

**VAKHTANG VI ON THE SENTINEL OF THE HISTORICAL-LITERARY
BOUNDARY**

Kebadze Madona

Associate Professor of Iakob Gogebashvili
Telavi State University, Georgia,

Baindurashvili Lia

Senior teacher of Georgian Language and Literature of
LEPL Telavi Merab Kostava Public School № 4, Telavi, Georgia,

Eka Kobiashvili

Doctor of History, Teacher of History and Civic
Education at LEPL Telavi N:6 Public School,

Bakhsoliani Nino,

Senior teacher of Kondoli Public School, Telavi Municipality, Georgia,

Churgulashvili Nino,

Master of History, senior teacher of history, Georgia,

Kazarashvili Nestan,

Master of New and Recent History, Senior Teacher of History, Civic Education and Special
Education, Sakobiano village public school of Akhmeta municipality, Georgia

Introduction: The 18th century is a rather difficult period both in the world history and in the history of our country. Austria, Russia had been active on the world chess board (we are not talking about England-France competition on the mainland or in colonial politics) and other political processes have taken place. This period in the history of our country is marked: Georgia is divided (3 political units and separate Samtskhe-Saatabago), to this is added the struggle of two Muslim states in the Caucasus region, including Georgia. During these difficult and important issues, Vakhtang VI becomes the ruler of Georgia, a person who stood as a guard of the country, despite the failure in the foreign arena. A person who played a great role in the strengthening and development of Georgian culture and education.

Key words: Vakhtang VI, "Ottomanism", "Kyzilbashoba", Georgian printing press, Peter I, legislative activity, etc.

Main part: In 1703, the Shah of Iran returned the governorship of Kartli to Giorgi XI, but left him in Iran, and appointed Vakhtang (the son of his brother Levan) as the king's deputy ("Janishini") in Kartli.

During "Janishini" period, Vakhtang tried to restore order inside the country. In 1705, on his purpose, a church meeting was convened. In order to strengthen the central government, he created the "Army of Guards", i.e. the Royal Guard, and suppressed the disobedient seniors. Vakhtang VI paid a lot of attention to the restoration of agriculture - he repopulated the depopulated areas of Kartli, dug out and renewed the irrigation canals that were broken a long time ago, arranged the trade-access roads, built bridges and caravans, improved the minting of money.

In the first years of his rule, Vakhtang initiated a great legislative activity. In 1705-1708, the codification commission established by him created a collection of law books, which was edited by Kartli's "Janishini" himself.

The main part of the collection entitled - "Law of Batonishvili Vakhtang" had special importance. This book of laws was compiled for Kartli by Vakhtang, but soon it became a valid legislation in all of Georgia, which is why Vakhtang was nicknamed "The Punisher".

The second legislative monument of Vakhtang VI is "Dasturlamal", which was the main legal monument of the basic law of the state constitution. It regulated the governance of the country, the etiquette of the royal court and other practical aspects of state life. With the direct participation of Vakhtang's leadership, many events in the field of culture were also carried out. In 1709, he founded the first Georgian printing house in Georgia with the help of georgian Antimoz Iverieli, who worked in Vlacheti (Romania), thus contributing to the supply of Orthodox churches with books.

In 1709 two gospels were printed - "Davitni" and "Apostolic". In 1712, with the editing and commentaries of Vakhtang VI - "Vepkhistaosani" was printed for the first time. The critical-scientific research of the king gave potential to the work of further study-restoration of the text of the poem and laid the foundation for scientific "Rustvelology".

Vakhtang VI was one of the outstanding poets, scientists, translators, critics, editors, commentators and organizers of educational affairs of his time. He translated prominent examples of didactic literature: "Kilila and Damana", "Amir-Nasarian", "Wisdom of Malaghobel" and others. He was one of the first to create samples of patriotic lyrics in ancient Georgian literature.

It is noteworthy Vakhtang VI's contribution for determining and correcting the text of the old "Life of Kartli". His name is associated with the great scientific activity of the commission of scientists - "Stsavlulkatsta".

In addition to humanities, Vakhtang was interested in astronomy, mathematics, geography, chemistry and medicine. He translated "Ziji", i.e. "Catalog of stars", to which he added a Persian-Georgian astronomical-astrological dictionary compiled by himself.

Vakhtang VI compiled a textbook of chemistry - "The Book of Oil Mixing and Chemistry". He also paid a lot of attention to medicine - he organized it in terms of content, added notes and turned "Karabadin" into a medical book for everyday use.

