between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Soviet Nakhijevan, and Armenians considered themselves full citizens of the state.

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[18] Ibd., p. 444.

[19] Saroyan, Mark. "Beyond the nation-state:culture and ethnic politics in Soviet Transcaucasia". In: R. Suny, ed. "Transcaucasia, nationalism and social change: essays in the history of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia" Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press. 1996(1998), p. 403.

[20] Dudwick, Nora. "Nagorno-Karabakh and the politics of sovereignty". In: R. Suny, ed. "Transcaucasia, nationalism and social change:essays in the history of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia". Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1996, p. 439.

[21] Suny, Ronald and Terry Martin, Terry. "A State of Nations, Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin", New York, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 73.

[22] Madatov, Garash. "Pobeda Sovetskoj Vlasti v Nahichevani i Obrazovanie Nahichevanskoj ASSR", Baku, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Azerbajdzhanskoj SSR, 1968, str. 161(Madatov, Garash " The Victory of Soviet Power in Nakhijevan and the Formation of the Nakhijevan ASSR", Baku, Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR, 1968, p. 161).

[23] Marshall, Thomas. "Citizenship and Social Class". In: "Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays by T.H. Marshall". Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977, pp. 105-106.

1.2. The Territory of Nakhijevan as a "Borderland"

I consider Nakhijevan as a borderland region, is a typical example of creating historical identity in connection with territorial ideologies. In this paper I depict Nakhijevan in Soviet border region. Located in the South Caucasus, Nakhijevan is a small region that currently borders Iran to the south, Turkey to the east, the Republic of Armenia to the north and west. Because this territory was always in the buffer zone of powerful empires like the Persian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, and ultimately the Soviet Union, despite how little it is, its history is even more fascinating and significant.[24]

Malcolm Anderson argues that territorial ideologies may have poor historical roots, despite using history to support them. Stateless nations or ethnic communities, that assert political independence frequently, create a territorial ideology and a historical identity. In local circumstances, these territorial ideologies form, and develop into strong tools of political mobilization. Disadvantaged people, that are negatively impacted by economic and political change processes rely on them as a tool to shift the balance in their favor. In this sense, populations, who are weak and vulnerable, are more likely to support territorial ideologies.[25]

Thus, I argue that the territory of Nakhijevan is one of the border regions that is constructed over specific historical stages. Nakhijevan was a district of the historical Armenia,[26] and it remained a part of it until World War I. However, following a decision by the Soviet Union, it became a part of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic at the beginning of the 1920s.[27] It remained a part of the Republic of Azerbaijan as an exclave after the Soviet Union's collapse. Though the region nowadays is completely unpopulated by Armenians, they consider this region as their historical homeland. The historical shift of borders impacted on the formation of new state borders. I explore the context under which Armenians claim to belonging to the disputed territory of Nakhijevan.

How may inhabitants of a disputed border region express their opinions about their environment and the world in general? It is required to identify at least three key issues in order to contextualize this question. First, the legal systems in place or an environment of violence and instability may give inhabitants of disputed contexts a turbulent status as citizens, which

[24] https://www.britannica.com/place/Naxcivan-republic-Azerbaijan , (21/11/2022).
[25] Anderson Malcolm. "Frontiers, Territory and State formation in the Modern World", Cambridge, Polity Press, 1996, p. 35.
[26]Ayvazyan, Argam. "Naxij&an. Bnashxarhik Patkerazard Hanragitak", Erevan, Erkrord barep'oxvac' & lramshakvac' hratarakowt'yown, heghinakayin hratarakowt'yown, 2017, e'j 8 (A. Ayvazyan, Argam, "Nakhijevan, natural illustrated encyclopedia", Yerevan, second revised edition, author's edition, 2017, p. 8).
[27] Vladimir, Ivanov. "Dearmenizacii Nakhidjevana v XX v". pp. 38-39.

has an impact on their ability to communicate. Second, when a conflict lasts for a significant period of time, it creates its own social dynamics of fragmentation, which has a negative impact on perceptions of the community. Thirdly, the border is the result of a unique historical construction that is typically imposed on the area's inhabitants.[28]

I consider, the issue of this borderland seems out of consideration nowadays, as Nakhijevan is successfully homogenized and there is no political discourse from Armenian side for claiming rights over this territory. There are different reasons for it. Due to the commonly held perception that every border and borderland should be viewed as unique, the theoretical focus on borders and border regions has been dismissed for a long time.[29] Studies of border regions and societies eliminate misconceptions that the terms "state" and "society" or "state" and "country" are inevitably interchangeable or coterminous. Any state's border marks serve as an arbitrator and unifier of intricate geopolitical, political, and social conflicts.[30]

I link the other reason with the problem of territoriality. Territoriality is a "spatial strategy to affect, influence, or control resources and people, by controlling area." This type of enforcement "uses area to classify and assign things," and it operates by limiting access to and from designated regions.[31] The question of whether or to what extent state borders are undergoing a historic transition at this time is directly impacted by the complicated nature of territoriality.[32] As this borderland became part of Soviet Azerbaijan,[33] and continues to be an exclave of Azerbaijan,[34] thus Azerbaijan earned the privilege over the region's territoriality.

[28] Mato-Bouzas, Antía. "(B)Ordering and the politics of Belonging", St. Antony's International Review, 2017, p. 122.
[29] Houtum, van Henk. "An Overview of European Geographical Research on Borders and Border Regions", Journal of Borderlands Studies, 2000, p. 58.
[30] Anderson, James and O'Dowd, Liam. "Borders, Border Regions and Territoriality: Contradictory Meanings, Changing Significance", Regional Studies, 33(7),1999, p.595.
[31] Sack, Robert. "Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History". Cambridge University Press. 1986, pp. 21-34.
[32] Anderson, James, and O'Dowd, Liam. "Borders, Border Regions and Territoriality: Contradictory Meanings, Changing Significance", Regional Studies, 33(7),1999, p. 598.
[33] Karskij dogovor (The Treaty of Kars).
[34] https://nakhchivan.preslib.az/en_b1.html#l7 (accessed: 29/12/2022).

