

History

The Incompatibility of Interests and Territorial Border Issues of the Georgian-Ottoman Relations in 1919-1921

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In the historical past Georgia managed not only to protect its state borders but also to spread its influence on the territory of neighboring states. The state border regime of Georgia with neighboring states often depended on the country's internal political and international situation. It can be safely said that the historical-territorial state borders of Georgia are very far from the current reality. Considering this, one of the problematic sections was the Georgian Ottoman border line of 1919-1921. From the beginning of the 19th century after the annexation of the feudal Kartli-Kakheti kingdom by the Russian Empire the state borders of the Russian and Ottoman empires in the section of Georgia were changed numerous times. During the Russia -Turkish war of 1877-1878 historical land and water were returned to Georgia. When the border line of the country in this section came closer to the historical reality, there was a chance to expand it further (during the First World War). After the Restoration of the Independence of Georgia, the country's government spared no effort to protect the state border. However, the Georgian government had problems with the borders with all the neighboring countries – Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan- regarding the territorial-administrative arrangement of the Russian Empire in the Caucasus. Unfortunately, this reality is still relevant today. © 2022 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

Georgia, Batumi, Russia, Magnificent Porta

In the fall of 1918, the Ottoman positions in South-West Georgia were significantly shaken. As well known, the Ottoman Empire had its own goals in the ongoing war. Accordingly, they were not only thinking about survival! The main task was the realization of the national ideology, which meant the defeat of Russia and therefore the expansion of the borders of the empire. Obviously, this plan also meant the conquest of Georgia [1] but the defeat of

Germany in the First World War made this utopian dream of the Ottoman Empire lost its perspective. Due to the existing situation, the defeated Ottoman government in the World War decided to sort out relations with the neighboring Republic of Georgia. At the end of October 1918 they officially informed Tbilisi that the Ottoman army would leave Batumi on November 4. According to the truce, he proposed to occupy Samtskhe-Javakheti and Lore.

The international situation at that time dictated this step for the Ottomans. Defeated by the Entente, the Ottomans signed temporary truce with England on October 30, 1918 in the harbor of Mudros, based on which the Ottomans had to leave the territories they occupied.

According to the Mudros Treaty, Ottoman troops had to leave the occupied territories in Transcaucasia, which England would occupy. The influence of the Entente was actually established on Turkey. The shameful capitulation of the Ottoman Sultan was followed by the start of a powerful national liberation struggle in the country under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha. The plight of the Ottomans was well reflected in the Cabal Treaty of Sèvres on August 10, 1920 [2].

Against the background of this extremely unfavorable internal and external situation created for Turkey, the terms of the Georgia-Turkey Treaty of July 4, 1918, including the issue of borders, were losing their meaning. Herefore, since the beginning of 1919, the armed forces of the Government of Georgia gradually occupied Artvin and Artan districts.

As early as November 21, 1918 at the meeting of the Georgian government, a report was made on the state borders of Georgia, which was presented on March, 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference. Later this report was also published in Paris with a map.

According to this report [3:202] according to the application presented by Georgia in Paris, Georgia's border with Turkey ran in the southwest, on the Chakhir-Baba ridge, which was the watershed of the Araks and Oltichai rivers (tributary of the Chorokhi River in the upper waist basins).

From Mount Oskan, the border went west, along the ridges of Dumludag, Kazanbach and Kortikadi, and went around the upper Chorokhi river from the north, which remained outside its borders up to Ispir, a little west of the Kilisakalu monastery, to the village of Madna. On the left bank

of Chorokhi, the border continues to the north, on the crests of the mountains, which are the mountain of the branch (Keshishkai) of the Pontos range of Lazistan. It passes from the Pontus ridge for some time to the west, in the region of the Kirkliar mountains, and along the border line of the territory of Sanjak Lazistan (Turkey), it goes north to the headwaters of the Kalapotamos River between Rize and ofom on the Black Sea, which surrounds Georgia in the west to the headwaters of Makopsu [3: 204].

In the attached definition, it is indicated that "the part of the border of Georgia, which provides for the inclusion of Sami Sanjak and Lazistan as part of Georgia, as well as the annexation of the Erzurum vilayet's part (River Chorokhi district), it should be noted that we have discussed this territory as the ancient Georgian lands taken from Georgia by the Turkey."; Despite the de-Muslimization of the officialdom, they kept their ethnic character" – it was mentioned in the document [4].

