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MORPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOPONYMS OF SAMURZAQANO

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The given article presents an analysis of the morphological and semantic structure of the Georgian and Abkhaz toponyms of Samurzaqano. The relevance of the topic is determined by the following circumstance: specifically, after 1993, the toponymic situation in this region changed radically: all toponyms of Georgian origin were prohibited, and Abkhaz names invented by separatists - names that had never existed before or were unofficial versions of Georgian toponyms adapted into the Abkhaz language—became dominant.

Our aim is to provide a detailed morphological analysis of the Georgian and Abkhaz toponyms from the pre-occupation period of the Samurzaqano region in Abkhazia. The research is based on toponyms recorded by the well-known Georgian researcher Paata Tskhadaia.

It was found that the majority of microtoponyms in the studied area are entirely Georgian in structure: they are Georgian, or Mingrelian, or contain Mingrelian roots, bases, and affixes used as derivational affixes.

The second group of toponyms is entirely in the Abkhaz language, and here too, a diverse picture emerges in terms of morphological analysis. Specifically, there are both simple-rooted Abkhaz toponyms and complex-rooted, composite-derived Abkhaz toponyms, in which the morphological and syntactic features characteristic of Abkhaz determinatives and boundary markers are preserved.

The examined material clearly shows that the toponyms of Samurzaqano represent a variety of morphological and semantic groups. It is noteworthy that Kartvelian toponyms and derivational affixes are more dominant, and even in Abkhaz roots, Kartvelian derivational affixes are often present.

Key words: Georgia, Kartvelian, Abkhazia, Samurzaqano, toponyms, temporarily occupied.

Хобелія, М. Морфологічний аналіз топонімів Самурзакано. Ця стаття містить аналіз морфологічної та семантичної структури грузинських і абхазьких топонімів Самурзакано. Актуальність теми визначається наступною обставиною:

після 1993 року топонімічна ситуація в цьому регіоні змінилася радикально: всі топоніми грузинського походження були заборонені, а абхазькі назви, вигадані сепаратистами — назви, яких раніше не існувало або які були неофіційними версіями грузинських топонімів, адаптованих до абхазької мови, — стали домінуючими.

Метою нашого дослідження є надання детального морфологічного аналізу грузинських та абхазьких топонімів періоду до окупації регіону Самурзакано в Абхазії. Дослідження ґрунтується на топонімах, зафіксованих відомим грузинським дослідником Паатою Цкхадоа.

Було встановлено, що більшість мікротопонімів на досліджуваній території мають виключно грузинську структуру: це можуть бути грузинські або мегрельські топоніми, або ж вони містять мегрельські корені, основи та афікси, що використовуються як дериваційні елементи.

Друга група топонімів повністю представлена абхазькою мовою, і тут також виникає різноманітна картина з точки зору морфологічного аналізу. Зокрема, серед них є як прості корінні абхазькі топоніми, так і складні, утворені від кількох коренів, абхазькі топоніми, в яких зберігаються морфологічні та синтаксичні ознаки, характерні для абхазьких детермінативів та маркерів меж.

Досліджений матеріал чітко показує, що топоніми Самурзакано складають різноманітні морфологічні та семантичні групи. Варто зазначити, що картвельські топоніми та дериваційні афікси є більш домінуючими, а навіть в абхазьких коренях часто зустрічаються картвельські дериваційні елементи.

Ключові слова: Грузія, картвельські мови, Абхазія, Самурзакано, топоніми, тимчасово окуповані.

Introduction. Samurzaqano is a historical region located in western Georgia, within the territory of Abkhazia, which is currently under temporary Russian occupation. As a political entity, it was formed at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries in the territory of Odishi. Today's Samurzaqano includes the entire **Gali** district and part of the **Ochamchire** district. The region is particularly interesting from a linguistic perspective. In the area near the border of the Gali and Ochamchire districts, the close proximity of the Abkhaz and Georgian (Mingrelian) populations has created a zone of linguistic, dialectal, and ethnic transition, as reflected in natural bilingualism, bidirectional lexical borrowings, and hybrid toponyms. After the war in Abkhazia from 1992 to 1993, the toponymic situation here changed radically: all toponyms of Georgian origin were banned, as they could not be translated into Abkhaz by the occupying regime.

