

მაჭვამე ვაჭედდუსთ /ირანი, ურმიის უნივერსიტეტი/

ქართული ელემენტი სპარსულ ლიტერატურაში

ირანს და საქართველოს უხსოვარი დროიდან აქვთ საერთო ისტორიული ღირებულებები და მემკვიდრეობა. ამ ორ ქვეყანას აქემენიანთა ეპოქიდან დღემდე აკავშირებს პოლიტიკური, ეკონომიკური, სოციალური, კულტურული და განსაკუთრებით კი ლიტერატურული ინტერესები, რის შედეგადაც ორ ხალხს შორის ჩამოყალიბდა სულიერი და კულტურული სიახლოვე. ამ კულტურული ურთიერთობების შედეგად ორივე ხალხის ლიტერატურულ ძეგლებში აირეკლა ირანულ-ქართული ელემენტი და კულტურული ურთიერთგავლენა.

ნაწარმოების მიზანია გამოავლინოს სპარსულ ლიტერატურულ ძეგლებში არსებული სხვადასხვა სახის ქართული ელემენტი. ჩვენ შევეცადეთ შესაბამისი მასალის მოყვანით გავაანალიზოთ ასეთი ელემენტის ხასიათი და მნიშვნელობა.

ქართული ელემენტი კლასიკურ სპარსულ ლიტერატურაშიც გვხვდება, მაგრამ ყველაზე მეტი ცნობა XVI-XVII საუკუნეების სეფიანთა და XIX საუკუნის ყაჯართა ეპოქების სპარსულ ლიტერატურასა და ისტორიულ დოკუმენტებშია დაფიქსირებული. ყველაზე მეტი ქართული ელემენტი დაფიქსირებულია ისეთი ხასიათის ძეგლებში, როგორებიცაა: ისტორიოგრაფიული თხზულებები, მოგზაურობათა დღიურები და მემუარები, ლექსიკონები, სპარსული ლიტერატურის შირვანის სკოლის პოეტური ნაწარმოებები და სხვა.

სპარსულ ლიტერატურულ ძეგლებში დაფიქსირებული ქართული ელემენტის ხასიათი:

1. ზოგადი ინფორმაცია საქართველოსა და ქართველების შესახებ, ქართული წარმოშობის ლექსიკა, რომლებიც გაფანტულია სხვადასხვა ლექსიკონებსა და ცნობარებში, მაგ.: დეჰხოდას სპარსული ენის განმარტებითი ლექსიკონში, ან სპარსული ლიტერატურის ენციკლოპედიაში.
2. ირანსა და საქართველოს შორის არსებული ხანგრძლივი ისტორიულ-კულტურული ურთიერთობების და ზეგავლენის შედეგად უამრავი სპარსული სიტყვა შემოვიდა და დამკვიდრდა ქართული ენში.
3. მრავალ ისტორიოგრაფიულ ძეგლში სხვადასხვა ისტორიული პროცესების კონტექსტში მრავალი ცნობაა დაცული ირანის ისტორიის შესახებ, რომლებიც ხშირ შემთხვევაში ეხება კავკასიის რეგიონს და საქართველოს, განსაკუთრებით კი, ქალაქ თბილისს. ესაა პირდაპირი ან ირიბი ისტორიული წყაროები და სპარსული ლიტერატურის სხვადასხვა ძეგლებში დაცული ცნობები

4. სპარსულ წყაროებში მრავლადაა დაფიქსირებული სხვადასხვა ქართული გეოგრაფიული მხარის თუ ქალაქის სახელი. ქალაქ თბილისს, როგორც კავკასიის უდიდეს პოლიტიკურ, კულტურულ და სამხედრო ცენტრს განსაკუთრებული ადგილი აქვს დათმობილი. მაგალითად: ფახროდინ ასად გორგანის პოემა ვის ო რამინში საქართველო ხშირად ნახსენები აფხაზეთის სახით. ასევე, ნიზამი განჯელის შემოქმედებაში ხშირად ნახსენები საქართველო და ქალაქი თბილისი. უაღრესად დიდ ინტერესს იწვევს სეფიანთა და ყაჯართა პერიოდების მოგზაურთა დღიურები და მემუარები.
5. სპარსული ლიტერატურის ზოგიერთ ძეგლში ქრისტიანული რელიგიის სხვადასხვა რიტუალი, რწმენა-წარმოდგენა და ტერმინი მრავლადაა დაფიქსირებული. განსაკუთრებით უნდა აღინიშნოს ხაყანი შირვანელის შემოქმედება, რომლის დედა კავკასიელი ქრისტიანი იყო.

