



**The final seizure of Batumi and the establishment of  
Ottoman administrative authority<sup>15</sup>**

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**Abstract**

There is limited historical information available about Batumi's early history prior to the 19th century in Georgian sources. Therefore, the Ottoman archival materials preserved in the archives and libraries of the Republic of Turkey play a crucial role in bridging this informational gap.

Among the valuable records stored in the archives, there is an extensive log dedicated to Batumi, cataloged under code 122 within the Main Archive of the Department of Land and Cadastre in Ankara. This document, yet to be introduced into scholarly discourse, holds significant importance for unraveling the history of Batumi and its surrounding region.

Page B of this document contains a detailed text dating back to September 1704, offering intriguing insights into Batumi and the neighboring villages. It mentions that this area was part of the Gurieli kingdom until a relatively recent period. This reference is instrumental

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in pinpointing the timing of Batumi's incorporation into the Ottoman Empire, as historical literature has offered differing opinions on this matter. While some scholars believed Batumi became part of the Ottoman Empire in the mid-16th century, others asserted it was in 1703. The historical source provided supports the latter perspective, indicating that Batumi and its adjacent villages were ultimately annexed by the Ottoman Empire in the early 18th century, leading to the establishment of Batumi as an administrative center.

According to the documents we have analyzed, during this specific era, the boundaries of the Liva of Batumi extended to the western coast of the Black Sea and encompassed the territories of Atina (known today as Pazar). This document offers a comprehensive description of the region, allowing for multidimensional exploration of the period, including aspects such as socio-economic dynamics, political developments, ethnic composition, religious influences, demographic changes, and more.

**Keywords:** Batumi; Liva; log; census.

### **Introduction**

Georgian historical sources provide scant information about the history of Batumi, making the Ottoman documentary material preserved in the archives and libraries of the Republic of Turkey a vital resource for filling this historical void.

This paper focuses on an extraordinary document from the early 18th century, referred to as the "Comprehensive Log of Batumi Liva" (coded as 122), housed in the archives of the Main Department of Land and Cadastre in Ankara. This document is presented to the scholarly community for the first time, offering invaluable insights into the history of Batumi and its surrounding region.

The document holds significant potential for the examination of various aspects, including ethnicity, religion, socio-economic

conditions, politics, demographics, language, and more. During the specified era, Batumi, along with its 14 adjacent villages, was administratively linked to the coastal region of Eastern Chaneti, encompassing Khopa, Hemshin, Arkhave, and Atina. The document also preserves the original place names of these regions.

Introducing this document into the realm of scholarly discourse will be a substantial contribution, benefiting both Georgian and Turkish historiography alike.

### **Methods**

In this study, the research approach employed historical cognition and comparative analysis methods. We critically evaluated historical sources and relevant scientific literature pertaining to the research topic. This meticulous examination and comparison of these sources are essential for ensuring an accurate and unbiased assessment of historical events.

### **Results**

The research has yielded several significant findings of considerable scientific interest, shedding light on previously unknown aspects of historical relevance. Notably, the study has resolved the debate regarding the date of Batumi's ultimate conquest by the Ottomans, a matter subject to scholarly scrutiny. It has been established that alongside Batumi, the Ottomans also seized control of fourteen surrounding villages. The research provides a detailed account of the conditions prevailing in this newly acquired territory, including the introduction of taxes and the identification of intriguing toponyms that have since been lost to time.

The study systematically examines and discusses the administrative role and evolution of Batumi from the mid-16th century onwards, providing a chronological perspective.

It is worth emphasizing that a document with a similar wealth of information about Batumi's history during this period has not previously been the subject of scholarly investigation. Furthermore,

the research introduces a novel insight by revealing that in the early 17th century, the Batumi Sandjak encompassed the territory of Eastern Chaneti—a noteworthy contribution to the field of historical understanding.