1.3. Historical overview of Nakhijevan and the impact of Soviet Union's polices

This subchapter aims to give a brief reference on the history of Nakhijevan. I would not go much in detail to depict the stages of history from long historical traditions, since I consider that the main events that had an impact on the history of Nakhjivan are events that started in the 19th century. As this area is considered to be a disputed region, two nations, Armenians and Azerbaijanis, have both historical claims over this territory. As a result, it's important to acknowledge how essential the past is to these nations' current political goals when talking about their historical backgrounds. Azerbaijanis concentrate on building national identity and create the heroes and legends necessary to forge a powerful ethnic unity. Armenians create a strong response to the deported Armenians of Nakhijevan in order to relieve their suffering and lack of representation on this land. A small country trying to demonstrate its historical glory on a territorial and cultural level while surrounded by larger countries.[35]

According to Mirakhmedov, Nakhijevan is one of the oldest countries in the East, and the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Aliyev, gives enormous historical and political importance to the region from where they originate. A decree was made on February 6, 1999: *"The lasted long periods of wars, led in the 16th century the Safavid government against Ottoman Turks, therefore Nakhijevan was taken away from the Ottoman's hand into Safavid. In 1747, the year after the fall of Iran's state ruler Nadir Shah, Kengerli Guseynkuli Khan proclaimed himself as an independent ruler of the Nakhijevan people. Therefore, in the middle of the XVIII century Nakhijevan became one of the 18 khanate which were established in the territory of Azerbaijan. At the beginning of the 18th century Nakhijevani khan, Abbasgulu Khan established close ties with Guseynkuli Khan of Erevan , and Ibrahim Khan of Karabakh and king of Kartli - Kakheti Irakli II".*[36]

Up to the 18th century, the region was ruled by the Persian Safavid Empire (1501-1735) starting in the 16th century. I want to mention that Nakhijevan was at the peak of economic development during the 15th and 17th centuries, despite the oppressive centuries. The area advanced economically, culturally (churches, a medieval cemetery), and infrastructurally (canals, stone bridges, auqaducs, etc, trade center like Julfa). The traditional Nakhijevan centers, such as Julfa, Vordvat, and Nakhijevan, developed and expanded, and new urban areas

[35] Czézár, Nikolett. "The (De)construction of the Past: Nakhijevan between Armenia and Azerbaijan", Master Thesis, Noyan Tapan, 2014, p. 45.
[36] Smirnov, Konstantin. "Materials on the history and ethnography of Nakhijevanian Kray", Ozan, Baku, 1999, p. 3.

were established close to them.[37] The majority of Armenians moved to Persia as a result of deportation by Shah Abbas I between 1604 and 1618, where the shah welcomed them and initially settled them down. Around 10 or 20 thousand people were forced to leave Julfa and were first resettled to Tabriz and afterwards to Isphahan. They established New Julfa in the Isphahan suburb, where they reconstructed their new homes and, with the shah's approval, could continue trading and prosper within the Persian Empire.[38]

Surviving the Persian reign, after the period of the Russian-Persian war from 1826 to 1828, which was closed by signing the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1828, Nakhijevan and Yerevan khanates were transferred under the Russian rule.[39] The Khanates of Yerevan and Nakhijevan were unified when the Armenian Province (Armenskaya Oblast) was established at that time. Bebutov, whose administration was known for corruption, presided over the province until being soon succeeded by Smbation, but he was an Armenian commander who was respected to Russian rules.[40] One of the historians of Azerbaijani history, Tadeusz Swietochowski, wrote about the Turkmenchay treaty, which Fath Ali (1772-1834) shah signed in exchange for peace and which, in a sense, to restore the province of Gulistan. However, the shah was compelled to cede Yerevan, Nakhijevan, and Ordubad to Russia.[41] In the same year the Russian Emperor Nikolai I made a declaration on the 21th of March in which it is said: „*On valorous troops … conquered Yerevan Khanate situated on both banks of the Arax, as well as Nakhijevan Khanate, which is part of ancient Armenia: they shifted into the possession of the victor.*"[42]

In 1840, the regional administration was abolished and the Yerevan and Nakhijevan districts were created, which were part of the Georgian-Imereti province, and since 1846, part

[37] Ghougassian, Vazken. "Wealthy Merchants and Factors. The legacy of Julfa" In: "Les Arméniens dans la commerce asiatique au début de l'ére modern") 2008. pp. 52-56.; Herzig, Edmund. "Borrowed Terminology and Shared Techniques in New Julfa Armenian Commercial Documents" pp. 447-455. Hirotake Maeda. "Exploitation of the Frontier: The Caucasus Policy of Shah Abbas I". pp. 471-489. In: "Iran and the World in the Safavid Age". Ed: Willem Floor and Edmund Herzig. I. B. Taurus. London, New York, 2012. Baltrušaitis Jurgis and Kouymjian, Dickran. "Julfa on the Arax and its Funerary Monuments". In: "Armenian Studies Études Arméniennes In Memorian Haig Berbérian". Ed: Dickran Kouymjian. Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1986. pp. 9-53.

[38] Hewsen, Robert. "A Historical Atlas", Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2001, p. 156. Babaie, Sussan; Babayan, Kathryn; Baghdiantz McCabe Ina and Farhad, Massumeh. "Slaves of the Shah. I". B. Taurus. London, New York, 2004. pp. 54-55.

[39] Ivanov, Vladimir. "Dearmenizacii Nakhidjevana v XX v." pp. 20-21. In: "Nakhidjevan v XX – nachale XXI vekov: nekotoriye fakti." Ed: V. A., Zakharov. Moskva, Russkaya Panorama, 2011.

[40] Hewson, Robert. "A Historical Atlas", Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press. 2001. pp.173.

[41] Swietochowski, Tadeusz. "Russian Azerbaijan (1905 -1920)", Cambridge, London, NY, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney, Cambridge University Press, 1985. pp.5-6.

[42] Karapetian, Samvel. "Nakhijevan Atlas", Research on Armenian Architecture (RAA) Foundation, Yerevan, Tigran Metz Publishing House, 2012. 1-2., also mentioned in Tadeus Swietochowski's work that the Armenian region was created from Yerevan and Nakhijevan khanship which united Russia. p. 223.

of the Tiflis province.[43] In 1875, the Yerevan Province was redivided and consisted of seven districts instead (Aleksandropol, Echmiadzin, Yerevan, Novo-Bayazit, Sharur – Daralagiaz, and Nakhijevan – Surmalu) of the five original ones.[44]

Panturkism and panislamism gained influence in the early 1900s, and they engaged in armed conflict with the Russians to advance their objectives of establishing Islam throughout the entire region. On May 12, the violence spread to Nakhijevan as well.[45] The situation grew worse since Armenians fought alongside the Russians against Muslims. Turkish emissaries made attempts between 1912 and 1913 to seize control of the area and use it against Christians. A total of 50,209 Armenians, or 40% of Nakhijevan's population, were recorded as living there on the 1st of January 1916 by the Caucasian calendar for 1917. By the 1915 massacres, this number grew as a result of the influx of refugees from the Ottoman Empire and Yerevani gubernia. There were 6,300 Armenians living in Sharur, which had a large Armenian population, as of 1915.[46]

