

ETYMOLOGY OF PLACE NAME “ĈAHATA”

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ABSTRACT

Ĉahata refers to one of the neighborhoods of Kutaisi. There are different versions of scholarly etymology for the Ĉahata toponym: 1. Ĉahata is a compound word: mĉahe (“booming, piercing voice”), + mta (“mountain”). Over time, the “ĉahata” version has been formed through their phonetic alteration; 2. ĉahata means “unripe fruit”.

Currently, there is no other meaning of ĉahata attested in Imeretian.

Cf. ĉahata in Imerkhebian means “firewood stacked on top of each other”; the same is true of ĉahadi in upper Adjara dialect; ĉahati is a village name in Adjara.

According to the explanatory etymological dictionary of the Georgian toponyms, the word ĉaĝd-i “a sajene of wood (i.e. a pile, a fathom long, wide, and high)”, known in Mokhebian and Mtiuletian, is considered to be the basis for the ĉahĉkari form.

The root ĉah-, to which the plural suffix -ta is added, seems to be basic for the above-discussed word forms. Supposedly, on the one hand, as a result of dissimilation ĉahata > ĉaĝta; the suffix -ta has merged with the root, and ĉaĝd-i that has been obtained through assimilation is considered to be a whole morpheme, which is confirmed by the ĉaĝdebi form.

On the other hand, ĉaxata has been obtained through the dissimilation and insertion of the a vowel: ĉah-ta > ĉahata > ĉahata.

According to Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, caĥi// ĉaĥi - “a bunch of dry reed stems”. We believe, those who lived near ĉahata used to stack firewood in the forest in the summer, later skidding the firewood downhill on the snow in the winter. ĉaĥebi // caĥebi were also used for binding and skidding. It could be noted that it was an area placed on ĉaĥebi, with wood bound with ĉaĥebi or ĉaĥta //caĥta, that served as a basis for the ĉahata toponym.

Keywords: Georgian vocabulary, toponymy, ĉaxata, word etymology.