### **Discussion**

In the primary source of Georgian history, the "Life of Kartli," there is limited information available about Batumi, and it is primarily confined to the 16th century. Vakhushti Batonishvili merely reiterates these facts and provides additional geographical details about Batumi separately (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1973:676, 792-793, 814). Consequently, foreign sources assume great significance in conducting a comprehensive exploration of Batumi's history.

Turkish archives contain numerous documents related to Batumi. Within the Ottoman Empire, which boasted a rich historiographical tradition, Batumi did not escape attention. Being an integral part of the empire for an extended period, it generated noteworthy documentary and narrative materials.

Among the multitude of diverse materials from Ottoman sources that illuminate Batumi's history, one stands out: the "Comprehensive Log of Batumi Liva." The original document is preserved in the Republic of Turkey, specifically in the Archives of the Main Department of Land and Cadastre in Ankara, under code 122. Surprisingly, this book has remained unexplored to date, despite being a pivotal primary source of immense importance for understanding the history of our city and region.

The most challenging handwritten document in Rika's collection comprises 92 pages and measures 14x41 centimetres. According to this document, the territory of Batumi Liva encompassed the present-day city and its environs, extending westward to the Black Sea coast in Lazistan, which also included the region of Atina (now known as Pazar). However, for this discussion, we will focus solely on the

contents of the initial pages of the document and the intriguing information they contain.

Georgian and Turkish historiographies have different perspectives regarding the date of Batumi's conquest by the Ottomans, which we will briefly touch upon below.

Following the dissolution of the unified Georgian kingdom, Batumi remained under Gurieli rule as part of the Imereti kingdom. In the early 16th century, after the demise of Samtskhe Atabag Mzechabuki Major, a power struggle ensued to fill his position. The Ottomans and Persia exploited the internal feudal strife in Samtskhe-Saatabago and, under the pretext of "assistance," took control of the region, eventually dispersing it (Gabashvili, 1954: 53).

The Georgian political elite was acutely aware of the impending Ottoman threat, recognizing that the Samtskhe territories could be strategically utilized for their objectives. Consequently, in 1535, King Bagrat III (1510-1565) of Imereti launched a campaign against Atabag to counter the looming Ottoman invasion originating from Samtskhe. On August 13, near Akhalkalaki, adjacent to the Mujakheti village, he engaged and defeated Kvarkvare, ultimately capturing him (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1959: 457). A substantial portion of Saatabago fell under the dominion of the Kingdom of Imereti. In return for their support, Gurieli regained control of Chaneti and Adjara, while Bagrat ceded Javakheti to King Luarsab I (1527-1556) of Kartli. This settlement marked a temporary pause in hostilities.

With the assistance of Otar Shalikashvili, Kvarkvare's young son found refuge with the Sultan in Istanbul. On July 4, 1536, the Beglarbeg of Arzrum launched a campaign into the Saatabago territories (Pechevi, 1964: 25) and successfully conquered the Livane valley, tracing the course of the Chorokhi River from the region of modern-day Yusufeli in the direction of Speri.

Some scholars argue that this marks the onset of Ottoman rule in these territories (Danişmend, 1971: 190; Kırzioğlu, 1998: 162-163;

Shengelia, 1974:33; Svanidze, 1971: 57). However, historical sources make it evident that Bagrat III, actively opposing the establishment of Ottoman authority in Saatabago, succeeded in temporarily reclaiming these areas.

In the 1540s, after Kvarqvare III's death in captivity, his son, Kaikhosro, sought to defeat Bagrat III and restore Atabagate with the support of the Sultan. The Sultan recognized that endorsing Kaikhosro's cause would reinforce Ottoman influence in Samtskhe and offered his assistance (Svanidze, 1971: 58).

In 1543, a formidable Ottoman army, numbering 22,000 troops, reentered Georgia, led by Musa Pasha, the governor of Erzurum. After conquering the territories of Oltis and Narman, Pasha laid siege to the fortress of Oltis, although he was unable to capture it. During this time, King Bagrat III of Imereti, who had assumed control of Samtskhe for Atabag, was imprisoned.

