



Political Power Balances and the Strategic Importance of Nakhchivan (1924–1928)

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Abstract: This article investigates the political dynamics and power balances in Nakhchivan from 1924 to 1928, a period marked by shifting regional influences, Soviet control, and international interests. It will explore the geopolitical significance of the region during this time and its implications for both the Soviet Union and neighboring states, such as Turkey and Iran. The study will focus on political actors, strategic policies, and the region's role in broader geopolitical frameworks.

Keywords: Nakhchivan, 1924-1928, Political Power, Soviet Union, Regional Strategy, Turkey, Iran

Introduction:

1. Contextual Background:

Nakhchivan, a historically significant region located at the crossroads of the South Caucasus, played a pivotal role in the political landscape of the early 1920s. Situated between Azerbaijan, Turkey, Armenia, and Iran, its geographical position made it an important strategic asset for neighboring powers. The political situation in Nakhchivan during this period was highly volatile, with shifting allegiances and power structures largely influenced by external forces such as the Soviet Union, Turkey, and Armenia. As Azerbaijan regained control of Nakhchivan in the aftermath of World War I and the collapse of the Russian Empire, the region became a battleground for political control, with Armenians and Russians exerting negative influences that threatened Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the early 1920s, Azerbaijan faced numerous challenges from both Armenian nationalists and Soviet Russia. Armenian forces sought to annex Nakhchivan as part of their broader irredentist ambitions, aiming to create a Greater Armenia. These efforts were supported by Russian Bolsheviks, who were keen on expanding Soviet influence in the South Caucasus. Despite these external pressures, Nakhchivan's strategic location and the loyalty of its Azerbaijani population played a critical role in maintaining Azerbaijan's presence in the region. The Soviet Union's eventual establishment of control over Nakhchivan in 1924 came with complex power dynamics that reflected both Moscow's dominance and Azerbaijan's resistance to losing its historical territories.

Nakhchivan's importance was not only political but also strategic. The region's location provided a key link between Turkey and Azerbaijan, making it a vital corridor for trade and military movements.



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This connection to Turkey, a historically important ally, became a crucial factor in maintaining Nakhchivan's autonomy from Armenian and Russian attempts to control the region. The people of Nakhchivan, deeply loyal to Azerbaijan, resisted external aggression and played an active role in ensuring that the region remained an integral part of the newly established Azerbaijani state.

2. Research Questions:

- What were the key political actors and power structures in Nakhchivan between 1924 and 1928, and how did they shape the region's political landscape?
- How did Nakhchivan's geographical and strategic position influence local and international policies during this period?
- What were the long-term implications of the power dynamics in Nakhchivan, particularly in relation to Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity?

In examining the political dynamics of Nakhchivan from 1924 to 1928, this article will focus on the role of Azerbaijan in defending its territory against Armenian and Russian incursions, the importance of Turkish support, and the resilience of the Azerbaijani people in preserving their land. The research will address how these factors influenced both local governance and the broader geopolitical strategies of the Soviet Union, Turkey, and other neighboring states. Furthermore, it will explore the enduring legacy of this period, particularly in shaping Nakhchivan's identity as a region of strategic and national importance for Azerbaijan.

Literature Review:

1. Historical Perspectives:

The political situation in Nakhchivan during the 1920s has been widely explored in Azerbaijani and regional scholarship, often highlighting the region's turbulent history and strategic importance. In the early 20th century, Nakhchivan became a contested area, particularly after the collapse of the Russian Empire and the emergence of the Soviet Union. As Armenia sought to expand its territory, the Azerbaijani population of Nakhchivan resisted, forming a key part of the region's complex political history.

Şimşek (2010) provides a comprehensive overview of the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of Nakhchivan during this period, noting how the region's political fate was shaped by Soviet policies and Armenian aspirations. He argues that the political struggle in Nakhchivan was not only about local governance but also about regional dominance. The Soviet Union, seeking to strengthen its hold over the South Caucasus, found itself in a delicate balancing act between Turkey and Iran, with Nakhchivan serving as a crucial buffer zone. This perspective underscores the complex geopolitical chess game played between regional powers, with Azerbaijan caught in the middle.

