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RHETORICAL THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE 18TH-19TH CENTURIES GEORGIA ACCORDING TO THE FIRST GEORGIAN TEXTBOOKS OF RHETORIC

It is important to review the first textbooks of rhetoric in order to better understand the history of the rhetorical studies 18th-19th Centuries in Georgia. Nowadays we know the following textbooks: **Mkhitar Sebastatsi's** "*Rhetoric*" translated from Armenian around 1761-1764 by **Anton Bagrationi, Philippe Kaitmazishvili** and **Dositheos Cherkezishvili**. The next one is **Solomon Dodashvili's** "*Rhetoric*" written in 1827-1828. The following book is "*A Brief Review of Rhetoric*" published 1879 by the **Antuan Gvazaliani's** Printing House in Constantinople.

KEYWORDS: Georgian Rhetoric, Rhetorical Theory and Practice in the 18th-19th Centuries Georgia, The First Georgian Textbooks of Rhetoric

1. INTRODUCTION

When discussing the history of Georgian rhetoric, usually is mentioned **Solomon Dodashvili's** "*Rhetoric*", while other textbooks of rhetoric are less discussed. In the present study, I discuss about their authors, compilers, translators and publishers, the reasons for the translation, the epoch of creation, historical circumstances, terminology, etc. Studying these textbooks together is prominent for better understanding the history of Georgian rhetoric. Each of them has its value and place in the history of rhetorical studies in the 18th and 19th Centuries Georgia. The issues presented and discussed in the first Georgian textbooks of rhetoric should be analyzed in the light of the fact that they were created for educational purposes.

2. RHETORICAL STUDIES IN GEORGIA

The study of the theory and practice of rhetoric in Georgia has a long history, but the first textbooks and local references can be found only after the 18th Century. For example, an extensive discussion of rhetoric is given in the "*Kalmasoba*" of Ioane Batonishvili (1768-1830), written in 1813-1828 (Batonishvili, 1936: II). During this period was considered the theoretical

¹ Anglicized as Mekhitar of Sebaste.

issues, such as the essence of rhetoric, a subject, a place (“border”), etc.

For this period of time rhetoric was taught in two theological-philosophical schools – theological seminaries in Tbilisi and Telavi. The teaching of rhetoric theory and practice was introduced as a compulsory subject in the schools at this time. Special manuals were also created.

Mkhitar Sebastatsi’s “Rhetoric” was translated from Armenian to Georgian around 1761-64, due to the need of the seminaries of that time. It has been researched in Georgian scientific literature, that **Anton Bagrationi, Philippe Kaitmazishvili** and **Dositheos Cherkezishvili** were worked on various editions of the Georgian translations of the book (Baramidze, 1987: 373). The book still exists as a manuscript and has not been published since of its creation, nor later period.

The following books which I am discussing, belong to the period when Tbilisi and Telavi seminaries no longer exist. At this time, the kingdoms of Georgia are part of the Russian Empire and other types of schools are opened, new printing houses are established and the first printed textbooks are published.

During this period another textbook of rhetoric was prepared, written by Solomon Dodashvili (Dodashvili, 1989). His “Rhetoric” is considered to be the first original textbook of Georgian rhetoric. The book was written in 1827-1828. I suggest that the creation of this book should also serve educational purposes, as in the case of his another textbook “Logic”. However, both in its final form and in its publication, the author was not spared. I will discuss this issue in detail later.

The following printed book is “A brief review of rhetoric or eloquence in favor of increasing the young men” published 1879 by the **Antuan Gvazaliani’s** Printing House in Constantinople.

2.1. «RHETORIC» OF MKHITAR SEBASTATSI

A very interesting example of Georgian-Armenian literary relations of the 18th Century is the Georgian translations of the Armenian public figure **Mkhitar Sebastatsi’s “Rhetoric”**, whose number reaches 5¹. The most incomplete text contains 67 pages, and the most complete – 426 pages. **Mkhitar Sebastatsi’s “Rhetoric”** was translated from Armenian around 1761-64 by **Anton Bagrationi, Philippe Kaitmazishvili** and **Dositheos Cherkezishvili**. The necessity of translation was determined for educational purposes, due to the need of the seminaries of that time.

1 As a result of studying and grouping the manuscripts, Gr. Baramidze established three editions of the Georgian translations of Mkhitar Sebastatsi’s “Rhetoric”: 1) Manuscripts Q – 329, A – 1181, S – 1137, which was translated by Philippe Kaitmazishvili and then edited by Dositheos Cherkezishvili; 2) Manuscripts S – 295, S – 122, S – 920, A – 1152, A – 1830, etc. were refined and processed by Catholicos Anton I with the direct help of Philippe Kaitmazishvili, and 3) Manuscripts – S – 1454, H – 413, H – 19, that are significantly deficient, damaged and neither translator nor proofreader have been identified yet (Baramidze, 1987: 371-375).