Realizing that a direct confrontation with the enemy would be futile, Bagrat resorted to a clever stratagem. Supported once more by Gurieli, the king employed a ruse to divide the enemy's army. He sent gifts to Pasha and feigned surrender, pledging to hand over the fortress upon the Ottoman army's return. Musa Pasha, deceived by this plan, left a portion of his troops near the castle for its purported surrender, while he himself departed for Erzurum. Bagrat capitalized on the division of the enemy's forces, defeating them first near Oltis and then advancing to Mamirvan, near the village of Karaghak, where he vanquished Musa Pasha's army. Pasha perished in battle (Makharadze..., 2021: 59-60).

The Georgians' string of victories incited the Sultan's anger, leading him to dispatch the rulers of Erzurum and Diyarbakir for another campaign. Upon hearing of Musa Pasha's demise, Beglarbeg of Diyarbakır, Khadim Ali Pasha, arrived in the region to seek vengeance and conducted raids in several territories, although the specific names of these territories are not known (Aydın, 1998: 66).

The Sultan's anger over the Georgians' victories prompted him to once again send the rulers of Erzurum and Diyarbakir on a campaign. Upon hearing of Musa Pasha's death, Beglarbeg of Diyarbakir, Khadim Ali Pasha, arrived in the region seeking revenge and launched raids on various territories, although the precise names of these territories remain undisclosed (Aydın, 1998: 66).

In 1545, a significant battle unfolded near the village of Sokhoista in Basiani between the Georgians and Ottomans. The Ottomans were under the command of Temerud Ali Pasha, who had been appointed Beglarbeg of Erzurum in Musa Pasha's stead. This confrontation, as Hasan Rumlu notes, became known as the Battle of Qanlı Chemen, in which the Georgians suffered defeat.

It is noteworthy that in order to take revenge, the Ottomans subsequently attacked Gurieli in 1547 after the Battle of Sokhoista. Bagrat was unable to provide assistance, but Gurieli managed to repel the Ottoman assault. According to the *Life of Kartli*, "At that time, Khontkar was angry with Gurieli because if he had not brought Bagrat to Basiani, then Bagrat could not have destroyed so many troops. He drove out the army and they came to Batumi and started building the fortress with boats and boats." (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1959: 360). Vakhushti also provides similar information: "Then the army of Khontkar came to Guria to take revenge, because he followed Bagrat king and broke the Ottoman army; They gave Chaneti to Gurielo, they started building a fortress in Batumi" (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1973: 813-814).

Gurieli assembled an army and expelled the Ottomans from Batumi, forcing them to retreat by sea. However, due to the overflowing Chorokhi river, the Georgians could not cross the river on horseback and pursue the Ottomans. The enemy reached Gonio and began fortifying the fortress before being dislodged, leading to the recovery of Chaneti (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1959: 360). Subsequently, the Ottomans repurposed the renovated Gonio fortress as an outpost for launching raids into Adjara and planning campaigns against Guria

(Iashvili, 1948: 18). During this period, Batumi appears to have returned to Gurieli's control. According to the "Life of Kartli," following these events, Bagrat's brother Vakhtangi convened with Gurieli and the Gurians in Batumi (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1959: 360).

The earliest known Turkish reference to Batumi as a Sanjak dates back to 1549 (KKT RD 209:71). Nonetheless, a closer examination of the sources suggests that the boundary between the Ottomans and Gurieli extended along the Chorokhi River near Gonio.

Between 1545 and 1549, Mustafa Pasha, the son of Büklü Mehmed Pasha, the Sanjakbeg of Trabzon, undertook repairs and fortifications of Gonio Castle (KKT. RD. 209: 78, 80, 154; Aydın, 1998: 258). It appears that Batumi was also declared a Sanjak during this period, although the exact date remains unclear. Turkish historian Dunder Aydın, citing a document dated 1549, posits that "Emir Beg, the ruler of Batumi mentioned in this document, is the first Sanjakbeg of Batumi" (Aydın, 1998: 258).

