
Analysis of the Social-economic Situation of Akhaltsikhe Liva According to the Great Register of Gurjistan Vilayet

Dali Nikolaishvili^{1*}, Davit Sartania², Manana Kvetenadze³, Daredjan Kirtadze⁴, Vazha Trapaidze⁵

¹ Department of Geography/ Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia, dali.nikolaishvili@tsu.ge

² Museum of TSU / Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia, davit.sartania@tsu.ge

³ Department of Geography/ Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia, mananakvetenadze@gmail.com

⁴ Public School # 100, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia darejan.kirtadze@gmail.com

⁵ Department of Geography/ Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia, vazha.trapaidze@tsu.ge

* Corresponding author

Abstract. The article describes the social-economic situation of one region of Georgia concurred by the Ottoman Empire in the XVI century. Akhaltsikhe Liva covered the north-western part of Gurjistan Vilayet. Presently, its major area is within the borders of present-day Georgia, while its other part is located in the Republic of Turkey, the legal successor of the Ottoman Empire. It covered the entire basin of the Potskhovistskali River and a part of the River Mtkvari between villages Dviri and Aspindza. The study mainly relies on the Great Register of Gurjistan Vilayet of 1595 translated from Turkish to Georgian and published in 1941 by S. Jikia. In the course of the study, the geographical objects (villages, sites of ancient villages, sowing areas, etc.) given by the Register were identified, systematized and classified and the GIS database was developed. The objects plotted on the map were identified by comparing with other sources and comparative, semantic and retrospective cartography and other methods were used for this purpose. The geographical-cartographic analysis of the objects given by the Register was provided. The social-economic situation in Akhaltsikhe Liva was studied. Despite significant political changes, no basic social-economic changes in ethnic-demographic, religious or economic respect occurred there and the principal features of Georgian culture still survived.

Keywords: Gurjistan Vilayet, old Ottoman registers, XVI c., retrospective picture, agriculture

Introduction

The Ottoman registers drafted for the territory of Georgia are an important source for different branch specialists, as they give the social-economic, demographic, administrative, agricultural, linguistic, historical, toponymic and patrimonial-hereditary data. Following the analysis of the mentioned data and comparison with other historical documents, it is possible to identify the political changes on the given territory and the dynamics and nature of the resultant ethnic-demographic and social-economic transformation.

The study of old Ottoman registers is also important in view of drafting a retrospective picture of the traditional nature use. Individual branches of economy and agricultural crops common in Meskheta, namely in Akhaltsikhe Liva in the past¹, due to the general modern trends of the social-economic development, are less common, with many of them having disappeared. Therefore, it is extremely interesting to study this question. It will help us to determine the issues of traditional nature use and restore the traditional knowledge and experience, which are forgotten by now.

Initial data and study methods. The study mainly relies on the Great Register of Gurjistan Vilayet of 1595 translated from Turkish to Georgian and published in 1941 by S. Jikia. The Turkish original of the Great Register of Gurjistan (hereinafter “The Register”) was written on 490 quite large pages and is preserved at the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Center of Manuscripts [Fund #478]. The document gives extremely rich and diversified data about the social-economic situation of then-time Georgia, regarding which Academician Sergi Jikia, the translator and researcher of the Register wrote: “*The feudal Otto-*

¹ Liva – A military-territorial and administrative-territorial unit in Turkey, the same as the “Military district”. It was a part of a vilayet and was divided into Nahiyahs (regions). In the XVI century, the territory of Georgia concurred by the Ottomans was divided into vilayets, livas and Nahiyahs.

man Empire, owing to unequal forces, succeeded in isolating it from Georgia, which had the economic riches and traditions of high culture of the many-century-long history of Georgia” [Jikia, 1941, p. VIII].

“The map of Gurjistan Vilayet” [Askanikashvili, 1953, scale: 1:300,000], different-scale (1:100,000; 1:50,000) Soviet topographic maps, maps in the old Verst system (scales: 1 inch : 5 Versts and 1 inch : 10 Versts), 3-dimensional Google Earth geo-images were also used as primary sources.

The present work is based on the identification, systemization and classification of the geographical objects (villages, sites of ancient villages, sowing areas, etc.) described in the “Register”. The GIS-data-base was developed. The identification of the objects was done by comparing with cartographic and other sources and comparative, semantic and retrospective cartography and other methods of study were used for this purpose. A geographical-cartometric analysis of the objects given by the Register was provided.

Object of the study

Gurjistan Vilayet was one of the administrative units in the XVI-century established by the Ottoman Empire after the conquest of this part of Georgia. Akhaltsikhe Liva, the largest administrative unit of Gurjistan Vilayet, which covered the north-western part of the vilayet, was subject to the study area. Today, most of its territory is a part of present-day Georgia.

Akhalsikhe Liva included the whole basin of Potskhovistskali River and a part of the River Mtkvari basin between the villages of Dviri and Aspindza. It was bordered by Guria and Imereti from the north and Adjara from the west. From east and south, it was bordered by the livas and nahiyahs of Gurjistan Vilayet, in particular by Petre (Petre Nahiyah) and Khertvisi (wooded Javakheti and Buzmareti Nahiyahs) from the east. Along small section in the southeast, it was bordered by Akhalkalaki Liva (Nialiskuri Nahiyah) and Potskhov Liva (Mzvare and Shadow Nahiyah) stretched along its southern border.

