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PALEOGRAPHIC, TEXTOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC STUDY AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PERSIAN MANUSCRIPTS WRITTEN IN THE GEORGIAN SCRIPT

Abstract

The paper deals with the manuscripts S-16, S-418, and H-2290 – preserved in Georgian-language funds of Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, which attest the Persian texts in Georgian script. S-16 is an 18th-century manuscript containing a Persian Gospel transcribed in Georgian letters. Manuscript S-418 is an 18th-century collection that includes excerpts from poems in various languages, among them a Persian poem written in Georgian letters, followed by Georgian translations of Persian words and phrases, also in Georgian script. H-2290 (19th century) is a bilingual text of Georgian-Persian expressions, where Georgian phrases and their Persian translations, transliterated using Georgian letters, are presented one below the other. In the paper, paleographic, textological, and phonetic studies and comparative analyses of the mentioned manuscripts are presented.

Keywords: *Manuscripts*, *Persian language*, *Georgian script*, *Gospel*, *Phonetics*

Introduction

The Oriental collection of the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts houses over 700 Persian manuscripts. These manuscripts span a wide array of genres, including poetry, history, collections with diverse content, epistolary literature, lexicology, medicine, fiction, religion, Sufism, astronomy, poetics, ethics, geography, grammar, philosophy, alchemy, travel, and even sports. The chronological boundaries of the manuscripts extend from the 14th to the 19th centuries.

However, the focus of the recent paper is not on the Persian manuscripts preserved in the Oriental collection. Instead, it centers around three manuscripts – S-16, S-418, and H-2290 – preserved in Georgian-language funds, which attest the Persian texts in Georgian script.

S-16 is an 18th-century manuscript containing a Persian Gospel transcribed in Georgian letters. Manuscript S-418 is an 18th-century collection that includes excerpts from poems in various languages, among them a Persian poem written in Georgian letters, followed by Georgian translations of Persian words and phrases, also in Georgian script. H-2290 (19th century) is a bilingual text of Georgian-Persian expressions, where Georgian phrases and their Persian translations, transliterated using Georgian letters, are presented one below the other.

I. S-16:

S-16 is a Persian Gospel manuscript transcribed in the Georgian script, showcasing a rich presentation. The script, a graceful Mkhedruli style, adorns sturdy paper and is embellished with intricate golden ornaments. The manuscript spans 358 folios, with the Gospel of Matthew commencing on page 3r, Mark on 109r, Luke on 173r, and John on 279r. The page dimensions are 29.9X19.5, while the text occupies an area of 23.5X14.5. Margins are meticulously proportioned: outer – 5, inner – 1, top – 3.5, bottom – 3. Crafted on paper, the text is organized in a single column with 10 lines per page, maintaining a consistent 2.5-sized space between lines. The ink is black, with titles elegantly inscribed in red. The manuscript cover, fashioned from leather-covered wood, boasts ornate detailing. At its center, an image of the crucifixion takes prominence, surrounded by depictions of the four evangelists along the edges. Notably, one page is missing, specifically between 172 and 173, marking the end of Mark's Gospel. Pages 2r-v and 108v remain blank. Each page of S-16 showcases catchwords at the bottom, consisting of several letters that offer a preview of the following page. The margins are adorned with opulent golden and silver ornaments, predominantly featuring rhombus and leaf motifs. Notably, there are no colophons or any indications about the date and place of the manuscript's composition. However, clues provided by watermarks on the paper, depicting knights, horses, and bulls, allow for a tentative dating of the manuscript to the 18th century.

