

## Past and Modernity of Georgian Ports

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### Abstract.

The purpose of this paper is to present the past and modernity of the most important seaports of Georgia - Batumi and Poti - and determine their role and place in the economy of the country and in the unified transport system. As the development of Georgia's port potential is closely linked to the country's socio-economic development, its efficient use of geographical location, and the successful functioning of the Eurasian Transport Corridor in general.

The history of the creation of Georgia's seaports is practically the history of the formation of the Caucasus Logistics Center, which defined Georgia's role as a transit country. Georgia is an important link of the Europe-Caucasus-Asia Corridor, it is the Transcaucasian maritime gateway. The ports of Batumi, Poti, Kulevi, Supsa and under construction seaport Anaklia are vital strategic facilities that will ensure the country's economic progress. Among its past and contemporaries, the ports of Batumi and Poti are important, as they are distinguished by a number of advantages from the Black Sea ports (water depth, less danger of storms and heat, etc.). In the recent past, they have played an active role not only in the maritime shipping of Georgia and the former Soviet Union, but also in the development of maritime trade and economic ties worldwide. The western part of Georgia has historically been associated with the sea and sea navigation, the myth of the Argonauts, the existence of Greek newborns indicates that maritime navigation in ancient Colchis was one of the major means of leaving the world. Georgia, as a maritime country, was and is a country of great economic potential, to prove this; we will bring some details from its history.

**Keywords:** Georgian Ports, Poti Seaport, Batumi Seaport, History, Development, Prospects.

## 1. Introduction

The development of Georgia's port potential is closely linked to the country's socioeconomic development, its efficient use of geographical location and the successful functioning of the Eurasian Transport Corridor. The history of the creation of Georgian seaports is practically the history of the formation of the Caucasus Logistics Center, which also defined Georgia's role as a transit country. Georgia is an important link of the EuropeCaucasus-Asia Corridor, thanks to its historic, geopolitical location, and the opportunity to become actively involved in the modern world economic space. Georgia is a maritime gateway for the Transcaucasus. The ports of Batumi, Poti, Kulevi, Supsa and under construction port Anaklia are vital strategic facilities that will ensure the country's economic progress. The ports of Batumi and Poti are important to its past and contemporaries, which, in the recent past, have played an active role not only in the shipping of Georgia and the former Soviet states, but also in the development of maritime trade and economic ties worldwide. The western part of Georgia has historically been associated with sea and sea navigation, the myth of the Argonauts, the existence of Greek newborns indicates that maritime navigation in ancient Colchis was one of the major means of leaving the world.

## 2. Body of Paper

### Batumi Port

The name of the city "Batumi" comes from the Greek word "Bathus", which means deep. Indeed, Batumi has the deepest (maximum depth of 58 m) and convenient oil pipeline after the Sevastopol on Black Sea, and it has a convenient berths. However, the advantage of the Batumi port is that it has ideal natural-meteorological conditions, unlike Ukraine, whose ports are freezing in the winter, and Russia, where the ports often have strong winds during the winter. Russia, like other big countries, was interested in the deep and wind-shielded port of Batumi earlier. One of the reasons for the four Russian-Turkish wars in the 19th century was Batumi. Mikhail Vorontsov, the Russian king in the occupied Georgia, wrote about it in 1853: "The small port of Batumi is justly considered one of the best ... in every wind it can carry large ships. The small port of Batumi is the best on the Black Sea. During the Crimean War (1853-1856), the world press specifically considered the place and role of Batumi the in the militants plans and focused on Russia's interest in the port. According to Karl Marx, "the port of Batumi was the only reliable refuge for ships on the east coast of the Black Sea. By mastering Batumi, Russia will turn the Black Sea into the Russian Sea. ". Victory in the war with Russia against Turkey in 1877-1878 resulted that Batumi was occupied by Russian Empire, it finally ended with the proclamation of Batumi's "Porto Franco" at the Peace Congress of Berlin in 1878.

From that period starts period of Nobles and Rothschilds and English, German or other capital was reached to Batumi.