Vakhtang tried to spread his influence on the kingdoms of Georgia. It seems that he partially achieved this, because "Janishin" was "obeyed by Imerni, listened to by Kakhni".

In 1712, Vakhtang "Janishini" was summoned to Isfahan by Shah of Iran. If he wanted to be confirmed on the royal throne, he must convert to Islam, to which Vakhtang refused, so he was exiled to Kirman.

In 1716, Vakhtang VI formally accepted Islam, but the Shah confirmed him as the king of Kartli only in 1719 and returned to his homeland. Vakhtang tried to continue its old activities, but by that time the international situation in the Transcaucasian arena had changed noticeably. Georgia found itself involved in the struggle of the states fighting for the control of the Caucasus. In such a situation, Vakhtang VI took the path of Russian orientation and in 1720 established a military-political alliance with Peter I. They decided to march together against Iran. According to the agreement, the Russian army was supposed to enter Azerbaijan, where it would be joined by the Georgian and Armenian army, and together they should take Iran. In 1722, Peter I began a campaign in the direction of the Caucasus and captured the Dagestan coast of the Caspian Sea, Daruband, but stopped the campaign and returned to Astrakhan. After 3 months of waiting, Vakhtang was informed about the postponement of the campaign, which put the king in a difficult situation. Peter I ceded the entire north-western part of Iran to the Ottoman Empire, including eastern Georgia. The extremely difficult "Ottoman" period began in the country. Having been so deceived by Peter I and completely abandoned, the Georgian king had nothing left but to drive him out of Georgia.

In July 1724, Vakhtang VI with his family members and a 1,200-person entourage of compatriots left for Russia via Racha. He hoped that with the support of Russia and auxiliary troops he would soon return and free his homeland from the invaders. But he was not supposed to return to Georgia. He was still on his way when Peter I died. Peter's successors could no longer pursue an active foreign policy course.

While in Russia, Vakhtang VI again tried to interest the Russian royal court in the issue of Georgia. In 1726-1727, he even arrived to Gilan on a special mission as a representative of Russia and negotiated with the Shah of Iran, but to no avail. Disappointed, Vakhtang was forced to finally settle in Astrakhan.

The extreme weakening of the Iranian state, the overthrow of its ruling dynasty by the Afghans, and the extreme internal crisis of the country apparently made Georgian politicians, in particular Vakhtang VI, think that there was no longer any need to hide Georgians' desire for the revival of Orthodox faith and Orthodox Russia. Before that, Vakhtang strictly guarded the secret of his quest for Christian countries. For example, in 1714, to the French minister,

"As a precaution, Vakhtang neither writes in Georgian nor signs the answer, so that the answer would not fall into the hands of his enemies, the Persians, and would not make him worse." Even to his tutor, Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani, Vakhtang sent a letter written in Italian so that they would not get hold of Georgian and read it. In particular, he wrote: "I do not dare to write anything with my own hand, because I am afraid of my brother Jesse, the general of artillery, who, like the ever-renegade enemy and the devil, will surround me in order to destroy me."

Due to the weakening of the Persian state and the great hopes that the Russian state, named Peter I, gave, Vakhtang no longer considered it necessary to cover his Christian-Orthodox or, in the opinion of Ottoman-Persians, Russian orientation; He publicly disclosed his decision to establish a military alliance with Russia, in particular, he was ready to facilitate the entry of Russian troops into the territories of Transcaucasia and Iran. This greatly alarmed Muslim countries and North Caucasian tribes. Unfortunately, the conceived plan could not be implemented. Instead, Turkey found a reason and entered Georgia, the Leks added attacks, and in the end, "Kyzilbashoba" replaced the Ottomans in the country. "We think that the revealed diplomatic Russian orientation of Vakhtang VI and the strengthening of Lekta attacks, the unrelenting feudal battles at home, created a precondition for the disruption of the state (economic, cultural and social) structure of that time in Eastern Georgia for two decades. First "Ottomanism" and then "Kyzilbashoba" were established in Georgia.