Results and Discussion

From 1919 Georgian-Turkish relations entered a new phase. Ongoing turbulent processes in the Transcaucasian political space reflected to some extent on these relations [5:682-683]. It is extremely important Erzurum Declaration of 1919 (July 23-August 16), The decision of the Sivas Congress of 1919 (September 4-11), and the "Turkish National Pact," adopted by the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies on January 28, 1920, according to which Batumi, Artan and Kars districts were recognized as a constituent part of the Ottoman Empire, but allowing a new plebiscite.

As well as with the 1918 Mudros Treaty and the Siva Treaty of August 10, 1920 some territories were separated from the Ottomans. According to this agreement, the eastern border of the Ottoman Empire was to be restored in 1914. Although the Sultan's government accepted this agreement, the Angora government did not recognize it. At this

time, the rapprochement between Soviet Russia and Kemalist Ottomans occurs. Their main goal was a concerted fight against the Entente. On April 26, 1920, the Ottoman Grand National Congress appealed to Moscow for help [5:683]. In its response letter dated June 2, 1920, the Soviet Government of Russia accepted and confirmed the principles of the Angora government announced by the Great National Congress in the direction of foreign policy. In particular, it states in it: "The Soviet government was pleased to learn the basic principles of foreign policy of the new Turkish government headed by the Grand National Assembly in Angora. The government of Soviet Russia naturally meant that a free referendum would be held in these places with the participation of refugees and immigrants... [6].

With this statement, Soviet Bolshevik Russia actually, under diplomatic caution, recognized the Batumi region as part of Turkey. This should be considered as the biggest betrayal. This agreement between Russia and Turkey laid the foundation for future complications. In July-August 1920, diplomatic negotiations took place in Moscow, where the terms of the treaty were prepared. At the end of 1920, the Turkish government proposed to the Soviet Russian government to continue negotiations to conclude an agreement, which was agreed to [7].

Unofficial negotiations between the representatives of Soviet Russia and Kemal's Turkey began on February 21, 1921, and officially on February 26. Yusuf Kemal Bey headed the Turkish delegation. During the negotiations in Moscow, the most intense discussion was about determining the border in the Caucasus. The Turkish delegation demanded that the border be established based on the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

After the successful war with Armenia, the attention of Kemal's new government was directed against Georgia. On November 14, 1920 at the meeting held in Batumi, N. Ramishvili said - Kemal Pasha had not yet refuse on the borders of the Brest

Treaty and, in particular, on the Batumi District; therefore, the government of the Republic took all measures to protect the borders of the Ottoman Empire [8].

Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia K. Sabakhtarashvili said at the parliament session..., we have no real guarantee that Kemal's army, when it fulfills its intention in Armenia, will not cross our borders as well".

This is the end of the preparatory works for implementing the strategic security program of the government of the First Republic (we have in mind the planned measures for strengthening the Borchkha-Artvini border line in the direction of Georgia-Turkey). It can be said that an of that time government of Georgia fell into a magical arc, which every minute was decreasing in geometrical progression like "Shagren leather"!

On February 6, 1921 diplomatic relations were established with the government of Kemal Atatürk. The Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Georgia was opened in Ankara. But Kemal's government said one thing with words and did another with deeds. On February 22, the government of Ankara (Kemali) sent an ultimatum to the Democratic Republic of Georgia government and demanded the withdrawal of troops from Artvini and Artaani. The government of Georgia accepted the terms of the ultimatum due to the impasse. On February 23, Ottoman troops occupied Artan and Artvin, and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey passed a resolution regarding joining these territories with the Ottoman Empire. On March 4, 1921 the occupation of Batumi by Ottoman troops began with the consent of Noe Zhordania. On March 11, the Ottomans were already attacking Batumi. At the same time, Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki districts were also occupied.

Before the Moscow negotiations, Turkey had already occupied Kars, Artan and Artvin. The Turkish delegation additionally demanded that Batumi and Batumi District be handed over to it, to which Russia did not agree. During the nego-

tiations, the Turks began to introduce their troops to Batumi and the Batumi district (with the consent of the government of Noe Zhordania. This caused great concern in Moscow. In this regard, V. I. Lenin was writing to G. V. Chicherin: " friend Chicherin! I am very concerned that the Turkeys are delaying the signing of the agreement on Batumi, saving time while their troops advance to Batumi. We should not allow to dragging on. Consider this arrangement: you will interrupt the conference for half an hour to speak with me, while Stalin will speak frankly with the Turkish delegation; so that the case, the issue can be clarified and brought to the end. Lenin. [3:140].