Furthermore, Armenian-Georgian literary-cultural relations at the end of the 17th Century and during the 18th Century should be mentioned. During this period, numerous scientific works were translated from Armenian into Georgian and this was not an accidental fact. In my opinion, this was facilitated by the publishing activities of Armenian and Georgian Catholics abroad during this period. Despite such an active literary and publishing relationship, this period has not been properly studied in the scientific literature.

As for the persons working on the translation, Philippe Kaitmazishvili was an Aznauri¹ living in Georgia (as Aznauri is mentioned in the list of the Georgievsky's Treatise), Armenian by nationality, he knew Georgian very well, was an author and translator of 21 philosophical works, was close to Erekle II, by whose order he headed the theological-philosophical schools of Tbilisi and Telavi in 1755-1758. The information on his birth and death are unknown. **Dositheos Cherkezishvili** was the Bishop of Nekresi, a disciple of **Philippe Kaitmazishvili** and he knew Armenian very well.

I can easily explain the contribution of Dositheos Cherkezishvili to the translation of **Mkhitar Sebastatsi's** "*Rhetoric*"; On the one hand, Dositheos Cherkezishvili and Philippe Kaitmazishvili, as students and teachers, were involved in the teaching processes of the seminaries of that time, on the other hand, the creation of textbooks was their primary task. Thus, the work done by Dositheos Cherkezishvili on the book translated by Philippe Kaitmazishvili is completely natural to explain.

Mkhitar was the founder of the Armenian Catholic Congregation, (Congregation of the Mekhitarists was founded in 1701, in Constantinople), while Anthony, except that knew Armenian language, also had interests regarding the Catholic world. Indeed, Catholicos Anton I also accepted Catholicism, in which he was denounced and dismissed from his position by the ecclesiastical assembly in 1755 (Kekelidze, 1987: 444).

In addition, it should be noted that **Anton Bagrationi** was a versatile public figure, a great Georgian thinker, writer, scientist, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia. Along with his ecclesiastical activity, Anton was in charge of school-educational work. **Catholicos Anton** was the organizer and ideological leader of the Russian-Slavic theological seminaries opened in 1755 in Tbilisi and in 1782 in Telavi. He defined the profile of the schools, set the program of action, created the basic textbooks (both translated and original) (Kekelidze, 1987: 444). "*According to Anton I, these schools should have been similar to the Moscow Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy, similar in their equipment and purpose. Anton I, who lived in Russia and served for several years, thoroughly got acquainted with the local schools and wanted to transfer them to Georgia. Therefore, the seminaries in Tbilisi and Telavi were mostly similar to the same type of theological-ecclesiastical schools in Russia.*" (Begiashvili, 1937: 170-171).

¹ Nobleman belonging to the aznauri class of Georgian nobility.

2.2. «RHETORIC» OF SOLOMON DODASHVILI

Georgian public figure Solomon Dodashvili is considered to be the first theorist of Georgian rhetoric. He is the author of the first original Georgian textbook in rhetoric (Dodashvili, 1989: 179-189).

Solomon Dodashvili's *"Rhetoric"* must have been written around 1827-1828. The argument of this opinion is that in his letter to **Iona Khelashvili** dated September 21, 1828, **Solomon Dodashvili** refers to "Rhetoric" as a completed work (Darchia, 1992: 21). Moreover, he was going to translate the book into Russian (Qumsishvili & Kukava, 1955: 148). Only later **S. Dodashvili's "rhetoric"** was revealed by **T. Kukava**, and first time was published by **D. Qumsishvili** and **T. Kukava** with their research in 1955 (research in the form of an article and the text of the *"rhetoric"* below) (see Qumsishvili & Kukava, 1955: 148-157).

According to **N. Kandelaki**, *"This is the first original work in the field of Georgian rhetoric theory, and despite its schematic nature, attention should be paid to raise questions, their exploration, through their research and scientific generalization. The subject and task of rhetoric are defined here, its scientific field and bordering disciplines are shown, the theoretical precedents and practical significance of rhetoric are discussed, the masters of oral speech are mentioned, their ways of expression, facilities, etc. This large circle of rhetorical issues of S. Dodashvili's work is theoretically inexhaustible, but it is presented in the form of a broad generalization material"* (Kandelaki, 1958: 38). Let's see, what's the theoretical knowledge manifests **S. Dodashvili** on issues of rhetoric.

