

**GEORGIAN LANDS IN THE REGIONS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**  
**(SECOND HALF OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY-UNTIL 1878)**

ისტორიული ქართული მიწა-წყალი ოსმალეთის იმპერიის დარაიონებაში  
(XVI ს. II ნახევარი-1878 წლამდე)

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**Abstract**

During the 16th century, at the height of its power, the Ottoman Empire succeeded in occupying parts of Georgia.

The socio-political organization of the medieval Ottoman Empire was based on a military-feudal system. This system was integrated with the administrative-territorial structure of the empire. This paper presents a general explanation of the military-feudal regime, based on the knowledge of a British subject, Ryko (17th century), who studied the system in the Ottoman Empire.

By the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries, there is no comprehensive data on the number of provinces and dominions within the Ottoman Empire, nor on their borders and periods of existence. Our study provides a source in which several Ottoman provinces are listed for the second half of the 16th century and early 17th century, up to the year 1609. Among them were also historical Georgian territories. Not all dates are precisely defined.

Historical southwestern Georgia was incorporated into four Ottoman eyalets: Childir and Trabzon (entirely), and Erzurum and Kars (partially). This paper outlines how the Georgian lands were divided into sanjaks (districts) within these eyalets.

We also aim to clarify why the Acharistskali River basin does not appear in the 1595 “Great Register of the Vilayet of Gurjistan,” i.e., the Childir Eyalet, and to trace where this basin was administratively placed in the period leading up to the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877–1878.

The decree issued in 1595 by Sultan Mehmed III, ruler of the Ottoman Empire, addressed to the governor of Adjara, provides grounds for certain historical conclusions.

We attempt to clarify the timeline of the Ottoman conquest of Batumi and its surrounding territories, as well as the question of their subordination to the Trabzon Eyalet during the 15th–16th

centuries. In addition, we investigate which administrative-territorial unit the Kobuleti district belonged to during the 18th and 19th centuries.

**Keywords:** Ottoman Empire, Georgia, administrative-territorial organization, eyalet, sanjak, Adjara.

### ალექსანდრე ჩხაიძე

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### აბსტრაქტი

XVI საუკუნის განმავლობაში, როდესაც ოსმალეთის იმპერია თავისი ძლიერების მწვერვალზე იმყოფებოდა შესძლო საქართველოს დაკავება.

შუა საუკუნეების ოსმალეთის იმპერიის სოციალურ-პოლიტიკურ ორგანიზაციას სამხედრო-ლენური სისტემა წარმოადგენდა. იგი შეთავსებული იყო ადმინისტრაციულ-ტერიტორიულ მოწყობასთან. წინამდებარე ნაშრომში გადმოცემულია ამ სისტემის მცოდნეს, ოსმალეთში ბრიტანელი ქვეშევრდომის რიკოს(XVII ს.) ზოგადი განმარტება სამხედრო-ლენური რეჟიმის არსის შესახებ.

XVI ს. ბოლოს და XVII ს. დასაწყისისათვის არ არსებობს ოსმალეთის იმპერიის პროვინციების და დომინიონების რაოდენობის, აგრეთვე საზღვრებისა და არსებობის თარიღების შესახებ სრულყოფილი მონაცემები. ჩვენს ნაშრომში წარმოდგენილია წყარო, რომელშიც XVI ს. მეორე ნახევარსა და XVII ს. დასაწყისისათვის, 1609 წლამდე ჩამოთვლილია ოსმალეთის რიგი პროვინციები. იქ მდებარეობდა ისტორიული ქართული მიწა-წყალიც. ყველა თარიღი დაზუსტებული არაა.

ისტორიული სამხრეთ-დასავლეთ საქართველო ოსმალეთის იმპერიის ოთხ ეიალეთში მოხვდა: ჩილდირისა და ტრაბზონში (მთლიანად) და ერზურუმსა და ყარსში (ნაწილობრივ). წინამდებარე ნაშრომში მოყვანილია აღნიშნული ეიალეთებში ქართული ტერიტორიების სანჯაყებად დაყოფა.