On page 1r, following the title 'სახარება დაწერილი სპარსულ ენაზედ ქართული ასოებით' ('Gospel written in the Persian language with Georgian letters'), the name 'И. Андроников' is inscribed in Slavic letters. This inscription may indicate one of the manuscript's owners. Further insights into the manuscript's journey come from the stamps of the Society for the Spreading of Literacy among Georgians. These stamps suggest that the manuscript was once in the possession of this society before its current location. According to A. Tsagareli, prior to being in the care of the Society for the Spreading of Literacy among Georgians, the manuscript was housed in the student collection in St. Petersburg. This collection, consisting of 37 units, was a gift from Georgian princess Salome Parnaozovna to the students of St. Petersburg University in the 60s of the 19th century.[1]

The Vorlage of S-16

The *Vorlage* of the Persian Gospel transcribed in the Georgian script is believed to be manuscript C-268, currently held at the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies, Department of Manuscripts. This manuscript was once owned by Teimuraz Batonishvili. An inscription at the end of the text reveals, 'This Persian Gospel I had with me in Germany. By its grace, I went from St. Petersburg on May 26, 1836, and arrived back last year in November (Giorgobis tve).' Manuscript C-268 was commissioned by Nadir Shah Afshar and executed by a group of religious scholars in Isfahan. The preface at the beginning reveals that the text was translated from Arabic. This Isfahan manuscript was transported to Tbilisi, where a copy with Georgian letters was made. Another manuscript, PK 55/90, preserved at the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, shares the same redaction as C-268 and was copied in 1108 (1697). The Gospel in PK 55/90 is translated from Arabic by Ibn Email Al-Hosein Mohamed Baqeri, commissioned by Shak Soltan Hosein. However, it's important to note that S-16's source is C-268, not PK 55/90. The manuscript C-268 comprises 118

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[1] Aleksandre Tsagareli, Сведения о памятниках грузинской письменности (СПб.: 1886), XXI.

folios with dimensions of 23.3X15.3. According to M. Khubua,[2] who has conducted a detailed description and comparison of both manuscripts, S-16 bears textual and visual similarities to C-268. The historical context and shared provenance between the two manuscripts provide a deeper understanding of their significance. Indeed, both manuscripts, S-16 and C-268, emerge as significant monuments in the history of the Persian language. S-16, in particular, serves as a meticulous transliteration of C-268. Originating in Isfahan, the latter manuscript was subsequently transported to Tbilisi, where a copy featuring Georgian letters was also crafted. This historical connection not only underscores the cultural exchange between Isfahan and Tbilisi but also highlights the careful preservation and reproduction of Persian texts in the Georgian script, showcasing the intricate linguistic interplay and the importance of these manuscripts in the broader historical and linguistic context.

Phonetics

S-16 meticulously transcribes C-268, enabling us to reconstruct the Persian original with precision. Given the stark differences in language structures between Persian and Georgian, coupled with the non-ambiguous nature of the Georgian script (where the pronunciation of phonemes corresponds adequately to graphemes in a one-to-one manner), the manuscript S-16 emerges as exceptionally valuable material for delving into the history of Persian phonetics. The unique features of the Georgian script provide a distinct advantage for the detailed study of phonetic nuances in Persian, shedding light on linguistic elements that may be less apparent in the Persian script. Hence, it becomes fascinating to observe how the copyist navigated the challenges associated with selecting equivalents for Persian letters, especially considering that Georgian lacked precise counterparts or, in some instances, any equivalents at all. The table shows Persian-Georgian phonetic correspondences, where all attested equivalents of each Persian letter are presented:

Vowels

In Georgian, there are five vowels: central, open ა-a; front, mid - ე-e; front, close - ი-i; back, mid - ო-ო; and back, close -u-უ. Unlike Persian, Georgian lacks distinct long and short vowels. Therefore, the scribe opted for various methods to convey the diversity of Persian vowels. The Persian long vowels aleph آ and ى are represented with double vowels in Georgian, as seen in examples like აასიმაან (aasimaan آسمان) and მიითაიი (miiaaii می آی). However, the transmission of و varies, being conveyed at times by 'u' and at other times by 'o'. For the Persian letter 'he', two equivalents are utilized: the glottal voiceless fricative ჰ (h) and the so-called 'e eights' - ჱ (ē).[3] The latter, known as 'ei' or 'e-merve' ('eighth e'), once part of the Georgian alphabet, was equivalent to the ეჲ (ey) diphthong. In manuscript S-16, ჱ (ē) typically represents both Persian 'h's, while ჰ (h) is predominantly used for the plural suffix ها (e.g., მაჱჰაა maēhaa مه ها). Short vowels are transmitted in various ways;

