

Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University
Faculty of Humanities
Department of History, Archaeology and Ethnology

**Vilayet of Akhaltsikhe in 1774-1829,
From Kuchuk-Kainarji to the Treaty of
Adrianople(According to Ottoman sources)**

Specialty: History of Georgia

Firat Hakir
Annotation

**of the dissertation submitted to obtain the degree of the
PhD in History**

Batumi – 2020

Actuality of research: Historical Samtskhe, Samtskhe-Saatabago or principality and its capital city Akhaltsikhe have a long history. It was one of the most important regions of Georgia for centuries as well as the south gateway and strategic fortified city. But at present, it is administrative center of Samtskhe-Javakheti region and Akhaltsikhe municipality.

As it is known in the middle of XVI century empowered Iran-Ottoman have shared the spheres of influence in Georgia. In the last quarter of the same century Ottoman Empire has succeeded to settle at southern lands of Georgia which was followed by creation of Akhaltsikhe eyalet same as province (1579). In XVIII century the appearance of Russia at Trans-Caucasian Arena has changed the balance of powers. Ottoman appeared to be at the risk of losing powers the first signal of which was Russian-Ottoman war in 1768-1774 and the consequences of it. Since then, so since 1774 Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji the semi-centurial period is the point of our interest, until Russian governance was established in Akhaltsikhe with Treaty of Adrianople. We think that it is important to study the last five decades of ottoman authorities in Akhaltsikhe eyalet in the context of Georgian –Russian-Ottoman relations especially when it was not the very last episode of sharing Georgian territories in this century (we consider Russian-Ottoman War 1877-1878 and the consequences of it). Hence, we believe that the topic is not really of a poor importance and studying these issues will definitely support correct and fair understanding of the problem in historical aspect.

Besides, we think that the actuality of the topic is stipulated by the life of historical figures and their last years of life such as King Heraclius II of Kartli-Kahketi, King Solomon II of Imereti, Selim Khimshiashvili, Suleiman Pasha Kazinadaroghli, etc.

Goals and objectives of research: The goal of the present research is to study and demonstrate history of Akhaltsikhe eyalet same as province between two wars of Russia and Ottoman – the period since 1774 to 1829 based on research and objective analysis of scientific literature and sources, as well as archive documents in accordance with the modern standards of historical sciences.

We have set the following objectives to achieve our goals: to study Georgian and Turkish sources and scientific literature about Akhaltsikhe eyalet (Childir); to identify the place and role of Akhaltsikhe eyalet in ottoman administrative structure, what were the relations it has with Ottoman central governance and what were the relations it has with Georgian royal principalities.

For the very beginning I would like to note that the processes were studied in dynamics, taking into account present reality and historical experience as well. Therefore, we study our review from founding Akhaltsikhe eyalet (1579). Obviously, we demonstrate the events on the basis of political processes and on the background of military confrontations of main political players in Caucasus. Here we mean Russian-Ottoman wars in 1768-1774, 1789-1791, 1806-1812 and 1828-1829 and the consequences of it. The goal of our research is military-political and socio-economic issues of Akhaltsikhe eyalet as well as demographic conditions, landownership, etc.

Scientific novelty of the given research: The scientific novelty of the research is that, for the first time, Akhaltsikhe eyalet will be shown in its entirety, in Russian-Ottoman four wars conditions, in Georgian historical science, which finally was resulted in establishing Russian rule. It must be said that the history about Akhaltsikhe eyalet in this period is not far studied neither in Georgian nor in Turkish historiography. Hence, the research with new ottoman documents obviously will be unit adding many new points to already existing ones. It is worth mentioning that part of these documents are attached to the research hereto.

Theoretical-methodological basis of the research is applying complex of principles and methods elaborated by modern historical scientists such as chronological, historical-comparative, statistical, retrospective, political analysis, etc.

While working on the research we have used Georgian, Turkish, English, Russian materials and scientific literature as well as documents found in Ottoman archives by prime-minister, the majority of which are correspondence between Porta officials.

Theoretical and practical value of the research: The present research work will be interesting and valuable for those interested in history of Georgia, dynamics of neighbouring relations, socio-economic and political conditions of Akhaltsikhe, Geo-politics and events occurring at the verge of XVIII-XIX centuries as well as for students and professor-lecturers. In addition, the present work can be used for preparing proper educational course in universities. The research results as well as the attached literary sources can be useful for bachelor's master's thesis and other kinds of thesis as well.

History of the study of the issue; it must be said that at first glance it seems that brief period is quiet full of events and therefore, scientific literature is not that scarce but, Turkish historiography is much rich. In particular, there is no research carried in this direction and in this aspect. Despite of this fact it would be impossible to write our research if there were not works dedicated to certain aspects, regions and epochs.

One of the most important sources about historical region and epoch for us definitely is "Description of Kingdom of Georgia" by Vakhushti Batonishvili. Studying Akhaltsikhe history without life of Erekle II is absolutely impossible. Hence great attention should be paid to "The Reign of Irakli II" by Oman Kherkheulidze. The interesting notes were found in material reflecting the trip of member of Russian Academy in Georgia – I. Guiulden Stetd – the Reign of Heraclius II.

It is totally impossible to study important issues of Georgia and Caucasus without scientific inheritance from I. Javakhishvili and N. Berdzenishvili. Therefore it is vivid that we cannot go far from such materials. Among other Georgian authors who worked on Akhaltsikhe issues first must be mentioned professor Shota Lomsadze. He has monographically studied history of Samtskhe-Javakheti from midst of XVIII century to middle of XIX century. In his works there are discussed and studied many interesting points for us. In the works of Georgian researchers and scientists certain issues of Meskheti history are shown. These researchers and scientists have greatly helped us while working at our research and among them are: A. Proneli, Z. Tchitchinadze, S. Pirtskhala, M. Janashvili, T. Chikovani, R. Gogolauri, M. Beridze, etc.

As for Turkish historiography here no less interest is shown towards study of the issue. Many Turkish researchers got interested and studied history, social and demographic issues of Akhaltsikhe eyalet as administrative unit of Ottoman and we have focused to this direction, as these works the majority of which are based on ottoman archive documents are almost unknown for Georgian reader. Taking and discussing all of them in this work is impossible so we will select main ones.

The researcher Mustafa Adil Özder in his monographic work – “History of Chıldır (Akhalsikhe) Atabags (title of rulers of Samtskhe) and their grandchildren” [Erzurum 1971]. This work gives detailed information about Samtskhe Atabags, pashas who ruled the region during ottoman period

Feridun Ababay in his work - “The History of Chıldır” [Ankara 1987] – pays great attention to the origination of word Chıldır and discusses history of Chıldır region. The same author in the work – “The Organizing Process for Chıldır Ruling” – discusses form of governing and administrative structure of chıldır eyalet.

Rasim Bayraktar in his book “Akhalsikhe – Chıldır Beglarbeks” [Ankara, 2000] tells the history of Chıldır eyalet. In this work great attention is paid to Russian-Ottoman war period.

Mehmet İnbaşı in his work – “Chıldır Eyalet and its rulers in second half of XVIII century” [Erzurum, 2006] - gives information about those Pashas who were ruling Chıldır Eyalet in 18-th century. Besides, this work discusses economic and social conditions in Chıldır Sanjak (Turkish Province) of the same period.

Fahrettin Kirzioğlu in his book – “Conquering Caucasus by Ottoman” [Ankara, 1998] – discusses the process of conquering Chıldır eyalet and gives information about eyalet administrative and economic reorganization after conquering.

Yunus Zeyrek in his work –“Akhalsikhe Region and Meskhetian Turks” [Ankara, 2001] – describes history of Akhaltsikhe region, conditions

in Akhaltsikhe and problems of Meskhetian Turks since ancient period including period of Atabags, Ottoman, Russian Empire and Soviet Union.