Instead of Georgian toponyms, a dominance of newly invented Abkhaz names emerged, primarily promoted by separatist scholars, particularly **Valeri Kvarchia**, the so-called speaker of the Parliament of Abkhazia, who holds a doctorate in philology. In this context, the research of historically confirmed toponyms in various sources has gained particular relevance and significance.

The most complete toponymic description of Samurzaqano was carried out by Professor Paata Tskhadaia in the 1970s and 1980s. He recorded more than 11,000

geographical names. The article in question is a morphological analysis of the geographical names recorded by this researcher. It is part of our future dissertation, titled "Morphological Analysis of Georgian and Abkhaz Toponyms of Samurzaqano."

We conditionally use the term Samurzaqano, which did not exist until the beginning of the 18th century and derives from the name of Murzaqan Sharvashidze, the son of the ruler of Abkhazia. This territory was inherited from his father, Qvapu Sharvashidze.

Main goals and objectives. The main goals and objectives are to research and analyze the toponymic situation that existed before the occupation of Samurzaqano in order to restore and protect historical justice in the future. To achieve this, it is essential to address the chronological relationships between the Georgian and Abkhaz toponyms of Samurzaqano, using historical morphological models of toponyms. This objective involves clarifying the original language of the toponyms and understanding how the current forms of these toponyms in other languages have evolved. The analysis of numerous new written and cartographic materials identified by Georgian scholars during the post-Soviet period will aid us in this effort, as well as provide a thorough critique of outdated viewpoints and promote the dissemination of new ideas. We specifically rely on this new data and these conclusions. For example, through the analysis of toponymic material, we reject Professor **Shalva Inal-Ipa's** opinion that the Abkhaz tribes were the main inhabitants of the entire region from the Mzimit River to the Enguri River, and that the abundance of Georgian toponyms is supposedly explained by their later origin, linked to the existence of the united state of Abkhazia and Georgia.

The study aims to conduct a morphological analysis of the Georgian and Abkhaz toponyms found in Samurzaqano, considering their semantic nature. The results of this research will assist not only linguists but also historians, ethnologists, and geographers. Most importantly, the State Language Department is responsible for establishing spelling norms for toponyms in both Georgian and foreign languages.

Methodology of research. In this article, descriptive and historical-comparative methods are used for the morphological and semantic analysis of the toponyms of Samurzakano.

Theoretical background. In addition to geographically similar names with morphologically similar structures in the toponymy of the Georgian and Abkhazian

regions of Samurzaqano, semantically similar toponyms can also be found, indicating the existence of certain semantic models.

In the local Georgian toponymy, there are many simple-root toponyms created with the participation of surnames.

Note: For technical reasons, we use transliteration, not transcription, to indicate toponyms in the article.

- **Sa-abloti-o:** "the district of Ablotia" (Tagiloni community, Gali municipality), cf. the surname **Ablotia** (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 147).
- **Sa-abrumi-o:** "the district of Abrumia" (Mziuri community, Gali municipality), cf. the surname **Abrumia** (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 147).
- **Sa-gasashvil-o:** "the district of Gasashvili" (village of Upper Gali, Gali municipality), cf. the surname **Gasashvili** (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 150).
- **Sagogolandzo:** "the district of Gogolandze" (village of Tsikhiri, Gali municipality), cf. the surname **Gogolandze** (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 151).

The mentioned semantic groups consist of morphological names of destinations that precisely indicate the living space of specific family groups. We believe that the transformation of surnames with such meanings into toponyms is based on the so-called Principle of Economy, which involves condensing substantial information into a single word through the use of word-formation affixes. In the Abkhaz language, there are no one-word toponyms used as names of destinations due to the absence of word-formation affixes with this semantic function.

In the toponymy of Samurzaqano, there is a greater prevalence of neighborhoods, entire villages, and other geographical objects (plots of land, settlements, springs, ditches, roads, shrines, hills, etc.) compared to the previous model. In two-word names, the identity of their owner or the main population is indicated using a surname. Such a model also exists in the Abkhaz language. This model includes the following toponyms:

Georgian (Mingrelian) geographical names that morphologically serve as substantial delimiters are represented by Georgian surnames as delimiters. Each surname is marked by the possessive case suffixes **-ish** or **-sh**, indicating ownership:

- **Adamiash Nokhori:** "Adamia's residence" – a forest in the Gali municipality, on the banks of the Ertsqari river, cf. the surname **Adamia** (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 13).

