

**THE KINGDOM OF IMERETI ACCORDING TO „TSKHOVREBA MEPETA”
(LIFE OF KINGS) BY SEKHNIA CHKHEIDZE**

ИМЕРЕТИНСКОЕ ЦАРСТВО ПО «ЖИТИЮ КОРОЛЕЙ» СЕХНИИ ЧХЕИДЗЕ

SEKHNİA CHKHEİDZE'NİN "KRALLARIN HAYATI" ADLI ESERİNE GÖRE
İMERETİ KRALLIĞI

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ABSTRACT

Verifying written sources, especially the works of the old chroniclers and specifying their historical and source study value is one of the main tasks of historical sciences. No complete A complete historical and source-scientific study of the works by Sekhnia Chkheidze, a Georgian historian of the of the XVII century and the first third of the XVIII century has not been carried out until now. Such a “delay” is partially caused by the attitude of Ivane Javakhishvili, the founder of the modern Georgian historical school, to the works of Sekhnia Chkheidze. Our goal is to study the reliability of the records by Sekhnia by means of comparison of the different kind of historical sources, records of Georgian and foreign authors and data from the works by Sekhnia Chkheidze. The article analyses the records of the author about the kingdom of Imereti history of XVII-XVIII centuries out of the mentioned extensive research. Georgian historiography is dominated by the view that the focus of Sekhnia Chkheidze's attention was only on the historical processes taking place in the Eastern Georgia, and he was not familiar with the political situation in the Western Georgia. On the basis of the cyclical source scientific research conducted by us, the present paper shows that S. Chkheidze was well aware of the political processes taking place in the Western Georgia, especially in the Kingdom of Imereti.

Reportedly, Georgia was divided into several kingdom-principalitys in the II half of the XV century, it was a long process, first, Samtskhe-Saatabago, then Kakheti Kingdom separated from the united Georgia, later, Kartli and Imereti were also formed as separate kingdoms. The process of disintegration was deepened in the XVI century, Imereti Kingdom had started dividing into several principalitys like Samegrelo, Guria, Abkhazia and Svaneti in the second half of the 50s. Despite such a condition the fight for restoring of the country unity had never stopped. Sekhnia Chkheidze, treasurer and historian of the royal court of Kartli,

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could clearly see that Western Georgia faced the most difficult situation in the case of unification of the country. A chronicler highlights the attempt of progressive kings of Kartli (Vakhtang V, Giorgi XI, Archil and Vakhtang VI) to enhance and strengthen their influence on the whole region with support of Georgians from the Western Georgia.

Key words: Sekhnia Chkhiedze, Imereti Kingdom, Ottoman Empire, Shah of Iran, Kartli kingdom, the idea of unification, separatism, Akhaltsikhe Pashalik, slave trading.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Выяснение достоверности и историко-источниковедческой ценности письменных источников, особенно сочинений древних летописцев, является одной из главных задач исторической науки. Полного историко-источниковедческого исследования произведений грузинского историка Сехнии Чхеидзе конца XVII — первой трети XVIII вв. не проведено. Эта «отсталость» частично связана с отношением основоположника современной грузинской исторической школы Иване Джавахишвили к произведениям Сехнии Чхеидзе. Наша цель – изучить достоверность упоминаний Сехнии на основе сравнения различных исторических источников, сообщений грузинских и зарубежных авторов, данных произведений Сехнии Чхеидзе. На основе этого обширного исследования в настоящей статье анализируются авторские отчеты XVII-XVIII веков. Об истории начала Имеретинского царства. В грузинской историографии преобладает мнение, что в центре внимания Чхеидзе были только исторические процессы, происходящие в Восточной Грузии, и он не был знаком с политической ситуацией в Западной Грузии. На основе проведенного нами исследования циклических источников знаний в настоящей статье установлено, что С. Чхеидзе был хорошо знаком с политическими процессами, происходящими в Западной Грузии, особенно в Имеретинском царстве.