ვცდილობთ დავაზუსტოთ თუ რატომ არ არის აჭარისწყლის აუზი 1595 წ. შედგენილ „გურჯისტანის ვილაიეთის დიდ დავთარში“, ე.ი. ჩილდირის ეიალეთში. ასევე სად იყო გაერთიანებული ეს აუზი მომდევნო პერიოდში 1877-1878 წლების რუსეთ-ოსმალეთის ომამდე.

ოსმალეთის იმპერიის მბრძანებლის მეჭმედ III 1595 წლის ბრძანება აჭარის მმართველის მიმართ გარკვეული დასკვნების გაკეთების საშუალებას იძლევა.

ვცდილობთ გავარკვიოთ ბათუმის და მისი მიმდებარე ტერიტორიების ოსმალთა მიერ დაპყრობის თარიღი და ამ ტერიტორიების ტრაბზონისადმი დამორჩილების საკითხი (XV-XVI

სს.). ასევე რომელ ადმინისტრაციულ-ტერიტორიულ ერთეულში იყო გაერთიანებული ქობულეთის რაიონი XVIII-XIX საუკუნეებში.

**საკვანძო სიტყვები:** ოსმალეთის იმპერია, საქართველო, ადმინისტრაციულ-ტერიტორიული მოწყობა, ეიალეთი, სანჯაყი, აჭარა.

## Introduction

Understanding the administrative-territorial structure of Georgia—whether united or fragmented in the past—is a fundamental element of historical research. Naturally, such research includes periods and regions where the country, or parts of it, were under foreign occupation.

During the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire's occupation of Georgian territories was accompanied by a wave of new administrative reforms: the deployment of Ottoman officials and military officers, the registration of the population and property, and the overall establishment of a new order.

We often come across cases where someone writes or speaks about the Georgian territories within the Ottoman Empire but clearly lacks any substantial understanding—or has only a superficial one—of their administrative-territorial division.

The period of Ottoman dominance over the territories of south Georgia has not been extensively studied. Every newly discovered document attracts scholarly interest.

In Georgian historiography, the administrative-territorial organization of the Childir Eyalet is more or less known. However, the same level of study has not yet been extended to the eyalets of Trabzon, Erzurum, and Kars, which require more thorough research.

This article discusses a decree issued by Sultan Mehmed III (reigned 1595–1603) to the Beylerbey of Adjara. Furthermore, we conclude that after the Treaty of Constantinople in 1590 and until the year 1609, the Acharistskali River basin must have existed as a separate administrative-territorial unit. Later (in the 17th century), it became part of the Childir and Kars Eyalets; in the 18th century, it remained within Childir; and after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1828–1829 and subsequent territorial reorganization, it was incorporated into the Kars (or Kars–Childir) Eyalet. From 1844 to 1878, it belonged to the Trabzon Eyalet.

We believe that the Kobuleti district, along with the territories located to its south, was incorporated into the Trabzon Eyalet beginning in 1723.

## Methods

In Georgian historiography, the issue of the administrative-territorial system that extended over southwestern Georgia has not been studied comprehensively. By comparing and synthesizing various sources, we aim to shed more light on this essential component of the study and arrive at logical conclusions.

## Results

The chronological scope covered by this study is quite broad, and the topic is extensive. As a result of the research, we were able to partially identify data concerning the eyalets with Georgian-origin names that existed in the territory of Georgia from the second half of the 16th century until their disappearance before 1609.

Additionally, some data have been established regarding the Georgian districts listed in the Ottoman administrative-territorial organization of 1609, as well as their placement within various administrative units in subsequent periods.

Of particular interest is Sultan Mehmed III's (reigned 1595–1603) cautious attitude toward the Beylerbey of Adjara and the region under his command. It is known that until the mid-19th century, the Ottoman Porte was unable to fully assert its authority over this region.

## Discussion

In the 14th century, the unification of Turkish tribes—concentrated in Asia Minor and scattered across individual beyliks (feudal principalities)—began. This process progressed successfully, and in 1453 they captured Constantinople, after which their state became known as the Ottoman Empire.

