

RECEPTION OF ORIENT AND GEORGIA BY AN EUROPEAN SCHOLAR OF THE 17TH CENTURY

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Illustrium, Ab Orbe Condito, Ruinarum (Notable Devastations since the Creation of the World) (Bisselii 1663) – the work of German Jesuit Ioannis Bisselii which I am going to introduce, I found working on the Slovak school drama inspired by the story of Georgian Queen Ketevan and entitled “Katherine (Ketevani), Queen of Georgians, Decorated with her own Blood, Presented on the Stage” (Mišianik 1981: 605-610).



Survived only bilingual synopsis of school drama written in Slovakized Czech (*Katerina, královná gurziánská, vlastní krví ozdobená, na divadlo predstavená*) and Latin (*Caterina, Gurzianorum regina, proprio sanguine purpurata, theatro data*) languages, the school drama was written by an unknown Slovak Jesuit in 1701 and in the same year was presented at the stage of the Jesuit Gymnasium in Skalica (Minárik 1985: 280). The abovementioned drama depicts the story of the Georgian Queen Ketevan (ca. 1575-1624) who was martyred by Shah Abbas (1571-1629) in Shiraz on September 22 in 1624 for her devotion to Christian belief. Synopsis of the school drama consists of “short extract from the history”, preface, three acts, two choruses, and epilogue. It should be pointed out that at the end of the “short historical extract” the Slovak Jesuit specifies authors of the sources which he had used composing his drama and introduces their titles. These sources are following: the above-mentioned work by Ioannis Bisselii and *De rebus gestis Schach-Abae (About Shah Abbas’ Deeds)* by Adam Olearius (Mišianik 1981: 605).

Therefore, anonymous Slovak Jesuit's work was inspired by the story of Georgian Queen, who was martyred for her Orthodox belief and this information he obtained from the sources of the European authors of the 17th century, who dedicated their works to the Orient. Adam Olearius (1599-1671) is a well-known German traveler, scholar and diplomat who wrote *Detailed Description of the Travel of Holstain Mission to Moscow and Persia* (1647). Unlike Olearius, Bisseliis' work was unknown for Georgian scholars. His work shows how great was an interest of the 17th century Western Europe towards Orient and Georgia. About Ioannis Bisselii from the Society of Jesus (Societate Iesu) we have the following information: he was German Jesuit, was born in 1601 in Badenhauzen (Shvabia) and died in 1677 in Amberg. His abovementioned book was published twice. First within 1654-1664, the second time after his death in 1679 (Mianik 1981: 610). The fact that this book was published twice in such a short time interval shows on the one hand, that his work was very popular reading book in the second half of the 17th century, and on the other hand – the great interest of that times Europeans towards the Orient, resp. the Persia and Georgia.

I found the book *Illustrium, Ab Orbe Conditio, Ruinarum*, written by German Jesuit Ioannis Bisselii in the Department of Rare Books in Moscow Lenin Library in 1989 and copied the fragment rewriting by hand as it was forbidden to make photocopies.

The subject of my article is presentation of the passage from Bisseliis' book, which covers pages 1035-1065. This extract contains information about historical persons, events, and geographical matters, to what Ioannis Bisselii paid attention.

Here we present English translation of relevant passages from *Illustrium, Ab Orbe Conditio, Ruinarum*, particularly, from the "Ruina. regium Persidis", where about Queen Ketevan Bisselii writes:

Shah Abbas pays great attention to his power and life; he enjoys the intercourse with his Christian spouse who is ranked among our saints. For example, he let her to go to the adherents of the Augustinian Order to the Isfahan residence in the royal City of Sedis and he himself moved in their circles with pleasure [...] However, he committed a lot, what is connected with the persecution, punishment and destruction of Christians. Like his ancestors and descendants, he had three wives and hundreds of concubines simultaneously. However, not all of them were let to keep their salutary religion. Among slaves was Katherine the Georgian Queen, who strictly adhered the Christian cult, specifically Orthodox, moreover, she was famous for her beauty, origin and dignities [...] That is the reason why Shah wanted to have a power over her and made her the fourth wife (as he already had three another). However, he saw, that she opposes to his wishes on the one hand the Saints and royal moral purity and on the other hand Christ's rule about marriage of one person with one. Nevertheless, Shah was not able to force her to refuse Christianity nor with threats, nor with songs, nor with kindness and by terrible torture she was driven to extremity; but Augustinians, who encouraged her with a crown of a saint martyr, supported her. In 1617, she was taken into the havens. After 12 years Shah finally followed her, but into other world (Bisselii 1663: 1061, 1062, 1063).