Известно, что во второй половине XV века Грузия окончательно разделилась на несколько царств-княжеств, это был длительный процесс – единство Грузии. Сначала от корпуса отделилось Самцхе-Саатабаго, затем Кахетинское царство, позже в отдельные царства образовались также Картли и Имерети. Процесс распада углубился в XVI веке, со второй половины годов Имеретинское царство начало распадаться: на княжества Самегрело, Гурия, Абхазия и Сванетия. Несмотря на такую ситуацию, борьба за восстановление единства страны никогда не прекращалась. Сехния Чхеидзе, казначей царского двора Картли и историк, прекрасно видел, что в Западной Грузии оказалась самая сложная ситуация с точки зрения объединения страны. В своем произведении летописец подчеркивает попытку прогрессивных царей Картли (Вахтанга V, Георгия XI, Арчила и Вахтанга VI) расширить и укрепить свое влияние на весь регион при поддержке западных грузин.

Ключевые слова: Сехния Чхеидзе, Имеретинское царство, Османская империя, Иранский шах, Картлийское царство, идея единства, сепаратизм, Ахалцихская сапаша, покупка пленников.

Öz

Yazılı kaynakların, özellikle de vakanüvisler yazılarının güvenilirliğinin ve tarihsel ve kaynakbilimsel açıdan değerinin açıklığa kavuşturulması, tarih biliminin temel görevlerinden biridir. Günümüze kadar Gürcü vakanüvis Sekhnia Chkheidze'nin 17. yüzyılın sonu ve 1830'lu yıllara ait eserleri üzerine tam bir tarih ve kaynakbilim çalışması yapılmamıştır. Bu "eksiklik" kısmen modern Gürcü tarih araştırmalarının temelini atan İvane Javakhishvili tarafından Sekhnia Chkheidze'nin eserlerine olan yaklaşımlarından kaynaklanmıştır. Amacımız, çeşitli tarihi kaynaklarda yer alan, Gürcü ve yabancı tarihçiler tarafından verilen

bilgilerin Sekhnia Chkheidze eserlerindeki bilgilerle karşılaştırılarak Sekhnia'nın verdiği bilgilerin güvenilirliğini irdelemektir. Bu kapsamlı araştırmadan yola çıkılarak, mevcut makalede Sekhnia Chkheidze'nin 17.-18. yüzyılların şafağında İmereti Krallığı'nın tarihi üzerine verilen bilgiler tetkik edilmiştir. Gürcü tarih biliminde Chkheidze'nin yalnızca Doğu Gürcistan'da yaşanan tarihi süreçlere odaklandığı ve Batı Gürcistan'daki siyasi duruma aşına olmadığı yönünde yaygın bir görüş mevcuttur. Tarafımızca yürütülen döngüsel kaynak bilgisi araştırmasına dayanarak S. Chkheidze'nin Batı Gürcistan'da, özellikle de İmereti krallığında meydana gelen siyasi süreçleri çok iyi takip ettiği anlaşılmaktadır.

15. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında Gürcistan birkaç krallığa ve beyliğe bölünmüştür. Birleşik Gürcistan'dan önce Samtskhe-Saatabago, sonra Kakheti Krallığı ayrıldı, daha sonra Kartli ve İmereti de ayrı ayrı krallıklara dönüştüler. Parçalanma süreci 16. yüzyılda derinleşti. 1550'lerden itibaren İmereti krallığından Samegrelo, Guria, Abhazya ve Svaneti prenslikleri ayrıldı. Bu duruma rağmen ülkenin birliğini yeniden tesis etme mücadelesi hiçbir zaman durmadı. Kartli kraliyet sarayının maliye müdürü ve tarihçi Sekhnia Chkheidze Batı Gürcistan'ın ülkenin birleşmesi yolunda zorluklar çekeceğinin farkındaydı. Sekhnia Chkheidze eserinde V.Vakhtang, XI. Giorgi, Archil ve VI. Vakhtang gibi ileri düşünceli Kartli krallarının Batı Gürcülerinin desteğiyle bütün Gürcistan toprakları üzerinde nüfuzlarını genişletme ve güçlendirme girişimlerini oldukça detaylı bir şekilde anlatmıştır. **Anahtar kelimeler:** Sekhnia Chkheidze, İmereti Krallığı, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Kartli Krallığı, Ahıska Paşalığı.