In Georgian scientific literature, there is an opinion about how did **S. Dodashvili** understand rhetoric, only as a *"theory of eloquence"* or *"a theory of prose in general"*: *"Dodashvili's "rhetoric" was a theory of prose in general, in other words, as Dodashvili himself would say, it was a science that studied "without excluding the works of prose writers of all kinds" and not the theory of eloquence, especially not only the art of eloquence."* (Kukava, 1968).

First of all, it should be noted that **S. Dodashvili** was one of the first who had been educated in Russia, in particular in St. Petersburg during the period from 1824 to 1827. He was educated in the knowledge of his time, which becomes apparent after reading his writings. However, it can not be ignored that the author introduces some innovations in the understanding of certain issues (Jagodnishvili, 1999: 47). S. Dodashvili's *"rhetoric"* is more like a summary, or a general plan, where the questions are presented in the form of abstracts. Nevertheless, "Rhetoric" in this way shows the highest scientific level of professionalism on which the author stands (Korashvili, 2000: 48). The *"rhetoric"* by **S. Dodashvili** was indeed not only of a compilation nature like other textbooks that can be seen from the fact that he has cited numerous famous authors of his time. This characteristic sign gives more scientific dignity to his work. **S. Dodashvili** has certified **Jean-François de La Harpe** (1739-1803), French literary the-

orist and critic, professor, author of several textbooks of literature, **J. J. Eschenburg** (1743-1820) – German, scientist from Braunschweig, friend of Lessing, professor, author of several textbooks in literature, Russian specialist in rhetoric **N. Grech** (1787-1867), who was a literary theorist too, also Rector of Kharkov University **Iv. Ryzhsky** (1755-1811), to whom belongs the Rhetoric published in Moscow in 1809.

I will touch in a few words on the historical circumstances in which S. Dodashvili led his intensive educational and publishing activities. In this regard, small but noteworthy information can be found in **Z. Tchitchinadze's** books. Despite their unscientific nature, I can not ignore their testimony and bringing them here. **Z. Tchitchinadze** in his book *“History of Georgian printing house and printing books: 1626-1900”* writes: *“S. Dodashvili's printing house, opened in 1829, did not last long. 5000 manets was spent on this printing house by the monastic priest Ivane Khelashvili. The founders had a great preparation. All the necessary textbooks should be printed in this printing house, especially the books that would be needed in the seminary opened in 1817 and in the “Noble School”. The newspaper “Tiflis bulletin” was published in the same printing house in 1829, and monthly magazine in 1832. This printing house was destroyed in the fourth month of this year and its owner-manager exiled to Russia forever, he could not return to Georgia from Russia”* (Tchitchinadze, 1900: 40-41).

Z. Tchitchinadze repeats the same information in another of his books (Tchitchinadze, 1916: 167-168). According to this information one thing is certain: The “founders” of the printing house (S. Dodashvili, I. Khelashvili, etc.) had big plans, first of all, providing Georgian textbooks to the newly opened schools.

2.3. «A BRIEF REVIEW OF RHETORIC OR ELOQUENCE IN FAVOR OF INCREASING THE YOUNG MEN»

Another textbook is *“A brief review of rhetoric or eloquence in favour of increasing the young men”* published 1879 by the **Antuan Gvazaliani's** Printing House in Constantinople (A Brief Review of Rhetoric, 1879). The author and compiler of the book are unknown.

Printing houses in Constantinople is the another interesting issue for the purpose of independent research. First of all, about the history of Georgian book printing, there is **D. Karitchashvili's** work *“History of Georgian Book Printing: Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Centuries”*, which examines the first printed books published in Rome, Russia and Georgia in 1629-1817 (Karitchashvili, 1929). In addition, there are other works by **Z. Tchitchinadze**. Despite his unscientific works, I consider it expedient to at least mention and cite some references, which **Z. Tchitchinadze** gives us, for example, the information about the Constantinople printing house, about the people working there and the Georgian language books published there.

Z. Tchitchinadze writes in one of his books: *“After the 1860s, P. Kharist-*

charashvili parted ways with Mekhitarists, moved to Constantinople and set out to open a Georgian printing house here, establishing a Georgian brotherhood with him, opening a monastery for Georgian Catholics, both men and women, opening a school and many other such things, here he opened a Georgian printing house in 1872. Since then, many Georgian books have been published in Constantinople” (Tchitchinadze, 1916: 162-163). **Z. Tchitchinadze** mentioned **Petre Kharistchirashvili** as a person who worked here.