- **Anchbaiaash Kuntkhu:** "Anchbaia's corner" – conceptually refers to "the borough of Anchbaia" (the Achigvara community, Gali municipality), cf. surname *Anchbaia* (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 21).
- **Apsepish ghal:** "Small stream of the river of the Apsava family or gorge" – the name of a right tributary of the Okhoje River, located in the Agubedia community. Researchers Paata Tskhadaia and Vilena Jojua consider the toponym to be derived from the Mingrelian surname *Apsava* → *Aps-ep-ish* ("of the Apsavas") → "the Apsavas' gorge" (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 26).
- **Berandzepish dikha:** "The land of Berandzes" (the village of Kvishona, Gali Municipality), cf. the Georgian surname *Berandze* (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 43).
- **Kakubash Okhvame:** "Kakubava's Shrine/Church" (Kvemo Ghumurishi, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p.79).

Abkhaz Geographical Names:

- **Ashana Ibokhv:** "Shanava's Hill," located on the left bank of the Otape river (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 28). The toponym is recorded by a Georgian, and the exact Abkhaz form would be *Ashana ibokhv*. The surname is of Georgian origin, derived from the Megrelian *shana* (the literary Georgian form is *shana-va*). The Abkhaz used the *Shana* segment, which refers to a part of the lineage understood in the spoken language of the Megrelians (Gvantseladze, 2011, p. 152-153). The Abkhaz variant *a-shana* includes the *a-* prefix, which refers to a specific representative of the surname.
- **Gelvan Itsva:** "Gelovani's Apple," located in the Adzhkida community of Tqvarcheli. Researchers Paata Tskhadaia and Vilena Jojua rightly suggest that the first part of the toponym is derived from the Georgian surname *Gelovani* (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 51). In Abkhaz, *I-tsva* means "his (meaning a man's) apple."
- **Katsvaa Rkvara:** "The Gorge of Katsva's" – the name given to a left tributary of the Okhoje River and the valley of this river. The toponym derives from the Abkhaz surname *Katsba* or *Katsva* (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 184). The Abkhazian surname is actually *Katsv-ba*, which has lost the suffix *-ba* (indicating a family name in the plural form) and replaced it with the collective suffix *-aa*.
- **Solomkaa Rkhvu:** "Solomko's Hill" – according to researcher Paata Tskhadaia, this toponym is named after a hill on the left bank of Barzalkvara, where Ukrainians with the surname *Solomko* are believed to have lived (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 173).

It should also be noted that Georgian surnames are frequently found in Abkhaz toponyms, whereas Abkhaz surnames are much rarer in Georgian toponyms. The reason for this disparity lies in the 17th-18th centuries, when an influx of Abkhazians from other parts of Abkhazia or the Northern Caucasus into the current territory of Samurzaqano led to the Abkhazization of the Georgians already living there. The Georgian surnames remained unchanged, although a similar process occurred with less intensity in later periods.

There are many place names in the study area that contain names of plants in both Georgian and Abkhaz, indicating that this semantic model is highly productive in both languages. The Megrelian toponyms in this group include:

- **Bzakal-on-i** (Sabuliskerio, Okumi community) – cf. Kartvelian (Megrelian) *bzakali* "box tree" (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 45).
- **Zartsup-on-i** "guilder-roses" – located in the village of Gindze Etseri, part of the Gali municipality; cf. Kartvelian (Megrelian) *Zartsupa* // *Zartsupa* "guilder-rose" (*Viburnum opulus*) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 70).
- **Tkhumul-on-i** "alder forest" – located in the village of Ghumurishi (Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 75).
- **Ibl-on-i** "azaleas" – located on the banks of the Chitaponi River in the Upper Barghepi community (Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 76), cf. Kartvelian (Megrelian) *Ibli* "azalea."
- **Kaklar-on-i** "a place where many smilaxes flourish" – the name of the slope on the right side of the Ertsqari River (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 79), cf. Kartvelian (Megrelian) *Kaklari* "smilax."