სპარსულ წყაროებში ქართული ელემენტის შესვლა სხვადასხვა გზით მოხდა:

1. საქართველოდან ირანში, განსაკუთრებით სეფიანთა პერიოდში გადასახლებული ქართველების მეშვეობით, რომლებიც ფერეიდანისა და ირანის სხვა რეგიონებში ჩაასახლეს.
2. ირანელი ისტორიკოსების მეშვეობით, რომელთაც თავიანთ თხზულებებში მრავალი ცნობა შემოგვინახეს საქართველოს სხვადასხვა კუთხის შესახებ.
3. თანამედროვე ირანელი მეცნიერებისა და მწერლების მეშვეობით, რომლებმაც განსაკუთრებით ბოლო 20 წლის განმავლობაში სხვადასხვა წიგნი, თუ სტატია უძღვნეს საქართველოს ისტორიის, ქართული კულტურისა და ხელოვნების სხვადასხვა საკითხებს. განსაკუთრებით უნდა აღინიშნოს XX საუკუნის გამოჩენილი ირანელი მეცნიერის საიდ ნაფისის ღვაწლი, რომელმაც არაერთი გამოკვლევა უძღვნა ქართულ ლიტერატურას, საქართველოს და ირან-საქართველოს ისტორიულ-კულტურული ურთიერთობების საკითხებს.
4. ირანელი მოგზაურების მეშვეობით, რომელთაც ძირითადად სეფიანთა და ყაჯართა ეპოქებში საქართველოს სხვადასხვა კუთხეში იმოგზაურეს.
5. სპარსული ლიტერატურის სხვადასხვას ანთოლოგიასა და პოეტთა ცხოვრებისა და მოღვაწეობის აღმწერ კრებულში ასევე მრავლადაა დაცული საინტერესო ცნობები საქართველოს შესახებ.
6. ყაჯართა პერიოდის ისტორიული ხასიათის კორესპონდენციას უაღრესად დიდი მნიშვნელობა ენიჭება, როგორც მნიშვნელოვანი ინფორმაციის შემცველ ისტორიულ წყაროს.

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Manifestation of Georgian Elements in Persian Literature Texts

Introduction

Georgia, considered part of the Caucasian lands, has several thousand years of history and thus boasts a culture as rich. Some historians believe that Georgia was the original habitat of Aryans across the Caucasus.

Over the centuries, commercial exchanges between Georgia and its neighboring countries, in particular Iran had prospered to a great degree. For instance, Georgian carpets and rugs and Tbilisi garments were popular goods found in different regions of Iran. The close cultural relationship between Georgia and Iran greatly contributed to the development of Georgian science and national civilization. Throughout the centuries, despite the ups and downs in the relationship between the two countries, common grounds have remained as strong as any other time in history (Giunashvili, 2012: 55).

Georgia is among the countries that have been continuously exposed to the intellectual and cultural exchanges between the West and the East and has thus always been inspired by two rich sources of knowledge and culture. Although Georgians have been seeking novelty and welcoming it in the entirety of their history, they have always tried to adhere to their ethnic originality and adapt novel elements to deeply-rooted principles and join them together; they have thus created a particularly Georgian link between material and spiritual culture that boasts the characteristics of a national culture. A unique cultural continuity can therefore be perceived in this country (ibid, 157).

