

## **The Chronology of Prince Kaikhosro's Occupation as a Dārūgha of Isfahan Reconsidered**

Prince Kaikhosro (known in Iran as Kay-Qosrow Khan) was the elder son of Levan, brother of Giorgi XI, the King of Kartli. He mostly served in Iran: Kaikhosro was naib of dīvān**begī**, dārū**gha**, commander-in-chief of Iranian army, and lastly in 1709-1711, wālī of Kartli. Due to the fact that Kaikhosro stayed in Iran, the administration of the Kartli kingdom was entrusted to his brother Vakhtang. Kaikhosro took part in suppressing riot in Isfahan and participated in a combat against Afghan rebels in Iran. Kaikhosro was conspicuous for his warcraft and for the talent of warlord.

Obviously, Kaikhosro's service in Iran was in the interest of the royal family. However, we should not forget that this fact was conditioned by historical circumstances of the time. As a result, since his young years, Kaikhosro had to serve the Shah of Iran along with other Islamized Georgians and to waste his strength and talent outside of his motherland. Despite serving in a foreign country, Prince Kaikhosro was contemplating converting to the creed and traditions of his ancestors. The foreign authors who knew Kaikhosro personally have noted this intention. In this respect, Tadeusz Krusinski, a Polish Jesuit monk who lived in the Safavid Empire from 1707 to 1725/1728, was a first-hand witness to the developments of the time:

“The prince was unhappy that in order to retain the right to the throne of Georgia he had to be a vassal of the King of Iran. For that, he denied Christianity and converted to Islam. However, later on he regretted his move. After the military operation in Kandahar, he was thinking about abandonment of Islam, wishing to return back to the Church [i.e. Christian faith] and to sacrifice his faith to the throne. He made the first step by added a cross to his ensign. The missionaries in the Kingdom of

Persia had no more zealous protector than him. Two Capuchin monks and Father Basil, a Carmelite monk, always attended him. Kaikhosro gave them out as surgeons and took them along with him in the Kandahar military operations” (Krusinski 1733, 198-199).

Tadeusz Krusinski’s account cannot comprise exaggerated and embellished evaluations because other Georgians living in Iran had the same attitude toward the religion. As it is known, after assassination of King Giorgi XI in Iran, it was revealed that he secretly wore the pectoral cross and owned a small Bible. In addition, I can give an example of an Islamized Georgian Giorgi Kvinikhidze, a secretary of King Giorgi XI, who ordered a small Bible and carried it with him while he stayed in Iran (Mirianashvili 2017/2018, 159).

The *dārūgha* of Isfahan was one of the main and important administrative positions in Iran. This was conditioned by the size and importance of the city itself. As is known, Isfahan was the capital of Iran since 1598. Since then, it started growing fast. We can perceive dimensions of Isfahan on the basis of Jean Chardin’s report, according to which there were 162 mosques, 48 madrasahs, 1802 caravanserais, 273 public baths and 12 cemeteries in the city. In Chardin’s estimation, 600,000-1,100,000 people lived in the capital (Savory 1980, 176). Correspondingly, it was very prestigious to occupy an administrative position in Isfahan. The fact that starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the appointment of *dārūghas* and their discharge from service was the Shah’s direct prerogative bespeaks the above (Encyclopaedia Iranica 2006, 657). The duties assigned to this position had been changing over the years. Ultimately, it mostly dealt with issues of law and public security; or in other words, *dārūgha*’s aim was to fight against criminals and protect lawfulness and peace in the city. The fact that *dārūgha* was subordinated to *dīvānbeḡī* indicates *dārūgha*’s law-enforcement function. There is no direct single-word translation for *dārūgha* in European languages, therefore it is commonly translated as “the prefect of police”.