INTRODUCTION

The „Tskhovreba Mepeta“ ("Life of Kings") by Sekhnia Chkheidze, a Georgian historian who lived in the 1750s and 1830s, describes the history of Georgia, Iran, Ottoman Turkey and Afganistan. The purpose of the article is to compare the unknown and well-known facts given in this essay with data from other sources in order to determine their reliability. All afore-mentioned enhances the relevance and scientific novelty of the article. Among the events discussed in the source, the ongoing political chaos and controversy in the kingdom of Imereti is particularly noteworthy. The author of the chronicle convincingly defends the idea of unification of the country, led by the kings of Kartli at that time.

The methodology of the research. In the process of working on the paper, the comparative method of historical research is used, which involves finding cause-and-effect relationships, demonstrating the main characteristics of processes and their analysis, comparing data from primary sources in order to draw a common conclusion.

Results and Discussion. In the second half of the XVII century, advanced Georgian politicians tried to unify Georgia and mobilized their forces for this purpose. The leading role in this case belonged to Kartli. Despite the political dominance of Iran, Kartli was advancing economically and culturally that time. At the same time, his influence on other kingdoms of Georgia was growing more and more (Lomouri, Berdzenishvili, 1941:XI). Vakhtang V, also known as Shah Nawaz-Khan (1658-1675), was known for his efforts to strengthen central government in the Eastern Georgia and strive for unification of Georgia.

Vakhtang and his successors tried to gather a group of proper people and unite the Georgian kingdoms. Since 60s of the XVIII century the whole western Georgia was covered by the terrible anarchy. The rule of king or principles was delimited more. The country became the place for the principle's revenge. Dadiani, Guriel, Batonishvili of Kartli, Abashidze and Batonishvili of Imereti replaced each other on the royal throne by the will of the principles. During 40 years the reign changed twenty times. Only one maintained the reign till his natural death“ (Berdzenishvili, 1973:274). The kings of Imereti maintained political balance with the Ottoman Empire, sometimes by fighting and sometimes by alliance. Ottomans also did not

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want a strong king in the region, and for this reason, they implemented a similar strategy in the kingdom of Imereti. Sometimes they supported the king and maintained order, though when the king grew stronger, they supported a separatist noble to weaken the king's power.. Finally, Ottomans still tried to maintain order in the Imereti Kingdom, as it faced political, economic or social problems in the region. In 1660 Alexandre III, the king of Imereti died and left his weakened kingdom to his son, Bagrat; Uprising, anxiety and disorder, characterized for the Western Georgia of that period, continued. Vakhtang V took advantage of this situation and announced his 14-year-old son Archil as the king of Imereti in Kutaisi (1661), then he left for Kartli and took blind Bagrat IV with him. Such unification was not reliable and in addition, he faced resistance which was not possible to be overcome by Georgia of that time in its own. The fact is that according to the Iran-Ottoman peace treaty of 1639, Eastern Georgia was recognized as a vassal of Iran, and Western Georgia as a vassal of the Ottomans. The Ottoman Empire considered the dominance of Vakhtang in western Georgia as Iran's interference in its affairs and categorically demanded that Iran withdraw Archil. Archil ruled Imereti only two years and a half. Before that, in 1662, Erekle Batonishvili (grandson of Teimuraz I) came from Russia, he tried to become king in Kakheti with the help of Tushes, but Vakhtang did not allow him. Archil got married with the granddaughter of Teimuraz I, the ex-wife of Bagrat IV, Ketevan. Blind Imeretian King, Bagrat IV was under house arrest by Vakhtang in Tbilisi. After a while, Bagrat regained the throne of Imereti, but he died in 1664.