Orographically, Akhalsikhe Liva covered Akhalsikhe basin and the slopes of adjacent Arsiani, Adjara-Imereti, and Erusheti ridges. The border of the liva ran across the crests of these ridges. The eastern part of liva was on the territory of Javakheti Plateau. Thus, the major part of liva had clear orographic boundaries, with the only open border in the north-east and south-east, along the Mtkvari gorge.

Akhalsikhe Liva was located at the crossroads of different parts of then-time Georgia: Imereti, Shida Kartli, Adjara, Potskhovi and Javakheti. It was here where the important transport arteries connecting the said regions ran having a great impact on the trade and economic relations and, generally, on the social-economic development of the liva. The roads from Rabati in Akhalsikhe Fortress ran to different directions. On the one hand, it connected Shida Kartli and Adjara, and on the other hand, Imereti and Potskhovi, and Javakheti at the same time.

The area of Akhalsikhe Liva was 2387 km² ranking the first in Gurjistan Vilayet (15204 km²) [Kelberashvili, 2017]. Today, the greatest area of the liva is on the territory of present-day Georgia and only a small part of it (38 km²) is in Turkey. According to Al. Aslanikashvili’s map [1953], only 3 villages of Udi Nahiyah of Khevtvisi Liva are beyond the borders of Georgia.

Main results

Administrative and territorial division. Akhalsikhe Liva has 9 nahiyahs (districts): Okrostsikhe (Altunkali), Aspindza, Atskuri, Mzvare, Otskhe, Ude, Kvabliani, Chrdili and Chacharakia. The largest areas were occupied by Kvabliani, Atskuri, Aspindza, Chacharakia and Udi Nahiyahs found in the western and eastern part of the liva (Fig. 1, 2).

The nahiyahs of Akhalsikhe Liva differed with the number of villages, sites of ancient villages and other objects. Most of the villages were in Udi, and their least number was in Kahbliani Nahiyah.

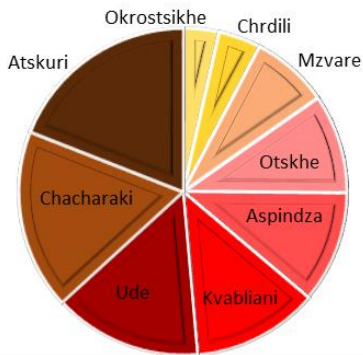


Fig. 1. Nahiyahs according to area (km²)

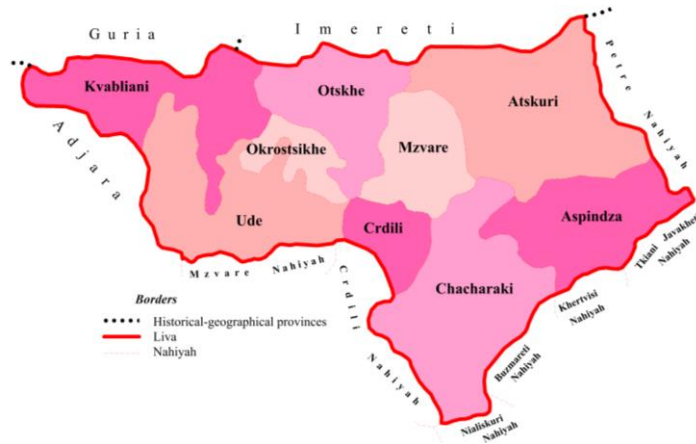


Fig. 2. Administrative division of Akhaltsikhe Liva

There are 246 villages and 78 sites of ancient villages named in Akhaltsikhe Liva¹. It is estimated that there were at least 324 villages there before the Ottoman dominance in the region, with almost ¼ of them deserted and turned into the sites of ancient villages². The already small Kvabliani Nahiyah saw the greatest devastation, with more than half of its villages deserted. Besides, many villages in Atskuri and Mzvare Nahiyah turned into the sites of ancient villages. The situation was a bit better in Udes Nahiyah where only 9 % of the villages were now the sites of ancient villages (Fig. 3).

Demography. Total 3383 households lived in Akhaltsikhe Liva making 16,915-20,298 inhabitants on average. With this figure, Akhaltsikhe Liva ranked the second in the vilayet. Udi Nahiyah had the most population (Fig. 4), with 1/5 of the liva population concentrated there. However, with its area, Udi nahiyah ranked somewhere in the middle among other nahiyahs of the liva. Chacharaki and Atskuri Nahiyah were also much populated. In total, all three nahiyahs had 8160 inhabitants, i.e. almost ½ of the total population of the liva. Kvabliani and Okrostsikhe Nahiyahs had much less population what must be explained by their more complex orographic conditions.



Fig. 3. Share of villages and sites of ancient villages in Akhaltsikhe Liva

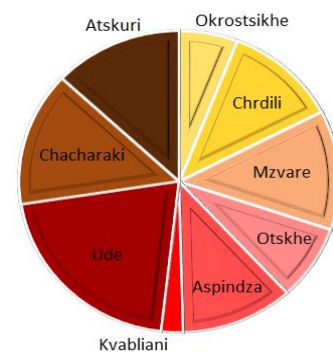


Fig. 4. Nahiyahs according to population size

The population density of liva was very low, averaging 7.8 inhabitants per 1 km² (Tab. 1). It is even clearer if comparing this figure with the present-day indicator. Such a low indicator is not fixed in any part³ of Georgia today¹. After all, the census of the region took place after it was conquered. Hence, the

¹ The Register fixes them as villages, although neither the heads, nor the numbers of the households are indicated. Since these villages are empty, we considered them as villages.