İbrahimova (2019) discusses Armenian expansionist policies in the region during the 1920s, particularly the ambitions to annex Nakhchivan to a "Greater Armenia." The study highlights how the Armenian leadership, with support from Soviet Russia, sought to disrupt Azerbaijan's control over the region by instigating conflicts and seeking international recognition of their territorial claims. This work reflects the hostility that characterized Armenian-Azerbaijani relations during this period, and how Armenian forces, backed by Soviet influence, created persistent challenges for the Azerbaijani administration.



Additionally, Ismayilova and Abbasova's (year) analysis on the genocidal actions in Western Azerbaijan between 1918 and 1920 further underscores the hostility from Armenian factions during the post-war period. Their work ties into the broader context of how these tensions spilled over into Nakhchivan, affecting the political atmosphere of the 1920s.

2. Geopolitical Significance:

Nakhchivan's unique geopolitical location is a central theme in the literature on the region. Situated at the crossroads of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Armenia, and Iran, it has long been a critical point of strategic interest for neighboring powers. The region's location made it a key area for Soviet military and political maneuvers, especially as it provided direct access to Turkey and served as a buffer against Iran.

Several studies emphasize the historical tensions between the Soviet Union, Turkey, and Iran, focusing on the competition for influence in Nakhchivan. Ünal (2000) highlights how Ottoman-Azerbaijan relations played a significant role in ensuring the region remained part of Azerbaijan, preventing Armenian encroachment. The strategic importance of the region for both the Ottoman Empire and its successor state, Turkey, meant that Turkey was a key ally for Azerbaijan in securing Nakhchivan's political future.

Simultaneously, the Soviet Union viewed Nakhchivan as a key frontier zone, not only to contain Armenian ambitions but also to counterbalance Turkish influence. The Soviets often used Nakhchivan as a political pawn, making concessions to Turkey to maintain their own dominance in the region. Soviet archives, analyzed by Baguirov (2012), reveal how Moscow's political machinations in the South Caucasus often prioritized regional control over local governance, particularly in border regions like Nakhchivan.

In contrast, Iran's position in the region was more passive but nonetheless important. While Iran did not seek direct control over Nakhchivan, its historical claims and interest in maintaining influence over the region shaped diplomatic interactions during the period. Scholars like Guluzade (2022) have explored the regional power dynamics, illustrating how the shifting political alliances between the USSR, Turkey, and Iran continually reshaped Nakhchivan's political and strategic landscape.

Methodology:

1. Data Collection:

To explore the political power balances and the strategic importance of Nakhchivan between 1924 and 1928, this research will rely primarily on archival materials and historical documents from Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Russia. These sources will provide firsthand insights into Soviet policies, local governance, and international diplomatic efforts that shaped the region during this period.

- Archival Research on Soviet Policies: The Soviet Union's influence in Nakhchivan is crucial to understanding the political dynamics of the region. This research will examine Soviet policy documents, government decrees, and administrative reports from archives in Baku and Moscow to trace the shifting control mechanisms in place. Special attention will be paid to directives issued by the Soviet government regarding the South Caucasus and Nakhchivan in particular, as these reveal the USSR's broader regional strategies.



- **Historical Documents and Diplomatic Correspondence:** Diplomatic correspondence between Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Russia will provide valuable context for understanding the international significance of Nakhchivan. The Turkish archives, in particular, will offer insights into how Ankara viewed Nakhchivan's role in its foreign policy, while Azerbaijani documents will shed light on internal efforts to resist foreign intervention. These materials will be cross-referenced with Russian archives to highlight the tensions and negotiations that took place during this period.