“Tskhovreba Meeta” by Georgian historian, Sekhnia Chkheidze starts with the praising of Vakhtang V, the king of Kartli „Forbidder of conflicts, lover of the kingdom, aware of military sciences, knowing of principals' treachery “, he was also, never defeated by anybody, the ruler of Georgia” (Sekhnia,1913:4-5). The historian does not mention anything about Archil's reign in Imereti, instead he tells in detail Batonishvili's meeting with Shah Abbas II, where the Shah offered the kingdom of Kakheti instead of Imereti. „Shah Abbas summoned Batonishvili Archil, he met with the chief host who brought the letter of great mercy. "And to obey the command of the ruler"; he left, the king took with him Amilakhori Givi, as he was a son-in-law and faithful; he came to him and to his guest room. As soon the ruler heard about his arrival, he met him with the army, he liked the courage and kindness of Archil, he honored him to sit as if a son were waiting for his father, he granted him gifts and the thrown of Kakheti, he named him as Shah-Nazar-Khan. (Sekhnia,1913:6-7). The information of the Georgian historian is also confirmed by Mohammad Taher, the 17th century Iranian historian of the Safavid era.: „At the same time, vally Shahnavaz-Khan of Georgia sent a report about the conquest of Bashi-Achuk and Dadiani "district" to Iran, as described, and the letter about courage of Bashi-Achuki, nobles, bishops and other population, that they were agree on making his son Archil as king. As the noble nature of His Majesty, All-Merciful Shadow of God never breaks a treaty and a promise, he ordered that Shahnavaz-Khan should leave the said "district" and Archil-khan with those people, with who he is there, should be called back and since that country is a subject of the great Ottoman ruler and peace and goodwill between these two parties (i.e. Iran and the Ottomans) is strong, therefore let them to do what they would like. Shah-nawaz followed the order, informed about it to Shah and he was granted with the great presents and the gown. As a sign of approval of his service, the "district" of Kakheti was granted to his successor Archil-Khan, and it was decided that he (Archil) together with Givi-Beg Amilakhvari and Elizbar-Beg should go to the heavenly Mazanderan and see the ruler (Puturidze, 1954:403). Sekhnia tells about the conflict between Shah-nawaz and Erekle Batonishvili for Kakheti kingdom, mentioning that „King Archil did not want Kakheti, neither reign, nor Tatarian belief, he left Kakheti, did not listen to his father, brothers and family, left for Imereti and gained it by

sword and fully conquered for a short time and then the order from the Sultan came about not giving Imereti“ (Sekhnia,1913:8). The source shows that Archil made it against the will of his father (Vakhtang V), and it probably caused the disagreement between a father and a son. Politics of Vakhtang and strengthening of Kartli and Kakheti did not correspond to the plans of Iran rulers.

