

Hello America!

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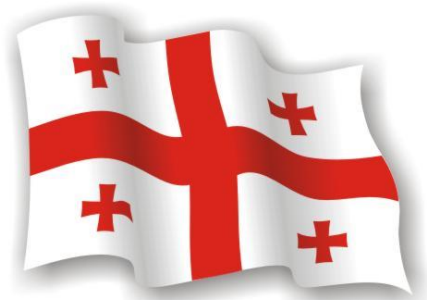
Abstract: The article presents a description of the plant sequoia that grows in the Zugdidi Botanical Garden of the Samegrelo region in Georgia. The Megrelian sequoia is compared to the sequoia collection in California. It is characterized by the nature of Samegrelo and the Poti lowland, which is comparable to the nature of California. Economic gains and links with other countries are also shown.

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Key words: Flora, Megrelian, Kolkheti, Botanical garden, Zugdidi, Sequoia, Poti

1. Introduction

Welcome to the evergreen tree – Sequoia – *Sequoiadendron giganteum* of the cypress family (Cupressaceae) imported from the Nikiti Botanical Garden in the 50s of the 19th century (about 1850). Samegrelo is one of the sides in Georgia and is conditionally equivalent to the state US. Its administrative center is Zugdidi. Zugdidi's Megrelian Sequoia had a strategic ally "mother" at the Big Tree Park, Calaveras (California), America, with a tunnel cut in its trunk (was cut in 1880), in which the car could freely be getting through. This giant tree sequoia called the Ioner Chabin Tree at the age of 1000, in 2017 was knocked down by the wind and fell. He practically could not withstand the strong storm, but left his "children and grandchildren," which subsequently spread around the world, in the Colchis part of Samegrelo. To demonstrate the strength of Colchis in Samegrelo, the myth of the Golden Fleece spread throughout the Greek world and the Epic poem "Argonautica" by Greek writer Apollonius Rhodius of the 3rd century B.C., are quite sufficient.



The Megrelians, in VI-I century B.C., had economic and political contacts with Athens, the Aegean Cultural Center (Greece), Genoa and Venice in Italy and so on. Let's get back to California.

2. Materials and Methods

Today, the wondrous nature of California, its flora and fauna is littered with fire. But Sekvioia is not afraid of forest fires as its skin (bark) is practically not burning. The "eldest" Sequoia is over 3.5 thousand years old. The tallest tree Sequoia in the planet (115.5 m) called "Hyperion" grows in Redwood National Park (San Francisco, USA). The height of the Megrelian Sequoia does not exceed 36 meters so far.

The nature and climate of Samegrelo and California are very similar. We will be easily convinced of this if we look at the location and nature of both (California – Samegrelo):

California is located on the west coast of the Pacific Ocean 86 meters below sea level. In mid-summer the average temperature here is 47°C and is therefore called the "valley of death". Poti, a place in Samegrelo. Its marshy places are also 4 meters below sea level. The average temperature in California and Los Angeles in January is 18-22°C and in Samegrelo (Zugdidi) 11-17°C. The best time to swim in the sea in California is September, when the water temperature is about 20°C. Also in Samegrelo, September is considered to be the best swimming month and it is also called the "velvet month". The most abundant rainfall – 384mm a month, is in Los Angeles, California. In Samegrelo, in particular in Poti, the maximum rainfall is 222 mm, the minimum is 10 mm. Most of the rainfall comes in the winter – approximately 27% of the annual sum. The dry months are June and August. The first rain in California comes in the fall in October or November, and February is virtually rainless. There is also a cloudy and rainy February (347 mm) in Samegrelo. The largest snowfall in California came on January 15, 1932 – 50 mm. In Samegrelo the snow nappe is very fluctuating and appears several times during the winter and disappears again, but it is also known for its rich snowy

winter. For example, in Samegrelo in 1910 the height of the snow cover reached 170 cm, while its average perennial height is not more than 2-3 cm.

Samegrelo is the homeland of cheese - Suluguni. The national dishes Elarji and Peppermint Gebjalia are made of it. Suluguni has been exported overseas from Poti Port since 1890 due to its high nutritional value. Honey, wine Ojaleshi, wood material, etc. were also exported to abroad.

The wine Ojaleshi was made and is made at Dadiani's former spring residence in the small town of Salkhino, who had a close relationship with France, with the Murat family (Ojaleshi label is attached).

For information, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte's sister-in-law, Ashil Murat, living in Zugdidi in the village of Chkaduashi, inherited the mask, taken by Francesco after Napoleon's death, which are the only three in the world and are kept in New York, Paris, Zugdidi. Murat's travel furniture and books are also stored in Zugdidi. Salome Dadiani, daughter-in-law of the Murat family, had lived and worked in the Chkaduash summer residence for some time, who owned property in Samegrelo, Martvili, Salkhino, Chkaduashi, Abastumani, etc.