Levent Küçük discusses activities of Pashas in Akhaltsikhe Sanjak and Istanbul in his work - “Akhaltsikhe Officials in Ottoman Bureaucracy” [Istanbul 2015].

Oktay Kızılkaya discusses socio-economic conditions of Chıldır sanjak in the midst of 19-th century as well as agricultural industry of the same period in his work “Chıldır Sanjak socio-economic conditions in the midst of XIX century”.

Bahattin Kılıç discusses administrative structure of Chıldır Sanjak after Tanzimat period in his dissertation work - “Chıldır Sanjak Administrative Structure in 19-th Century” [Kars 2011] and demonstrates the existing conditions of the same period.

The work of Sadık Müfit Bilge is also interesting – “(History-Society-Economy) in Caucasus-Ottoman Period 1454-1829”. In this work the author discusses general history of Caucasus and Chıldır Sanjak conditions in the mentioned period.

Salih Değirmenci discusses administrative, political, military, socio-economic and cultural conditions of Chıldır eyalet before 1828-1829 Russian-Ottoman war in his dissertation work which is based on recordings and official materials filed by Ottoman lawyers.

İbrahim Aykun, Esra Pamuk, Shota Bekadze and Iasha Bekadze, Nebi Gümüş, Cemal Gökçe and others discuss certain aspects of Akhaltsikhe eyalet history, economic and social conditions.

As for European historiography some kind of interest towards Caucasus is felt in here as well. Confrontation between Russian-Ottoman in parallel with Caucasus was taking place on a larger scale at European stage and in this context interest towards the region is not far surprising. There is no special researches carried on the issues interesting for us in Samtskhe but many interesting notices are met in the context of global relations which we will come closer in certain paragraphs of this work.

Obviously, historiography of interesting subject for us does not really end here and we have no further claims to present it in its entirety, though monographic works, certain articles and scientific works mostly describe the modern conditions of study of issue.

Research Approbation. The research has successfully passed approbation and was approved by BSU Department of History, Archaeology and Ethnology on 20 June 2020. The separate parts of the research were published in the form of Articles in Scientific newspapers and were read at International Scientific Conferences.

Research Structure. The present work includes Introduction, 3 Chapters, 9 Paragraphs and Conclusion. The list of applied sources and scientific literature are attached hereto. Besides, several ottoman documents with proper Georgian translation are attached in the form of Annex.

The introduction discusses actuality of the research, goals and objectives of it, theoretical and methodological principles of the work and scientific novelty of the research. Besides, the modern level of studying the issue is represented hereby and the importance of certain sources and scientific literature is highlighted.

Chapter I. Akhaltsikhe in Ottoman Administrative Structure Relations with Georgian Royal Principalities and Iranian-Russian Interests in the Region up to 1774

§ 1. Iran- Ottoman War of 1578 and Formation of Childir Eyalet

In Georgian and Turkish historiography Akhaltsikhe Childir are frequently synonyms. Childir Eyalet is used as region name which includes Ardahan region and Akhaltsikhe region.

Akhaltsikhe the word the etymology of which does not need any further definitions in Turkish is known as Ahiska or Akiska which is variation of Georgian term.

The relations between Samtskhe Atabags and Ottoman started during the reign of Sultan Mehmet II Fatih (in 1451-1481). In this period Samtskhe and ottoman were allies. Later, when Ottoman Empire started to pursue a policy of expansion in the East, Samtskhe region became the target of Ottoman Empire.

As it is known on 29 May 1555 with the Peace of Amasya between Ottoman and Safavid-Iran Georgia was divided between warring countries: the west of Georgia was under the subordination of Ottoman Empire and the East of Georgia – under the subordination of Iran, Samtskhe part was distributed between them.

According to Ottoman historiography in 1578 Safavids have violated Peace of Amasya and tried to subjugate Georgian Kingdoms. State of Ottoman was forced to make decisions about retaliation. The army was led by Lala Moustafa Pasha which started moving from Erzurum to Akhaltsikhe direction and called for Georgian kings and governors to participate in the war in favour of Ottoman.

On August 9, 1578 in Childir region Ottoman and Iran armies clashed against each other. Ottomans had won this battle. After the victory, a new military-administrative unit in Ottoman empire – Childir (Akhaltsikhe) Eyalet was created which lately included previously conquered territories by Atabags.

On August 10 1578 Lala Moustafa Pasha started moving to Tbilisi. He was accompanied by Samtskhe Atabag Manuchar II. Vakhtang Mukhranbatoni and Ksani army commander - Bardzim Amilakhvari have declared their obedience to Ottomans. Davit XI (1569-1578) of Kartli under the subordination of Iran has left Tbilisi and concealed in highlands. On August 24 Lala Moustafa Pasha together with Ottoman army has entered the capital without bloodshed. On August 29 Kingdom of Kartli became Tbilisi eyalet and joined the territories of Ottoman.

For the end of October, Lala Moustafa Pasha camped near Gori Fortress. Here he was joined by brother of King of Imereti - Giorgi and brother of Guria Governor - Mamia. At the same time King of Kartli -

Simon who was released by Iranians from 10 years captivity, being helped by Ganja governor, has started small attacks on Ottoman army.

Though Ottomans conquered Tbilisi relatively easily but further progress was quiet difficult. In addition, because of wars of Safavids and Georgians, the Ottoman army suffered significant losses. Gori was captured in September 1578. Aleksandre II of Kakheti (1574 - 1601) has sent an ambassador to Ottomans and declared his obedience to them.

Iran-Ottoman war ended in 1590 with the Treaty of Constantinople. Ottomans received / conquered Georgia, Ganja Shirvani and Karabakh. Even more, with such victory Ottoman Empire was enabled to directly contact with North Caucasus.

Unfortunately, the disagreement /conflict between Georgian kingdoms and the fact that Georgia did not have unified power, has significantly weakened Georgia's resistance against two powerful countries such as Ottomans and Iran.

§ 2. Administrative Governance of Chidir Eyalet. Samtskhe Atabags / Akhaltsikhe Pashas 1579 – 1774s

Chidir eyalet form of governance was somehow different from main military-administrative units within the empire. It envisaged using the incomes from the territories of the mentioned region for the benefits of the population of the same region.

Chidir Eyalet for the moment of creation consisted from the Sanjaks of Arpali, Imerkhevi, Pertekrek (Jusupeli), Artanuj, Checherek, Aspindza and Ude. In 1582 eyalet was joined by Livan. Pashalik (ottoman province) was joined by previously conquered territories in particular Ardahan. As Chidir eyalet was bordering region, military actions was quiet frequent here and eyalet borders was gradually changing. Chidir eyalet center sometimes was Chidir and sometimes Akhaltsikhe.

In 16 century the state allowances issued by state for Chidir eyalet equalled to 900.100 Akhcha (money unit). The duty of Chidir Eyalet governors was to control Imereti Kingdom, Provinces of Guria and

Samegrelo, to protect them from the influence of Iran, to prevent rebellions, to collect taxes, to establish liaisons with Dagestan and Azerbaijan Khanates through Georgian principalities as well as governing Childir, Poti, Batumi and Sokhumi troops.

In 1595 the following land categories were in Childir eyalet: 16 Khasi, 90 Zeamati, 761 Timar. For the middle of 17 century in Childir eyalet there was 14 Khasi, 92 Zeamat and 559 Timar. So during half of century the quantity of population owning Timar has reduced by 200 units which means that population was reduced itself. Akhaltsikhe eyalet population was engaged by cattle-breeding and agricultural activities as well. The products they produced were corn, honey, flax and vegetables.

In 17-18 centuries the quantity of Sanjaks in Akhaltsikhe eyalet according to various sources is between 13 to 23. Samtskhe-fiefdom territory in the borders of Ottoman empire was constantly changing which was reflected at quantity of administrative units. The main reason for changing sanjak quantity was the location of pashalik near border territories and constant confrontation with Iran and Georgian kingdoms.