Emigration began in 1919 from Nakhijevan, which had 38,500 residents. Of them, 5,000 migrated to Iran, 13,000 migrated to Kaffa and Sis, 7,500 migrated to the Novo-Bayazit area and around 8000 came to Yerevan, 4000 migrated to Goghtan, and so on.[47] Nakhijevan was added to the Republic of Armenia as a province next year, in 1919. This inclusion did not last long since, due to the Musavatists' mistake, there was a conflict between Turkey and Armenia in the summer of that year. A new battle broke out in the area as a result of the Musavatists' failure to reconcile among themselves and their followers. *(„On 30 November 1920, Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan made a statement on the occasion of the Sovietization of Armenia in which they declared Nakhijevan and integral part of the country: „… henceforward no territorial issues should incite bloodshed between the two centuries-old neighbours, i.e. the Armenians and Muslims. The territories of the districts of Zangezur and Nakhijevan are inseparable parts of Soviet Armenia…").*[48]

[43] Madatov, Garash. "Pobeda Sovetskoj Vlasti v Nahichevani i Obrazovanie Nahichevanskoj ASSR", Baku, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Azerbajdzhanskoj SSR, 1968, str.13(Madatov, Garash. "The Victory of Soviet Power in Nakhijevan and the Formation of the Nakhijevan ASSR", Baku, Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR, 1968, p.13).
[44] Hewson, Robert. "A Historical Atlas", Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press. 2001, p.173.
[45] Croissant, Michael. "The Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict. Causes and Implications", Praeger, Westport, Connecticut, London. 1998, p. 9.
[46] Ivanov, Vladimir. "Dearmenizacii Nakhidjevana v XX v. pp. 19-30.
[47] Ibid., pp. 30-37.
[48] Karapetian, Samvel. "Nakhijevan Atlas". Research on Armenian Architecture (RAA) Foundation, Yerevan, Tigran Metz Publishing House, 2012, p. 2.

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic was established on April 28, 1920, when the Bolshevik Eleventh Red Army invaded the country, and it later joined the Union of Soviet Socialist republics.[49] The following telegram was issued to Soviet Armenia by Soviet Azerbaijan: „*As of today the border disputes between Armenia and Azerbaijan are declared resolved. Mountainous Karabakh, Zangezur and Nakhijevan are considered part of the Soviet Republic of Armenia*."[50] Thus, on July 28 1920, the Red Army conquered Nakhijevan, which Turkey later acknowledged as Soviet territory governed by Soviet Azerbaijan. On March 16 1921, Turkey and Russia signed a treaty on the status of Nakhijevan, without Armenian side and placed the territory under the protection of the Republic of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist. This was done as a result of the Soviet Union's "divide and rule" policies.[51]

Therefore, in his book Madatov points out that at the beginning of 1921, in the towns and villages of Nakhijevan, representatives of the Azerbaijan SSR, the Armenian SSR, the RSFSR, and others conducted a survey of the population about the decrees of the Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee and the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia. As a result of the referendum, over 90% of the population voted for Nakhijevan to remain part of the Azerbaijan SSR with the rights of an autonomous republic. This important act greatly contributed to the settlement of territorial issues between the two fraternal republics. In subsequent years, the Communist Party and the Soviet government in the national state building in the Nakhijevan ASSR proceeded from this expression of the will of the working people.[52]

The Article 5 of the 1923 Treaty of Kars stated that the Nakhijevan exclave would be an autonomous region within Azerbaijan, despite the fact that its citizens were predominantly Azerbaijanis and as such belonged to the same ethnic group as the majority of Union Republic residents.[53] On Nakhijevan's territory, the Armenian SSR had further claims, none of which were approved by the treaty[54]. Armenian nationalists believed that giving Nakhijevan to Azerbaijan was a "historic injustice", despite the fact that it had an Azerbaijani majority.[55]

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[49] Balayev, Bahruz. "The Right to Self-Determination in the South Caucasus", Nagorno Karabakh in Context, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2013, p.19.

[50] Croissant, Michael. "The Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict. Causes and Implications", Praeger, Westport, Connecticut, London. 1998. pp. 18

[51] Ivanov, Vladimir "Dearmenizacii Nakhidjevana v XX v". pp. 38-39.

[52] G. A. Madatov, Garash. "Pobeda Sovetskoj Vlasti v Nahichevani i Obrazovanie Nahichevanskoj ASSR", Baku, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Azerbajdzhanskoj SSR, 1968, str. 95(Madatov, Garash. "The Victory of Soviet Power in Nakhijevan and the Formation of the Nakhijevan ASSR", Baku, Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR, 1968, p. 95).

[53] Karskij dogovor (The Treaty of Kars).

[54] Balayev, Bahruz. "The Right to Self-Determination in the South Caucasus", Nagorno Karabakh in Context, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2013, pp.19-20.

[55] Cornell, Svante. "Azerbaijan Since Independence", Armonk, New York, London, England, M. E. Sharpe, Inc.,, 2011, p. 37.

Initially, Nakhijevan did not have a border with Turkey, but in January 1932 they acquired one along the Aras River from Iran, at a distance of around 10 km. The new Nakhijevan ASSR expanded by 5,363 square kilometres. Due to Soviet geopolitical interests, the Soviet Union chose to grant this border region to Azerbaijan rather than Armenia. Azerbaijan was already well-known and wealthy due to its oil refineries. With this action, Russia put an end to what seemed to be an endless battle in the Southern Caucasus and grounded the opposing political viewpoint for the ensuing 100 years.[56]

Since the Soviet Union's Armenia lies between the "home country" and the exclave and this area does not share a straight border with Azerbaijan, Nakhijevan was granted autonomy in 1924. There were five districts in the Nakhijevan SSR: Sharur, Nakhchawan, Goghtan, Ernjak, and Chahuk. According to Robert H. Hewsen, Goghtan had its own bishopric and it's possible that Ernjak and Chahuk belonged to the province of Goghtan. Sharur was likely a part of Urts or Urtsadzor. The Nakhijevan SSR was first split into three parts: Julfa, Norashen, and Nakhijevan. Norashen was eventually given the name Il'ich, after Lenin. Later, Shahbuz from Norashen and Ordubad from Julfa were added to make five parts.[57]

Armenia's nationalist sentiment rapidly gained steam as a result of the change in the political power in the Soviet Union under President Mikhail Gorbachev. There, newly formed groups focused on ensuring the transfer of the autonomous Soviet socialist republic of Nakhijevan to Armenia.[58] The Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR adopted the Constitutional Law "On Sovereignity of the Azerbaijan SSR," on the 23th of September 1989, and the 5th provision of it stated inter alia "that sovereignity of the Azerbaijan SSR shall cover the whole its territory, including Azerbaijan's integral parts- Nakhijevan ASSR and NKAO", and that "the borders of the Azerbaijan SSR with other Union Republics might be altered only by mutual agreement of republics concerned."[59]

[56] Ivanov, Vladimir. "Dearmenizacii Nakhidjevana v XX v". pp. 38-39.
[57] Hewsen, Robert. "A Historical Atlas", Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2001, pp. 266.
[58] Cornell, Svante. "Azerbaijan Since Independence", Armonk, New York, London, England, M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2011, pp. 47-48.
[59] Balayev, Bahruz."The Right to Self-Determination in the South Caucasus",, Nagorno Karabakh in Context, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2013, p. 39.