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[2] Makar Khubua, "Persian manuscripts of the Gospel (XVII-XVIII cc) at the Museum of Georgia," The works of the institute of linguistics, Serie of oriental languages, I (1954): 163-185.

[3] It should be noted that during the 17th-18th centuries, the letter ჱ was often used interchangeably with ჰ in manuscripts.

for instance, 'a' can be represented by 'a' or 'e', 'e' is conveyed with 'e', 'a', 'i', or even 'o', and 'u' is depicted with 'o' or 'u'.

Consonants

Turning to the consonants, modern Georgian comprises 28 consonants, including ejectives (პ, ტ, წ, ჭ, კ). Persian, however, lacks ejectives, and as expected, our manuscripts do not include Georgian ejectives, except for ყ - a uvular ejective stop. This corresponds to the Persian uvular stop qâf in our manuscript. Additionally, the Persian post-alveolar voiced غ (ġayn) is represented by the Georgian velar voiced fricative ღ. When Persian consonants are repeated with a similar difference in pronunciation, the scribe in our manuscript typically employs a single equivalent in Georgian. For instance, only ص (ṣâd) is occasionally represented by the voiceless ს and at other times by the voiced ზ. The Persian alveolar voiced spirant žē and its Georgian parallel, the post-alveolar voiced fricative ჟ, were not observed in the manuscript. Additionally, for certain Persian letters without direct equivalents in Georgian, characters such as Persian ʿAin ع and Slavic ф are utilized, as seen in examples like ბაƷდ (ba'd بعد) and ფურუდ (furud فرود). Two Persian (Arabic) symbols, tashdid (ّ - indicating the gemination of consonants; the geminated consonant is also written twice, e.g., ამმა (amma اماّ), and hamza (ء - representing the glottal stop, e.g., ءიინ (ءiin این), are employed in the manuscript. Additionally, a special marker (ˊ) is presented on the top of nomina sacra. The وا sequence is portrayed with double ა a (და aa) დაჯდადდა xaaēad (خواهد). Ezāfe constructions are formed using the Georgian ი (e.g., مادر مسیح მადარი მასიიƷ madari masiiē). The Persian ه at the end of a word is occasionally represented with Georgian დ (e.g., გოფთა შოდა ბუდ ((goфta šoda bud گفته شده بود)), and at other times with - ი i (e.g., აზ იინქი (از اینکه az iinki).

All in all, the transcription in S-16 is executed with remarkable subtlety, showcasing the composer's fluency in both Georgian and Persian languages. The meticulous provision of stable equivalents for each letter renders this Georgian-transcribed Persian text an invaluable resource for exploring uncharted aspects of historical phonetics in both languages. Beyond phonetics, it unravels a narrative of historical, sociological, cultural, and linguistic ties between Georgia and Persia during the 17th-18th centuries.

Finally, a few words about the probable goal of the composition of such a sample. Scholars posit various purposes for the composition of this manuscript. Some believe it was created for practical use during liturgy, serving the Persian diaspora residing in Georgia, who were Christians with a proficiency in spoken Persian. Others suggest an educational intent, proposing that it was crafted for learning the Persian language. Scholars like E. Giunashvili and T. Abuladze highlight the strategic role of reading the Gospel in Persian and Turkish by ethnic Georgian priests in Christian churches, seen as a gradual tactic of Islamization among the Georgian population in both eastern and western regions of Georgia.[4] Prof. Tsisana Abuladze when discussing Turkish texts transmitted in the Georgian script expresses the following opinion: "The so-called "Tatar Gospels" is also transliterated mainly for the purpose of the practice in the language. ... It is understandable that from the