Childir eyalet pasha history starts by Manuchar II who was distinguished member of Samtskhe-pashalik governing dynasty and Samtskhe Atabag. During Lala Moustafa Pasha attack he has received Islam and was named as Moustafa. He was holding this position since 1579 to 1582. In 1582 Manuchar rejected Islam and started rebellion. Ottomans went on a temporary compromise – in 1583 Manuchar II was restored on the position of Beylarbey. Ottomans have plan to incorporate Meskheti and in 1587 sent the troops against Manuchar II. Manuchar II has moved to Iranian orientation and moved to Iran.

Since 1587 to 1614 Childir eyalet was governed and ruled by governors appointed from Istanbul. After Manuchar in 1614 Karaman Beylarbey Mehmet Pasha was beylarbey of Childir eyalet as well. In 1614 the reins for ruling Childir eyalet still were given to Samtskhe Atabags. After this until 1829 Childir yelet was governed by Samtskhe Atabags.

In 1614- 1625 Childir eyalet Pasha was Manuchar II's son Manuchar III who was killed by his uncle Safar Pasha and Ascended the throne. In Georgian sources he is still called as Samtskhe Atabag. In 1635-1647 Childir eyalet pasha was Sapar Pasha's son Jusuf Pasha. In Georgian sources he is called as atabag or Pasha-Atabag.

From the further period we can no longer see the Samtskhe Atabags referred to as Atabags, although after the first few decades the region was ruled by the descendants of Samtskhe Atabags. This system was used in Ottoman Empire regions especially where various ethnic and religious groups lived. Certainly, these Atabags were appointed at these positions with the condition that they will receive Islam according to traditional form of Ottoman and will govern the region on behalf of Ottoman Empire.

§ 3. Iran-Ottoman and Russian-Ottoman Wars XVII-XVIII Century until 70s and Akhaltsikhe Pashalik

As we have mentioned in 1587 Abbas I became Shah of Iran which has used favourably the period of Treaty with Ottoman and has carried important reforms in the country which gave him the possibility to revenge.

Iran-Ottoman wars started from 1603, were proceeding with some intervals and they continued up to 1639. During wars Georgian Kingdoms and Principalities had various positions. Kakheti Kingdom (Since 80s of last century) has relations with Russia. Kartli was careful as well. After capturing Yerevan, Safavid army has attacked Akhaltsikhe, actually the city was robbed and many Georgians were captured.

In 1606 throne of Kartli was taken by Luarsab II and Kartli Kingdom became under the subordination of Safavids. King Teimuraz of Kakheti declared his obedience to Shah. In 1609 King Luarsab II attacked Childir. As a response to this, beylarbey Moustafa Pasha has attacked Kartli intending to capture King Luarsab II and Gori City. However, he was harshly defeated first in Tskhureti and then in Tashiskari battles with Kartli army which was led by Giorgi Saakadze and then retreated. After this Ottoman-Safavid wars have cancelled for a long time.

By the Treaty of 1612 Iran-Ottoman border returned to the conditions of 1555. Safavids admitted Ottoman dominance in western Georgia, North Caucasia and Dagestan and Ottomans admitted Safavids dominance in Western Iran, Yerevan, Nakhitchevani, Karabakh and Azerbaijan.

After concluding Contract King Teimuraz I of Kakheti has sent ambassadors in Ottoman Empire to seek help against Shah Abbas I and offered them obedience in return. In 1614-1617 Shah has invaded Kakheti many times and brought the country to the destruction. Teimuraz was hiding to Luarsab but later both of them had to escape in Imereti.

In 1615 Iran-Ottoman war has started again. In 1618 with new Treaty, Kars and Akhaltsikhe lands were left to ottoman. In March 1627 Safavids besieged Akhaltsikhe and captured it. It was followed by temporary agreement in the same year. Though in 1635 Ottoman has returned back Yerevan and Akhaltsikhe. Soon the on-going war with Iran has ended.

For the beginning of 18-th century Russia became active in Caucasus. In 1722 Russian emperor Peter I has organized expedition in Azerbaijan. King Vakhtang VI of Kartli who has totally relied on Russians actually was in war with ottomans and Iran as well, which on one hand cost him losing the throne and leaving the country and on the other hand cost the country receiving new wave of ottomans.

On September 17 Georgians with the help of Iran returned back Tbilisi. However a new not less difficult period has started so called “Qizilbashism” (Qizilbashoba). In 1745 Teimuraz II was consecrated as King of Kartli and Teimuraz’s son Heraclius was consecrated as King of Kakheti with Christian rule. In 1747 Nadir Shah was dead which was followed by withdrawal of Iran army from the region.

The situation was far difficult in Western Georgia as well. In 1752 Imereti throne was taken by Solomon I who has stopped paying tribute to Ottomans. In 1757 the victory at Khresili field, was followed by total defeat of ottoman’s plans. Their dominance in the region has been reducing

and it was irreversible process. Ottoman's have lost all the means of control over Imereti Kingdom. Gradually the scales of captive purchases have been decreased.

In 1758 King Solomon I has met with King Teimuraz II of Kartli and King Heraclius II of Kakheti in Gori and has created Alliance against Ottoman, Iran and Dagestan. Since 1762 after the death of Teimuraz the Kingdoms of Kartli and Kakheti were united under the flag of Heraclius II.

In 1768 in the Balkans and Caucasus the war started between Russia and Ottoman in which warring countries had great hopes of the positions of Georgian kingdoms and principalities.

In 1769 Russian Emperor Ekaterine II made a decision to send certain amount of militants in Georgia governed by General Totleben. United army of Georgians and Russians in April 1170 have besieged Atskhuri Fortress. It was here that General Totleben has suddenly abandoned the king, returned back to Tbilisi with the army of Russians and started to require from local population to swear the devotion to Russian Emperor.

Heraclius II who actually was in war with Ottomans has brutally defeated Ottoman army in 20 April 1170. Despite the victory Heraclius II did not dare to invade deeply in Pashalik as he was thinking on one hand about ottoman army being in Akhalsikhe and on the other hand General Totleben's action and he was forced to get back to Tbilisi. German General In October 1170 moved to Western Georgia. On October 6 1170 Kutaisi Fortress was returned back by Georgians. Soon Russians laid siege on Poti Fortress but in vain. Because of great financial costs and Pugachev's revolts in Russia, in May of 1772 Russian army was withdrawn back.

As for Russian-Ottoman war it ended in 1774 by Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji by which Russia has strengthened its strategic and trading positions on the black sea. The Bagdati, Shorapani and Kutaisi fortresses being conquered by Russia during war returned back to Ottomans. Russia has admitted Ottoman's rights to western Georgia. In return, Ottomans

refused to require tributes from population and oppression of Christians as well.

Chapter II. Childir Eyalet in 1774-1806s Weakening Ottoman Positions and Russia Settles in Southern Caucasus

§ 1. Akhaltsikhe on the background of Political Processes in Southern Caucasus (1774-1787s)

After Kuchuk-Kainarji Treaty in 1775 Heraclius II required Russian troops to enter Caucasus and in return he promised them his help. In parallel with this he was trying to establish allied relations with Ottoman Empire. In this period three main powers (Iran, Ottoman, Russia) were trying to have dominance on Georgian principalities. Ottoman Empire was traditionally trying to control the region via Childir Pasha.

In 1775 declaring war by Iran to Ottomans was great opportunity for Heraclius II. He considered that at this stage, alliance with Ottoman Empire would be beneficial. He informed Ottomans that Kartli- Kakheti was on the side of Ottomans.