Already in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Georgians were appointed as *dārūghas*. One of the first Georgians who was appointed *dārūgha* in 1590 was Biḡan Beg Gorḡi. From 1602-1603, Konstantine, son of King Aleksandre II, was appointed as *dārūgha*. Since 1620 until the end of the Safavid rule, the *dārūgha* was always a Georgian and mostly a representative of the royal house (Encyclopaedia Iranica 2006, 657). We find the same report with Jean Chardin and other authors. A Georgian, who held the position of *dārūgha* for the longest time, from 1620 to 1658, was Ḳosrow Mīrzā. In 1632-1658 he reigned in Kartli under

the name of King Rostom, therefore starting from 1632 naibs were assisting him with implementation of his duties as dārūgha of Isfahan.

The relations between Georgia and Iran were especially active during the reign of Vakhtang V Shahnawaz. According to Sekhnia Chkheidze, Suleyman Shah, after ascending the throne, demanded from Vakhtang V to send his daughter and son as hostages to Isfahan. The King was forced to send princess Anuka and prince Aleksandre to Iran. The Shah granted the latter the position of dārūgha upon his arrival in Isfahan (Chkheidze 1854, 308), and at the same time married Anuka (Chkheidze 1854, 308; Vakhushti 1973, 449). Thus, taking into consideration Sekhnia Chkheidze's report, Aleksandre entered upon his duties presumably from 1666, but no later than from 1667.

K. Kutsia, a scholar working on the topic of Georgian dārūghas, gives two different dates for the next dārūgha. According to him, Konstantine served as dārūgha for only four years (Kutsia 1972, 100), though later on the scholar suggests that he remained dārūgha supposedly until late 1670s (Kutsia 1972, 102).

There are two accounts on the identity of the next dārūgha of Isfahan. According to Sekhnia Chkheidze's account, King Erekle I arrived in Iran along with his sons in 1703. During the visit, the Shah granted King Erekle's illegitimate son the position of dārūgha of Isfahan:

“King Erekle arrived in Isfahan; the Shah met him cheerfully, gave him alms and made him the qulār āqāsi. The Shah rewarded Erekle's son Imam Quli Khan, former Davit, with Kakheti and appointed Konstantine, the second son from the concubine, as dārūgha of Isfahan (Chkheidze 1854, 320).

Prince Vakhushti also writes that King Erekle I arrived in Iran in May 1703, while Levan, brother of Giorgi XI, arrived there in July of the same year (Vakhushti 1973, 479). Nevertheless, he does not mention Konstantine's appointment as dārūgha during that period. Instead, when discussing the events shortly prior to that time, Vakhushti notes that after Levan severely defeated the Balōč army, eliminating all warriors, the Shah, granted him the position of a chief judge as a token of gratitude, and appointed Kaikhosro, Levan's elder son, dārūgha of Isfahan (Vakhushti 1973, 477). At the same time, the Shah accepted Levan's request for granting Vakhtang, his another son, a duchy and sent a relevant command to Erekle I (Vakhushti 1973, 477). As is known, Vakhtang received a duchy in 1701 (Vakhushti 1973, 908). Hence, according to Prince

Vakhushti, Kaikhosro was appointed dārūgha of Isfahan in 1701. In order to specify the exact chronology of Prince Kaikhosro's occupation as dārūgha of Isfahan, I have referred to a foreign source that has not been used up until today. It is a literary work called "The Martyrdom of Louis Gregory" written by an unknown author of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries.

Gregory was an Armenian who lived in Iran, namely in Isfahan, in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. Local Muslims tortured him in 1703, at the age of eighteen. In "The Martyrdom of Louis Gregory" the hagiographer writes: as the chief mullah of Isfahan found him guilty based on a deliberately false denunciation, he offered Gregory two options – to either embrace Islam and save his life or to choose death penalty. Gregory chose death for Christ over the abjuration of his religion. The judge of the city issued the death penalty decision according to the rule and affixed it with his seal. In order to inform the dārūgha about the death penalty, the accusers went to the dārūgha of Isfahan who, according to the author of the Martyrdom, "was Shahnawaz's grandson, an ethnic Georgian" (Ter-Davtyan 1998, 214). The above story described in the Martyrdom happened in July 1703. The date is included in the text of the Martyrdom. Thus, taking into consideration the accounts preserved in Prince Vakhushti's "The History of the Kings of Georgia" and in "The Martyrdom of Louis Gregory", we can assume that the Shah appointed Kaikhosro, Shahnawaz's grandson, dārūgha of Isfahan in 1701, and he held this position through 1703.