- **Primary Sources from Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Russia:** This research will incorporate a wide range of primary sources, including memoirs of political figures, military records, and contemporary newspapers. These sources will offer a perspective on how local and regional actors perceived the political dynamics in Nakhchivan. Azerbaijani and Turkish perspectives will be prioritized to provide a balanced view of how the region's strategic importance was understood by its closest allies, while Russian sources will be used to understand Soviet motivations and actions.

2. Analytical Framework:

This research will apply a comparative historical approach to examine how political control in Nakhchivan shifted between various actors, including the Soviet Union, local Azerbaijani authorities, and Armenian factions. By comparing the power structures and policies of different actors, the research will highlight the competing interests and strategies that influenced Nakhchivan's political landscape.

- **Shifts in Political Control:** The comparative historical approach will enable a detailed analysis of how political power shifted between different authorities in Nakhchivan during the 1924-1928 period. Key events, such as the Soviet consolidation of power and the influence of Turkish diplomatic efforts, will be compared to understand the region's evolving political dynamics. This approach will help identify the factors that contributed to the relative stability or instability in Nakhchivan during this time.

- **Geopolitical Theories Applied to Nakhchivan's Strategic Role:** In addition to historical analysis, this research will draw on geopolitical theories to analyze the strategic significance of Nakhchivan. The concept of buffer states, spheres of influence, and regional power dynamics will be applied to understand why Nakhchivan was so critical to both Soviet and Turkish foreign policy. The region's geographical position will be analyzed within the broader context of Soviet territorial ambitions, Turkish interests in the South Caucasus, and the ongoing Armenian-Azerbaijani tensions.

This methodological framework, combining archival research with comparative analysis and geopolitical theory, will offer a comprehensive understanding of Nakhchivan's political dynamics and strategic significance during the 1924-1928 period. By focusing on primary sources from Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Russia, the research will provide a balanced and well-rounded perspective on the region's complex history.

1. Political Power Balances in Nakhchivan:

Soviet Dominance (1924-1928):

During the period between 1924 and 1928, Nakhchivan was under Soviet administrative control, following the region's incorporation into the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic in 1924. The Soviet Union, with its ambitions to solidify its power in the South Caucasus, saw Nakhchivan as a strategically



critical region. This period marked a significant shift in the balance of power, as the Soviets worked to establish a stronghold over Nakhchivan, both politically and militarily.

The Soviet government implemented various policies aimed at integrating Nakhchivan into the larger Soviet framework, while simultaneously countering Armenian and Western efforts to challenge their control. Local Azerbaijani leaders, many of whom were loyal to Soviet ideals, played a critical role in maintaining the political balance. They acted as intermediaries between the Soviet authorities in Moscow and the local population, helping to ensure that Nakhchivan remained under Azerbaijan's influence despite external pressures.

The Soviet administrative approach was multifaceted, involving both military presence and political indoctrination. Schools, media, and local governance structures were reorganized to align with Soviet ideology, while the region's geopolitical importance was underscored by the establishment of military infrastructure. Soviet officials prioritized maintaining stability in the region to prevent Armenian incursions or influence from Turkey, and they often used local Azerbaijani leaders as a buffer against foreign interference.

One of the key challenges the Soviets faced was balancing their relationship with Armenia, which had irredentist claims over Nakhchivan. The Soviets, while generally supportive of Armenia in other contexts, were wary of allowing Armenian control over Nakhchivan, as it would disrupt the delicate balance of power in the region. The Azerbaijani population in Nakhchivan remained resolute in its loyalty to Baku, and local resistance to Armenian influence was supported by the Soviet authorities as a means of preserving the regional status quo.

Influence of Turkey and Iran:

Turkey's strategic interest in Nakhchivan during this period cannot be overstated. Following the Treaty of Kars in 1921, which had established Nakhchivan as an autonomous region under the protection of Azerbaijan, Turkey viewed the region as a vital corridor linking the Turkish Republic with the Turkic populations of Azerbaijan and Central Asia. Turkey's historical and cultural ties with Nakhchivan made it a staunch ally of Azerbaijan, and Turkish diplomats closely monitored Soviet policies in the region to ensure that Armenian influence was kept at bay.