The struggle for the throne of Imereti in the second half of the 17th century was followed by complete anarchy, which continued until the end of the century and beyond. In 1681 blind Bagrat IV was died. He had not a legal . He did not have a legal heir, and his illegitimate son Alexander was held captive by Giorgi XI in Kartli. Giorgi Gurieo took advantage of it and took the throne of Imereti. (Rekhviashvili,1989:135). New king of Kartli, the son of Vakhtang V, Giorgi XI, he actively started fighting for the country independence. Shah Suleiman soon expressed his displeasure with George's politics. The Shah ordered Giorgi to capture Archil and send him to Iran. Giorgi did not fulfill the task and as a result Shah resigned Giorgi and appointed Erekle I, Nazerali-khan, being newly converted into Muslim. Giorgi had to go to the western Georgia: “King Giorgi went to Imereti and soon king Archil came from Russia. Alexandre, the son of King Giorgi ruled Imereti and King Archil arrived to Imereti, he was met by King Giorgi in Imereti“ (Sekhnia,1913:11). Archil met with his supporters in Gvelistavli, but with support of Ottomans King of Imereti, Alexandre IV won. Archil first took refuge with the Sharvashidzes in Abkhazia, and from there he asked the Crimean Khan for help. King Giorgi temporarily moved to Guria. Despite the defeat, Archil continued to fight for the throne of Imereti "Archil, who was in Digor, made every effort to overthrow Alexander IV and become king himself, he even made a promise to Khan that he would pay twenty years-old unpaid tribute if he was made king in Imereti." (Brosset,1900: 210-211). After many visits and negotiations: "Archil, with the help of Seraskir of Arzrum, received the royal sword and robe, left Ossetia and ascended the throne in 1692... George himself stayed in Akhaltsikhe" (Brosset,1900: 211). Sekhnia tells us about this event with usual brevity:„ Imereti was taken from Alexandre and thown to Kartli and he went to the Gori Fortress. King Erekle interceded him, showed a great honor, King Alexandre hiddenly left Gori and some Imeretians followed him; King Archil collected the army, they started fighting... he attacked him by army. He killed, he threw the spear to those who were following him and made them to stay there. King Alexander escaped again and found the shelter in Gori again. Giorgi left Imereti and stayed in Oshora” (Sekhnia,1913:11-12). The situation became more difficult by the fact that King Alexandre asked to the King of Kartli, Erekle Mazarali Khan to advocate for him at the Shah for making him the king of Imereti again. The king send a man immediately to Iran and reported to Shah about the happened. Shal send the ambassador to the Ottoman Sultan. Sultan fulfilled the request of the Iranian ambassador and they made Alexandre the king of Imereti again. Giorgi XI being in Akhaltsikhe was arrested. (Rekhviashvili, 1989:142). In 1691, Alexander IV returned to the Western Georgia from Akhaltsikh accompanied by the Turkish army and occupied the royal throne of Imereti, while King Archil was forced to leave Imereti without a fight. As it was mentioned above, Giorgi XI was captured in the prison by Akhaltsikhe Pasha, but his Georgian supporters were able to release king Giorgi from the prison. „Engicarns approached him and did not allow to have him. The ambassador left without anything“ (Sekhnia,1913:12). The source shows that Sekhnia is able to assess ongoing process.

The nobles of Imereti did not support King Alexander, who together with Erekle Nazar Ali-Khan started a new battle against George XI. He attacked Daba Ali and ravaged the population. Archil, who was in Tashikari, was defeated by Alexander, leaving behind prisoners and booty. After that, Archil and Giorgi convinced the nobles of Imerel about Alexander's immorality and impiety. The nobles, running out of patience, attacked Alexander

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in the Skandi prison and took him to the King Giorgi of Kartli; The king asked to bring him to Ruisi, made him to suffocate and buried him there (Brosset,1900:213-214). According to Vakhushti the king of Imereti was „A swindler, a scumbag, an ungodly man, a trader by slaves" and therefore, " Alexander was captured by Imers and he was given to the king Giorgi, who killed him in Ruisi“. (Vakhushti,1913:100). According to the records by Sekhnia: „King of Imereti, Alexandre was captured and sent to the king Giorgi, Alexandre died and he was buried in Ruisi. The throne was inherited to King Archil and he became the king of Imereti“ (Sekhnia,1913:14). Archil temporarily regains the throne of Imereti in 1695. Many princes of Kartli and Kakheti helped Giorgi and Archil, though finally, they were still defeated, because as mentioned, Erekle Nazar Ali Khan was actively supported by Iranian shah Sultan Suleiman against the rebel Giorgi (1694-1722). Giorgi first moved to Western Georgia, and then went to Iran and declared his obedience to the Shah (1695). Archil was fighting for the throne of Imereti for a long time, he even became king there in 1698, but was expelled again in 1699. He moved to Russia (Essays,1973:350-351).

"King Archil stood incomparably higher than all those who fought for the crown completely unfairly after leaving Kakheti" (Brosset, 1900:213-215). Here, Marie Brosset meant the predecessors of the throne of Kakheti and Imereti, but he added that it was not enough in the fight for the unification of the country. Considering the historical developments, the moral decline of the kings and nobles of the Western Georgia was clearly visible, which continued in the first half of the XVIII century.