² The data given in the Register do not give us a complete picture of the number of sites of ancient villages, since at that time only those sites of former villages whose agricultural lands were cultivated by the people from a neighboring village (who duly paid the taxes) were registered. As for the villages whose lands were left uncultivated, they were not recorded in the Register because no one paid taxes for them.

³ This means a region, i.e. the largest administrative unit of Georgia.

low population density following the depopulation after the conquest. We can assume that some people were fleeing to other, unoccupied parts of Georgia, others died in military operations and only a small number of people remained in the liva.

Tab 1. Some demographical features of Akhaltsikhe Liva

Nahiyahs	Area, km ²	Household size	Population size	Share of population from whole Liva, %	Population density, 1 inh. on km ²
Aspindza	264	385	2120	11.4	8.0
Atskhuri	454	440	2420	13.0	5.3
Mzvare	182	430	2365	12.7	13.0
Orostsikhe	84	200	1100	5.9	13.1
Otskhe	234	271	1500	8.1	6.4
Ude	348	703	3865	20.8	11.1
Kvabliani	296	74	410	2.2	1.4
Chrdili	100	391	2150	11.5	21.5
Chacharak	425	489	2690	14.4	6.3
Amount / Average	2387	3383	18 620	100	7.8

The difference between the nahiyah in terms of the population density is not so little. The population density was the highest in Udi Nahiyah, located in the basin of the middle and lower courses of the Kvabliani River (the left tributary of the Potskhovistskali River) what can be explained by the great area and perhaps, its favorable geographical location of the nahiyah. In particular, through Goderdzi Pass, the road leading to Zemo Adjara Liva from the administrative center of Akhaltsikhe Liva (Akhaltsikhe Fortress Rabat) ran across Udi Nahiyah. This could not but contribute to the social-economic development of the mentioned nahiyah and, in spite of the grave situation established as a result of the Ottoman policy, to more or less "fixation" the population on site. This is hardly true for the most sparsely populated Kvabliani (2.2 inhabitants per 1 km²) and the Okrostsikhe (5.9 inhabitants per 1 km²) Nahiyah. These nahiyahs were located in the basin of the Kvabliani River (in the upper and middle reaches). However, the above-mentioned road actually bypassed them. This is particularly true for Kvabliani nahiyah, which already had a complex terrain and harsh climatic conditions.

One might say that Akhaltsikhe Liva was a mostly Christian one: Ispenje and murahhasiye taxes were generally levied on Christian (pic.5). The sole exception was Tsakhnitskharo village (13 households), Otskhe municipality, that paid benak² a tax levied on married Muslims. Analysis of ispendje and benak taxes levied on this village reveals the fact that there (and in the liva as a whole) lived 12 Christians and 1 Muslim.

Murahhasiye, a tax levied on Christians to reserve the right to have a church and a priest, provides significant information that proves presence of Christian parish in the liva. Just 30 of all 248 villages of the liva didn't pay that specific tax. So, it's very likely that in the rest of villages (almost 90 %) there were functional Georgian churches in which served priests, e.g., there were churches in all the villages in Aspindza and Mzvare nahiyahs, and more than 84 % of villages in 5 nahiyahs (Atskhuri, Okrostsikhe, Otskhe, Chrdili and Chacharaqi). Kvabliani Nahiyah was the only one for which we can presume that no more than 71 % of villages had a functional church.

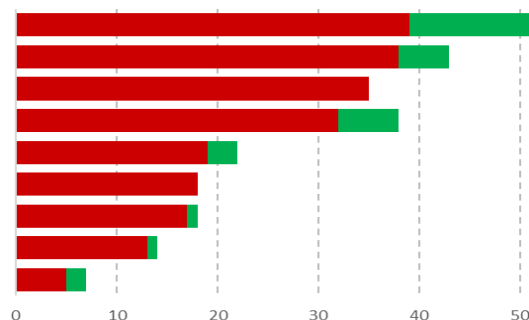


Fig. 5. Taxes according to religions

■ Amount of villages with taxes on murahhasiye
 ■ Amount of villages without taxes on murahhasiye

¹ Clearly, we do not mean uninhabited or sparsely populated areas in the regions, such as, for example, the highlands, Eldari Lowland, Kolkheti swampy sites, etc.

² Benak - was an Ottoman tax imposed in the last quarter of the 16th century married Muslim peasants who cultivated land. The tax of 18 akches was much smaller than ispenje tax levied on Christians

So, we can arrive to the conclusion that by the time when the registry was drawn up (1595), after 21 years from the seizure of that land (1574¹), religious transformation of Georgian population (conversion of Christians to Islam) had already begun and people had already made the first steps on the way to Islam. Slowness of the process was probably determined by the fact that those who practiced the religion of their ancestors were still alive when the territory was conquered. The process was accelerated in the next generations who received baptism in another faith due to economic aspects. Their exemption from certain taxes (ispenje, murahhasiye) would be a considerable relief for their household budgets. As it will be said below, Kvabliani nahiyah was the least wealthy among the ones of the region and probably that is why the number of functional Georgian churches was the smallest there. People in extreme need were proselytized. Besides, they were born in a new environment and it wouldn't be so painful for them to be converted to Islam as to the earlier generations who had got used to their faith and who were forced to convert.

Economic Branches. All agricultural crops grown by the local people were taxed: cereals (wheat, barley, rye, panicum), legumes (chickpea, lentil), walnut, fruit, vine, flax, etc. [Sartania, Nikolaishvili, etc., 2020, p. 424].