In general, the 11th and 12th centuries AD (5th-6th centuries AH) were a period of extensive cultural-scientific exchanges between the Christian population of Georgia and various Muslim nations who were living together in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, or its other cities, without religious or racial prejudices and enriching their knowledge and capacities in the different fields of science, art and culture. At this period, Georgian science, culture and art, and more specifically literature, adopted the elements, concepts and knowledge of the Islamic world particularly through classic Persian language and literature, and, through their integration with its own indigenous elements, the country reached a whole new stage of development (Chulukhadze, 2008: 40).

Review

As mentioned earlier, apart from their historical common grounds, Iran and Georgia have boasted political, economic, social, literary and cultural relations since the Achaemenid period. As a result, deep emotional and cultural ties have developed between the nations of Iran and Georgia, and, through cultural interactions and under each other's influence, Georgian and Iranian elements have grown roots in their literature side by side. This study is concerned with different manifestations of Georgian elements in Persian literature and sets out to examine the subject matter by providing examples from relevant books. Manifestations of Georgian elements are most prominent in Persian literature of the Safavid and Qajar periods, though these elements also exist in classic Persian literature. For instance, in his "سفرنامه" (*Safarnama*)¹, Naser Khosrow (1003-1088 AH), poet and writer of the 5th century AH, mentions Georgian kings (Naser Khosrow Ghobadiyani, 2007: 156 & 189). " (Nafsat-al-Masdoor) also refers to the beauty of Georgian women who were long known for their beauty and intelligence (Zeidari Nasavi, 2010: 169). Apart from writers and historians, Iranian poets have also long been using Georgian elements in their poems; an instance would be their use of the terms "Georgian" and "Abkhazian" –only a few of which are referred to here. In his third volume of "مثنوی" (*Masnavi*), Rumi mentions Georgian tribes residing in Georgia who were symbols of power and heroism at the time:

هوا می کرد بالای (اژدها) که هزیمت می
وی

(Rumi, (22.: 1299, مولوی)

1881 AH: 22)

*dar hava mikard khod balaye borje ezhdeha Ke hazimat mishod
az vey rumo gorj*

Considering the historical and literary requirements, Georgian elements are most prominently manifested in Azerbaijani poetry. Poets of this particular style, including "Mojir-al-din Bilghani", "Falaki Shirvani", "Nezami Ganjavi", "Khaqani Shirvani" and so forth, have frequently used Georgian elements including Georgian places and historical issues as they were well acquainted with Georgian culture due to their geographic proximity to Georgia and Tbilisi. In addition, in the 12th C. AD (6th C. AH), Georgia had unique extensive relations with Ganja, Shirvan and Arran. "Davood IV" regained these regions from Seljukid occupation and governed Shirvan and Darband and turned them into the protégés of the Georgian empire. These efforts led to the expansion of

¹ Travel Tale

political, economic and, more importantly, cultural relations among Caucasian nations; Georgian kings and sovereigns of Darband and Shirvan even formed kinship relations between themselves through marriage into one another's family and thus developed their political and cultural ties. It is important to note that religious or racial differences did not affect the cultural relations and exchanges between Caucasian nations and there were close economic and cultural relations between Christians of Georgia and the Muslim populations of Sirvan, Darband, Arran and Ganja that had enriched the culture and arts of these nations. As protégés of the Georgian empire, Shirvanshahs (Kings of Shirvan) and their court men were frequently lodged in Georgia. According to the historical Georgian text "تاریخ ستایش" (Tarikh va Setayeshee Tajdaran), dating back to the early 13th C. AD (7th C. AH), which is the biography of Queen Tamar of Georgia, the second Akhestan of Shirvanshah had visited Tbilisi multiple times and Nezami Ganjavi had also traveled twice with the king's court to Georgia (Chulukhadzeh, 2008: 37-38).

The entrance of Georgian elements

Georgian elements have entered Persian language through several different ways; for example, 1. through poets and writers, in particular Iranian historians of the past, who have entered Georgian elements including historical issues, Georgian places and descriptive accounts of Georgian people and cultures, into their writings due to historical common grounds; 2. contemporary Iranian scientists, researchers and writers, and 3. Iranian travelers and globetrotters.