Thanks to the Ottomans' strong military organization, they were able to unite vast and diverse populations under a single administration for centuries. The empire stretched across three continents, including the Balkans, North Africa, the Levant, the South Caucasus, and beyond. Its peak strength was reached during the 16th century. Naturally, such a vast state of its time had a distinct administrative-territorial structure.

Throughout its existence, the Ottoman Empire had two primary periods of administrative-territorial organization. The first began with the formation of the state itself. The second was officially introduced in the 1860s during the **Tanzimat** period—an era of reform.

The socio-political organization of the Ottoman Empire's feudal era was represented by the military-feudal system. This system was integrated with the country's administrative-territorial structure. The country was divided into eyalets, which were further subdivided into sanjaks, and sanjaks into kazas.

The essence of the military-feudal system is well described by Ryko, the secretary of the British embassy at the court of Sultan Muhammad IV (reigned 1648–1687). Specifically, the lands were considered the Sultan's property and were distributed among the military class. These lands could be confiscated at the Sultan's discretion. The eyalets were governed by Beylerbeys, who lived off the revenues from their administrative seats. It is important to note that in some administrative-territorial units, local residents were appointed as rulers or those already in service passed down their holdings by hereditary succession (this was common in Samtskhe-Javakheti and some Kurdish provinces). According to Rycout, the governors of the sanjaks—called sanjak-beys—lived off the

revenues of the estates within the sanjak. The timar was a type of fief whose annual income ranged from 5,000 to 19,999 akçe; the ziamet income ranged from 20,000 to 99,000 akçe; the sanjak's income ranged from 100,000 to 199,999 akçe; and the income of the beylerbeys was 200,000 akçe or more. During times of military mobilization, one soldier was expected to be provided for every 3,000 akçe of timar income, and for ziamets and sanjak-beys, one soldier per 5,000 akçe (Georgian State Archive, fund 231, file 99, page 6).

In addition to state lands—known as fiefs—there were also categories of vakıf lands (religious endowments), imperial lands (hass), and private property in the Ottoman Empire.

The military-feudal system was officially abolished in 1834. However, the system, which had taken root over centuries, was not easy to dismantle through reforms. Its eradication happened gradually. Administrative-territorial units were then based on territorial criteria. The new system was introduced, as mentioned, in the 1860s during the Tanzimat reform period.

For the period that interests us, sources are not always sufficient to determine the exact number of provinces and dominions of the Ottoman Empire, their borders, and dates of existence. Moreover, their numbers and borders were subject to change. Establishing these facts remains problematic even for Turkish historians themselves (Peter F. Sugar, 1977:41).

Between 1578 and 1590, another Iran-Ottoman war took place. It concluded with the 1590 Treaty of Istanbul. Under the terms of this treaty, the South Caucasus was incorporated into Ottoman borders. On the conquered territories, whose populations the Sultan maintained by force of arms, a new administrative regime was established.

Easily accessible and officially presented data on the administrative-territorial organization of Georgia in the second half of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century do not fully satisfy our research interests. Particularly noteworthy is Donald Edgar Pitcher's fundamental study, *The Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire*. The data published in this work somewhat broadens our understanding of the issue at hand. It concerns the eyalets created in the second half of the 16th century. However, in some cases, question marks remain, which can only be explained by the inaccessibility of sources.

The presented list enumerates various eyalets. We will naturally highlight those located in the Caucasus and specifically in Georgia. According to the source's own data, these eyalets disappeared by 1609:

Province name	Ottoman Turkish name and transliteration modern turkish	Existed for	
Abkhazia	Abhazya	? years(1578-?)	Also called sukhum(sohumkale) or Georgia (Gurcistan) and included Mingrelia and Imeretia as well as

			modern Abkhazia-nominally annexed but never conquered
Akhaltzikhe	Ahiska	? years(1603-?)	Either split from or coextensive with samtske
Dmanisi	Tumanis	? years(1584-?)	
Gori	Gori	? years(1588-?)	Probably replaced Tiflis after 1586
kakheti	kaheti	? years(1578-?)	Kakhetian king was appointed hereditary bey
Lazistan	Lazistan	? years(1574-?)	
Lorry	Lory	? years(1584-?)	
Poti	Fas	? years (1579-?)	May have also been another name for Trabzon
Tiflis	Tiflis	08 years (1578-1586)	Probably replaced by Gori after 1586

(Pitcher D. E. 1972:128-129)

From the beginning of the 17th century, specifically from 1609 onwards, there exist more precise data regarding the establishment and abolition of administrative-territorial units of the Ottoman Empire. These are presented in various studies, including the aforementioned book by D. E. Pitcher.