In difference from this, Sekhnia Chkheidze suggests that Kaikhosro was appointed dārūgha in 1707. He writes:

"In the same Chronicon (1707), on 9 June, a junior police officer came from Isfahan to Meshed and said that the people of Isfahan were suffering from famine; they stoned the King's gate and demanded to elevate the Khan's brother. As they heard this news [at the court], they bewailed and granted the prince positions of the Shah's naib, appointed him dārūgha and gave him the right to punish; and they sent him [to Isfahan]... once he entered the city, everyone was filled with joy. But when they heard that many people have been punished there on Kaikhosro's order, all of them got frightened ..." (Chkheidze 1854, 322).

In this passage of the text, Isfahan's riot of 1707 caused by famine is mentioned. Accounts on this riot are found in several written sources. Sekhnia

Chkheidze's account does not admit of doubt, the more especially as he was part and eyewitness of those events. For this reason, all scholars shared the date given by this author, in contrast to the date stated by Prince Vakhushti. This viewpoint is still held by many today. The most recent publication on Kaikhosro says that Levan's son Kaikhosro became dārūgha of Isfahan in 1707 (Kvashilava 2020, 60).

Taking into account the reliability of Sekhnia Chkheidze's report, we can pose a question: what was the reason for indicating the date different from 1707 in Vakhushti Batonishvili's work and in "The Martyrdom of Louis Gregory" written by the author of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries? In my viewpoint, the clue lies in Sekhnia Chkheidze's text itself. It is clearly written in the fragment of the text quoted above that at first the people met Kaikhosro's appointment as dārūgha with joy. However, when the citizens of Isfahan recollected Kaikhosro's ruthless actions committed before (he had already punished many people with severe forms of punishment, including different methods of mutilation), their joy turned into fear. The fear was not groundless because the mutinous citizens were cruelly punished at Kaikhosro's command in this case as well (Chkheidze 1854, 323; Holt 1970, 425). When did the citizens of Isfahan experience Kaikhosro's atrocity? Obviously, this was back when Kaikhosro was first appointed dārūgha of Isfahan, the reports on which are found in Prince Vakhushti's work and in "The Martyrdom of Louis Gregory".

I suppose that in 1707, Kaikhosro was appointed dārūgha spontaneously, because of the worrisome situation. Since Konstantine, the acting dārūgha of Isfahan was not able to deal with his duties and the riot expanded, the Shah dismissed him. The Shah appointed Kaikhosro dārūgha of Isfahan because he already had experience in this position held in the past. At the same time, he was experienced in military matters. I consider that Prince Kaikhosro was not appointed dārūgha of Isfahan in 1707 for the first time, but rather for the second time.

If we conceptualize the events in such way, the three sources discussed above give us exact information about the dates of Kaikhosro's service as dārūgha: 1701 mentioned by Vakhushti Batonishvili is the date of Kaikhosro's first appointment as dārūgha of Isfahan (Vakhushti does not mention the fact of Kaikhosro's second term and the date). "The Martyrdom of Louis Gregory", the new source I cite, confirms that Kaikhosro was appointed dārūgha of Isfahan in the early-eighteenth century. According to the account found in the source, Kaikhosro still held the position of dārūgha of Isfahan by July 1703. As for

1707 indicated by Sekhnia Chkheidze, it is the date of taking office by Kaikhosro for the second time. During the emergency and in order to bring the mutinous citizens under and punish them, the Shah appointed Kaikhosro to the same position (Sekhnia Chkheidze does not mention Kaikhosro's first appointment in his work).

Thus, we can present the timeline of the Georgian *dārūghas* of Isfahan over the time span of interest in the following way:

- a) 1701 - July 1703 – Kaikhosro, son of Levan,
- b) the summer of 1703 – the summer of 1707 – Constantine, illegitimate son of King Erekle I,
- d) the summer of 1707 – the summer of 1709 – Kaikhosro, son of Levan (second appointment).

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