The idea of unity in Georgia never disappeared in the country, and all progressive forces, even in the most difficult period, were carriers of this idea. But from the beginning of the XVIII century, Georgian progressive people planned to take practical steps to implement this idea. (Samsonadze,1988:16). The struggle for the throne continued in the Imereti kingdom even at the beginning of the XVIII century. The principals of Samegrelo, Guria and Abkhazia had their own politics and did not obey the king. The principals of Imereti were less obedient to the king, especially Abashidze and Eristavi of Racha. Internal division and weakness of the central government made a favorable conditions for Turkish expansion. Turkey considered western Georgia as its vassal and was actively interfered in its internal affairs by means of Akhaltsikhe Vilayet. In spring of 1720 the Abashidzes killed the king of Imereti, Giorgi VI. The elder son of Giorgi, Alexandre was growing up at the court of Vakhtang VI. Akhaltsikhe Pasha asked Vakhtang VI to send Alexandre to Imereti and made him a king. Vakhtang sent Alexandre accompanied by a supporting detachment under the command of Vakhushti Batonishvili (Vakhushti, 1913:125). Ongoing developments in the kingdom of Imereti are described in detail by Sekhnia, which allows for proper conclusions to be drawn:„In March , 1720, Abashidze Svimon betrayed the king of Imereti, Giorgi and killed him. The news came to the king Vakhtang, he started mourning, as he was a son-in-law for him, his daughter was Giorgi's spouse, Rodam, the queen of Imereti and his son Alexandre was grown up by Vakhtang and he was in Kartli. As soon as he heard about it, he sent a man to Akhaltsikhe Pasha, Isak, and asked for giving the throne of Imereti to Alexander and Alexandre was summoned. The king supported and granted numerous presents, Pasha called the army and went to Imereti, made Alexandre the king of Imereti and got married to the daughter of Bezhan Dadiani (Sekhnia,1913:52-53).

The historical value of the works by Sekhnia Chkheidze lies on the author's attitude to historical events, because he did not use written primary sources, but described what he saw with his own eyes, or used the narration of direct eyewitnesses.

Alexandre and Akhaltsikhe Pasha went to Imereti. Ottomans assigned the guardians within the Tsutskhvati Fortress. Pasha obeyed Bezhan Dadiani and he appointed him as a “Guardian” for a young king. Isak Pasha demanded King Vakhtang VI of Kartli to grant him