Qr. Rachvelishvili provides more complete information in his book *“Book of Georgian Printing House: Statistical-historical essay”*: Petre Kharistchirashvili founded a printing house in Constantinople in 1860, where he published approximately 10-12 books. Publishing activities lasted until the early 1880s. The list of books from Constantinople in 1879 includes textbooks that were printed abroad and sent to Georgia. **Qr. Ratchvelishvili** also cites this book list here: 1. World History; 2. Georgian Grammar; 3. Geography; 4. Human Wisdom; 5. Georgian Rhetoric; 6. Philosophy or Rhetoric; 7. Wise Man; 8. Featured Poems; 9. Pocket Prayer Book; 10. Eden – Prayers; 11. A guide to learning French Language; 12. French-Georgian grammar; 13. Life of the saints; 14. Aesop’s Fables; 15. Christian doctrine. A total of 2452 copies of the above books have been sent to Georgia (Ratchvelishvili, 1934: 56).

In my opinion, *“Georgian Rhetoric”* mentioned in the fifth place should be referred to *“A brief review of rhetoric or eloquence in favour of increasing the young men”* published in 1879. As is clear from the list of books, most of the books published by the printing house were published for educational purposes.

I know a total of two books published in this printing house: *“A brief review of rhetoric or eloquence in favour of increasing the young men”* (A Brief Review of Rhetoric, 1879) and *“A brief review of philosophy or love of wisdom which contains in itself psychology, logic, the word of God by nature (Theodicy) and ethics (morality) for young men entering high learning”* (A Brief Review of Philosophy, 1880). Both books bear a resemblance to each other in both title and structure, and most importantly, as is clear from the publishing data, both are printed in the same **Antuan Gvazaliani’s** Printing House in Constantinople.

In the preface of *“A brief review of rhetoric”* we can read the reason and purpose of compiling the book; It turns out that the purpose of creating the book was to make learning easier for young people, which is also emphasized in the title (“in favour of increasing the young men”). The manual was published for a specific purpose. It was intended for Georgian-speaking readers and also for a limited age group.

Scientific interest to this book arose after Prof. **G. Shervashidze** discovered it in the repository of one of the Istanbul Catholic Church. After that, the linguistic value of the textbook was studied by **N. Tsetskhladze** and **M. Khakhutaishvili** (See Tsetskhladze & Khakhutaishvili, 2011: 114-119). They

expressed the opinion that the compiler of “A Brief Review of Rhetoric” could be a representative of Anthony’s School or simply coeval (Tsetskhladze & Khakhutaishvili, 2011: 118). It is not excluded, if I will allow Georgian Catholic **Petre Kharistchirashvili** as a compiler, who works directly in the printing house founded in Constantinople.

3. SUMMARY

One of the aims of the present research was to study the rhetorical theory and practice based on the first Georgian textbooks of rhetoric, etc. As research has shown, rhetorical studies in Georgia has a long history. The first Georgian language textbooks of rhetoric belong to the 18th-19th Century.

In this study, I presented a total of three such textbooks; The first one is **Mkhitar Sebastatsi’s** “*Rhetoric*” translated from Armenian around 1761-1764, which is the earliest georgian rhetoric textbook chronologically. However, it has not been published or used for educational purposes. Nevertheless, the paper is undoubtedly important and I considered it appropriate to discuss it with other textbooks. The next one is **Solomon Dodashvili’s** “*Rhetoric*” written in 1827-1828. However, it has not been published or used for educational purposes. Nevertheless, the textbook quite interesting and thus, I have discussed it in the context of other textbooks. Moreover, **Solomon Dodashvili**, in this regard, is the author of the first original Georgian handbook of rhetoric and he had no predecessors. The textbook definitely deserves the attention of scholars. The following book is unknown author’s “*A brief review of rhetoric or eloquence in favour of increasing the young men*” published 1879 by the **Antuan Gvazaliani’s** Printing House in Constantinople.

As the study of the issue showed, the first Georgian textbooks of rhetoric belonged to the 18th-19th Centuries, unfortunately, I had not found any Georgian literature on similar topics before or even after that. Even this literature has not been properly studied, for example, only individual articles are dedicated to them.

All three books are undoubtedly important and I considered discussing them together for a better understanding of the history of rhetoric. At this time, the aim of this study was to research the first Georgian textbooks of rhetoric in terms of their purpose and value, to find out more about their authors, compilers, translators and publishers, to review the period, reasons and circumstances of textbook creation, etc.

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