On December 15, 1549, Suleih Beg, the defterder (treasurer) of the Timars of Erzurum, was appointed as the Sanjakbeg of Batumi (Aydın, 1998:258). The official residence of the Sanjakbeg of Batumi was established at Gonio Castle (KKT. RD. 209:141; Aydın, 1998: 259), which indicates that Batumi was still under Gurieli's control.

According to records of 28 Zilkaade of 963 (October 3, 1556) preserved in Muhime Log, the border of Trabzon's Sanjak extended to the Chorokhi River (Bostan, 2002: 48), and Batumi remained outside the Ottoman Empire's jurisdiction.

Despite the declaration of Batumi as a Sanjak, no documents indicating its full incorporation into the Ottoman administration at this point have been discovered. It wasn't until December 11, 1564, in a Diwan Chancellery document, that we find the mention of Batumi once again (Aydın, 1998: 259).

In 1564, Batumi was temporarily captured by Rost Gurieli but shortly returned to Ottoman control. Between 1578 and the next Iran-



Ottoman war, Batumi was separated from Erzurum, and an independent Sabeglarbego was established (Aydın, 1998: 259). After the creation of the Sanjak of Batumi in the second half of the 16th century, the territories of Gonio Nahiye, Atina, Hemshin, and Arkhavi Kaza were placed under the jurisdiction of Batumi. The border between the Sanjaks of Batumi and Trabzon was delineated through Mafavri, which corresponds to the present-day Çayeli İlçe (Bostan, 2002:48).

In 1582, during the administrative reorganization of the country under the reign of Murad III (1574-1595), the Batum-Trabzon sanjaks were merged to form a single province. The Beglarbeg of the New Eyalet was stationed in Trabzon (Goloğlu, 2013:64).

In 1609, Mamia II Gurieli seized the opportunity presented by the situation in the Ottoman Empire and successfully ousted the Ottomans from Adjara (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1973:724), thereby shifting the border back to the Chorokhi region.

According to reports from Ottoman historians and European missionaries, Batumi remained under the rule of Gurieli at the beginning of the 17th century, specifically in 1615 (Tamarashvili, 1902:138). However, it appears that the Ottomans soon regained control of the region.

Between 1617 and 1648, Batumi remained part of the Ottoman Empire. Historical documents from the Guria Principality during this period indicate that the Ottoman presence in the Chorokhi region was limited to Batumi Castle and its surroundings (Chkhatarashvili, 1959: 106-107). The principality of Guria faced significant challenges, and Gurieli had little opportunity to reclaim Batumi. Western Georgia, including the Kingdom of Imereti, was severely weakened by internal conflicts, and Gurieli was compelled to pay tribute to the Ottoman Empire.

During this time, Gurieli, in coordination with other Georgian kings and princes, embarked on diplomatic efforts to seek assistance from Russia in order to thwart the Ottoman invasion into their

territories. However, these initial attempts yielded no significant results.

By the 1660s, Giorgi III Gurieli, known for his diplomatic acumen, pursued a pragmatic approach with the Ottomans. Despite continuing to pay tribute to the Sultan's government, he successfully regained control over the Batumi region. During his reign, the border was still delineated along the Chorokhi River.

In the records of Charden, who visited the region in the 17th century, Batumi is documented as part of Gurieli's territory (Chardin, 1975:49).

Turkish sources provide varying information about the location of Batumi. Some sources indicate that Batumi was incorporated into the Eyalet of Trabzon in 1582 and remained under its jurisdiction through the mid-17th century.