Of particular interest to us are four provinces: Childir (also known as Akhaltsikhe), Trebzon (called Trabzon by the Turks), Erzurum, and Kars. It should be noted that among the pashas of these four eyalets, the Pasha of Erzurum held primacy and during wartime fulfilled the role of Serasker, or commander-in-chief, in the region.

The Childir Eyalet was primarily established on the territory of Samtskhe-Saatabago. It existed from 1578 to 1845. Its administrative centers were: Childir (1578–1628), Akhiskha (Akhaltsikhe) (1628–1829), and Oltu (Oltisi) (1829–1845) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childir\\_Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childir_Eyalet)).

At that time, a significant source of income for the Ottoman state was the revenue obtained from conquered lands. Therefore, Ottoman officials conducted surveys and inventories of the occupied territories (relevant tax registers were prepared in Samtskhe-Saatabago as early as the 1570s).

In 1595, the “Great Cadastre of the Vilayet of Gurjistan” was compiled. The “Vilayet of Gurjistan” is the same as the “Childir Eyalet” or the “Pashalik of Akhaltsikhe.” This document was primarily created for fiscal purposes. From it, we learn that the mentioned eyalet was divided into 8 sanjaks (or livads). These are: Akhaltsikhe, Khertvisi, Akhalkalaki, Chaldiri, Potskhovi, Petra, Panaki, and Great Artaani. The sanjaks were further divided into nahiyahs (smaller districts). Hidir Pasha was appointed as the Beglarbeg of the “Childir Eyalet.” He governed the region through Ottoman officials. This cadastre was translated, commented on, and published by S. Jikia (Jikia, 1958). Additionally, the “Childir Eyalet” is better studied compared to other eyalets, and its administrative-territorial data is available in accessible books, so we will not dwell on it here.

Interestingly, among the above-listed sanjaks, Ajara is not mentioned. At that time, “Ajara” referred to the Adjara River valley. Let us try to understand why it was not included in this list.

During the Iran-Ottoman war in 1552, Ajara was forced to acknowledge Ottoman rule. However, “this was only meant to recognize Ottoman suzerainty” (Shashikadze, 2020:148-149). Despite this acknowledgment, the ruler of Ajara, Bejan, showed disobedience. Therefore, the Ottomans took the region from him in 1561 and attached it to the Sanjak of Ispir (Speri). In 1563, Bejan went to Istanbul, accepted the religion of Muhammad, declared submission, and as a result, Ajara was returned to him as a separate sanjak (ibid., 150-151). According to a document dated 1576/7 (984 AH), Ajara was subordinated to Gurjistan, which may indicate that during this period Ajara was temporarily united within the Vilayet of Gurjistan (sometimes eyalets were also called vilayets at that time – a.ch.) (ibid., 152-153). In 1584, the Georgians managed to regain Ajara, but in 1586 the Beglarbeg of Childir received orders to restore the region to Ottoman control, and the order was soon executed.

After regaining control over the Adjara river valley, it may not have been united within the Childir Eyalet but instead constituted a separate administrative-territorial unit. Such cases could happen in the Ottoman Empire at that time (Svanidze, 1971:81). Therefore, Ajara is not mentioned in the “Great Cadastre of the Vilayet of Gurjistan” compiled in 1595, though it presumably remained under the authority of the chief of the northeastern Ottoman region, the Beglarbeg of Erzurum (Shashikadze, 2002:152).