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[4] Helen Giunashvili and Tamar Abuladze, "Notes on the Persian Gospel Manuscript in Georgian Script," Iran Namag, Vol. 5, Num. 4, (2021).

soul to the flesh Christian Lords chose the Gospels and the Psalms to practice in Turkish and Persian languages".[5]

From the typological point of view, noteworthy are the Persian Gospels in Armenian script of the same period (M 2044, N 8492, N 3044, Matenadaran), from the colophons of which we learn that the Gospel was translated into Persian for Armenians living in the Eastern Caucasus in the 18th century, because they needed religious knowledge in the polemics against the Muslims.[6] As the Georgio-Persian Gospel lacks colophons, we can draw insights from similar examples like the Armeno-Persian Gospels.

II. S-418

Another sample from the S-collection is manuscript S-418, as previously mentioned, an 18th-century collection that includes three poems in Georgian. Excerpts from other Georgian poems are also found in the margins of the manuscript. Additionally, the manuscript contains Turkish and Persian texts written in Georgian letters. The Persian text is followed by Georgian translations of Persian words and phrases, also in Georgian script.

Paleography: The manuscript consists of 96 folios, measuring 31.5 x 19.3 cm. The material is paper, yellowed and stained. The cover is made of wood, wrapped in yellow leather. The beginning of the manuscript is missing. The text is written in the Mkhedruli script, with titles and the beginnings of verses in red ink. A watermark is present. Rectangular seals bearing the Mkhedruli inscription "Servant of God Nino" are found on folios 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, and 95. Cryptograms are also visible on folios 17 and 93.

Composition:

The collection includes poems by the Georgian kings Teimuraz I (1589- 1663) and Archil (1647-1713).

Inscriptions:

Poems by various authors, such as Teimuraz, Rustaveli, Archil, and Besik, are written in different hands in the margins of the manuscript. These poems are unrelated to the main text and are primarily satirical. Additionally, several Turkish (dialectal) poems written in Georgian letters appear in the margins.

Of particular interest to us is the Persian text inscribed in Georgian letters among these marginal notes.

On the folio 175 we read:

ქ. ნური ჩეშმი მან, მისსლი ბეგტ დოხტერ, ჩერა ბიდამალი, ქუჩა მირავი, ამშაბ ინჩა ბაში, სარი ხოდა აგერ ნამიქუნი, ბისიარ ბიდამალი მიქუნამ. ხანუმ ინჩავს. ქარ დარამ, ქარ. აგერ ნამიაი, დიგერ ნამიხამ თურა. დურუდ ნის, ჰარ ჩის მიგუამ, ქუნითუ.

k. nuri češmi man, missli begt' doxt'er, čera bidamali, kuǯa miravi, amšab inǯa baši, sari xoda ager namikuni, bisiar bidamali mikunam. Xanum inǯavs. Kar daram, kar. Ager namiai, digger namixam tura. Duruy nis, har čis miguam, kunitu.

[5] Tsisana Abuladze, "Turkish texts transcribed by Georgian Alphabet," Mravaltavi XXI (2005): 184.

[6] Hasmik Kirakosian, "On the Colophons to the Two Persian Gospels Manuscripts in Armenian Script (Matenadaran N 8492 and N 3044)," Etchmiadzin, 5 (2018): 69.

نور چشم من. مثل بهشت دختر. چرا بیدمالی. کجا می روی؟ امشب اینجا باشی. سرخدا اگر نمیکنی. بسیار بیدمالی میکنم. خانم اینجاست. کار دارم. کار. اگر نمیایی دیگر نمی خواهم تورا. دروغ نیست. هر چیز می گویم کن تو.