Those who lived in Akhaltsikhe Liva had to pay 44 different taxes, but the number of taxes varied for nahiyahs and villages. The sum of all taxes made up 2,942,868 akches, 31,3 % of the taxes levied on the vilayet, which was the highest rate in the vilayet. The amount of taxes considerably varied for each nahiyah of the liva (pic.6). Chacharaki Nahiyah had to pay the highest tax (548,139 akches), while Kvabliani Nahiyah paid the lowest one (82,084 akches), a seventh less than Chacharaki. It is clear that the misbalance appeared in terms of population. Villages with bigger households had to pay higher taxes and the ones with minor households paid less. However, the situation was not always pure and simple.

The pattern slightly differs in calculations made for individual households. It's true that Chacharaki Nahiyah had to pay the highest tax (1121 akches) but the minimum sum was levied on Ude Nahiyah (610 akches) instead of Kvabliani (1109 akches). So, the nahiyahs that paid the highest and the lowest tax amounts (Chacharaki and Kvabliani) were almost equal with regard to the taxes calculated for each household. Besides, they clearly differed from Ude and Mzvore Nahiyahs were households paid half of the tax paid by households from Chacharaki and Kvabliani. These figures demonstrate the fact that people from one and the same liva had different agricultural incomes and paid different taxes.

The balance between agricultural and noncommercial taxes seems to be the same for all the nahiyahs in Akhaltsikhe Liva. The bulk of the amount was made up by agricultural taxes exceeding 91 % everywhere (pic. 7, 8), but, from this point of view, certain nahiyahs and villages still differed significantly.

None of the nahiyahs had to pay 44 different taxes at the same time. Some of the taxes, 21 ones, were levied on all nahiyahs. Such taxes included taxes imposed on cereals, legumes, nuts, fruit, pastures, sheep, cattle, pigs, bees, mills and most noncommercial taxes.

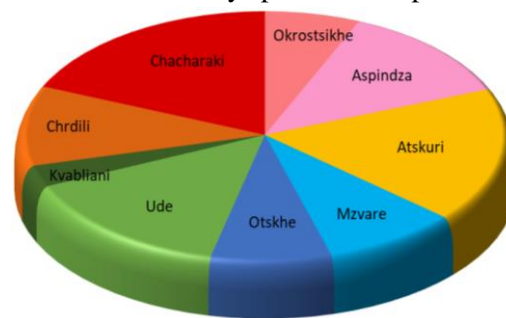


Fig. 6. Taxes according to according Nahiyahs

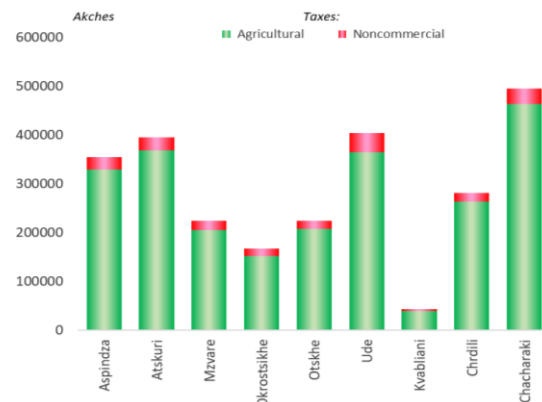


Fig. 7. Agricultural and non-agricultural taxes according to Nahiyahs

¹ We can access an Ottoman register drawn up for the same territory, which is dated back to the same year. According to the data of the register, in 1574, this part of the country was conquered by Ottomans.

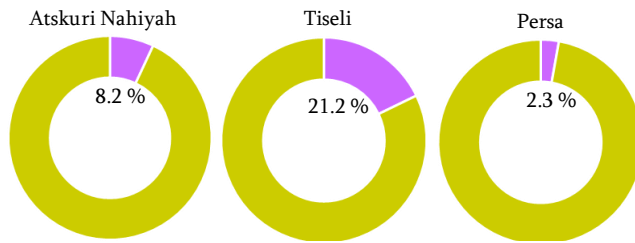


Fig. 8. Agricultural and non-agricultural taxes
 Taxes: ■ Agricultural ■ Non-agricultural

Key Aspects of Agricultural Structure.

Grain crops production was the most developed branch of agriculture in the liva. The locals paid 1,025,492 akches in total, which was almost 69 % of the taxes imposed on the liva. Grain crops taxes were levied on all nahiyahs. 4 types of grain crops were yielded: barley, wheat, rye and panicum. The highest taxes were imposed on barley (932,940 akches) and wheat (908,332 akche) which took the shape of more than 90 % of grain crops taxes. Rye and especially panicum were considered to be of secondary importance.

People from Chacharaki Nahiyah (405,300 akches) had to pay the highest tax for grain crops and Kvabliani Nahiyah paid the lowest one (32,170 akches). These figures underline the great difference between two nahiyahs: One of them is 12 times as big as the other. High grain crop taxes were also paid by Aspindza, Ude and Atskhuri Nahiyahs. These four nahiyahs paid two-thirds of the grain crops tax imposed on the liva and were the most affluent ones. Economic structure of different nahiyahs was different because some of them had to pay high taxes imposed on other branches of agriculture. The share of grain crops production was different there too.

As revealed in the figures given above, grain crops production was a rather developed branch of agriculture and played an important role in the food ration of the locals. Today, the agricultural structure of the region has dramatically changed: Wheat is harvested in rather small amounts, while barley, rye and panicum are practically not grown at all. In the first half of the 20th century these grain crops were widely spread [Chijavadze, 1976; Beriashvili, 1973; Beriashvili, 1989; Jalabadze, 1986]. In the process of modern social and economic development growing these crops in this region proved to be unprofitable and locals turned to growing potatoes that had high demand in the market or other profitable activities.