Russia had special economic interests in Persia. "Peter the Great wanted the trade of Persia to be taken over by Russian merchants... To make it easier to take over Persia economically, Peter I decided to first take the Caspian Sea area in Transcaucasia under his protection, then conquer the country and settle Russian soldiers in it... to complete this mysterious plan of Russia the military assistance of the Kingdom of Georgia was needed. That's why Peter the Great decided to intervene in Georgia and King Vakhtang in this case and use it for the benefit of Russia." With this mission, Peter I sent an extraordinary ambassador to Vakhtang:

"The Russian ambassador skillfully organized and presented the case to the Georgians as if Peter I had learned about the poor condition of Vakhtang VI, his help and deliverance from the clutches of the Persian-Ottomans, and that is why he was going to ride against Persia. King Vakhtang and the influential circles of the Kartli kingdom considered these diplomatic tricks to be true, they could not imagine that a strong Christian ruler would have other mysterious intentions in his heart."

Vakhtang, as is known, had his plan for the "liberation and resurrection" of Georgia. Peter I trusted him to implement this plan, that's why he trusted him. "The king of Kartli, Vakhtang VI, on the other hand, was driven by broad general plans, when he preferred Russia's alliance: Georgia should be freed from the oppression of Iran, attacks from the Turks should be avoided, political unification of the country should be achieved, dynastic strife should be slowed down,

the persecution of the Christian religion should be stopped and a relatively better condition should be created for the development of the national economy".

Therefore, Vakhtang was agree by the proposal of the king of Russia, although a group of feudal lords of the state advised the king to be careful. During the forced obedience of the Persians and Ottomans, some of the people working at the royal court of Kartli, due to their clear connection with the Russian king:

Iran, Ottomans and Dagestan were filled with great concern, they prepared to repulse the Russians from all sides and to punish Kartli as an example.

M. Kikodze writes: "In our opinion, Vakhtang's diplomatic weakness was in the fact that he did not hide his political position and his trust in the Russian imperial court became obvious to Iran and Turkey."

Hoped by Peter, Vakhtang with his army of 30-40 thousand entered the borders of the Persian state, where, according to him, the Russian army should have entered from the other side. It is known that the Russian army did not enter to Persia, Vakhtang was alone in front of maddened enemies.

S. Janashia writes: "Vakhtang did not turn to Peter I for help, but Peter involved Vakhtang in the Persian campaign. It is not correct to claim that Georgia failed to receive the help of the Russian army. Peter I mercilessly left his Caucasian allies to their fate."

News reached Peter in Daruband that Vakhtang had entered the borders of the Persian Empire with an army of 40,000 and was waiting for Peter. On the second day of receiving the news, "On the 7th of Enken(september in ancient Georgian language), 1723, he set off and left, but not to join the Georgian army, but to home, to Astrakhan.

"King Vakhtang stood with 40,000 Georgian soldiers and waiting for "Christ-loving" ruler and could not understand why "there was a delay of the ruler". When he learned what had happened, "then the Vakhtang king was convinced that the people of feudal lords, who opposed the campaign, were right. "The king had a great sadness", but at what time?! The case turned out much worse than the anti-war feudal lords had foreseen, they did not even think that the Russian ruler would not keep his word and leave Georgia helpless to the enraged enemy. Before Peter I seduced the Vakhtang king and took the fatal step, Ottomans promised Vakhtang VI protection through the Pasha of Arzrum, if he did not participate in the Russian war against Persia and was not clearly in favor of Russia. But since the Ottomans saw that Russia was planning to conquer Persia, and the Georgians were their allies, they started fearing Russia and first captured the entire country from Yerevan to Tavrizi, and then marched against Georgia itself... On the other hand, could Persia even forgive Georgia for its actions? The Shah of Persia was told about the Vakhtang king: he "is your enemy" so much that he "allied the ruler of Russia" and "cut off the well-wishers of your religion", instead of being strengthened and reinforcement, Georgia became the enemy's burden: Kartli was defeated and fell into the hands of the Ottomans, the Leks started robbing the people. The Vakhtang king, who had tirelessly

worked for the state, cultural and economic revival of Georgia and was passionate about the reconstruction work of the country, being so deceived by Peter I and completely abandoned, had nothing left but to leave Georgia. The Ottomans prevailed in Kartli, but the matter did not end there. When Peter the First saw that the Ottomans were so enraged by the military action of the Russians in Persia that he was going to declare war on Russia on June 12, 1724, he quickly made a truce with him, in the first paragraph of which the Russian emperor gave the entire eastern Georgia to the Ottomans, although it did not belong to him at all. Kartli was in the hands of a new conqueror - Ottomans. Vakhtang VI moved to Russia with a huge feudal army, he took 1200 people with him from Georgia, and the Georgians who arrived there before would be added to Russia. Finally 1885 people were in army. With such a move, Vakhtang VI made a mistake, because the battle he was leading would no longer make sense. In fact, the Georgian nation was left without a leader and an organizer.