The toponyms of Abkhazia belong to the same group:

- **Abatsuanara** "Slope of medlar" – This name refers to the hillside on the right side of Tsarche (Chkhortoli community) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 9). The toponym is Abkhazian and functions as a substantive determinant expressing possession. It consists of two Abkhaz roots: *a-batsu* ("medlar"), cf. Megrelian *batsu*, *batsvi*, and *a-naara* ("slope"). One of the two vowels has been reduced. The pronunciation follows the Megrelian form, while in Abkhaz, it is pronounced *abaatsv anaara*.
- **Aisir-tra** "Carexes" – This refers to the forest located in the Pokveshi community (Ochamchire municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 13). The toponym originates from the Abkhaz word *aisir*, meaning "carex," which has been borrowed from Georgian (specifically from Megrelian). Cf. Megrelian *isiri* "carex." The toponym includes the specifically Abkhaz locative suffix *-tra*.

- **Al-ra // Ar-la** "Alder forest" – This name refers to the forest and hill in Okumabsta (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 19). The correct phonetic Abkhaz variant is **al-ra**, which consists of the Abkhaz word **al** (alder) and the collective suffix **-ra**. The alternative form **Ar-la**, in our opinion, represents a Megrelian expression, characterized by the metathesis of the sounds **L < R**.
- **Ancha-ra** – The forest in the Chkhortoli community (Gali municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 21). Cf. **ancha** "maple."
- **Aqarma-ra** – The mountain and forest located in the Tsarche community (Gali municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 28). The toponym is based on the Abkhaz word **a-qarma** "hop."
- **Ashits-ra** "Box-trees" – This toponym refers to a location on the banks of the Jukhu River in the Gali municipality (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 29).

Toponyms related to viticulture and grape varieties are also common in Samurzakano. In Georgian toponyms, the word **mamuli** and geographical names derived from it are frequently encountered. This term refers to a vineyard or garden. In Megrelian, the equivalent term is **binekhi**, while in Abkhazian, **aqvatsa** refers to "a place where vines are grown on trees."

- **Mamuli** – The name of a field in the Saabashio borough (Village of Samqvari, Gali municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 92).
- **Bakosh mamuloni** "Bako's Garden" – Located in the village of Pshauri, Bedia community (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 40). This toponym is Kartvelian (Megrelian). **Bako** is a personal name (Ghlonti, 1986, P. 83), cf. **o-mamuloni** "vineyard/garden." **Bako-sh** is a substantive determinant, with **-sh** marking the genitive case.

We present the toponyms related to grape varieties (although, in our opinion, some of the grape varieties listed here are disputed):

- **Adesa // Odesa** – The name of the slopes in the village of Samarkvalo (Gali municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 13). This toponym is of Megrelian origin. It is important to note that both variants of the name have been borrowed from Russian. In Russian, the sound **O** is pronounced as **A**. In Megrelian, both variants appear to be in use. **Adesa** in Megrelian refers to a variety of grape called **Izabella**, which produces black fruit (Kajaia, 2001, p. 164).
- **Cheshona** – The slopes on the right side of the Rtomtsqari river. In Georgian (Megrelian), **cheshi** is an early variety of grape that produces white grapes (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 198).

- **Akaloshra** – The ravine on the left bank of the Jukhu River. According to researcher Paata Tskhadaia's informant, "The grape variety is called *Kaloshi* in Megrelian. It was cultivated here." Paata Tskhadaia further adds that *Koloshi* in Colchis (Kolkheti) is the name of a black grape variety in Megrelian (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 18).
- **Tkvapana** – According to Paata Tskhadaia, this is another grape variety that was grown on trees and produced golden-colored fruit. The plain slopes with this name are located in Samurzaqano, in the Sarodonaio area, in the Siskvari Valley (Rechkhi community) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 74).