In my opinion, writing about Ketevan Bisselii was familiar with the work of Augustinian Friar Ambrosio dos Anjos. Inaccuracies in the fragments which narrate about Queen Ketevan make obvious that it is less possible that Bisselii has read work of Ambrosio dos Anjos, it is most probable he has heard about this information and this explain discrepancies in the text. Portuguese Friar Ambrosio dos Anjos was a member of Augustinian mission in Shiraz and wrote *A true account of the Glorious martyrdom of the Most Serene Queen Ketevan Dedopali in Shiraz Metropolis of the Kingdom of Persia by the Order of Shah Abbas on the Twenty-second day of September in the year 1624*. This record describes Queen Ketevan's relationship with Catholic Missionaries, her martyr-

dom, death, burial and recovery and subsequent dispersal of her relics (Flannery 2013: 202-203). Therefore, from this very important source we learn that he was familiar with the Georgian Queen Ketevan and sometimes visited her in Shiraz captivity. The fact is that the Portuguese missionaries fought to start their missionary activity in Georgia, and for this the most suitable way was to get closer to the Georgian royal person. The record of Ambrosio dos Anjos is a very important source, since the author was personally acquainted with Queen Ketevan and was eye-witness of her martyrdom. The author emphasizes that Ketevan went to the Shah on a diplomatic mission to prevent the Shah's invasion of her country. But Ketevan's requests were in vain, and the Shah ordered to send to Shiraz where she lived under the arrest. According to Ambrosio dos Anjos, Ketevan rarely left her home, only when she was called to the governor's palace or to the Shah's harem, where she went to see, comfort and strengthen the Georgian women who were there. Ambrosio dos Anjos notes that Ketevan urged the Georgians who were in Persia to remain faithful to Christ and was very worried when she was told that some of them, because of all sorts of promises or fear of torture, refused Christian faith. He also reports that Ketevan spent almost all of her time in prayer. People who knew her talked a lot about her responsiveness and virtue. She lived modestly and was treated like an ordinary woman. She had a priest who helped her in spiritual matters, but he was slandered and sentenced to death. Ambrosio dos Anjos writes that Ketevan helped them with donations, and her visit was always a great consolation for him (Tabagua & Bibileishvili 1987: 26-34).

During her captivity in Shiraz Queen Ketevan maintained good relations with Catholic missionaries and diplomats and at the same time with steadfastness in the Orthodox faith and courage, she indicated the only possible path for the country's development is Orthodoxy. This is evidence how diligently the Augustinian missionaries tried to convert her to the Catholic faith, and later, to create the impression that Ketevan was converted to Catholicism before her martyrdom. According to the calculations of the Portuguese missionaries, this would give the Augustinian missionaries an advantage over other orders to establish themselves in Georgia.

But later Ambrosio confessed that his claim of Queen Ketevan's conversion to Catholicism was unfounded:

It is to be believed that this Queen is partaking of God's glory in the heaven, for although she belonged to the Greek rite, she was most cordially disposed towards the Holy Catholic Church and to all the Latin's, showing them every mark of affection and helping them as much as she could. She lived on such good term with us that it is impossible to believe that she was ill-disposed to the Holy Catholic Church (Lang 1956: 172).

One more issue interesting for Bisselii are military campaigns of Shah Abbas:

Moreover, he often and for a long time tormented with arms Georgians (Georgianis), who are Christians and live behind the Armenian mountains. He moved his troops against their king Tamer Khan, the son of Simonis Armenian, first time troops were leaded by warlike nobleman, second time, in his absence he gave such an order, which was impossible to fulfill due to invincible power of Tamer. On return to Persia, he killed everybody, although their only fault was that their arms were unhappy.

After this he organized the third campaign, which was leaded by him personally, he invaded Georgia with a greater number of troops, seized it, and within the nine months ruined the country. Before this, in accordance with the oath which he made, in case of victory all Georgian captives: men and women shall be sold per Abis. Abis is a Persian coin that equals to eight

European Dinaris. Shah Abbas won a victory over Tamer; refractory tribe is subjugated. The great number of enslaved Georgians was brought to Persia, Ispahan. Today you can see there their ancestors and some Christians as well... (Bisselii 1663: 1061-1062).