Chapter 2. Experiencing Citizenship in Soviet Union

2.1. The Relation between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Daily Life

After discussing citizenship from social perspective, and the history of Nakhijevan in this subchapter through oral history interviews I present the relations between these two ethnic groups under Soviet rules. Along with creating an all-union identity as "Soviet people," the Soviet authorities praised the unity and friendship among Soviet states. Stalin's phrase "friendship among the peoples" has been used to describe the connection between Soviet nations since 1935.[60]

So how did this policy influence to the relations of ordinary people in their communities? The discussion of this section is relevant to compare the relations between Armenians and Azerbaijani ordinary people to that of state authorities. Arman emphasizes, "*The ordinary people did not discriminate among themselves. Discrimination was imposed by the elites. Even in the last period, local Turks*[61] *helped Armenians to cross the Yeraskh border. The population lived with their usual daily worries.*"[62] This statement makes clear that as Armenians and Azerbaijanis shared their daily life matters for some period of time in Soviet Union, it gave them the sense of being one community. Hasmik points out that they did not feel much difference between themselves until some obstacles arose, such as national movements.

> *Hasmik*: It was very good during the Soviet Union, because I was a citizen of the Soviet Union. People were equal and they lived equally. E.g. my grandmother used to come to Yerevan, the Turk would say, "Dear sister, what can you bring from Yerevan?" My grandmother used to buy it. After the Karabakh movement, the Turks were furious. In 1988 Nakhijevan was finally depopulated. But there were helpers from the Turks, they told us in advance to go, it would not be good. My father didn't manage to get something out, because he helped each of the villagers.[63] This example again proves the idea of being the same citizens of one state.

Stalin believed that the various ethnic groups of the Soviet Union, particularly the less developed ones, could not be allowed to choose the extent of their own autonomy because the

[60] Simon, Gerhard. "Nationalism and Policy toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union: from totalitarian dictatorship to post-Stalinist society". Boulder, Westview Press, 1991, p. 150.
[61] It is interesting to mention that, all Armenians do not discriminate Turks and Azerbaijanis. They refer to them as one nation.
[62] Interview with Arman.
[63] Interview with Hasmik.

concept of national self-determination compelled less developed ethnic groups into allowing imperialist nations to rule them as colonies in exchange for cultural autonomy.[64]

Cultural rights are also a way to express citizenship in a state. Armenians were not deprived of their cultural rights. Though in Soviet times churches were closed, Armenians used to hold some celebrations for their belief. Besides, they could organize some cultural events with Azerbaijani people. Elina, who is 64 years old, was born in Aza village of Nakhijevan. She spent her childhood there. She mentions after finishing school she did not receive higher education, because her family could not afford it. She states that it was possible to maintain their customs and traditions.

> *Elina:* It was a kolkhoz from the beginning, then in 1973 It became the collective farm village. Every year on the next Sunday after June 20 we used to celebrate Vardevor.[65] We gave a concert with Armenians and Turks. The opening was when we performed the Hayastan Azerbaijan song, but they didn't forbid us to hold Armenian events.[66]

Elina's statement that they performed " Hayastan-Azerbaijan song",[67] emphasizes the fact that the two nations shared common cultural values, and they performed and respected each other. In his address to the population on July 29, 1920, the Revolutionary Committee of Nakhijevan solemnly announced that the Communist Party would consistently implement the Leninist national policy based on equality, friendship and brotherhood of all peoples.[68] Marianna states the close relationship they were having with Azerbaijanis.

> *Marianna*: There were many close families in the village, they were called "kirva"[69] in the dialect of our village. They used to go to their weddings. I had a grandmother. The Turks used to take her for two months as a specialist. At that time they made carpets with patterns. Then the elders came and interviewed our grandmothers, where did you migrate, etc. They did not burn houses at that time, when the Turks attacked, they took food and went up to the mountains, then returned to their homes.[70]

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[64] Stalin, Joseph. "The Foundations of Leninism", Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1953, pp. 65-66.

[65] Vardavar is an Armenian festival. https://folkdancefootnotes.org/culture/special-occasions/vardavar-%D5%BE%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%A4%D5%A1%D5%BE%D5%A1%D5%BC-armenian-summer-water-fest/ (29/12/2022).

[66] Interview with Elina.

[67] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OlrUMTUPpSU (29/12/2022).

[68] Guliev, Dzh; Madatov, G.,Nadirov, A. "*Sovetskaja Nahichevan"* Azerbajdzhanskoe Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Baku, 1984, str. 50(Guliyev J., Madatov, G., Nadyrov, A. "*Soviet Nakhijevan*" Azerbaijan State Publishing House Baku, 1984, p. 50).

[69] Kirva is a friendly addressing mode used to address Azeris and Kurds. https://ganjalyanyura.wordpress.com/2016/08/26/kirva/ (29/12/2022).

[70] Interview with Marianna.

Living together in one community, brought developing some common words. Armenians used some words which were taken from Azerbaijanis. The term "kirva" is a best example of this. Besides people were working together and it did not prevent the maintenance of stable relative peace.

Laura brings vivid examples of the daily relationships they were having with Azerbaijanis. She goes on deeply the idea of discrimination among nations. She underlines that even she had close friends and was in close relationship with Azerbaijanis, Armenians were not mixed with Turks. They kept the precaution that they cannot become brotherhood nation, even mingle into one nation-state.

> *Laura*: I had a Turkish friend named Sevda, we were very close, her brother Salei, when we went to the village, would meet us in his car, take us wherever we wanted, we were very close, actually at one point he got angry with me, I didn't invite her to my wedding, my wedding was at my uncle's house, mama said that it would be shame to invite a Turk, she got married in Baku herself, she wanted me to be a bridesmaid. We have been to a lot of Turkish weddings, we also 0went to Bayram,[71] but at that time our grandfathers said that the Turk should be a raisin, don't scratch your pocket. The elder Turks did not give much trouble. Our Turks helped us to cross the border. Until 1988, we considered ourselves more Armenians, with full rights, because we judged ourselves healthier and now we don't know if we will get home safe or not.[72]

Despite the fact, that they were cautious of Turks and were keeping their inner borders for themselves, it is interesting to analyse some key aspects. She mentions the particular term "Our Turks". What is behind of it? It means that they got used to the Azerbaijanis they lived with. They could establish some kind of relativeness. For that the feeling of having a relative is not just having ties with blood but also the neighbors who they lived with, over a time become closer even than relatives.