Imeretian Prince Alexandre, who was grown in Kartli. Pasha took Alexandre first in Akhaltsikhe. Then they went to Imereti and in 1720 he gave him the throne of Imereti under the name of Alexandre V (Bliadze, 2013:194). On the initiative of Pasha of Akhaltsikhe, Giorgi's son Alexander V was placed on the throne of Imereti. Due to the young age of Alexander, the influence of the king of Kartli in Imereti increased considerably. The era of Alexander V began in Imereti, which lasted until 1741. Ottomans held Kutaisi, Shorapni, Bagdati and other fortresses. King Alexander with the help of the Ottomans tried to subjugate the disobedient feudals and principals, Dadiani, Eristavi of Racha and Abashidze defied such intention of the king, who continued the secret battle against the king with the usual cunning. Bejan II Dadiani was the most dangerous rival among them was, who was killed by Isak Pasha's intention, while his son Otia managed to escape. (Makalatia ,1941:139). It seems that Sekhnia responds to this fact in his chronological records when he tells us about the conflict in Geguti: „In August 1727, the son of Isak Pasha, Usuf beg, left for Imereti, reconciled with Abkhazi and went to Guguti Palace of Iashevili. He deceived Bezhan Dadiani and killed him“ (Sekhnia,1913: 66). In 1728 after murder of Bezhan Dadiani by Ottomans the whole power went to Alexander V, but the conflict between the king and principals continued. Alexander V tried to subjugate the principals and strengthen his rights, but since it was beyond his power, he tried to do it all with the help of the Ottomans. Dadiani, Eristavi of Racha and Abashidze continued to fight against the king with their usual cunning and under the conditions of mutual betrayal, the king was also forced to rely on the Ottomans and tried to maintain his reign by supporting them (Rekhviashvili,1989:162). Describing the reasons, a historian Sekhnia Chkheidze manages to tell the events sequentially: "In the same month, Mamuka, the brother of Alexander, the king of Imereti, went to Dadiani, as his sister was married on him, similar to King Alexander who had another sister of Dadiani as a wife, but he was defeated and the king married to Levan Abashidze's daughter. And as the daughter of Dadiani grew in the house of the King, he refused to get married with her and made her the wife of his brother. But he did not have the mercy, Dadiani wanted dominion of Mamuka. Dadiani Otia, Grigol, Eristavi of Racha, Abashidze Zurab came together. Though the king sent a son, Davit with an army, they fought at Chikhori. During the fight Otia Dadiani shot a gun and wounded. By the order of God Alexandre won" (Sekhnia,1913: 71-72). According to the source of Vakhushti, Marie Brosset considers 1743 as a date of battle at Chikhori:„In 1734 With the help of Gurieli, Levan Abashidze, Dadiani's brother, Katsia, and others, King attached the conspirators in Chikhori and defeated him. Dadiani was captured by the king, and his brother, Katsia, sacrificed himself in this war. Although there was a lot of snow, the Imeretians hunted down the escaped, defeated many and took many captives and sold them (Brosset,1990:233). According to the „Tskhovreba Mepeta“ by Sekhnia it took place in December, 1732, while so called „Chronicle of Abashidze“ or „Chronicles of Imereti“ and „Chronicle of Antadze“ say in 1731 (Zhordania, 1967:127,639). „The Little Chronicles“ considers 1732 as the date for the battle (Odisheli,1968:70). K. Chkhatarishvili dates Chikhori battle by 1732 (Essays,1973: p. 465). Grigol Eristavi of Racha participated in the battle, according to Vakhushti Grigol Eristavi took the throne in 1731. Among these conflicting reports, Sekhnia Chkheidze's report is more reliable, as he is a contemporary of the mentioned war. Thus, the battle of Chikhori should have taken place in 1732 (Rekhviashvili,1989:164).).

We tried to restore the historical picture out of the information received from different written sources, though during the research we overview each record in the given source critically. Definding credibility of the information about the facts indicated the reliability of the source.

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Later on, the fight between Imereti and Ottoman Empire ended by mutual agreement between the parties. Ottomans, who would like to maintain their rule over the territory of Georgia and especially over Imereti, were about the war with Russia, though before starting the war, the agreement was achieved. According to the agreement, Russia acknowledged the rule of Ottoman Empire in the Western Georgia. In addition, the Ottoman Empire took Eastern Georgia from Iran and brought the whole Georgia under its influence (Gulduri, 202:149).

CONCLUSION

Considering the comparative study of above-mentioned historical sources reliability and historical value of the records by Sekhnia is confirmed.

The paper tries to evaluate the Kingdom of Imereti according to the „Tskhovreba Mepeta“ by Sekhnia Cheikhidze. It overviews the struggle of Georgian kingdom - principalities for unification at the end of the XVII and the first third of the XVIII century. The kingdom of Imereti by its foreign policy periodically tried to balance the relationship with the Ottoman Turkey by relationship with Iran and Russia. It was strategically important kingdom for Ottoman Empire which did not want to lose the control over Imereti. Ottomans always used the disorder and supported to those party which was favorable to it, regularly causing chaos and conflict. Sekhnia Chkheidze during overviewing „lives“ of Kings of Kartli tries to look from the perspective of the idea of country unification which was opposed by Ottomans and Iran. It is considered that the source does not provide only the dry facts, but also assessment of these events and attempt of critical discussion. From the point of view of the scientific study of the source, these historical facts are noteworthy as they are the primary source for the history of Georgia.

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