During the Soviet period, new plant species emerged, leading to the creation of new toponyms derived from them. For example, the Eastern name *Tungi* (referring to the tung tree, a Chinese-Japanese oil plant that was cultivated in many parts of western Georgia during the first half of the 20th century) came through Russian, specifically from Chinese or Japanese. From this name, the following geographical names originated in Samurzaqano:

- **Tung-on-a** (Mukhuri Community, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 177). A collective name referring to a place where many tung trees grow. The suffix *-on* is a Georgian suffix that indicates a collective noun.
- **O-Tung-on-i** "Tung's Trees" (Tagiloni community, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 131). A toponym derived from the *o-on* suffix, which indicates an abundance of similar plants.
- **O-Dap-e** "A place where a lot of laurel grows" (Jirghalishka community, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 124), cf. Kartvelian *Dapi* "laurel, bay."
- **Rami** "Plantation of ramie" – A village in the Otobaia community. According to the administrative-territorial division of Abkhazia in 1953, it belonged to the Otobaia council (Khorava & Chanturia, 2019, p. 152). *Ramie* is a plant used for industrial purposes; this crop was not widespread in Georgia until the 20th century. The village was named by the communists in the 1930s, based on the name of the plant. (The Georgian song *Charirama* comes from *chai* (tea) + *ram-i* (ramie).

Toponyms related to production and agriculture should be highlighted separately:

- The Georgian toponym *berketish enachkira* "where (construction) blocks were cut" (Zarstupa community; Gali municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 4). The toponym is Kartvelian.

- **Dizelish nazavod** "former Diesel factory" (Pitsarghali community; Gali municipality). The root is from the Russian **zavod** (завод) "factory" (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 64). i.e. "Diesel's former factory."
- **Kirnachvi** "a place for burning lime" (Partonokhori community; Gali municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 83).
- **Ashantskvara** "stone stream" (Adzkhida community, Tqvarcheli district) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 193). It is an Abkhaz complex-root toponym: **ashantsa** "stone," **akvara** "stream," i.e. "stone stream," and so on.

Throughout Samurzaqano, both Georgian and Abkhaz toponyms related to animal husbandry are common. The abundance of these geographical names indicates the significant role of livestock farming in the lives of the locals.

This semantic model is particularly prevalent in Abkhaz toponyms with the root **azhv** (meaning "cow"). Examples include:

- **Azhvishegirta / Azhvishagirta** – "A cow corral" (Located at the entrance of Otape and Ghalidzga, Ochamchire Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 22). The Abkhaz root **azhv** is combined with the Mingrelian possessive suffix **-sh** and the Abkhaz word **agirta**, meaning "corral."
- **Azhurimua** – "Cattle path, herd path" (Located in Adzkhida, Tqvarcheli Community, Ochamchire Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 22). The record indicates that the expression was first recorded by a Georgian speaker, with specific Abkhaz phonemes being approximated. In Abkhaz, it is pronounced as **azhvirimvia**.

Additionally, both Abkhaz and Mingrelian designations related to animals are used in toponyms, for instance:

- **A-chada-ra** – Meaning "for donkeys" (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 30). This refers to a mountain pasture located between Okumbasta and Ashtatsqari in the middle mountains. In Abkhaz, **a-chada** means "mule."
- **Asagvarta** – Meaning "lamb's pen" (Located in the Refi-Etseri community, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 24). This toponym contains two Abkhaz roots: **Asar** meaning "lambs" and **R-gvarta** meaning "their pen," together forming "lamb's pen."
- **Ahvarrimua** – Meaning "pig paths" (Located in Atishadu, Ochamchire Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 38). This is a compound toponym: in Abkhaz, **ahvar** means "pigs" and **r-mva** means "their path," hence "pig's path." Mingrelian toponyms include:

- **Nakablishkonki** – Refers to a place where there was a meadow for male calves (Located in the Mukhuri community, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 114). This is a complex possessive compound name, cf. Kartvelian *kabla* meaning "male calf."
- **O-girin-e** – Meaning "for mules," this refers to the pasture for mules in the village of Shashikvara. Cf. Kartvelian (Mingrelian) *Girini*, meaning "mule" (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 124).

Particular attention is paid to the toponyms derived from terms reflecting *social divisions*. Active terms of this kind include the Georgian *mapa* (king), and the Abkhaz *aha* ("master; chief") and *aps'ha* ("chief of Abkhazia"), which appear in the following toponyms:

- **Georgian:**
 - *Mapatsqu* – "King's Spring," located in the Achigvara community (Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 94).
 - *Mapash Tsqurgeli* – "King's Spring," located in the village of Soviet Chai, in the Lower Barghepi community (Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 93).
- **Abkhaz:**
 - *Ahihapu* // *Haihapu* – "Master's Cave," a pasture in Anara (mountain). In Abkhaz, *aha* means "master" and *ahap* means "cave" (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 39).