Specific part of legumes in the total tax was insignificant (about 1%), but in the food ration of the local's legumes played an important role. Ude Nahiyah paid the highest total tax imposed on legumes, one-third of the legume tax imposed on Akhaltsikhe Liva. Besides, maximum tax for each legume species in the liva was levied on the locals of Ude Nahiyah (pic. 9).

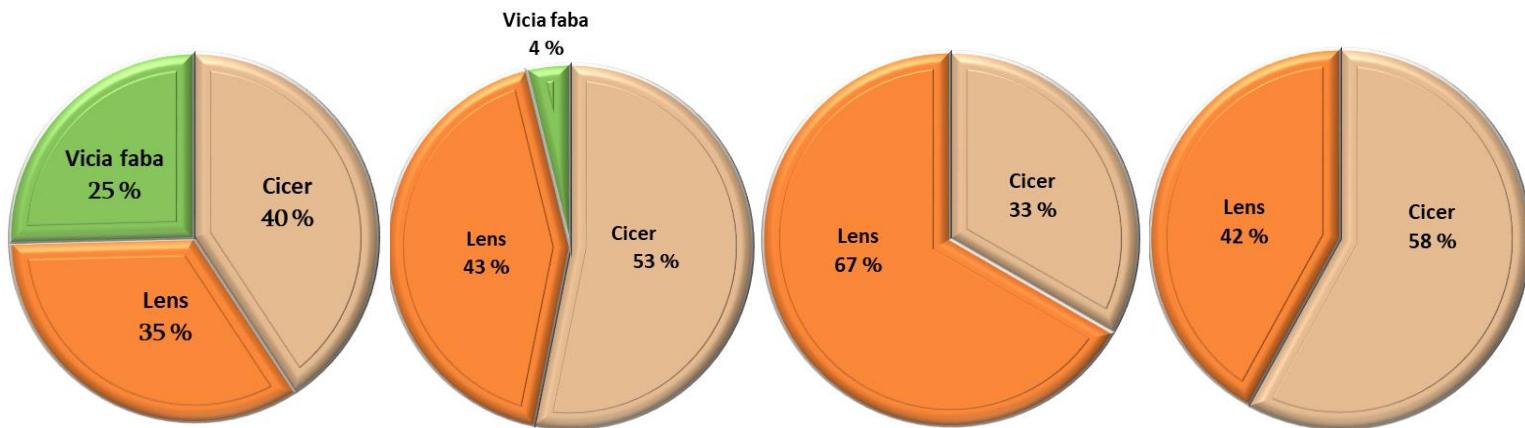


Fig. 9. Taxes on legumes (Ude, Atskhuri, Kvabliani and Chacharaki Nahiyahs)

Beside the taxes imposed on them, specific shares of legume species were rather different too. In some nahiyahs almost equal taxes were paid for each of three different species, but in others cicer or lens, if not both, were equally preferred. It is obvious that peas and lentil were of special importance everywhere and were taxed in all nahiyahs. Taxes paid for peas and lentil made four-fifth part of the taxes imposed on legumes in general. Unlike peas and lentil, taxes to be paid for broad beans were lower (one-fifth).

Fruit growing and wine-growing was another leading branch of agriculture.

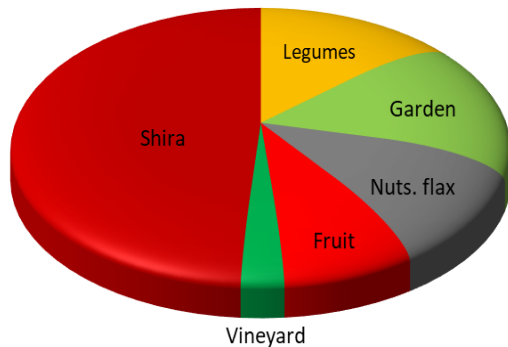


Fig. 10. Taxes on farming

The highest taxes (90,440 akches), after grain growing, were imposed on it. According to these figures, Akhaltsikhe Liva was in the first place in Gurjistan Vilayet. It's true that in among the taxes levied in Akhaltikhe Liva the portion of taxes to be paid for must (sweet juice – "shira") was inconsiderable, but we can assert that must production was still one of the leading branches of agriculture. It is also evidenced by the fact that 41% of the total taxes (except taxes imposed on grain crops) were levied on must (pic.10). These quite high figures indicate that must production was a special agricultural branch and fruit growing and well as wine-growing was a leading branch of agriculture in that part of Georgia, before and after it was seized.

According to the tax imposed on must, villages of Atskhuri Nahiyah may be divided into four categories. Each of seven villages paid 2400 akches for must, which made two-thirds of must tax imposed on the nahiyah. Three other villages had to pay a high must tax (1200-1600 akches) (pic.11).

Situation was similar in Aspindza Nahiyah where must production was one of the most important branches of agriculture. The locals had to pay annual 9440 akches which was the highest tax, except for the tax imposed for grain crops. After barley, wheat and rye the tax imposed on must was in the fourth place. 20 villages had to pay the must tax, about 472 akches each. The highest tax (1000 akches) was imposed on 5 of those 20 villages. Only one village among them had a large population. The number of households in the rest of the villages did not exceed 6-13, but the tax imposed on them was still high. It indicates the importance of must production there.

