

MAMUKA MENABDE

FROM THE HISTORY OF 16TH CENTURY GEORGIA

On May 29, 1555 an armistice was signed at Amasia between Iran and the Ottomans. According to the very armistice, Imereti kingdom, the principalities of Megrelia and Guria, as well as the Western part of Samtskhe-Saatabago –Tao, Shavsheti, Klarjeti (Chorokhi basin) – was given to the Ottomans, while Kartli and Kakheti kingdoms, and the Eastern part of Samtskhe-Saatabago (Mtkvari basin) was given to Iran.

The Safavids retained the rule over the entire Azerbaijan and the Eastern part of Armenia, while western Armenia (*Lake Van region*) came to the way of the Ottomans. The border zone – the Kars district had to become empty with its population exiled to Iran. The Karsi castle was demolished.

We believe, the main outcome of the Amasia armistice envisaged the following: through the armistice, Georgia was divided into two parts by Iran and the Ottoman Empire for a long period of time, which led to a more or less relatively longer period of harmony in their relations. The geographical factor somewhat contributed to the above harmony. Likhi, Arsiani and Meskheta ridges geographically divided Georgia into two regions. The location of Iran and the Ottoman Empire made it convenient for them to manage their rule over the geographically split country.

The Amasia armistice was functional almost for the entire period of the Late Middle Ages. Later, the conditions of 1555 armistice between Iran and the Ottomans were in fact cancelled by the affiliation of Georgia to Russia. Nevertheless, the political situation in Georgia did not improve as the usual role of the southern neighbours was pursued by the Northern one.