In July 1724, the king left the borders of Kartli, a month earlier Domenti Catholicos sent an official letter to Peter I, in which he reported the deplorable situation created in the country because of the Turks, in particular, he wrote: "Who knows, we will find a way and get closer to you there, so that the king will have mercy on us..." It is clear from this letter that the request of the Catholicos of Kartli was a common decision of the leaders remaining in the country; Unable to cope with the created situation, on the one hand the invasions of the Leks and on the other hand the establishment of the Ottomans, the leaders of Kartli decided to close to Russia". Such a situation was created that a Georgian could no longer live in Georgia, those who had the ability and wanted to preserve Orthodoxy, were ready to leave Georgia and move to Russia. Together with other dignitaries, they left their flock in distress and left "Archbishop Christopher, Metropolitan Pavle Tbileli, bishops: Nikoloz Mroveli, Arseni Mangleli...". Because of this, the relevant bishoprics were also abolished, for example, one document from the beginning of the reign of Teimuraz II and Erekle II shows that the chair of Mroveli was abolished and they wanted to restore it. Despite the created situation, the Georgian Church had great power and influence in Georgia, which was also accounted for by the Russian Imperial Court. For example, the Russian government tried to prevent Vakhtang VI from establishing any connection with the Catholicos domain, despite the fact that the Catholicos, oppressed by the Turks, was hiding.

"In the summer of 1725, Domenti Catholicos, who was still hiding in the Ksni valley, was then forced to take refuge in Constantinople. At least the Russian government was afraid that Vakhtang and Domenti would have some kind of secret connection with each other and thereby anger Turkey against Russia."

From this it can be seen that both in Russia and Turkey, the Catholicos of Georgians were considered to be the personified face of the whole of Georgia, the Catholicos is a personal expression of Georgia. Therefore, after the Turks sent Catholicos from Constantinople as a

prisoner to an island, "Vakhtang asked Russia in 1731 to free Domenti Catholicos from the captivity of the Turks."

Soon it became clear to everyone that the Russian government did not care about Georgia, and in Georgia, "Ottomanism" and "Kyzilbashoba" took a terrible shape.

"...His (Vakhtang's) undisguised attitude and loyalty to Russia always not only aroused the attention of Ottomans and Iran, but also pushed him to actively fight against the eastern conquerors."

Vakhtang's hope to free himself from Iran's vassal dependence with the help of Russia ended in failure. On the contrary, during the time of the Ottomans, then the Kizilbash, the Ossetians first captured the Kartli Mountains, then the Ossetian tribes moved towards the bar of Kartli. If until now Vakhtang (in 1711) subdued Dvaleti, which was territorially located in the North Caucasus, after "Kizilbashoba", Teimuraz II and Erekle II in the 1740s are already fighting the Ossetians, who settled in the mountains of Georgia. As for the Leks, they finally captured Eastern Kakheti during this period. The capture of the lands of Kartli and Kakheti by Ossetians and Leks was a big failure along with other failures.

Vakhtang VI died on March 26, 1737 in Astrakhan. On March 30, he was buried on the first floor of the Assumption Cathedral of the Astrakhan Kremlin.

Conclusion: Therefore, the main goal of the work of king Vakhtang VI of Kartli was the unification and strengthening of the country. With the diplomatic means at his disposal, he achieved some success (if it is called success). Despite being a Muslim, Vakhtang V never became a servant of Iran's political interests. With his prudent policy, Kartli gained peace and prosperity. In the history of our country, he remained a worthy family member and a great political figure.

Vakhtang VI was a versatile figure. An outstanding politician, diplomat, scientist and poet devoted his entire life, creative energy, state and diplomatic skills to the care of the better future of his country and nation without compromise.

Cultural activities, which Vakhtang put at the service of national science, writing, and education, were widely developed in Kartli, which was fortified in terms of state and economy. He made a great contribution to the development of Georgian poetry. The lyrics of Vakhtang VI are characterized by religious themes, divine love, displeasure of the life, didactic motive. He added a lyrical sound, a personal touch to the traditional themes, which refreshed the intonation of the Georgian verse, added more intimacy to it.

The work of Vakhtang VI is very important for Georgian history and writing. The legacy he left to posterity in the translation and literary direction is priceless.

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