It's worth noting that Evliya Çelebi made an error when referring to Trabzon as the "City Kvemo Batumi." Here he says that Trabzon vilayet consists of Janha (the correct form is Chanicha - Z.Sh.), Zemo Batumi, Kvemo Batumi, Gonio, and Trabzon sanjaks (Çelebi, 1971: 81-82). It is plausible that "Upper Batumi," as mentioned by Evliya Çelebi, refers to the present-day Ortabatumi community, while "Kvemo Batumi" pertains to a more coastal area. The later census of 1835 supports this notion, as it reveals that during that period, Ortabatumi had a significantly larger population (NFS.d 01170: 220-225) compared to the area now occupied by the modern city. The census document describes this area as a "village harbor" (Karye-i Liman) (NFS.d 01170: 206-209).

Katib Çelebi's records also place Batumi under the rule of Gurieli (Çelebi, 2013: 43).

It's evident that the territory encompassing modern-day Batumi and its surrounding areas, located north of the Chorokhi River, changed hands between Gurieli and the Ottomans over an extended period. Gonio, which had been under Ottoman control since the first

half of the 16th century, served as the administrative center of the Sanjak, sometimes referred to as the Sanjak of Batumi, and at other times as the Sanjak of Gonio. This administrative terminology may explain the varying reports, and it appears that "Batumi Sanjak" is more of an administrative designation than a specific geographic location.

In 1703 (or according to some accounts, 1704), due to the vehement anti-Ottoman policy pursued by Giorgi Abashidze, the governor of Imereti, the Ottoman army invaded Imereti through Guria. Mamia III Gurieli had to assume the position of the ruler of Imereti and confront the invading Ottoman forces. This led to Guria's subjugation to the Ottomans, as they had to submit to the Pasha (Rekhviashvili, 1989: 151).

Following this invasion, it appears that Batumi, which had been captured by the Turks, finally fell under their control. Prior to that, at the close of the 17th century, Giorgi III Gurieli had confiscated properties situated on the northern bank of the Chorokhi River from Ahmed Beg Tavdgiridze. This action made Ahmed Beg and his brother Mustafa Beg staunch enemies of Gurieli, and they sought support from the incoming governor (Chkhatarashvili, 1959: 150).

The viewpoint that Batumi was ultimately conquered by the Ottomans in 1703 is well-established in Georgian historiography (Iashvili 1948:21; Chkhatarashvili, 1959:150; Chkhatarashvili, 1972: 60; Rekhviashvili, 1989:151). This perspective is supported by references found in the "Extensive Log of the Census of Batumi Liva," compiled in the early 18th century. The document opens with a list of fourteen villages and their revenues, described as "from Gurieli's territory," which were under the jurisdiction of Batumi Liva. These villages are described as "without log" and are recorded in a log with the seal of Halil Pasha, the governor of Erzurum and a noble vizier. The document is dated 22nd of Jamazi ul-Evel 1116 AH (22nd

September 1704). The contents of this text directly indicate the recent conquest of Batumi.

The extensive records that follow provide valuable insights into the circumstances in Batumi and its surrounding areas after its definitive occupation by the Ottomans. They shed light on the territories captured by the Ottomans at that time, including Batumi, and the establishment of the imperial government system in the region.

The book commences with a letter, and on the subsequent page, we encounter a much more extensive letter that lays out new regulations for the mentioned area.

The text mentions, "The tax revenue status of the villages in Batumi, which were formerly under the authority of Gurieli and had been recorded without a tax record, was thoroughly documented at the direction of Halil Pasha, the esteemed vizier and governor of Erzurum. This documentation was meticulously preserved in an official record bearing his seal. According to the aforementioned vizier, as per a letter and imperial decree dated the 22nd of Jemazi el-Evel 1116 (corresponding to September 22, 1704), the records were submitted to the State Treasury, duly verified in the General Register, and an official order was issued" (TT.D 122: A).

The total income is as follows:

"The tax from 14 villages is 384.5 Esed Kurush<sup>16</sup> and a quarter, 28 Akcha<sup>17</sup>.

The fishing tax at the wharf is 36 Esed Kurush.