Contemporary Iranian scientists have written various books about the country, people and history of Georgia. These books contain vast information on the culture and history of Georgia. For instance, Saeed Nafisi, the cultural advisor of Iran in Georgia, is among the scholars who wrote prolifically about Iran-Georgia political and cultural relations. Other examples include "مسیر تاریخ" (Gorjestan dar Masir-e Tarikh), written by Amir Ahmadiyan, or the various books and essays written by Ali Ojakeh, Saeed Moliyani and others. The books "تاریخچه جبهه" (Tarikhche Roostaye Gorji Mahalleh va *Dastan-e Mohammad Jabbeh*), written by Aliakbar Ojakeh tells rewarding tales about the ancient village of "Gorji Mahalleh" and the story of Mohammad Jabbeh. To summarize the book, Mohammad Jabbeh was a brave hero from "Gorji Mahalleh" village who rose against the oppression of the regime of the time and the tyranny of the tribal chiefs and the Russians residing in Iran.

1. Immigrant Georgians, in particular immigrants of the Safavid period: Georgians arriving in Iran from Georgia during the Safavid

period, especially during the reign of Shah Abbas I, settled in different regions of Iran including the north (Ojakeh, 2010: 267). Trusting their bravery and strength, the Safavid kings settled them in Isfahan near themselves and some of them managed to attract the trust of Safavid kings for their honesty and merit and soon Georgian leaders reached the highest ranks of state and military authority in Iran. The most famous of these leaders was Allahverdikhan who became the generalissimo of Iran and held the highest rank of power after the king (Muliyani, 2000: 11).

2. Iranian globetrotters who traveled to Georgia: These globetrotters who were mostly of the family of Qajar kings or else held social and political positions during the Safavid and Qajar periods entered Georgian elements into Persian texts through their travel tales.

3. “*Tazkirat*”² of the circumstances of the lives of poets and writers: for instance, "تذکره ی" (*Tazkirat-e-Akhtar*) and "تذکره پیمانہ" (*Tazkirat-e-Peymaneh*) by Golchin Ma’ani and "تذکره" (*Tazkirat-e-Delgosha*). Some of these biographical accounts were written by Georgian Iranians; instances would be Ahmad Beig, known by his penname Akhtar, and his younger brother Bagher Beig, known by his penname Neshati, had both written a number of biographical accounts. In the introduction to his “*Tazkirat*”, Fazelkhan Garousi writes, “some people wrote biographies before him but were not successful; two Georgian Iranians once lived by the names of Ahmad Beig, known by his penname Akhtar, and Bagher Beig, his younger brother, known by his penname Neshati, who wrote a “*Tazkirat*” titled "Anjomanara". In fact, "تذکره" (*Tazkirat-e-Anjoman-e-Khaghan*) is based on "تذکره" (*Tazkirat-e-Akhtar*) only with certain additions.” (Garousi, 1997: 14-16)

4. Georgian Iranian survivors of Georgian immigrants in Iran, most of whom married Iranians and were also born in Iran and can thus be called Georgian Iranians: a number of prominent poets and writers emerged from these populations and are now part of the cultural heritage of Iran. For instance, Akhtar Gorji, Eshtehay Gorji, Berahman Gorji, Khosrow Gorji, Doostagh Gorji, Zambil Gorjestani, Kami Gorjestani, Kokabi Gorji and Keikhosrow Gorji.

A number of Georgian elements reflected in Persian literature include, 1. General information on Georgians and Georgia; 2. Georgian language; 3. Historical referes; 4. Georgian places; and 5. Religious beliefs.