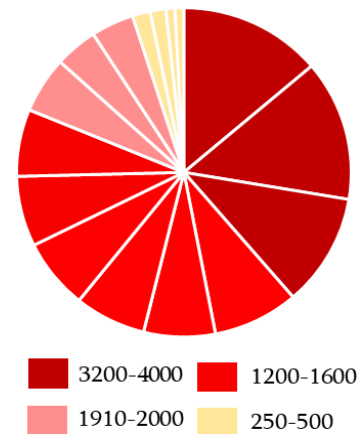


Fig. 11. Taxes on shira

Vineyard tax was imposed on 8 of 9 nahiyahs (except Kvabliani) in Akhaltsikhe. These nahiyahs were situated in the upper and middle reaches of the Kvabliani River. The natural conditions here might have served as an barrier for wine growing. Unlike these nahiyahs, Ude (2278 akches) and Chrdili (1490) nahiyahs were leaders in wine-growing. As for Atskhuri nahiyah, it was two or three times less developed in this direction.

Vineyard tax was imposed on 23 villages altogether. They were located far apart from each other, in different nahiyahs, i.e., vine was widely spread in ancient times. The scale of wine-growing in those 23 villages was enough to impose a special tax on them.

Walnut trees were apparently less spread throughout the vilayet. They did not grow in all nahiyahs and villages, but Atskhuri nahiyah still was a leader, paying 2160 akches. It was followed by Ude (1860 akches) and Chrdili (1820 akches) nahiyahs. These three nahiyahs paid the major part, almost two-thirds, of the walnut tax imposed on the liva. 8 villages in Atskhuri nahiyah paid maximum tax (200 akches).

Vegetable farming was more or less developed in almost every village. It was an important branch of local agriculture (pic.12). The total tax was 28,127 Akches. The highest tax, after grain crops and legumes, was levied on vegetable gardens, i.e., this branch of agriculture was rather developed in the region.

However, vegetable farming wasn't equally developed in all nahiyahs. Ude, Atskhuri and Chacharaqi had to pay the highest taxes, half of the tax imposed on vegetable gardens in the liva.

The potential tax for vegetable gardens was the lowest one (0.8 %) among the agricultural taxes, i.e., with the exception of grain crops, the taxes imposed on vegetable farming made almost 17 % of all agricultural taxes.

Vegetable farming was quite important but it was not equally developed in all the villages. There are no data in the Great Register about the vegetable species grown in the region, but some cues may be found in later sources. The Iveria paper, for example, wrote that radishes, cucumbers, beetroots, onions, etc. were grown in Akhaltsikhe uyezd [About the Georgians of Akhaltsikhe uyezd, 1894, გვ. 1-3.].

Flax was an important industrial crop. The total tax imposed on it was low (11,550 akches, 0.4 % of the total tax), but its importance was still high: 1) Flax tax was paid almost by all villages, instead of nahiyahs.

Ude and Atskhuri nahiyahs paid more than 45 % of the flax tax levied in the liva. Flax was produced in relatively small amounts in Okrostsikhe and Otskhe nahiyahs; 2) Villages mostly paid high taxes, 100 or from 200 to 250 akches.

In Atkhuri nahiyah the total tax imposed on flax production was insignificant (0.6 %), but it (100 akches) was paid by quite many villages, 17 of 27.

To sum up, grain crops production is the dominant branch of agriculture in Akhaltsikhe liva, along with must production, cultivation of legumes and vegetable farming.

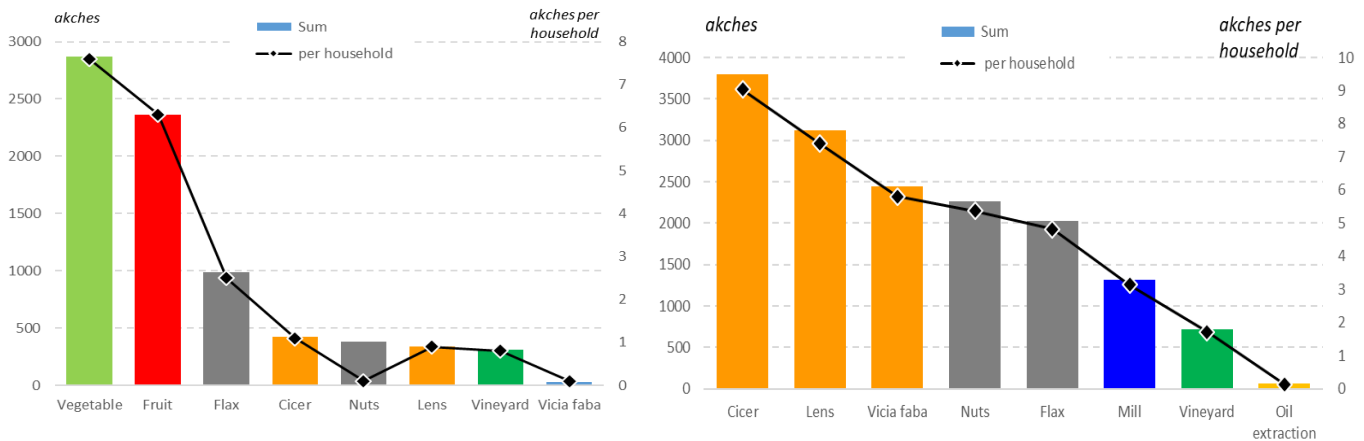


Fig. 12. Taxes on some agricultura

Cattle-breeding. The total of taxes is a clear evidence of the fact that cattle-breeding was much less developed than plant-growing. The specific part of taxes imposed on stock-breeding (5.6 % on average) was smaller, but the state of things was not that monotonous everywhere. The locals of Ude nahiyah had to pay the highest tax (37,311 akches). They were followed by Atskhuri and Chacharaqi nahiyahs (Fig. 13). These three nahiyahs paid 57 % of the stock-breeding tax imposed on Akhaltsikhe liva.

