

## GIORGI SOSIASHVILI

### PATARA (SMALL) LIAKHVI GORGE (HISTORICAL-GEOGRAPHIC REVIEW)

The territory which was comprised by Small Liakhvi Gorge during the Middle Ages had a special significance for the public life. It was stipulated by its strategic location. It was divided into two parts in early Feudalism. In the historical sources, particularly in the anonymous Armenian Geography of the VII century, its lower part was called Korditiriko, and middle, and upper parts of Small Liakhvi Gorge were called Satskhumeti. The Small Liakhvi Gorge borders the northern-eastern part of Ksani Gorge, where in the late Feudalism there was the KsaniSaeristavo there. The northern-western part of the Gorge adjoins the Big LiakhviGorge, it was exactly the place, where one of the most powerful Satavado – Samachablo was established in the XV century. The most part of the Small Liakhvi Gorge historically was included in the KsaniSaeristavo, and the villages of the lower part of the Gorge were under the influence of AragviEristavi. From the ancient times, many important roads went through the Small Liakhvi Gorge, by means of which it was easy to get in touch with not only ShidaKatrli settlements, but with the North Caucasus as well. There were many fortresses that controlled the roads in the Gorge. In the XIX century, the establishment of Russian government in Georgia influenced the Small Liakhvi Gorge as well. First, it was included in the OssetianOkrug (District), which was founded in 1843, and then, it was a part of Gori District. After the annexation and sovietization of Georgia by Russia, which was followed by the country's new administrative structure, the Small Liakhvi Gorge was divided into two parts, one part belonged to Gori Region, another one – to the so-called South Ossetia. Currently, one of the most ancient Gorges of ShidaKartli is occupied. The local population has become refugees. Georgian settlements are destroyed. The Russian government built military bases on the historical Georgian land. The trace of Georgian life is being removed, and the unique monuments of Georgian art are being destroyed.