Ottoman sultan Abdulhamid I accepted such offer and sent back to Heraclius 1000 Gold, Coat and Horse as a gifts. Besides, he has ordered to Governor of Childir Eyalet - Suleiman Pasha to support King Heraclius with 3000 army in case of need.

Shah Kerim Khan Zand of Iran died in 1779. Russians took advantage of this situation and started preparations for invasion in Georgia. Aleksandre Bakarisdze was claiming the throne as well, who was supported by King Solomon of Imereti. In response Heraclius II has addressed Germany and Venice for help but in vain. After this he has still turned back to Russia.

On July 24, 1783 in Georgievsk fortress Treaty was concluded between Russia and Kartli-Kakheti by which Eastern Georgia was under the protection of Russia. Ottomans were carefully observing this quiet new military-political alliance. Ottomans started to fortify-strengthen fortresses located in Caucasus.

To its part, Russian in Terek at Dariali pass started military road construction. Ottomans tried to give proper answer to Russia. For this purpose, this latter required to attack Georgia by Khans of Azerbaijan and Daghestan. Mehmet Khan of Quba, Dagestan population, Ibrahim Halil Khan of Karabakh and Muslim population in Georgian border have informed Chidir eyalet governor Suleiman Pasha that they were ready for war.

Heraclius II has sent letter to ottomans to prevent conflict with them and informed them that Russia's military actions were not intended against Ottomans. Governor of Chidir eyalet was gradually sending notices to Istanbul about existing situation in Georgia. Porta got information from letters sent by Suleiman Pasha that Heraclius II was preparing to attack Chidir and Kars and Solomon I was preparing to attack Poti and Anaklia. Suleiman Pasha's inaction contributed to Solomon's turn to Russia. Russia was already trying to gain over and agree with Imereti King. Ekaterine has sent financial support to Solomon.

In April 1784 Solomon I died. Ottoman was most afraid that pro-Heraclius II king will ascend the throne of Imereti. Porta was planning to ascend the throne Georgian prince Kaikhosro Abashidze son of Levan, uncle of Solomon I, who was obeying Ottoman and lived in Istanbul. Janikli Ali Pasha would send 8000 soldiers to help him. He did invade Guria but was defeated and went in Ottoman. Meanwhile, in the battle for the throne of Imereti, Solomon I's cousin, David son of Giorgi, defeated 12-year-old David son of Archil - Solomon's nephew, and ascended the throne for 5 years in the name of David II.

As a result of diplomatic steps made by Sultan Abdulhamid I Khans of Shaki, Khoy and Karabakh declared their consent to act together with Chidir governor Suleiman Pasha against Russians and Georgians. At the instigation of the Ottomans, Khan Omar of Avaria and Khan Ali of Elisus invaded and looted Kartli-Kakheti on June 1, 1784.

Later Omar Khan who wanted to punish Heraclius II marched to Tbilisi by 20000 soldiers. Omar Khan had besieged Tbilisi but could not conquer it and retreated. He spent winter in Chidir and provided food

supplies. Heraclius II blamed Suleiman Pasha in attacks and sent letter in Istanbul by which this latter required dismissal of Suleiman Pasha. Ottoman authorities did not recognize the mentioned accusations although they sent warning to Pasha not to act against peaceful relations.

King Heraclius understood that Treaty made with Russia was not sufficient guaranty. For the end of 1786 Heraclius II send friendly letter to Akhaltsikhe governor Suleiman Pasha and tried to fortify the western borders this way. However ottomans considered such action from Heraclius as a certain manoeuvre.

Despite of all above stated measures Ottoman Empire did not succeed in withdrawing Russia from Transcaucasia and establishing control over the region. Ottoman Empire has moved to self-protective position in its relations with Russia both in Caucasus and Rumelia as well.

§ 2. Georgian Kingdoms-Principalities and Akhaltsikhe Pashalik during Russian-Ottoman War in 1787-92s

For 1787 the situation was ready for new Russian-Ottoman war. Russia was preparing for annexation of Crimea and for expulsion of Ottomans from the Balkans and Caucasus countries and Ottoman Empire was ready to return back lost territories.

After the visit of Russian Emperor Ekaterine II in Crimea, Ottomans were demanding in the form of ultimatum to recognize Kartli-Kakheti as part of Ottoman and renounce Crimea. Surely, Russia did not accept this proposal to which Porta answered by imprisoning Russian Ambassador in Yedikhule prison. It was almost similar to declaring a war. On August 13, 1787 Ottoman authorities being encouraged by Britain, France and Prussia declared war to Russia.

Just before start of hostile acts Ottoman Empire started preparing Caucasus front. Akhaltsikhe governor Suleiman Pasha collected weapons, shells and bullets for Erzurum, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki and Ardahan Fortresses. In addition he has sent 113 thousand Qirsh (Ottomans money unit) to rulers of Cherkezeti, Abkhazia, Daghestan and Noghay.

In this period two battalions of Russian army was in Georgia according to treaty. Although after war was started Russia has fully withdrew its troops from Georgia. In paralel with this Russian authorities were encouraging Erekle to participate in war and join them in the war.

Before war Suleiman Pasha has offered to reconcile Heraclius II. however no agreement was achieved between parties. Akhaltsikhe governor Suleiman Pasha was still thinking to use Lezghins against Kartli-Kakheti. However, because of friendly attitude of Heraclius towards Ottomans during the war, the decision was made not to use and stop Lezghins against Kartli and Kakheti.

Heraclius still was not feeling himself safe, so he has sent two Batonishvilis as hostages to Suleiman Pasha. The Russians also advised the king to establish good relations with Akhaltsikhe Pasha in case he wanted to protect himself from ottoman attacks. However, as soon as the war started, this agreement lost its meaning. In 1788, the ruler of Akhaltsikhe, Suleiman Pasha, in order to ensure security, to destroy the military road in the Dariali gorge, carried out attacks on the territory of Georgia and took many captives or loots.

Ottoman Empire has declared attacks will end in case if the road is dismantled but Heraclius has declared that he could not destroy the road as Russians had his children as captives. Heraclius II had asked Russians in the form of money and soldiers to protect himself from ottoman attacks but he was rejected. Heraclius has followed advice of Georgian rulers having anti-Russian position and despite of Treaty of Georgievsk has positioned at neutral position in war. However without declaring war he has started retaliatory attacks at Akhaltsikhe.

In 1789 peaceful initiatives were noticed between Ottoman and Russia. Russia has offered peace to Ottoman Empire by the condition that the territories conquered in the Balkans and Caucasus would stay to it and it will receive compensation. However Ottoman Empire has rejected such requirements as it knew that losing these lands would result in serious consequences in the future. Hence, peaceful initiation failed.

Russia's progress to south, construction military fortresses and settlement of Cossacks on their lands caused strong protests from north Caucasus population which was led by Sheikh Mansour. In this period north Caucasian tribes were trying to be in harmony with Ottoman army but it could not be achieved fully.

On 22 June 1791 Russians occupied Anapa. Mansour was among the captive, who was sentenced to life imprisonment. After losing Anapa fortress, Ottomans left Sujuk-Kale (Novorossisk) and it was occupied by Russians in July 1791 but they were forced to retreat due to Circassian attacks.

After such defeat Ottomans have offered peaceful negotiations to Russia. According to Treaty of Jassys dated on 9 January, 1792 Russians have agreed to return back the lands taken away from ottomans and Kuban river became border between these two states. Ottoman Empire has recognized that Crime and Taman regions were Russian territories. Ottoman Empire has accepted Russian dominance on Kartli-Kakheti kingdom. Akhaltsikhe Pashas and Ottoman armies in this region were forbidden to attack Kartli-Kakheti lands and to interfere in any of their crisis.

§3. The Political Conditions in Southern Caucasus and Akhaltsikhe in 1792-1806s

After 1787-91 Russian-Ottoman war, Russia and Ottomans have made steps to protect their borders and to maintain long-term peace.