This follows to the argument, that Soviet nation-building policy succeeded within some period. People could live together, and in spite of some conflicts, they could share their daily life matters. Even the sentence "*we considered ourselves more Armenians, with full rights, because we judged ourselves healthier and now we don't know if we will get home safe or not*" is a proof stating that for ordinary people there did not seem much difference what political status they would bear, which citizen they would become. Most cases people would prefer to live in peace and keep their national identity, which seems was preserved in that time. Hasmik, who considers herself Zok, which is a typical dialect spoken in seven regions of Nakhijevan,

[71] It is the Turkic word for a nationally-celebrated festival or holiday. https://www.dailysabah.com/expat-corner/2019/06/04/all-about-ramadan-bayram-the-sweetest-of-holidays (29/12/2022).
[72] Interview with Laura.

also agrees on the point that two nations could live together under one nation state, and from her narratives, she states that not only Armenians but also Azerbaijanis wanted to keep their close relations.

> *Hasmik*: The Turk used to call my father kardash.[73] We have a dialect, I am pure Zok. Zoks live in 7 districts. Let's say that hac[74] is pronounced hoc. The TV was in Turkish. I once fell and broke my nose because of them. My neighbor told me to go and tell my mother about Zeinab's concert, I ran and fell. It had nothing to do with being a Turk, even if she was an artist, everyone was listening. I also participated in Turkish weddings. The Turk used to come and bake bread for us. Baking bread was another ceremony, there must have been 7-8 people. Bread was baked for the whole year. They sat down from 6 a.m. in the morning and baked bread. Then they gave it to everyone. Every day, they gave bread to your house as fresh bread.[75]

During the middle period of Soviet Union, in Armenian villages of Nakhijevan, where there was no cultural life, no connection with Armenia and national general events, Azerbaijani specialists, such as shepherds, agronomists, nurses-doctors, etc. were sent. Thus, Azerbaijanis, occupying key positions in rural areas, in a few years, 1-2 families became 5-6 or more families. Thus, such conditions were gradually created for the locals that the Armenians left their native places "of their own free will", so to speak, becoming victims of a white or bloodless massacre.[76] Marianna mentions, in her talk, that the relations with their teachers were good. There did not seem to occur any tension or discrimination between the students.

> *Marianna*: We didn't learn Turkish at school, but we had a Turkish algebra teacher, he was a good person. In the 80s, the Azerbaijani language was introduced as a language. We studied Russian and English in our school years. The English teacher came and went from the city Nakhijevan every day.[77]

Boris speaks about the case which happened to them. It proves the best example showing that ordinary people did not become hostile, even when their territories where in the full control by Azerbaijani people. It should be mentioned once more that the two nations could live together keeping their national identities among themselves and experience their rights within the community.

> *Boris:* We were very close classmates, we gathered many times. Every year, on the second Sunday of October, we gathered in the holy place which was named Hazaraprikich, which

[73] The Turkish word *Kardeş* translates to *brother* in English.
[74] *Hac* in English means *bread*. In Zok dialect, it is pronounced *hoc* instead of *hac*.
[75] Interview with Hasmik.
[76] Ayvazyan, Argam. "Naxij&any' 1905 t'. & 1918-1919 t't'. krake shght'ayi goyamarterowm", Er&an, 2005, e'j 13 (Ayvazyan, Argam. "Nakhijevan in 1905 and 1918-1919 in the fire chain battles", Yerevan, 2005, p. 13).
[77] Interview with Marianna.

already has a 350-year history and is located on the Nakhijevan-Sisan road. During last time in 1987 we went to the holy place by bus. Then we were stopped by a car. A man came out and introduced himself as the first secretary of Raikom. He said, "What are you doing here, no Armenians live here, go." We moved quickly to cross the border of Shahabuz, but the barrier was closed, he had called in advance to warn, but someone sitting near the barrier recognized me and said, "I'm pretending to be asleep now, you open the door and go through".[78]

The sentence which said Azerbaijani "*I'm pretending to be asleep now, you open the door and go through"* again emphasizes the point that both Azerbaijani ordinary people and Armenians were not discriminating each other. As they shared their daily life together, they developed the sense of being brothers and friends. And even the fact, that state authorites had different commands towards Armenians, it did not prevent Azerbaijanis for helping Armenians to escape and save their lives.

Artvom, in his narrative, portrays the daily life spent in Znaberd. He mentions that it was hard for the youth to stay in the village, because villages were not developed. This was a special policy, organized by the local authorities of Azerbaijan. According to this policy the number of Armenians started to decrease in almost all regions. In fact, the villages of Nakhijevan were in some way different. There were some villages who were inhabited only by Armenians. There was no Turk living within them. Znaberd was one of the villages, where Azerbaijanis usually did not live. Traditionally, people of Znaberd engaged in gardening, viticulture, tobacco farming, apiculture and other crafts. The village had a winery, a high school, a hospital, a club, a library, and a kindergarten.[79]

Artyom: After finishing school, I came to Yerevan, studied as an auto electrician for 8 months, then recruited to the army, after finishing the army I came back to the village and after a few months I left the village and moved to Jermuk at the age of 21, because you can't get a job in the village. There were no Armenians in high positions, let's say there was a newspaper editor. But if the leadership wanted, their person would be the head of the village. There were clashes sometimes. They were doing things on purpose so that the police would come and catch us. If they were coming from neighboring villages we caught and beat them. We had a man, who was a procurator of Transcaucasian military, who withdrew the judge from his position as he adjudicated my father for a year, he said, now see who you are judging.[80]

[78] Interview with Boris.
[79] Ayvazyan, Argam. "Naxijevanyan Mtorowm-e'sqizner," hator errord, Erevan, heghinakayin hratarakowt'yown, 2022, e'j 273 (Ajvazjan, Argam. "Nakhijevanyan Reflection-sketches", volume three, Yerevan, author's edition, p. 273.)
[80] Interview with Artyom.

Here it is important to mention that, the tension started to arise from the local authorities and it gradually affected on daily relations between these ethnic groups. Azerbaijanis were given high positions in state administrative system, while Armenians not. And in all above mentioned examples Armenians and Azerbaijanis could leave together peacefully, but still there were some villages which did not want to have some common features with Azerbaijanis. Thus they did not interact with each other.