The wine Ojaleshi is exported not only to France and several Eurasian countries but also to America. America is our strategic ally not only in defense, but also in the country's economy. The number of FDIs, made from the United States to Georgia, amounted \$80 million in 2014.

Among nuciferous and baccate plants, nuts and blueberries are important. Nuts are the leader in Georgian exports (most of which are grown in Samegrelo), accounting for 4%. Nut exports for 2017 amounted \$171.6 million. Various types of products are made from more than 1000 tons of hazelnut raw materials (roasted, crushed, ground), 60% of which is mainly shipped to Europe. Its export has increased by 40% according to the latest data. The largest hazelnut processing factories are located in Zugdidi. Cranberries are also an important food and medicinal plant. Its fruit and leaf are equally priced (1 kg x \$ 5.25), in other words, the maximum profit equals to \$210,000. The company "Cranberry" exports 60 tons annually. 65% of Georgia's total exports (USD 1.6 billion) is from Samegrelo region. Among the vine varieties Ojaleshi, Chvitoluri, Tsolikouri and others are important. Ojaleshi and Chvitoluri are endemics of Georgia. The wine Ojaleshi is economically very profitable and expensive. It is a successful export product of Samegrelo. There are 5 power stations in Samegrelo, the largest of which is the Enguri Dam. The total capacity of Enguri HPP is 1300 MW, annual project output 4300 000 kW / h; guaranteed Monthly Power – 270 MW. Samegrelo supplies Abkhazia with free electricity. In the largest deep-sea port of Samegrelo, Poti, there is a large grain processing mill, which produces white and black wheat flour, cornmeal, etc. The capacity of flour machines is 1040 tons in 24 hours. There is a snail farm in the Village of Khibula, in Khobi Region, Samegrelo. And medicines for the treatment of diseases of the joints and cosmetic ointments are produced from

snail-indispensable proteins. There are hundreds of business sectors in Samegrelo. According to official business registry data, 41.7 thousand entities are registered in the region, which is 10.5% of the total number of entities registered in the country. It only fall behind Tbilisi and Imereti regions. As of 2011, turnover of industry in Samegrelo amounted to GEL 289.7 million. The industry employs 4646 people. Total salaries of employees amounted to GEL 283.4 million. GDP per capita is 4375 GEL, which is the eighth place in the world (Turkmenistan is in the first place). There are many balneological and climatic resorts in Samegrelo: Menji, Tsaishi, Nokalakevi – 150 m above sea level; Skuri – 480 m above sea level; Lebarde (climatic) – 1600m above sea level. From a tourist standpoint, the unique object is Kolkheti National Park, which has been granted international status by the Ramsar Convention.



Figure 1. Sequoia from Zugdidi



Figure 2. Poti swamp – 4 meters below sea level



Figure 3. A label of wine Ojaleshi, made in the courtyard of Murat Family, from Salome Dadiani's own garden in Salkino.

Area of Samegrelo – 7093 sq. km.

Population – 451852 (all whites)

Cities – Zugdidi, Poti, Senaki, Tsalenjikha, Chkhorotsku, Martvili, Abasha, Khobi.

Population of cities as of 2014:

Poti, ancient deep water port, population – 41465 people.

Zugdidi, the Administrative Center of Samegrelo – population 64600 people.

Senaki – 21596 people.

Martvili – 4425 people.

Tsalenjikha – 3847 people.

Chkhorotsku – 3141 people.

Khobi – 4262 people.

Abasha – 4941 people.

Anaklia. – the largest new deep-sea port is being built in Anaklia, with a population of 1331.

Famous people – Tsotne Dadiani, Royal Chancellor Chkondideli, Lavrenti Beria, Meloton Kantaria, Iliia Vekua, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava, Nona Gaprindashvili, Nana Aleksandria, Zhiuli Shartava, Simon Janashia, Shota Meskhia, Zurab Khonelidze, Arnold Chikobava, Terenti Graneli, etc.

3. Conclusion

Introduction and distribution of evergreen sequoia in Georgia is studied, in particular in the Zugdidi Botanical Garden (Samegrelo). The nature of Georgia and California (USA) is characterized. Historical facts are provided when and how the plant was introduced into Samegrelo. Samegrelo Port Poti and its nature, accomplishments and connection with the countries of the world are described.

Californians, travel to Georgia and see Samegrelo.

With great love and respect

Professor Vazha Todua

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