In the mentioned period the biggest threat for Georgia and especially for Kartli-Kakheti Kingdom was coming from Iran, where Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar has come to power.

Iran traditionally was considering eastern Georgia's territories as his and was declaring and claiming that he had rights on Georgia against Ottomans and Russia as well. Presumably, Heraclius II has foreseen the future threat and signed Alliance with in 1790 with King Solomon II of Imereti, Grigol Dadiani and Simon Gurieli according to which in case of attacks to Georgia their army will be united under the Flag of Heraclius II.

After Treaty of Jassys, Heraclius II has expressed his desire to make peace with ottoman. In response to this Porta required demolition of Dariali military road. Soon Heraclius II Khan Mohammad of Yerevan, Mir Moustafa Khan of Talysh and Halil Khan of Karabakh decided to jointly act against Iran.

Gradually threats from Agha Mohammad Khan were intensifying. Heraclius was seeking support from Russia foreseen under treaty but in vain. He addressed to Ottomans for help and in 1794 sent ambassadors to Istanbul through Akhaltsikhe.

In 1795 Iran has occupied Yerevan and Karabakh. After this Shah required tributes and obedience from Kartli-Kakheti in exchange of peace. Heraclius II did not receive such offer. In response Shah sent 35000 soldiers army.

Shah's army has defeated Heraclius II in Krtsanisi battle on 10 September 1795 and invaded Tbilisi on 11 September 1795. After 6 days and nights plundering about 30000 captives were taken from burnt-out capital city. During the battle Sheriff Pasha Governor of Akhaltsikhe has supported Iranian army and sent food aid.

In March 1796 Russia has declared war to Iran. Russians have occupied Azerbaijan khanates. Agha Mohammad Khan has offered to Ottomans alliance against Russia but Ottomans did not agree.

On 18 November 1796 Ekaterine II has died and throne was taken by Pavle I who has changed policy in Transcaucasia. On 25 December 1796 he has taken Russian troops from Caucasus. Heraclius II was afraid that Iran will still attack so he has asked protection from Ottomans. Porta required Letter of apology from Heraclius II. Only in this case it would agree with peace agreement.

On 11 January 1798 Heraclius II was died. After his death throne was taken by eldest brother - Giorgi XII. The Ottoman government reminded the potential heir of throne of the need to obey the Ottomans. However at the end of the year after Napoleon has attacked Egypt, Russian-Ottoman alliance was established preventing Porta to act against Russian

rule in Georgia. The encouragement of Lezghins by Akhaltsikhe Pasha was not well enough to achieve the goal.

On 12 September 1801 Russian Monarch Aleksandre I announced Georgia as Russian Province. The second governor Tsitsianov was thinking to establish full control at the territories of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. In addition, he was planning to unite Akhaltsikhe and Georgia. Although in this period Russia had peaceful relations with Ottomans. Hence the final plan was postponed for future.

In 1804 Imereti Kingdom came under the rule of Russia. The same year Russia invaded Ganja, called the city Elizavetpole and handed it to Georgian government. Russia's attack to Azerbaijan led to the mobilization of Iran which was followed by war. It is worth mentioning that some Khans (Karabak, Shak, Shirvan) of the region voluntarily accepted Russian rule. In 1806 Tsitsianov was killed while negotiations about Baku. The same year Russia has subjugated Kuba.

Chapter III. Akhaltsikhe Pashalik in 1806-1828s. Russian-Ottoman Wars and Military-Political Situation in the Region

§ 1. Russian-Ottoman Wars in 1806-1812s and Akhaltsikhe Pashalik. Situation of Georgian Kingdoms

For 1806 there were not any serious disagreements that would have been resolved by the war between the Ottomans and Russia. However, the events developed in European politics have paved the way for a military confrontation between them. This is the period of Napoleon's ascension in Europe. Ottoman Sultan Selim III thought he would act together with France against the enemies - Austria, Russia and Britain.

Russia could not let more good relations between Ottomans and France. Despite the fact that it has war with Iran since 1804, not to say anything about western direction, being encouraged by the support of England it has attacked Romania with 60000 army without declaring war in October 1806 and Russian-Ottoman war of 1806-12s started.

Since 1807 Russian Army being in the Balkans started active actions. The alliance of Ottoman empire with France, and the alliance of England with Russia has ended by the Treaties of Tilzit 1807. Russia joined continental blockade against Britain and France rejected to support this latter in Russian-Ottoman war.

In 1807 military actions started at Caucasian front. In spring Russians have conquered Anapa fortress and Anaklia, after which ottomans have strengthened military units in Sinop, Trabzon, Batumi and Poti.

Until military action started in Akhaltsikhe region Russians demanded that Akhaltsikhe come under Russian protection without resistance. Meanwhile, the Russian army occupied Akhalkalaki, giving it the necessary advantage for military operations in Kars.

In November 1807 Lezghins became active in southern Georgia. Qarapapaqs in Akhaltsikhe started looting attacks in the region. In response General Orbeliani has invaded Akhaltsikhe but because of heavy loss retreated.

Soon peaceful negotiations started between Russia and Ottomans which continued until spring of 1809 but final treaty could not be signed still. During temporal peace conditions ottoman relations to the west has been changed. The Ottoman Empire now had support from England instead of France. As for Russia it has offered to Iran to cease fire, this everything has changed the balance of powers in Caucasus.

In May 1809 Russians have besieged Poti Fortress. However, when the city's defenders came to the rescue, General Orbeliani retreated. The governor of Akhaltsikhe, Selim Pasha, was assigned to protect Batumi who was actively collaborating with Guria principality and Russians as well. Nevertheless, powers of Selim Pasha prevented the ottoman rule to act against him. Moreover, in 1810 governor of Trabzon Sherif Pasha was dismissed from his post because of conflict with Akhaltsikhe governor Selim Pasha.

Russian commanders of the region have beneficially used conflict between Selim and Sherif Pashas and they have occupied Poti Fortress in 27

November 1809. As for the Ottomans, they were only able to begin strengthening The Black Sea coastline especially Batumi, Trabzon and Sokhumi.

After losing Poti Porta has changed governors in coastline regions, including Selim Pasha, who was dismissed from the positions of Akhaltsikhe Governor and Head of Batumi Prison and Mr. Tuzjuoglu Memish Agha was appointed instead.

In 1810 Russians have captured Sokhumi, attacked Trabzon. The military actions against the Akhaltsikhe region continued throughout 1810 and 1811s. During this period, Christian Georgians living in the Akhaltsikhe region supported Russian troops and fought for joining with Georgia.

In September 1811, Russian troops besieged Sujuk-Kale and captured it the same month. In December of the same year, the Russians captured Akhalkalaki as well. An arrest warrant has been issued for Akhaltsikhe Governor Sherif Pasha and again Selim Pasha was appointed at his post -governor of Akhaltsikhe.

At the end of 1811 peaceful negotiations started between two parties. In March 1812 as Napoleon was preparing a war against Russia, Russia was forced to soften its peaceful offers.

The war ended 1812 by Treaty of Bucharest in 16 May. According to Article 6 of the Treaty Russia agreed to return back territories received from Ottomans in Southern Caucasus (Poti, Sujuk-Kale, Anapa, Akhalkalaki); River Kuban was acknowledged as border between two countries; Anaklia Kemhale and Sokhumi Fortresses were given to Russia which lately belonged to Ottoman Empire; Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki regions which were occupied by Russia during war returned back to Ottomans.

During war the pressure from Russia at Georgian Kingdoms and principalities was increasing day by day. The Russians did not trust King Solomon II of Imereti. On February 20, 1810, the Russian Emperor Alexander I announced the abolition of the Kingdom of Imereti. General

Tomasov captured Solomon II, however, Solomon managed to escape and moved to Akhaltsikhe. In 1811, the Ottoman Empire officially promised to support Solomon II, but with no avail.