From 1595 to 1603, the Ottoman Empire was ruled by Sultan (Padishah) Mehmed III. In 1595, he sent an order to the Beglarbeg of Ajara:

#### **“Order to the Beglarbeg of Ajara:**

My ascension to the throne was fortunate and successful. It is my desire that all regions be in prosperity, peace, and security. Therefore, I order: as soon as this directive reaches you, show greater prudence for the welfare of all my people and to gain the blessings of the Muslims. As for the non-Muslims, they are also the legacy of our Creator. Under no circumstances treat them despotically or unjustly. Strive to ensure their safety and to bring their affairs into the usual order. Establish good relations with the neighboring rulers of Simon, Sadadiano, Imereti, Guria, and others. Consult with Jafar Pasha regarding obligatory taxes and other related matters, maintain businesslike and sincere unity with the Beglarbeg of Childir, and care for the welfare and security of all the Muslim and non-Muslim people of the Vilayet. Do not hesitate to honestly collect taxes. Constantly receive information about the behavior and activities of the rulers through spies and travelers — whether they are present or not. Take measures and prepare accordingly based on this. If, due to the situation, you need to approach me, don’t hesitate. Execute the received orders as per the rules. 28th Shewaly, 1003 /6 July 1595 (Ildiztash, 2012:25).

From this order, it is clear that the ruler of Ajara held the title of Beglarbeg. Beglarbegs were governors of eyalets. Additionally, the Beglarbeg of Ajara was instructed to maintain “businesslike and sincere unity with the Beglarbeg of Childir.” We think that Ajara was not an eyelet, but rather a



separate administrative-territorial unit. The Beglarbeg was tasked to care for the vilayet's population and to maintain normal relations with subordinate non-Muslims. He was also to strengthen the intelligence (spy) institution. This shows, among other things, how cautiously the Ottomans treated this border region, which was inclined toward independence.

From 1609 onward, the Adjaristskali river basin was part of the Childir Eyalet (Shashikadze, 2002:152). “In the 17th century, the Pashalik of Akhaltsikhe consisted of 13 sanjaks: Oltisi, Khertvisi, Artanuji, Great Artani, Chacharaqi, Poczkhovi, Machakheli, Adjara, Fanaki (Bana), Pertekrek, Livana, Nisfi-Livana, and Shavsheti” (Jamburia, 1973:55).

However, a foreign source repeats only 12 of these sanjaks and omits the Adjara sanjak ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childir\\_Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childir_Eyalet)). This may be because, according to 1631-1632 records, the upper and lower Adjara livas (district) was subordinated to Kars (Shashikadze, 2002:152).

According to this foreign source, from 1682 until the end of the century, and during the 18th century (until 1740), Adjara was again a sanjak within the Childir Eyalet ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childir\\_Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childir_Eyalet)). It should have remained part of it afterward as well.

The 1828-1829 Russo-Turkish War ended with a Russian victory. As a result, among other gains, Russia acquired most of the Childir (Akhaltsikhe) Eyalet. The 16 sanjaks of Akhaltsikhe that remained part of Turkey were mainly attached to the Kars, and subsequently also to the Erzurum and Trabzon Pashaliks. In the early period, this pashalik was called the “Kars-Childir Pashalik” (Lomsadze, 1975:248).

The Trebizond Eyalet existed from 1598 to 1867. Its administrative center was the city of Trebizond (Trabzon) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trebizond\\_Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trebizond_Eyalet)).

This administrative-territorial unit corresponds to a historical region in southwestern Georgia. Specifically, it covers the southeastern coast of the Black Sea, inhabited by the Laz and Chan peoples—ancient Georgian tribes. Its borders changed over time. Between 1204 and 1461, the Empire of Trebizond existed there, formed as a successor state to the central Georgian government. In 1456, the Turkish-Ottomans invaded this country and tribute was paid to the local population. In 1461, Sultan Mehmed II conquered it and made it one of the Ottoman provinces. In 1598, it was separated as a distinct eyalet.

Regarding the division of the Trebizond sanjaks, the following data exists:

17th Century	1732-1740	Early 19th Century
1. Sanjak of Gümüşhane	1. Sanjak of Trabzon	1. Sanjak of Trabzon
2. Sanjak of Canik	2. Sanjak of Gönnye	2. Sanjak of Giresun
3. Sanjak of Vize	3. Sanjak of Batum	3. Sanjak of Lazistan
4. Sanjak of Gönnye		



## 17th Century

1732-1740

## Early 19th Century

## 5. Sanjak of Batum

(ibid.)