Followed by Georgian translation:

„ქ. ჩემო თვალის სინათლევ, სამოთხის მზგავსო ქალო, რათა ხარ მოწყენით, სად მიხვალ, ამაღამ აქ იყავ, ღვთის მადლისა, თუ არა იქ, დიად მეწყინება. დედოფალი აქ არის. საქმე მაქვს, კარგი საქმე. თუ არ მოხვალ, აღარ მინდიხარ შენა. ტყუილი არ არის, რასაც გეუბნები შენმა მზემა.“

"The light of my eye, paradise-like woman, why you are sad, where are you going, stay here tonight, by the grace of God, if not there, I will be very sad. The Queen is here. I have a case, a good case. If you do not come, I do not need you anymore. It is not a lie what I'm telling you, I swear by my life."

The next page contains a Persian-Georgian dictionary of words and phrases. In this section, too, the Persian text is written in Georgian letters.

176: ქ. მარდუმი ქუჯაი *k. mardumi kuǰai* - საїდავეли ხარ مردمی کجایی "Where are you from?"

გურჯი *gurǰi* - ქართველი گرجی "Georgian"

ესმა ჩიზეს *esma čizes* - სახელი რა გქვიან اسم چیست "What's your name?"

იექ *iek* - ერთი یک "one"

ბარადარ დარამ *baradar daram* - ძმა მყავს برادر دارم "I have a brother"

ქ. დირუზ *k. diruz* - გუშინ دیروز "yesterday"

ქუჯა ბუდი *kuǰa budi* - სად იყავი کجا بودی "Where were you?"

დარიხანა *darixana* - ბატონის ჯარს ქვიან درخانه "The army of master is called"

უნჯა ქი ბუდ *unǰa ki bud* - იქ ვინ იყო? آنجا کی بود "Who was there?"

ბისიარ ადამ ბუდ *bisiar adam bud* - ბევრი იყვნენ بسیار آدم بود "There were many"

ხან უნჯა ბუდ *xan unǰa bud* - ხანი იქ იყო بود خان آنجا "Khan was there."

On the margins of f. 178 we also find some Persian-Georgian phrases:

ნა რავტე ბუდამ *na ravte budam* - არ წავსულიყავ نه رفته بودم "I haven't gone."

ხოდა ნაქუნად *xoda nakunad* - ღმერთმა ნუ ქნას خدا نکند "God forbid!"

ყურბანით გარდამ *q'urbanit gardam* - გენაცვალე قربانت گردم "My dear (lit. Geo. Let me take your place (if something bad happens); Pers. I will be your victim)"

On f. 180 there are the first Georgian phrases, followed by the corresponding Persian translations:

შენთვის მოვკვდები - ყურბანით შავამ *q'urbanit šavam* قربانت شوم "I will die for you"

On f. 191 we find:

დილით მიხამ *dilit mixam* - გულით მინდა دلت می خوام "I want with all my heart"

ბაღ მირავტემ *bay miravtem* - ბაღში წავედი باغ می رفتم "I went to the garden"

უნჯა ბია *unǰa bia* - იქ მოდი... آنجا بیا "Come there"

The dictionary continues on f. 192:

მან უნჯა *man unǰa* - მე იქ من آنجا "I there"

რავტამ *ravtam* - წავედი رفتم "went"

ამა *ama* - მარა امّا "but"

არჩი რა *arči ra* - რაც რამ هر چی را "anything"

On the same page (192) there are 4 Persian-Georgian equivalents on the bottom margin:

გენახოს = დიდეი *didei* دیده ای "you saw"

გაიგონე შანიდი *šanidi* شنیدی "you heard"

And then Georgian-Persian correspondences in 6 columns.