§2. Selim and Sherif Pashas Battle for Akhaltsikhe. Southern Caucasus in 1812-1828s

Selim Khimshiashvili is one of the most significant figures of history of Ottomans and southern western Georgia in first-quarter of 19 century. In this period when relations between Russia-Ottoman-Iran were aggravated Selim Khimshiashvili twice became the governor of such important region as Akhaltsikhe firstly in 1802-1809 and secondly in 1812-1815.

In 1784 after the death of father Selim Pasha became governor of Adjara Sanjak. On 26 August 1802 he was handed Akhaltsikhe Pashalik together with Adjara. After appointing Selim Pasha as governor of Akhaltsikhe the conflict has started between former governor of Akhaltsikhe Sherif Pasha and Selim Pasha.

Sherif Pasha belonged to the Akhaltsikhe Atabag family dynasty and was the grandson of Akhaltsikhe Ishak Pasha and the son of Suleiman Pasha. On November 1, 1802, Sherif Pasha escaped from Akhaltsikhe due to the conflict with population. This should have been a good example for Selim Pasha. On December 3, 1802, Selim Pasha attacked the sheriff hiding in Childir Fortress, who, with 200 warriors, retreated in the direction of the Oltis Sanjak, and Selim pursued him. In this difficult situation Sherif was assisted by Moustafa Pasha of Bayezid Sanjakbeg, who gave him 300 warriors. Sherif Pasha managed to escape to Yerevan. In 1803, the Sherif twice marched to conquer Akhaltsikhe against Selim Pasha, but failed to achieve the goal.

Lately, in 1804 Sherif Pasha was sent to Tbilisi as Iran spy. As for Selim because of increased Russian influence in the region on 16 March 1804 he was given Gonio Sanjak to protect Poti Fortress.

Following these events, mercy warrant was issued for Sherif Pasha because of good relations with Iran. In 1809 he was also given the position

of commander-in-chief of Trabzon and the Black Sea Army. During the Russo-Ottoman War of 1806-1812, both Pashas had certain responsibilities, but the conflict between them did not cease, which made it easy for the Russians to get Poti fortress.

The fact of receiving Poti raised the issue of punishing Pasha. Selim Pasha was taken to Adjara, and Sherif Pasha was appointed as governor of Akhaltsikhe. As it turns out, the population of Akhaltsikhe was not satisfied with the policies pursued by Selim Pasha during the war.

During his reign, Selim Pasha, on the one hand, tried to maintain good liaisons with the Ottomans, and on the other hand, he fought for the unity of Georgia. He had active relations with the Guria principality, as well as the Kingdom of Imereti and the rulers of Kartli-Kakheti. In 1809 he received the protectorate from Russia. However, after the persecution of King Solomon II of Imereti by Russia, he lost hope of help from Russia and he tried to fight for the idea of united Georgia independently.

Due to the failure of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1806-1812, Sherif Pasha was dismissed from the post of Governor of Akhaltsikhe and Selim Pasha was reappointed as Governor of Akhaltsikhe. After the war, the conflict between them still continued. The Ottoman authorities decided to sentence both of them with death penalty, which, was executed with Selim Pasha June 1815. As for Sherif Pasha, he was forgiven and even promoted.

After agreement between Iran-Ottoman-France, the biggest problem for Russia was King Solomon II of Imereti which first was hiding in Akhaltsikhe and then in 1813 moved to Trabzon. Russia was requiring passing of Solomon but Ottomans have rejected such request and promised to Solomon II to return the throne back. In November 1813 Solomon arrived in Poti and at the meeting with princes and nobleman required from them to get rid of dominance of Russia. Solomon II has sent notice to Istanbul that in case if he is helped with weapon and finances he will regain the throne. Despite of all efforts Solomon II was unable to get help from them and he died in despair on 7 February 1815 in Trabzon.

After the death of Solomon II, the Ottomans used both financial and economic tools to achieve the desired results. However, first of all, rule has to be established in Akhaltsikhe. After the revolt of Selim and Sherif Pashas, the region was not peaceful. This time the revolt was started by Ahmed Beg, the son of Selim Pasha, whose goal was to seize the rule of Akhaltsikhe and establish Georgian rule. But he was defeated, but instead of being punished, after some time, he was forgiven. After that he joined the Ottomans.

In summer of 1819 revolt against Russians started which involved Guria as well. Imereti hoped that they would receive help from Akhaltsikhe against Russians but in vain. This revolt has the same consequences as revolt of 1812 in Kakheti. The ottomans could not officially support Georgia as Russia was much stronger in this period in Southern Caucasus than Ottomans. Therefore, in order to avoid possible complications, it only could to strengthen Akhaltsikhe and Ardahan fortresses.

In 1828 Russia achieved another success in Southern Caucasus, Nakhinachevi and Yereven Khanates joined Russia by Treaty of Turkmenchay by which Russia had strategic advantage in the East of Akhaltsikhe.

§3. 1828-1829 Russian-Ottoman War and Consequences of It for Samtskhe-Javakheti

For 20s of XIX Century Ottoman empire was weakened by internal and external revolts. The structure of the army was broken. In 1826 the army of the Janissaries was abolished and replaced by a new army, although it could not be fully formed before the war. Russia took advantage of this difficult situation for the Ottomans and on April 26, 1828, declared war to the Ottomans.

The goal of ottomans was to protect the boundaries of the Balkans and eastern Anatolia. The conditions of Ottoman army was very bad. Russia was in much better position. The Commander-in-Chief of Russian Army of Caucasus was General Paskevich who was famous with his successes at Iranian battles.

Russians tried to destroy the Ottoman military defences with false information, as if they had conquered Trabzon, the districts of Sinop, Rumelia and even Istanbul. They offered various proposals to the Caucasians who had come to the help of the Ottoman Empire.

The very first success of Russians at front was conquering Anapa Fortress, but it was necessary to conquer Kars Fortress to maintain Russian provinces in Caucasus, after which Akhaltsikhe province would be separated from Anatolia and capturing it would be easier.

On 1 Jun 1828 Russians came near to Kars and conquered the Fortress fully. After this plague epidemic started because of which the war was canceled for twenty days. After this attacking Akhaltsikhe fortress. Then it was decided to attack the Akhalkalaki fortress, because if they went to Erzurum, the Ottoman army in Akhaltsikhe would turn its back on the Russian army. General Paskevich was thinking of taking Akhaltsikhe after Akhalkalaki.

On July 26, Paskevich launched a misguided manoeuvre in the direction of Erzurum. On August 3, 1828, General Paskevich arrived in Akhalkalaki and demanded the admitting from Ferhad Beg, the son of Selim Khimshiashvili, the commander of the fortress. However, he and Akhalkalaki residents rejected this request. After that, the Russian army attacked and started firing cannons. There was a division of 1000 men in the fortress, who could no longer resist and escaped. On August 7, the Russians captured the Khertvisi fortress without battle, located 40 kilometres from Akhalkalaki. Thus, the roads between Ardahan and Akhaltsikhe passed to the Russians.

After capturing Akhalkalaki the second part of General Paskevich was conquering Akhaltsikhe. With its rocky walls and 10000 garrison it seemed that nothing could threat Akhaltsikhe but General Paskevich was very self-confident and decided to attack. On August 20 Paskevich called board. The board made decision to start the attack at night.

Due to the poor relief, the Russians were unable to move quickly, but soon gained the advantage. The reason for the unrest in the Ottoman

ranks was the panic caused by the wounding of the Ahmed Khimshiashvili beloved by population.

On 22 of August Russians offered to admit to prison guards giving them the guarantee of inviolability of population and faith. As Russians knew that Ottomans received help they started immediate attack. General Paskevich decided to make fire in order to disrupt city's defence force. Akhaltsikhe residents show great resistance to Russians. Even women participated in the war, and they preferred rather to die than to be captured. In response the Russians carried great massacre and on 28 August captured the city.