Three main branches of stock-breeding were: cattle breeding, sheep breeding and pig breeding. Alfalfa and hay, along with pastures, serve as indicators of cattle breeding (42,575 akches). The figures aren't small at all, but no taxes were imposed on any livestock product, especially melted butter. So, as compared with other branches of stock-breeding, cattle breeding was presumably less developed. The later situation evidences the fact that cattle breeding wasn't dominant in the region which still stands out for its field crop cultivation.

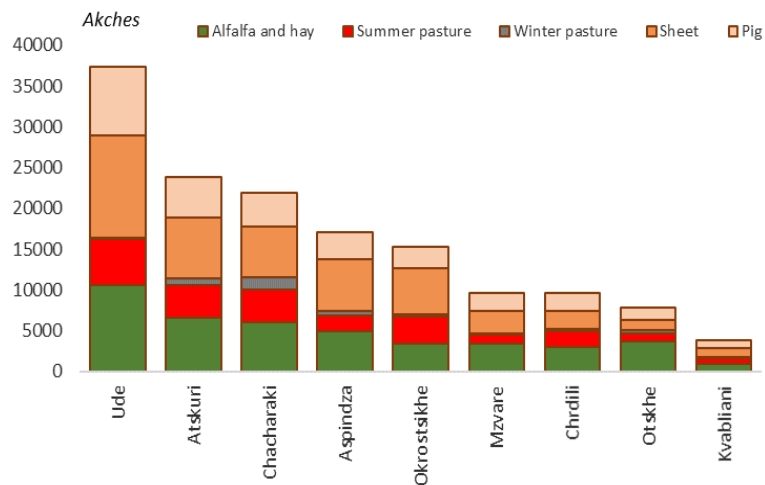


Fig. 13. Taxes on cattle-breeding)

The total tax imposed on sheep breeding throughout the liva was 45,734 akches, including the tax for sheep pens. It was more than one-third of the tax imposed on stock-breeding. If we also take into consideration taxes imposed on summer pastures, then we'll see that sheep breeding was a leading branch of stock breeding. Its development was a result of availability of summer pastures in close vicinity to settlements and mountainous grasslands situated a little further from them. The Ranges of Arsiani, Ajara-Imereti and Erusheti Ranges provide summer pastures. So, the locals of Akhaltsikhe Liva had large numbers of sheep in that period, 82,860 heads (24 heads per household). According to these figures, Akhaltsikhe Liva surpasses even the rates of Samtskhe-Javakheti today. It would be impossible to breed such quantities of cattle, depending just upon nearby pastures. That's why nomad lifestyle was a form of agriculture dictated by the natural conditions.

Ude Nahiyah stood out for the high tax (12,655 akches) paid for sheep. It was followed by Atskhuri (7520) and Chacharaki (6221) Nahiyahs. If we calculate heads of sheep per household, we'll see a different picture in which Okrostsikhe Nahiyah dominates, where the total number of sheep is about 5624. In this case it would be only in the fifth place in the liva, but with regard to the number of sheep per household (28 heads) it would gain the lead.

Taxes were much smaller for **pig breeding** (30,083 akches), which made one-fifth of the tax imposed on stockbreeding. Ude Nahiyah was a leader in pig breeding too, paying almost 28 % of the total tax imposed on pig breeding. In calculations made for individual households (11.8 akches) it was second to Kvabliani (13.7 akches) and Okrostsikhe (12.9 akches) Nahiyahs, but in spite of that we can say for sure that pig breeding was a developed branch of stockbreeding in Akhaltsikhe Liva: Most villages (94%) paid taxed imposed on pig breeding. All the villages in Aspindza, Okrostsikhe, Ude and Kvabliani Nahiyahs paid that tax.

Beesbreeding. Tax imposed on beekeeping were high enough and made 32,056 akches. Ude nahiyah paid the biggest part of it (8245 akches), which made one-fourth of the tax imposed on the liva. Chacharaki and Atskhuri nahiyahs shared the second place (pic.14), paying 9932 akches (almost 31%). So, these three nahiyas seem to have been the main area of beekeeping in the liva.

Ude, Chcharaki and Atskhuri nahiyahs paid the highest taxes, 57 % of the total tax to be paid for beekeeping. There was only one village among the villages of these nahiyahs that did not pay that tax. All the other villages, with certain exceptions, had to pay rather high taxes. It was a record for a nahiyah, but with regard to the tax to be paid by a household (12.5 akches), it was far behind the other villages.

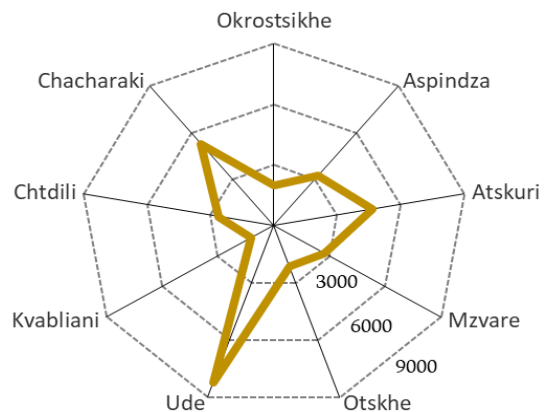


Fig. 14. Taxes on bees

Main features of Agricultural Structure. From the perspective of the data given in the Register, it is obvious that grain crops production was the principle branch of agriculture and a source of profit in Akhaltsikhe liva. We might as well say that situation did not differ in any part of the liva: High taxes were imposed on grain crops in every single nahiyah. Each nahiyah had to pay about 3/4 of the total tax. The share of the grain crops production was especially big in three nahiyahs: Otskhe (86,5 %), Aspindza (82,4 %) and Chacharaki (81,9 %).