The fee for moving boats on the Chorokhi River has been set

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<sup>16</sup> Kurush - silver money that replaced the devalued Akcha in Ottoman Empire in 1687. It was equal to 80 Akcha. Before that, Kurush (penny) was called the silver money of the European states, which also circulated in the Ottoman Empire. Europeans called Ottoman Kurush Piastre (Shengelia, 1987: 286). Esed Kurush (Lion Kurush) - Ottoman coin printed in imitation of Dutch money with the image of a lion. It was minted for the first time in 1691, and it appears in mint records since 1701 (Sahillioğlu, 1995: 368-369).

<sup>17</sup> Akcha - silver money of the Ottoman Empire, which was first minted in 1328.

at 10 Esed Kurush per year.

In total, this amounts to 430.5 Esed Kurush, 1 Akcha, and 27 Para" (TT.D 122: A).

Following the above passage, the manuscript continues with a list of 14 villages and the corresponding taxes levied on each:

**Anaria village** (the name can be specified further):

11 Keyls of Pasta (Setaria italica) [price] a quarter, 2.5 Kurush Esed and 1 quarter;

Corn 30 Keyl, [price] 20 Churuk Akcha<sup>18</sup>, 3.5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter;

Shira<sup>19</sup> 30 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 1.5 Esed Kurush;

Badhava and bride-tax<sup>20</sup>, 1 Esed Kurush.

Total 9 Esed Kurush.

**Akha(l)sheni Village:**

37 Keyils of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 9 Esed Kurush;

Corn 76 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 9.5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter;

Shira 100 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 5 Esed Kurush;

Tax per hive, probably 5 Esed Kurush;

Badhava and bride-tax 6 Esed Kurush;

A total of 34.5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter.

**Sameba Village:**

47 Keyils of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 9 Esed Kurush;

Corn 128 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 16 Esed Kurush;

Shira 137 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 7 Esed Kurush;

Tax per hive, probably 5 Esed Kurush;

Badhava and bride-tax 7 Esed Kurush;

A total of 46.5 Esed Kurush and a quarter.

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<sup>18</sup> Churuk Akcha - a small unit of copper money, on the amount of which the unit of Para depended. One Para contained four Churuk Akchas. It had a low purchasing power, that's why "Saghlam Akcha" or "Saghlam Para" was used instead. (Shengelia, 1987: 288).

<sup>19</sup> Shira - grape juice.

<sup>20</sup> Penalties and marriage tax. See more about this and other Ottoman taxes in Adjara (Shashikadze, Makharadze, 2011: 22-34)

**Korolis Su Village**<sup>21</sup>:

40 Keyls of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 10 Esed Kurush;  
Maize 93 Keyils, [price] 20 akcha, 11.5 Esed Kurush 20 Akcha;  
Shira 100 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 5 Esed Kurush;  
Tax per hive, probably 5 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 6 Esed Kurush;  
A total of 37.5 Esed Kurush and 20 Akcha.

**Korolistavi village:**

37 Keyl of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 9 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter;  
Corn 98 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 12 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter;  
Shira 115 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter;  
Tax per hive, probably 6 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 6 Esed Kurush;  
A total of 38.5 Esed Kurush and 1 Akcha.

**Agara village:**

30 Keyl of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 7.5 Esed Kurush;  
Corn 80 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 10 Esed Kurush;  
Shira 66 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 3 Esed Kurush, 1 quarter and  
8 Akcha;  
To be drawn in the basket, probably 2 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 2.5 Esed Kurush;  
A total of 25 Esed Kurush, 1 Akcha and 8 Para.

**Kapreshumi village** (Kapreshuli in the manuscript - Z.Sh.):

35 Keyls of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 8.5 Esed Kurush and 1  
quarter;  
Corn 100 cans, [price] 20 Akcha, 12.5 Esed Kurush;  
Shira 100 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 5 Esed Kurush;  
Tax per hive, probably 2 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 2.5 Esed Kurush.  
A total of 30.5 Esed Kurush.