The Bolshevik government of Russia attached great importance to bringing relations with Kemal Atatürk's government into a hard friendly framework; for this, they were ready to provide any assistance, even at the cost of territorial concessions but not at the expense of Batumi. This was caused not by the purpose of protecting the national honor and interests of the Georgian people but rather by their pragmatic strategic thinking. Lenin's government was well aware of Batumi's strategic purpose in Transcaucasia and the region as a whole. The deep-water port of this city should become the cornerstone of the future geostrategic policy with the Baku-Batumi pipeline! In the first paragraph of the Treaty of Brotherhood and Friendship signed between Soviet Russia and Turkey on March 16, 1921, the Russian government recognized as Ottoman the state whose territory included the lands listed in the Turkish National Pact. The first article of the agreement states: "Turkey in this agreement means the territories included in the Turkish National Pact of January 28, 1920 (1336), which was drawn up and made public by the Chamber of Deputies of the Ottomans in Constantinople and known to the press and all states" [5: 598]. As a result of the deal, a new section of the border between Soviet Russia and Turkey was established: the northeastern border of Turkey is defined by: "a line that starts near the village of

Sarp on the Black Sea, passes over the hill of Khedi Mountain, follows the watershed line of Shavsheti Mountains and Kanidaghi Mountains, then it follows Ardagani and the northern administrative border of the Sanjaks of Kars..".

Regarding to the second article, the parties once again emphasized the fact that Batumi was a part of the Ottoman Empire, which is confirmed by the wording of this article: "Turkey agrees to cede to Georgia the suzerainty (Suzeränität – the supreme right of the suzerainty to the vassal) over the port and city of Batumi and the territory that lies north of the border of the mentioned the first article of the current agreement, which is a part of Batumi district, provided that the population of the places mentioned the present article will enjoy wide local autonomy in administrative terms". Obviously, the first and second points declare the Batumi region as part of the Ottoman Empire, but Turkey voluntarily renounces the part of the Batumi region with the second point. On the other hand, Russia did not demand that the northeastern border of Turkey be extended to the border line established by the Congress of Berlin (1878). This Russian-Ottoman deal was determined by their military-strategic, trade-economic and political interests in the Transcaucasian region.

The Moscow Treaty shows that Russia recognized the Ottoman National Pact because the Moscow Treaty of March 16 is based on the Ottoman National Pact. The first article recognizes this pact and draws the border between Georgia (Russia) and the Ottoman Empire. Logically, the second article also follows from this, which indicates that the "Ottoman agrees to cede Georgia's suzerainty over the port and city of Batumi and the territory that lies north of the border!" Therefore, Ottomans are giving up here! It is meant that Batumi was also Ottoman and is now giving it up [9]. Under Article 15, Russia committed to Turkey that it would ensure the awareness of the Transcaucasian republics of the articles that directly concern them according to the present treaty [10-12].

At the time of signing the Moscow Treaty, all three republics of Transcaucasia formally maintained their independence; therefore, it remains unclear how Russia forced them?! Such a fundamental principle of international law, which still came from Roman law, was practically ignored – the contract creates neither rights nor duties for the third party.

Although the agreement was already signed in Moscow on March 16, General Kiazim Bey of the Turkish army, who entered Batumi, published a decree on the return of Batumi District to the Ottoman Empire: "Recently, with the consent of the Georgian government, Batumi District, Akhal-kalaki and Akhaltsikhe districts were occupied by our troops.

According to the resolution of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, based on national rights, in our many times confirmed agreements, these districts return to the motherland from today and obey the Turkish national government in political and administrative terms. (The struggle for the victory of the Soviet Power in Adjara, documents and materials 1917-1921, 1961. 371). However, here we should also consider that he probably did not know anything about the agreement [11, 12].

On September 23, 1921 a new round of peace negotiations between the Transcaucasian Soviet republics and Turkey began in the city of Kars. The participating side was also represented by Soviet Russia, which should be considered nonsense. The Kars negotiations were a continuation of the Moscow negotiations. The Treaty of Kars, in principle, repeated the articles of the Russia-Turkey Moscow Treaty of March 16, 1921, which concerned Georgia.