It is also important that grain crops production as a traditional branch of agriculture with a centuries-old history in this part of the country has been changing. As M. Svanadze said, nomadic tribes that invaded Georgia more than once turned cultivated farmlands into grasslands, but Samtkhe-Saatabago succeeded in its attempts to avoid the risk [Svanidze, 1984, p. 6; 1971]. According to the Register, the main features of traditional agriculture have not been significantly changed yet and grain crops production still remains the major branch of agriculture in Akhaltsikhe Liva.

The third and second leading branches completely change the monotony of the agricultural structure. Wine growing is the second important branch in some nahiyahs, while others are dominating in stockbreeding (pic.15). In five Nahiyahs of Atskhuri, Mzware, Chrdili, Chacharaki and Aspindza wine growing and fruit growing represent the second branch of agriculture. This fact proves that the branch was highly developed in the past as it is depicted in numerous sources [Bagrioni Vak-

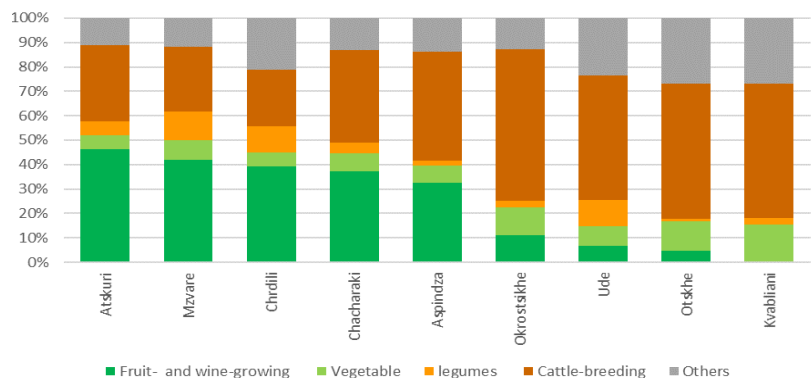


Fig. 15. Agricultural taxes according to nahiyahs, %

hushti, 1941; Javakhishvili, 1930, 1986; Ketskhoveri, 1954, 1955; 1957; Ketskhoveri, Ramishvili, Tabidze, 1960; Proneli, 1991, etc.). In the rest for nahiyahs (Okrostsikhe, Ude, Otskhe and Kvabliani) stockbreeding is the second branch of agriculture. All these nahiyahs were situated in the west part of the vilayet and enclosed the basin of the Kvabliani River and partially the basin of the Otskhitskhali River. From the point of view of orography, it included the eastern slope of Arsiani Range, southern slope of the western section of Ajara-Imereti Range and northern slope of the western section of Erusheti Range. It is logical that stockbreeding dominates in the upper lands, from the point of view of hypsometry. As for the eastern part of the liva, Mtkvari and Potskhovi gorges, because of orographic and natural conditions, here wine growing and fruit growing are regarded to be the second dominant branch of agriculture.

Conclusion

Should generalize the importance of the paper or recommend further research.

As a result of the present research, the social and economic situation typical to this part of Georgia in the 16th century was determined. Notwithstanding important political changes, no fundamental social, economic, ethnic, demographic and religious changes had taken place there and main features of Georgian culture were still preserved.

It was also revealed that since the 16th century, the social and economic structure of this part of Georgia has been fundamentally changing: The specific volume of grain crops production and wine growing was reduced. Particularly, by the end of the 20th century, plant growing and stockbreeding were almost equally represented in the agriculture of Samtskhe-Javakheti [Jaoshvili, 1996, p. 262], but in the 16th century plant growing obviously dominated.

The data from the Register evidence the fact that there were no functional churches in some villages, but the locals were mostly Christians, i.e., in a 20-year period after the seizure of the land, the religious practices were altered. However, agricultural traditions, traditional branches of agriculture were preserved. The data of the Register unveil the fact that these branches were highly developed, including branches unacceptable to the conquerors: wine growing and production of corresponding products.

The analysis of the Ottoman register (1595) may be summarized as follows:

- Akhaltsikhe Liva, a part of the Georgian province called Gurjistan Vilayet, is conquered and included in the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman taxes are imposed on the local population;
- The land has been conquered for more than 20 years and political situation has changed, the locals are ethnic Georgians and their religious beliefs are still Christian. Heads of the households were given Christian names and people had to pay special taxes (ispenje and murahhasiye). People are involved in pig breeding which is characteristic of only non-Muslims and pay a special tax.
- Notwithstanding changes, the amount and diversity of the taxes imposed on Akhaltsikhe Liva evidence high productiveness and well-established agricultural traditions.
- The data of the Register serve as a proof that by the time when the document was drawn up the conquered locals preserved all traditional crop species in field-crop cultivation and stockbreeding as well as in specific branches of agriculture unacceptable to Muslims, e.g., highly developed wine growing and large-scale must production in which grape juice and wine may also be meant;

If we generalize the example of Akhaltsikhe Vilayet and assume that the situation was more or less similar in other parts of Georgia, we'll have to admit that Georgians had a quite developed agriculture, which is proved by the large share of agricultural products per capita.

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