Russian army had success in other directions as well. They captured Poti and Ozurgeti fortresses as well as Ardahan and Bayezid. Russia's settling in Akhaltsikhe was followed by changing of demographic and religious picture. The ottomans, part of Kurds and other Muslims left Akhaltsikhe and were forced to sell their lands with very low prices. The Russians have given these lands to newly-arrived Armenians.

Before the start of campaign of 1829 General Paskevich arrived in Saint Petersburg where he has discussed plan of eastern Anatolia. After conquering Erzurum he was going to conquer Trabzon with the help of maritime forces of Russia and then to conquer Sivas. In this period Ahmed Khimshiashvili was facing dilemma. During war Ahmed Khimshiashvili met with general Bebutov and asked the Russian side to participate in war. But after General Ostensaken provoked him in Adjara, who had been appointed to replace General Bebutov, Ahmed Khimshiashvili decided to be on side of the Ottomans. He had an attempt to return Akhaltsikhe back, which was not successful.

In response to this Russians with the help of 5-th Colony of Armenians managed to conquer Erzurum. After receiving fortress, Commander-in-Chief Salih Pasha was captured and sent to Tbilisi. On 13 July 1829 the Russians invaded Baiburt without any resistance, conquered Gumushhane but because of mobilization of army of Ottomans from Samsun and resistance from local population Paskevich made his opinion to attack Trabzon and returned back to Erzurum.

The Russian army had some successes in European part as well. They conquered Adrianople and threatened Istanbul, though they knew Europe would oppose their invasion there. Finally, on September 14, 1829, peaceful negotiations started in Adrianople, culminating in the signing of a Treaty consisting of 16-article. According to the Treaty, Anapa, Sujuk-Kale (Novorossiysk) and Poti, as well as the cities of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki were given to the Russians. The Ottomans recognized the transfer of Georgia to Russia. Akhaltsikhe came into the territories of Tbilisi province. In the rest territories of Akhaltsikhe province, the Chidir Sanjak was established, the center of which was Oltis and it joined Erzurum Province.

It is worth mentioning that after Kuchuk-Kainarji, Adrianople Treaty was the most difficult Treaty signed in the Ottoman history. In addition, Adrianople treaty became the starting point of Armenian issues in Ottoman Empire.

Conclusions

Because of its strategic location the great states such as: Iran, Ottoman, Russia were constantly trying to capture Akhaltsikhe- the important Southern outpost of Georgia. For the end of 70s Amasya Treaty made between Iran-Ottoman was violated after which the ottomans conquered Samtskhe-Javakheti, eastern Georgia and actually ruled the whole Transcaucasia. The ottomans left the old rulers and started to establish their administrative system.

In August 1578 a new military-administrative unit was established in the Ottoman Empire - Chidir (Akhaltsikhe) Eyalet, which became the main point for indirect and direct battles against Iran and Georgia from Ottomans during the next two and half centuries.

The full influence and control over southern Caucasus by Ottomans did not last long. After the rise of Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) to the throne of Iran, a country strengthened by reforms declared war to the Ottomans to regain lost positions. In 1603-1639, Akhaltsikhe and eastern Georgia became a war zone between the Ottomans and Iran. During these

hostilities, Akhaltsikhe first fell into the hands of Iran and then was still captured by the Ottoman Empire. During this period, the politically divided Georgian kingdoms tried to use the confrontations between the two empires for their own interests, for the country's sovereignty, and therefore formed an alliance either with the Ottomans, or with Iran.

After establishing full control over Akhaltsikhe, the Ottoman Empire organized the region in accordance with the traditional Ottoman terrestrial regime, the Timar system. Incomes of cities and villages in the region were audited and recorded. After the first several decades, the region was handed over to the Samtskhe Atabags, who had previously ruled Akhaltsikhe. This system was used in the regions of the Ottoman Empire, especially where different ethnic and religious groups lived closely. Of course, these Atabags were appointed to this position on the condition that they will receive Islam in the traditional form of the Ottoman Empire and will govern the region on behalf of the Ottoman Empire.

After the reign of Peter I (1682-1725) in 18-th century, the country got involved in political conflicts of Caucasus and Georgian political units tried to make alliance with religiously close country - Russia instead of Ottomans and Iran.

Significant events took place in Eastern Georgia in the mid-18th century. Heraclius II, who became the king of Kakheti in 1744, after the death of his father, King Teimuraz II of Kartli (1744-1762), proclaimed himself as king of Kartli-Kakheti and took a big step towards the full unification of Georgia. During the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768-1774, the appearance of Russia in the South Caucasus further strengthened this hope. Heraclius II being encouraged by this began to pursue a more active policy against the Ottomans and Iran, culminating in the Battle of Aspindza in 1770. From 1774, by virtue of the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji, a new player appeared in the politics of South Caucasus in the face of Russia, which at the same time was some kind of threat for the interests of both Georgia and the Ottomans and Iran as well.

By Kuchuk-Kainarji Treaty Ottoman Empire lost The Crimea and its monopoly on the black sea. Since then close political or economic

liaisons with Georgian kingdoms and southern Caucasus acquired even higher importance for the Ottoman Empire.

After 1768-1774 Russian-Ottoman war King Heraclius II of Kartli-Kakheti was seeking the ways to agree with governor of Akhaltsikhe Suleiman Pasha. The Ottoman Empire supported such liaison but was somehow refraining because of relations of Heraclius II to the Russians.

In the mentioned period Heraclius II started battles in Azerbaijan, conquered Yerevan and Ganja. Though King of Kartli-Kakheti was forced to accept Russian protection, due to revolt from Aleksandre son of Bakar, threats from Ottomans and Iran, as well as ineffective attempt to contact with Europe. In 1783 Treaty of Georgievsk was signed, by which Russia gained advantage in Transcaucasia compared to Iran-Ottoman.

Heraclius II had different expectations from Russia from the treaty signed in Georgievsk. It was the hope of defeating Georgia's enemies and uniting the country under Russian protection. However, these hopes of the king did not come true. Following the signing of the Georgievsk Treaty, in the conditions of irritation of Iran and the Ottomans, Russian assistance appeared to be insufficient. Moreover, their action was inadequate. The Ottomans, traditionally using the Lezghins, invaded the region, and sent letters to Heraclius demanding the abolition of the alliance with Russia. As a result of non-performing such request, Suleiman Pasha, the ruler of Akhaltsikhe, personally organized a battle in Georgia in 1785. During this period, the Armenians, taking advantage of the military operations carried out by the Georgians and the Russians against Azerbaijan, began to restore the Armenian state in the region, which had been abolished many centuries ago, and sent gifts to both the Russians and Heraclius II. However, with the outbreak of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1787-1791, this desire of the Armenians was postponed for the future.

In 1787 the next Russian-Ottoman war started the reason of which on one hand was Russia-Austria Alliance formed in 1787 against Ottomans and on the other hand - there was Porta's desire to return back Crimea Khanate. War actions was processing in the Balkans and in Caucasus.

Despite the fact that during the war the Ottoman Empire had an advantage over the Russians on the Caucasus front, it lost this advantage due to the struggle for power of the Pashas in the region, disobedience to orders and problems of recruitment of soldiers. The forgetfulness of their original duties by the commanders sent to the Caucasus front and the confrontation with each other became the reason for Russia's survival at a time when the Russians were in great difficulty. In addition, the struggle for power between the political units of the Caucasus weakened the resistance of the Muslims of the Caucasus, and these conditions led to the defeat of the Russians. During the war, relations with Georgia were traditionally established through the governors of Akhaltsikhe. Though conflict between King Heraclius II and Akhaltsikhe governor Suleiman Pasha put the two powers against each other and prevented the Ottomans from taking advantage of the Russians' plight in Georgia. Heraclius tried to act against the Ottomans with Solomon, who sought to seize Poti and Adjara. Their attempts were in vain

The Ottoman Empire was forced to declare Crimea as Russia's property and recognize Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti under the protection of Russia according to Treaty of Jassys 1791. This was followed by Russia's first strengthening of its military system in the South Caucasus, and then the final conquest of Georgia.