It is obvious that under the Tamer Khan Biselii means King Teimuraz the First (1589-1663), the King of Kakheti in 1606-1616 and in 1625-1647 and the King of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti in 1625-1633. It is worthy to note that Bisselii is not aware of fact that the Queen Keteavn was mother of King Teimuraz the First. Under the Simonis Armenian probably is meant Simon the First, the King of Kartli in 1579-1569 and 1579-1599. Presenting Teimuraz the First as the son of Simon Armenis is discrepancy.

As for the military campaigns against Georgia, Bisselii is well informed, he speaks about three invasions of Shah Abbas, which in general correspond to reality. From the sources it is known that in the first military campaign against Georgia Shan Abbas participated personally. But according to Bisselii revolt of Georgian of March 25, 1625 took place between first (1614) and second (1614-1617) invasions what does not correspond to the reality. Under the "warlike nobleman" presumably is meant Giorgi Saakadze. In this passage is mirrored the fact when in 1616, after an unprecedented massacre, arranged by Shah Abbas, Kakheti lost two-thirds of its population: a lot of people were killed by the enemy, and the rest of Georgians were captured and forcedly deported to the various parts of Persia to facilitate their forced assimilation. Bisselii also mentions Shah Abass' Hormuz military campaign, he writes: "Recently he took away from Lusitanians an Island Armusiam (Ormuz as ancient author call it) in order to avoid conversion of the best teams of Moslems into the cult of Christ".

Bisselii pays special attention to court intrigues and deeds of cruelty of Shah Abbas, he writes:

He did not spare even his own son's, Sephy Mirsa's life who was appointed as his successor. He was a youth of many inborn and acquired dignities, whose mother was Christian. He was thrown down from the horse and speared by Bebutbek, the noble Persian. Sephy died. His dead body was put in a conspicuous place to be seen by all people and did not left him in a peace; but after a few hours, he was buried thanks to care of some high standing persons. After this Shah invited the noblest people of the country, offered them seats around the royal table, gave them to drink poison, and immediately ordered them to fight with death and than he was looking and asking, why they all are dying" (Bisselii 1663: 1047).

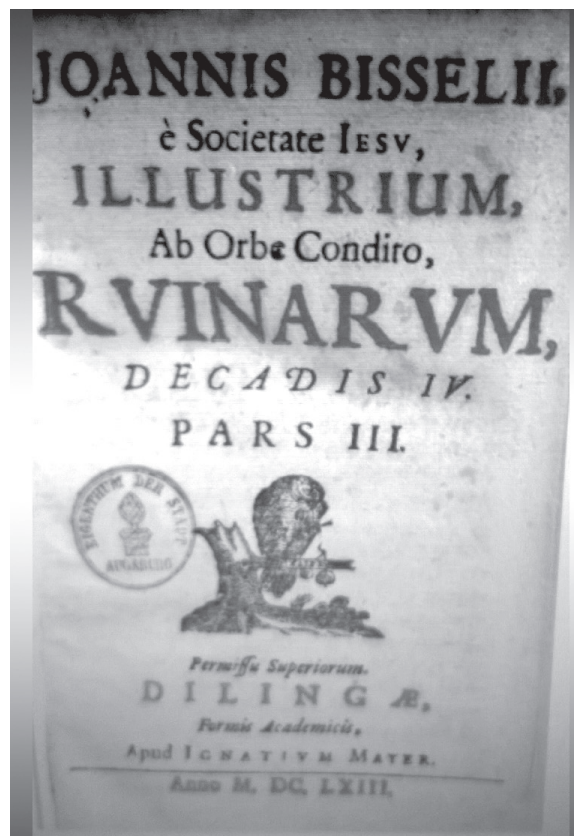
As for Mirza's death, there was no other reason than guiltless and naivety. One of the noblemen, who wished Mirsa to advent power as soon as possible, wrote a letter and put it stealthily into his chamber. Mirza himself gave this letter to father immediately, refusing such revolting and bloody content of the letter. However, in Sach-Abass' hart was born suspicion about his son's desire to inherit power prematurely and so, fatherly love had been grown into hatred towards the betrayal. Therefore, he killed him, to whom as the father he gave a life and although he was dear to him. Then he annihilated Bebutbek, the killer of Mirza and seized his property (Bisselii 1663: 1059-1060).