Although Azerbaijanis were given some privileges, Armenians were able to claim determining their rights for living in their community. Such a case is narrated by Laura.

> *Laura*: If you were a little stronger, you could go and complain to them. E.g. my mother was strong, she was able to carry her words forward. My father worked as a driver in the collective farm. Once the Turks wanted to harass my father, he was driving a new car, they cut off the front of the car, they wanted to hit him, my mother said that when Aliyev is coming, I will lean against the car with my bare feet and tell him, "Look, what your nation is doing". So many policemen came to our house, apologized, told me not to do such a thing, my mother said: "I will complain, you are discriminating between nations". My mother said, "Look, if something like this happens again, I will write a letter.[81]

It shows, that Armenians were not afraid of claiming their rights. Even they were living side by side with Azerbaijanis, and sometimes there were some ethnic problems. Interesting point here is that the local Azerbaijani people were also afraid of Armenians though they were given some privileges, and when they were threatened *"I will complain, you are discriminating between nations"*, they tried to maintain peaceful relations between their neighbours. Thus, Armenians considered themselves full Armenians despite the fact they were governed by the local Azerbaijani authorities. It is important from the framework of claiming rights as an integration in a community. They were well aware of the system operating in the Soviet Union. So claiming to protect their rights is a means of feeling full citizens of the state. People used citizenship as a tool for their daily survival.

[81] Interview with Laura.

2.2. The Experience of Armenians as Citizens of Nakhijevan ASSR

In this section relying on my informants' memories and observations of different scholars I discuss how Armenians in Soviet Nakhijevan experienced their citizenship political and social belonging to that territory. Regarding rights, I ask about how they dealt with the effects of Soviet nationality policy, citizen hierarchies, and inequalities along nationality lines. In terms of identity, I question whether, even though they were Soviet citizens, nationality was the primary source of identification for them or if other identities were also significant, and gave them a sense of citizenship.

As in previous chapter I discussed Armenians' historical settlement to that border region, and the formation of autonomous republic under Soviet Azerbaijan, it is noteworthy to speak about their feelings of inclusion from that state. First I discuss how two Soviet states Armenia and Azerbaijan responded to the decision of making Nakhijevan autonomous republic. So how did Armenian SSR respond to preserving Armenians' full rights within these state? What kind of policy was carried out by Azerbaijan? In the interview with Artyom, he argues that Soviet Armenia did not do his best to handle the issues over Nakhijevan. Armenians were followers of Soviet ideologies, and were loyal to their beliefs.

> *Arman:* I have dealt with almost all issues related to Nakhijevan. The press in Armenia did not publish articles about Nakhijevan, arguing that Moscow would see it as causing inter-ethnic problems. Armenia always followed Moscow's instructions. The study of monuments in the territory of Nakhijevan was much more difficult, there were arrests, confiscation of studied materials. There was a case when a person was sent from Baku to meet with me and offered me money so that I would not publish. After my refusal, they published an extensive review material in the academic press, that my materials are national anti-Soviet publications between two nations.[82]
>
> *Lilit.* I wonder, while your research studies, could Armenians maintain their Armenian Identity or were they sovietised?
>
> *Arman:* Of course, there were places inhabited only by Armenians or there were places where the population was mixed, but Azerbaijan had a special policy, in order to work in state institutions, you had to know Azerbaijan language. Armenians did not know Azerbaijani after finishing school, the youth came to Yerevan and stayed there. These are special policies, that's how the Armenian population began to decrease. Armenia did nothing to keep the local population in the settlements. This was due to the fact that Armenians were devoted to the party's ideology. Azerbaijan didn't think like that, they had a state program for their national

[82] Interview with Arman.

problems and were going in that direction, and Armenian authors sometimes made such publications that were in favour of Azerbaijan. The ordinary people did not discriminate among nations. Discrimination was imposed by the authorities.[83]

While in the previous subchapter I portrayed vivid examples how the two ethnic groups shared their daily life matters, here it becomes a clear statement, that the policy against the ethnicity was developed by the authorities. The sentence *"Azerbaijan had a special policy, in order to work in state institutions, you had to know Azerbaijan language*" underlies the special policy carried out by Soviet Azerbaijan. This was a nationalistic approach toward the other nation and gave further discrimination between nations.

The Nakhijevan Revolutionary Committee paid special attention to the issue of refugees. Already on July 30, the Revolutionary Committee addressed the population with an appeal stating that under the rule of the Soviets there could be no national hatred, and all refugees, regardless of nationality and property status, could return to their villages and cities. The Revolutionary Committee announced its full readiness to help the refugees in this. Having learned about the establishment of Soviet power in the region, refugee peasants began to return to their native villages in masses. They were greatly assisted by the consuls of the RSFSR in the cities of Iran. As can be seen from the report of the Nakhijevan Refugee Commission to the Presidium of the Nakhijevan Regional Party Organization, dated December 1920, along with refugees of the profitable residents of South Azerbaijan, who fled from the khan's regime. In September-October 1920, Armenian refugees arrived in Nakhijevan.[84]

After the establishment of Soviet order in Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Azerbaijani authorities tried their best to create many and varied obstacles, created difficulties for Armenians from exile to return to their ancestral homes. Among the many such anti-Soviet and anti-constitutional decisions of the Azerbaijani authorities, the decision made in 1922 should be emphasized. The June 24 telegram of the Chairman of the People's Committee of the Azerbaijan SSR Musabekov to the Chairman of the People's Committee of the Azerbaijan SSR, where it is reported that the "mass entry of the population to the borders of Azerbaijan" is prohibited by the decision of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan.[85]

[83] Interview with Arman.

[84] Madatov, Garash. "Pobeda Sovetskoj Vlasti v Nahichevani i Obrazovanie Nahichevanskoj ASSR", Baku, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Azerbajdzhanskoj SSR, 1968, str. 85 (Madatov, Garash "The Victory of Soviet Power in Nakhijevan and the Formation of the Nakhijevan ASSR", Baku, Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR, 1968, p. 85).

[85] Ayvazyan, Argam, "Naxij&any' 1905 t'. & 1918-1919 t't'. krake shght'ayi goyamarterowm", Er&an, 2005, e'j 9(Ayvazyan, Argam, "Nakhicevan in 1905 and 1918-1919 in the fire chain battles", Yerevan, 2005, p. 9).

