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THE ROLE OF TOWNS
IN THE SERVICES SYSTEM FOR THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION
IN THE SUBTROPICAL ZONE OF THE GEORGIAN SSR

This paper presents a typology of towns according to the number of people and their functional features. The services regions of the towns of subtropical zone of the Georgian SSR have also been marked out.

The realization of the important task, that is the elimination of fundamental differences between towns and villages, is possible on condition that the transforming of the rural settlements into well equipped town-like villages takes place.

The equalizing of socio-cultural standards of the inhabitants of towns and the inhabitants of villages is a long-lasting and complex process. It is being realized by increasing the quality of services in villages and by enabling the inhabitants of the villages to use the cultural amenities of the towns.

The subtropical zone of the Georgian SSR is one of the more important parts of the Republic, and it is known in our country for its highly developed subtropical agriculture and processing industry. The territory of that zone covers 26.4% of the whole Republic. There are 23 agricultural regions (2 209 rural settlements) inhabited by 40.1% agricultural population of the Republic. Apart from the socio-economic factors, the agricultural character of the region is greatly influenced by the particular climatic conditions. Great socio-economical changes were followed by the changes in culture, education, health-protection, trade and services. However, the rural settlements have not protected enough the proper number and capacity of cultural amenities. To prove this fact, it was found that out of 200 villages settlements only the bigger ones, which are at the same time seats of villagecouncils, have a full service-complex (education, culture, health-protection, trade, communication).

Often, however, there exists only one cultural structure in big and medium sized villages; for example: the 8-years school (or elementary school), kolkhoz club, library, obstetrical (accoucheuse) centre or shop. 82 village settlements have one or two service structures. There are nearly no communication structures and living-condition services in more than a half of the villages under study. In some cases there are even no health-protection structures.

Poor equipment of the settlements often results from a small number of inhabitants because such investments are unprofitable. There are no big towns in the investigated area, but the existing ones are very interesting and distinguish themselves from other towns of the republic and Soviet Union due to their type and geographical conditions. In the recent years a new factor — agricultural and food industry, connected with the processing of agricultural products came into being in place of typical town-making factors (i.e. industry, transport, administration and cultural-educational functions).

In the discussed zone, 31.7% of town inhabitants of the republic live in 39 towns. The question of density is particularly interesting. While there is one town for each 700 km² (in the inhabited areas only) in the republic, there is one for each 285 km² in the subtropical zone. That zone then abounds in town settlements. Towns in the investigated area have been divided into:

- big (over 100 000 inhabitants)
- average (50 000 — 100 000 inhabitants)
- demi-average (20 000 — 50 000 inhabitants)
- small (less than 20 000 inhabitants)

The greatest number of town-inhabitants is grouped in big and average towns, i.e. Kutaisi, Sukhumi, Batumi, Zugdidi, Tkibuli, Okhakaja, Tkvarcheli, Gagra, Samtredja, Makharadzhe.

From among the towns of subtropical zone, following 7 functional types have been distinguished:

1. Multi-functional towns (best developed) — Kutaisi, Batumi, Sukhumi.
2. Industrial (connected with the mining industry) — Tkvarcheli, Tkibuli, Zugdidi.
3. Transport-industrial — Poti, Samtredya, Ochamchira.
4. Towns of mixed type — Makharadzhe, Okhakaya, Culukidzhe, Lanchkhuti.
5. Towns — health resorts, as: Kobuleti, Chekaltubo, Gagra.
6. Administrative towns with service function for the agricultural areas with developed agricultural and food industries: Calendzhikha, Majkoski, Vani, Gegiechkory, Chkhorodzk, Khobi, Chokhatura.

7. Towns with predominant agricultural and food industries: Lajturi, Ureki, Ochkhamuri, Khelvachuari.

The role of the centres of the towns in the system of versatile services for town settlements depends on transport links between villages and towns, set of institutions and their servicing-forces and on the zones of migrational tendencies. Even the smallest towns of the investigated area play the role of centres for the neighbouring agricultural areas (ca. 10.8% of town population live there). These towns, representing low level of services equipment, determine, however, the first stage of village inhabitants' contact with the towns.