The first article of the Treaty of Kars practically recognizes the fundamental norm of international law, which derives from the aforementioned Roman law. Still, in the last paragraph, it is written that "the Russian-Ottoman Treaty signed in Moscow on March 16, 1921 (1337) is not subject to

the application of this article." The northeastern border of Turkey was defined by the fourth article. In the section of Georgia, it started from the village of Sarfi, located on the edge of the Black Sea, passing through the watershed line of Khedi mountain, following the watershed line of Shavsheti mountains and Kani-Daghi mountains; then it was following the old northern administrative border of Ardaghan and Kars sanjaks... The sixth article, which related to Adjara, was formulated as follows – The Ottomans agreed to cede to the suzerainty (Suzeränität) of Georgia for the port of Batom and city; moreover, also, they cede the territory lying north of the border shown in the fourth article of this treaty and which was included in the district of Batom, on the condition that the inhabitants of these places, As shown in this article, has benefited from wide local autonomy under the administrative arm, which ensures the cultural and religious rights of each community.... Then, talk about local land laws and Turkey's duty-free use of Batumi port. From the twenty articles of the treaty, the six articles came into force from the time of signing (October 13, 1921); the exchange of certificates of the Treaty of Kars took place in Yerevan on September 11, 1922.

This agreement had no secret articles. Three addendums were attached, none of which were confidential. In the first addendum, the northeastern border of Turkey is described in detail. The Treaty of Kars was signed in five copies - in Georgian, Russian, Turkish, Azerbaijani and Armenian languages. The term of validity of the agreement was not determined.

Conclusion

1. During the First Republic of Georgia, the Russian-Ottoman state border on the section of Georgia changed according to the international political situation during the existence of independent Georgia;
2. Georgia's independence was clearly in Germany's interests, but at the same time it had to

- be focused on Germany. Turkey's claims and war actions against Georgia and Armenia developed political processes in the Caucasus in favor of Germany; in this respect, the disintegration of Transcaucasia, Georgia's independence and orientation towards Germany was undoubtedly necessary. On the one hand, Germany won the heart of Turkey with a well-calculated policy; On the other hand, he assumed the role of the savior of Georgia, disturbed by Ottoman aggression;
3. Parallel to these events, three options for regulating relations with Georgia were formed in the political circles of Istanbul. Which would also concern the new border regime between the two countries. According to the first plan, future relations should have been limited by the terms of the Brest Treaty. The second plan provided for the confiscation of other territories for Transcaucasian political units. And with the third option, Transcaucasia should be joined entirely to Ottoman;
 4. It took almost two years for the government of Georgia to return the territories of South-West Georgia, where in 1918-1920 Three times in a row, there were unsuccessful attempts to create self-styled states. First in Akhaltsikhe, then in Kars, and finally in Batumi. Behind which was either Ottoman, England, or Azerbaijan;
 5. The national liberation movement started in the Ottoman Empire in the middle of 1919, and its successful development again actively put the so-called issue of three constituencies in Ottoman politics. Although by the end of 1919, a diarchy (Angori-Kemalist and Constantinople-Sultan) was established in the Ottoman Empire; both emphasized the indivisibility of the northeastern territories of the Ottoman Empire;
 6. The attack of Soviet Russia and the Ottomans on Sakhtvelo was carried out at the same time. It was followed by the negotiation process between Moscow and Ankara. Coinciding events confirm the interest of these two states in Georgia. This was clearly seen in the Moscow Treaty of March 16, 1921, where territorial-border issues in the Caucasus were one of the main issues;
 7. Thus, from 1918-1921, border-territorial issues occupied a large place in Georgian-Ottoman relations. The peace treaty of Brest fully satisfied the interests of the Ottomans, so-called regarding three districts. Since the middle of 1920, the issue regarding the mentioned territories was actively discussed between Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey, trampling the strategic interests of Georgia, which finally ended with a deal between them;
 8. The Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Good Neighborly Relations between the Republic of Georgia and the Republic of Turkey of March 25, 1993, explicitly states: "they shall observe the treaties and agreements between them concluded beginning with the Kars Agreement of October 13, 1921."
- Thus, the territorial and border issues turned out to be the fateful node that could not bring these two neighboring states to a final acceptable agreement. The unresolved relations with the Ottomans turned out to be miserable for Georgia, which played no less a role in losing the country's independence. Russian diplomacy successfully resolved the problematic issues of the Caucasian policy at the expense of the alienation of Georgian lands. Unfortunately, the Georgian side failed to assess the current international situation and make the right diplomatic moves, even at the cost of small concessions to preserve the state's independence. Georgian-Turkish relations, unfortunately, could not develop in a good-neighborly frame. Therefore, This in no way contributed to maintaining a stable situation in the region.