After the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi Railway in 1883, Batumi gained the status of a true business center after opening the Caspian and Black Sea oil company - "Société Commerciale et Industrielle de Naphte Caspienne et de la Mer Noire" owned by the Rothschilds. That same year, a railroad was launched that connected these outermost centers of the Caucasus - Baku and Batumi - to each other. This was a great event in the social and economic life of the Transcaucasus, as, from now on the minerals: Baku oil, Chiatara margarine, coal and other highly demanded goods on the world market, could be exported to major centers of Europe, Asia and other continents through the ports of Batumi and Poti.

Until the 1980s, oil was exported from Baku to the Poti and Baltic ports abroad, and industrialists did not like it because of the high prices, Batumi was considered the best option, which played a special role in the development of Batumi and its port. The geography of petroleum exports has increased: Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America, Australia. Between 1891 and 1893, 26% of world oil and petroleum products exported through Batumi. Exports of petroleum products reached such levels that the railway could no longer meet the overseas demand for petroleum products. The need for international sea shipping was on the agenda. In 1886 the first freight from Batumi to the Far East was conducted. In 1902, compared to 1883, freight turnover increased by 2339 percent. Naturally, appropriate infrastructure was needed to turn oil products (such as oil refineries, iron tanks, tin boxes and barrels, warehouses) into such scale and export them. It was all located in the city center, in front of the fortresses, which was unacceptable for the military bodies. Based on their appeal, the government issued an order in 1892, based on it the place for the reservoirs construction to be found elsewhere, that ended with the construction of the "City of Oil". By 1899, 11 oil factories and nine oil and tin cans refineries were constructed, one owned by the Treasury and the other by foreign businessmen. In 1890, the Surami Railway Tunnel and later, between 1900 and 1906 - the Baku-Batumi oil pipeline, increased the total turnover of the Batumi port to 108 million feet, 71% of which was oil and petroleum products supplied from Batumi. World-famous traders were involved in the oil export; 18 The Rothschild, Mantashev, and Nobel unions were particularly distinguished from the societies operating here.

In view of the above mentioned, Batumi has become attractive to the world's leading countries. At the beginning of the twentieth century, consulates and shipping companies of about 20 countries (Great Britain, USA, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Turkey, etc.) were operating in Batumi.

By 1899, there were 366 enterprises in Batumi. By 1908, Batumi was third in the Russian Empire after the ports of St. Petersburg and Odessa.

*Table 1: Tendency of Cargo Turnover in Batumi and Poti Port*

Years	Cargo Turnover (foot)	Cargo Turnover (%)	
		From Batumi	From Poti
1885	2556581	34	65
1886	3295976	16	83
1887	3732435	14	85
1889	344037	2079	
1892	8049758	5	95
1894	959956	4	95
1895	10641018	3	96
1898	16512094	4	95
1899	24930786	5	94
1900	28698357	7	92
1901	21648575	4	95
1902	31177892	4	95

The table shows how the trend of export of petroleum products from Batumi and Poti ports has increased over the years.

At the beginning of the 20th the Batumi port was one of the most important ports in terms of cargo turnover on the Black Sea basin. Later, 5 berths for tankers and dry carriers were also built. Port cargo turnover increased, processing cargo nomenclature expanded.

Participation in oil transportation has made the Batumi port an important hub of Europe's transport corridor and a major international transport hub. The favorable strategic and geopolitical location of the Batumi port became a decisive factor for Kazakh subsidiary Kaztransoilcompany to buy it under its exclusive management right in 2008.

Table 2: Cargo Turnover in Batumi Seaport – 2010-2018

(thousand tons)	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
<b>Dry Cargo</b>	1223	1518	1577	1721	1203	1046	862	795	1189		
<b>Oil and Oil Products</b>		5,4	5,4	5,2	5,8	4,5	3,9	3,4	2,1	1,0	
<b>Containers (TEU)</b>	16318	45442	72126	72123	61980	54695	55781	76025	90002		
<b>Vessel traffic</b>	797	862	697	714	585	570	663	527	584		

Batumi Sea Port is one of the first companies in Georgia to implement the requirements of the new version of ISO 9001: 2015 International Standard.