1. **General information on Georgians and Georgia:** General information denotes any information gathered on Georgian terms, the

² Biographical account of the life of a poet.

country Georgia, or any other information about this land and its people. This information is primarily found in encyclopedias, in particular those about the variations of Persian language such as “*the Encyclopedia of Persian Literature*”. The entry in “*نامه دهخدا*” (*Dehkhoda Dictionary*) about the term “Georgia” and the 5th volume of “*the Encyclopedia of Persian Literature*” both provide broad information on poets and writers and the status of Persian literature and poetry throughout the Caucasus and Georgia (Anousheh, 2001, Vol. 5). In “*سیاست نامه*” (*Siy satn ma*), Khajeh Nezam-al-Molk Toosi (1017-1092 AD), the resourceful minister of Seljuqids during the 5th C. AH, describes Georgian horsemen as brave and courageous (Khajeh Nezam-al-Molk, 1969: 165). Apart from “*اسکندرنامه*” (*Iskandarnama*)³, Nezami Ganjavi also refers to several Georgian elements in his other work “*لیلی*” (*Leyli-o-Majnun*); for example, he describes Georgians as:

زین گرجی برکشیده، () طرّه بریده⁴.

(Nezami Ganjavi, 1965: 379, 3523-3524)

zin gorji torreh barkeshide shod ruz cho torreye sar boride

“Mohammadtaghi Sepehr” refers to Georgian women who were odalisques for the Arabs [Imam of Muscat] (*Lesan-al-Molk Sepehr*, 1998: 1232) and tells of the hospitality of the people of Tbilisi and Georgia in their welcoming the ambassador of Iran in the 3rd volume of his “*History of Qajar*” (*ibid*: 1270).

2. **Georgian language:** With regard to the social, cultural and political interactions and exchanges between Iran and Georgia and their historical common grounds, not only did Persian language influence Georgian language, but some Georgian words also entered Persian language. Most of the loan words were imported by poets of Azerbaijani style who were born in the Caucasus and also through the friendly relations between Shirvan, Ganja, Arran, Darband and Georgia; these Iranian Persian-speaking poets of Azerbaijani style were familiar with the language and culture of the people of Georgia and have used Georgian terms in their poems in the most natural way— a point that requires broader investigations. Among the Azerbaijani style poets (adhering to Azerbaijani style of writing), Khaghani Shirvani uses elements of Georgian language most frequently than anyone else in his ode “*ترسائییه*” (*Tarsaeiyeh*):

بُقراطیانم

ناجرمکی دیر

³ The Book of Alexander.

⁴ . This night, which resembles the black curly hair of the Gorjis, has made the Russian’s day as dark as hair.

پوشیده غاری بیند
man o najarmaki o deire mokhran dare boqratianam ja vo malja
mara binand dar surakhe ghari shode moluzan o pushide chukha
 (Khaghani, 2004: 25).

Khaghani was familiar with Georgian language and used Georgian terms in his quatrains and other poems:

گر جی گوئی نشین صلیب موی رومی روی
 هر مویی موی مویی مویی
az eshqe salibe muye rumi ruyi abkhaz neshin gashtam o gorji
gui
az bas ke begoftamash mu-yi mu-yi shod muye zabanam va
zaban har muyi
 (Khaghani, 2003: 742)

چگونه همدم عیسی گر جی
 مویی مویی که موی مویم که موی
 (همان)
 (708:

gorji sanama hamdam-e isast damat ruholqodos chegune khanam
sanamat
chon mui shodam ze bas ke bordam setamat mui mui ke mui
muyam ze qamat

(ibid: 708)

Immigrant Georgians in the Safavid era greatly contributed to the importing of Georgian terms into Persian language, which is quite evident in regions where Georgians were residing. Immigrant Georgians dispersed through the provinces of Mazandaran, Gilan, Khorasan, Isfahan, Fars, etc. and integrated with Iranian peoples. This assimilation gradually faded Georgian originality and language and only Georgians living in “Faridan” managed to maintain the Georgian language (Ojakeh, 2010: 267):

One of the characteristics of Georgians that was influenced by their living environment after they immigrated to Iran was their language. For instance, Georgians of Mazandaran spoke Georgian at the beginning, but within several centuries of their migration to these lands, their original language was lost. Nowadays, Georgian terms and expressions are often spoken by old men and women in their colloquial language on rare occasions though their origin is not clear for the educated younger generation of this village. (Ojakeh, 2003: 21)

3. **Historical referes:** The historical element of texts about the historical events of Iran denotes the referes made in these texts to historical issues related to the Caucasus and Georgia. These referes either are directly and formally related to historical issues or else are reflected

indirectly and literally by the works of past Iranian poets and writers. Numerous historical books have referred in different ways to Georgia and its cities, in particular Tbilisi, which are pertinent to the historical events of Iran.