From this list, the former sanjaks of Gönnye and Batum are today within the borders of the Republic of Georgia. The Sanjak of Vize corresponds to the territory of eastern Chan (the name Vize corresponds to modern Rize). To its west lay the Sanjak of Canik (the name Canik in Georgian denotes Chan territory).

The division of the Trebizond Eyalet into sanjaks in the early 19th century recalls the historical-geographical provinces of Chaneti. Specifically, Lazistan in the east, Trebizond in the center, and Kerasun (Giresun) in the west.

The Erzurum Eyalet existed from 1533 to 1864. Its administrative center was the city of Erzurum, where the Pasha's residence was located. According to available data, in the 17th century this eyalet consisted of 12 sanjaks ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erzurum\\_Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erzurum_Eyalet)). Among them, we highlight three Georgian regions: the sanjaks of İspir (Georgian name Speri), Tortum (Georgian name Tortomi), and Pasin (Georgian name Pasinleri, Basiani).

The population of Speri was part of the Georgian ethnic group from ancient times. Representatives of the Georgian royal dynasty, the Bagratids, originated from there.

Tortomi is the name of an ancient Georgian region, river, fortress, and province. It was also part of the ancient Georgian region of Tao.

Basiani is a historical province of southwestern Georgia. Its name is connected to the Phasian tribe, mentioned by Xenophon (Musxelishvili, 1977:219). For some period, Basiani was not within the borders of Georgia but later established its place here. In 1545, it was conquered by the Ottomans.

As noted earlier, the presented division relates to the 17th century but up to 1682. From 1682 to 1702, there existed a different division of the same eyalet into sanjaks. Specifically, during this period, 17 sanjaks are recorded. Among them, we are watching: Phasiane, Tortum, and Speri. Additionally, there is another ancient Georgian district, the sanjak of Namervan ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erzurum\\_Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erzurum_Eyalet)).

Since the territory of the Erzurum Eyalet coincided with the ancient settlements of Georgian tribes, apart from the mentioned three sanjaks, other historical Georgian settlements can be found within its borders.

By the early 19th century, only six sanjaks were registered in the Erzurum Eyalet, where Georgian-like toponyms no longer appear. Georgian districts were scattered across various administrative units. Additionally, the sanjak of Gümüşhane—historical territory of Chaneti—is also recorded.

The Kars Eyalet existed from 1580 to 1845. Officially, six sanjaks were registered here in the 17th century ([https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki>Kars \(eyalet\)-Vikipedi](https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kars_eyalet)). Among them, three are of particular interest to us: 1. Göle (in Georgian, Kola), also known as Lesser Artaani; 2. Hujujan, also known as Childir; 3. Zarshad, also called Arpachay (in Georgian, tsinubani).

Kola is a historical region of southern Georgia. Its name is derived from the ancient Georgian kingdom of Colchis. It was mainly inhabited by Georgians. For some periods, it was under the Armenian kingdom. From the 16th century onward, it was annexed by the Ottomans.

Hujujan, i.e., Childir sanjak, was located in the region of the Childir lake.

Zarshad, or Arpachay sanjak (in Georgian, Zinubani), lay south of Hujujan. It also partly covered the Childir river area and was a historic Georgian region.

South of Zarshad, the Kars sanjak contained the residence of the Kars eyalet.

Thus, after conquest, the Ottomans united southwestern Georgia into four eyalets. Among them, Childir (Akhaltzikhe) and Trabzon eyalets are ancient Georgian territories, while Kars and Erzurum are partially so.

Regarding Batumi, Ottoman sources report that "after Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror took Trebizond (1461), he sent a strong army to southwestern Georgia and conquered Batumi and its surroundings" (Ildiztashi, 2012:22). The list above mentions that in 1574, the Lazistan province was established. In the same source, a little further down, Trebizond and Lazistan sanjaks existed side by side from 1461 to 1864 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>Eyalet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eyalet)). It is possible that here Trebizond and Lazistan are the same. As for Batumi, "in 1582, the Ottomans subordinated Batumi sanjak to Trebizond" (Svanidze, 1971:154). Possibly in the early 17th century, for some period, Batumi was part of the Principality of Guria or Ottoman control over it weakened during this time (Uzunadze, Surmanidze, Zosidze, 2013:29).