ისტორია

ინტერესთა შეუთავსებლობა და ტერიტორიულ-სასაზღვრო საკითხები საქართველო-ოსმალეთის ურთიერთობებში 1919-1921 წლებში

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ისტორიულ წარსულში საქართველო ახერხებდა არათუ დაეცვა თავისი სახელმწიფო საზღვრები, არამედ გაეგრძელებინა გავლენა მეზობელი სახელმწიფოების ტერიტორიაზეც. საქართველოს სახელმწიფო სასაზღვრო რეჟიმი მეზობელ სახელმწიფოებთან ხშირად ქვეყნის შიდა-პოლიტიკურ და საერთაშორისო მდგომარეობაზე იყო დამოკიდებული. თამამად შეიძლება ითქვას, რომ საქართველოს ისტორიულ-ტერიტორიული სახელმწიფო საზღვრები დღეს არსებული რეალობიდან ძალიან შორს დგას. ამ მხრივ, ერთ-ერთი რთული მონაკვეთი 1919-1921 წლების საქართველო-ოსმალეთის სასაზღვრო ხაზი იყო. XIX საუკუნის დასაწყისიდან რუსეთის იმპერიის მიერ ფეოდალური ქართლ-კახეთის სამეფოს ანექსიის შემდეგ, რუსეთ-ოსმალეთის იმპერიების სახელმწიფო საზღვრები საქართველოს მონაკვეთზე რამდენჯერმე შეიცვალა. 1877-1878 წლების რუსეთ-ოსმალეთის ომის დროს საქართველოს დაუბრუნდა ისტორიული მიწა-წყალი, რითაც ქვეყნის სასაზღვრო ხაზი ამ მონაკვეთზე მიუახლოვდა ისტორიულ რეალობას და იყო მისი კიდევ უფრო გაფართოების შანსი (პირველი მსოფლიო ომის დროს). საქართველოს სახელმწიფოებრივი დამოუკიდებლობის აღდგენის შემდეგ ქვეყნის ხელისუფლება ძალასა და ენერჯიას არ იშურებდა სახელმწიფო საზღვრის დასაცავად. საქართველოს ხელისუფლებას საზღვრებთან დაკავშირებით პრობლემები ჰქონდა ყველა მეზობელ სახელმწიფოსთან – რუსეთთან, სომხეთსა და აზერბაიჯანთან, რაც კავკასიაში რუსეთის იმპერიის ტერიტორიულ-ადმინისტრაციული მოწყობიდან გამომდინარეობდა (სამწუხაროდ, ეს რეალობა დღესაც აქტუალურ ხარისხშია). თავის დროზე რუსეთის იმპერიამ შეგნებულად მოშალა ამ ქვეყნებთან საქართველოს ისტორიული საზღვრები. საქართველოს პირველი რესპუბლიკის მთავრობა ცდილობდა ქვეყნის ტერიტორიული მთლიანობა ისტორიულ საზღვრებში შეენარჩუნებინა, თუმცა მაშინ არსებული საშინაო და საგარეო მდგომარეობის პირობებში რთული იყო ამის მიღწევა. საქართველოს დემოკრატიული რესპუბლიკის მთავრობა თურქეთთან სასაზღვრო რეჟიმის 1914 წლამდე არსებული რეალობის შენარჩუნებას

ცდილობდა, რასაც, ცხადია, ოსმალეთის იმპერია კატეგორიულად ეწინააღმდეგებოდა. იმჟამინდელ ოსმალეთის იმპერიას (თურქეთის სულთანათს!!) ზურგს უმაგრებდა სხვადასხვა საერთაშორისო გადაწყვეტილებები. ამ მხრივ, ერთ-ერთი ყველაზე ხელჩასაჭიდი მათთვის ბრესტის ზავი იყო, რომელიც საკმაოდ რთულ ვითარებაში გაფორმდა, ყოველ შემთხვევაში, მომავალი ახალი საქართველოსათვის მეტად არახელსაყრელი პირობებით.

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