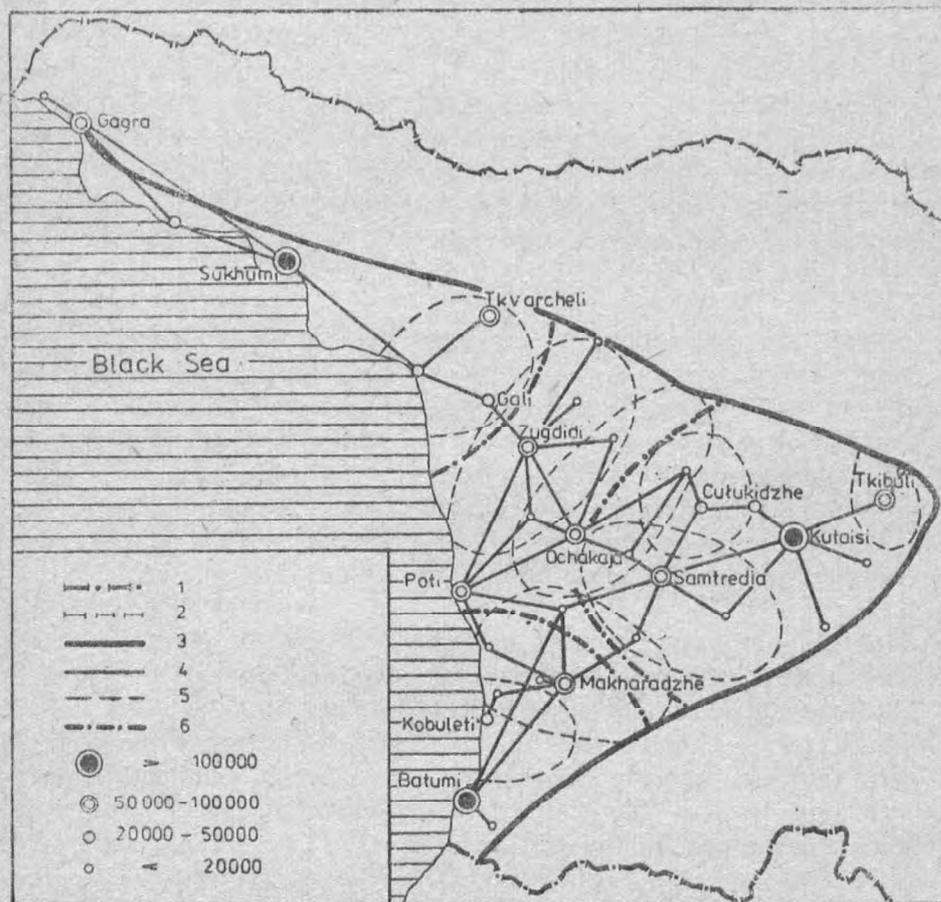
10 out of 22 town-like settlements are the centres of agricultural region, which are better provided with service structures. Small and average towns play a specific role in the services for rural settlements. Small towns are centres for agricultural regions. Some of average towns are of republican importance, eg.: Poti, Tkibuli, Gagra, Zugdidi. These towns become centres of regions. The place of these town in settlement system, big distances between them, town-wide institutions as theatres, museums, pioneers' clubs, hospitals, polyclinics, shops and marketing places, and active service relations — all these factors mark the average town and leading ones in the service system for agriculture.

50% of the population of this zone live in big towns. They are economic-agricultural, administrative-political and cultural-educational centres of the Western Georgia (Kutaisi, Sukhumi, Batumi). These centres differ not only by their functions but also by living conditions. Regional differences in the living conditions of inhabitants cause intensive migration to the towns from the country. These migrations are conditioned mostly by numerous social needs of people. The better the town is equipped and the better communication it has, the greater is the migration.

It is an important scientific and practical task to point out zones of migrational tendency of towns. V. Gudzhavidze was engaged in scientific research on that subject. In his studies of 1976 he eliminated two-level zones of influence. As the first zone he takes the zone of biggest republic centres' influence: Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Sukhumi, Batumi. The second zone of the town Kutaisi (according to its dimensions) reaches a large part of the Western Georgia. Two smaller zones are: zone of Sukhumi, including nearly whole Abkhazia (without Galski region) and Adzharia, and the western part of the regions: Makharadzhesk and Landchkhutsk. These two regions determine the zone of Batumi influence.

The second level should be understood as an elimination of the

influence of towns which have regional centres' functions (it concerns all towns of 10—60 thousand inhabitants). On this level the scale of local influence of high category centres is also taken into account (Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Sukhumi, Batumi — Ryc. 1). The areas of the above-mentioned towns' influence had been precisely marked on that map. The dimensions of the zone of influence are various. They are relatively bigger in towns situated far from the important centres (as well as from competitive centres of the same category), and smaller in the areas of high density of town's network (and also close to important centres).



Ryc. 1. Service areas of the towns in the subtropical zone of the Georgian SSR
 1 — State boundary, 2 — Republic boundary, 3 — Subtropical zone, 4 — Service associations,
 5 — Service regions of the second order, 6 — Service regions of the first order

The distinguished areas of towns' influence are not only terrains of migrational tendency. The cultural and productional influence of the above mentioned towns is quite distinct.

The subtropical zone of the Georgian SSR consists of several historical-geographical provinces: Guri-Maugreli (Colchis), Nizna Imeria, and maritime part of Abkhazia and Adzharia. The towns of those provinces, that have been distinguished according to their functions and geographical conditions, are the most typical of the whole subtropical zone.

The population of villages which are in the tendency zone of Zugdidi live in big and average villages. The town has its central place in relation to its service-region and has constant bus communication with all big and average villages. The unique service institutions which exist in the town prove its more than regional character. 200 people were interviewed on a market day to show the role of the town for the inhabitants of this zone in satisfying their needs. 23% of them lived in Zugdidi; 27.5% — in the administrative region of this town (villages: Rikie, Ruki, Kakheti, Darcheli, Orsatia), 13.5% were from the Galski region; 4.5% — from Khabsk region and 31% from other neighbouring region and towns (eg. Sukhumi, Celendzika, Ochamchira, Kutaisi, Tbilisi).