The inquiries of the Central Executive Committee of Transcaucasia to the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan were resumed only on March 26, 1926. In the resolution dated May 6, it is stated that "in order to implement equal land distribution... and due to the lack of land in the Nakhijevan ISR, it is forbidden to resettle in the Nakhijevan ISR to those who wish to receive land plots for farming, and accordingly, it is suggested that the Nakhijevan ISR land allotment committee give land plots only to those persons who were moved until April 1, 1925". This decision was only for the uninformed. Because until April 1, no Armenian could settle in Nakhijevan ISR, not only because Nakhijevan was a border zone and lived there, but also no one could settle without registration. This is an example of how the issue of the return of Armenian refugees was not resolved.[86]

In the interview with Artyom, who was born in 1962, in Znaberd village of Nakhijevan he also states that entering to the territory of Nakhijevan was restricted. One could not pass the border zone without permission. Which means that since Nakhijevan was considered a borderland, it received special treatment. As I discussed in the theoretical chapter that one of the problems of being a borderland is connected with territoriality,[87] thus Soviet Nakhijevan being under the protection of Soviet Azerbaijan restricted the entry to its territory, even Armenians who were born in other places of Soviet Armenia needed to get permission and show that written document to the checkpoint (Appendix 2).

> *Artyom*: We had Soviet passports, in our passport there was a sign stating our status. To enter the territory of Nakhijevan, there was a military post that checked, if you didn't have that document, they wouldn't let you in or you had to get permission from the passport department, because there were strong weapons in Nakhijevan, it was a border zone city. It wasn't small, with the military, the population was approximately 250,000-300,000.[88]

Karen was born in Arinj, while in his document it is stated that the place of birth is Vayq, which was a part of Soviet Armenia. He mentions that as it was a custom that mother would give birth to his child in her native village, so in that way he spent his childhood in Nakhijevan. His mother was from Arinj, a village in Nakhijevan. Khachatur does not seem to differentiate between Azerbaijan or Armenian citizens, despite his identity of a Nakhijevan citizen. It becomes an interesting point, that in the Soviet Union, there was a chance to travel inside territories and no matter which nationality the person belonged to or status he possessed.

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[86] Xojabekyan, Vladimir.“Hayastani bnakchowt'yan verartadrowt'yowny' & teghasharjhery'”, Erevan, 2002, e'j 164(Xojabekyan, Vladimir, “Population Reproduction and Migration of Armenia”, Yerevan, 2002, p. 164).
[87] Anderson, James and O'Dowd, Liam. “Borders, Border Regions and Territoriality: Contradictory Meanings, Changing Significance”, Regional Studies, 33(7),1999, p. 598.
[88] Interview with Artyom.

Armenians having origins in Nakhijevan could travel to Soviet Armenia. Thus it proves the point that the Soviet Union had the same citizenship for all its citizens.[89]

> *Karen:* During my school and student years, I used to go to Nakhijevan. For the most part, there were no conflicts, if there were any, they turned to the secretary of the corps. If there is something good in me, I owe it to Nakhijevan. We had Soviet passports, at that time there was no national discrimination, people were safe, if there was any national problem, they were arrested by the Soviet police. They preached brotherhood, but there is no brotherhood on that basis. It would be good if national issues were solved in the Soviet Union. The socialist problem was put there.[90]

The above mentioned example once again depicts that Soviet authorities could maintain some relative peace for solving national problems. The statement "*It would be good if national issues were solved in the Soviet Union. The socialist problem was put there*" emphasizes that in the Soviet period social aspects were core elements of citizenship regardless nationality.

Kymlichka asserts that ethnic groups do not strive to sovereignty. He defines national minorities as groups with desires for secession, various degrees of autonomy, and cultural rights. In addition, he states that recognizing, accomodating, and promoting the demands and identities of specific ethnic and national groups is intimately connected to decisions made by the government regarding languages, internal boundaries, public holidays, and state symbols. Unavoidably, the state benefits some cultural identities while defavoring others. Once this is acknowledged, the justice of minority rights demands should be reconsidered.[91] According to this viewpoint, the following example agrees to the point that Armenians could preserve their national identities in some degree of autonomy. While practicing their free cultural rights, Boris indicates, in the state organizing system there were some positions that could be occupied by Armenians, but the privileged ones were given to the Azerbaijanis.

> *Boris*: Armenians had positions, but 2nd, 3rd positions. During the Soviet Union, you were considered a full Armenian, but they prevented you in every way. Once when my uncle was going in a truck, the drunk Turks cut his way, my uncle got out alone. There were 10 of them, he beat all of them, they complained to the police. The police asked how many people there were from the Turks, and how many Armenians , when he knew that one Armenian beat 10 Turks, he said he did well.[92]

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[89] Shnirelman, Victor. "The Value of the Past: myths, identity and politics in Transcaucasia", Osaka, National Museum of Ethnology, 2001, p. 3.
[90] Interview with Karen.
[91] Kymlichka, Will. "Multicultural Citizenship, A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights", Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 108.
[92] Interview with Boris.

Speaking about experience of Armenians as citizens of Soviet Nakhijevan it is noteworthy to emphasize social rights among the civil, political and social components of citizenship. Great attention was paid to social rights during Soviet times. As Thomas Marshall states, "modern citizenship" is connected with practicing social rights as a mechanism for equality and social rights have primarily changed the patterns of inequality[93]. Thus practicing social rights in the Soviet period meant that a person was engaged to that community. Armenians in Nakhijevan were able to keep their social rights in spite of some factors, especially during the first years of the formation of the Soviet Union. Marianna, like other young people from Nakhijevan villages, continued her education in Yerevan. After graduating, she returned her village.

> *Marianna:* After graduation I went to the village, I said, "I can't stay with my relatives in Yerevan. I went to the village, my sister said whether I wanted to work in a store, I said yes. Turks with special addresses used to come to our store. We had a store manager, he used to say, what kind of person will come, what kind of thing we should give. It was very good in our village. We had all kinds of shops, a hospital. It was a gasified village. We had transport from Yerevan, it was working every day. The neighboring villages also could use it. Our schoolchildren were taken to harvest, and the Turks were brought from the neighboring villages, too. There was nothing hostile. The kolkhoz had tomato gardens and tobacco farms. My mam was working, we went and helped.[94]

The ability to work in the such places, depicts once more that Armenians were appreciated in social life, but not in administrative system. Thus following Golfo Alexopoulo's consideration on "Soviet Citizenship" I indicate that Armenians were citizens "lacking certain rights".[95] Workplaces in Soviet times can highlight the idea of equality among nations. As Marianna mentions that "*Our schoolchildren were taken to harvest, and the Turks were brought from the neighboring village, too*", this is a clear statement that the Soviet policy was not discriminating between nations. This was done to preach brotherhood and solidarity in the community.[96]

Therefore, national problems between Armenians and Azerbaijanis started to arise gradually in the middle of the Soviet period, and developed intensively up to the collapse of it.