Bisselii except of the historical events pays a special attention to the toponyms. It is worthy of note that in this small passage which I introduce in this paper Bisselii speaks about the geographical names and traces their origin back to the old times. For example:

Contemporary Persia (Lat. Persis) which gave the name to the entire Empire which belonged to Cyr (Lat. Cyro) and Cambis (Lat. Cambijseque) is called Farsistan (Lat. Farsia) what do not correspond to the generally accepted name. Parthia which is located in the North, near Hirkan

(Lat. Hyrcanos) and is new additions of Boter (Lat. Botero) is designated Arac but the correct is Eeac-Azem. Taking into consideration the fact of alteration, nowadays generation call it Servan, and the Mediam Aquilonare - Schirveny - on the other hand, in Anstralorem, which belongs to Late Middle Ages (they) call Adirbeitzan, others Hirkaniam Grigia (Lat Hyrcaniam alii Grigiam) and also Corcam, (Lat Corcam) and also Dargumentam - Strana, (Lat; Stranam); according to Ollearius - Kilan: Bakhtria (Lat; Bakhtrianam); Batter and Kharasan (Charassaam) or Khorasan (Lat Chorasan)" (Bisselii 1663: 1036).

It is also obvious from this small fragment of this voluminous work that the author used more then several different sources while writing his book. I came to this conclusion based on the fact that he mentioned several authors while speaking about toponyms. He lists such authors as Boter (lat. -Boter), Olearius, merchant Khondian Atlanti (Atlanti, Hondiam Mercatoris Atlantis), Buasard (lat. Boisardus), and Baronius. For the designation of Georgia and Georgians he used two different terms: "Gurz" and "Georgianorum" and this points to the fact that he used several sources while composing his work.



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აღმოსავლეთისა და საქართველოს რეცეფცია XVII საუკუნის ევროპელი მეცნიერის მიერ

მაია ნაჭყებია

გერმანელი მეცნიერის, იოჰანეს ბისელიუსის ლათინურ წიგნს „მნიშვნელოვანი დამხობანი სამყაროს დასაბამიდან“, რომელიც 1663 წლით არის დათარიღებული, მივაკვლიეთ სლოვაკურ სასკოლო დრამაზე „ქეთევანი, ქართველთა დედოფალი, თავისივე სისხლით შემკული, სცენაზე წარმოდგენილი“ მუშაობისას. სასკოლო დრამის ავტორი არის სკალიცელი იეზუიტი. ნაწარმოები დაწერილია 1701 წელს და იგი ამავე წელს იქნა წარმოდგენილი სკალიცის იეზუიტური გიმნაზიის სცენაზე. პიესას საფუძვლად უდევს ქეთევან დედოფლის სარწმუნოებისადმი ერთგულების ამბავი. პიესა სრული სახით შემონახული არ არის, ჩვენამდე მოაღწია მხოლოდ სლოვაკიზებული ჩეხურსა და ლათინურ ენებზე შესრულებულმა სინოფსისმა. სინოფსისში, კერძოდ კი „მოკლე ისტორიულ მიმოხილვაში“. ავტორი ასახელებს იმ წყაროებსა და ავტორებს, რომლებითაც ისარგებლა თავისი ნაწარმოების წერისას. ერთ-ერთი ავტორი არის იოჰანეს ბისელიუსი, რომლის ნაშრომიც აქამდე არ იყო ცნობილი ქართული სამეცნიერო საზოგადოებისთვის. ჩვენ გავეცანით ბისელიუსის ნაშრომის შესაბამის მონაკვეთებს, სადაც საქართველოსა და ქეთევან დედოფალზეა საუბარი. ბისელიუსის ნაშრომში ქეთევანი მოხსენიებულია კათოლიკური ეკლესიის წმინდანად, რაც, ცხადია, სინამდვილეს არ შეესაბამება და, სავარაუდოდ, ეს ცნობა მას ამბროზიო დუშ ანჟუშის „ნამდვილის ცნობების“ გავლენით აქვს დაწერილი, თუმცა თავად პორტუგალიელმა ბერმა მოგვიანებით აღიარა, რომ ქეთევან დედოფლის გაკათოლიკება სინამდვილეს არ შეესაბამებოდა.

ბისელიუსი ასევე ყურადღებას აქცევს საკარო ინტრიგებს შაჰის კარზე, მის სამხედრო კამპანიებს: სამ ლაშქრობას საქართველოში, ორუმბის დაპყრობას და აღმოსავლური სამყაროს ტოპონიმიკის საკითხებს.

სტატიის ავტორი გამოთქვამს ვარაუდს, რომ თავისი ნაშრომის წერისას ბისელიუსი რამდენიმე ავტორის ნაშრომით სარგებლობდა.