The table displays the Persian-Georgian phonetic correspondences, showing all the Georgian equivalents for the Persian letters found in the marginal inscriptions:

آ ا	ა, უ	a, u
ب	ბ	b
پ	-	-
ت	თ, ტ	t, t'
ث	სს	ss
ج	ჟ	ž
چ	ჩ	č
ح	ჰ	h
خ	ხ	x
د	დ	d
ذ	-	-
ر	რ	r
ز	ზ, ს	z, s
ژ	-	-
س	ს	s
ش	შ	š
ص	-	-
ض	-	-
ط	-	-
ظ	-	-
ع	-	-
غ	ღ	γ
ف	ვ	v
ق	ყ	q'
ک	ქ	k
گ	გ	g
ل	ლ	l
م	მ	m
ن	ნ	n
و	უ, ვ, ო	u, v, o
ه	ჰ, ა, 0	h, a, 0
ی	ი	i
َ	ა, ე	a, e
ِ	ე, ი, ა	e, i, a
ُ	ო, უ	o, u

As we can see, stable equivalents are not consistently maintained when Persian letters are transcribed into the Georgian alphabet. The author adapts Persian words to various Georgian phonemes based on sound. Notably: Georgian *u* is used as an equivalent for Aleph; the Persian *he* (ه) is omitted at the beginning of words (before vowels); voiced consonants become voiceless at the end of words; *fe* is represented by *v*; *ṣe* is rendered as a double *s*; *te* is occasionally represented by *t'*; *ze* is sometimes transcribed as *z* and other times as *s*. Geminated consonants are written as single consonants, short vowels are transcribed variably, and auxiliary verbs are written without their final syllable.

All of this suggests that the author is transcribing Persian words as he hears them, i.e., phonetically. He does not seem to be fluent in Persian (e.g., *begt* instead of *behešt*). From the material, it appears that he is familiar with spoken Persian (e.g., *unža*, *mixam*, *inžavs*, etc.). Most likely, the inscriptions were made by the owner of the collection. Since there is no connection between the inscriptions and the poems in the collection, the reason for the inclusion of these inscriptions remains unclear.

III. H-2290

And last but not least, the 19th-century manuscript H-2290 represents a bilingual text of Georgian-Persian expressions. Georgian phrases are presented alongside their Persian translations, which are transliterated using Georgian letters.

The description of manuscript H-2290 provides only limited information: it is titled 'Practice Book of Georgian-Persian Phrases,' dated to the 19th century, with dimensions of 17x32 cm, and consists of 2 pages. The manuscript is made of paper, is in poor condition (lacking a cover and damaged), and is written in the Mkhedruli script. It bears two seals. The description also mentions that at the beginning of the manuscript, there is a folio that reads: „რუჲული თურქთა ენათათვს და ქართულად გარდმოღებული,“ which translates as 'Exercise book for the language of Turks and translated into Georgian'.[7]

The manuscript has been restored, although it is unclear when or where the restoration took place, as the current data differs significantly from the original description. The current dimensions of the manuscript are 15.7x70 cm, with the text area measuring 11.5 cm. The margins have been trimmed at the top and bottom, with the right margin now measuring 2 cm and the left margin 2.5 cm. Only one folio has survived, and it contains Georgian and Persian phrases written in the Mkhedruli script on both sides. The first side has 77 lines, and the second side has 85 lines (with an additional 8 lines written in the margin). The manuscript is bound in two places, and at these points, there are two elliptical oriental soot seals. Additionally, there are two Russian seals from the Russian Public Library (RPB, before 1925) and two Georgian seals from the former museum of the Georgian Historical and Ethnographic Society. The paper does not have a watermark, and the manuscript is now missing the title page mentioned in the original description.

The two pages of the manuscript differ in both formatting and the transliteration of letters. Let us analyze each page separately.

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[7] Aleksandre Baramidze, edit., Description of the Georgian Manuscripts. V (H collection) (Tbilisi: Georgian Academy of Sciences, 1949), 203.

I. As previously noted, page I contains 77 lines, with Georgian phrases followed by their Persian translations, both written in Georgian letters. These phrases and translations were created by the same hand, using the same ink, and at the same time.