Neither the Ottoman Empire nor Iran tolerated the growing influence of Russia in the Caucasus. After the Treaty of Jassy, they used various means to stop the Russians in the region. From the beginning, the Ottomans chose to act through diplomacy, instead of responding to Russia with weapons to Georgia. At the same time, after coming to power of the Qajar dynasty and Agha-Mohammad-Khan, Iran returned to its former policy towards Georgia and began to take aggressive actions. Iran required from Russia to recognize its own rights on the eastern Georgia and at the same time wanted King Heraclius to subordinate them. King Heraclius tried to activate relations with Ottomans with the help of Akhaltsikhe Pasha but in vain. After rejecting Iran's request Agha-Mohammad-Khan in 1795 carried military expedition and destroyed Tbilisi. Despite of severe defeat King Heraclius at his last years of life once more tried to make alliance with Ottomans. Proper meetings were carried in Akhaltsikhe as well, but in the

mentioned period Ottomans were not able to actively interfere in the affairs of Georgia. Although Iran offered the Ottomans an alliance against the Russians, the Ottomans feared entering a hot conflict in the Caucasus. At the turn of the centuries, he sought to heal the wounds received from the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 and 1787-1792, and to support the Persian and Azerbaijan Khans fighting against Russia. Through the governors of the border provinces, Porta was constantly informed about recent events. However the Ottoman Empire wanted to avoid war during this period, due to the events in Europe in 1806, it still had to go to war with the Russians.

Beforehand after passive policy from Ottomans and Agha-Mohammad-Khan as a result of unrest in Iran Russians have consolidated positions in both Georgia and Azerbaijan. In 1798 death of Heraclius II was the sign of end of Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti. In 1801 at the death of Giorgi XII Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti was annexed with the 12 September manifest of Alexander I. Russia even then was trying to establish control over Akhaltsikhe pashalik but it tried to avoid conflict with Ottomans and postponed it for the future.

Although there was no serious opposition which required war, the confrontation between the Ottomans and the Russians escalated and formed into a large-scale military conflict in 1806, which was supported by the events developing in European politics for that time. The Ottoman-Russian War of 1806-1812 began due to pressure from Western authorities and the process of the Ottoman collapse continued in the Caucasus.

The very first stage of war proceeded without big conflicts. In the following period due to constant disagreements even more severe stage of war has started. Despite the fact that Russians were in difficult situation they emerged victorious from this war. The most important reason for Ottoman's defeat was conflict between Ottoman governors together with lack of organization which was extremely vivid in Akhaltsikhe. This was the very region where anti-Ottoman attitudes were felt though Ottomans managed to maintain control over that region. At the same time Porta was forced to accept Kingdom of Imereti in the borders of Russian Empire.

The situation of Akhaltsikhe during war was quiet dramatic. The conflicts between governors of this Pashalik Selim and Sherif have made impact at war and even became the main reason for weakening positions by Ottomans. The activities of Selim Khimshiashvili – Akhaltsikhe Pasha to promote the idea of “Independent and Sovereign Georgia” caused great resonance among Georgian Kingdoms and principalities though Ottoman Empire opposed and the idea remained as idea.

1806-1812 Russian –Ottoman war ended with the defeat of Ottomans due to inside-political confrontations, military and administrative conflicts but the Ottomans could win with the help of Caucasian tribes. During the war because of threat coming from France, Russian army could not send important part of the troops to Caucasus. Besides, the revolts in Georgia and Russian war with Iran was good opportunity for the Ottomans. However, due to confrontations between the rulers in the provinces, Porta was unable to send enough troops to the war zones, which cost it to defeat. The Ottomans could not stop the Russians influence and control over Imereti, Samegrelo, Guria and Svaneti. However, under the Treaty of Bucharest, Ottomans returned back the fortresses of Poti, Soghujak and Anapa lost during the war, thus maintaining its influence over the Circassians.

In 1812-1813s the revolt in Kakheti against Russian occupation regime was proceeding in Georgia which was terminated using brutal force and suppressed in blood. Anti-regimen revolt of 1819-20s was caused due to religious and administrative issues in Imereti and Guria. However, unfortunately these speeches did not achieve the goal either.

After the execution of Selim Khimshiashvili, in 1817 his son Ahmed Beg revolted against the Ottoman rule, which can be considered as a continuation of the revolt of his father - Selim Khimshiashvili. Like his father, his goal was to pursue Georgian interests in the region. Ahmed Beg, who also had good relations with the Georgian kingdoms and principalities, was able to gain the love and respect of the people. He had serious military force, however Erzurum Governor Baba Pasha put down his rebellion. Nevertheless, Ahmed Beg was pardoned, after which he joined the service of the Ottomans.

Despite the fact that no serious changes have occurred in political map of the region as a result of 1812-1813 Russian-Ottoman and 1821-1823 Ottoman-Iran wars, the achieved peace treaties did not provide long-term peace for the region and became some kind of basis for military confrontation between Iran –Russia 1826-1828 and Ottoman-Russia 1828-1829. As a result of Iranian-Russian War of 1826-1826 Iran rejected its rights on Azerbaijan and Georgia. It has lost its influence in Caucasian policy.

Although the Russo-Iranian wars of 1812-1813 and the Ottoman-Iranian wars of 1821-1823 did not bring about significant changes in the political map of the region, the peace treaties reached failed to ensure lasting peace and became the sole basis for 1826-1828. The Iranian-Russian years and the Ottoman-Russian military confrontations of 1828-1829. As a result of the Iran-Russia War of 1826-1828, Iran relinquished its rights to both Azerbaijan and Georgia. He lost influence in Caucasian politics.

1828-1829 Ottoman- Russian war with its consequences appeared to be severe for Ottoman Empire. Because of Annulling Janissaries, Greek rebellion and problems in Serbia autonomy, Porta started a war without preparation which was followed by defeat in Rumelia and Caucasus. The ottomans lost the following fortresses: Anapa, Poti, Akhalsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Kars, Erzurum, Baiburt which were under the control of the Ottomans for a long time in Caucasus. This meant that Georgian territories except Adjara were totally under the control of Russia.

As a result of Treaty of Turkmenchay with Iran and Treaty of Adrianople with Ottoman by taking advantage over Azerbaijan and Akhalsikhe region Russia had great preference in southern Caucasus. After strengthening the positions Russia started colonization of the region with the known elements for it. The most important goal of Russia's colonization was immigration of old Mohammedan and exchanging them with new Christian aspects. The major part of immigrants from Russia, Erzurum and Kars settled in Akhalsikhe region.

The Treaty of Adrianople vividly showed that the Ottoman Empire has lost major part of military force and was not successful in diplomacy.

The Ottoman Empire could not go far from the conditions set by Russia and was forced to accept all the offered conditions. In this aspect after Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji, the treaty of Adrianople was the most severe agreement being signed in the Ottoman history which was lately followed by Armenian problems in Ottoman Empire. With this victory Russians were given the opportunity to start long planned project of State of Armenia. The ethnic structure of Akhaltsikhe region was beneficial in the future for Armenians. Russia intended to use State of Armenia as buffer zone against Ottomans and Iran. Georgia considered Russia's occupation of Akhaltsikhe as one of the steps made for unification of the country. Georgian principalities and kingdoms being allied and sometimes fighting with each other were under one rule which seemed to be progressive event which to its part would have positive impacts at future prospects.