The town of Makharadzha is characteristic because of its big number of commercial and health-protection structures. There are also many villages around the town but they are sparsely populated. Makharadzha is the service centre for numerous sovkhoses. People living in bigger sovkhoses, 5—10 km from the town, can use bus transport and reach it in 20—30 minutes. But those who live in smaller villages in the mountains, spend much more time to get to the centre of Makharadzha. The town lies in the western part of its region. It should be mentioned that small towns Ochamchira and Ureki (placed in the western part of the region) have greatly limited bus communication — only 3 bus fares daily. Ureki settlement is a sea-side health-resort.

Many holiday-makers come to the town, and the increasing number makes the already difficult situation even worse.

The Kobuleti resort is a very interesting case. It has a sufficient number of shops and restaurants as well as of cultural amenities and renders its services not only to neighbouring settlements but also to many holiday-makers.

The migration from villages to the towns, connected with the journeys to work and services, have largely increased. Everyday 1437 persons come to work to Makharadzha; 383 — to Kobuleti, (9.1%); 292 — to Chakva (21.6%). This movement is especially developed in the administrative borders of the given region and so, 94% of people coming

to Makharadzha live in 39 settlements of that region. Those people mainly inhabit villages placed along the train and bus tracks, 10—15 km from the centre (30—50 minutes).

Such migrations become smaller (and even disappear) with the distance from town to village reaching 30 km. It is clear that people coming to work also use the servicing amenities of the town.

Mulukidze is zone of the smaller towns of Nizna Imeriti. Marketing services prevail there. The town is placed 28 km from the northern border and 6 km from the southern border. Village settlements which lie 10 km from the town can easily reach it, owing to the main car-communication routes. These roads connect town and village settlements of the region with nearby important service centres (Kutaisi, Khaltubo, Samtredia).

Gali is one of the town of Abkhazia, placed near the main trunk-line and arterial road. It is better provided with numerous marketing amenities than in cultural ones. There are many small village settlements on the neighbouring hills. The Galski region has close transport relations with the towns: Zugdidi and Ochamchira. People living near them prefer to use their services for they are also an outlet for the agricultural surpluses.

Culture and health-protection structures in the towns of the region under research are suited to present requirements and planning norms. Commercial and cultural amenities of all these towns are equipped according to present-day requirements and are grouped in commercial centres and also in „establishments of cultural amenities“.

Rendering them accessible to the total population is now the most important task. The improvement of communication with the centre and other settlements of the region helps to realize those plans.

Summing up, we can distinguish three following groups of service centres in the Subtropical Zone of Georgia (according to the role they play in service system):

1) local importance — rural settlements with cultural amenities, (daily, periodical, and episodic),

Some of them are the administrative centres of the regions.

2) inter-regional importance — average towns that have cultural amenities (periodical and episodic) for neighbouring regions' settlements.

3) towns of republican importance and administrative centres with developed cultural and unique institutions for the inhabitants of neighbouring towns and regions.

Gulnara Lashkhi

ROLA MIAST W SYSTEMIE USŁUG DLA LUDNOŚCI ROLNICZEJ
W SUBTROPICALNEJ STREFIE GRUZIŃSKIEJ SSR

W pracy przedstawiono wyniki badań i przemyśleń na temat roli miast jako centrów usługowych w subtropikalnej strefie Gruzjińskiej SSR. Wybór obszaru badań podyktowany został intensywnością gospodarki rolnej oraz wyjątkową gęstością sieci miejskiej (1 miasto przypada na 285 km² powierzchni).

Przyjmując za podstawę pełnione funkcje, wyróżniono w pracy 7 typów miast: wielofunkcyjne, przemysłowe, transportowo-przemysłowe, mieszane, uzdrowiska, administracyjne z funkcją usługową dla terenów rolniczych, o dominacji przemysłu rolno-spożywczego.

Dalsza analiza wyposażenia miast w usługi wykonana została według wymienionych typów funkcjonalnych. Uwzględniono w niej ilościowe wyposażenie miast w urzędnia usługowe (oświata, kultura, ochrona zdrowia, handel, usługi bytowe, łączność) oraz zasięg ich oddziaływania.

W celu określenia zasięgu handlowego miast przeprowadzono przykładowe badania ankietowe w mieście Zugdidi. Ankietą objęto 200 osób dokonujących zakupów w domu handlowym w dniu targowym.

Wynikiem końcowym pracy jest wydzielenie trzech typów miejskich centrów usługowych w subtropikalnej strefie Gruzji: centra o znaczeniu miejscowym (małe osady miejskie), centra o znaczeniu międzyrejonowym (średnie miasta) oraz centra o znaczeniu republikańskim. Na załączonej mapie przedstawiono w sposób kartograficzny rejony usługowe miast tej części Gruzji.