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<sup>21</sup> The village of Qorolistskali is given in this form in the manuscript. The second part of the toponym is Turkicized - Su - water.

**Makhinjauri village:**

44 Keys of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 11 Esed Kurush;  
Corn 120 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 15 Esed Kurush;  
Shira 130 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 6.5 Esed Kurush;  
Tax per hive, probably 4 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 5 Esed Kurush;  
A total of 41.5 Esed Kurush.

The total income of Batumi is 300 Esed Kurush, 1 Akcha and 28 Para.

**For fish caught in Batumi harbor:**

12 Esed Kurush for fishing in Batumi harbor.  
12 Esed Kurush for fishing on the Zgvapatar<sup>22</sup> lake.  
Near Chorokhi, a place called Zghma<sup>23</sup>, 12 Esed Kurush.  
Here we inform you about the income received from the harvest of the villages bordering the village of Erge, which is part of Batumi Nahiye:

**Erge village:**

36 of yogurt, [price] a quarter, 9 Esed Kurush;  
Corn 120 cans, [price] 20 Akcha, 15 Esed Kurush;  
Shira 90 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 4.5 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 2 Esed Kurush.  
A total of 30.5 Esed Kurush.

**Jocho village:**

29 jars of yogurt, [price] a quarter, 7 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter.  
Corn 84 cans, [price] 20 Akcha, 10.5 Esed Kurush.  
Shira 80 batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 4 Esed Kurush.  
Tax per hive, probably 2.5 Esed Kurush;  
Badhava and bride-tax 2 Esed Kurush.

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<sup>22</sup> The above-mentioned toponym is not a specified form, however, the variant of reading the manuscript allows us to think that some lake existing in the territory of former Batumi was called "Zgvapatra" or "Zgvapatar".

<sup>23</sup> The mentioned toponym should probably be connected to the sea.

A total of 26.5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter.

**Khelvachauri village:**

8 jars of yogurt, [price] a quarter, 8 Esed Kurush;

Corn 28 cans, [price] 20 Akcha, 3.5 Esed Kurush;

Shira 23 Batmans, [price] 8 Akcha, 1 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter;

Badhava and bride-tax 2 Esed Kurush.

A total of 7.5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter.

**Kibe Village:**

24 Keyls of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 6 Esed Kurush;

Corn 110 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 13.5 Esed Kurush;

Shira 90 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 4.5 Esed Kurush;

Badhava and bride-tax 2 Esed Kurush;

A total of 26 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter (TT.D 122: A).

**Kapnistavi village:**

29 Keyls of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 7 Esed Kurush;

Corn 89 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 10 Esed Kurush;

Shira 60 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 3 Esed Kurush;

Tax per hive, probably 2.5 Esed Kurush;

Badhava and bride-tax 2 Esed Kurush.

A total of 24.5 Esed Kurush and 1 quarter.

**Osanauri village:**

4 Keyls of Pasta, [price] a quarter, 1 Esed Kurush;

Corn 16 Keyils, [price] 20 Akcha, 2 Esed Kurush;

Shira 80 Batman, [price] 8 Akcha, 1 Esed Kurush;

Badhava and bride-tax 2 Esed Kurush.

A total of 5 Esed Kurush (TT.D 122: A).