It is noteworthy that, as researcher Paata Tskhadaia has clarified, *aps'ha idzikh* is a calqued form of the Georgian term, specifically Mingrelian *mapash ts'qari*. According to Tskhadaia's precise assessment, *aps'ha* refers to the ruler of Abkhazia, not the king of Abkhazia, as the Abkhaz people never had a king (Tskhadaia, 2004, p. 73).

Toponyms related to Christianity include the following:

- **Georgian:**
 - *Kakubash Okhame* – "The chapel of a member of the Kakubava family" (Kvemo Ghumurishi; Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 79).
 - *Kuajvari* – "Stone Cross" (Tqvarchali community; Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 187).
 - *Papchoni* – "Priest's Oak" (Rechkhvi, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 140). This is a complex compound name, consisting of Georgian *papa* ("priest") and *chqoni* ("oak").
 - *Lashkindari* – "Smithy" (Tqvarcheli community, Ochamchira municipality). This toponym is of Georgian (Svan) origin (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 88).
- **Abkhaz:**

○ *Apapikvara* – "Priest's stream or small river" (Okumi, Gali Municipality) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 21). In Abkhaz, *apap* means "priest," which derives from Georgian, specifically Mingrelian, while *akvara* means "stream".

Toponyms related to various beliefs and mythology:

• **Georgian (Mingrelian):**

○ *Ochokochish Ude* – "The House of Ochokochi" refers to a cave in the rock, near the source of the Chegemgali River (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 134). Cf. Mingrelian *Ocho-kochi*, meaning "forest man" or "goat-man," referring to a mythological creature and deity whose body is part goat and part human. *Ocho-kochi* is said to describe a man whose body is covered with thick hair, and who has a beard and large mustaches (Kobalia, 2020, p. 331).

• **Abkhaz:**

○ *Gizmal Ikvara* – "Devil's Stream," located in Akvarashi (Ochamchira community) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 58).

○ *Adaichikuabarta* – "The Place Where the Daeva Bathes," located in Adkhida, specifically in the Tqvarcheli community (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 9). Cf. Georgian *Devi* (Daeva), an evil spirit in Georgian mythology and folklore. Devils are depicted as hair-covered, zoomorphic creatures with horns and multiple heads, ranging from three to a hundred.

○ *Absrakmara* – "Death's Stream," one of the tributaries of the Okumtskqari River (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 11).

○ *Absrukhu* – "Death's Hill," a pastureland located between Ochake and Okumbasta (mountain) (Tskhadaia & Jojua, 2003, p. 11).

Conclusion. Thus, based on the analysis of the presented morphological and semantic models, we can conclude that Samurzaqano is home to a diverse range of toponyms, represented in both Georgian and Abkhaz morphological models.

In Samurzaqano, there are more Georgian toponyms in terms of frequency, as the existence of the case category in Georgian has led to the creation of diverse names, such as toponyms with substantival determiners of composite origin, which retain the marker of the genitive case, as well as names with the same morphological structure but without the case marker. In Abkhaz, names are mostly found in the form of a syntagma or a compound.

The analysis of toponyms shows that the original population of Samurzakano was Georgian, as evidenced by the morphological diversity of Georgian toponyms in this area. However, most importantly, some Abkhaz toponyms also support this fact. There are many instances where Abkhaz names have preserved Georgian

forms and are not presented lexically and grammatically in a way characteristic of Abkhaz. Several grammatical norms of calque formation have been violated.

The study area still contains many Georgian and Abkhaz toponyms that require further research. However, this work focuses on several relatively productive morphological and semantic models. Most importantly, it has been established that Georgian place names are more prevalent in Samurzaqano than Abkhaz ones, which clearly demonstrates—and further confirms—that the indigenous population of this region were Georgians, a fact that has been historically and linguistically proven. Despite this, separatists continue to actively attempt to erase Georgian traces in Abkhazia. The change in the toponymic situation serves as a powerful tool for the separatists in this matter, aimed at permanently erasing any trace of Georgian influence. However, the falsification of linguistic data (especially toponymic data) is impossible.

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