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[93] Marshall, Thomas. "Citizenship and Social Class". In: "Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays by T.H. Marshall". Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977, pp. 105-106.
[94] Interview with Marianna.
[95] Alexopoulos, Golfo. "Soviet Citizenship, More or Less: Rights, Emotions, and States of Civic Belonging", University of South Florida Libraries, 2006, pp. 488-489.
[96] Simon, Gerhard. "Nationalism and Policy toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union: from totalitarian dictatorship to post-Stalinist society", Boulder, Westview Press, 1991, p. 150.

Soviet Azerbaijan developed a special policy so that Armenians would leave their homeland. The first victims of white massacre were the Armenians of the Astapat village left behind by the Great Patriotic War, who gradually moved to Yerevan. Then the people of Astapat were followed by a part of the Armenians of the cities of Nakhijevan and Julfa. Then, starting from the 1940s, the number of Armenian schools in Nakhijevan began to decrease. Armenian departments of Nakhijevan Pedagogical College, Medical Technical College, Armenian Theater, etc. were closed... Thus, in the 1950s, the emigration of Armenians became a common phenomenon.[97] Boris, who was born in 1955 in Shahabuz region of Nakhijevan, talks with pain concerning the matter of schools. He remembers his school years and his classmates. During the first years they were given a bit of freedom, but when they started to perform their patriotic ideas, the government immediately became warned of it.

> *Boris:* In the 6th grade, our Armenian language teacher performed Sasuntsi Davit. The next day, they called him, saying, "Are you doing antisocial things?". In the 9th grade, which I wanted to attend, the Turks announced that the Armenian schools were closed, they said that the Armenian should not study they should go and keep sheep, my father's eyes filled with tears, he said, "You see, my son, Turk remains a Turk."
>
> *Lilit:* Did you learn Turkish at school?
>
> *B.:* We started learning Turkish when we started communicating with Turks, they came to the village to buy a house, etc., otherwise there was no Turk in the village before that, we did not learn Turkish at school.[98]

So Armenian population started to decrease in the region of Nakhijevan. Thus, I conclude that Armenians considered themselves full citizens of Soviet Nakhijevan until to the point that Soviet Azerbaijan implemented its nationalistic approach during the last decades of Soviet Union. Besides, people who were born in Nakhijevan were given a special treatment. There were neither battles nor military actions between these ethnic groups. Ordinary people did not complain to live side by side as neighbours. They developed an identity of one nation. This was due to the idea of "Soviet citizen".

[97] Ayvazyan, Argam. "Naxij&any' 1905 t'. & 1918-1919 t't'. krake shght'ayi goyamarterowm", Er&an, 2005, e'j 14 (Ayvazyan, Argam "Nakhijevan in 1905 and 1918-1919 in the fire chain battles", Yerevan, 2005, p. 14).
[98] Interview with Boris.

Conclusion

The research included Historical Citizenship in the Soviet Border Region focusing on Armenians of Nakhijevan. The primary source of my research was based on Oral History Interviews, and I tried to depict the middle period of the Soviet Union, since my interviewees were middle-aged people. I included Armenian and Russian sources in my research as well, to have a multidirectional discussion on Soviet Nakhijevan. The interviews were carried out in the Republic of Armenia in Armenian language.

In my theoretical chapter I have discussed the concept of citizenship from social perspective. Generally, citizenship carries legal aspects and is widely used by political scientists, lawyers and scholars who make researches in legal fields, but in my research I explained citizenship focusing on social rights. I connected social aspect of citizenship to discuss how citizenship was perceived in the Soviet Union. As in the Soviet Union social rights were defined as core elements for inclusion in society, that is why relying on Thomas Marshall's social framework in citizenship, I analysed the "Soviet Citzenship" and brought the experience of Armenians as citizens of Soviet Nakhijevan. I have underlined the case of Soviet Nakhijevan, because this borderland is constructed over specific historical stages, and the greatest impact on its history, was made in the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union, Nakhijevan became Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic under the protection of Soviet Azerbaijan and it was considered as the exclave of Azerbaijan because it did not have straight border with it, thus in Soviet period Nakhijevan was governed by local Azerbaijani authorities.

I have depicted that this borderland creates historical identity in connection with territorial ideologies. Two nations, Armenians and Azerbaijanis, have both territorial claims over this borderland. Nowadays Armenians do not claim rights over this territory in political discourse and also during Soviet period, Soviet Armenia was not publishing any articles on Soviet Nakhijevan due to the fact, they always followed Soviet ideologies and were afraid to arise some ethnic clashes between nations. That is why archival sources are rare on the topic of Nakhijevan. However, there are still some Armenians who publish books and articles on cultural, territorial history of Nakhijevan. All the Armenians with whom I carried out my interviews, consider Nakhijevan their historical homeland because the idea of being born there and having spent some period of their life in this region creates the feeling of belonging to that state. On the other side there are a lot of books and articles published by Azerbaijani authors about the Soviet Nakhichevan, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, highlighting Nakhichevan as the motherland of the governing Aliyev family. The goal of my research was

to present Armenian's historical citizenship in Soviet Nakhijevan. I developed the notion of historical citizenship to describe that Armenians had historical connection with Nakhijevan and social rights which they experienced in Soviet Union was associated with their historical belonging to that state. I also emphasize that the nationality of Armenians was registered as "Armenians" in their passports, though Nakhijevan was legislature part of Azerbaijan and other smaller ethnic groups such as Lezgins, Talyshed Avars or Meskhetian Turks, were registered as "Azerbaijanis".

Through conducting interviews with Armenians I have revealed that in the Soviet period due to the idea of "Soviet Citizenship" Armenians considered themselves full citizens of Soviet Nakhijevan, even they were discriminated by local Azerbaijani authorities in state administrative system. They were having good relations with ordinary people of Nakhijevan and shared their daily life together. They were engaged in economic life. They could have developed one nation and lived in peace since they had common customs if nationalistic ideas had not been developed. So Armenians of Nakhijevan agreed to live under the rule of Soviet Azerbaijan, to practice their historical citizenship in their homeland.

This small, forgotten and distant region is extremely significant in daily life and politics of South Caucasus. Today, it is relevant from a geopolitical, historical, social, and psychological standpoint. Good ground for social studies theory investigations, as in my research, citizenship and state membership have social implications. Hopefully soon, this work using historical citizenship knowledge will be taken into further consideration as part of a larger research work and will be applicable to other peripheral areas of the Soviet Union.

Primary Sources (Oral history interviews)

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4. Interview with Elina, the Republic of Armenia, 29/08/2022.
5. Interview with Hasmik, the Republic of Armenia, 27/08/2022.
6. Interview with Karen, the Republic of Armenia, 26/08/2022.
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