Turkey's involvement in Nakhchivan was largely diplomatic, as it sought to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union while safeguarding its interests in the region. Ankara was particularly concerned about the potential for Armenian expansion into Nakhchivan, which would have threatened the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and weakened Turkey's position in the South Caucasus. Thus, Turkish officials maintained a delicate balance, supporting Azerbaijan's sovereignty over Nakhchivan while avoiding direct conflict with Soviet authorities.

On the other hand, Iran's perspective on the political dynamics of Nakhchivan was more passive, though not insignificant. Historically, Iran had territorial claims over parts of the South Caucasus, but by the 1920s, it had largely accepted the new political realities following the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1828, which ceded control of Nakhchivan to the Russian Empire. Nevertheless, Iran continued to monitor the situation in Nakhchivan, particularly as it related to Soviet expansionism.



For Iran, the power dynamics in Nakhchivan were important in the context of broader regional stability. Iran was wary of Soviet influence spreading further south and potentially threatening its own sovereignty. While Iran did not have direct political or military involvement in Nakhchivan during this period, it kept a close watch on Soviet policies and Turkish actions to ensure that its own interests in the region were not jeopardized. Iran's strategy was to maintain a neutral stance, aligning neither too closely with the Soviets nor Turkey, while keeping diplomatic channels open with both powers.

In conclusion, the political power balances in Nakhchivan from 1924 to 1928 were shaped by the interplay of Soviet administrative dominance, the strategic interests of Turkey, and the cautious watchfulness of Iran. Local Azerbaijani leaders played a vital role in maintaining the region's autonomy, while external actors such as Armenia and the Soviet Union posed persistent challenges to the region's stability. Nakhchivan's strategic significance in the broader geopolitics of the South Caucasus made it a focal point for both regional and international powers.

2. Geopolitical Significance of Nakhchivan:

Strategic Location:

Nakhchivan's geopolitical importance stems largely from its strategic location at the crossroads of three powerful neighbors: the Soviet Union, Turkey, and Iran. Its position as an enclave separated from the main part of Azerbaijan by Armenian territory made it a key focal point for regional security, international diplomacy, and economic connectivity. The region served as a crucial land bridge, linking the Turkic world with Turkey, and its control was essential for maintaining Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and strategic interests in the South Caucasus.

Situated between the USSR to the north and northeast, Turkey to the west, and Iran to the south, Nakhchivan was of immense value not only for Azerbaijan but also for the wider Soviet strategy. Its location allowed the USSR to exert influence over Turkey and Iran, ensuring that both countries remained within Moscow's strategic calculus. At the same time, the region acted as a buffer between Soviet territories and the Western-leaning Turkish Republic, which was seen by Moscow as a potential ally of Western powers, particularly Britain.

The proximity of Nakhchivan to Turkey also had implications for Turkish foreign policy. Turkey's interest in the region was not only cultural and ethnic, due to the shared Turkic heritage, but also strategic. Control over Nakhchivan provided Turkey with a direct connection to the Turkic populations of Azerbaijan and, by extension, to Central Asia. This connection was viewed as vital for Turkish aspirations in fostering unity among Turkic peoples and countering Soviet influence in the region.

Moreover, Nakhchivan's location along the Aras River made it a critical military and political frontier. For the Soviet Union, it offered a natural barrier against external threats, while for Turkey, it represented a foothold that could protect its eastern borders. The region's topography and infrastructure also facilitated movement and trade, allowing for economic interdependence between Azerbaijan, Turkey, and the wider region. Hence, Nakhchivan's geopolitical significance was not just a matter of geography but also of the economic and military strategies pursued by regional powers.

Soviet-Turkish Relations:

Nakhchivan played a pivotal role in shaping Soviet-Turkish relations during the 1920s. As the Soviet Union sought to expand its influence in the South Caucasus, it viewed Turkey as both a potential ally and



a strategic competitor. The USSR's primary concern was to maintain control over Nakhchivan while preventing Turkish encroachment into Soviet territories. However, given Turkey's deep historical ties to Nakhchivan and its broader interests in the region, the Soviets had to engage in delicate diplomatic negotiations to secure their position.