The following is a lengthy letter:

"In Batumi Sanjak, the previously described Batumi Nahiye, which was subordinated to the country of Gurieli and previously reported as the Khasa of Gonio Sanjakbega with an annual income of fifty-five thousand, although without a deed, was owned and held by the Gurielis. Since the Bega of Gonio no longer held them, the said



Nahiye was deprived of the country of Guriel and its possession and was enclosed. Subsequently, it was taken over by the Supreme Treasury, and with the consent of Mirliva, it was re-evaluated to determine the total revenue of the said Nahiye and entered into the log. The total revenue included fourteen village Ushra<sup>24</sup> fees, fish market, lakes, and more, amounting to four hundred and thirty and a half and a quarter Kurush. For several years, until this regulation is firmly established, the population should not be burdened with any additional taxes. Since [1]115, March, it has been entrusted to Yusuf Beg and his brother Mehmed, the Sanjakbeg of Kvemo Adjara, who had previously guarded Rachveli<sup>25</sup> Castle. Due to the scarcity of resources and the severe poverty of the population in the said Nahiye, the population should be relieved of excessive taxes (Z.Sh.), except for those resettled near the Batumi harbor. The work on strengthening the castle's defenses with wood and stone should be completed, and any other damaged walls should be restored. Only the fixed Ushra fee should be collected, and a certificate should be issued from the Supreme Treasury after collecting one noble gold Jizye per year from those who are unruly based on their circumstances. In addition to this, the Muslim and non-Muslim population living in the said Nahiye shall not be subjected to Awariz, Urfa, Shakka<sup>26</sup> taxes, or any other taxes levied by Firman. The sale of any land (Reaia)<sup>27</sup> within Batumi Nahiye is prohibited. If such sales are discovered, the buyers should be returned to their original places, and the sellers should be punished. If anyone from Guria, Imereti, or other places embraces Islam, they shall be shown suitable places within the said Nahiye according to Sharia

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<sup>24</sup> The Ottoman taxes imposed in Adjara are studied in detail according to the extensive log of Liva of Adjara of 1574 (Shashikadze..., 2011).

<sup>25</sup> The name of the fort is clearly read as Rachvel (Rajvil, Rajvel). It is conceivable that we are talking about the fortress in the possession of the Ottomans, located in Western Georgia, namely Racha.

<sup>26</sup> Taxes in the Ottoman Empire that were collected during times of war and emergency.

<sup>27</sup> Christian peasant.

and settled. Under these specified conditions, it should be recorded in the main registry, and a decree should be issued and turned into a log. The most noble Halil Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, sent the presentation, the document, and the promissory note to the main registry office (Defterhane). During the examination, the villages mentioned in the short and extensive logs of Batumi Sanjak were not registered. Based on the document, promissory note, and submissions sent by the said vizier, the head of Defterhane ordered, according to the established law, that the income of the said Nahiye amounting to four hundred and thirty and a half Kurush be certified in the main account and Defterhane. Starting from March in the year [1]1115, the management of all this should be assigned to the said Yusuf Beg and his brother Mehmed, and the Begs of Gonio should no longer interfere. It shall be declared as treasury property. With the entrusted document's authority, the Jizyadar of Trabzon should collect Jizie, prepare and send as many papers as Sharia deems necessary to the Jizie account in the form of a list. As per the submission, leaving the existing conditions, an honorable order was issued, a reference was issued for certification in the log. The Supreme Firman was issued on the spot and recorded in the main registry office on the 24th of Jumazi el-Evel, year 1116<sup>28</sup> (TT.D. 122: B).

### **Conglusions**

Through the research conducted, it becomes evident that Batumi and its surrounding villages were recently annexed by the Ottoman Empire and they were in the process of establishing their own forms of governance, tax systems, and land ownership rules. The tax system was still not fully organized, with only a portion of the population being taxed, despite being officially registered and recorded in the log. The majority of the population in this region appeared to be Christian.

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<sup>28</sup> September 24, 1704.

Over an extended period, Batumi and the surrounding area had alternated between being under the rule of Gurieli and becoming a part of the Ottoman Empire. However, in the early 17th century, the Ottomans managed to firmly establish their presence in the region, marking the definitive incorporation of this territory into the empire. This Ottoman rule persisted until the Russian-Ottoman war of 1877-1878.

During their control, the Ottomans implemented their own system of governance, adhering to written regulations. This system was particularly notable in the realms of administration, land ownership, and taxation.

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