A. Historical books: Historical books written during the Safavid era included extensive accounts of information about the historical issues pertaining to Georgia; an instance would be "آرای عباسی" (*Alam ArAy AbbAsi*) by Eskandar Beig Monshi, a famous historian of the Safavid era and a secretary of Shah Abbas' court who was also familiar with the court of Shah Tahmasb and other Safavid kings. "آرای عباسی" (*Alam ArAy AbbAsi*) involves significant historical information about the relations between Iran and Georgia and frequently makes historical referes to it. For instance, in the first volume of this book alone, the terms Georg, Georgian and Georgia are repeated at least twenty seven times (Eskandar Beig Monshi, 1998: 19, 74, 79, 115, 118, etc.), the term "Tbilisi" is repeated at least five times (ibid: 109, 119, 124, 226 & 528), and the term "Tfilisi" repeated seven times in place of "Tbilisi" (ibid: 138, 139, 142, 145, 147, 224, 316) and the events of the Tfilisi Fortress are talked of four times (ibid: 361, 388, 407 & 416). Similarly, in other volumes of "آرای عباسی" (*Alam Aray Abbasi*), historical accounts of Georgia are abundant. "تاریخ برین صفویه ایران" (*Iran Dar Roozgar-e Safavieh*) by Mirza Mohammad Yousof Valeh Isfahani, the minister of Shah Abbas and Shah Ismail, is a book about Iran that makes several referes to Georgia and Tbilisi; for instance, it refers to historical issues related to Georgia at least twenty three times (1, 94, 96, 261, 263, 270, etc.) while referring also to Tbilisi three times (356, 409, & 624) and once to the thwarted invasion of Homayoon Khan Gorji to Iran (Valeh Isfahani, 1993: 356). "التواریخ" (*Nasikh-al-Tawarikh*) tells of the attack of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar against Tbilisi (Sepehr, 1998: 76). In the chapter "حزکت فتحعلی به آذربایجان" (Fathali Shah Qajar's move to Azerbaijan), Sepehr also points out to the attack of the Russians against Qarabaq with the intention of occupying it (ibid, 185-186) and then refers to "the conquest of Tbilisi and its suburbs under the command of Agha Mohammad Shah" (ibid, 76). In *Mera't-al-Baladan*, Etemad-al-saltaneh writes about Shah Abbas' invasion of Georgia, "Tahmoures Khan Gorji gathered his people from Georgia and entered Tiflis without warning and attacked against Mohammad Khan Ziadoghli Qajar who had come to Tiflis with his fifteen thousand soldiers, and so forth" (Etemad-o-saltaneh, 1988: 798).

B. Historical letters: Historical letters of the Qajar era are among the Persian texts that have historical referes. For instance, Amberger's

Nezami Ganjavi traveled to Georgia twice accompanied by the second Akhstan of Shirvanshah; in one of these trips, he attended a poetry circle where famous Georgian and Shirvanian poets cited poetry to each other. According to researchers in the field of cultural relations between Caucasian nations, Nezami Ganjavi used the book *the Biography of Georgian Kings* by Leonti Mroveli, the well-known Georgian historian of the second half of the 11th C. AD (late 5th C. AH), when composing his "اسکندرنامه" (*Iskandarnama*) epic poem. In Nezami's works, Abkhazia⁵ was located in the geographical areas of Azarabadegan, Arman, Bardae, Iraq and Yemen (Nezami Ganjavi, 1974: 20).