One of the key moments in Soviet-Turkish relations regarding Nakhchivan was the Treaty of Kars, signed in 1921. This treaty officially recognized Nakhchivan as part of Soviet Azerbaijan but with Turkey acting as a guarantor of its autonomous status. The inclusion of Turkey in the treaty was a significant concession by the Soviet Union, aimed at ensuring that Ankara would not oppose Soviet dominance in the region. For Turkey, this arrangement allowed it to maintain a degree of influence over Nakhchivan without directly challenging Soviet control. The Treaty of Kars thus laid the foundation for the Soviet-Turkish balance of power in the South Caucasus, with Nakhchivan at the center of this geopolitical arrangement.

The Soviet Union's use of Nakhchivan as a buffer zone in its relations with Turkey was a key component of Moscow's strategy. By maintaining control over Nakhchivan, the Soviets could secure their southern borders while monitoring Turkish activities in the region. At the same time, the USSR sought to cultivate diplomatic ties with Turkey to prevent the latter from aligning too closely with Western powers. Nakhchivan, therefore, served as a focal point in the broader Soviet-Turkish relationship, acting as both a source of potential tension and a bridge for cooperation.

In the years following the Treaty of Kars, there were several diplomatic negotiations between the Soviet Union and Turkey concerning the status of Nakhchivan. These negotiations reflected the complex nature of Soviet-Turkish relations, as both powers sought to assert their influence in the region while avoiding direct conflict. The Soviets, in particular, were keen to ensure that Turkey did not interfere in Nakhchivan's internal affairs, while Turkey continued to use its role as a guarantor to protect its strategic interests in the region.

The importance of Nakhchivan in Soviet-Turkish diplomacy is evident in the lengths to which both sides went to maintain stability in the region. While the Soviet Union's control over Nakhchivan was never seriously challenged during this period, Turkey's involvement in the region's affairs ensured that it remained an important player in the South Caucasus. The diplomatic balance struck over Nakhchivan helped to maintain relative peace in the region, while also allowing both the Soviet Union and Turkey to pursue their broader geopolitical goals.

3. Impact of Regional Power Shifts:

Internal Political Developments:

During the 1924-1928 period, Nakhchivan witnessed significant internal political shifts, primarily shaped by Soviet policies and local resistance. While the Soviet Union maintained administrative control, there was considerable local opposition to its presence, particularly among Azerbaijani nationalists and factions that resented Soviet interference. Despite Soviet efforts to solidify their control, local support for maintaining Azerbaijan's influence in Nakhchivan remained strong, driven by a sense of national identity and resistance to external forces such as Armenia and Russia.



Changes in political leadership played a crucial role in determining the region's stability. The Soviet authorities frequently replaced local leaders to ensure loyalty to Moscow, but this often led to instability. Local Azerbaijani figures who had previously held significant sway were either co-opted into the Soviet administration or sidelined, creating tensions within the region. At the same time, the Soviet government sought to placate local populations by allowing a degree of cultural and administrative autonomy, but this was often seen as superficial by local residents who viewed Soviet policies as a threat to their identity and sovereignty.

This delicate balance between resistance and support for Soviet control created a volatile political environment. On one hand, Soviet leaders in Moscow were determined to maintain Nakhchivan as part of the broader Soviet sphere of influence. On the other hand, local leaders and citizens, while at times cooperating with the Soviets, continued to express loyalty to Azerbaijan and resisted attempts by external forces, particularly Armenian nationalists, to alter the region's demographic and political composition. The interplay between these internal forces shaped the political stability of Nakhchivan during this period.