Interestingly, the initial letters of the Persian text on this page are predominantly in the Asomtavruli script. Examples include: Ⴙი (Či), Ⴣა (Va), Ⴂუ (Gu), Ⴣაყამათ (Vaq'amat), Ⴙიგარი (Nigari), Ⴒარი (Tari), Ⴌო (No), Ⴑად (Sad), Ⴁეთარ (Betar), Ⴙუ (Ču), Ⴂოვთ (Govt), Ⴒან (Tan), Ⴍნჩი (Onči), Ⴂარ (Gar), Ⴞარა (Mara), Ⴂი (Gi), and others.

It is also noteworthy that three Persian words on this page, which begin with Asomtavruli letters, are abbreviated: Ⴂ̃ფთ (G̃ft), Ⴂ̃რჩი (G̃rči), and Ⴂ̃სან (G̃san).

Below is a table of phonetic correspondences between Georgian and Persian letters, presenting all the attested equivalents for each Persian letter (phoneme) found on this page.

آ ا	ა, აა, ო, უ	a, aa, o, u
ب	ბ	b
پ	�ფ, ფ	p, ɸ
ت	თ, ტ, დ	t, t', d
ث	ს	s
ج	ჯ	ǯ
چ	ჩ	č
ح	ჰ	h
خ	ხ	x
د	დ, თ	d, t
ذ	ზ	z
ر	რ	r
ز	ზ	z
ژ	შ	š
س	ს	s
ش	შ	š
ص	ს	s
ض	ზ	z
ط	თ	t
ظ	ზ	z
ع	ა	a
غ	ღ	γ
ف	ჯ, ფ, ვ, ბ	p, ɸ, v, b
ق	ყ, ღ	q', γ
ک	ქ	k
گ	გ	g
ل	ლ	l
م	მ	m
ن	ნ	n
و	უ, ვ, ო	u, v, o
ه	ჰ, ჱ, 0	h, ē, 0

ی	ი	i
َ	ა, ე	a, e
ِ	ი	i
ُ	ო, უ	o, u

As we can see, consistent equivalents are not maintained when transcribing Persian letters into the Georgian script. The author adapts Persian words to various Georgian phonemes based on sound. Notably, as before, Georgian *u* is used for Aleph (e.g., آنکه - *unki* for *unki*); the Persian *he* (ه) is often dropped at the end and in the middle of words (e.g., کوه - *ku* for *kūh*, نه - *no* for *nah*, بتر - *betar* for *behtar*). Again, voiced consonants become voiceless at the end of words (e.g., پوشید - *pušanit* for *pušid*, می‌کنید - *mikunet* for *mikunid*).

The letter ف is sometimes rendered as *p* (e.g., افراسیاب - *aprasiob* for *Afrāsiyāb*), sometimes as the Slavic ф (کاف *kaφ*), sometimes as *v* (e.g., گفت - *govt* for *goft*), and occasionally as *b* (e.g., خریف - *xarib* for *xarif*). The letter *te* is sometimes rendered as *t'* (e.g., درختان - *diraxt'an* for *diraxtān*, دست‌ها - *dast'a* for *dast'hā*). Similar to manuscript S-418, geminated consonants are represented as single consonants, and auxiliary verbs are missing their final syllables.

All of this indicates that in this case as well, the author was transcribing Persian words based on their sound.

On the second page, Persian translations written in Georgian letters follow the Georgian phrases. Each Persian phrase is preceded by the Georgian letter ქ (k), which is a symbol of Christ. Unlike the first page, there are no Asomtavruli letters here. The Georgian translations are written in a different hand and with different ink. Additionally, the letter correspondences differ from those on the first page.