Georgian places are manifested in Khaghani's poems more than in any other poet's works. Aside from traveling to Tbilisi with Shirvanshah, he had an affinity for this land as it was said that he had a Georgian wife or lover and traveled back and forth to Abkhazia and Tbilisi. He also had a Christian mother and was therefore quite familiar with the culture, religion and language of Georgia (Ojakeh, 2010: 266). In his works, Khaghani frequently mentions Georgia, Tbilisi, and the residences of the Georgian kings (Khaghani, 2003: 759; 2004: 712)

Among contemporary poets of Iran, Nima Yooshij, whose grandmother was arguably Georgian (Tabbaz, 1996), the Founder of modern Persian poetry, uses the word *Georgian* in his poem "پی (Pey-e Daar-o-Choopan)" (Nima Yooshij, 1996: 389).

In addition to Persian poetry and prose of the past, texts written in the Qajar era also frequently refer to Georgian places; books of Qajar history make referes to Georgia or Tbilisi in their accounts of the history of Iran. As mentioned earlier, one example is "التواریخ" (*Nasikh-al-Tawarikh*) or "تاریخ قاجاریه" (*the Qajar History*) by Mohammad Taghi Ibn-e (Molla) Mohammad Ali Kashani who not only refers to the events of Iran in their relation to Georgia but also mentions Georgian servants and odalisques. In this book, he makes at least twenty-five referes to Georgia (Sepehr, 1998: 52, 76, 128, 151, 158, 162, etc.), three to Georgians (ibid: 77, 198, & 527) and at least thirty six to Tbilisi (ibid: 858, 907, 1142, 1143, 1197, 1264, etc.).

Mentioning Tbilisi and Georgia in travel tales of the Qajar era: Travel tales are the most significant texts describing cities of Georgia, Tbilisi in particular. For instance, Mirza Saleh Shirazi stopped by in Tbilisi in 1815 after "departing from Tabriz for traveling to Petersburg and visiting England" and provides a rather detailed description of Tbilisi

⁵ Abkhazia refers to the entire Georgia or the Western Georgia (Giona Shoveili, 2012: 129)

but makes no referes whatsoever to the conditions of drama in Tbilisi (Malekpour, 1984: 69-75; Mirza Saleh Shirazi, 1968: 316). In his travel tale, Naser-al-din Shah mentions that he had also traveled to Poti port and Tbilisi (Naser-al-din Shah, 1983: 2 & 3). Mozaffar-al-din Shah also writes about Tbilisi and the Caucasian lands in his travel tale (Mozaffar-al-din Shah, 1984: 42 & 56-57). In “Farsnameh-y-e Naseri”, Hosseini Fasayi also mentions Tbilisi (Hosseini Fasayi, 1988: 860-863). In his travel tale, Farhad Mirza describes Tbilisi, Poti port and Batumi port (Farhad Mirza, 1987: 316-317). Soltan Mohammad Mirza Seif-al-dawleh, the 44th son of Fath Ali Shah Qajar, born in 1812 from a Georgian woman named Taj-al-dawleh (Seif-al-dawleh, 1985: 5-8) discusses Georgia and Tbilisi in his travel tale (Seif-al-dawleh, 1985: in “First Journey”). Afshar Orumi also describes Tbilisi in his travel tale (Afshar Orumi, 2007: 67).

Referes made to Tbilisi in texts of the constitutional era imply that this city was considered the center of drama and theater, and Iranian playwrights learnt the art of playwriting and theater from that region; moreover, some Iranian playwrights were living in Tbilisi during the constitutional revolution. Tbilisi was also known as the center of civilization; in fact, Fath Ali Akhondzadeh, the most prominent writer, critic, and playwright of the Iranian constitution who played an important role in the victory of the constitutional movement lived and was buried in Tbilisi. “Tbilisi was the city of commanders and the capital of Caucasus and dominated over other Georgian cities in terms of culture and literature. At the time, Tbilisi became the hub of literary, social, and political activities due to the exile of numerous dissidents to that city. The atmosphere of Tbilisi had a great influence on the writer’s intellectual evolution. Akhondzadeh was assigned the teacher of Persian and Azeri languages at the local Caucasian school in Tbilisi from December 1836 to September 1840. Akhondzadeh became acquainted with scientists, poets and government officials of the city and highly valued their friendships. He learnt Russian in a short time and familiarized himself with classic Russian and European works by the help of this newly-learnt language.” Akhondzadeh developed a heart disease in late 1877 and died of a heart attack on March 12th, 1878. He was buried next to Mirza Shafi Vazeh’s tomb in Tbilisi’s cemetery as per own request in his will (Akhondzadeh, 1994, 1-24; Malekpour, 1984: 129-130).