International Relations:

On the international stage, Nakhchivan's strategic position at the intersection of Soviet, Turkish, and Iranian interests made it a focal point of regional diplomacy. The Soviet Union's approach to Nakhchivan was deeply influenced by its desire to maintain control over the South Caucasus while balancing relations with Turkey and Iran. Soviet diplomatic strategies often revolved around securing Nakhchivan as a buffer zone against Turkish influence, while simultaneously using the region to project power into the Middle East.

Turkey, on the other hand, had a vested interest in Nakhchivan due to its proximity and historical ties to the region. The Treaty of Kars, which established Turkish oversight of Nakhchivan's autonomy, provided Turkey with a diplomatic foothold in the region, allowing Ankara to influence developments without directly confronting Soviet power. Turkish diplomatic efforts focused on ensuring that Nakhchivan remained out of Armenian hands and under Azerbaijani control, thereby maintaining the Turkic connection with Azerbaijan and Central Asia. This alignment with Azerbaijan was also a means for Turkey to counterbalance Soviet influence in the region.

Iran, while less directly involved in the day-to-day politics of Nakhchivan, continued to monitor the region closely. The Soviet Union's presence in Nakhchivan was a source of concern for Tehran, which feared that Soviet influence could eventually extend into northern Iran. While Iran did not engage in direct diplomacy concerning Nakhchivan, it maintained cautious relations with both the Soviets and Turkey, understanding the region's potential to shift the balance of power in the South Caucasus. The Iranian strategy was one of diplomatic neutrality, ensuring that it maintained open lines of communication with both Moscow and Ankara, while avoiding entanglement in the region's more contentious issues.

Thus, Nakhchivan's role in shaping Soviet-Turkish-Iranian relations during this period was significant. As a key point of intersection between these powers, the region served as both a buffer and a battleground for competing interests. The diplomatic maneuvers surrounding Nakhchivan had broader implications for regional stability, as each power sought to assert its influence without triggering open conflict. The period from 1924 to 1928 can be seen as a time when Nakhchivan's geopolitical importance came to the forefront, influencing the direction of Soviet-Turkish relations and impacting the broader South Caucasus region.



Discussion:

1. Strategic Outcomes of Soviet Policies:

The Soviet Union's policies in Nakhchivan between 1924 and 1928 can be evaluated as both strategically successful and fraught with challenges. On one hand, the Soviet government succeeded in maintaining administrative control over Nakhchivan, ensuring that the region remained a key part of Soviet Azerbaijan despite external pressures from Armenia and Turkey. Soviet policies focused on political integration, economic development, and military control, all of which helped stabilize the region under Moscow's influence.

However, these policies were not without their difficulties. The Soviet administration faced continuous resistance from local Azerbaijani leaders and the population, who viewed Soviet control as an imposition rather than genuine partnership. While the Soviets were able to prevent Armenian advances into Nakhchivan, they struggled to fully win over the local populace, many of whom remained loyal to the idea of an independent Azerbaijan and wary of foreign domination. This tension limited the full success of Soviet policies, as local resistance undermined the effectiveness of some of their governance strategies.

The impact of these policies on regional stability was twofold. On the one hand, Soviet control provided a measure of political stability by keeping Armenian ambitions in check and maintaining the integrity of Azerbaijani territory. On the other hand, the lack of deep local support for Soviet policies meant that unrest and dissatisfaction persisted beneath the surface, creating a fragile balance of power. Thus, while Soviet policies prevented immediate conflict, they laid the groundwork for future regional tensions, as the roots of local discontent were never fully addressed.

2. Nakhchivan's Role in the Geopolitical Balance:

Nakhchivan's strategic importance during the 1924-1928 period cannot be understated. The region's position as a gateway between the Soviet Union, Turkey, and Iran made it a central element in the larger geopolitical dynamics of the South Caucasus. For the Soviets, Nakhchivan was critical not only as a buffer zone against Turkish influence but also as a symbol of their ability to control the volatile border regions of the Caucasus.