From the 18th century, Ottoman nominal control over the Black Sea coastal area of the present-day Autonomous Republic of Adjara was tightened. "In 1702, western Georgian kings and princes united to start an uprising" (Svanidze, 2009:237). Ultimately, the Ottomans prevailed. In 1712, the areas of Batumi and Chakvi were incorporated into the administrative-territorial unit of Trabzon. Later, they expanded northward and intensified their regime. "In 1723, the Ottomans captured fortresses along the eastern Black Sea coast, cutting Georgia off from the sea. Garrison troops were stationed in the fortresses of Cihisdziri, Kobuleti, Grigoleti, and Anaklia" (ibid., 238). Kobuleti, as a natural extension, must have been part of the Trabzon eyalet. In most cases, the administrative-territorial unit of Kobuleti (Churuk-Sus) was part of Trabzon vilayet in the 1860s-70s until 1878.\*

\*See books: TRABZON VILAYET SALNAMESI — annual statistical yearbooks of Trabzon vilayet.

It was already mentioned that the Adjartskali river basin was part of the Childir eyalet in the 18th and first third of the 19th centuries. According to the Treaty of Adrianople signed in 1829

between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, territories of the Ottoman Empire were transferred to Russia. Russia received territories including the cities of Poti, Akhaltsikhe, and Akhalkalaki, and sanjaks such as Akhaltsikhe, Atskuri, Aspindza, Khetvisi, Kvareli, Abastumani, and Chacharaki. The Adjara basin remained under Ottoman eyalets.

Since part of the Childir eyalet passed to Russia, the remaining Ottoman parts of Childir were joined to other eyalets. Our interest lies in where the Adjara basin was placed later. According to historical records, Prince Ahmed Khimshiashvili, the last pasha of the Childir eyalet, became pasha of Kars (Kars-Childir) after the war (Kazbegi, 1995:68). G. Kazbegi also relates that Khor Hussein Beg Khimshiashvili, who presumably opposed the central government in Adjara in the 1830s, was arrested by military forces sent by the pasha of Kars and sent to Kars (*ibid.*, 69).

According to a document dated March 30, 1844, the collection of taxes and recruitment in Adjara was assigned to the pasha of Kars (Georgian State Archive, Fund 16, File 8085, pp. 10-11). Another document dated May 5, 1844, states that by the sultan's order Adjara was joined to the Trabzon pasha (*ibid.*, p. 35). Also, a document dated September 8, 1844, shows that taxes and recruitment matters in Adjara were managed by the pasha of Trabzon (*ibid.*, p. 36).

From the above, it follows that the Adjara basin was part of the Kars (Kars-Childir) eyalet from 1829 to 1844, and from 1844 to 1878 (until the end of the Russo-Turkish war), it was incorporated into the Trabzon eyalet (renamed Trabzon vilayet in 1867).

## Conclusions

The process of gradual annexation carried out by the Ottoman Empire in Georgia over a long period (16th-18th centuries) was accompanied by an attempt to establish a new regime. This was at least partially achieved in certain territories.

The socio-political system of the Ottoman Empire did not facilitate state centralization. However, prolonged domination by brute force brought about integration of Georgian lands into the empire over time.

Due to objective reasons, until the early 17th century and especially before 1609, incomplete data exist regarding the Ottoman administrative-territorial organization in our country. From 1609 onward, these data become relatively clearer.

We have at hand the division of historical southwestern Georgia within the Ottoman Empire's organization (in the Eyalets of Childir, Trebizond, Erzurum, and Kars). This division may have changed to some extent over time.

During the second half of the 16th century, the Adjara basin gradually entered the orbit of the Ottoman Empire. It appears to have been a separate administrative-territorial unit under the jurisdiction of the beylerbey of Erzurum. The supreme authority demanded a careful and well-thought-out policy from the ruler of Adjara. Later, this unit was incorporated into various administrative-territorial entities.

The modern coastal area of Adjara, whose territory was conquered by the invaders at different times, was included in the Trebizond Eyalet (later Vilayet).

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