At the present stage, Batumi Sea Port Ltd has a clearly defined development strategy and mission, emphasizing: Maximize profit for the company by providing quality, timely, efficient, safe and competitive freight services while ensuring equal access to port services. As a pioneer in Georgia's dock industry, it will strive to maintain leadership in this area by participating in Georgia's largest transportation projects.

### Poti Port

Poti (Pazisi) is one of the oldest seaports in Georgia. It was founded by Greek colonizers. Pazisi was one of the points of the Europe-Asia Maritime Trade Road, which maintained the importance of a large trading city even during the feudal period. For centuries it was occupied by the Turkish. It was liberated by truce of Andrianopolis in 1829 from Turkey.

In the same year, under the instruction of the Russian Emperor Nicholas Pirveli, on the basis of an inquiry by Engineer-Captain Chadayev and Major-General Potier, a port project was developed in Poti. In 1832, Baron Rosen began preparatory work. In 1836, Lieutenant General Levan Dadiani, the governor of one of the principalities of Samegrelo - Georgia, gave the state treasury for free of charge to array an important land around Poti for the construction of the town and port. On November 18, 1858, by the order of the Russian emperor, Poti was declared a port city.

Construction of the port was further accelerated by the construction of the Poti-Tbilisi railway line, because Poti was the end of the Transcaucasian main road, from where all the Transcaucasian agricultural products and industrial products could be shipped to different parts of the world in the shortest possible way. However, Poti was closer to the inland regions of the Transcaucasus and its closest competitor – and shortest they compare to Batumi. In addition, the rivers for navigation - Rioni, Khobi, Supsa, Pichora - flowed towards Poti. These rivers flowed into Poti with agricultural products, timber, stone, lime, bricks and other agricultural loads. Port construction lasted 25 years, more than 7 million rubles were spent, but due to poorly organized work, the result was not complete - the harbor was completely inconvenient for ships and ships were losing anchor during the storm. It was remodeled in 1894, when the head of the new city, Niko Nikoladze, was elected. The revival of Poti, the reconstruction of the port, the modernization of the city and its modernization are connected to his name. As a brilliant manager

and organizer, Niko Nikoladze made good use of the news that he had seen while overseas while modernizing the city and port. Due to his work and managerial activities, Poti's budget has increased almost ten times: if it was 75,000 rubles in 1885, it would have surpassed 723,000 in 1914.

At the present stage, the Poti Sea Port Extensive Development Plan provides global projects. At the present stage, the Poti Sea Port Extensive Development Plan provides global projects. It is planned to close the Rioni River and create a new water area. Work is also underway to install wind generators in the port's extensive development zone. The port is equipped with all modern equipment and meets European standards. The open and closed warehouses, motorways and railways, distribution substations and other infrastructure support facilities are operating in the Port.

The port has eight cargo unloading complexes located at 15 berths of the North Port and the Inner Basin; there is also a passenger complex and berths for the port fleet and fishing fleet. The Poti Sea Port has all opportunity to meet the different requirements of customers regarding cargo and travel. Poti Port has implemented the new version of the International Standard for Quality Management Certificate ISO 9001: 2000 (ship loading / unloading, cargo storage, vessel service, and ship crew and boat passenger safety).

Pazis, today's Poti, occupies an important place in the history of Georgia. It has played a major role in both the early and modern times of our statehood, due to its location on the World Trade "Great Silk Road" that links Asia and Europe.

### 3. Conclusion

The Georgian seaport system currently is presented by two major ports - Batumi and Poti, as well as terminals in Supsa and Kulevi. In addition, Georgia is currently building one of the most important, world-class project - Anaklia Deep SeaPort. The existing ports mainly meet the tasks of receiving and processing Georgian transit and local cargo. However, our goal is to showcase that great historical background and the existing geographical and economic potential creates all the conditions for Georgia to firmly stand among the world's maritime states.

In the process of consistent integration of Georgia into the European arena, it is very well seen that our country has the potential, desire and will to become a regional leader in the field of international investment, communication, transport, logistics, tourism and finance.

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