The influence of Nakhchivan on broader regional dynamics is evident in how both Turkey and the Soviet Union handled their relations with the region. For Turkey, Nakhchivan represented a critical link to Azerbaijan and the wider Turkic world. Ankara's diplomatic efforts to ensure Nakhchivan's continued connection to Azerbaijan—and by extension, Turkey—reflected its strategic interest in maintaining a strong Turkic presence in the region. For the Soviet Union, Nakhchivan was a linchpin in their efforts to contain Turkish influence and project power into the Middle East and Iran. The Soviet military presence in the region also served as a deterrent against any attempts by Armenia to assert control over the enclave.

In the broader context of Soviet foreign policy, Nakhchivan played a role far beyond its size. It was a tool in Soviet diplomacy with Turkey, ensuring that Turkey remained neutral or cooperative in Soviet plans for the South Caucasus. Furthermore, Nakhchivan's position allowed the USSR to exert pressure on both Turkey and Iran, reinforcing its role as a regional powerbroker. As a result, the region's



importance extended beyond local or national politics, shaping interactions between major regional players.

3. Legacy of the 1924-1928 Period:

The period from 1924 to 1928 left a lasting legacy on the political landscape of Nakhchivan and the broader South Caucasus. The power balances established during this period shaped the region's development for decades to come. The Soviet policies of administrative control and military presence ensured that Nakhchivan remained part of Azerbaijan, but the resistance and local dissatisfaction also sowed the seeds for future conflicts and political instability.

The long-term effects of this period can be seen in Nakhchivan's continued importance as a strategic enclave. The political tensions between Azerbaijan, Armenia, and external powers such as Turkey and Russia have persisted, with Nakhchivan often playing a critical role in regional negotiations and conflicts. The region's unique status as an autonomous republic within Azerbaijan has been a direct result of the political dynamics established during the 1924-1928 period, reflecting the lasting impact of Soviet administrative decisions and diplomatic agreements.

Moreover, the power balances from this era shaped future developments in the South Caucasus. The delicate equilibrium between Soviet control, Turkish interests, and local Azerbaijani resistance set the stage for future regional conflicts, particularly the ongoing tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan over territories like Nagorno-Karabakh. The legacy of Nakhchivan's strategic importance continues to influence contemporary politics, as the region remains a symbol of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and a focal point for broader geopolitical struggles in the South Caucasus.

Conclusion:

The study of political power balances and Nakhchivan's strategic role between 1924 and 1928 reveals a complex and dynamic period in the region's history. Soviet dominance during this era established Nakhchivan as a critical buffer zone in the South Caucasus, allowing the Soviet Union to project power and maintain regional stability, albeit through policies that were often met with local resistance. The involvement of Turkey and Iran, two neighboring powers with deep historical and cultural ties to the region, further highlighted Nakhchivan's geopolitical importance.

Key findings indicate that while Soviet control was largely successful in maintaining Nakhchivan's political alignment with Azerbaijan and preventing Armenian encroachment, the region's local population remained resistant to full Soviet integration. This underlying discontent created a fragile political landscape, one that persisted throughout the Soviet era and into the modern day. Additionally, Nakhchivan's strategic location made it a focal point for diplomatic negotiations between the Soviet Union and Turkey, with both powers recognizing the region's importance in maintaining regional security.

This period also set the stage for Nakhchivan's future position in international relations. The 1924-1928 power dynamics established the region as a key player in the broader geopolitical contest between Soviet interests and Turkish aspirations in the South Caucasus. These developments had long-lasting implications, influencing Nakhchivan's role in future territorial disputes, such as those concerning Nagorno-Karabakh, and shaping the region's identity as a critical element in Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.



Suggestions for further research include a more in-depth examination of local political resistance movements within Nakhchivan during the Soviet period, as well as a comparative study of the region's evolving strategic significance in post-Soviet international relations. Future studies could also explore the role of external actors, such as Turkey and Iran, in shaping Nakhchivan's political landscape in both historical and contemporary contexts. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for comprehending the region's ongoing geopolitical importance in the South Caucasus.

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