The first historical encounter between Iranians the Western drama takes place during Agha Mohammad Khan’s invasion of Georgia and Tbilisi. In his invasion of Georgia and after many killings and destructions, Agha Mohammad Khan commands his army to kill a great number of theater actors in Tbilisi. Tbilisi drama, which boasted a Western-inspired culture and drama at the time, almost disintegrated after

this massacre (Malekpour, Vol. 1, 1984: 54-106). Akhondzadeh in fact had no knowledge about drama and theater until his trip to Tbilisi in 1834. His first encounter with drama was in the fifth decade of the 19th century. At this epoch, concerts were held in the salons of wealthy Georgian princes and short pieces of the works of Russian and Georgian writers would go on display. A large theater was later founded in Tbilisi and the plays of Moliere and Griboyedov went on stage there. Akhondzadeh went to these plays and familiarized himself with the most important Russian plays such as the ones by Gogol Ostrovsky and was thus inspired by Shakespeare and Moliere. In the introduction to his *Parables*, Akhondzadeh writes, “the noble science of edification has never been written in Persian in the form of comedy or drama that is the ethereality of words, and our fellow countrymen are deprived of this gift. If God wills, such prose will be written by this humble in Persian so that it shall persist over time. As the grand monarch, honorable empress, Ashraf Amjad, (قنیزواررنصوف), ruler of the Caucasus, built an edifice for a theater in Tbilisi in 1887 and supported anyone who possessed the theory and practice of drama for staging their gifts, therefore I, too, have composed six parables and one story in Turkish and presented them all in one book in order to make Muslims familiar with this alien matter” (Akhondzadeh, 1977: 21-29 & 3-5; Malekpour, 1984: 171-177). As mentioned earlier, Tbilisi was considered the land of Iranian democrats during the Iranian constitutional revolution. In the introduction to the book *Masalek-al-Mohsenin*, Talbof mentions his move to Tbilisi for pursuing his political activities (Talbof, 1977: 5-7). Mirza Jalil Gholizadeh, son of Mohammad Gholi, another satirist of the constitutional era and founder of Molla Nasraddin newspaper, entered the teachers’ school of Gori (Georgia) at the age of 14 or 15 and, upon graduation in 1904, went to Tbilisi and began writing for Shargh-e-Russ newspaper with the editorship of Mohammad Agha Shah Takhti (Aryanpour, 1978: 40-46). He published Molla Nasraddin newspaper in Tbilisi (Aryanpour vol. 2, 1978: 40).

5. **Religious beliefs:** Khaghani’s odes, sonnets and quatrains are filled with Christian allusions as his mother and wife were Christians of the Caucasus. His poetry collection is laden with Christian expressions and his ode, “Tarsaeiyeh”, is well known for its abundance of Christian Georgian expressions (Khaqani, 2004: 25).

Conclusion

Deep emotional and cultural ties have developed between Iran and Georgia over the ages, and, through cultural interactions and under each other’s influence, Georgian and Iranian elements have grown roots in

their literature side by side. Georgian elements most frequently reflected in Persian literature are: 1. General information on Georgians and Georgia; 2. Georgian language; 3. Historical refers; 4. Georgian places; and 5. Religious beliefs.

Georgian elements have entered Persian language through several different ways; for example, 1. Through poets and writers, in particular Iranian historians of the past, who have entered Georgian elements including historical issues, Georgian places and descriptive accounts of Georgian people and cultures, into their writings due to historical common grounds; 2. Contemporary Iranian scientists, researchers and writers; and 3. Iranian travelers and globetrotters. Persian literature texts that are most abundant with Georgian elements include historical accounts, travel tales, encyclopedias and Azerbaijani style poetry, in particular the poems of Nezami Ganjavi and Khaghani Shirvani.

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