آ ا	აა, ო	aa, o
ب	ბ	b
پ	ფ	p
ت	თ	t
ث	ს	s
ج	ჯ	ǰ
چ	ჩ́	č
ح	ჱ	ē
خ	ხ	x
د	დ	d
ذ	ზ	z
ر	რ	r
ز	ზ	z
ژ		
س	ს	s
ش	შ	š
ص	ს	s
ض	ზ	z
ط	თ	t
ظ	ზ	z

ع	ა	a
غ	ყ, ღ	q', γ
ف	ჳ, 3	w, v
ق	ყ	q'
ک	ქ	k
گ	გ	g
ل	ლ	l
م	მ	m
ن	ნ	n
و	3	v
ه	(ჱ, ჰ)	ē, h
ى	ი, იი	i, ii
ـَ	ა	a
ـِ	ე, ი	e, i
ـُ	ო, უ	o, u

The table shows that the equivalents for transmitting Persian letters are more stable on the second page compared to the first. Georgian abruptives are not used. It is strange to see ჳ (w) used as the equivalent for ف and ჱ (ē)[8] for ه. Long vowels are represented in a geminated form (e.g., دین را - დიინ რაა for *dīn rā*). While tashdid is not indicated, double consonants are written twice where implied (e.g., ჱაყყ for *ēaq'q'* and حق for *ḥaqq*).

The author of the Persian section seems to be more fluent in Persian and makes an effort to preserve its peculiarities, unlike the author of the first page.

Regarding content, it is presumed that the first page of the scroll contains a translation of Persian ghazals, which have not yet been identified. However, the Georgian text includes the phrase: "This poem belongs to Nizam al-Mulk" (ქ. ნიზამელ მულქის ნათქვამია ეს ლექსი). The translator also attempts to maintain the Persian rhythm (e.g., *rang - dang*, *perovani - isrovani*). The content of the phrases on the first page primarily praises women, e.g.,

> Geo.: წარბ მკვლდოვანი და წამწამ ისროვანი
> "Rocky eyebrows and arrow-like eyelashes"
> Pers.: ჩი აბრუ ქამანრიზ ჩი მუშგან ზადანგ
> *či abru kamanriz či mušgan zadang*
> Geo.: მკერდი რომ ქონდეს რბილოვანი და წმინდა
> "That the beast would be soft and pure"
> Pers. სინა ამ ბარ ქი ბაშედ ნარმი საჶ
> *sina am bar ki based narmi saჶ*

The content of the second page is mostly didactic: e.g.,
Geo.: შენ მარტო და არავინ იცოდეს შენს გულში რაც აქვს
"Only you and nobody else should know what is in your heart"
Pers.: ქ. აგარ ჯოზ თო დაანად ქი რააი თო ჩიისთ

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[8] Cf. above the first footnote for the manuscript S-16.

k. agar šoz to daanad ki raai to čiist

Geo.: შენს შვილებს მეცნიერებ და ნამუსი და ისრის სროლა და მხედრობა ასწავლე

"Teach your children science and conscience and shooting arrow and horse training"

Pers.: ქ. ვა ვარზანდაან რაა ელმ ვა ადაბ ვა თიირ ანააზი ვა სავაარი ბიაამუზ

k. va warzandaan raa elm va adab va tiir anaazi va savaari biaamuz

Geo.: სიყვარულობას დედაკაცებისსას ნუ დაიჯერებ

"Don't believe in woman's love"

Pers.: ქ. ბარ დუსთიი ზანააn ეთიმაად მაქონ

k. bar dusti zanan etimaad makon

The discussed data clearly indicates that the manuscript was created by two authors: one who was well-versed in Persian and another with relatively limited proficiency. It appears that the manuscript was intended for educational purposes, aimed at Georgian users interested in learning Persian.

To sum up, the analyzed material demonstrates that Persian texts transcribed into Georgian script were primarily created for practical purposes – such as language practice and everyday use of Persian words and phrases. The comparison of phonetic correspondences across the three manuscripts reveals that the authors made varying efforts to maintain consistent equivalents for Persian sounds. Consequently, these Georgian-transcribed Persian texts offer precise and valuable insights into several unexplored aspects of historical phonetics. Additionally, they provide a window into the historical, sociological, cultural, and linguistic relations between Georgia and Persia from the 17th to the 19th centuries.

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